

Writing, Reading, and Utilizing *Njáls saga*: The Codicology of Iceland's Most Famous Saga.

by

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Für meinen Papa

**Engelbert Fahn**

(1944-1995)

*doctor rerum politicarum*

Du hättest von meiner Doktorarbeit sicherlich mehr verstanden als ich von deiner.

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Wisconsin from October 2009

and until May

2015.\*

\*If you would like to know what this ending is all about, you just have to read the dissertation.

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## ABSTRACT

**Writing, Reading, and Utilizing *Njáls saga*: The Codicology of Iceland's Most Famous Saga**

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This dissertation analyzes material aspects (codicology) as well as the readership and reception of the just over sixty extant manuscripts containing the Icelandic family saga *Njáls saga* (c1280). The manuscripts date from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. Through the analysis of codicological features, such as size, layout, and text density, it is possible to construct trends and changes in manuscript production over time and illustrate how differences in the codicological make-up of a manuscript allude to its intended purpose, such as scholarly or private use.

The dissertation begins with three introductory chapters, outlining the history of codicology in general and specific to Scandinavia (Chapter 1), the methodology utilized for the codicological study (Chapter 2), and the history of research on *Njáls saga* (Chapter 3). These introductions are followed by the presentation (Chapter 4) and analysis (Chapter 5) of the codicological data collected. The sixth chapter takes a closer look at the readership and reception of the manuscripts in question. First, a small selection of manuscripts are used as case studies to exemplify how codicological data, in combination with ownership marks, marginal notes, and manuscript context (the various texts preserved in one codex), can be utilized to construct the history and social background of the manuscripts. The second part of this chapter offers a detailed overview and interpretation of paratextual features, both those that show no connection to the saga text (e.g., ownership marks, pen trials) and those that relate to the story, including marginal annotations by scribes and readers, highlighted and underlined passages, or depictions of scenes and characters. Chapter 7 offers an overall summary as well as possibilities for future research.

## PREFACE

In 2011, the research project “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” received funding from the Icelandic Center for Research (RANNÍS). The principal investigator, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir from The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in Iceland, invited me to become part of the research group and to connect my dissertation to the project. While most participants in “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” project have focused on the textual variance within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, my focus and that of this dissertation is to examine the material variance (codicology) as well as the readership and reception of the just over sixty extant manuscripts containing Iceland’s most famous family saga: *Njáls saga* (c1280). The dissertation illustrates how the analysis of codicological features, such as size, layout, and text density, can be used to study trends and changes in manuscript production over time and shows how differences in the codicological make-up of a manuscript allude to its intended purpose, such as scholarly or private use.

The dissertation begins with three introductory chapters, outlining the history of codicology in general and specific to Scandinavia (Chapter 1), the methodology utilized for the codicological study (Chapter 2), and the history of research on *Njáls saga* (Chapter 3). Section 2.3.1. introduces various abbreviations used throughout this dissertation and in accompanying tables and figures for the collected codicological data and its analysis. These abbreviations are listed immediately following this preface in alphabetical order, with a brief explanation, to provide the reader with an easier reference.

Chapters 4 and 5 represent a codicological study in a stricter sense, focusing on measurements taken and data collected of the physical aspects of the sixty-one codices and fragments, which date from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. A major distinction has been made between manuscripts written on vellum and those on paper. Moreover, manuscripts are grouped together by century. The interpretation of the codicological features allows for an interpretation of the purpose of individual manuscripts, such as high-status, generously designed, decorative manuscripts or plainer, more densely written personal reading copies. This distinction was

evident between both manuscripts on vellum and paper. Among the paper manuscripts, further categories could be established. Some paper manuscripts were written for a scholarly audience, while the majority was likely used for entertainment purposes. The latter – in this dissertation referred to as ‘private reading manuscripts’ – shows great variation with regard to the degree to which the manuscripts were decorated. These manuscripts are, therefore, divided into three categories: decorative, moderate, and plain. While the results of the codicological data analysis from the *Njáls saga* manuscripts are often comparable to those of similar studies of Icelandic manuscripts, they do, on occasion, differ, particularly regarding the size of the manuscripts and writing blocks (especially medieval vellum manuscripts) and the extent to which the text was abbreviated.

