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AN ICELANDIC CHRISTMAS HYMN

*Hljómi raustin barna best*¹

Preface

THE PRESENT ARTICLE is based on work done by a group of students who participated in the International Summer School of Manuscript Studies in 2008–2010. They were given the task of investigating the transmission history of an Icelandic Christmas hymn, *Hljómi raustin barna best*, which is known in both a shorter and a longer version. The longer version, 16 stanzas in most manuscripts, is attributed to the Rev. Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614–1674), but the first three stanzas are a translation of the Latin hymn *Personent hodie*, made by the Rev. Bjarni Gissurarson (1621–1712) in Þingmúli. It is preserved in a manuscript from Skálholt containing songs and hymns that were used for singing in the cathedral school and in the diocese of Skálholt.

Although the hymn might have been included in the critical edition of Hallgrímur Pétursson's works currently in preparation at the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in Reykjavík – it was printed in the edition of Hallgrímur's poems published at Hólar in 1773 – the decision was made not to do so, since only a part of the hymn is by Hallgrímur. The widespread dissemination of the text and melody of *Personent hodie* throughout Europe, and not least its transformation by Hallgrímur Pétursson into an Icelandic Lutheran hymn, was nevertheless clearly in

1 The authors would like to thank Margrét Eggertsdóttir and Matthew J. Driscoll for their valuable comments and suggestions in the preparation of this paper for publication. We would also like to thank all the other initial members of the Master Class 2010: Joonas Ahola, Florian Grammel, Anne Hofmann and Tanja Tjorven Umlauff.

teresting enough to warrant further investigation.² Although never printed in the Church's official hymnbooks, Hallgrímur's hymn is found in nearly 30 manuscripts from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

For the 2010 Summer School in Manuscript Studies, held in Copenhagen under the auspices of the Árni Magnússon Institute in Icelandic Studies, Reykjavík, and Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, University of Copenhagen, it was decided that the hymn would make a suitable editorial project for the school's Master Class, i.e. the group of advanced-level students participating in the summer school for the third time. Although it was not possible to finish this project in the short time available during the summer school, some of the original summer school participants have continued working on the text, both individually and at meetings and workshops held on three occasions over the last three years in Freiburg and Göttingen.³ These are Ulrike Michalczik (Göttingen), Sofie Vanherpen (Ghent), Eevastiina Korri (Helsinki), Friederike Richter (Berlin), Werner Schäfer (Copenhagen) and Katharina Baier (Braunschweig). For the two meetings in Göttingen, Margrét Eggertsdóttir and Matthew Driscoll were invited to assist and advise.

The results of this project, now referred to as the *Personent Hodie Text Edition Project*, are presented here. The history of the text's transmission is investigated in depth, the origin of the manuscripts and their interrelationship as well as their material aspects are described, and the content of the hymn is discussed, as well as the relationship between the original Latin text and the Icelandic translation. Finally, the text of the Latin text as preserved in ÍB 525 8vo is printed, along with that of the shorter Icelandic version as it is preserved in JS 386 8vo, the oldest extant manuscript, written at Hólar in Hjaltadalur in 1684. The longer version in Lbs 238 b 8vo, a manuscript written around 1860 by Páll Pálsson "stúdent," is also presented. This manuscript includes variants taken from other manuscripts the scribe made use of. Finally, the edition is supplemented with an English

- 2 A preliminary survey of the Icelandic manuscripts preserving the hymn and a short introduction to the origin, development and distribution of the text was presented in Margrét Eggertsdóttir "Hljómi raustin barna best": Upppruni, um sköpun og útbreiðsla gamals jólasálmis í handritum fyrr á öldum," in *Pulvis Olympicus: Afmálisrit tileinkað Sigurði Péturssyni*, eds. Jón Ma. Ásgeirsson et al. (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2009), 155–178.
- 3 We are grateful to the Zentrum für Mittelalter- und Frühneuzeitforschung Göttingen for generously funding the meetings in Göttingen.

translation of these three texts. Electronic versions of these and other texts of the hymn, marked up using TEI-conformant XML, are available online on the summer school's website, www.arnamagnaean.org.

Margrét Eggertsdóttir
Trans. Matthew J. Driscoll

1. Introduction

The year 2014 marks the 400th anniversary of the birth of one of Iceland's most eminent poets, Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614–1674). His birthday has been celebrated in Iceland in various ways throughout the year. With this article, we would like to contribute to these celebrations and thus end this festive year by discussing a Christmas hymn attributed to Hallgrímur entitled *Hljómi raustin barna best*. This hymn is an Icelandic translation of the Latin hymn *Personent Hodie*, to which Hallgrímur added thirteen original verses. In 1773, almost 100 years after the poet's death, a compilation of his hymns and poems entitled *Andlegir sálmar og kvæði* was published. This was also the very first time that the Icelandic hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best* appeared in print.

This article is the result of the work done as part of the *Personent Hodie Text Edition project* outlined in the preface. First, the article sketches the origin for the Icelandic hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best*, which lies in the Latin Christmas hymn *Personent Hodie*. We examine the textual tradition of this Latin hymn and its Icelandic parallels, and evaluate its translation into Icelandic. Second, we take a closer look at the content of the Icelandic hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best*, which survives in a shorter and longer version, and we discuss the theological views it expresses. Next, we turn to the 27 Icelandic witnesses of this hymn, their transmission and their relationship to each other. By examining the manuscripts' date and place of origin, scribe(s), and provenance, the hymn's varying verse number and order, and its variant readings, some clear patterns emerge that allow us to divide the manuscripts into groups. Additionally, we focus on the material dimension of the hymn's transmission, such as rubrics, page design and the content of the entire manuscript, and ask whether these can provide us with additional information on the relationship between the various

manuscripts containing *Hljómi raustin barna best*. Furthermore, we discuss in detail one of these manuscripts, which we nicknamed the ‘academic’ manuscript, namely Lbs 238 b 8vo. Finally, after the concluding remarks, we present the editions of the various text under discussion here side by side with their English translations, and an appendix with further information about each manuscript.

2. The songbook *Piae cantiones* and its Icelandic parallels

The following section will examine the textual tradition of the Latin text underlying the Icelandic song, the Christmas hymn *Personent hodie*. ÍB 525 8vo, the only Icelandic manuscript known to contain the Latin text of this hymn, is of central importance in tracing the process by which the hymn may have reached Iceland. Even so, the Latin hymn itself is best known from the sixteenth-century printed collection of sacred songs known as *Piae cantiones*. We will first introduce these two main sources before presenting a comparison of their respective texts. We will then briefly discuss the short Icelandic version translated by Bjarni Gissurarson (1621–1712) and its relation to the Latin text.

The manuscript ÍB 525 8vo was probably copied in Skálholt in 1687. It constitutes the first part of a collection of songs intended for the school at Skálholt, the so-called *Hymni scholares ad auroram canendi*.⁴ The hymn *Personent hodie* appears in the main section of the manuscript, which contains a collection of sacred songs, on fols. 74v–75v under the heading *sequuntur Hymni in Aduentu et natiuitate*. Jakob Benediktsson has characterized it as a Catholic hymnal, which is remarkable, as no other hymnals have survived in Iceland from before the Reformation.⁵ The Icelandic translation of the hymn was very likely made by Bjarni Gissurarson, who stayed at Skálholt around 1642, first as a student at the cathedral school and later as a scribe.⁶

4 Jakob Benediktsson, “Hymni scholares. Latneskt sálmasafn frá Skálholti,” in *Einarsbók: afmæliskeðja til Einars Ól. Sveinssonar 12. desember 1969*, ed. Bjarni Guðnason, Halldór Halldórsson and Jónas Kristjánsson (Reykjavík: Nokkrir vinir, 1969), 121–137.

5 Jakob Benediktsson, “Hymni scholares,” 127.

6 For further discussion see Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 161. See also Jakob Benediktsson, “Hymni scholares,” 127; and Bjarni Gissurarson, *Sólarsýn. Kvæði*, ed.

The main source for the Continental tradition of the Latin hymn is the collection of sacred songs known as the *Piae cantiones*. The 74 church and school hymns which make up this collection were collected in Finland, then part of Sweden, by Theodoricus Petri Nylandensis, a Finnish student at the University of Rostock. It was first printed in Greifswald, also part of Sweden at that time, by August Ferber in 1582; the school director Jakko Finne from Åbo arranged for its printing.⁷ While ÍB 525 8vo does not contain exactly the same collection of hymns as the *Piae cantiones*, the latter nonetheless provides the most authoritative comparandum to the Icelandic tradition of the text.⁸ Moreover, it is a pivotal source for our understanding of school education in Scandinavia in general and Iceland in particular.⁹

Still, it should be noted that these hymns were by no means contemporary compositions. In fact, most of these songs, originally intended for use in school or church, predate the Reformation and were subsequently reworked to fit the new religious dispensation. For example, Guido Maria Deves, who re-edited the *Piae cantiones* as *Cantiones sueciae* for the extensive twentieth-century collection *Analecta hymnica*, argued convincingly that many of the songs devoted to Christ had originally been addressed to Mary, because the re-writing had often been either “so conservative or sloppy [...] that most of the changes made to the original are clearly recognisable”.¹⁰ This may also account for the considerable thematic variety of the collection, which, according to Timo Mäkinen and Gudrun Viergutz, contains ballads and aubades as well as hymns and sequences (some of which date as early as the tenth century), religious, satirical and

Jón M. Samsonarson, *Smábækur Menningarsjóðs*, vol. 5 (Reykjavík: Bókauktgáfa Menningarsjóðs, 1960), 13.

- 7 *Piae cantiones ecclesiasticae et scholares veterum episcoporum in inclito regno Sueciae passim usurpatae, nuper studio viri cuiusdam reverendissimi, de ecclesia Dei et schola Aboënsi in Finlandia optime meriti, accurate a mendis correctae et nunc typis commissae opera Theodorici Petri Nylandensis* (Gryphisuualdiae [Greifswald]: per Augustinum Ferberum [Ferber], 1582).
- 8 While an investigation of the entire *Piae cantiones*-tradition in Scandinavia remains a desideratum, this lies beyond the scope of this article; our discussion will be limited to the hymn *Personent hodie*.
- 9 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 159.
- 10 “[S]o konservativ, oder so salopp [...], daß die Veränderung überall mit Händen zu greifen ist”; Guido Maria Dreves, ed., introduction to *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi. Cantiones et Muteti. Lieder und Motetten des Mittelalters. Dritte Folge. Cantiones: Variarum, Bohemicae, Sueciae*, vol. 45b (1904; repr. Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1961), 13.

historical songs.¹¹ This variety is equally borne out by the provenance of some of the material; indeed, whereas most of the hymns presumably originated in Finland, some of the songs can be traced to France, England and Germany, particularly to Bavaria.

We now turn to the textual differences between the version of the Latin hymn in *Piae cantiones* and ÍB 525 8vo. The Latin text of the latter differs from the printed text only in a few minor details. These variant readings mostly concern small lexical differences that do not change the overall meaning of the stanzas. For example, the first stanza in ÍB 525 8vo reads “qvi nobis est natus, | summo Christe [*sic*] datus” [who is born for us, given by the highest Christ]¹² as compared to “qui nobis est natus | summo Deo datus” [who is born for us, given by the highest God] in the *Piae cantiones*. Similarly, in the second stanza, ÍB 525 8vo has “præsepi imponitur, | stabulo porcorum” [he was put in a manger, in a pigsty], whereas *Piae cantiones* reads “praesaepi ponitur | stabulo brutorum” [he was put in a manger, in an animals’ stable]. Other differences concern the use of tense: in the third stanza ÍB 525 8vo has “veniunt” [they are coming] as compared to “venerunt” [they came] in *Piae cantiones*; or the use of an attributive genitive instead of an adjective: the first stanza ÍB 525 8vo has “de vir virginis, | ventre procreatus” [brought forth from a virgin’s womb], whereas the text in *Piae cantiones* reads “de virgineo ventre procreatus” [brought forth from a maidenly womb]. These examples should suffice to show how little the two versions differ.

As noted before, the final stanza of the hymn is absent in ÍB 525 8vo and it is therefore also lacking in the Icelandic translation. It follows that the exemplar from which the Latin text in ÍB 525 8vo was derived – that is, if we assume that there was a written exemplar – also contained only the first three stanzas of the hymn. However, in order to show that the

11 See Timo Mäkinen, *Die aus frühen böhmischen Quellen überlieferten Piae Cantiones-Melodien*, trans. Helmut Henning, *Studia Historica Jyväskylänsia*, vol. 2 (Jyväskylä: Jyväskylänski Yliopistoyhdistys, 1964), 10–23; Gudrun Viergutz, “Der Rostocker Kantor Daniel Friderici und sein Anteil an der zweiten lateinischsprachigen Ausgabe des schwedisch-finnischen Liederbuches ‘Piae Cantiones,’” in *Musica Baltica. Interregionale musikkulturelle Beziehungen im Ostseeraum. Konferenzbericht Greifswald-Gdansk 28. November bis 3. Dezember 1993*, ed. Ekkehard Ochs et al. (St Augustin: Academia, 1996), 191.

12 Note the erroneous use of the vocative form *Christe* instead of the expected ablative case *Christo*.

original fourth stanza provided a fitting ending to the hymn, its text is here given in full:

Omnes clericuli,
Pariter pueri
Cantent ut angeli:
Advenisti mundo,
laudes tibi fundo,
Ideo gloria
in excelsis Deo.¹³

[Let all clerics and boys sing like the angels: You have come into the world, I shower you with praises. Wherefore glory [be] to God in the highest.]

