

SUSANNE MIRIAM ARTHUR

THE IMPORTANCE OF MARITAL  
AND MATERNAL TIES  
IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF ICELANDIC  
MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE MIDDLE  
AGES TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

“Virduglegur Herra Biskupenn M. Brynjólfur Sveins son ad  
Skálholte, minn dygdarikur og elfkulegur Velgörða og Ætt-  
bróðer, gaf mer þessa fógubók, enn eg gef hana nu  
dóttur minne Jarþrúde Hákonar dottur til eignar. Skrifad ad  
Brædratungu 31. Ianuarý. Anno 1675.  
Helga Magnus dotter e h”

(JS 28 fol., 3r)

[The venerable master Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson at Skálholt,  
my faithful and dear benefactor and kinsman, gave me this  
book of sagas, and now I give it to my daughter Jarþrúður  
Hákonardóttir to own it. Written at Brædratunga on January  
31, in the year 1675.

Helga Magnúsdóttir with her own hand.]

## Introduction

THE ABOVE-WRITTEN DONATION of Helga Magnúsdóttir to her daughter Jarþrúður in JS 28 fol., a manuscript written by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt around the year 1660, exemplifies and supports the notion that while land property (particularly the main farm) would often be passed down to male descendants,<sup>1</sup> women (who usually left the family household upon marriage) would receive a dowry, most commonly in the form of pre-

1 See e.g. Gerda Merschberger, *Die Rechtsstellung der Germanischen Frau. Mit 21 Abbildungen Im Text*, Mannus-Bücherei 57 (Leipzig: C. Kabitzsch, 1937), 165; Margrét Eggertsdóttir, “Um kveðskap kvenna og varðveislu hans.” *Vefnir* 2 (1999). It is, however, documented that rich farmers and chieftains also bequeathed land property to their daughters, which was then usually managed by the woman’s husband. Nonetheless, women inherited less property (see e.g. the case of Loftur ríki Guttormsson: *Diplomatarium Islandicum. Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga, dóma og máldaga, og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenzka menn* 4. 1265–1449, ed. Jón Þorkelsson (Copenhagen: Hið íslenzka bókmentafélag, 1895–1897), 518–520).

cious goods.<sup>2</sup> Upper-class marriages during the Middle Ages until early modern times were arranged for economic and political reasons. The use of marriage to expand and strengthen political influence and power occurred in both Icelandic pagan and Christian societies.<sup>3</sup> Three important aspects of marriage arrangements in Iceland were the bride price (*mundr*) paid by the groom's family, the "supplementary gift" (*tilgjöf*) given by the groom, and the dowry (*heimanfylgia*) provided by the bride's family.<sup>4</sup>

The tradition of passing on manuscripts to women, as a gift from groom to bride (*tilgjöf*),<sup>5</sup> as part of the women's dowry, or as family heirlooms, continued until at least the middle of the seventeenth century, a time that marks the advent of extensive and systematic manuscript collection in Iceland.<sup>6</sup> Donations (such as JS 28 fol.), ownership marks, and marginal notes in Icelandic manuscripts written by or for women reveal that

- 2 On the concept of dowry, see e.g. Merschberger, *Die Rechtsstellung Der Germanischen Frau*, 61, 65–66, and Jenny Jochens, *Women in Old Norse Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 26–27. The Icelandic law code *Jónsbók* makes several mentions of dowry and contains numerous passages about inheritance. See e.g. *Jónsbók. The Laws of Later Iceland. The Icelandic Text According to MS AM 351 fol. Skálholtsbók eldri*, Bibliotheca Germanica, Series Nova 4 (Saarbrücken: AQ-Verlag, 2010), *heimanfylgia* (dowry): IV.30, V.1–3, V.5–6, V.13, Rb. 1314 §9; *arfur* (inheritance): V.1, V.7–V22. Even though written sources are relatively quiet about the specific goods that were passed down as dowry in Iceland, one may speculate that these precious goods included such things as clothing (see e.g. *Ibid.*, V.1), jewelry, homespun (*vaðmál*), butter (*smjör*), household items, and manuscripts (see e.g. Margrét Eggertsdóttir, "Um kveðskap kvenna.").
- 3 See e.g. Jochens, *Women in Old Norse Society*, 27–28.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 26–27. Just like dowry, the concept of the bridal gift (*tilgjöf*) is discussed in *Jónsbók*, *tilgjöf* (bridal gift): V.1–3, V.5–6, V.13, Rb. 1294 § 38, Rb. 1302.
- 5 Two ownership entries in the seventeenth-century Icelandic manuscript AM 137 fol., written by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt, state that "Wýgfús Hannesson ä Bokena Anno 1699" [*Vigfús Hannesson owns the book in the year 1699*] and that "Guðrýður Sigurdardotter er nü eigande þessarar Bökar Anno 1700" [*Guðrýður Sigurdardóttir is now the owner of this book in the year 1700*]. It seems possible that the manuscript was a wedding gift (*tilgjöf*) from Vigfús to his bride, considering that Vigfús Hannesson and Guðrýður Sigurdardóttir married in 1699. See Bogi Benediktsson, *Sýslumannaæfir 4*, ed. Hannes Þorsteinsson (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmentafélag, 1881), 322–326.
- 6 While early manuscript production in Iceland largely centered around monasteries and the ownership of manuscripts was likely reserved for monasteries, nunneries, and a few selected influential chieftains, private ownership of manuscripts presumably became more common after the Reformation, when manuscripts that originally belonged to the cloisters ended up in the private possession of clergymen and rich farmers.

women used, owned, and inherited manuscripts.<sup>7</sup> The family trees of these women can often be linked to influential dynasties in Iceland.<sup>8</sup> It seems, therefore, that women played a major role in the distribution of texts, either directly by inheriting and bequeathing manuscripts or indirectly by forming marital links between influential families involved in manuscript production in Iceland.<sup>9</sup>

An analysis of the history of manuscripts containing the same texts, particularly the history of their ownership, makes it possible to reconstruct the distribution of manuscripts and texts in Iceland between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, both geographically and genealogically. Using the manuscript context of the seventeenth-century manuscripts GKS 1002 and 1003 fol. as a starting point, this article shows that although the two volumes were written in the south of Iceland, many of the exemplars (or

- 7 The topic of women's connections to manuscript production and usage in Iceland has received more attention in recent years. Margrét Eggertsdóttir briefly discusses female ownership of manuscripts in "Um kveðskap kvenna og varðveislu hans." Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir shows in her Ph.D. thesis that the intended audience of the manuscript AM 764 4to was "novices, women and girls, at the convent of Reynistaður", cf. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, "Universal History in Fourteenth-Century Iceland. Studies in AM 764 4to." (Ph.D. thesis, Scandinavian Studies, University of London, 2000), 143, 233–238 ("The purpose and audience of AM 764 4o"). Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir examines a miscellany (*syrpa*) owned and commissioned by Þórey Björnsdóttir (1676–1745) as part of her doctoral dissertation "Í hverri bók er mannsandi." *Handritasýrpur – bókmennning, þekking og sjálfsmynd karla og kvenna á 18. öld*. Studia Islandica 62 (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2011), 204–257. She furthermore created registers of Icelandic manuscripts written by and for women from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries and offers an overview of women's manuscript culture in Iceland in an appendix (Ibid., 310–375). Natalie M. Van Deusen also studies women as users and owners of manuscripts in her article "Stitches in the Margins: The Embroidery Pattern in AM 235 fol.," *Maal og minne* (2011): 26–42.
- 8 Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason of Hólar, for example, divided his manuscripts and printed books equally between his children, including his only daughter, Elín Þorláksdóttir. See Jakob Benediktsson, "Bókagerð Þorláks biskups Skúlasonar," *Saga og kirkja. Afmálsrit Magnúsar Mús Lárussonar. Gefið út í tilefni af sjötugsafmáli hans 2. september 1987*, eds. Gunnar Karlsson et al. (Reykjavík: Sögufélag, 1988), 193; Már Jónsson, "Þórður biskup Þorláksson og söfnun íslenskra handrita á síðari hluta 17. aldar," *Frumkvöðull vísinda og mennta. Þórður Þorláksson biskup í Skálholti. Erindi flutt á ráðstefnu í Skálholti 3.–4. maí 1997 í tilefni af þrjúhundraðustu ártíð Þórðar biskups Þorlákssonar*, ed. Jón Pálsson (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 1998), 189ff. Elín was married to Þorsteinn Þorleifsson, the son of county magistrate (*sýslumaður*) Þorleifur Magnússon, a descendant of the influential Svalbarð family and the wealthy Eggert Hannesson.
- 9 Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir comes to a similar conclusion, noting that "women's part in the nation's literary culture is far greater than previously thought." Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir, "Í hverri bók er mannsandi", 381.

exemplars of exemplars) originated in the north and west (Westfjords and Dalasýsla) of Iceland.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, codicological evidence, most notably ownership marks of manuscripts directly and indirectly associated with GKS 1002–1003 fol., reveals that these manuscripts are connected to the descendants of some of the most influential families in medieval Iceland. These Icelandic dynasties include the descendants of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson,<sup>11</sup> including his daughter Ólöf *rika* Loftsdóttir, as well as her offspring with Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* (also called “*ríki*”)<sup>12</sup> during the fifteenth century, Jón Arason (the last Catholic bishop of Iceland), and the

10 This geographical pattern (north-west-south) appears to hold true not only in the case of GKS 1002–1003 fol. My preliminary research of manuscripts containing *Njáls saga* suggests that manuscript production shifted from the north to the west and south from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Other studies of Icelandic manuscripts, particularly those concerning manuscripts from the seventeenth century, confirm that manuscript production centered geographically around Hólar (north), Skálholt (south), and Vigur (west). See e.g. Peter Springborg, “Antiqvæ historiæ lepores – Om renæssancen i den islandske håndskriftproduktion i 1600–tallet,” *Gardar* 8 (1977): 57; Tereza Lansing, “Post-Medieval Production, Dissemination and Reception of *Hrólfs saga kraka*,” (Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen), 57–63; Alaric Hall, “Making Stemmas with Small Samples: Testing the Stemma of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, and New Media Approaches to Publishing Stemmas,” <[http://www.alarichall.org.uk/working\\_paper\\_on\\_stemmas\\_from\\_small\\_samples](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/working_paper_on_stemmas_from_small_samples)>. Silvia Hufnagel (personal communication) confirmed the importance of western Iceland as a center of manuscript production during the seventeenth century in her study of manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka*. She does not, however, discuss the geographical distribution of these manuscripts in her dissertation, since she did not detect a clear distribution pattern and geographical information was lacking for many of the manuscripts in question. Hufnagel nonetheless mentions the major centers of manuscript production in the north, south, and west of Iceland, referencing Springborg’s article. Silvia Hufnagel, “*Sörla saga sterka*. Studies in the Transmission of a *forældarsaga*,” (Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen), 11. – [I would particularly like to thank Tereza Lansing, Alaric Timothy Hall and Silvia Hufnagel for sharing their research with me.]