Chapter 6 takes a closer look at the readership and reception of the manuscripts in question. First, a small selection of manuscripts are used as case studies to exemplify how codicological data, in combination with ownership marks, marginal notes, and manuscript context (the various texts preserved in one codex), can be utilized to construct the history and social background of the manuscripts (Sections 6.2. and 6.3.). The large number of *Njáls saga* manuscripts makes it necessary to restrict such detailed analyses to a small number of codices. The second part (Section 6.4.) offers a detailed overview and interpretation of paratextual features, both those that show no connection to the saga text (e.g., ownership marks, pen trials) and those that relate to the story, including marginal annotations by scribes and readers, highlighted and underlined passages, or depictions of scenes and characters. The discussion of paratextual features shows how signs of usage and signs of readership vary among the different established manuscript categories (i.e., vellum vs. paper; scholarly vs. private) and what aspects of *Njáls saga* particularly engaged the scribes and readers.

Chapter 7 offers an overall summary as well as possibilities for future research.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR CODICOLOGICAL DATA ANALYSIS

<b>*</b>	Result that is excluded, generally in case of heavily damaged fragments (= unreliable).
<b>#lines</b>	Number of lines on a given page of the manuscript
<b>#signs</b>	Average number of signs on 10 cm of line (excluding superscript signs)
<b>#words</b>	Average number of words on 10 cm of line
<b>ABBR%</b>	Percentage of abbreviation signs (of total number of counted signs, both superscript and on the line).
<b>AVG</b>	Average result
<b>DIFF</b>	Difference between MAX and MIN results
<b>MAX</b>	Maximum result
<b>MDN</b>	Median between MIN and MAX results
<b>MIN</b>	Minimum result
<b>signs/dm<sup>2</sup></b>	Average number of signs per one square decimeter.
<b>UR</b>	<i>Unità di Rigatura</i> , calculated by taking the height of the writing block and dividing it by the number of lines minus one.
<b>W+H</b>	Width plus height of the leaves; half a circumference of the manuscript; indication of manuscript size
<b>W:H<sub>leaf</sub></b>	Ratio of width to height of the leaves
<b>W:H<sub>WB</sub></b>	Ratio of width to height of the writing block
<b>WB%</b>	Percentage the writing block takes up of the entire page

## 1. Introduction: Codicology

### 1.1. A Note about the Relationship between Codicology and Paleography

The relationship between codicology, the study of the physical aspects of a manuscript and book,<sup>1</sup> and paleography, the study of script, has been a matter of dispute. Muzerelle (1991) notes that in the 1930s codicologists were still called paleographers (369), and Gruijs (1972) draws attention to the fact that in Italy, Spain, and parts of some Anglo-Saxon countries, the term palaeography is still used both for the study of handwriting (= paleography) as well as for the study of manuscripts (= codicology) (90) (see also Brown 1976:60). According to Milde (Löffler and Milde 1997:19-20), however, codicology does not include paleography, which is considered a discipline in its own right. Some scholars, especially in German speaking countries, argue that codicology is closely related to or even synonymous with the German discipline *Handschriftenkunde* [manuscript studies] (Muzerelle 1991:347; Gumbert 1975:336). They maintain that the German term may indeed be more accurate, since it covers all aspects of manuscripts studies, including paleography, and both the more general definition of codicology as well as codicology in a stricter sense (Löffler and Milde 1997:19-20; Mazal 1986:25). This assumption does not, however, hold true, since German scholars likewise differentiate between *Handschriftenkunde* and *Paläographie*. Gruijs (1972) argues that while the two terms were used synonymously in Germany in the past, this practice has changed since the beginning of the twentieth century (93). Gruijs (1972) gives the example of the German philologist Ludwig Traube. Traube used the two terms as equivalents in his publication *Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters* (originally published 1902/3, see also Traube and Lehmann 1911). But only a few years later, in 1905/6, he makes “a conceptual and methodological distinction” (Gruijs 1972:93) between *Handschriftenkunde* and *Paläographie* in his lectures about the history and foundation of both disciplines (see also Traube 1909). The distinction between codicology (*Handschriftenkunde*) and paleography by German scholars is, for example, clear from Traube’s lecture series, in his book *Zur Paläographie und Handschriftenkunde* (1909), and in Schneider’s