This three-stanza Icelandic version was subsequently amplified by Hallgrímur Pétursson, who added thirteen new stanzas (or in some manuscripts only twelve).¹⁴

It is to Bjarni Gissurarson's translation of the first three stanzas that we now turn. According to Margrét Eggertsdóttir, "poets [in seventeenth-century Iceland] were generally educated men, the most accomplished of whom often composed their verses in Latin".¹⁵ While it is difficult to gauge the extent of Bjarni's knowledge of Latin, the following analysis will show that he must have understood his Latin exemplar sufficiently to produce a fairly accurate translation.¹⁶ His Icelandic translation of the hymn is preserved in the manuscripts JS 386 8vo and Lbs 238 b 8vo.

In the first stanza, the Icelandic text adds the expression "lijkama vorum klæddur" [clothed in our flesh].¹⁷ This important detail, which stresses that God has become man, is further reinforced in the second stanza through the use of the nouns "gud og mann" [God and man] in apposition. By con-

13 Cited from Dreves, *Analecta Hymnica*, 45:135 (no. 167). Translation by Ulrike Michalczik.

14 See section 3.

15 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, *Icelandic Baroque. Poetic Art and Erudition in the Works of Hallgrímur Pétursson*, trans. Andrew Wawn (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 2014), 205.

16 Admittedly, it remains difficult to exclude entirely the possibility that his exemplar was in a language other than Latin. A Danish or German exemplar is also a possibility.

17 The Icelandic examples are taken from the autograph Thott 473 4to, verses 2 and 3 are reversed in order to correspond with the Latin version.

trast, the original phrase “stabulo porcorum” is shortened to a mere “stalle”. Furthermore, the refrain now runs “herfang tok tok tok | herfang tok og hrygder jók | hann þeim myrkra anda” [he took the spoils and increased the disappointment for the Dark Spirit]. The phrase “herfang tok” corresponds closely to “perdidit spolia,” but the rendering “og hrygder jók | hann þeim myrkra anda” in the final stanza deviates considerably from the original’s “rector superiorum” and “rector inferiorum” [ruler of heaven] and [ruler of hell], respectively), even if it could be argued that the vernacular rendering is much clearer. Even so, on the whole, the Icelandic translation closely follows the Latin original. Indeed, considering that the entire song structure, together with its verse, rhyme, and presumably its melody, were reflected in the Icelandic version, the translation is no mean feat.¹⁸ In the following section, we will take a closer look at the entire content of the Icelandic hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best*.

3. The content of the Icelandic hymn

As mentioned previously, the Icelandic versions of *Personent hodie* can generally be divided into two groups, a longer and shorter version. The longer Icelandic version adds twelve to thirteen stanzas to the three-stanza translation from Latin, the thirteenth and last stanza always being the stanza added or omitted. The four stanzas of the Latin version of *Personent hodie*, and hence the three of those found in the Icelandic versions, refer to the nativity of Jesus, marking this hymn clearly as a Christmas song. The topic of the added stanzas of the longer version, however, stretches into Christian eschatology, referring to the Last Judgment and the eternal afterlife, including images known from the Book of Revelation. This is also reflected in the rubrics. While the rubrics label the shorter version a song or psalm on the nativity of Jesus, the longer versions tend either to label this hymn as about Jesus (in general) or about Judgment Day and the eternal afterlife.

One might assume that the content would reflect Lutheran theological views where there were suitable points at which to express them.

18 Unfortunately, for reasons of time and space the musical aspect of these texts cannot be taken into account here. For further discussion, see references in Mäkinen, *Piae Cantiones-Melodien*, 10–23.

Considering the nativity of Jesus, there are no differences between the Christian confessions in the Baltic Sea cultural zone at that time. The extra stanzas of the longer Icelandic version, however, refer to eschatological topics such as the Last Judgment, salvation, and the afterlife, topics on which Lutheranism differs clearly from Catholicism and Calvinism: will Christ judge the souls by their belief in Him (Lutheranism), or their good works (Catholicism)? Can only the souls of the chosen enter Heaven (Calvinism), or those of everybody who believes in Christ (Lutheranism), or those of everybody regardless of their belief in Christ as long as they lived a life compliant with Christian norms (Catholicism)?¹⁹ Surprisingly, the hymn gives no clear answer to these questions and it has virtually no explicitly Lutheran content. In fact, some stanzas reflect Catholic or even Calvinist notions that would be unacceptable to Lutheranism.

The first three stanzas, which derive from the original Latin hymn, refer to the nativity of Jesus, and contextualize these with the Last Judgment. The first stanza refers to Mary's virgin birth, while the second stanza includes the trinitarianist view that Christ is "both God and man". This is compliant with Lutheran theology, but so too with most other Christian theologies. The second stanza briefly refers to the descent of Christ into hell, where he frees the souls of the just that had passed away after the Fall. More typically Lutheran is the harsh statement that "The Savior [...] / increases the sorrows / of those with dark souls" (st. 2, ll. 6–8). This statement is best understood if interpreted with the Lutheran view on salvation. According to the Lutheran doctrine *sola fide* [by faith alone], only believers are delivered from sin, and no amount of good works can provide a substitute for this.²⁰ However, the statement in the second stanza goes further, as *ex negativo* "dark souls" are attributed to all non-believers. This appears to be a deduction from the (dubious) implication of the hymn that all believers have good souls (due to *sola fide*). However, this does offer us a possible understanding of these lines, and poets are not bound to follow formal logic. The description of Christ as "the Savior of all lands" (st. 2, l. 5) and "the Savior of all people" (st. 4, l. 5) reflects the view of unlimited atone-

19 Oliver Freiberger, et. al. "Werke, Gute," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. 35: *Vernunft III – Wiederbringung aller*, eds. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 636–640.

20 Freiberger et al., "Werke, Gute," 636–637.

ment taken by Lutheran theology (as well as Catholic theology), at the same time clearly departing from the beliefs of Calvinism. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the hymn alludes to a Calvinist concept at a later point.

The third stanza refers to the Adoration of the Magi, as part of the account of the Nativity of Jesus. The following thirteen stanzas, which are not part of the Latin tradition of the hymn, deal with further aspects of eschatology in addition to the Last Judgment, and depart from the scene of the Nativity. The fourth stanza refers to the Resurrection of Christ and takes up his descent into hell mentioned in stanza two. The conquering of the devil by Christ is described and the metaphor of war is taken up again. As the souls of the just that were claimed by the devil after the Fall were referred to as “herfang” [war booty] (st. 2, ll. 6–7), Christ now commands “stríð” [a war] Ust. 4, l. 8), in which he gains “sigur” [victory] (st. 4, l. 1).

Stanzas five to seven then deal with the Last Judgment and stanzas eight to ten describe the afterlife: burning in hell for the sinners, and eternal praising of God in heaven for the good, as described in the Book of Revelation. The stanzas discussing the souls that are doomed to burn in hell do not clearly show Lutheran views on salvation. The doomed are those who have performed bad deeds, rather than those who do not believe in Christ. Also, the reference to the redeemed souls as those of “chosen men” (st. 16, l. 4) is suggestive of Calvinism, although the notion might still be compatible with Catholic views on redemption if one assumes the chosen to be those who did good works.

Stanzas 11 to 16 conclude the hymn by describing the longing for the afterlife and rejection of worldly life. Stanza 12 includes the sole identifiably Lutheran reference in the hymn to redemption: “Everyone who believes in Christ the Lord / Receives true exaltation” (st. 12, ll. 1–2). Here, the Lutheran concept that belief in Christ alone – and not good works – will deliver the soul from sin is explicit.

The views expressed in the hymn appear to be those common to most confessions of Christianity, with the exception of the one explicitly Lutheran perspective mentioned previously (st. 12, ll. 1–2). Some views apparent in the hymn are even clearly Catholic (the relevance of good works and of avoiding sin), while the reference to the rapture of the chosen is closer to Calvinism than to anything else. The content of the longer Icelandic version of the hymn thus suggests that, by the time of its com-

position, Lutheran theology had not fully superseded Catholic theology in everyday religious practice in Iceland.

The general division of the *Hljómi raustin barna best's* textual witnesses into two groups, based on length of the hymn, is highlighted by the difference in meaning of the first three stanzas and the remaining stanzas subsequently added to the hymn.

4. The Icelandic manuscripts

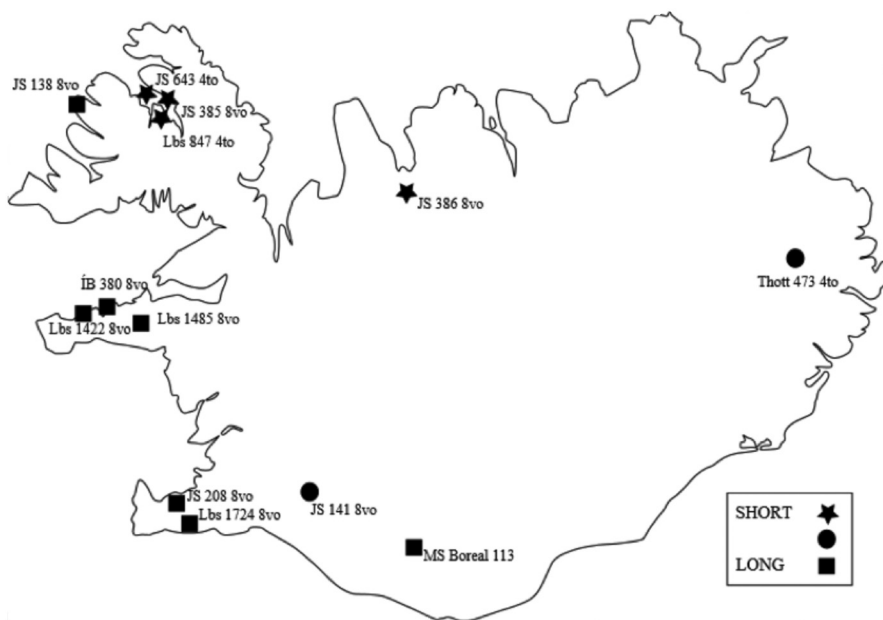
The 27 preserved texts of *Hljómi raustin barna best* fall into two distinct groups: a shorter and a longer version. The former is a translation of the Latin hymn, albeit containing only three of the originally four verses, as mentioned above (ÍBR 7 8vo, JS 141 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 847 4to, Lbs 1192 8vo, Thott 473 4to). Its best-known example is written by Bjarni Gissurarson (1621–1712) and preserved in the autograph manuscript Thott 473 4to. The hymn's longer version is represented in a larger number of manuscripts than the shorter one, and varies in length, comprising either fifteen²¹ or sixteen²² stanzas. The version of the Christmas hymn best known among Icelandic scholars today is the one ascribed to Hallgrímur Pétursson, first printed in *Andlegir sálmar og kvæði* at Hólar in 1773.

Based on criteria such as the length of the hymn, the date and place of origin, scribes, provenance and variant readings, these manuscripts can be further divided into four groups.²³ We will discuss these groups of manuscripts in relation to variant readings. A manuscript's scribe(s), date and place of origin are often difficult to determine with certainty. Nevertheless, of the manuscripts we have studied, scribal and/or geographical information has been obtained for thirteen manuscripts, 50% of the total number.

21 JS 439 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo.

22 EDL a and b 8vo, ÍB 380 8vo, ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 138 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, JS 509 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo, MS Boreal 113.

23 See appendix for detailed information on length, date and place of origin, scribes and provenance.



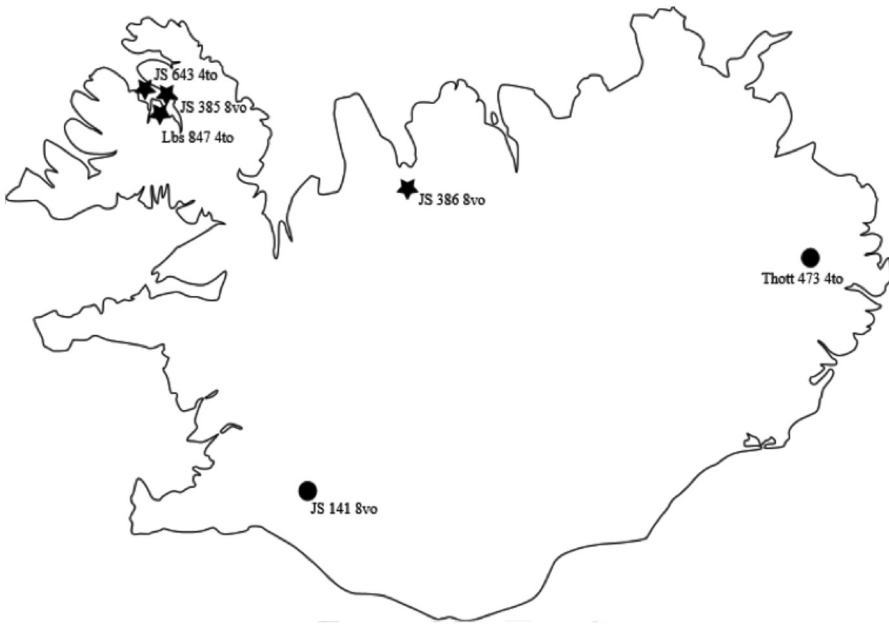
Map 1.1: Manuscripts with known place of origin²⁴

For the shorter version of the hymn, the place of origin of 75% of the manuscripts (six of eight) could be located, whereas for the longer version 39% of the manuscripts (seven out of 18) could be placed.