11 After the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in Iceland (1402–1404), new influential families gained power and wealth. Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir points out that Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson was likely one of these new patriarchs arising after the plague. Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir, “Eigi skal gráta Björn bónda heldur safna liði.” Ólöf *rika*, goðsögn og saga,” *Heimtur. Ritgerðir til heiðurs Gunnari Karlssyni sjötugum*, eds. Guðmundur Jónsson et al. (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 2009), 20.

12 Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* (*ríki*) received land in Vatnsfjörður from his grandmother Solveig Þorsteinsdóttir in March of 1433, and his mother Kristín Björnsdóttir (Vatnsfjarðar-Kristín) agreed to this gift (Ibid., 20). This transaction from grandmother to grandson, with the permission of Björn’s mother, is an example of the power and influence that Icelandic matriarchs held on occasion in medieval society.

so-called Svalbarð family<sup>13</sup> during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although the involvement of these powerful families in manuscript production and their connection to the geographical centers in the north, west, and south of Iceland has already been established,<sup>14</sup> this article highlights

- 13 The patriarch and matriarch of the Svalbarð family were Jón *riki* Magnússon, an Icelandic chieftain and member of the *lögrétta* at Svalbarð in Eyjafjörður in the north of Iceland, and his wife Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum*, the great-granddaughter of Ormur *skáld* Loftsson and his wife Solveig Þorleifsdóttir. Ormur *skáld* was the illegitimate son of Loftur *riki* Guttormsson. His wife, Solveig, was the daughter of the influential and wealthy county magistrate Þorleifur Árnason. Five of Loftur *riki*'s children entered into marriages with children of Þorleifur Árnason. The most significant match-up between Loftur's and Þorleifur's offspring appears to have been the marriage of Ólöf *rika* Loftsdóttir and Björn Þorleifsson *riddari*. Interestingly, at least one of the marriages, namely between Ormur and Solveig on October 14, 1434, was arranged by Þorleifur's widow Kristín Björnsdóttir after Loftur *riki*'s and Þorleifur's deaths (in 1432 and 1433 respectively, cf. *DI* 4, 548–549). It seems possible that some of the remaining marriages between the two families were also arranged by Kristín Björnsdóttir, since all but the marriage between Ólöf *rika* Loftsdóttir and Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* took place in or after 1433. It may also be possible that Björn Þorleifsson and his wife Ólöf had an interest in solidifying the ties and thereby power and wealth of both families and therefore arranged the marriages between their siblings. This brief biographic overview demonstrates clearly the tight interconnections between the dynasties of Loftur *riki* Guttormsson, Björn Þorleifsson *riddari*, and the Svalbarð family during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. During the sixteenth century, the Svalbarð family solidified their power and wealth through marriage with other influential families. For example, Jón *riki* Magnússon's and Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir's son, county magistrate Páll Jónsson (Staðarhóls-Páll), married Helga Aradóttir, the granddaughter of Bishop Jón Arason. Another of their son's, Magnús *prúði*, married Ragnheiður Eggertsdóttir, the daughter of the influential captain of the king's men (*hirðstjóri*) and lawman Eggert Hannesson, who in turn took Jón *riki*'s and Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir's daughter Steinunn Jónsdóttir as his second wife, who previously had had seven children with Björn Jónsson, the son of Bishop Jón Arason.

Date of births and family connections are not specifically cited since they can easily be looked up in reference works, such as *Diplomatarium Islandicum. Íslenskt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga, dóma og máldaga, og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenska menn* 1–16, eds. Jón Sigurðsson et al. (Copenhagen: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1857–1972), Páll Eggert Ólason. *Íslenskar aviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940* 1–5 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1948–1952), and Bogi Benediktsson. *Sýslumannaæfir* 1–5, ed. Hannes Þorsteinsson (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1881–1932). An excellent website for researching Icelandic family trees is "FamilySearch. Community Trees," <<http://histfam.familysearch.org>>, which bases its information amongst other things on the aforementioned literature. More specific events, such as the arranged marriage between Ormur *skáld* Loftsson and Solveig Þorleifsdóttir by Kristín Björnsdóttir, are however cited with exact references.

- 14 See e.g. Springborg, "Antiqvæ historiae lepores," 56, 87; Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," *Saga* 32 (1994): 121; Lansing, "Post-Medieval Production, Dissemination and Reception of *Hrólfs saga kraka*," 62.

the importance of female members of these dynasties in the distribution of manuscripts.

## The Starting Point: GKS 1002–1003 fol.

In January 1692, Björn Þorleifsson<sup>15</sup> presented two beautiful, large vellum manuscripts, GKS 1002–1003 fol., bound in red velvet with gilt-edged pages, to the Danish king Christian V, likely in hopes of receiving the support of the king to become bishop.<sup>16</sup> The volumes contain a variety of Icelandic family sagas (*Íslendingasögur*), including *Grettis saga* and *Njáls saga*, legendary sagas (*fornaldarsögur*), and romances (*riddarasögur*). The choice of GKS 1002–1003 fol. as a starting point for this article is debatable, since the manuscripts have no obvious connection to female ownership. Nonetheless, I discovered women's involvement in manuscript production and distribution while researching the manuscript context of GKS 1002–1003 fol.<sup>17</sup> All the manuscripts used in this article are connected to the two volumes, and it is therefore sustainable to use GKS 1002–1003 fol. as a starting point and connecting thread throughout this article.

GKS 1002–1003 fol. were written in 1667 and 1670 by Páll Sveinsson and commissioned by Jón Eyjólfsson of Eyvindarmúli in the Rangárvellir district of southern Iceland.<sup>18</sup> According to the manuscripts' title pages, they were meant for the entertainment of Jón and "other pious men" (*odrvmm Froomumm Monnum*),<sup>19</sup> who likely included Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson

15 Björn Þorleifsson was a descendant of the Svalbarð family on both the maternal and paternal side of his family. His mother, Sigríður Björnsdóttir was the granddaughter of Magnús *prúði* Jónsson of Svalbarð and his wife Ragnheiður Eggertsdóttir. His father, Þorleifur Jónsson, was the great-grandson of Steinunn Jónsdóttir of Svalbarð. See fn. 13 and Fig. 3.

16 Desmond Slay, "On the Origin of Two Icelandic Manuscripts in the Royal Library in Copenhagen," *Opuscula* 1 (1960): 149.

17 This research was conducted as part of my dissertational studies of manuscripts containing *Njáls saga*, which is connected to the research project "The Variance of *Njáls saga*," a collaborative effort by a group of Old Norse-Icelandic scholars to study the manuscripts and reception of *Njáls saga* from different angles in preparation for a new edition of the text. More information about the project can be found online at "The Variance of *Njáls saga*," <<http://njalssaga.wordpress.com/>>.

18 Slay, "On the Origin of Two Icelandic Manuscripts," 143–150.

19 For the complete reconstructed text of the title pages, see *Ibid.*, 144–145.

of Skálholt<sup>20</sup> and Björn Þorleifsson's father Þorleifur Jónsson, who was provost at Oddi.<sup>21</sup> Prior to becoming bishop of Hólar in 1697, Björn Þorleifsson lived at Oddi, which is where he probably received the two volumes. Desmond Slay notes that little is known about the commissioner of GKS 1002–1003 fol., Jón Eyjólfsson of Eyvindarmúli, and the scribe, Páll Sveinsson. It is nonetheless clear that Jón Eyjólfsson's family was closely connected with the farm Múli (Eyvindarmúli) in the Rangárvellir district and that he came from a distinguished and wealthy family with prominent ancestors.<sup>22</sup>

The sagas in GKS 1002 fol. comprise *Karlamagnúss saga* (fols. 1v–27r); *Grettis saga*, which is followed by a poem beginning with the words “Sterkan nefndu báls börk” (fols. 27v–60v); *Mágus saga* (fols. 61r–79r); *Hrólfs saga kraka* (fols. 79v–93r); *Flóres saga ok Leó* (fols. 93r–112v); *Sigrarðs saga frækna* (fols. 113r–119v); *Hektors saga* (fols. 120r–135r); *Sigurðar saga þögla* (fols. 135r–161v); and *Önundar þáttur tréfóts* (fols. 161v–166v), which is introduced with the words “Þetta er upphaf á Grettirs sögu og vantar við þá sem í þessare bók skrifuð er” [*This is the beginning of Grettir's saga and it is missing from the one that is written in this book*]. GKS 1003 fol. contains *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar* (fols. 1v–24v), *Göngu-Hrólfs saga* (fols. 25r–48v), *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar* (fols. 49r–63v), *Njáls saga* (fols. 65r–110v), *Finnboga saga ramma* (fols. 110v–124r), *Þórðar saga hreðu* (fols. 124v–132v), *Kjalnesinga saga* (fols. 133r–139v), *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar* (fols. 139r–141r), and *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar* (fols. 141r–144r). The two volumes thus contain a total of 18 texts (17 if *Önundar þáttur tréfóts* is considered part of *Grettis saga*). All of

20 Brynjólfur Sveinsson was the grandson of Páll Jónsson of Svalbarð and his wife Helga Aradóttir (see fn. 13).

21 It is impossible to ascertain who the “other pious men” may have been, but the apparent close connection of GKS 1002–1003 fol. with the Rangárvellir district suggests that the men referred to must have been prominent figures in the south of Iceland. Considering Brynjólfur Sveinsson's importance as a bishop and collector of manuscripts and Björn Þorleifsson's involvement in the manuscripts' history, it is likely that Bishop Brynjólfur and Björn Þorleifsson's father Þorleifur Jónsson, whose name appears in at least one medieval manuscript (AM 466 4to, *Oddabók*) as one of its owners, were among the men for whom the manuscripts were written.

22 For a more detailed summary of Jón Eyjólfsson's family history, see *Ibid.*, 145–146. The fact that Jón Eyjólfsson is a direct descendant of Bishop Jón Arason can be seen as an indication of the involvement in manuscript production and distribution of descendants of the three prominent Icelandic families highlighted in the introduction above.



these texts, with the exception of *Karlamagnúss saga*,<sup>23</sup> are preserved in other Icelandic manuscripts dating from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, but I wish to emphasize that I am not suggesting that the manuscripts mentioned in this article were in fact the exemplars which Páll Sveinsson, the scribe of GKS 1002–1003 fol., used. The study of the history of these manuscripts and of GKS 1002–1003 fol. shows that from the fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth century manuscript production thrived in the north, west and south of Iceland; each geographical center had its own heyday. Moreover, manuscripts containing the same texts as GKS 1002–1003 fol. are largely connected to the descendants, often female, of some of the influential Icelandic dynasties described above.