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<sup>1</sup> See below as well as Chapter 2, particularly section 2.3. for a definition of codicology.

book *Paläographie/Handschriftenkunde: Paläographie und Handschriftenkunde für Germanisten. Eine Einführung* (Grujijs 1972:92-93; Schneider 1999<sup>2</sup>).

In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Mathisen (2008) concludes that while codicology and paleography are two distinct disciplines, the best way to utilize them in reconstructing the history of codices is to combine them (141). Most scholars will probably agree that this is the most desirable approach in the study of medieval manuscripts. According to Grujijs (1972), it is impossible to separate handwritten texts from the manuscripts that preserve them or vice versa (93). Grujijs (1972) notes, furthermore, that Traube, who was the first German scholar to differentiate between codicology (*Handschriftenkunde*) and paleography, insisted that “this distinction ... [was] not a separation,” but that both disciplines “are inseparable and complementary” (93).

This close relationship between codicology and paleography, makes it necessary to include paleography in any discussion of the research history of manuscript studies in general and codicology specifically.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.2. Research History and Definition

Mazal (1986) traces the history of manuscript studies back to ancient Greek librarians, who tried to date texts and identify their authors in order to compensate for missing, incomplete, or false authorship of codices (1). This tradition was subsequently adopted by Roman librarians as well as Christian clerics and resulted in the production of early catalogues and bibliographies. Mazal (1986) notes that during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, all religious orders commissioned bibliographies of texts by Christian authors (2). At the same time, scholars and laymen, such as jurist and humanist Guglielmo da Pastrengo from Verona (*De originibus rerum libellus*, 1547), put together catalogues of works by Christian and non-Christian authors (Copenhaver 1978:210).

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<sup>2</sup> For this dissertation, Schneider’s first edition is cited. A third, revised edition was published in 2014 (see Schneider 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Various excellent publications offer summaries of the research history of paleography and codicology. These include: Grujijs (1972); Gumbert (1975); Mazal (1986); Muzerelle (1991); Löffler and Milde (1997); Schneider (1999); Foerster and Frenz (2004); Gumbert (2004); Haugen (2007a); Haugen (2007b); Schneider (2014). The contents of this chapter, unless noted otherwise, are based on the information given in these publications.

Even though certain terms for different scripts were developed during the Middle Ages, scholars did not analyze the scripts or codices themselves in a scientific way. Nonetheless, they may have included information about the provenances of codices, a general description of their preservation, and from the sixteenth century onwards, suggested dates of the manuscripts in their scholarly works. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries showed an increase in the acquisition, collection, and edition of written works. During this time, editors also began to use multiple manuscripts as the basis for text editions, including the printer and publisher Anton Koberger from Nuremberg, who used more than eighteen manuscripts for an edition of the Bible at the turn of the fifteenth century.

