#### ANTHONY FAULKES

# A NEWLY DISCOVERED MANUSCRIPT OF MAGNÚS ÓLAFSSON'S *EDDA* PRIVATE COLLECTION, LONDON

## 1. Magnús Ólafsson's Edda

THIS 8VO MANUSCRIPT, purchased in Denmark a few years ago, was probably written in Iceland in the late 18th or early nineteenth century. It is written on paper, apparently by a single hand (with the minor exceptions noted below), in black ink, with some coloured (red and green or blue) decoration to the lettering of the title page. The binding is certainly more modern; it has marbled boards and a cloth spine without any lettering. The binder has cut the bottom of the leaves very close, in a few cases taking off part of the last line of writing (e.g. on page 142). The spine has become very dry and brittle and the volume has suffered from much use. The name written on the front flyleaf in a different and probably much later hand than the text is difficult to decipher, but may read 'Pórarinsson'. This un-Icelandic use of the patronymic alone, without the owner's first name, suggests that this Þórarinsson, who is of course unidentifiable, had emigrated from Iceland to Denmark, perhaps in the second half of the 19th century, and had there used his patronymic as a surname in the Danish fashion. If so, this emigrant presumably brought the manuscript from Iceland to his new home with him.

The title on the title page reads 'Edda . . . med Vidbætir', and this corresponds well with the contents of the volume, which is an interpolated and re-arranged version of Magnús Ólafsson's *Edda* with an appendix containing material about Icelandic runes. Magnús Ólafsson's *Edda* was itself a re-arrangement of *Snorra-Edda* (the *Prose* or *Younger Edda*), a treatise on poetry compiled in the first half of the 13th century by the Icelandic historian and poet Snorri Sturluson. *Snorra-Edda* contained a *Prologue* about the origin of Norse religion, *Gylfaginning* (mythological narratives from the Creation down to Ragnarökkr, 'the Twilight of the gods'), *Skáldskaparmál* 

(a discussion of the kennings and heiti, or poetical terms, of Old Norse poetry, including stories explaining the origins of some of these),¹ and *Háttatal*, a poem by Snorri Sturluson with commentary in praise of King Hákon Hákonarson and Earl Skúli in 102 stanzas exemplifying a wide variety of verse forms that could be used in Old Norse poetry.

Magnús Ólafsson's *Edda* was compiled by the Icelandic priest and poet Magnús Ólafsson (c. 1573–1636) in the early years of the 17th century.<sup>2</sup> Magnús later (1622) became minister at Laufás in northern Iceland, and hence his *Edda* has come to be referred to as the *Laufás-Edda*. His work survives in two versions, known as the X version, parts of which survive in his own hand as well as in three manuscript copies, and the Y version (of which the X version is an abbreviation). Of the latter we have nothing in Magnús's hand, though it survives in whole or in part in over 100 manuscripts dating from the 17th to 20th centuries, and more are still turning up from time to time, of which the present version is an example.

Magnús Óláfsson re-arranged Snorri's text, so that the *Prologue* was followed by 67 'Dæmisögur' (mythological narratives from *Gylfaginning* and *Skáldskaparmál*), and then 'Annarr Partur' (a list in alphabetical order of their significations of kennings and heiti based mostly on *Skáldskaparmál*, begining with 'Nöfn Asanna'). *Háttatal* is not included.

Magnús Ólafsson's version of the *Prose Edda* was far more popular than any other version in post-medieval times. Snorri's survives in comparatively few manuscripts, while Magnús's was frequently copied down to modern times (often with many additions and expansions), even after the publication of Resen's *Edda*. It also became the basis of several other re-arrangements and adaptations as well as being used as the foundation of the first printed edition of the *Prose Edda*, that of P.H. Resen (Copenhagen 1665). There exist also translations into Danish and Latin. It is clear that Magnús's version was found more useful as a textbook for poets and readers of Icelandic poems than Snorri's.

- 1 Edda: Skáldskaparmál, 2 vols., ed. Anthony Faulkes (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1998).
- 2 Edda Magnúsar Ólafssonar (Laufás Edda), ed. Anthony Faulkes, Two Versions of Snorra Edda from the 17th Century, vol. 1, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit, vol. 13 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1979) = EMÓ. References to the Introduction to this volume are to paragraph numbers, those to the texts are to page numbers.