### *Möðruvallabók, Flateyjarbók, and Maternal Ties: Ragnheiður, Helga, Elín, Steinunn, Halldóra, and Guðný*

Two of the most famous medieval Icelandic manuscripts, *Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol.) and *Flateyjarbók* (GKS 1005 fol.), both dating from the fourteenth century, contain sagas preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol.: *Finnboga saga ramma* and *Njáls saga* in *Möðruvallabók*, and *Orms þáttr Stórolfssonar* in *Flateyjarbók*. Even though the version of *Njáls saga* in *Möðruvallabók* is not the same as that in GKS 1003 fol. (which preserves the *Oddabók* version), Einar Ól. Sveinsson argues that both versions “derive, with intermediate links, from the same original.”<sup>24</sup>

23 *Karlamagnúss saga* is the only text in GKS 1002–1003 fol. which is not preserved in any manuscript older than the two volumes. Both GKS 1002 and 1003 fol. contain a note by Árni Magnússon with brief descriptions of the various sagas. Regarding *Karlamagnúss saga*, he writes: “Keiser Caroli Magni Chronica, af lige indhold som den ordinaire tryckte, som oc findis paa danske” [*Chronicle of Emperor Charlemagne, with the same content as the commonly printed one, which is also available in Danish*]. Árni Magnússon thus suggests that the *Karlamagnúss saga* in GKS 1002 fol. is an Icelandic translation from Danish and therefore not related to other Icelandic manuscripts containing this saga. This Danish version survives in manuscripts as old as 1480 and is a shortened and fairly free adaptation of a Swedish version. See Gustav Storm, *Sagnkredsene om Karl den Store og Didrik af Bern hos de nordiske folk. Et bidrag til middelalderens litterære historie*. (Oslo: Den norske historiske forening, 1874), 164. Gustav Storm points out that this abridged Danish version existed in printed form already during the early sixteenth century; accordingly, the Icelandic translation in GKS 1002 fol. may in fact be based on a printed book rather than a manuscript (Ibid., 164).

24 Einar Ól. Sveinsson, “Introduction,” *Möðruvallabók (Codex Möðruvallensis)*. MS. No. 132 fol.



*Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol., c.1330–1370) was presumably written in northern Iceland.<sup>25</sup> It appears to have remained in the north of Iceland until 1684, when it was brought to Copenhagen and presented to Thomas Bartholin by Björn Magnússon, the son of the lawman (*lögmaður*) Magnús Björnsson of Munkaþverá, one of the manuscripts owners. Árni Magnússon received AM 132 fol. after Bartholin's death in 1691. Magnús Björnsson's name appears in a marginal note in the manuscript, stating "Magnus Biornnsson Med eigin h[ende] Anno 1628 a krossmesu sialfa wm vorid huor ed var saa 3 Maij Manadar J storu Badstofunne aa Modruvullum." [*Magnús Björnsson, with his own hand, in the year 1628, on the Holy-Rood day itself which was on the 3rd of May, in the large sitting-room at Möðruvellir.*]<sup>26</sup> According to Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, it is impossible to tell whether Magnús Björnsson is referring to Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður or Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, Einar Ól. Sveinsson believes that the manuscript may well have been the "hereditary property" of Magnús' family,<sup>28</sup> and Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson argues that even though *Möðruvallabók* was conceivably written in a monastery or cloister, it was likely made for a secular chieftain, potentially Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon,<sup>29</sup> grandfather of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson and maternal ancestor of Magnús Björnsson. Claudia Müller maintains that the family of Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon or that of Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson,

in the *Arnarnaganaan Collection in the University Library of Copenhagen*, Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi 5, (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1933), 21.

25 According to Einar Ól. Sveinsson, *Möðruvallabók* was written in the Skagafjörður or Eyjafjörður district. He argues, however, that the manuscript was not produced in the vicinity of the cloister at Munkaþverá due to a mistake that the scribe makes in a place name (Ibid., 21, en. 3). Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson suggests that the manuscript was written at Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur, cf. Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," 118, 124.

26 Translation by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, "Introduction," 22.

27 Einar Ól. Sveinsson points out that while the marginal note may refer to either farm, Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður was the home estate of Björn Magnússon and his family and thus the more feasible location (Ibid., 22). Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, on the other hand, argues that Björn Magnússon is more likely referring to Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur. Both, however, admit that a definite answer is impossible. Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," 130–136.

28 Einar Ól. Sveinsson, "Introduction," 23.

29 Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," 120. For more details on Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon, as well as his and his descendants' involvement in manuscript production, see Ibid., 120–125.

Eiríkur *auðgi*'s brother-in-law and a powerful farmer and lawman in the north of Iceland, may have commissioned the writing of *Möðruvallabók*, due to their connections to the influential Möðruvellingar and Urðamenn families, which according to Müller are highlighted in the various texts preserved in the manuscript.<sup>30</sup> Magnús Björnsson was the son of Björn Benediktsson<sup>31</sup> and his wife Elín Pálsdóttir. Elín was the daughter of Helga Aradóttir (granddaughter of Bishop Jón Arason) and her husband Páll Jónsson of the Svalbarð family, who was related in turn to Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon and Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson through his mother Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum* (Fig. 1).<sup>32</sup>

Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson argues that if Magnús Björnsson is referring to Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur in his marginal note in AM 132 fol., then Magnús potentially received *Möðruvallabók* from Halldór Ólafsson, son of Magnús' aunt Þórunn Benediktsdóttir (Fig. 1). Halldór moved to the cloister at Möðruvellir in 1627, where his and Magnús' grandfather Benedikt Halldórsson had been county magistrate and manager. According to Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, Halldór may have received *Möðruvallabók* as an heirloom either from his parents or in-laws.<sup>33</sup> Halldór's wife Halldóra Jónsdóttir was the granddaughter of Björn Jónsson (son of Bishop Jón Arason) and his concubine Steinunn Jónsdóttir of the Svalbarð family. Like Magnús Björnsson, Halldóra is directly related to Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon and Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson (Fig. 1).

Einar Ól. Sveinsson, however, maintains that Magnús Björnsson more likely wrote the marginal note at Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður.<sup>34</sup> This estate

30 Claudia Müller, *Erzähltes Wissen. Die Isländersagas in der Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol.)*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik 47 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), 223–224. Müller mistakenly calls Þorsteinn Eiríkur's son-in-law (Ibid., 224), but Þorsteinn was married to Eiríkur *auðgi*'s sister Arnþrúður Magnúsdóttir.

31 Björn Benediktsson was related to Björn Þorleifsson *riddari*, since one of his female ancestors, Þuríður Björnsdóttir, was an illegitimate child of Björn Þorleifsson and an unknown concubine (see Fig. 1).

32 Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon's granddaughter Sigríður Björnsdóttir, married Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson's grandson Þorsteinn Ólafsson. Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum* was, therefore, related to Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson through her maternal and to Eiríkur *auðgi* both through her maternal and paternal side of the family (see Fig. 1). For more biographical information on Magnús Björnsson, see Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," 136–147; cf. fn. 13.

33 For more details on Halldór's family and in-laws, see Ibid., 130–133.

34 Einar Ól Sveinsson, "Introduction," 22.

was for a long time owned by Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson,<sup>35</sup> Magnús ancestor, and Loftur's descendants. Loftur's son Þorvarður lived there, as did Þorvarður's widow Margrét Vigfúsdóttir and their daughter Ingibjörg, who was married to Páll Brandsson, county magistrate in Eyjafjörður (Fig. 1). Páll's illegitimate son Grímur Pálsson and Björn Þorleifsson *riddari*'s illegitimate granddaughter Helga Narfadóttir<sup>36</sup> are the great-grandparents of both Magnús Björnsson's maternal grandmother Helga Aradóttir and Magnús' and Halldór Ólafsson's paternal grandfather Benedikt Halldórsson (Fig. 1).

Whether Magnús Björnsson wrote the marginal note at Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur or Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður, his complicated family network (Fig. 1) suggests that he received *Möðruvallabók* from either the paternal or maternal side of his family. Considering, however, that his maternal ancestry includes far more prominent figures<sup>37</sup> (including Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon and Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson, two potential commissioners of *Möðruvallabók*<sup>38</sup>), it is more probable that Magnús Björnsson received the manuscript from his mother's side of the family. Nonetheless, it must be restated that the manuscript may also have come into Magnús' possession through the family of his cousin Halldór Ólafsson's wife, Halldóra Jónsdóttir, who shares Magnús' mother's ties to Bishop Jón Arason, the Svalbarð family, Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon and Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson.

The history of *Möðruvallabók* illustrates the close relationship between prominent Icelandic dynasties and their connections to manuscript production and distribution through marital ties, and women seemingly play particular important roles in that respect, no matter which path *Möðruvallabók* traveled before Magnús Björnsson received it. These matriarchs include, most importantly, Magnús Björnsson's great-grandmother Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum*, head of the Svalbarð family; his grandmother Helga Aradóttir, granddaughter of Bishop Jón Arason; and her daughter Elín Pálsdóttir, Magnús' mother. Taking into account Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson's hypothesis, the list of important women must also include Halldóra Jónsdóttir and her grandmother Steinunn Jónsdóttir,

35 See fn. 13.

36 Her mother was Þuríður Björnsdóttir (see fn. 31).

37 See fn. 13 for more information on Magnús' family background.

38 Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson, "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók," 120; Müller, *Erzähltes Wissen*, 224.

daughter of Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum*. The women who link Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir to Eiríkur *auðgi* Magnússon and Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson (namely, Sigríður Þorsteinsdóttir, Kristín Þorsteinsdóttir, Sigríður Björnsdóttir, Malmfríður Eiríksdóttir, and Soffía Eiríksdóttir) should also be mentioned. While it cannot be proven that these women were directly involved in manuscript ownership and distribution, their importance in the formation of links between influential families, and thereby enhancement of power and wealth of these dynasties, is undeniable.