The first scholarly paleographical study was conducted by the French Benedictine monk Jean Mabillon from the Congregation of St. Maur and published in his work *De re diplomatica libri VI* (1681). His work was a reaction to the Jesuit Daniel Papebroch's allegation that almost all documents from Merovingian times were forged. Papebroch had published the results of his study in 1675 in *Acta Sanctorum* under the title *Propylaeum antiquarium circa veri et falsi discrimen in vetustis membranis*. The Congregation of St. Maur wanted to refute Papebroch's allegation, since their monasteries housed some of the oldest, most important documents and manuscripts, which were the basis of scholarly works by Maurists on the history of the Church and religious orders as well as secular matters and literature. The Maurists assigned Jean Mabillon to disprove Papebroch's work. Mazal (1986) calls Mabillon's work the first comprehensive paleographical study (7). Because of his methodology, Mabillon is often considered the founder of diplomatics<sup>4</sup> and paleography as scholarly disciplines (Haugen 2007b:223-224).

The term paleography was not, however, introduced until 1708 in Bernard de Montfauçon's *Palaeographia graeca sive de ortu et progressu literaruill*. While Mabillon's work still focused heavily on diplomatics, de Montfauçon made book script and handwriting, and thereby paleography, the center of his analysis. Foerster and Frenz (2004) note that even though de Montfauçon does not

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<sup>4</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines diplomatics as "the science of diplomas, or of ancient writings, literary and public documents, letters, decrees, charters, codicils, etc., which has for its object to decipher old writings, to ascertain their authenticity, their date, signatures, etc." (see "Diplomatics" 1989).

add much to the discussion of the origin of script (“de ortu literarum”), his study and description of the development of the Greek scripts and letter forms (“de progressu literarum”) is an exceptionally valuable contribution to paleography as a scholarly discipline (9). De Montfauçon’s book was followed by his publication of the first scholarly manuscript catalogue of the Fonds Coislin, the collection of Greek manuscripts of Bishop Henri Charles du Cambout de Coislin. In this catalogue, de Montfauçon (1715) also included a description of hitherto undated manuscripts and attempted to date them on the basis of paleography. His efforts resulted in the production of catalogues of other library inventories by scholars such as British librarian David Casley (*A Catalogue of the manuscripts of the King's Library, an appendix to the Catalogue of the Cottonian Library, with an Index*. 1734), French scholar Anicet Melot (*Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Regiae Parisiensis*. 1739-1944), and Italian cleric Giuseppe Pasini (*Codices manuscripti Bibliothecae regiae Taurinensis Athenaei*. 1749). In contrast to earlier catalogues, these catalogues focused more on codicology than on philology and included more detailed information about the dating of manuscripts based on paleography, philology, and codicology.

During the early eighteenth century, the study of medieval manuscripts increased. The Italian archaeologist Marchese di Maffei Francesco Scipione in particular helped to further advance paleography and codicology as scholarly disciplines after his rediscovery of the lost library of the Veronese cathedral chapter and his paleographical study of the library’s manuscripts in 1713.

Between 1750 and 1765, the two Benedictine monks Charles François Toustain and René Prosper Tassin published the *Nouveau Traité de diplomatique . . . par deuz Religieux Bénédictins de la Congrégation de St. Maur*. Toustain and Tassin summarized the previous research history and essential findings of diplomatics and paleography in six volumes. Their study included a review of de Montfauçon, Maffei, and other German, Spanish, and English scholars.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, paleography – still as part of diplomatics – began to find its way into various universities, including Gießen, Jena, Halle, Göttingen, and Strasbourg. Foerster and Frenz (2004) point out that France played a major role in the development of paleography as an independent scholarly discipline during the nineteenth century



(14). The establishment of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, the École des Chartes, the École pratique des Hautes Études, and the Bibliothèque Nationale contributed to the field of paleography by publishing journals and by educating archivists and librarians. In order to accommodate the new teaching facilities, early instruction materials were published, such as Natalis de Wailly's *Éléments de paléographie* (1838), Louis Alphonse Chassant's *Paléographie des chartes et des manuscrits du XIe au XVIIe siècle* (1839), Auguste de Bastard d'Estang's *Peintures et ornements des manuscrits classés dans un ordre chronologique* (1835-1848), or Champollion-Figéac's *Paléographie universelle* (1839-1841).