The manuscripts containing the shorter version were written within a time frame of approximately 30 years (ca. 1680–1710), apart from one manuscript (JS 141 8vo), which was written much later, between ca. 1760 and 1770. The most striking feature in the pattern of geographical origin is that most of these manuscripts were copied in Ísafjörður in West Iceland and one could be located to the north of Iceland, as illustrated by the stars on map 1.2.²⁵ This geographical distribution is discussed in greater detail in the appendix.

²⁴ All the maps in this article were made by Sofie Vanherpen using the program Inkscape, available for free at <http://inkscape.org/en/>. The image of Iceland is an Open Access image (.svg).

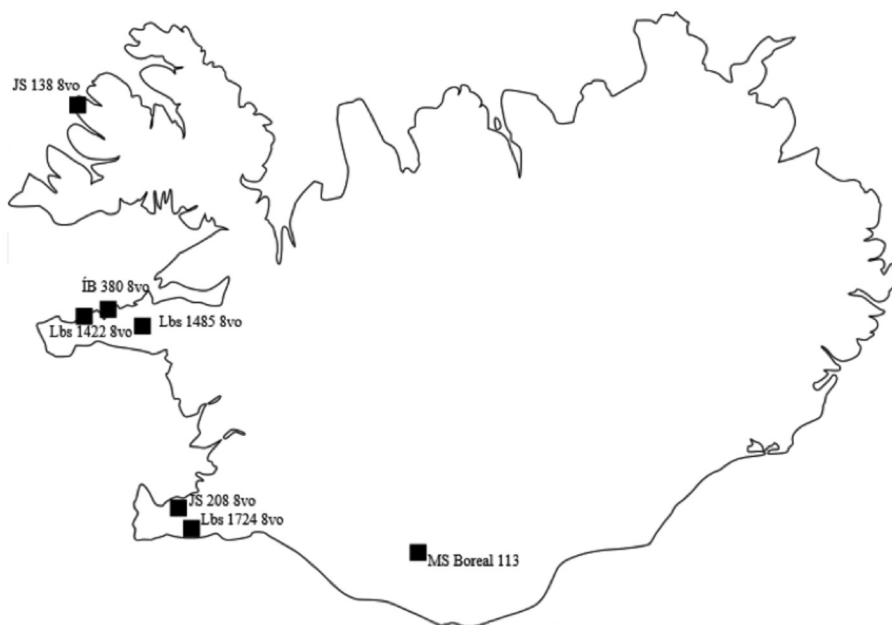
²⁵ JS 385 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 847 4to in Ísafjörður, and JS 386 8vo in North Iceland.



Map 1.2: Shorter version – Manuscript origin

The group of manuscripts marked with a star on map 1.2, in addition to ÍBR 7 8vo, form a discrete group among the manuscripts of the shorter version, referred to as the *heiðra*-group.²⁶ Not only are these manuscripts closely related in age and place of origin, but the texts of the hymn also share a large number of variant readings. This group has been named after the variant reading “*heiðra*”, which is used instead of the verb “*finna*” (manuscripts marked with a black dot on map 1.2). The corresponding line in Thott 473 4to reads “*Christum finna vilja*” in place of “*Christum heiðra villdu*”. A corresponding verse line does not occur in the Latin manuscript ÍB 525 8vo. In the 1582 edition of *Piae cantiones*, the corresponding verse reads “*paruulum inquirunt*” [searching for the Child]. This variant reading seems to have been deliberately introduced by the scribes. The *finna*-reading (“to find”) is closer in meaning to the original verb “*inquirō*” [I search], whereas the use of the verb “*heiðra*” (“to honour”) adds more value and significance to this Child.

26 JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 643 4to and Lbs 847 4to.



Map 1.3: Longer version – Manuscript origins

The order of stanzas is another element that sets this group of manuscripts apart. In comparison to the original Latin text, Bjarni reversed the order of the verses to 1, 3, 2. This order occurs in 20 of the 27 manuscript witnesses of the hymn, three of the shorter version and 17 of the longer one.²⁷ The original verse order, 1, 2, 3, occurs in only two manuscripts of the longer version and in the so-called *heiðra*-group.²⁸

The manuscripts containing the longer version were almost all copied later than those of the short version, between approximately 1689 (Lbs 1586 8vo) and 1860 (Lbs 238 b 8vo). Only a few of these manuscripts can be localized. The most striking feature of the geographical origin pattern is that a large number of these manuscripts were copied in West and South Iceland, as illustrated on map 1.3, discussed in greater detail later.

27 JS 141 8vo, Thott 473 4to, Lbs 1192 8vo, and MS Boreal 113, EDL a and b 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 272 4to II, JS 506 8vo, JS 509 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo.

28 Lbs 238 b 8vo and JS 439 8vo, and ÍBR 7 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 847 4to.

As mentioned previously, the longer version of the hymn varies in length. Hallgrímur Pétursson's version of the hymn consists of sixteen stanzas, which is also the case for 68% of the longer versions (13 of 19 manuscripts).²⁹ It should be noted here that in one manuscript, ÍBR 104 8vo, stanza 15 is added in the margin of the manuscript. The first five lines of the stanza are barely legible; the manuscript is slightly defective because the edges have been trimmed. In six instances, the hymn is only 15 stanzas long.³⁰ With the exception of Lbs 194 8vo, where stanza 9 is omitted, stanza 14 is omitted in all of these manuscripts, perhaps deliberately. In a number of cases, the order of the stanzas as it appears in the printed edition of Hallgrímur Pétursson's text is reversed.³¹

The third stanza of the Latin original describes how the three wise men bring gold, myrrh and frankincense. In the Icelandic translations, an adjective is added to the last verse line of this stanza to rhyme with a previous line:

Austr kongar komu þrijr
 Christum finna vilja:
 þessum fylgde fornin dyr:
 þeir frjettu ad barne kjæru.
 Sem stjarnan oskar æru:
 Gullid best best best
 gullid best best best
 gullid best og myrran mest.
 Med reykelse skiæru.³²

This added adjective forms an important variant and groups certain manuscripts together. In all, there are four variant readings.³³ The first reading, “barni kæru / reykelsi skæru” [the cherished child / frankincense bright],

29 These are: EDL a and b 8vo, ÍB 380 8vo, ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 138 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, JS 509 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo, MS Boreal 113.

30 These are: JS 439 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo.

31 In ÍB 380 8vo, for example, verses 3 and 4 are switched, while verses 8 and 9 are reversed in JS 439 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo and Lbs 1530 8vo. Finally, verses 14 and 15 have switched places in JS 509 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo and MS Boreal 113.

32 Stanza taken from Thott 473 4to to serve as an example.

33 See also Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 173–175, for a thorough discussion of these variant readings.

appears in JS 141 8vo, JS 439 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 847 4to and Thott 473 4to. The odd one out in this group is JS 439 8vo, as it is the only one of these manuscripts to contain a text of the longer version of the hymn. It also shares the original verse order (1, 2, 3) with JS 643 4to and Lbs 847 4to. When it comes to place of origin, these manuscripts are scattered all over Iceland. With the exception of JS 141 8vo (from 1760), they were all written in a narrow time frame of approximately ten years (from 1693 to 1712).

The second reading of these verse lines is “barni skæru / reykelsi kæru” and can only be found in manuscripts containing a copy of the shorter version: ÍBR 7 8vo, JS 385 8vo and JS 386 8vo. These three manuscripts are all part of the so-called *heiðra*-group. In this reading, the adjectives “skæru” and “kæru” are reversed in comparison to the previous reading. This reading appears to be defective, since the reference to frankincense as “dear” or “beloved” makes little sense, so it is likely that this variant reading represents a scribal error.

The third reading is “barni skæru / reykelsi tæru”. *Tæru* is close in meaning to *skæru*, meaning “clear”. It occurs exclusively in longer versions of the hymn.³⁴ Apart from Lbs 1536 8vo, these manuscripts can be dated and localised with precision. As previously mentioned, JS 208 8vo and Lbs 1724 8vo are closely related to each other. They were both written around 1730 in the southwestern part of Iceland. ÍB 380 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo and Lbs 1485 8vo originated in western Iceland and were written around 1700. Of these three manuscripts, two are connected to the siblings Gísli Jónsson and Helga Jónsdóttir. Strikingly, manuscripts belonging to this group were all written before Hallgrímur Pétursson’s version of the hymn was printed in 1773.

The final reading “barni skæru / reykelsi skæru” occurs in twelve manuscripts and is thus the most common reading.³⁵ It only appears in the hymn’s long versions. With the exception of Lbs 1568 8vo (written in 1689) and Lbs 1192 8vo (written in 1700), these manuscripts were all written in the late-eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, i.e. after 1773, the year Hallgrímur Pétursson’s version of the

34 ÍB 380 8vo, JS 208 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo Lbs 1724 8vo.

35 ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 138 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, Lbs 506 8vo, JS 509 8vo, Lbs 1192 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, MS Boreal 113, EDL a and b 8vo.

hymn appeared in print. Additionally, the variant in this group of manuscripts is the same as in the printed hymn by Hallgrímur. In ÍBR 104 8vo, which we know was copied from the printed version, the scribe added an emendation: “barne kiæru ‘skiær⟨u⟩’ /reikellse skiæru”. In the academic manuscript, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Páll Pálson makes a note of the variant “tæru” next to “skæru”: “skæru ‘alias tæru.’”

These four different readings correspond to the four groups of text witnesses that we were able to distinguish between after taking into account the date and location of origin, scribes and provenance. Further grouping is possible by looking at material aspects of *Hljómi raustin barna best*.

5. Material aspects of the transmission of the hymn

The following section presents a short investigation into some material aspects of the transmission of the hymn.³⁶ Such aspects include both those implemented initially at the time of writing and those added later.³⁷ The most eye-catching aspects to be presented and discussed here include the titles or rubrics of the hymn, page design with illuminations, and tables of contents.³⁸ These characteristics will be related to the previously described

36 Material Philology was initially proposed by Stephen G. Nichols, see e.g. “Why Material Philology? Some Thoughts,” in Nichols, Stephen G. “Why Material Philology? Some Thoughts,” *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie* 116, special issue (1997): 10–30. With regard to Icelandic manuscripts, calls for scholars to turn to such studies were put forth by Már Jónsson, “Recent Trends (or their Lack) in Icelandic Manuscript Studies,” *Gazette du livre Médiéval* 36 (2000): 11–16; and Matthew James Driscoll, “The Words on the Page: Thoughts on Philology, Old and New,” in *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability, and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature*, eds. Judy Quinn and Emily Lethbridge (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2010), 85–102.

37 The recent edited volume, Lena Rohrbach, ed., *The Power of the Book. Medial Approaches to Medieval Nordic Legal Manuscripts*, Berliner Beiträge zur Skandinavistik, vol. 19 (Berlin: Nordeuropa-Institut der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2014), bears witness to the manifold aspects that material philology takes into consideration, and to the productivity of such an approach. In this article, only a few elements can be considered.

38 We had access to most of the manuscripts kept in Reykjavík during the International Summer School of Manuscript Studies in 2009. As the project initially focused on editing the text and the eventual master class met in Copenhagen a year later, this current analysis is based on digitalized images of the actual pages, data and digitized complete manuscripts provided in Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” and images available on *Handrit.is*, National and University Library of Iceland, 2009–2014, <http://handrit.is/> (accessed April 1, 2014). The digitalized manuscripts accessible on *Handrit.is* included ÍBR 7

parameters of dating, provenance and main variants of the texts, in order to conclude how similarities and differences correlate to these variants. The material characteristics provide supplementary information about the manuscripts' genesis and the hymn's transmission. In this way, it is possible to determine what role material aspects played in the transmission of the text, and how far they behave as independent qualities of the manuscripts.

5.1 Rubrics

All manuscripts containing *Hljómi raustin barna best* are hymn collections with varying compilation patterns, sometimes including other types of texts as well. Thus, none of the witnesses transmits the hymn in an unexpected context. The beginning of the hymn is always marked by a rubric, a heading, usually in display script and introducing the hymn. It sometimes includes information about the hymn's title and the name of the author, directions regarding the melody, or a subsequent number of the hymn within the book. Consequently, the rubrics can give information about how the hymn was perceived, transmitted and performed. In the following charts, the rubrics of the short and long versions are grouped separately, whereas the rubrics of the longer versions are further subdivided according to the hymn's subject matter (short version: group 1, long version: group 2a–c).³⁹ The rubric of the first printed edition will also be included in this discussion.

Since such rubrics did not function as titles of works in the modern sense, they were merely descriptive and hence unstable. However, four significant groups can be made out when distinguishing between the longer and shorter versions on the one hand, considering the shorter versions as a separate group of transmission (Group 1), and, on the other hand, the variants regarding the given content of the hymn (Group 2a–c). It is not

8vo, ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 138 8vo, JS 141 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 439 8vo, JS 509 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1192 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, and Lbs 1724 8vo.

39 The transcriptions of the rubrics follow the same rules as the transcriptions of the two versions of the hymn, explained in section 6. Exceptions to those rules are due to the special character of rubrics; marked line breaks are not displayed as in the manuscripts, but follow major changes of script in script type, script size or/and change of colour of the ink, or visible intentional line breaks by the scribes.

Group 1: Rubrics of the shorter versions.