While *Möðruvallabók* appears to have remained in the north of Iceland until it was brought to Denmark at the end of the seventeenth century, *Flateyjarbók*, clearly associated with one particular family in Iceland, moved with its owners from the north of Iceland to the west. According to its preface, *Flateyjarbók* (GKS 1005 fol.) was commissioned by and belonged to Jón Hákonarson of Viðidalstunga. The bulk of the manuscript was written in 1387 by two scribes, Jón Þórðarson and Magnús Þórhallsson. Magnús Þórhallsson furthermore added text in the latter half of 1389 or in 1390 and sporadically between 1391 and 1394.<sup>39</sup> The manuscript must have been written in the north of Iceland at or close to a monastery or nunnery with an extensive library, such as the monastery at Þingeyrar.<sup>40</sup> Some leaves were added during the fifteenth century. It has

39 Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir, "Für welchen Empfänger wurde die *Flateyjarbók* ursprünglich konzipiert?" *Opuscula* 13 (2010): 1–2, 4–5 30, 45. In her article, Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir offers by far the most precise dating of *Flateyjarbók*. She discusses in detail the theory that *Flateyjarbók* was originally intended as a gift for King Olaf IV Hákonarson and argues convincingly against it. Her article includes an overview of previous research and is an excellent and up-to-date stepping stone for anyone interested in the history of *Flateyjarbók*. The general history of *Flateyjarbók* is also outlined in e.g. *Katalog over de oldnorsk-islandske håndskrifter i Det store kongelige bibliotek og i Universitetsbiblioteket (undenfor den Arnemagæanske samling) samt den Arnemagæanske samlings tilvækst 1894–99*, ed. Kristian Kålund (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1900), 10, 15; Finnur Jónsson, "Introduction," *Flateyjarbók. (Codex Flateyensis). MS. no. 1005 Fol. in the Old Royal Collection in the Royal Library of Copenhagen*, Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi 1 (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1930), [3].

40 Elizabeth Ashman Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók. Iceland and the Norwegian Dynastic Crisis of 1389*, The Viking Collection, Studies in Northern Civilization 15 (Odense: The University Press of Southern Denmark, 2005), 11. Finnur Jónsson argues that the manuscript was written at the Þingeyrar monastery or possibly at Viðidalstunga, where Jón Hákonarson lived, cf. Finnur Jónsson, "Introduction," [3], [5]. According to Sigurður Nordal, the exact origin of *Flateyjarbók* is a disputed topic, although he considers the monastery at Þingeyrar a likely contender. Sigurður Nordal, "Formáli," *Flateyjarbók* 1 ([s.l.]: Flateyjarútgefán, 1944), xii.

been suggested that the additions were commissioned by captain of the king's men (*hirðstjóri*) Þorleifur Björnsson of Reykhólar, the son of Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and his wife Ólöf *ríka* Loftsdóttir.<sup>41</sup> It is known that Þorleifur's grandfather Þorleifur Árnason<sup>42</sup> bought half of the property of Viðidalstunga from Guðný Jónsdóttir (*DI* 4, 245–247), the daughter of Jón Hákonarson.<sup>43</sup> It has been argued that Þorleifur Árnason may have received *Flateyjarbók* from Guðný Jónsdóttir as part of the contract to buy property at Viðidalstunga,<sup>44</sup> which is supported by the fact that the manuscript stayed in the possession of Þorleifur's descendants until Jón Finnsson of Flatey gave the codex to Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson in 1647, who presented it to King Frederick III of Denmark in 1656 (*Fig. 2*).<sup>45</sup> The manuscript's history is therefore closely tied to descendants of Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and his wife Ólöf *ríka* Loftsdóttir, and a woman, Guðný Jónsdóttir, appears to have been one of the first owners of *Flateyjarbók* (or at least in a legal position to sell the manuscript as part

41 Finnur Jónsson, "Introduction," [4]; Jonna Louis-Jensen, "Den yngre del af Flateyjarbók," *Afmælisrit Jóns Helgasonar*, 30. júní 1969, eds. Jakob Benediktsson et al. (Reykjavík: Heimskringla, 1969), 245; Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 13, 405. Þorleifur Björnsson appears to have been highly learned and literarily active, as his association with the so-called *Læknabók Þorleifs Björnssonar 1* shows. See, e.g. Örn Bjarnason, "Læknabók Þorleifs Björnssonar 1," *Læknablaðið* 90:4 (2004): 335–338.

42 See fn. 13.

43 Not much information exists about Guðný or why she sold half of the property to Þorleifur Árnason. Elizabeth Ashman Rowe points out that Guðný and her husband Sveinn Bergþórsson also sold the farm Ásgeirsár in Viðidalur to Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson (Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 404), which is evidenced by a letter written at Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður on September 8–9, 1424 (*DI* 4, 317–319). Rowe suggests that the couple may have had to sell the properties of Ásgeirsár and Viðidalstunga (and perhaps also *Flateyjarbók*) due to a lack of frugality (Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 404).

44 Sigurður Nordal, "Formáli," xiv; Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 13, 405, 405 fn. 3. Earlier scholars, such as Finnur Jónsson and Ejnar Munksgaard, argued that Þorleifur Árnason received *Flateyjarbók* from his mother, who they assumed was a sister of Jón Hákonarson by the name of Guðný. Finnur Jónsson, "Introduction," [3]; Ejnar Munksgaard, *Om Flatøbogen og dens historie* (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1930), 16. Sigurður Nordal, however, has shown that there is no evidence for this assumption. Sigurður Nordal, "Formáli," xii. For a brief summary of this dispute, see Jonna Louis-Jensen, "Den yngre del af Flateyjarbók," 235–236, and Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 405 fn. 3.

45 See e.g. Finnur Jónsson, "Introduction," [3]; Sigurður Nordal, "Formáli," xii–xviii; Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*, 405.

of her personal property).<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, *Flateyjarbók* physically traveled from the north of Iceland, where it was commissioned (Víðidalstunga) and written (Víðidalstunga, Reynistaður, Þingeyrar?), to the west, where its later owners, the descendants of Þorleifur Árnason, lived.<sup>47</sup> This supports the geographical distribution pattern (north-west-south) proposed in this article<sup>48</sup> and suggests that most of the earliest Icelandic manuscripts, such as *Möðruvallabók* and *Flateyjarbók*, were produced in the north of Iceland, but that some of the manuscripts, such as *Flateyjarbók*, and gradually manuscript production itself, slowly moved from the north to other parts of the country.

### *Oddabók* and Maternal Ties: Ragnheiður, Steinunn, Guðrún, and Ragnheiður

There are a number of fifteenth-century manuscripts containing texts also preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol.,<sup>49</sup> but the focus in this chapter is on

46 It is evident that the ownership of *Flateyjarbók* after Guðný Jónsdóttir is dominated by men. However, the present article does not argue that women were always directly involved in the distribution of manuscripts but rather that their importance, particularly after the Reformation, may have been greater than previously assumed.

47 See Fig. 2. Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and Ólöf *riki* Loftsdóttir lived at Skarð at Skarðsströnd in the Dalasýsla district of western Iceland. From there, *Flateyjarbók* moved to Reykhólar in the Westfjords, where Þorleifur Björnsson and later his son Björn Þorleifsson lived. It was later brought to Flatey in Breiðafjörður, where it was in the possession of Jón Björnsson, Finnur Jónsson, and lastly Jón Finnsson.

48 See fn. 10.

49 Other manuscripts which should be mentioned here briefly are AM 162 C fol. (1420–1450, containing *Finnboga saga ramma*), GKS 2845 4to (1440–1460, containing *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar* and *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*), AM 471 4to (1450–1500, containing *Þórðar saga hreðu* and *Kjalnesinga saga*), and AM 556 a 4to (1475–1499, containing *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* and *Grettis saga*). All of these manuscripts show connections to the north and northwest (Westfjords and Dalasýsla) of Iceland. Three (AM 162 C fol., AM 471 4to, and AM 556 a 4to) are linked with descendants of Loftur *riki* Guttormsson, Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and the Svalbarð family. AM 556 a 4to was once owned by Eggert Hannesson, a descendant of Björn Þorleifsson *riddari*; and Árni Magnússon received AM 471 4to from Magnús Magnússon of Eyri in Seyðisfjörður (Westfjords), a great-grandson of Magnús *prúði* Jónsson of the Svalbarð family and Ragnheiður Eggertsdóttir, Eggert Hannesson's daughter (see fn. 13). AM 162 C fol. was – according to Stefán Karlsson – written by Ólafur Loftsson, an illegitimate son of Loftur *riki* Guttormsson. Stefán Karlsson, “Ritun Reykjarfjarðarbókar, Excursus: bókagerð bænda,” *Opuscula* 4 (1970): 138. Ólafur owned property in the Eyjafjörður and Þingeyjar districts of northern Iceland, and Stefán Karlsson

AM 466 4to (*Oddabók*), which preserves the same version of *Njáls saga* as GKS 1003 fol., although the text in GKS 1003 fol. is not a direct copy of *Oddabók*.<sup>50</sup> *Oddabók* shows again the importance of the Svalbarð family during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and potentially also the importance of the descendants of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson during the fifteenth century. The codex is also a good example of the importance of maternal ties in the distribution of manuscripts. One of its owners was Þorleifur Jónsson (father of Bishop Björn Þorleifsson),<sup>51</sup> who wrote in the margin of *Oddabók* that “Þorleifur Jónsson aa Niálu þessa Anno 1645” [*Þorleifur Jónsson owns this Njála in the year 1645*]. Since Björn Þorleifsson later presented the manuscript to Árni Magnússon, *Oddabók* was presumably the hereditary property of Þorleifur’s family.<sup>52</sup> If this is indeed the case, it is, in theory, possible to trace the family of Þorleifur back to the time when *Oddabók* was written (c. 1460) (Fig. 3). Þorleifur’s paternal ancestors include Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and his wife Ólöf *ríka* Loftsdóttir, daughter of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson. More importantly, however, on

identifies Ólafur’s script in a number of letters associated with the north (Munkaþverá, Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður) (Ibid., 137–138). It thus seems likely that AM 162 C fol. was written in the north of Iceland. At some point, however, it must have made its way to the south, since part of the manuscript (fols. 8–11) was used as the cover of a manuscript written by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt and owned by Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson at Skálholt (*Katalog over den Arnemagnæanske håndskriftsamling* 1, ed. Kristian Kålund (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1889), 122), illustrating the geographical distribution pattern previously mentioned (see fn. 10). Considering that Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson was not only a collector of manuscripts but also a descendant of the Svalbarð family (see fn. 20), whose matriarch Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum* was a descendant of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson, it is not surprising that he came into the possession of AM 162 C fol. or fragments thereof.

At least one other fifteenth-century manuscript, AM 567 V 4to (1450–1499), contains a text, *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar*, which is also preserved in GKS 1003 fol. The provenance and previous ownership of this manuscript are, however, unknown, which makes it irrelevant for the present study.

50 See Slay, “On the Origin of Two Icelandic Manuscripts in the Royal Library in Copenhagen,” 147.

51 See fn. 15.

52 At one point, Björn Þorleifsson was in the possession of *Oddabók* as well as GKS 1002–1003 fol. It does not seem surprising that GKS 1003 fol. contains the *Oddabók* version of *Njáls saga*. Jón Eyjólfsson, the commissioner of GKS 1002–1003 fol., must have been in close contact with the “other pious men” for whom the two volumes were written. Since this group of men likely included Þorleifur Björnsson, who owned *Oddabók*, a copy of this version of the *Njáls saga* text would have been readily available to Páll Sveinsson, the scribe of GKS 1002–1003 fol.