## 2. The Contents of the Edda Manuscript

T.p.: 'Edda. Samanskrifad af Snorra Sturlusÿne á Reikholti. Anno-MCCXV. med Vidbætir.'

Rev. of t.p.: Magnús Óláfsson's preface (EMÓ 189).

Pp. I–XIX: 'Formáli.' = Preface II. This preface (see EMO §§ 29.2, 43, 104, 108, 115, 117, 118, 121, 122, 124, 126, 129, 130, 131, 149, 150, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, [172], 173, 174, 185; p. 463), which is not by Magnús Ólafsson, is found in a wide variety of manuscripts and already existed in the second half of the 17th century.

Pp. 1–110: 'Gilfaginning. Firsta Dæmisaga–XLVII. Dæmisaga' = Dæmisögur 1–49, EMÓ 189–233 (Y version). Dæmisaga 11 is rather garbled, possibly some words are inserted from a source other than EMÓ with a text more similar to that of the Codex Regius. Some words added in the last sentence are similar to the text of the Codex Regius. A sentence is added at the end of Dæmisaga 18. There is an addition at the end of Dæmisaga 21. Dæmisaga 33 (unnumbered) is after Dæmisaga 34 (numbered 33), then Dæmisaga 35 (unnumbered). Dæmisögur 36, 37, 38, 39 etc. are numbered 34, 35, 36, 37 etc. (to the end of Gylfaginning). Various small items are omitted and some interpolated, probably mostly scribal additions or comments, but some words from the Codex Regius omitted by Magnús Ólafsson are included, cf. EMÓ § 43. At the end of Gylfaginning, where X¹ has 'Hier til Härslye, Bragarædr fylga eptir' (EMÓ 234) is written: 'Hér endar Hars-lýgi, finst ok getiþ, at þar hafi Gilfi heirt þulin Háva-mál sem annarstaðar standa i frædi'. Cf. Thott 1494 4to, EMÓ § 45.

Pp. 110–47: 'Braga=rædr. (: edr Braga-lýgi:). XLVIII Dæmisaga–LX Dæmisaga' = Dæmisögur 50–62, EMO 234–46 (Y version). Again, there are some minor additions, often comments at the end of stories.

Pp. 147–81: 'Vidbætir edr vidrauki nokkra Frásagna. LXI Dæmisaga–LXV. Dæmisaga' = 'Vidur auki nockra fräsagna', Dæmisögur 63–67 in the X version manuscript Thott 1494 4to (the story of Otrgjöld and the Gjúkungar, *Skáldskaparmál* 45/3–50/21, derived ultimately from the *Codex Regius* but omitted from Magnús's original *Edda* as they were from Magnús's main source, *Codex Wormianus* (cf. *EMÓ* 249/13–17, 250 line 21–251 line 5 and § 43) and also interpolated in Sth. Papp 4to nr 10, another manuscript of the X version, and Resen's edition, Dæmisögur 68–78).

Added at the end is 'Hedann kennist grjót grand Sörla og Hamdijs enn hlifar beirra herklædi og annad soddan', cf. EMÓ 251 line 5. This is followed by 'LXVI Dæmisaga Hvi Gull kallast Fródamjöl' = EMÓ Dæmisaga 66, 'vm Fröda Feniu og Meniu' (text again corresponding to Thott 1494 4to, not to the Y version; also not in the original Codex Wormianus); 'LXVII. dæmisaga Hvi gull er kallat Kraka sád' = EMÓ Dæmisögur 63 'AP(OLOGUS) vm ägæti Hrölfs kraka' and 64 'APOL(OGUS) Wm fræknleik Hrölfs kraka'; 'LXVIII. Dæmisaga, vm Holga kóng' = EMÓ Dæmisaga 65; and 'LXIX. Dæmisaga, um Högna og Hildi dóttr hans' = EMÓ Dæmisaga 67. At the end of this last Dæmisaga in this section, there is an additional passage also found in Thott 1494 4to, cf. EMÓ 250, note to line 20. But the passages 'Vm Erp Sorla og Hamder', EMÓ 250-251 (see above), 'Epilogus partis. prioris,' EMÓ 251 and 'Poku menn', EMÓ 252 (derived from the Fourth Grammatical Treatise) are omitted. The order of the narratives in this part of the manuscript is thus very similar to that of the Codex Regius, and different from that of EMÓ (and Resen's Edda).