Manuscript	Rubric	Indicated melody
ÍBR 7 8vo, f. 65v 1693	Saungvijsa um Christi fædijng.	none
JS 141 8vo, f. 175r 1760	Jolapsalmar sal <i>sira</i> Biarna Gyssurssonar.	none
JS 385 8vo, f. 119v ca. 1693	Saungvijsa vmm fæding <i>Christi</i> vr latinu.	none
JS 386 8vo, f. 32r 1684	XLII. psalmu⟨r⟩. Vmm fæding Christi. S⟨n⟩üenn ür latinu.	none
JS 643 4to, f. 5v ca. 1700–1710	IX Joola psalmur.	none
Lbs 847 4to, p. 297 1693	Saungvÿsa um fæding Christi ür Latinu.	none
Lbs 1192 8vo, f. 37r ca. 1700	Nyars psalmur af sama ortur med ägiætum tön:	unspecific
Thott 473 4to, f. 37r 1704	Personent hodie, útsett med ijnum tön.	með sínum tón

Group 2a: Rubrics of the longer versions: “Um fæding Kristi, dómsdag og eilíft líf” (including the later printed edition).

Manuscript	Rubric	Indicated melody
ÍBR 104 8vo, f. 9v, 1750–1800	Umm fæding Christi dóms dag og eyliíft líf. Lag! Marja móðeren skæra	<i>María móð- irin skæra</i>
JS 272 II 4to, f. 421v, 1750–1800	Þridia qvæde. Um fæding Kristj, dóms dag og eilyft lyf. Lag, Maria modurinn skæra.	<i>María móð- irin skæra</i>
Lbs 1568 8vo, f. 72r, 1689	Fagur psálmur vmm dómsdag og eilyft líf (med sýnum tön).	með sínum tón
Lbs 1724 8vo, f. 70v, after 1730	LXXXI psálmur. Fagur lofsaungur sem er stutt agrip umm Christi nidurlægingar og upphafningar stand. Item umm dómsdag og effterlaungun eilijfslyfs. Tón Lijfsins alla lyknn og nád.	<i>Lífsins alla líkn og nád</i>
Andlegir sálmar og kvæði, 269 1773 (print)	Umm Fæding Christi, Dooms-Dag og eilíft Líf. Lag, Maria Moodurinn skæra.	<i>María móð- irin skæra</i>

Group 2b: Rubrics of the longer versions: “Bænarsálmur til Christum.”

Manuscript	Rubric	Indicated melody
ÍB 380 8vo, p. 60 ca. 1700	Eirn fagur bænar psalmur til <i>Christum</i> Tön Mariä möduren skiaera. ‘ <i>Síra Hallgrímur Péturs [son]</i> ’	<i>María móðirin skæra</i>
JS 138 8vo, f. 2r ca. 1740–1750	Eirn fagur bænar psalmur til Herrans Jesum <i>Christum</i> . <i>Síra Hallgrímur Péturs son</i> . Med synum ton.	með sínum tón
JS 208 8vo, f. 11v 1730	III. Psálmur Til christum Tön, Lyfsens alla lykn og näd	<i>Lifsins alla líkn og näd</i>
Lbs 1422 8vo, f. 34r ca. 1701	Eirn fagur bænar psálmur til Christum. Tön Maria moduren skiaera. ‘ <i>Síra Hallgrímur Péturs son</i> ’	<i>María móðirin skæra</i>
Lbs 1485 8vo, f. 29v ca. 1696–1700	Bænar psalmur til Christum / <i>Síra Hallgryms Peturssonar</i> , med tön Maria moderen skiaera.	<i>María móðirin skæra</i>
Lbs 1536 8vo, f. 46r 1700–1799	Eirn fagur <i>Bænarp</i> salmur Til Christum, tön, Maria möderen skiaera. ‘ <i>Síra Hallgrímur Péturs son</i> ’	<i>María móðirin skæra</i>

Group 2c: Rubrics of the longer versions without specifications relating to the content of the hymn.

Manuscript	Rubric	Indicated melody
EDL a 8vo, f. 20v early 18th c.	Ein fögur saungvysa <i>síra Hallgríms Péturs sonar</i>	none
EDL b 8vo, f. 7r 1700–1799	Ein fögur saungvysa <i>síra Hallgríms Péturs sonar</i>	none
JS 439 8vo, f. 33r 1700–1799	Eirn fagur psálmur Med sijnum eigen tön.	með sínum tón
JS 509 8vo, f. 112v 1841–1851	Gømul fögur liödmæle	none
Lbs 194 8vo, f. 77r 1750–1800	Eirn gödur psalmur med liömulag	un-specific
Lbs 238 b 8vo, f. 20r, ca. 1860	Sálmur. Eptir salmasafni <i>Jóns Arnasonar 8vo nr. II</i> . <i>Samanborið við Lambastaða bok.</i> ‘ <i>I Sálmareykelse eignaður síra Hallgrími Péturssyni somuleiðis af síra Vigfúsi Jónssyni í æfi hans</i> ’ Med sinum egin tön:	með sínum tón
Lbs 506 8vo, f. 51r around 1750	Þrijtugasti og fyrsti psalmu med sínum tón.	með sínum tón
Lbs 1530 8vo, f. 13v ca. 1780	Eirn godur psalmur. Med sijnum toon.	með sínum tón
MS Boreal 113, f. 539v, 1740	Niars Salmur Ton/sem <i>við Mariu</i> vjrsur ‘401’	<i>Máriu-vísur</i>

surprising that the content according to the titles of the shorter version refer to the Nativity. Furthermore, most of the denotations of the hymn as a Christmas hymn appear here, and thus also imply the Nativity.⁴⁰ Since only the additional stanzas by Hallgrímur Pétursson tell of Judgment Day and eternal life, these aspects are exclusively mentioned in titles introducing the longer versions, as well as the first printed edition from 1773. These form group 2a. Most of them also include the Nativity (“Um fæðing Kristi, dómsdag og eilíft líf”). Another group, 2b, is formed by those designating *Hljómi raustin barna best* as a prayer hymn to Christ (“Bænarsálmur til Christum”). Lastly, group 2c covers titles that are rather unspecific about the hymn’s content.⁴¹ The rubric in the academic manuscript forms an exception within this group since it also presents the sources for Páll Pálsson’s writing.

Some of the oldest extant manuscripts of the shorter version refer to the hymn’s origin as a translation from Latin; the rubric then includes the notice “úr latínu.”⁴² Another variant of this is the autograph Thott 473 4to, which comprises the Latin title *Personent hodie*. The lack of references to the Latin origin in the rubrics of the longer versions is not unexpected, since the status of the hymn as a translation is much more significant for the shorter than the longer versions. Instead, the author of the various additional stanzas, Hallgrímur Pétursson, is mentioned in many rubrics of the long versions.⁴³ Even though Hallgrímur’s name is not mentioned in all of them, his role can be assumed from the context in which the hymn appears in a number of manuscripts, i.e. when a manuscript contains hymns mainly written by Hallgrímur Pétursson and/or his name is mentioned on the manuscript’s title page.⁴⁴ However, some of the manuscripts are defective, and where first leaves are missing, it is feasible that the poet was mentioned on their title pages or in a table of contents, if these were originally

40 Three of eight (JS 141 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 1192 8vo). The only rubric of the short versions that does not at least imply the Nativity is the autograph Thott 473 4to.

41 The only exception is MS Boreal 113, which denotes it as Christmas hymn similar to some of the rubrics of the shorter versions.

42 JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, Lbs 847 4to and all *heiðra*-group manuscripts.

43 EDL a and b 8vo, ÍB 380 8vo, JS 138 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo.

44 JS 208 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo. See Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 165.

present. Bjarni Gissurarson's name is included in two of the manuscripts of the shorter version, in JS 141 8vo and, as mentioned previously, in the autograph Thott 473 4to. It is worth noting that Hallgrímur Pétursson is mentioned as the hymn's author in one manuscript of the shorter versions (Lbs 1192 8vo), indicating that even the shorter version was associated with him in at least one instance.⁴⁵

The melody for *Hljómi raustin barna best* was indicated differently in the manuscripts – if indicated at all. None of the manuscripts contain musical notation for the hymn, although several manuscripts, as well as the printed edition of *Andlegir sálmar og kvæði* (1773), include musical notation for other hymns.⁴⁶ The status of the melody as an independent part of the rubric is visible, since, in almost all examples, the script differs clearly from that of the titles. Usually, the script is smaller and often current script (*fljótaskrift*), whereas the titles are mostly written in display script.⁴⁷ The similarities in the denotations of a melody reorganize the previous groups:

- I. No denotation of a melody;⁴⁸
- II. “[M]eð sínum tón” – refers to the song's own melody;⁴⁹
- III. The melody is denoted by its characteristic feature without specifying further details: “med ägiætum tön” (Lbs 1192 8vo) and “med liömulag” (Lbs 194 8vo);
- IV. References to other hymns are made, either *María móðirin skæra*⁵⁰ or *Lífsins alla líkn og náð*.⁵¹

45 The text reads “af sama ortur,” referring to Hallgrímur Pétursson, who was mentioned with the previous hymn.

46 ÍBR 7 8vo, JS 138 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 386 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo. Since we did not have access to all the manuscripts in the later stages of our work, this aspect could not be verified for the following manuscripts: EDL a 8vo, EDL b 8vo, ÍB 380 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, Lbs 847 4to, Lbs 1422 8vo, MS Boreal 113, Thott 473 4to.

47 The few exceptions to this rule are Lbs 194 8vo, Thott 473 4to, and ÍBR 104 8vo.

48 EDL a 8vo, Edl b 8vo, ÍBR 7 8vo, JS 141 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 509 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 847 4to.

49 JS 138 8vo, JS 439 8vo, Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, Thott 473 4to.

50 ÍBR 104 8vo, ÍB 380 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo, MS Boreal 113.

51 JS 208 8vo and Lbs 1724 8vo.

At first sight, this suggests that *Hljómi raustin barna best* was sung to different melodies. But a closer look reveals that the hymn was most likely sung to the same melody as the Latin *Personent hodie*, as implied in the autograph Thott 473 4to: “Personent hodie, útsett med sijnum tön.”⁵² However, it is interesting that this melody was identified with various different wordings. First, the absence of particular indications as well as the notion of “með sijnum tön” leads to the conclusion that the melody of the hymn must have been well-known and primarily associated with these lyrics.⁵³ This also applies to the two instances referring to the character of the melody, in which further details were considered unnecessary (I–III).

Second, the reference to two other hymns, *Máría móðirin skæra* and *Lífsins alla líkn og náð* (IV) indicate the same melody as the other previous instances, though at first sight, it does not seem to be the case. It is clear that rubrics presenting more details about the hymn’s content also tend to give more specific references to the melody; all manuscripts of group IV, belong to groups 2a and 2b in the previous charts.⁵⁴ Three of the rubrics referring to *Máría móðirin skæra* are in manuscripts (ÍB 380 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo) copied around 1700 in the West of Iceland, and the first two of these are very closely connected (cf. appendix). Since ÍBR 104 8vo is a copy of the printed edition, both the manuscript and the printed text share the wording of the rubric, including the reference to the melody rubric. Both songs, *Máría móðirin skæra* and *Lífsins alla líkn og náð*, follow the meter of *Hljómi raustin barna best*, and apparently used its melody, too.⁵⁵ This is further supported by the fact that is noted in Papp. Fol. Nr. 64 (f. 358r) that *Máría meyjan skæra*, which has the same metre, too, was sung to the melody of *Personent hodie*. It is highly likely that either *Máría móðirin skæra* or *Máría meyjan skæra* are referred to in MS Boreal 133, in which the melody is given as corresponding to „Mariu vijsur“. The title *Lífsins alla líkn og náð* is only referred to in the rubrics of the manuscripts JS 208 8vo

52 We wish to thank the anonymous reviewer for assistance and expertise concerning melody issues.

53 Thanks are due to the anonymous reviewer who pointed out this syllogism.

54 Except MS Boreal 113.

55 Jón Helgason, ed., *Íslenzk miðaldakvæði. Íslandske digte fra senmiddelalderen*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1938), 33–52. Cf. Jón Helgason, *Íslenzk miðaldakvæði*, 2:37.

and Lbs 1724 8vo.⁵⁶ These two manuscripts agree in terms of the indicated melody but not regarding the rest of the rubric, JS 208 8vo belonging to group 2b and Lbs 1724 8vo to group 2a. Nevertheless, the two manuscripts share many other features: their provenance is Southwest Iceland, the versions of the song share most text variants including “barni skæru/reykelsi tæru,” they preserve all 16 stanzas, and they are of similar visual appearance in terms of page design, discussed in the next section.⁵⁷ However, it is very likely that *Lifsins alla líkn og náð*, just like the other different versions of the melody, indicate the same genuine melody of *Personent hodie*. In addition to other factors, once again, the hymn’s unusual metre especially points in that direction.⁵⁸

5.2 Page design

The design and layout of the pages of the manuscripts vary widely. This also applies to the design of sections within individual manuscripts, since they are often written in several hands. As the hymn is transmitted in two versions of varying length, the texts can cover anything from one third of a page (ten out of 30 lines in JS 643 4to, f. 5v) to nine pages (Lbs 1536 8vo, f. 46r–50r). Almost all manuscripts feature a special display script for the title that differs from the script used for the text of the hymn itself. The structure of the hymn is usually reflected by the beginning of a new stanza on a new, indented line, and with new verses marked by commas or dashes. Some manuscripts even enhance the visibility of the structure by using display script for the first line of every stanza.⁵⁹ Many use paragraph initials, though these are sometimes hardly set apart from a normal majuscule. Only three manuscripts have consecutive numbering of the stanzas, and only two adjust the (physical) line breaks according to line breaks in the verse.⁶⁰ Only ÍBR 104 8vo uses no different script types, decoration

56 See the search request for this title on *Handrit.is* (accessed July 9, 2014).

57 Margrét Eggertsdóttir has already pointed out their close relation; see “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 165. She took into consideration that JS 208 8vo could have been used to prepare Lbs 1724 8vo.