Þorleifur's mother's side, tracing back his ancestors to the middle of the fifteenth century leads directly (largely via female ancestors) to Loftur Ormsson, grandson of Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson.<sup>53</sup> These potential female owners of *Oddabók* are Þorleifur's mother, Ragnheiður Hannesdóttir;<sup>54</sup> his grandmother Guðrún Ólafsdóttir;<sup>55</sup> his great-grandmother Steinunn Jónsdóttir;<sup>56</sup> and his great-great-grandmother Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir *á rauðum sokkum*.<sup>57</sup> While Þorleifur Björnsson's maternal side of the family appears to be the more prominent one and the more likely candidate for the ownership of *Oddabók*, it should nonetheless be pointed out that even if he inherited the manuscript from his father's side of the family, an argument could still be successfully made for the importance of women forming ties and potentially passing down manuscripts as family heirlooms. Four women in Þorleifur Björnsson's paternal family (Ragnheiður Ásgeirsdóttir, Þóra Ásgeirsdóttir, Solveig Björnsdóttir, and Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir) link Þorleifur with his ancestors Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson.

## AM 152 fol. and Maternal Ties: Helga, Elín, Helga, Elín

AM 152 fol. is the most significant sixteenth-century manuscript containing texts also preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol. The manuscript, which has been dated to the beginning of the sixteenth century, contains *Grettis saga*, *Hálfðanar saga Brönufóstra*, *Flóvents saga*, *Sigurgarðs saga þögla*, *Þórðar saga hreðu*, *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*, *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, *Ectors saga*, *Hrólfs*

53 Stefán Karlsson assumes three of Loftur's illegitimate sons (the aforementioned Ólafur, scribe of AM 162 C fol. (see fn. 49), Ormur *skáld* (see fn. 13), and Skúli Loftsson) to have been scribes during the early and mid-fifteenth century (Stefán Karlsson, "Ritun Reykjarfjarðarbókar," 137–138), and it seems plausible that *Oddabók* may in fact be connected to these brothers (although I did not conduct a comparison of scripts). It should be noted that even though the three scribes were illegitimate sons, Loftur *ríki* Guttormsson not only acknowledged but also financially supported his illegitimate children by giving them a substantial amount of property and other possessions (*DI* 4, 404–406, 515–516).

54 On her mother's side, Ragnheiður was of the Svalbarð family. On the paternal side of her family, Ragnheiður was a descendant of Björn Hannesson, the brother of the aforementioned Eggert Hannesson (see fn. 13).

55 On the paternal side of her family, Guðrún was a descendant of Bishop Gottskálk Nikulásson of Hólar.

56 See fn. 13.

57 See fn. 13.

saga *Gautrekssonar*, *Mágus saga*, and *Gautreks saga*. Of these eleven texts, eight are preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol., which suggests that it was used, either directly or indirectly, as an exemplar for the two codices.

Part of AM 152 fol. was written in the west of Iceland by Þorsteinn Þorleifsson of Svignaskarð, grandson of Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir.<sup>58</sup> Jón Helgason maintains that the manuscript was likely in the possession of the lawman Ari Jónsson,<sup>59</sup> son of Bishop Jón Arason. It has therefore been argued that the manuscript must have been owned by the descendants of Ari Jónsson until Árni Magnússon received it in 1707 from Vigfús Guðbrandsson.<sup>60</sup> Árni Magnússon writes about the manuscript that “þessa bok hefi eg feinged fra Vigfuse Gudbrandz syne, hefur bokina átt Elen Hakonardotter i Vatz firde. Mun vera komin fra Magnus Biörns syne lögmanne því Biörn Magnus son hefur sagt mier ad Helga Magnusdotter hafi efter fôður þeira Grettis Sôgu á perment i storu folio.” [I have received this book from Vigfús Guðbrandsson; Elín Hákonardóttir of Vatnsfjörður has owned the book. Probably came from the lawman Magnús Björnsson, as Björn Magnússon has told me that Helga Magnúsdóttir had

58 Ibid., 138.

59 According to Stefán Karlsson, Ari Jónsson wrote the manuscript AM 433 c 12mo (c.1525–1550), containing *Margrétar saga*, for Steinunn Jónsdóttir of Svalbarð, the concubine of Ari's brother Björn Jónsson. It bears the name “Margrét Bjarnadóttir” on the last folio (56v) written in a hand from the seventeenth century, which is the name of the mother of Bjarni Þorsteinsson of Vesturhópshólar, one of the previous owners of AM 433 c 12mo. Stefán Karlsson argues, therefore, that the manuscript was passed down from Steinunn Jónsdóttir to her daughter Halldóra Björnsdóttir to her daughter Margrét Bjarnadóttir and that the codex was thus owned by women from the sixteenth until the middle of the seventeenth century. Stefán Karlsson, “Kvennahandrit í Karlahöndum,” *Stafkrókar. Ritgerðir eftir Stefán Karlsson gefnar út í tilefni af sjötugsafmæli hans 2. desember 1998*, ed. Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit 49 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 2000), 381–382. [My thanks go to Natalie M. Van Deusen for pointing this example out to me.] See fn. 13 for more information on Steinunn Jónsdóttir and Björn Jónsson.

60 Jón Helgason, *Handritaspjall* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1958), 74. Even though Stefán Karlsson has demonstrated that Jón Helgason makes a mistake in his argumentation by confusing two Björn Þorleifssons (Stefán Karlsson, “The Localisation and Dating of Medieval Icelandic Manuscripts,” *Saga-Book* 25:2 (1999): 142–143), Jón Helgason's general conclusion about the manuscript having been passed down in Ari Jónsson's family remains, nonetheless, valid and has been repeated by other scholars. See e.g. Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, “Góður kall var Grettir’ Sagnahandrit frá um 1500.” <[http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/arnastofnun\\_hand\\_manadarins\\_sagnahandrit](http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/arnastofnun_hand_manadarins_sagnahandrit)>.

received from their father a Grettis saga on parchment in a large folio size].<sup>61</sup> AM 152 fol. thus seems to have been passed down from Ari Jónsson to his daughter Helga Aradóttir<sup>62</sup> to her daughter Elín Pálsdóttir<sup>63</sup> to her son Magnús Björnsson to his daughter Helga Magnúsdóttir,<sup>64</sup> who then passed it on to her daughter Elín Hákonardóttir,<sup>65</sup> who finally gave it to her son Vigfús Guðbrandsson. The case of AM 152 fol. shows both the importance of female family connections in the distribution of manuscripts and the passing down of manuscripts between women. No less than four women appear in the line of potential previous owners of the manuscript, and some of their names appear also in connection with *Möðruvallabók*.

Geographically speaking, the manuscript moved from Möðruvellir in the north of Iceland, where Ari Jónsson lived; to Helga Aradóttir's place of residence, Staðarhóll, in the west; back north to Munkaþverá, where Elín Pálsdóttir and Magnús Björnsson lived; to Bræðratunga in the south, the home of Helga Magnúsdóttir and her daughter Elín Hákonardóttir; and back to the west of Iceland to Vatnsfjörður, where Elín moved after her marriage to Guðbrandur Jónsson in 1672 and where her son Vigfús Guðbrandsson was born.<sup>66</sup> At the time when GKS 1002–1003 fol. were written, AM 152 fol. would have been in the possession of Helga Magnúsdóttir or her daughter Elín Hákonardóttir. Considering Helga's connection to Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson, it is – as previously stated –

61 *Arne Magnussons i AM. 435 a–b, 4to indeholdte håndskriftfortegnelser*, ed. Kristian Kålund (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel – Nordisk Forlag, 1909), 26.

62 Helga was married to Páll Jónsson of the Svalbarð family, cf. fn. 13.

63 Elín was married to Björn Benediktsson (see above and fn. 31).

64 This is the same Helga Magnúsdóttir who wrote the donation to her daughter Jarprúður in JS 28 fol. referred to at the beginning of this article. She inherited manuscripts from her father, Magnús Björnsson, as well as from Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson and was in the possession of a considerable library. See Margrét Eggertsdóttir, "Handritamiðstöðin í Skálholti," *Menntun og menning í Skálholti* 1620–1730. *Skálholt 17.–19. október 2008*, ed. Kristinn Ólason (Skálholt: Grettisakademían, 2010), 82–88; Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir, "Í hverri bók er mannsandi", 315–316.

65 Elín's husband, Guðbrandur Jónsson, was the great-grandson of Magnús *prúði* Jónsson of the Svalbarð family and his wife Ragnheiður Eggertsdóttir as well as of Bishop Guðbrandur Þorláksson of Hólar. Elín's father, Hákon Gíslason, was, furthermore, a descendant of Bishop Jón Arason's daughter Helga Jónsdóttir.

66 From the early sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the manuscript thus follows the north-west-south geographical distribution pattern (see fn. 10).

likely that AM 152 fol. was directly or indirectly used as an exemplar for the two manuscripts.

## Seventeenth-Century Manuscripts: Helga, Jarþrúður, Ragnheiður, and Kristín

While manuscript production in Iceland seems to have taken place primarily in the north and then west of Iceland during the sixteenth century, the trend of increased productivity of manuscript centers in the west and south continues during the seventeenth century.<sup>67</sup> The famous scribe Jón Gissurarson of Núpur from the Westfjords copied at least six of the texts found in GKS 1002-1003 fol. between 1635 and 1643: *Grettis saga* (AM 151 fol.), *Hrólfs saga kraka* (AM 11 fol.), *Finnboga saga ramma* (AM 165 a fol.), *Kjalnesinga saga* (AM 165 m II fol.), *Jökuls þáttir Búasonar* (AM 165 b fol., AM 165 m II fol.), and *Orms þáttir Stórólfssonar* (AM 165 c fol.).<sup>68</sup> He had ties to the Svalbarð family and Bishop Jón Arason, since his mother Ragnheiður Pálsdóttir was the daughter of Páll Jónsson of Svalbarð and Helga Aradóttir.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, his half-brother was Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson,<sup>70</sup> and it seems probable that Brynjólfur received manuscripts from Jón to be copied in the south of Iceland, for example by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt.<sup>71</sup>

67 Two sixteenth-century manuscripts, AM 571 4to (1500–1550) and AM 510 4to (1540–1560), which both contain texts preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol., show connections to the north and west. AM 571 4to was owned by Jón Magnússon of Jórþvík in Útmanasveit and his father Magnús Hávarðsson of Desjarmýri. Their ancestors are connected to the north and northeast of Iceland. AM 510 4to was written by one Ari Jónsson (not to be confused with the son of Bishop Jón Arason) and his sons Jón and Tómas Arason from the Westfjords. On Ari Jónsson and his sons, see Karl Ó. Ólafsson, “Þrír feðgar hafa skrifað bók þessa...” Um þrjár rithendur í AM 510 4to og fleiri handritum,” (M.A. thesis, Háskóli Íslands).