P. 181: 'Sidari partur Snorra Eddu um Kenningarnar' = 'Annar partur Eddu vmm kiennyngar',  $EM\acute{O}$  328 (Y version).

Pp. 181–82: Preface to Annar partur = EMO 328.

P. 182: 'Nöfn Asanna' = EMO 328.

Pp. 182−88: 'Nöfn-Óðins' = 'Nofn Odinz' (omitting lines 55, 60−68, 80−84, 91−110), *EMÓ* 328−332.

Pp. 188: 'Synir=Ódíns' = EMO 332.

Pp. 188–89: 'Þór heitir í kenningum' = EMO 332 'Þor heiter ad kiennyngu' (some names omitted).

P. 189–96: 'Baldr. kiennist'; 'Njördr'; 'Freyr'; 'Heimdallr' (here is added 'Heimdallarhöfut – mjótuðs', cf. *Skáldskaparmál* 19/11–13); 'Tyr'; 'Bragi'; 'Vidar'; 'Vali', 'Hauður'; 'Ullr; 'Hænir'; 'Loki'; 'Merk'; 'Nöfn Asynja' (expanded from þulur in *Skáldskaparmál* 114–15, cf.  $EMO \S 111$ ); 'Höfud Asinjur kennast svo'; 'Frigg'; 'Freya' (expanded with a couplet attributed to Arnórr, 'Sæll er syr hallar. Seida brynreiðar', see  $EMO \S 117$ ; this also corresponds to AM 742 4to); 'Sif'; 'Jdun'; 'Regla' (added: 'merk: til allra qvenna ásanna skal konur kenna.') =  $EMO \S 333-37$ .

Pp. 196–217: 'Nú eptir filgja Heiti og Kenningar ymislegra hluta eptir Stafrofs-ordu. Ar-heiti'; 'Arvatn heitir' (omits lines 12–14); 'Arnar=heiti'; 'Boga heiti'; 'Bjarnar=heiti'; 'Brynja=heitir'; 'Dverga. Kènníngar';

'Dags=Kènníngar'; 'Díra=heiti' (attribution of final stanza to *Haustlong* [96] added, together with four extra lines, 'Hveða skal hróðr fyrir hriðar | hræblaksindum særar. | drikkr var durnis rekkum | dókkr ljósari nókkvi.'); 'Daggar og drifu keningar'; 'Eya heiti'; 'Elds-kenningar'; 'Fugla=kenningar'; 'Fiska heiti nokkor'; 'Fót má kalla' (verse attributed to Eyjólfr Brúnason added, cf.  $X^2$ , EMÓ 269–70); 'Gras kallast' (reference to Arnórr jarlaskáld added, cf. \*X4, EMO 272 n.); 'Gata=heitir' (added: 'jardar og hennar heiti'); 'Geit kallast'; 'Gölltr-heitir'; 'Gullsheiti og kenníngar' (at EMO 346 line 19 adds 'Grátr dalneidar látra', cf. *Skáldskaparmál* verse 145/4; omits line 21; at EMO 346 line 27 adds Egill's verse, 'Gladdist flotna fjöl', cf. *Skáldskaparmál* v. 184; at EMO 349 line 108 adds 'Riett er at kalla gulls at handar sæfar og ása'; and there are various occasional omissions and minor additions throughout) = EMO 337–49.