Not only in France, but also in Italy, Great Britain, and Germany did paleography receive increasing interest during the nineteenth century. Major scholarly centers were Rome, Florence, Montecassino, Turin, and most importantly the Vatican in Italy, the British Library (formerly British Museum) as well as the university libraries of Oxford and Cambridge and other colleges in England. The establishment of a department of paleography at the Sapienza University of Rome by Ernesto Monaci and the establishment of the Scuola di Paleografia e Diplomatica in Florence (1857) were tremendously important for paleographical studies in Italy. Ernesto Monaci and C. Paoli also created the journal *Archivio paleografico italiano* in 1888. In Great Britain, the Palaeographical Society was founded in 1873. After its closure in 1894, it was re-established as the New Palaeographical Society in 1903. In Germany, the Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde (1819) helped to strengthen paleography as a scholarly science.

The German bibliographer Ebert is often seen as the first scholar to put forth a definition of the modern discipline codicology in his work *Zur Handschriftenkunde* (1825). Ebert also promotes a clear division of diplomatics, epigraphy, and paleography, suggesting that *Handschriftenkunde* [paleography and codicology] is a distinct, autonomous discipline.

However, a more important scholar for the establishment of paleography and codicology is Traube, whom Hessel (1927) calls the true inventor of paleography as a science ("den eigentlichen Schöpfer der Paläographie als Wissenschaft," 160). Traube focused solely on book script. He conducted a detailed study of the history and development of abbreviations and was interested in

analyzing the transmission and reception of texts through codicology and paleography. His publication *Zur Paläographie und Handschriftenkunde* (1909) illustrates that paleography and codicology are inseparable, despite the fact that they are two distinct disciplines.

During the twentieth century, codicology became more and more established as an autonomous research field, especially in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, which was founded in 1937 by the paleographer Félix Grat, became one of the most important institutions for the development of codicology as a scholarly science. In 1953, the Comité international de paléographie latine met for the first time in Paris. The conference, which was held at the initiative of Charles Samaran, offered scholars of Latin paleography the possibility to meet at an international colloquium.<sup>5</sup> Samaran was also involved in the development of codicology.

Until Samaran, French scholars used the “unwieldy” term “science des manuscrits” to translate *Handschriftenkunde* (Grujijs 1972:94). In a series of lectures in 1934-35, Samaran, however, proposed to replace this term with his own creation *codicographie* (Grujijs 1972:94<sup>6</sup>). Even though *codicographie* appears to be an adequate term, scholars today employ the term *codicology*, which was first used in lectures by Alphonse Dain in 1944. Dain published his lectures in 1949 under the title *Les manuscrits*. Grujijs (1972) explains that even though Dain “deliberately [introduced] a new term,” he “had no intention of introducing a new discipline or method” (94). Nonetheless, Dain’s creation, the French term *codicologie*, was already included as the official term for manuscript studies in the 1959 edition of the *Grand Larousse encyclopédique*, as Mazal (1986:25) points out (see also “Codicologie” 1960).

Codicology derives from the Latin word *codex*, which originally referred to a tree-stump or a block of wood. It was later used about books consisting of gatherings of parchment leaves, likely due to the resemblance between blocks of wood and the book-block. Grujijs (1972) stresses that

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<sup>5</sup> The Comité still meets. Information can be found on the Comité’s website <http://www.palaeographia.org/cipl/cipl.htm>

<sup>6</sup> According to Grujijs (1972), Samaran coined the term “in a course of lectures during the years 1934-35” (94). Grujijs (1972) quotes from Samaran’s lecture (94), stating in a footnote that he received the quote and permission to use it through personal communication with Samaran (94 fn. 1).