68 Jón Gissurarson also copied *Njáls saga* (AM 136 fol.), but not the *Oddabók* version.

69 See fn. 13.

70 Ragnheiður Pálsdóttir was the mother of both Jón Gissurarson and Brynjólfur Sveinsson. Her first husband, Gissur Þorláksson, father of Jón Gissurarson, was the nephew of Eggert Hannesson on his mother's side and a descendant of Þorleifur Árnason and Kristín Björnsdóttir on his father's side (see fn. 13). Her second husband, Sveinn Símonsson, father of Brynjólfur Sveinsson, was priest at Holt in Öndarfjörður and does not appear to have had a distinguished ancestry.

71 Conversely, it is also possible that Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson supplied his half-brother Jón Gissurarson with manuscripts to be copied in the west of Iceland; see e.g. Springborg,

Jón Erlendsson wrote JS 28 fol. in the south of Iceland around 1660. The manuscript contains *Egils saga Skallagrimssonar*, *Kjalnesinga saga*, *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar*, *Vatnsdæla saga*, *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra*, *Hróa þáttur heimiska*, and the poem *Gullkársljóð*. JS 28 fol. contains two texts also preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol., and it was undeniably owned by at least two women (Helga Magnúsdóttir and one of her daughters, Jarþrúður), both related to Bishop Jón Arason and the Svalbarð family.

It is possible to illustrate the importance of the Svalbarð family during the seventeenth century (and of female family connections in the distribution of manuscripts) with further examples. The paper manuscripts AM 110 fol., AM 163 d fol., AM 125 fol., AM 163 c fol., AM 163 a fol., AM 163 b fol., and AM 202 g fol. II at one point belonged to one codex (c. 1650–1682). Not all texts are written in the same hand, and it is likely that parts of the texts or even some of the leaves were added later. Before Árni Magnússon disassembled the codex,<sup>72</sup> the manuscript contained *Landnámabók*, *Um erlenda biskupa á Íslandi*, *Flóamanna saga*, *Njáls saga* (Oddabók version), *Eyrbyggja saga*, *Kjalnesinga saga*, *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar*, *Laxdæla saga*, two *Fjólsarímur* about Kjartan and Bolli by Þórður Magnússon, *Vatnsdæla saga*, *Grettis saga*, two *lausavísur* beginning with the words “Þrótt og þrek bar Grettir”, *Gunnars saga Keldugnúpsfífls*, *Þórðar saga hreðu*, *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar*, and *Rauðúlfs þáttur*. Six of these texts are also preserved in GKS 1002–1003 fol. Since the exact date of these manuscripts remains unknown, it cannot be ascertained if it was used as an exemplar for GKS 1002–1003 fol. (or, potentially, vice versa). Particularly interesting in the context of this article is AM 125 fol. On fol. 23r, right before the beginning of *Eyrbyggja saga*, someone has crossed out half a page of the text and then glued a blank sheet of paper over the crossed-out section.<sup>73</sup> The

“Antiqvæ historiae lepores,” 78–80 and Lansing, “Post-Medieval Production, Dissemination and Reception of *Hrólfs saga kraka*,” 61.

72 The manuscript AM 163 d fol. contains a note by Árni Magnússon, stating “Flóamanna Saga. Níals saga. Ur bok sem eg keypte 1711. af Sigurde ä Feriu, ok tók sundur j parta, var elldre, enn 1683” [Flóamanna saga. Njáls saga. From a book which I bought 1711 from Sigurður [Magnússon] of Ferja, and took apart; was older than 1683].

73 It is not known when the piece of paper was glued over the text, but it may conceivably have happened in the late seventeenth century, when someone began writing *Eyrbyggja saga* on the bottom half of the page. According to Mette Jakobsen (personal communication), the paper leaf was lifted from the manuscript while it was at the conservation workshop of the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen between January 21 and February 4, 1974.

crossed-out text can be partially read. It begins with parts of two family trees written side by side in two columns, the first entitled “Ætt Magnúsar Jónssonar í Ögri frá Lofti Ríka” [*Family of Magnús Jónsson of Ögur (of the Svalbarð family) from Loftur ríki (Guttormsson)*] and the second bearing the name “Ætt frá Birni Þorleifssyni Ríka sem átti Ólöfu Loftsdóttur” [*Family of Björn Þorleifsson ríki who married Ólöf Loftsdóttir*]. What is remarkable about these two family trees is the number of women mentioned. Of eighteen individuals mentioned (some of whom are mentioned more than once) six are female (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5). In fact, two of these women, Ragnheiður Magnúsdóttir and her daughter Kristín Einarsdóttir,<sup>74</sup> appear at the ends of both family trees, which illustrates their ties to Magnús Jónsson and Loftur ríki Guttormson, as well as to Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir. The fact that Kristín Einarsdóttir is the final name in both family trees suggests that the crossed-out texts in AM 125 fol. (the two genealogies and an unfinished family history of Björn Þorleifsson *riddari* and Eggert Hannesson) were written with Kristín Einarsdóttir in mind, and that a manuscript may have specifically been prepared for her (as a gift) or in her honor (after her death in 1673).<sup>75</sup> The emphasis on women in the family trees in AM 125 fol. furthers the argument that maternal ties played an important role in Icelandic family dynamics.

## Summary and Conclusion

It is clear that major centers of manuscript production in Iceland lay in the north, west, and south of the country. The productivity of these centers fluctuated over time. The north of Iceland produced manuscripts particularly during the fourteenth through the fifteenth century. Later, the centers in the west (Dalasýsla and Westfjords, fifteenth through seventeenth cen-

74 It is unclear where the manuscript was written, but Kristín Einarsdóttir and her husband Magnús Snæbjörnsson lived in the Rangárvellir district of southern Iceland, and this is also where Árni Magnússon received the codex which contained AM 125 fol., suggesting a clear connection to the south of Iceland.

75 Kristín and Markús had eight daughters, of whom three (Gróa, Anna, and Guðrún) married men with distinguished ancestry (descendants of Bishop Jón Arason and the Svalbarð family), highlighting again how marriage was used to further the wealth and power of Iceland's elite. These daughters' extensive offspring include important figures, such as Bishop Jón Teitsson.

ture) and the south (seventeenth century) became more active.<sup>76</sup> Secondly, and more importantly, women, especially those of some of the most influential families in Iceland, played a significant role in the distribution of texts by forming links between families or by inheriting and passing down manuscripts. Some of these women, such as Kristín Björnsdóttir (Vatnsfjarðar-Kristín), Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir, Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir á rauðum sokkum, and Helga Magnúsdóttir, were probably also involved in important family matters. The first, Vatnsfjarðar-Kristín, arranged at least one of her children's marriages<sup>77</sup> and managed the family farm after her husband's death.<sup>78</sup> The second, Ólöf ríka, accompanied her husband Björn Þorleifsson on travels abroad, allegedly made sure he was avenged after he was killed by English traders, paid ransom to free her son Þorleifur, and pursued and eventually overcame the English with the help of her sons. She reportedly took some of the traders as prisoners and let them work as slaves on her farm at Skarð at Skarðsströnd.<sup>79</sup> The third, Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir á rauðum sokkum, was the matriarch of the Svalbarð family, one of the richest and most influential families in Iceland during the six-

76 Tereza Lansing noticed in her research of manuscripts containing *Hrólfs saga kraka* that manuscripts containing this saga disappeared almost entirely from the south after the seventeenth century and production moved to the east instead (Ibid., 66). Silvia Hufnagel (personal communication) observed that eighteenth-century manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka* originated from the southeast, northwest, and west. Since this article deals only with manuscripts up to the late seventeenth century, it is at this point not necessary to include their findings here.

77 See fn. 13.

78 Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir, "Eigi skal gráta Björn bónda heldur safna liði' Ólöf ríka, goðsögn og saga," 33–34.

79 For these and more details on Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir's biography, see Ibid. and Einar G. Pétursson, "Fróðleiksmolar um Skarðverja," *Hulin Pláss. Ritgerðasafn gefið út í tilefni sjötugs-afmælis höfundar 25. júlí 2011*, ed. Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Rit 79 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, 2011), 238–243. Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir mentions that Ingibjörg Pálsdóttir, Ólöf ríka's mother, was apparently also not afraid to take matters into her own hands, cf. Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir, "Eigi skal gráta Björn bónda heldur safna liði," 22. It is also worth mentioning that a collection of confessions, the so-called *skriftamál Ólafar* [Ólöf's Confession] or *Confessio turpissima* [A Most Shameful Confession], surviving in an eighteenth-century paper manuscript (JS 308 8vo), have been attributed to Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir, see Ibid., 30–31 and Helga Kress, "Confessio Turpissima. Um skriftamál Ólafar ríku Loftsdóttur," *Ný Saga* 11 (1999): 4. The confessions are so explicit in context that the editors of the *DI* refused to print parts of the text. Ibid., 6; *DI* 4, 241 fn. 1. For a detailed discussion and transcription of the *Confessio turpissima*, see Helga Kress, "Confessio Turpissima."



teenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>80</sup> The fourth, Helga Magnúsdóttir, had to raise her children alone after her husband died when she was merely thirty years old. Her ability to be father and mother to her children is praised in the highest terms in her eulogy.<sup>81</sup> It is partly due to the importance and influence of these and other women that the production and distribution of manuscripts such as GKS 1002 and 1003 fol. was made possible.

80 The fact that all three women have bynames is also worth mentioning. While men in the Icelandic sagas very frequently have bynames attributed to them, only women of high standing who play influential roles are given the same privilege.