Pp. 218-35: 'Himins kènníngar'; 'Herklæði' (here there are some additions similar to Skáldskaparmál 67/17-69/14; cf. also 'Skjöldr heitir', pp. 315–17, EMÓ 396–97); 'Hjálmr=heitir'; 'Hvalfiska nöfn nokkr' (with additions corresponding to Skáldskaparmál 63/9-10 and 13-14; cf. pp. 280-81, EMÓ 378, 'Kuenna heite' 122-27); 'Hrafna=heiti'; 'Hesta-heiti' (2 lines, 'tvenna fjóra | tród sá fætur', added at the end of Kálfs-vísur, cf. EMÓ § 111); 'Höfuðs=kenningar' (some minor additions); 'Auga' (here two quotations from Kormákr's verse added, as in X4; cf. EMÓ 276, note to line 11); 'Brár'; 'Grát'; 'Eyru' (with a brief addition corresponding to Skáldskaparmál 108/14); 'Munnr' (4 words added at end); 'Tunga'; 'Nef'; 'Skegg'; Tennr' (4 words added at end); 'Hár' (some words added, EMÓ 356 lines 70-72 omitted); 'Hjarta' (last 2 lines replaced by 'og sæ nu land og lád', cf. 'Brjóst' below); 'Hugr' (added at end: 'edr ein hvörs fugls heitis til Ódins kenningar'); 'Brjóst' (transposed from 'Hjarta' above); 'Höndkallast' (order changed and some expansion); 'Hundr heitir' (4 words inserted at beginning and some elsewhere); 'Húd uxa'; 'Hríngr'; 'Hús' (3 words inserted at beginning; first couplet in final verse omitted, cf. EMÓ 280 note to line 7; and EMÓ 358 line 18 also omitted); 'Hrútr-heitir'; 'Hafr heitir' = EMO 349–58.

EMÓ 358 'Js heite kiennist' omitted.

Pp. 235–84: 'Jørd-heitir'; 'Jötna-heiti' (names put into alphabetical order, some added); 'Kónga heiti og Kenningar' (couplet added from *Skáldskaparmál* 101/5–7 before final sentence); 'Uppruni nokkra Kónga–

heita' ('hinn gamli' added in first line; some additions in the list of the second nine sons of Hálfdan;  $Sk\acute{a}ldskaparm\acute{a}l$  104/20 inserted after  $EM\acute{O}$  362 line 2; in  $EM\acute{O}$  362 line 41 a further definition of skattkonungar is given; the last line of this article omitted, as in AM 743 4to); 'Kristr'; 'Kallmanna–Kènníngar' (etymologies of  $sk\acute{a}ld$  and greppr inserted;  $EM\acute{O}$  366 lines 10–11 expanded, and a reference to Fossverjar in Viglundar saga is included; addition ('Skeggjar') at  $EM\acute{O}$  367 line 22; various other changes and additions in these lists, e.g. at  $EM\acute{O}$  372 line 1); 'Kvenna heiti og kenningar' ( $EM\acute{O}$  374 lines 7–10 are here more like  $Sk\acute{a}ldskaparm\acute{a}l$  107/29–33 and there are some items added or changed in this passage; Items added after  $EM\acute{O}$  375/37, 376/66); 'Kilfa er kend i þessari visu'; 'Kúa-heití' (expansion at the end) =  $EM\acute{O}$  358–80.

Pp. 284-317: 'Læti og um bær kenningar'; 'Lif'; 'Leggja-heiti' (two verse quotations added, one attributed to Bjarni and also in AM 742 4to, see Jón Helgason 1966, 178-79,3 and one to Sturla Þórðarson, Hákonarkviða 35/1-4); 'Logns-heiti'; 'Mál-heitir', 'Nótt-heitir' (3 additional terms inserted after verse); 'Naut-heitir'; 'Orusta-heitir'; 'Øxa-heiti og kenningar'; 'Orma-heiti' (some additions at the end); 'Ørfa-heiti'; 'Sólarheiti og kenningar' (2 words added before first verse; EMÓ 386 lines 25–28 omitted); 'Sækónga-heiti' (some names omitted); 'Sjóar heiti og Kenníngar' (additions after EMÓ 387/4; order of material changed in some places; verses added at end, see Skáldskaparmál 38/16-29, 63/9-10, 14, including a verse attributed to Þórðr Særeksson otherwise only known from AM 742 4to, see EMÓ § 111 and footnote on p. 107); 'Sauðar-heiti'; 'Svín-heitir'; 'Sverdaheite og kenningar' (the list of names put into alphabetical order and some added; EMÓ 391 line 22 'sem Kormakur quad' omitted, replaced by 'máni Valhallar og Ódins'; several names for spear added after EMÓ 391 line 25, cf. Skáldskaparmál verse 464); 'Sár-heitir' (with addition of last line of Fóstbræðra saga verse 40 (Íslenzk fornrit, 6:275) and a couplet attributed to Skáld-Helgi, 'megut járn ei fet fyrnast', cf. EMÓ § 111); 'Sumar kennist'; 'Skógar-heiti' (the names put into alphabetical order); 'Skipa-heiti' (inserted at the beginning is the list of ship-names from the end of the article in EMÓ 395 in alphabetical order, followed by 'Græðisvagn' (EMÓ