58 Thanks to the anonymous reviewer for sharing this convincing conclusion. It was beyond the scope of this article to include detailed research on the transmission, histories and links between these hymns and therefore the melody in general; clearly more research could be done on this matter.

59 EDL b 8vo, JS 509 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo.

60 These are Lbs 238 b 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo, JS 208 8vo, and Lbs 238 b 8vo and Lbs 1536 8vo, respectively.

or other elements of page design whatsoever. Only the rubric of the hymn, barely perceptible, is centered, breaking the monotony of the text block to a small degree. Even new stanzas fall into line with the previous ones, separated only by white space.

All the manuscripts were designed as books of utility, and their use has left traces: leaves are missing and the paper is soiled, sometimes worn with heavily tattered edges, which have occasionally been restored with paper. The signs of use are also apparent in Lbs 1192 8vo, a fragmentary manuscript remarkable for its page design. This manuscript is replete with beautiful illuminations that use elements of medieval book painting, albeit here in a late pre-modern context (see plate 1).⁶¹ It transmits the shorter version of the hymn and is one of the oldest manuscripts to preserve this work. It is also one of the smallest manuscripts, measuring ca. 13 cm in height;⁶² a normal text page only comprises 16 lines. Every page of the 41 preserved leaves of this manuscript is illuminated – at the very least with coloured paragraph initials. The rubrics are written in red ink, and every hymn opens with a distinct initial skillfully imitating Romanesque style, using luminous colours in red, blue and yellow. The ⟨h⟩ of “Hliöme raustenn barna best” is nine lines high, in a red minuscule with white branching scrolls on a blue background. Moreover, the manuscript provides coloured ornamentation at the end of the hymns, filling the space in order to allow the following hymn to begin on a new page. Other manuscripts of the hymn are also decorated with ornamentation or coloured or ornamented initials, but to a far lesser extent.⁶³ This type of decoration appears to be a variable feature of the manuscripts and is probably commensurate with the scribe’s skills or the commissioner’s request. There is nothing to suggest that the type and extent of decoration is connected with specific textual variants of the hymn.

This conclusion does not apply to the manuscripts JS 208 8vo and Lbs 1724 8vo, which refer to *Lífsins alla líkn og náð* as the melody and whose variants are closely connected to each other. They also share a page

61 Digitized images are available on *Handrit.is*, <http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/imaging/is/Lbs08-1192#0000r-FB> (accessed April 1, 2014).

62 The height is not given in the entry of *Handrit.is*, but it can be assumed from the digitized photograph, which includes a measuring tape.

63 JS 141 8vo, JS 208 8vo, JS 385 8vo, Lbs 1568 8vo, Lbs 1724 8vo, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 847 4to.

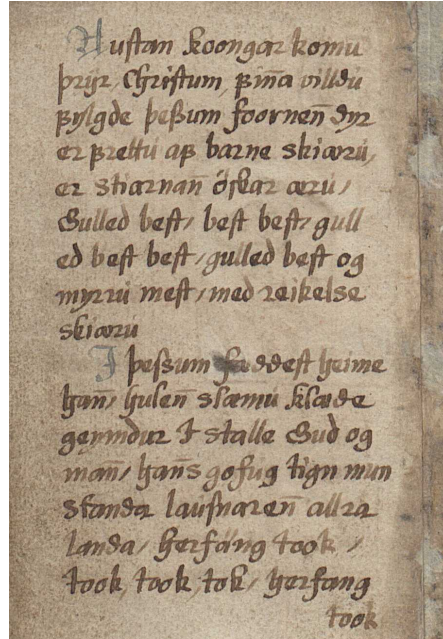
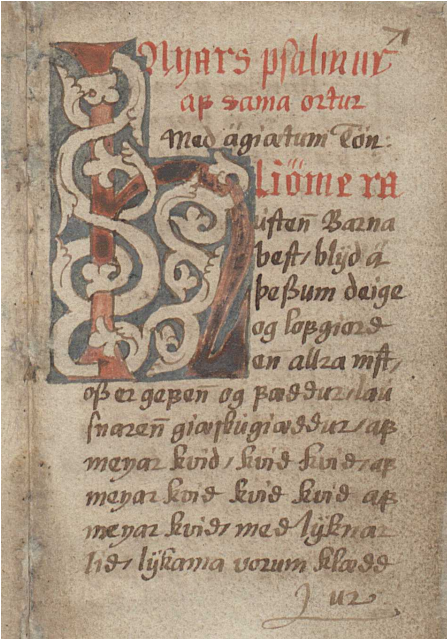


Plate 1, Lbs 1192 8vo, f. 37r–38r.

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design resembling that of printed books.⁶⁴ Since JS 208 8vo, and probably Lbs 1724 8vo, were written before the first edition of *Hljómi raustin barna best* was printed, the scribes could not have used the printed version as a template.⁶⁵ They were nonetheless clearly acquainted with the design of printed books and used this style as a general model for their page design. Both manuscripts feature the following design components that resemble printed books and hence the characteristics of the first printed edition, too (see plate 2):⁶⁶

- i) A header at the top of the page with pagination and running title, a horizontal line separating it from the text block.⁶⁷ The page's running title rubric reads as follows: JS 208 8vo: fol. 13v/14v "Daglegur", on recto pages "Psalmur."⁶⁸ Lbs 1724 8vo: fol. 70v "umm Dömsdag," fol. 71r "og eilýft lýf".⁶⁹ Thus, in the first manuscript the running title explains in which section the hymn appears, and in the second manuscript, the condensed title of the hymn is displayed.
- ii) Both manuscripts use bold Roman numerals to number the hymns.⁷⁰
- iii) Below the text, the collation is noted down with a letter and cipher (only recto).⁷¹ Though both manuscripts are defective and indicate

64 The ornamental initials of the illuminated manuscripts previously mentioned usually resemble the design of printed initials. They use lines of different width, are drawn with the same ink as the text script and the vines are placed within a notional rectangular frame.

65 There is no precise dating for Lbs 1724 8vo, but it was probably not written much later than JS 208 8vo.

66 The first printed edition has also been digitized: Hallgrímur Pétursson, *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvaede*, http://baekur.is/is/bok/000158089/Andlegir_Psalmar_og_Kvaede (accessed April 1, 2014). Digitized images of JS 208 8vo and Lbs 1724 8vo are available on *Handrit.is*, <http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/imaging/is/JS08-0208#0000r-FB> and <http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/imaging/is/Lbs08-1724#0001r> (accessed April 1, 2014).

67 The scribe of JS 141 8vo (shorter version) also uses the running title "Jolapsalmar."

68 Due to restoration work on the manuscript, with paper glued to the upper edge of the margins, the original wording was partly deduced from the following pages.

69 By comparison, the printed edition has a running title on every page, but with different content: "Vidbætir."

70 Bold Roman numerals also appear in two manuscripts of the shorter version (JS 386 8vo and JS 643 4to). In the printed edition no Roman numerals are included, but there is bold script in the hymn's rubric.

71 JS 208 8vo: B5, B6. Lbs 1724 8vo: L7, L8. *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvaede*: M3, M4, M5.

- different collations, it may be concluded that these are the correct collations for the manuscript, since there was apparently no printed book from which to copy them.
- iv) These two manuscripts are two of the three that feature numbering of the stanzas, the only other manuscript being the academic Lbs 238 b 8vo.⁷²
 - v) Lbs 1724 8vo marks the beginning of the hymn with an ornamental print-style initial.⁷³
 - vi) The pagination and numbering of the hymns indicate that the manuscripts presumably included tables of contents, which are not preserved.⁷⁴

All in all, the scribes enhanced the usability of these manuscripts by choosing design techniques with a high functional value modelled on print forms. Both manuscripts enable quick location of the hymns within the manuscript and neat arrangement.

5.3 *Tables of contents*

In addition to a neat page design or consecutive numbering of the hymns in the rubric, a table of contents would have been useful, enabling the reader quickly to look up the hymn within the hymnbook; these manuscripts were most certainly not designed to be read from cover to cover. Some of the manuscripts include one or more alphabetical tables of contents. These are either ordered by title, incipit and/or authors, and refer to the pages of the hymns.⁷⁵ Most of these seem to be written by Páll Pálsson “stúdent” and added in connection with later rebinding of the manuscripts at Landsbókasafn, most likely in the 1860s.⁷⁶ They contain, as a rule, three

72 However, stanzas are not numbered in *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvæde*.

73 Cf. the small initial in *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvæde*, 269.

74 *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvæde* includes a table of contents in alphabetical order, see 283–288.

75 EDL b 8vo, ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 439 8vo, JS 509 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 194 8vo, Lbs 1485 8vo and Lbs 1530 8vo. In JS 208 8vo, a supplementary table of contents was later machine-typed and has now been added to the manuscript. *Andlegir Psalmar og Kvæde* has an alphabetical table of contents with reference to the page numbers at the end of the book.

76 ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 385 8vo, JS 386 8vo, JS 439 8vo, JS 509 8vo, JS 643 4to, Lbs 194 8vo. The register in Lbs 194 8vo was written by Páll Pálsson “stúdent,” who rebound JS 439 8vo in 1865–1866. See the manuscripts’ entries on *Handrit.is*, <http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/>

kinds of registers. Since quite a number of the manuscripts are defective at the beginning and/or end, it is likely that more manuscripts initially included tables of contents.

In sum, many of the material characteristics discussed in this section vary more than the text of the hymn itself. The different composition of the rubrics could derive from cross contamination, but there is good reason to believe that oral transmission or common knowledge could be a factor in the transmission of a hymn. Rubrics and page design reveal the scribe's authority within the writing process. Furthermore, the evaluation of the tables of contents is evidence of the later reworking of the manuscripts at Landsbókasafn.

6. The academic manuscript Lbs 238 b 8vo

From the analysis and discussion in the previous paragraphs, it becomes apparent that one manuscript stands out: the so-called “academic” manuscript or Lbs 238 b 8vo, thought to have been written around 1860, most likely in Reykjavík. It contains 117 leaves and is in one hand, that of Páll Pálsson “stúdent.” The manuscript bears the title “Sálmasafn eftir síra Hallgrím Pétursson.” The hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best* in this manuscript is the longer version of 16 stanzas, found on pp. 29–34. It bears the title “Sálmur. | Eptir salmasafni Jóns Arnasonar 8vo nr. II. | Samanborið við Lambastaða bok. | ‘I Sálmareykelse eignaður síra Hallgrími Péturssyni somuleiðis af síra Vigfúsi Jónssyni í æfi hans` | Med sinum egin tón:” [Psalm following the Hymn collection by Jón Árnason. Compared with Lambastaðabók. Attributed to the Rev. Hallgrímur Pétursson in *Sálmareykelse* [i.e. ÍB 380 8vo], likewise to Vigfúss Jónsson in his biography. With its own tune].

What distinguishes this manuscript from the others is that the scribe has noted variant readings (see plate 3). There are numbered footnotes or glosses (or both) on every page of the hymn. In this respect, *Hljómi raustin barna best* is no exception, as such footnotes and glosses appear

view/Lbs08-0194, and <http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/view/JS08-0439> (accessed April 1, 2014). All other tripartite registers are similar to this one and have been added later to the manuscripts. Páll wrote Lbs 238 b 8vo in the 1860s and worked as a bookbinder in Landsbókasafn around 1850–1870; see Páll's biographical entry on *Handrit.is*, <http://handrit.is/is/biography/view/PalPal003> (accessed April 12, 2014). Tellingly, his own manuscript, Lbs 238 b 8vo, does not contain a table of contents.

Sálmur. 29

1 opur Salmafanú J.A. 8^o N II. / Or við
Lambast. Bók. 1 54^a Reykjav. mynd²
med sinum equi þou: 9. þun. af 12. J. af 8^o

1. Af þómi rausten barna best
Blid á þessum degi
og lofgjörðin allramest
Öss var gefinn og fæddur
Lausnareinn gærkvi gæddur
! af meggjar kvíð, kvíð, kvíð !
af meggjar kvíð, með líkni og líð
líkama vorum klæddur.

2. Á þessum fæddist heimi þam
(3) þulorin slæmu slæði,
geymdur í stalli gæð og mam,
þans gófgigkign nam'st anda
Lausnareinn allra landa.
! þerfang tók tók tók !
þerfang tók og þryggur jók
þann þeim myrkra anda.

3. Á þessum þongar komu þeir
(2) þrjú þerfenna veldur
! þer þessum þórnin dýr
fréttigaf barni þæru³

Orðm. o. Lfs. 1. mun. 2. þessum þu. 3. að b. þæru.

throughout the manuscript. The footnotes were most likely added at the time of writing, while the glosses are less systematic and might have been added later. All these notes clearly indicate that the scribe, Páll Pálsson, had other manuscripts at his disposal while working on Lbs 238 b 8vo. The title of the hymn names the manuscript that he was copying from as “8vo II” and also says that he compared the copy to “Lambastaðabók,” also mentioned in the footnotes to the hymn. The very first footnote states that the readings are taken from Lambastaðabók and footnote number 30 also mentions it, stating that the whole of stanza 15 was missing in 8vo II and is for this reason copied from Lambastaðabók. This manuscript is no longer preserved, and until now, very little has been known of the one Páll Pálsson calls 8vo II.