81 Margrét Eggertsdóttir, "Handritamiðstöðin í Skálholti," 84.



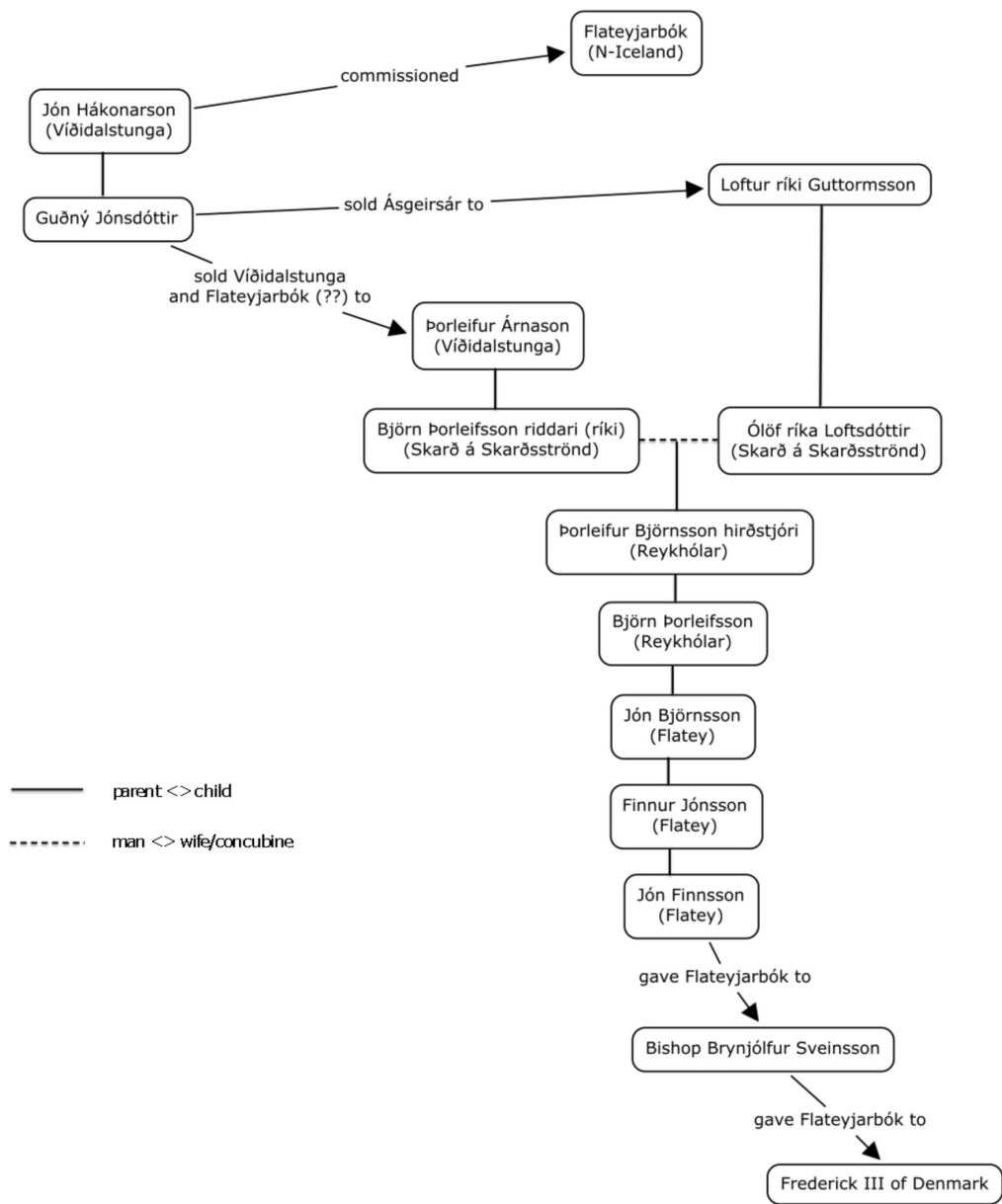


Figure 2: Probable path of Flateyjarbók.

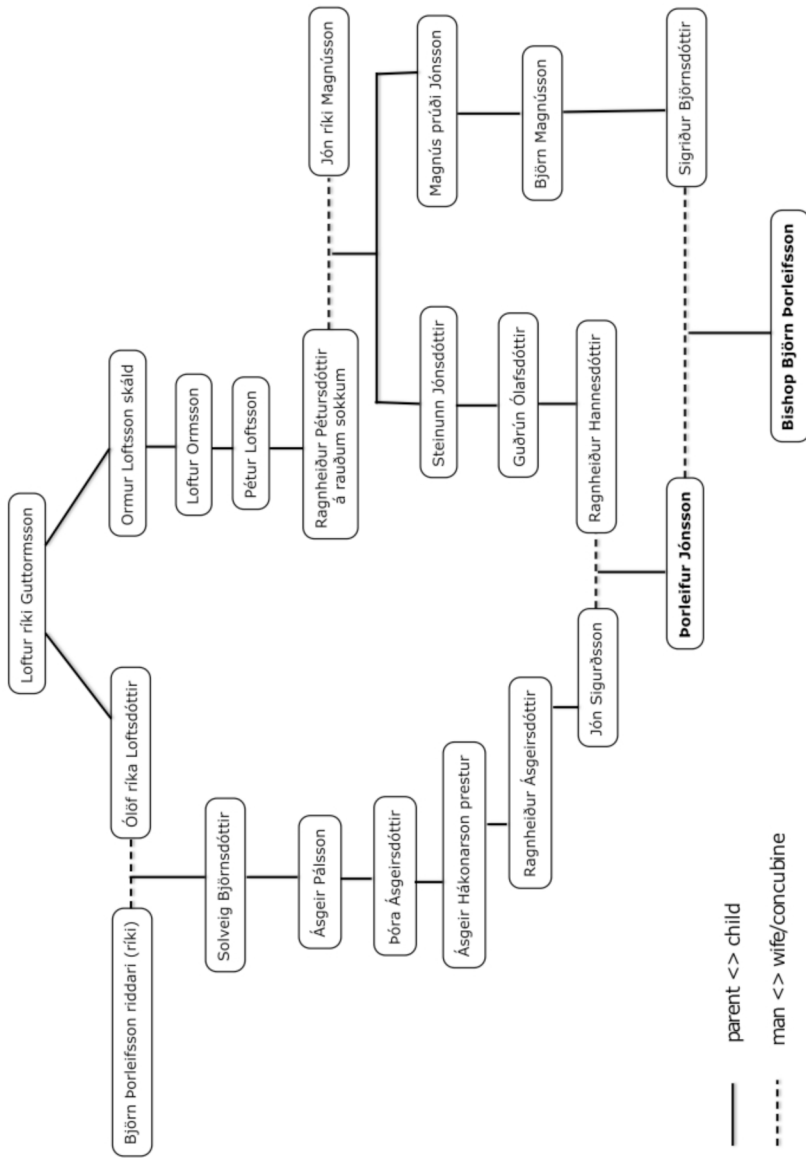


Figure 3: Simplified family tree of Bishop Björn Þorleifsson and his father Þorleifur Jónsson.

Ætt Magnúfar Jónsonar J Øgre	Ætt þrá Birne Þolleipþyne
þrá Lopte Rýka	Riddara fem ätte Olöfu
Guttormur Loptþon	Loptzdottur
Loptur [hans?] [sonur?]	Þöra og Jön dan(ur) hans Börn [laung..ra]
Petur Loptþon	Björn Gudnafon sonur Þoru
Ragneidur Peturzdötter	Broder Helgu Gudnadottur J
Magnús Jónþon J Øgre	Klofu kvinnu Torfa [Ribbalde?]
hennar [sonur?]	Gudrun Bjarnardottir kvinnu
Ragneidur J [Áse?] hans dötter	Hannefar Eggertþonar [Riddara?]
Kristfyn Einarsdötter	Eggert Hanneþon [E...?]
hennar [dötter?]	Ragneidur Eggertsdöttir [....?]
	Ragneidur Magnusdottir [hennar?]
	Kristfyn Einnarsdötter [og? ...?]
	hennar [dötter?]

Figure 4: Transcription of family tree on fol. 23r in AM 125 fol.

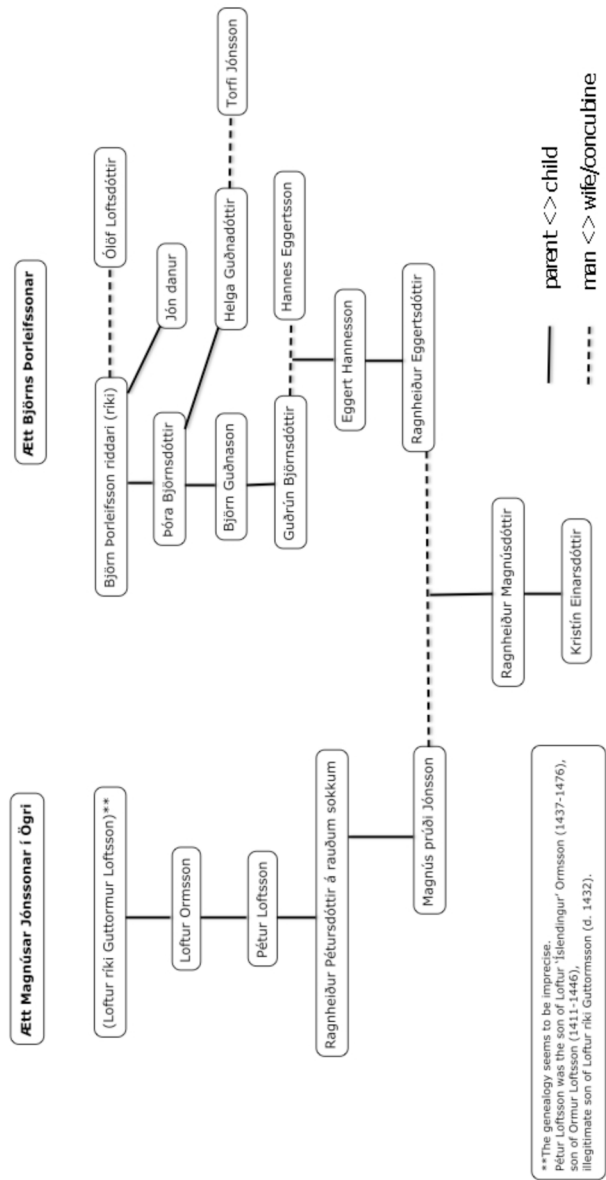


Figure 5: Family tree according to AM 125 fol., fol. 23r

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## PRIMARY SOURCES IN MANUSCRIPTS

AM 2 fol.	AM 202 g fol. II
AM 11 fol.	AM 466 4to
AM 110 fol.	AM 471 4to
AM 125 fol.	AM 510 4to
AM 132 fol.	AM 556 a 4to
AM 136 fol.	AM 567 V 4to
AM 137 fol.	AM 571 4to
AM 151 fol.	AM 764 4to
AM 162 C fol.	AM 136 a 8vo
AM 163 a fol.	AM 143 8vo
AM 163 b fol.	AM 433 c 12mo
AM 163 c fol.	GKS 1002 fol.
AM 163 d fol.	GKS 1003 fol.
AM 165 a fol.	GKS 1005 fol.
AM 165 b fol.	GKS 2845 4to
AM 165 c fol.	JS 28 fol.
AM 165 m II fol.	JS 308 8vo

## PRIMARY SOURCES IN PRINT

- DI = *Diplomatarium Islandicum. Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga, dóma og máldaga, og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenzka menn* 1–16. Eds. Jón Sigurðsson et al. Copenhagen: Hið íslenzka bókmentafélag, 1857–1972.
- DI 4 = *Diplomatarium Islandicum. Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga, dóma og máldaga, og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenzka menn* 4. 1265–1449. Ed. Jón Þorkelsson. Copenhagen: Hið íslenzka bókmentafélag, 1895–1897.
- DI 6 = *Diplomatarium Islandicum. Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga, dóma og máldaga, og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenzka menn* 6. 1245–1491. Ed. Jón Þorkelsson. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka bókmentafélag, 1900–1904.
- Jónsbók. *The Laws of Later Iceland. The Icelandic Text According to MS AM 351 fol. Skálholtsbók eldri.* Ed. and transl. Jana K. Schulman. Bibliotheca Germanica, Series Nova 4. Saarbrücken: AQ-Verlag, 2010.