<sup>3</sup> Jón Helgason, 'Verse aus der Laufás-Edda', in Kurt Rudolph, Rolf Heller, and Ernst Walter, eds., Festschrift Walther Baetke: Dargebracht zu seinem 80. Geburtstag am 28. März 1964 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1966), 175–80.

395, line 81) and a little further on 'geitis mar' from *Skáldskaparmál* 74/14, also added in AM 743 4to, see note to  $EM\acute{O}$  392 line 3 on p. 393, while the reference to Hornklofi is omitted); 'Skáldskapr-heitir' (preceded by a list of simplex terms for poetry, cf. *Skáldskaparmál* 83/14–15, and some other additions, in some cases perhaps arising from misunderstandings and muddled re-ordering); 'Skjöldr heitir' (some shortening and paraphrase of  $EM\acute{O}$  397, lines 20–30, and some omissions; 'hallarþak Ódins' inserted) =  $EM\acute{O}$  380–97.

EMÓ 397–98 'Spiota heite og kiennyngar' omitted.

Pp. 317–26 'Steirn-heitir' ('borg og bær' added before 'dverga' line 6; omits the verse attributed to Þjóðólfr and the reference to Arnórr in EMÓ 398, line 22, as well as EMÓ 399, line 27, which is replaced by 'etc:', but adds 'Fjörgýnjar hjarta' at the end like AM 743 4to, cf. EMÓ 399, note to line 27); 'Trøllkvenna-heiti' (omitting EMÓ 399 line 2; 63 names (plus 3 added) put into alphabetical order; at the end is added 'hingad er hugr kendr og ögxer', cf. EMÓ 356, 'Hugur' line 6, and 384 'Øxa heite' line 7 = p. 231 and 290, Skáldskaparmál 108/28 and 67/25); 'Vopna-heiti' (a list of 9 words for kinds of weapons inserted at beginning; EMÓ 400 last 8 words of lines 3-4 omitted; some words inserted, e.g. 'bvi bau smjúga' after 'orma', at EMÓ 400, line 5; plus a reference to Guttormr skáld for 'balla spjót' and at the end 'knifurin er kalladr vargr, eda jötun Magaskógsins'); 'Vetr heitir i Kènníngum' (omits 'þui þad heiter ørmur' at EMÓ 400, 'Vetur heiter j kienningum' line 3; inserts before Ásgrímr's verse st. 83/1-2 and 5-6 of Snorri Sturluson's Háttatal, attributed to 'Snorri lögmaðr'); 'Vindr-heitir' (some words for wind inserted at the beginning and some kennings towards the end); 'Vidr-heitir' (adds 'item má hann kalla jardar þöngla' and Ynglinga saga, Íslenzk fornrit, 26:61, verse 22/9-12 and Njála, Íslenzk fornrit, 12:354, verse 17/3-4; both verses also in AM 742 4to, see EMÓ § 111); 'Vargr-heitir'; 'Vit heitir' (some words omitted); 'Undirhiggja-heitir'; 'Uxi-heitir' (some words omitted, some added; expansion of last 4 words in EMÓ 402 with references to Haustlong 5 and an unknown verse of Skúli Þorsteinsson, cf. EMÓ 279, note to 'Hvd' and Jón Helgason 1966, 179; and a list of further kennings is added); 'Páng og bari kènnist' (further kennings added) = EMO 398–402.