In addition to the manuscripts mentioned, Páll Pálsson also had the following texts of the hymn at his disposal: JS 439 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, JS 643 4to and Lbs 194 8vo. Leaves and/or notes by Páll inserted into these manuscripts attest that he had them on hand. Judging by the variants of the longer versions of *Hljómi raustin barna best* in JS 439 8vo, taken with the printed version as the base text, the hymn corresponds so closely to the text in Lbs 238 b 8vo that it seems very likely that this manuscript is the “8vo II” to which Páll Pálsson refers in the hymn’s title. These two manuscripts are the only ones where the order of stanzas 8 and 9 of *Hljómi raustin barna best* is reversed. These are also the only two manuscripts of the hymn’s longer version where stanzas 2 and 3 are in the same order as in the original Latin text, although there is an alternative numbering for these stanzas marked in brackets under the stanza numbers in Lbs 238 b 8vo. Stanza 14 is also missing from JS 439 8vo, at which point the footnote in Lbs 238 b 8vo states that the verse was taken from Lambastaðabók because it was missing from 8vo II. Of all the manuscripts that Páll Pálsson had access to, the text of JS 439 8vo is closest to the hymn’s text. One of these manuscripts, JS 643 4to, contains the shorter version of the hymn and would thus not have been very useful to the scribe. Judging by the variants it does not seem likely that he consulted JS 272 4to at all when working on Lbs 238 b 8vo. In Lbs 194 8vo, *Hljómi raustin barna best* has some similarities with the version in Lbs 238 b 8vo, but it also has some variants that are not found in any other manuscript. It also has variants that are similar to another group of manuscripts where the hymn is relatively close to the

Lbs 238 b 8vo version, in either the text or the footnotes or glosses. This is a group that was identified in the course of this work and consists of the manuscripts ÍB 380 8vo, JS 138 8vo, JS 509 8vo and MS Boreal 113. These manuscripts seem to be quite closely related to each other and to Lbs 238 b 8vo. There is no evidence, however, that Páll Pálsson consulted the manuscripts of this group at any time, except ÍB 380 8vo, the *Sálmareykelsi* which he refers to in the heading of Lbs 238 b 8vo.⁷⁷ Thus, there is no certain knowledge of which manuscripts Páll Pálsson used as exemplars when working on Lbs 238 b 8vo, besides those that he himself mentions. Lbs 238 b 8vo is the second latest of the manuscripts containing *Hljómi raustin barna best*, so there were several versions of it already in existence when Páll Pálsson copied the manuscript.

7. Conclusion

This article seeks to make a contribution to manuscript studies by using the Icelandic Christmas hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best* as a case study. This Icelandic hymn has its roots in the short Latin hymn *Personent Hodie*, which was copied in at least one extant Icelandic manuscript, ÍB 525 8vo. Around the same time, *Personent Hodie* was translated into Icelandic by Bjarni Gissurarson (1621–1712) as *Hljómi raustin barna best*, and the translation was augmented with thirteen original stanzas ascribed to the Icelandic poet Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614–1647). While the Icelandic translation of the hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best* closely follows the Latin original *Personent Hodie*, the extra stanzas of the longer Icelandic version extend the hymn's scope from the Nativity of Jesus to the Resurrection, the Last Judgment and the Afterlife. However, these additions do not add any specific Lutheran views. This article presents an edition of the Latin *Personent Hodie* (ÍB 525 8vo), and of the Icelandic *Hljómi raustin barna best*, both the short version (JS 386 8vo) and the long version (Lbs 238 b 8vo).

In the course of our work, we were able to refine the initial division into two groups based on length of the hymn. A comparison of the twenty-six manuscripts with the Icelandic translation *Hljómi raustin barna best* shows that they fall into four groups according to date and location of

⁷⁷ We can only state for certain that Páll Pálsson used ÍB 380 8vo, though he must have had more manuscripts at his disposal while he was working at Landsbókasafn. See also fn 76.

origin, scribal and provenance information. Furthermore, this division is supported by the fact that these findings correspond nicely with the four variant readings of the phrase “barni kærur / reykelsi skærur.” Additionally, based on an analysis of the hymn’s rubrics, the various witnesses of the hymn *Hljómi raustin barna best* show a great deal of cross contamination that was perhaps based on oral transmission or common knowledge. The choice of rubric and the page layout highlight the scribe’s authority within the writing process of the individual copies of the hymn. All the aspects discussed in the analysis of the extant manuscripts containing the hymn come together in the so-called “academic” manuscript, Lbs 238 b 8vo, which records many variants that also correspond to the manuscript groups established by a comparison and close examination of the extant manuscripts.

* * *

The transcriptions and their translations

For this edition, we have chosen not to select a best text, but rather to present three versions of the Christmas hymn that are discussed in more detail in the article. The texts presented are taken from ÍB 525 8vo, JS 386 8vo and Lbs 238 b 8vo.

The Latin version and the shorter Icelandic version are presented side by side, in order to illustrate the translation of the hymn from Latin to Icelandic. The Latin text is taken from ÍB 525 8vo, which is, to our knowledge, the only extant copy of the Latin text in an Icelandic manuscript. For the Icelandic translation of the hymn, JS 386 8vo serves as an example. Both JS 386 8vo and Lbs 238 b 8vo may be taken as the most representative examples of the development of the Icelandic translation of this hymn from its earliest attestation to the most recent one, since JS 386 8vo – written in 1684 – is the oldest extant copy, whereas Lbs 238 b 8vo (1860) is the youngest. While the former represents the hymn’s shorter version, the latter is chosen as an example of the longer version. Furthermore, JS 386 8vo is one of the manuscripts belonging to the largest distinguishable group of the shorter versions, namely the *heiðra*-group. It was written at the cathedral school of Hólar, whereas the Latin text was written at the cathedral

school of Skálholt. Thus we present texts from Iceland's two episcopal sees, both important centers of learning and manuscript production. Lbs 238 b 8vo, nicknamed the "academic manuscript," can be seen as a continuation of the tradition of copying texts and manuscript production, which started at these two centers. Additionally, it exemplifies the way in which these older manuscripts are used for textual scholarship and serves as an early example of how we today – and in this article – describe, transcribe, edit or annotate texts and physical documents.

We have opted for a semi-diplomatic edition of the texts. The transcription of the texts retains the spelling of the manuscripts, but capitals are used only in proper names and at the beginning of sentences. No distinction is made between the different letter forms and the punctuation of the manuscripts is retained. All abbreviations are expanded in accordance with the scribe's normal spelling and indicated by the use of italics. Letters or words that are now illegible are supplied in square brackets. The transcription of Lbs 238 b 8vo aims to do justice to its distinctiveness: the underlining as well as the variants follow the system and numeration of the manuscript, with the exception that all variants in footnotes are displayed at the end of every printed page. In the manuscript, all variants that appear in footnotes are given on the page itself, separated from the text body by a horizontal line.

Personent hodie

The Latin text (ÍB 525 8vo)

Qvartus

Canticum puerorum

[ÍB 525 8vo, 1687, ff. 74v–75v]

‘1.’ [f. 74v] Personent hodie,
voces pueriles,
laudantes ju[f. 75r]cunde,
qvi nobis est natus,
summo Christe datus,
est, de vir, vir, vir,
est de vir, vir, vir
est de vir virginis,
ventre procreatus.

‘2’ In hoc mundo nascitur,
pannis involvitur,
præsepî imponitur,
stabulo porcorum,
rector superiorum,
perdidit, dit, dit
perdidit, dit, dit,
perdidit [f. 75v] spolia,
rector inferorum.

‘3’ Magi tres veniunt,
mu, munera deferunt,
naturam reqvirunt,
stellulam seqvendo,
ipsum adorando,
aurum thus, thus, thus,
aurum thus thus thus,
aurum thus et myrram
ei offerendo.

Hljómi raustin barna best

The short Icelandic version (JS 386 8vo)

XLII. psalmu(r). Vmm fæding Christi. |
S(n)üenn ür latinu.

[JS 386 8vo, 1684, f. 32r]

[1.] Hliöme raustenn barna best,
blijð ä þessum deige,
og lofgiörðenn allra mest:
oss var giefinn og fæddur,
lausnarenn giæsku giæddur,
af meýar kuid, *kuid kuid*
af meýar kuid, *kuid kuid*:
af meýar kuid med lýkn og lid,
lijkama vorum klæddur:

[2.] I þessum fæddest heime hann,
hulenn slæmu klæde,
geýmdur i stalle gud og mann,
þar gófug dijrenn standa,
lausnarenn allra landa,
herfang tök tök tök,
herfang tök tök tok
herfang tök og hrygder jök,
hann þeim mýrkra anda:

[3.] Austann köngar komu þrijr,
christum heidra villdu,
fýlgde þessum förninn dijr,
þeir friettu ad barne skiæru,
þeim stiarnann öskar æru,
gulled best, *best best*
gulled best best best,
gulled best, og mýrrann mest,
med reýkelse kiæru.
Amen.

English translation

[1.] May the children's voices sound most beautifully
Gently on this day,
And be the greatest, praised of all.
To us was given and born
The Saviour endowed with loving kindness
From the Virgin's womb, womb, womb,
from the Virgin's womb, womb, womb,
From the Virgin's womb with grace and help,
The body clothed in our flesh.

[2.] At this moment he was born into the world
Covered in poor clothes,
He who is both God and man, kept safe in a manger.
There the noble animals stand;
The Saviour of all lands;
He took the booty away, away, away,
the booty away, away, away,
He took the booty away and increased the sorrows
Of those with dark souls.

[3.] From the east came three kings
Who wanted to honor Christ.
They brought a precious offering with them;
They learnt about the pure child
For whom the star wishes honor;
The best, best, best gold,
The best, best, best gold,
The best gold and plenty of myrrh
With lovely frankincense.
Amen.

Hljómi raustin barna best

The long Icelandic text (Lbs 238 b 8vo)

Sálmur. | Eptir salmasafni Jóns Arnasonar 8vo nr. II. | *Samanborið* við Lambastaða bok. | 'I Sálmareykelse eignaður síra Hallgrími Péturssyni somuleiðis af síra Vigfúsi Jónssyni í æfi hans` | Med sinum egin tón:

[Lbs 238 b 8vo, ca. 1860, ff. 20r–22v]

[f. 20r] 1. Hljómi raustin barna best
blíð á þessum degi
og lofgjörðin allramest
oss var gefinn og fæddur
lausnarinn gæzku gæddur
:|: af meyar kvið, kvið, kvið :|:
af meyar kvið, með líkn og lið
líkama vorum klæddur.

2. '(3)` I þessum fæddist heimi hann
hulinn slæmu klædi,
geymdur í stalli guð og mann,
hans göfug tígn nam¹ standa
lausnarinn allra landa.
:|: Herfáng tók tók tók :|:
herfáng tók og hrygðir jók
hann þeim myrkra anda.

3. '(2)` Austan kóngar komu þrír
Christum finna villdu
fylgdi þessum² fórnin dýr
fréttu af barni kær³
[f. 20v] þar⁴ stjarnan óskar æru

Orðamunur eptir Lambastaðabók

- 1 mun.
- 2 þeim su.
- 3 að barni skæru?
- 4 sem.

:|: gullið best, best, best :|:
 gullið best, og myrru mest,
 með reijkelsi skæru. ‘*alias* tæru.’

4. Með sætum sigri sá reis upp,
 son Guðs á þriðja degi,
 batt hann vondan Belzebúb,
 boðaði dyrð so fríða
 lausnarinn allra lýða.
 :|: Til himna fór, fór, fór :|:
 til himna fór sú heillin stór
 hann fyrir oss réð stríða.

5. Enn sem kemur aptur hann ‘*alias* eflaust’
 á ásettum tíma, ‘*alias* aptur á’
 þessi hinn goði Guð og mann
 gjörir þá dóm að halda
 og vondum verðkaup gjalda;
 :|: kristna þá, þá, þá :|:
 kristna þá hann kallar á:
 komið í dyrð margfalda.

6. Hinna talar herrann⁵ til
 hefst þeim lítill friður
 a yður veit eg engin skil
 aungvan yðar eg þekki!
 Farið á Belials bekki!
 [f. 21r] :|: Með lífi og sál, sál, sál :|:
 með lífi og sál í logandi bál,
 lítið til mín ekki.

7. Þér hafið ei að vingan⁶ veitt
veikum Herrans sauðum, ‘*alias* þýðum’
 mína dyrð og mildi sneiðt,
 með svo vondu ráði⁷

5 tala mun helgur. ‘*alias* herrann’.

6 þiáð og þvingan.

7 háði.

yður því einginn ...⁸ 'alias náði'
 :|: Heljar raun, raun, raun :|:
 heljar raun þér hafið í laun
 með heitu neista sáði.

8. '(9)` Heyra má þá hrygðar⁹ kvein
hátt með eymdar hljóðum, 'alias hast'
 sjá þeir þar sín¹⁰ synda mein,
 seint þó að því gættu
sínum Guði¹¹ ei sættu.
 :|: I háum¹² glaum, glaum, glaum :|:
 i heimi glaum ei höfðu taum 'alias þeir höfðu'
né hvarma tárum vættu. '(alias) og hvarma tár ei vættu`.