the term *codex* describes the material of the written work rather than the method of writing it by hand (88-89). For this reason, some scholars prefer the term codicology to manuscript studies (originally: *science des manuscrits* or *Handschriftenkunde*), since the latter only emphasizes the fact that the work was written by hand, instead of regarding the codex as an entity and an archaeological artifact. According to Lieftinck (1958-1959:10), supporters of the term codicology “see manuscripts ... as objects of study for the cultural history of the Middle Ages, and thus comparable to archaeological 'finds', which have to be subjected to different types of interpretation: material, historical, ethnological and artistic” (qtd. and translated in Gruijs 1972:89-90<sup>7</sup>). In fact, codicology has often been described as the archaeology of the (handwritten) book, the archaeology of the codex, or the archaeology of the manuscript (Löffler and Milde 1997:19-20; Gruijs 1972:90, 102, 104; Muzerelle 1991:349).

It was François Masai, a historian and librarian from Brussels and founder of the journal *Scriptorium*, who defined codicology as it is understood today (see Masai 1950; Masai 1956). Gruijs (1972) summarizes Masai’s main points, concluding that paleography and codicology should be considered autonomous disciplines “with their own goals and methods” and not “subdivisions of philology,” even though both are “directly involved in the editing of texts” (96). In accordance with Masai’s definition, paleography can be considered both an auxiliary science, which enables scholars to “decipher and read scripts no longer in use,” and an independent historical discipline, “since it studies the development of handwriting throughout the ages” (Gruijs 1972:96). With regards to codicology, Masai argues that the archaeology of the manuscript, which studies manuscripts under both historical but mainly materialistic aspects, should be regarded as a truly independent specialty (see Gruijs 1972:98; Muzerelle 1991:349).

Masai and other scholars of codicology, most notably Leon M. J. Delaissé, helped develop codicology as an archaeological discipline in the years to follow. Delaissé utilizes codicological methods and principles in his studies, particularly in *Le manuscrit autographe de Thomas a Kempis et l'Imitation de Jésus Christ. Examen archéologique et édition diplomatique du Bruxellensis 5855-61*

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<sup>7</sup> For the original Dutch citation, see Lieftinck 1958-1959:10.

(1956). However, in contrast to Masai, Delaissé (1967) does not necessarily equate the term codicology with the archaeology of the book. In fact, Delaissé (1967) suggests that the term codicology is inferior to the term ‘archaeology of the book,’ since it “is less indicative of the method, because ... it does not evoke in any way the historical consequences of the method as archaeology does” (434). Delaissé (1967) also has objections to the German term *Handschriftenkunde*, since it is primarily used by historians and paleographers, who, despite a general interest in the manuscripts, are predominantly concerned with its content (434). According to Delaissé (1967), “the archaeology of the medieval book must be the first step in any research based on manuscripts” (432). Rather than merely describing manuscripts as part of critical editions for the sake of providing a general description of the manuscript containing a certain text, scholars should use the objective results from archaeological research provided through the archaeology of the book for their individual historical, philological, or paleographic studies. Despite Delaissé’s objections to the term *codicology*, it cannot be denied that many manuscript scholars nowadays, while using the term *codicology* for their research, nonetheless utilize the same archaeological methods that Delaissé promotes as the ‘archaeology of the book.’

During the 1960s, scholarly works in the field of codicology increased rapidly, and in 1971, the first university position in codicology was created at the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands, where Albert Gruijs was appointed Lector in the Auxiliary Sciences of History. In his inaugural speech, Gruijs (1972) attempts to settle some of the scholarly disputes with regards to codicology. This includes the relationship between philology, paleography, and codicology and a clear definition of codicology. Gruijs (1972) proposes to differentiate between codicology in a broader and stricter sense, a distinction that other scholars follow as well (see e.g., Mazal 1986:VIII; Löffler and Milde 1997:19; Muzerelle 1991:350-351). He equates codicology in the stricter sense with an archaeological discipline, which analyzes and interprets “all physical aspects of codices” without offering a historical interpretation of matters “outside of the field of the codex itself” (Gruijs 1972:102). According to Gruijs (1972), a codicological study in a stricter sense includes the detailed description of the manuscript(s) in question, “a synthesis based on this

description which outlines the material evolution of the codex,” and “a confrontation of this evolution with the actual contents of the item in question, its text or illustration” (104). The analysis of these three principles results in the description of the “static and dynamic structure of the manuscript” (Grujijs 1972:104).