## SECONDARY LITERATURE

- Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir. "Eigi skal gráta Björn bónda heldur safna liði." Ólöf ríka, goðsögn og saga." *Heimtur. Ritgerðir til heiðurs Gunnari Karlssyni sjötugum*. Eds. Guðmundur Jónsson et al. Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 2009, 19–34.
- Arne Magnussons i AM. 435 a–b, 4to indeholdte håndskriftfortegnelser. Ed. Kristian Kålund. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel - Nordisk Forlag, 1909.
- Bogi Benediktsson. *Sýslumannaæfir* 1–5. Ed. Hannes Þorsteinsson. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmentafélag, 1881–1932.
- Van Deusen, Natalie M. "Stitches in the Margins: The Embroidery Pattern in AM 235 fol." *Maal og minne* (2011): 26–42.
- Einar G. Pétursson. "Fróðleiksmolar um Skarðverja." *Hulin Pláss. Ritgerðasafn gefið út í tilefni sjötugsafmalis höfundar 25. júlí 2011*. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Rit 79. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, 2011, 219–253. Orig. *Breiðfirðingur* 48 (1990): 28–75.
- Einar Ól. Sveinsson. "Introduction." *Möðruvallabók (Codex Möðruvallensis)*. MS. No. 132 fol. in the Arnarnagæan Collection in the University Library of Copenhagen. Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi 5. Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1933, 9–23.
- . *Um Njálu* 1. Reykjavík: Bókadeild Menningarsjóðs, 1933.
- . *Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga*. Studia Islandica 13. Reykjavík: Heimspekideild Háskóla Íslands, 1953.
- "FamilySearch. Community Trees." <<http://histfam.familysearch.org>> [accessed June 5, 2012.]
- Finnur Jónsson. "Introduction." *Flateyjarbók. (Codex Flateyensis)*. MS. no. 1005 Fol. in the Old Royal Collection in the Royal Library of Copenhagen. Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi 1. Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1930, [7 pages, not paginated].
- Guðni Jónsson. *Bólstaðir og búendur í Stokkseyrarhreppi*. Reykjavík: Stokkseyringa-félagið í Reykjavík, 1952.
- Guðrún Ingólfssdóttir. "Í hverri bók er mannsandi." *Handritasýrpur – bókmenning, þekking og sjálfsmynd karla og kvenna á 18. öld*. Studia Islandica 62. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2011.
- Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson. "Góður Kall Var Grettir." *Sagnahandrit frá um 1500*. <[http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/arnastofnun\\_hand\\_manadarins\\_sagnahandrit](http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/arnastofnun_hand_manadarins_sagnahandrit)> [accessed June 5, 2011.]
- Hall, Alaric. "Making Stemmas with Small Samples: Testing the Stemma of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, and New Media Approaches to Publishing Stemmas." <[http://www.alarichall.org.uk/working\\_paper\\_on\\_stemmas\\_from\\_small\\_samples/](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/working_paper_on_stemmas_from_small_samples/)> [accessed June 5, 2012.]
- Helga Kress. "Confessio Turpissima. Um skriftamál Ólafar ríku Loftsdóttur." *Ný Saga* 11 (1999): 4–20.

- Hufnagel, Silvia. "Sörla saga sterka. Studies in the Transmission of a *fornaldarsaga*." Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen, 2012.
- Jakob Benediktsson. "Bókagerð Þorláks biskups Skúlasonar." *Saga og kirkja. Afmælisrit Magnúsar Mús Lárussonar. Gefið út í tilefni af sjötugsafmæli hans 2. september 1987*. Eds. Gunnar Karlsson et al. Reykjavík: Sögufélag, 1988, 193–197.
- Jochens, Jenny. *Women in Old Norse Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Jón Helgason. *Handritaspjall*. Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1958.
- Jón Þorkelsson. "Om håndskrifterne af Njála." *Njála 2. Udgivet efter gamle håndskrifter*. Ed. Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson. Copenhagen: Det kongelige nordiske oldskrift-selskap, 1889, 765–783.
- Karl Ó. Ólafsson. "'Þrír feðgar hafa skrifað bók þessa...' Um þrjár rithendur í AM 510 4to og fleiri handritum." M.A. thesis, Háskóli Íslands, 2006.
- Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske håndskriftsamling 1–2*. Ed. Kristian Kålund. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1889–1894.
- Katalog over de oldnorsk-islandske håndskrifter i Det store kongelige bibliotek og i Universitetsbiblioteket (undenfor den Arnamagnæanske samling) samt den Arnamagnæanske samlings tilvækst 1894–99*. Ed. Kristian Kålund. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1900.
- Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir. "Für welchen Empfänger wurde die *Flateyjarbók* ursprünglich konzipiert?" *Opuscula* 13 (2010): 1–53.
- Lansing, Tereza. "Post-Medieval Production, Dissemination and Reception of *Hrólfs saga kraka*." Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen, 2011.
- Louis-Jensen, Jonna. "Den yngre del af *Flateyjarbók*." *Afmælisrit Jóns Helgasonar, 30. júní 1969*. Eds. Jakob Benediktsson et al. Reykjavík: Heimskringla, 1969, 235–250.
- "Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands >> Einstaklingar." <<http://manntal.is>> [accessed June 5, 2012.]
- Margrét Eggertsdóttir. "Handritamiðstöðin í Skálholti." *Menntun og menning í Skálholtsstifti 1620–1730. Skálholt 17.–19. október 2008*. Ed. Kristinn Ólason. Skálholt: Grettisakademían, 2010, 79–88.
- . "Um kveðskap kvenna og varðveislu hans." *Vefnir* 2 (1999) <<http://vefnir.is/grein.php?id=711>> [accessed June 5, 2012.]
- Már Jónsson. "Þórður biskup Þorláksson og söfnun íslenskra handrita á síðari hluta 17. aldar." *Frumkvöðull vísinda og mennta. Þórður Þorláksson biskup í Skálholti. Erindi flutt á ráðstefnu í Skálholti 3.–4. maí 1997 í tilefni af þrjúhundruðustu ártíð Þórðar biskups Þorlákssonar*. Ed. Jón Pálsson. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 1998, 179–196.
- Merschberger, Gerda. *Die Rechtsstellung der Germanischen Frau. Mit 21 Abbildungen im Text*. Mannus-Bücherei 57. Leipzig: C. Kabitzsch, 1937.

- Müller, Claudia. *Erzähltes Wissen. Die Isländersagas in der Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol.)*. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik 47. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001.
- Munksgaard, Ejnar. *Om Flatøbogen og dens historie*. Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1930.
- Páll Eggert Ólason. *Íslenzkar æviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940* 1–5. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka bókmenntafélag, 1948–1952.
- Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman. *The Development of Flateyjarbók. Iceland and the Norwegian Dynastic Crisis of 1389*. The Viking Collection, Studies in Northern Civilization 15. Odense: The University Press of Southern Denmark, 2005.
- Sigurður Nordal. "Formáli." *Flateyjarbók* 1. [s.l.]: Flateyjarútgáfan, 1944, v–xxix.
- Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson. "Magnús Björnsson og Möðruvallabók." *Saga* 32 (1994): 103–151.
- Slay, Desmond. "On the Origin of Two Icelandic Manuscripts in the Royal Library in Copenhagen." *Opuscula* 1 (1960): 143–150.
- Springborg, Peter. "Antiqvæ historiæ lepores - Om renæssancen i den islandske håndskriftproduktion i 1600-tallet." *Gardar* 8 (1977): 53–89.
- Stefán Karlsson. "The Localisation and Dating of Medieval Icelandic Manuscripts." *Saga-Book* 25:2 (1999): 138–158.
- . "Ritun Reykjarfjarðarbókar, Excursus: bókagerð bænda." *Opuscula* 4 (1970): 120–140.
- . "Kvennahandrit í karlahöndum." *Stafrókar. Ritgerðir eftir Stefán Karlsson gefnar út í tilefni af sjötugsafmæli hans 2. desember 1998*. Ed. Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit 49. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 2000, 378–382. Orig. *Sögur af háaloftinu sagðar Helgu Kress 21. september 1989*, eds. Ástráður Eysteinnsson et al. Reykjavík: [s.n.], 1989, 75–80.
- Storm, Gustav. *Sagnkredsene om Karl den Store og Didrik af Bern hos de nordiske folk. Et bidrag til middelalderens litterære historie*. Oslo: Den norske historiske forening, 1874.
- Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir. "Universal History in Fourteenth-Century Iceland. Studies in AM 764 4to." Ph.D. thesis, Scandinavian Studies, University of London, 2000.
- "The Variance of Njáls saga." <<http://njalssaga.wordpress.com>> [accessed November 13, 2012.]
- Örn Bjarnason. "Læknabók Þorleifs Björnssonar 1." *Læknablaðið* 90:4 (2004): 335–338.

## EFNISÁGRIP

Mikilvægi kvensifja í eigendasögu og varðveisluhefð íslenskra handrita frá miðöldum til sautjándu aldar

**Lykilorð:** Kvensifjar, handritaeygn, handritavarðveisla, Ólöf ríka Loftsdóttir, Ragnheiður Pétursdóttir á rauðum sokkum, Loftur ríki Guttormsson, Björn Þorleifsson riddari, Jón Arason, Svalbarðsætt.

Í greininni eru færð rök að því að íslenskar konur hafi fyrr á öldum gengt öllu mikilvægara hlutverki í eigendamenningu handrita en hingað til hefur verið látið í veðri vaka. Þær tengdu áhrifamiklar ættir með mægðum og erfðu, áttu og létu til arfs eftir sig handrit. Rannsókn þessi á nokkrum handritum frá fjórtándu til sautjándu aldar, s.s. spássíukroti þeirra, merkingum skrifara, eða öðru sem vísbendingar gefur um eiganda eða eigendur, sýnir að umrædd handrit tengjast aðallega kvenlegg einhverra valdamestu ætta Íslands. Einnig er sýnt að landfræðileg dreifing handritanna og aldur þeirra stendur í samhengi við misjöfn blómaskeið í handritagerð norðan, vestan og sunnan lands.

*Susanne M. Arthur*  
*Department of Scandinavian Studies*  
*University of Wisconsin-Madison*  
*1306 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive*  
*Madison, Wisconsin 53706, U.S.A.*  
*s.arthur@twoclouds.net*