9. '(8)` Hræðilega hrygð munu fá
hvörjir¹³ illa gjörðu
ef skúfa vill þeim¹⁴ skjótlega frá
 skaparinn sínum sauðum
 sem leyst hefur lýð¹⁵ frá nauðum
 [f. 21v] :|: ^xhvaræð¹⁶ bөл, bөл, bөл :|: 'x alias hinir'
^xhvaræð¹⁶ bөл og hrygdar¹⁷ kvöl
 hafa með djöfli snauðum. 'alias hjá`

10. 'Hvað bætra ooo í ` Fagran munu þá fagnaðar saung
 friðust Guðs börn halda,
 æfin finnst þeim ekki laung,
 'alias eilifar` um allar¹⁸ aldir alda

- 8 ráði (?).
 9 harm og.
 10 þá sitt.
 11 syni Guðs.
 12 heimi.
 13 þá. Hafa þeir.
 14 því skilja vill þá.
 15 oss 'alias hann`.
 16 hrygdan.
 17 og hvörskyns.
 18 eilifð (?).

gleðinni Guð mun valda;
 :|: ljóminn þá, þá, þá :|:
 ljóminn þá er lýðum hjá
 xliðin er æfin kalda. 'x þegar *bætra alias* i'

11. Haldtu mér við hópinn þann
 himna faðirinn góði,
 og leið mig inn¹⁹ í lífsins rann
 þar ljómar eilífur dagur
 og sálar friðurinn²⁰ fagur.
 :|: Þar sjest ei nótt, nótt, nótt! :|:
 Þar sjest ei nótt, ei sorg né sótt,
 sæll er þá vor hagur.

12. Hvör sem trúir á²¹ herra Krist
 hann fær gleðina sanna
 [f. 22r] mér²² er þar til ljúfust lyst,
 lofgjörð honum að vanda,
 fyrir hjástoð heilags anda.
 :|: Að²³ dikta saung, saung, saung :|:
 að dikta saung, um dægur laung
 drottni mínum til handa.

13. Mér lítst nú kominn tími til
 taka sig héðan að búa
 mínar syndir minn Guð! Hyl
 mér ei veröld lætur,
 eg býð henni góðar nætur.
 :|: Heim til þín, þín, þín :|:
 heim til þín frá hrygð og pín
 hafðu mig Jesús sætur.

19 er leiðir þá '*alias* þú'.

20 frábær furðu.

21 elskar.

22 mín.

23 og.

14. Mig lángr til þín²⁴ lausnari minn
 mig lystir hjá þer²⁵ búa
 þar sem²⁶ hæsta huggun finn
 mér heimur²⁷ illa lætur
²⁸daga sem dimmar nætur.
 |: Heim til þín, þín, þín |:
 heim til þín frá hrygð og²⁹ þín
 hafðu mig Jesus sætur.

[f. 22v] 15. ³⁰Valt er þetta veraldar hjól
 völt er heimsins blíða
 þú réttlætis sanna sól 'alias sæta'
 sálna hirðir mætur
 gef þú að mér gætur
 |: heim til þín, þín, þín |:
 heim til þín frá hrygð og þín
 haf mig Jesús sætur.

16. Þar³¹ er eg glaður Guð í þér
 og glaður í himnaríki
 þar gleði um alla eilífð er³²
 og gleði útvaldra manna
 þá sælu gef mér sanna.
 |: Amen til, til, til |:
 amen til eg óska vil 'alias inna'
 einginn má það³³ banna.

24 héðan.

25 þar að.

26 sem eg.

27 þar heimurinn.

28 um dagur og.

29 hvörskyns.

30 þetta var vantar í 8vo II og var því tekið eptir *Lambastaðabók*.

31 þá: *Lambastaðabók*.

32 eilífð glaðvær er.

33 mun mér.

English translation

Psalm following the Hymn collection by Jón Árnason. Compared with Lambastaðabók. Attributed to the Rev. Hallgrímur Pétursson in *Sálmarykelse* [i.e. ÍB 380 8vo], likewise to Vigfús Jónsson in his biography.

With its own tune.

1. May the children's voices sound most beautifully
Gently on this day,
And be the greatest, praised of all.
Because to us is given and born
The Saviour endowed with loving kindness
From the Virgin's womb, womb, womb,
from the Virgin's womb, womb, womb,
from the Virgin's womb,
The body clothed in the flesh.

2. At this moment he was born into the world
Covered in poor clothes,
He who is both God and man, kept safe in a manger.
His noble dignity began to last⁷⁸
The Saviour of all lands⁷⁹
He took the booty away, away, away,
the booty away, away, away,
He took the booty away and increased the sorrows
Of those with dark souls.⁸⁰

78 began to last] the word form *nam* in the original is interpreted as an auxiliary verb here which then usually remains untranslated. The context points at an inchoative meaning, however.

79 In a variant of this verse, the word form *landa* "land" in the original alliterates with a word form *luft* "air" in the phrase *luft og landa* "air and lands." The phrase in that version can be interpreted as a metonymical expression meaning "heaven and earth." Understanding "the Savior of all lands" as "the Savior of the whole world" probably comes closer to the intended meaning.

80 The booty refers to the souls can be delivered from sin after the death of Christ, which eventually follows the birth of Jesus. The dark souls that are exempted from redemption follow the Lutheran interpretation of salvation, the *sola fide*, stating that only believers can be delivered from sin, irrespective of good deeds.

3. From the east came three kings
 Who wanted to find Christ.
 They brought a precious offering with them;
 They learnt about the dear child
 There⁸¹ the star wishes honour;
 The best, best, best gold, the best, best, best gold,
 The purest gold and plenty of myrrh
 With pure frankincense.

4. With sweet victory he rose
 On the third day, the son of God.
 He chained the evil Beelzebub.
 He preached glory,
 The Saviour of all people,
 Into heaven he ascended, ascended, ascended,
 Into heaven ascended the Great Good.
 He commanded the war for us.

5. And as he returns
 At the resolved time
 This good God and Man
 Then sits in judgment
 And will pay the evil ones their debt.
 The Christians then, then, then,
 The Christians then he calls to:
 "Come in manifold glory!"

6. To the heavens the Lord speaks:
 "From them comes little peace,
 I cannot tell you apart,
 I do not know even one of you:
 Go to Belial's bench
 With life and soul, soul, soul,
 With life and soul into the blazing Fire,
 You will not see me!⁸²

81 Most manuscripts have *þá* with the temporal meaning "as"; some versions have *þeim*, referring more directly to the "dear child" than *þar* "there" in this version.

82 This verse references the conception of hell as the absence from God.

7. You have shown no friendship
 For the weak sheep of the Lord
 My glory and my kindness avoided
 With such evil schemes
 [Text defective]⁸³
 Hell's hardship, hardship, hardship,
 Hell's hardship you get in return
 With hot, sparkling means."

8. One must hear then wails of distress
 High with the sounds of wretchedness
 They see there the harm of their sins
 Even though late to take care of this
 They do not reconcile with God.
 With high sounds⁸⁴ of merriment, merriment, merriment,
 In worldly merriment they were unrestrained
 And no tear would have dampened their eyes.

9. Devastating sorrow will get
 Everyone who did ill,
 If the Creator wants to push
 his sheep away quickly,
 He who has freed the people from slavery,
 To where fire, fire, fire
 To where fire and agony of distress
 They suffer abandoned with the devil.

10. They will sing an exalted song,
 The most beautiful children of God.
 A life span⁸⁵ will not seem long to them.
 Through all the centuries
 God's exaltation will rule.

83 Other texts have: *yður því enginn náði* [therefore no mercy for you].

84 A variant is given that would harmonize this verse with the following, thus reading, "In worldly merriment, merriment, merriment."

85 The main text of the ms has *ævi* [life span], but a variant noted in the margin says *eilífð* [eternity].

The radiance then, then, then,
 The radiance then is with the people
 Gone is the cold worldly existence.

11. Keep me in hope of this
 Heaven of God the Father
 And lead me into the stream of life.
 There gleam the eternal days
 And the beautiful peace of the soul
 There would be neither night, night, night,
 There would be neither night, nor sorrow, nor disease.
 Our life conditions are blessed then.

12. Everyone who believes in Christ the Lord
 Receives true exaltation.
 For it is the greatest pleasure there
 Diligently to praise him
 For the succor of the Holy Ghost.
 To write songs, songs, songs,
 To write songs, all day long
 For my Lord.

13. It does seem to me that the time has come
 To get away from here to live somewhere else
 My sins—dear God!—conceal!
 The world does not want to yield me to you,
 I say good night to the world.
 Home to you, you, you,
 Home to you from sorrow and pain.
 Have me, sweet Jesus!

14. I want to be with you, my Redeemer,
 I want to live with you,
 Where I find the deepest consolation.
 The world is bad to me
 By day and during dark nights.

Home to you, you, you,
Home to you from sorrow and pain.
Have me, sweet Jesus!

15. Unsteady is the wheel of this world.
Unsteady is love in this world.
You are the true sun of justice.
The shepherds of the soul appear.
Make that I am being led
Home to you, you, you,
Home to you from sorrow and pain.
Have me, sweet Jesus.

16. There is exaltation found in you, God,
And exaltation found in heaven.
There is eternal happiness
And the exaltation of chosen men.⁸⁶
This rapture give me truly.
Amen until, until, until,
Amen until I wish for it.
No one can forbid this.

86 This is the Calvinist notion of limited redemption or the Catholic notion that only the just will be chosen for the eternal life in heaven.

Appendix

This appendix discusses the origin and age of the manuscripts analysed in this article. We owe a great deal to Margrét Eggertsdóttir for the work she has already done on this topic in “Hljómi raustin barna best.” This appendix is a partial translation and re-working of her initial findings elaborated with new information and insights on age and provenance of the manuscripts.

Origin and age of the shorter versions

JS 386 8vo, Hólar in Hjaltadalur

The oldest extant manuscript containing a text of the Christmas hymn is JS 386 8vo, which is dated to 1684. The text on the title page, f. 1r, reads as follows: “Saunguar og andleger psalmar af fromum guds ords kiennefedrum samansetter vtuøldum gudz børnum til lærdöms yðkunar og vppmentunar sem hanz *heilaga* ord elska og i minne leggja. Enn þesse Saungbök heýrer til ad eign Ehrugøfugre og gudhræddre hófdings jómfrú Ingebiørgu Biørns dóttur huøria hun liet vppskrifu ä Hölum i Hialltadal a þui are M.DC.LXXXIII.” The inscription of the title page names a certain Ingibjörg, daughter of Björn, as the owner and commissioner of this particular manuscript. This is probably Ingibjörg (1664–1709), daughter of the district magistrate Björn Pálsson.⁸⁷ Both her parents were descendants of Bishop Guðbrandur of Hólar.⁸⁸ On the front flyleaf, 1r, the librarian Jón Árnason (1819–1888)⁸⁹ has written: “Þetta sálmasafn gaf mér Þorvaldur student Bjarnarson frá Belgsholti 1859.”

ÍBR 7 8vo, North of Iceland

ÍBR 7 8vo is a psalm book written in 1693, as stated on the title page. In several places in the manuscript (ff. 1r, 1v and 101v), the name Sveinn (or “Sveirn”) Jónsson occurs. On f. 1v, both the text and the name written beneath it are in the same hand. In *Íslenzkar æviskrár*, however, no Sveinn Jónsson who fits within the time-frame in which the manuscript was written is listed. Sveinn was probably not the scribe of this manuscript, as the bulk of the text is in a more professional hand than that of the text he has written. Whether or not Sveinn was the owner of the manuscript at some point is not evident from the text, as no further details are known. According to the entry for ÍBR 7 8vo on *Handrit.is*, Guðmundur Einarsson (1823–1865), who resided in the North of

87 Páll Eggert Ólason, ed. *Íslenzkar æviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940*, vols. 1–3 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1948–50), 1:242.

88 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 167.

89 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenzkar æviskrár*, 3:48–49.

Iceland, donated the manuscript to the Icelandic Literary Society of Reykjavík in 1865.

Manuscripts of the Vatnsfjörður family – JS 385 8vo, JS 643 4to and Lbs 847 4to
 Þórunn Sigurðardóttir refers to the children of provost Jón Arason and his wife Hólmfríður Sigurðardóttir as the Vatnsfjörður family and discusses a number of manuscripts that were in their possession.⁹⁰ JS 385 8vo, JS 643 4to and Lbs 847 4to are all connected to the Vatnsfjörður family and the Westfjords of Iceland. Lbs 847 4to was written by Magnús Jónsson (1637–1702) or his scribes at Vigur in Ísafjarðardjúp in 1693.⁹¹ The same is true for JS 385 8vo. In this case, there is no indication of a precise date as the title page is missing, but it can be conjectured that it was written around the same time as Lbs 847 4to. The third manuscript connected to this family is JS 643 4to. F. 191v reads: “Halldóra Sigurðardóttir á bókina með réttu.” Halldóra was the daughter of Sigurður Jónsson of Holt in Ísafjörður, the brother of Magnús, who wrote the manuscript around 1700–1710.⁹² On the front flyleaf, Jón Árnason has noted: “Bókina hefi eg feingið hjá Þorvaldi sál. Sívertsen í Hrapsey.” In the manuscript, there are sixteen inserted leaves in the hand of Páll Pálsson stúdent. JS 643 4to contains musical notations.

The autograph – Thott 473 4to

Thott 473 4to is taken to be the autograph of the reverend Bjarni Gissurarson (1621–1712), written at Þingmúli in the East of Iceland. Bjarni was a poet and priest at Þingmúli in Skriðdalur, his birthplace. After he graduated from Skálholt in 1643, he was in the service of Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson until he became the residing priest at Þingmúli in 1647. He remained a priest there until 1702, after which he was at Hallormsstaður for a year following the death of his son-in-law Þorleifur Guðmundsson. Bjarni lived for a short while with his daughter at Stóra Sandfell, but later returned to Hallormsstaður where his son Eiríkur had taken over the ministry. It was there that Bjarni passed away.⁹³

Bjarni is listed among the major poets of his time and is known as one of the group called *Austfirsku skáldin* (“poets of the East Fjords”). In 1960, Jón

90 Þórunn Sigurðardóttir, “Constructing Cultural Competence in Seventeenth-Century Iceland: The Role of Poetical Miscellanies,” in *Mirrors of Virtue. Manuscripts and Printed Books in Post-Reformation Iceland*, eds. Margrét Eggertsdóttir and Matthew Driscoll (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, forthcoming).