P. 326 'Endir' = EMO 402 'Finis Eddæ'.

P. 327 'Stuttr Vidbætir Eddu. Innihald. 1. Innihald Eddu. 2. Rúnir. 3. Bundnar málrunir. 4. Þyding málruna.'

Pp. 328–38 'Innihald Eddu.' Comprises headings and page numbers of the whole contents of the volume.

Pp. 338–40: 'Rúnir. 1. Málrúnir blasnar og stúngnar', '2. Adal Rúnir', '3. Torkenníngar', '4. Alfarún', '5 Óbreittar málrúnir'. Lists five runic alphabets.<sup>4</sup>

Pp. 340–41: 'Bundnar Málrúnir og þyding þeirra.'

Pp. 341-49: 'Pídíngin' (cf. Lbs 1116 4to, ff. 200v-202r).5

At the end of the text of p. 349 (the end of the manuscript) a later hand has written 'Hart' (?) (perhaps a pen trial).

### 3. Evaluation

A great deal of the manuscript corresponds not to the Y version of Magnús Óláfsson's *Edda*, but to the X version manuscript Thott 1494 4to, or to AM 742 4to as well as in some cases to the *Codex Regius* of *Snorra-Edda*. No evidence has been found of the influence of Resen's *Edda*. On the other hand there is also a quite large number of scribal additions and changes (re-ordering, paraphrase, explanatory phrases, expansions).

The redaction in this manuscript has a particular affinity to that in MS Icelandic 6 in University College London (see EMO § 117). The first part, the 'Dæmisögur', has the same additions, omissions and re-arrangement of the order of material in both manuscripts. 'Annar Partur', the lists of kennings, is also very similar. MS Icelandic 6 has most of the same additions and interpolations as this manuscript, including nearly all of those that correspond to the interpolations in AM 742 4to, though in many cases they are added in the margins or in spaces at the ends of paragraphs. According to a note on a flyleaf in MS Icelandic 6, the marginalia are in the hand of Eggert Ólafsson (1726–68).

Many items in 'Annar partur' in this redaction are confused or corrupt,

- 4 On no. 3 cf. Matthías Viðar Sæmundsson, *Galdrar á Íslandi: Íslensk galdrabók*, Íslensk þjóðfræði (Reykjavík: Almenna bókafélagið, 1992), 81–100. On late runic alphabets in general, see Alessia Bauer, 'Die späten *Runica Manuscripta* aus Island: was versteht man unter *málrúnir?' Futhark* (2010, no. 1):197–223.
- 5 See http://handrit.is/is/manuscript/imaging/is/Lbs04-1116/200v-202r#0200v.

and many kennings misunderstood. But there is also much conscious reordering and re-arrangement, and there are additions from other sources or scribal expansions. The scribe, or perhaps one of his predecessors, has not only made a conscientious copy of his exemplar, with very little shortening, but has also added to the material in it and become engaged with his work, so that many of his changes are positive 'improvements'.

So although this late manuscript contains very little that is not found in earlier manuscripts, and probably preserves very little in the way of superior readings to those found elsewhere, it may be unique in its combination of what is basically the longer (Y) version of Magnús Ólafsson's *Edda* with items from the shorter (X) version and other recensions such as that in AM 742 4to, which may have been made by the well-known scholar Björn Jónsson of Skarðsá (1574–1655) in the first half of the seventeenth century; and also with elements going back to the Codex Regius of Snorra-Edda (probably via one of the copies made of this before it left Iceland in 1662). It bears witness to the continuing intelligent interest in Norse skaldic poetry into the nineteenth century, and if the above guess that it was taken from Iceland by an emigrant to Denmark in the nineteenth century is correct, it also shows that some such emigrants wished to preserve the memory of the culture of their land of origin in their new homeland, even the more esoteric and difficult aspects of its early culture that had been brought to Iceland from Norway in the early Middle Ages.<sup>6</sup>

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6 Lbs 1562 4to has also been found to contain 'brief notes and summary extracts from' Magnús Ólafsson's *Edda*, though these are in some cases so shortened that the sentences are incomplete. See *Hrafnagaldur Óðins (Forspjallsljóð)*, ed. Annette Lassen (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2011), 35–36.