91 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn Landsbókasafnsins*, vols. 1–3 (Reykjavík: Landsbókasafn Íslands, 1918–37), 1:372.

92 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 2:615.

93 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenzkar æviskrár*, 1:167.

Samsonarson published a selection of Bjarni's poems entitled *Sólarsýn: kvæði*, as well as a thesis on the poet.⁹⁴ In his thesis, Jón Samsonarson suggested that Thott 473 4to was written down around in approximately 1691–1692 at Þingmúli.⁹⁵ However, on f. 30v, the manuscript contains the following remark: “Skrifad J StóraSandf : Áttatugasta [og] þridia alldurz are 1704 B.G.S.M.P.” (“Written at Stóra Sandfell, in the 83rd year of [his] life, 1704. Bjarni Gissurarson *manu propria*”). Thus, it appears that Bjarni wrote Thott 473 4to in his own hand at Stóra Sandfell in 1704 while he was living with his daughter. This implies that Bjarni's autograph is younger than most of the other short versions of the hymn listed below.

Lbs 1192 8vo, West Iceland

Lbs 1192 8vo was written around 1700 in a single hand.⁹⁶ The manuscript was owned by Einar Friðgeirsson, as noted on f. 1r: “Frá Einari prófasti Friðgeirssyni á Borg á Mýrum 28/6. 1893”.

JS 141 8vo, Skálholt

JS 141 8vo is dated to 1760, as can be seen from a rubric on f. 143r: “Vikupsalmar aa kuolld og morgna orter ut af bænabok D Josue Stegmans af sr. Sigurde Jonssyne ad Prestholumm. Skrifader Anno 1760.” On the damaged title page of JS 141 8vo a place name and a personal name are still readable: “... i Skalhollte ... Jone Snorasynne”. This probably refers to Jón Snorrason (1724–1771), who studied at the school in Skálholt and was later in the service of Bishop Finnur Jónsson (1704–1789). As mentioned previously, Bjarni Gissurarson also studied in Skálholt and it is almost certain that he read the Christmas hymn in one of the songbooks there. Margrét Eggertsdóttir suggests that Jón Snorrason copied his version of the hymn from a manuscript closely related to Bjarni's.⁹⁷ On the cover of the binding is written in discolored ink: “Marteinn Jónsson 19/11 63.” Marteinn Jónsson (1832–1920) was a goldsmith from Stafafell in the southeastern part of Iceland.

Origin and age of the longer versions

MS Boreal 113, South Iceland

This manuscript is written in one hand. On the front page (f. 3r) the name of

94 Jón M. Samsonarson, “Séra Bjarni Gissurarson í Þingmúla, ævi hans og kveðskapur” (Cand. mag thesis, Háskóli Íslands, 1960); Bjarni Gissurarson, *Sólarsýn. Kvæði*.

95 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 157; Jón M. Samsonarson, “Séra Bjarni,” 114.

96 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 2:229.

97 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 162.

the owner is written: “Pessa skrifada salma book a eg Þordis Marteinsdóttur.” The title page (f. 4r) gives us additional information about the date and location of the manuscript: “Skrifad ad Reyðar watni: Anno 1740.” On leaf 603, there is a letter of recommendation dated 6 May 1753 and signed by “Þorun,” very probably the Þórunn Þorsteinsdóttir (d. 1759) who was married to Marteinn Björnsson from Reyðarvatn. Their daughter was Þórdís (b. 1722). Þórunn’s second husband was Grímur Jónsson (d. 1750), who was a lawman at Reyðarvatn in the district of Rangárvallahreppur. The manuscript must have been written after Grímur married Þórunn.⁹⁸ MS Boreal is from the collection of the Icelandic scholar Finnur Magnússon (1781–1848), who sold his manuscripts to the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where MS Boreal 113 is now kept. This manuscript contains musical notations.

JS 208 8vo and LBS 1724 8vo, Southwest Iceland

JS 208 8vo was partly written by Guðmundur Runólfsson (1709–1780) at Staður in Grindavík in 1730 (f. 1v): “Skrifader aa Stad i Grindawik af Gudmunde Runólfssyne Anno Domini MDCCXXX.” The manuscript is divided into two parts. The second part reads: “Skrifad aa Westmana-Eyumm þad Aar 1736” and on the title page “Marteinn Jónsson 19/11 63.” This is the same Marteinn Jónsson mentioned previously as the owner of JS 141 8vo.

Little is known about Lbs 1724 8vo except that it is closely related to JS 208 8vo. We can assume that both manuscripts were written in the mid-eighteenth century. Lbs 1724 8vo was owned by Guðmundur Jónsson (1875–1947), who lived at Hoffell farm.

ÍB 380 8vo, Lbs 1422 8vo and Lbs 1485 8vo, West Iceland

Lbs 1485 8vo’s title page is missing, but there is an inserted title page (front flyleaf 1r), which states: “Safn af kvæðum og sálum frá 17. öld, með hendi Jóns prófests Haldórssonar í Hítardal á yngri árum (c. 1696–1700).” The manuscript preserves a funeral song by Kristín Stefánsdóttir for her husband Ólafur Einarsson, provost at Kirkjubær (d. 1651).⁹⁹ Bjarni Gissurarson was their grandson.

ÍB 380 8vo was once in the possession of Jón Jónsson Borgfirðingur (1826–1912), a police officer in Reykjavík and a lay scholar. Páll Eggert Ólason suggested that this manuscript was written by Magnús Jónsson of Vigur and his scribes.¹⁰⁰ However, Þórunn Sigurðardóttir points out that ÍB 380 8vo has been shown to be the work of Gísli Jónsson of Mávahlíð on Snæfellsnes

⁹⁸ Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 163.

⁹⁹ Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 165–166.

¹⁰⁰ Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 3:88.

(1676–1715), an important correction to our knowledge of Lbs 1422 8vo and ÍB 380 8vo.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, it has also been suggested that Lbs 1422 8vo was owned by Helga Jónsdóttir from Vatnsfjörður, because the initials HJD are written on its cover. Þórunn further notes that this manuscript is closely related to ÍB 380 8vo, because both begin with the same hymns and variants show that they were probably copied from the same exemplar. Given that Gísli Jónsson had a sister named Helga, Þórunn suggests that it is more likely that this is her manuscript rather than that of her namesake from Vatnsfjörður. Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir, however, proposes that Lbs 1422 8vo could have been written by Helga Jónsdóttir herself.¹⁰² Both manuscripts were written at about the same time: ÍB 380 8vo in ca. 1700 and Lbs 1422 8vo in ca. 1701.

JS 138 8vo, West Fjords

JS 138 8vo is written ca. 1740–1750 in the hand of Ásgeir Bjarnason (1703–1772), priest in Dýrafjörður.¹⁰³ The names of two of its owners are written on f. 218v: Þórdís Jónsdóttir and Margrét Sigurðardóttir. Þórdís was the granddaughter of Ásgeir and was married to Sigurður Jónsson from Hrafnseyri. Their daughter Margrét owned the book until it came into the possession of her brother Jón.

Lbs 1568 8vo, origin unknown

Little is known about Lbs 1568 8vo apart from the fact that it can be dated to 1689. According to *Skrá Landsbókasafns*, this manuscript is in the hand of Jón Þorláksson (1643–1712) from Berunes.¹⁰⁴ On the front board the name of a likely owner is just visible: “Jón Þorgrimsson a liber me rekte. El[...] BD [...] onsdotter [þe]tta kuer.”

JS 439 8vo, EDL 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo, Lbs 1536 8vo, origin unknown
Of EDL 8vo, JS 439 8vo, Lbs 506 8vo, Lbs 1530 8vo and Lbs 1536 8vo, very little is known except that they were all copied in the eighteenth century.

Lbs 506 8vo was written in one hand around 1750 and was once in the possession of Eggert Briem Ólafsson (1840–1893), whose library was purchased by Landsbókasafn in 1893.

101 Þórunn Sigurðardóttir, “Constructing Cultural Competence.” See also Hallgrímur Pétursson, *Ljóðmáli 3*, eds. Margrét Eggertsdóttir, Kristján Eiríksson and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Ritsafn Hallgríms Péturssonar, vol. 1.3, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit, vol. 64 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 2005), 281–282.

102 Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir, “Í hverri bók er mannsandi.” *Handritasýrpur – bókmenning, þekking og sjálfsmynd karla og kvenna á 18. öld* (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2011), 335.

103 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 2:647.

104 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 2:308.

Lbs 1530 8vo was written around 1780 in a hand that resembles that of Jón Egilsson from Stóra-Vatnshorn.¹⁰⁵ There are a large number of signatures of previous owners throughout the manuscript: f. 184v reads “Þessarar bókar riettur eygandi Stephan Vigfusson Samkomugerdi” while the rear flyleaf f. RF 1r reads “Eg undir skrifadur Vigfus Vigfusarson á þessa bok.” This manuscript includes musical notation.

Lbs 1536 8vo was written in one hand by an unknown scribe in the eighteenth century. On the manuscript’s accompanying material, some personal names are just about recognizable, although it is unclear what their connection with the manuscript is. The manuscript also contains musical notation.

JS 439 8vo is written in several hands and contains some hymns by Benedikt Magnússon Bech (1674–1719), sýslumaður,¹⁰⁶ which are dated “Anno 1712” (f. 98r). A leaf is inserted between f. 47 and f. 48 in the hand of Páll Pálsson.

EDL 8vo is a collection of hymns preserved at the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. It was written in the eighteenth century and consists of two parts, which we refer to as EDL a and EDL b. The first 98 numbered leaves written in one hand appear to be from the early eighteenth century. The second part consists of 68 leaves and is written in other hands. The manuscript includes a substantial number of psalms written by or ascribed to Hallgrímur Pétursson and Stefán Ólafsson. It contains two copies of the Christmas hymn.

ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, JS 509 8vo and LBS 194 8vo, origin unknown

Of ÍBR 104 8vo, JS 272 II 4to, JS 509 8vo and LBS 194 8vo, very little is known except that they were all copied in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Lbs 194 8vo is written in many hands. On page 33 (f. 17r) the chapter heading reads: “Nockur bænar ord af þeim 91 psälme Davids samann tekenn af sr. HPs og efter hans eigenhandar skrifte aftur uppskrifud Anno 1783 af SMs.” On f. 114v, a possible owner has written: “Þessa bok a Sofia Gudmundsdottur [...] Sofija Gudmundsdottur a þesa psalma med riétu.” There are several notes (front flyleaf 2v–5v) and additions to the manuscript (between 18v and 19r, and on leaves 19r–22v) in the hand of Páll Pálson. Other accompanying material is a leaf containing “Sálmur um enduruppreisn Magisters Björns Þorleifssonar superintendents á Hólum á Hólaprentverki,” by Magnús Illugason from Húsavík, printed in Hólar 1703 and written there by Jón Jónsson Borgfirðingur.

105 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 170.

106 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenskar aviskrár*, 1:117–118.

ÍBR 104 8vo is in at least two distinguishable hands.¹⁰⁷ Between leaves 42 and 43 is an inserted leaf in the hand of Páll Pálsson: “Vedrahjalmur S.J.O. Hjaltal. Kv. 1784.” The manuscript was purchased from Brynjólfur Oddsson (1825–1887) in 1873 (front flyleaf): “Keypt fyrir 2mk. að bókbindara Brynjólfi Oddssyni 26/3 73.” On the first page of the manuscript (1r) is written: “Vidbæter sem er aptann til vid það Hallgrijms qver er prentad var sijdarst aa Hoolumm I Hialltadal 1773 jnnhalldandi nockur liodmæle eignud sera Hallgrijme Peturssyne.” The hymn here is certainly a copy based on the text in the printed version of 1773.

JS 272 II 4to is written in many different late eighteenth-century hands. Among these are those of Páll Pálson, Ásgeir Bjarnason, Jón Marteinsson (1711–1771) and Þórarinn Sveinsson (1778–1859).¹⁰⁸ The owner of the manuscript collection JS 272 4to I–II was Hálfðan Einarsson, headmaster at Hólar in Hjaltadalur and the editor of the works of Hallgrímur Pétursson.

JS 509 8vo was largely written between 1841 and 1851 in the hand of Sigurður Magnússon (1720–1805) from Holt in Hornafjörður, as indicated by Jón Árnason in a note on the front flyleaf 2r: “Mest allt með hendi Sigurðar Magnússonar í Holltum”.¹⁰⁹

The academic manuscript – Lbs 238 b 8vo

Lbs 238 b 8vo was written by Páll Pálsson “stúdent” (1806–1877) around 1860, most likely in Reykjavík.

107 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 172.

108 Páll Eggert Ólason, *Skrá um handritasöfn*, 2:543.

109 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Hljómi raustin barna best,” 173.

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Greinin er útgáfa á íslenska jólasálminum *Hljómi raustin barna best* en hann á rætur sínar að rekja til latneska sálmsins *Personent Hodie* sem hefur varðveist í a.m.k. einu íslensku handriti, ÍB 525 8vo. Þessi stutti sálmur var þýddur á íslensku af Bjarna Gissurarsyni (1621–1712) en Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614–1674) bætti þrettán frumsömdum erindum við þýðinguna. Fyrri hluti sálmsins er nákvæm þýðing á upprunalega latneska textanum og fjallar um fæðingu Jesú en erindi Hallgríms auka við efni um upprisuna, dómsdag og eilíft líf.

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