According to Grujijs (1972), codicology in a broader sense studies codices in a multidimensional way, both as artifacts by themselves and as objects shaped by the cultures that created them (102). Codicology in this wider sense includes, therefore, more than just the analysis of physical aspects of manuscripts. It examines the history of a manuscript from its production until modern times. This includes the study of a manuscript’s preservation in manuscript collections and libraries, as well as references to it in catalogues and other types of literature. Furthermore, it analyzes “the social function it fulfilled in its own day, the philosophical and sociological problems it creates as a cultural phenomenon and communication medium, the symbolism with which it is associated, and so on” (Grujijs 1972:104).<sup>8</sup>

Mazal (1986) notes that advances in the field of codicology vary greatly. He remarks that the codicology of Greek manuscripts is quite developed due to the relatively small number of surviving manuscripts (~ 55,000). Latin codicology, on the other hand, still has a long way to go since the number of manuscripts exceeds 300,000 (Mazal 1986:25-26). Schneider (1999) points out that the bibliography by Leonard Boyle (1984) as well as the *Vocabulaire codicologique* by Muzerelle (1985) are some of the most important resources for students and scholars of codicology today (102).

Codicology and paleography have also become of greater interest with regard to text editing. In the past, two major methods for the editing of texts existed. The so-called Lachmannian method attempts to reconstruct a work by comparing different versions of texts in various manuscripts and choosing the presumed most original variants. This method assumes that there was one author who produced one distinct piece of literature. Bédier, on the other hand, focuses

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<sup>8</sup> The distinction between codicology in a stricter and broader sense illustrates the difficulties in presenting a clear definition of the term and its methods. Some of the specific aspects and methods of codicology and manuscript studies utilized for this dissertation will be presented in Chapter 2.

on choosing the text of one manuscript as the best text. Despite their differences, both editorial methods are solely interested in the text that a manuscript contains, rather than the manuscript itself as an artifact.

The New Philology movement, which was introduced by Nichols (1990) as “a return to the medieval origins of philology, to its roots in a *manuscript* culture” (1), puts more emphasis on “the manuscript matrix” and “the material specificity of medieval texts” (4). This includes historical circumstances, manuscript production, textual transmission, marginal notes as well as material aspects, and codicology. In contrast to Lachmann and Bédier, New Philology embraces the variety of multiple copies, suggesting that every manuscript witness of any text is important and should be seen as a creation of its time.

With the establishment of the World Wide Web in the early 1990s and other advances in digital imaging and text encoding, scholars began to experiment with the new technical possibility to create electronic editions, either on CD-ROM or more accessibly on the Internet. These electronic editions have allowed the followers of the New Philology movement to present facsimiles and texts of various manuscripts electronically, thereby allowing readers to explore the variance in the manuscripts and the changes that occurred at different periods with the click of a button. Organizations, such as the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), which was founded in 1987, are continuously working on establishing and improving standardized guidelines for the encoding of texts in the humanities and social sciences.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, Robinson (2004) has pointed out that the true potential of the digital age has not yet been explored by manuscript scholars and editors. He remarks that electronic editions rarely go beyond what is possible in printed editions. Robinson (2004) suggests that the time is ripe for creating “fluid, co-operative and distributed editions,” where “a community of scholars and readers” work together to create an edition that is not fixed in time, but is edited by any user who wishes to participate and that can be adapted by every user to his or her specific needs. The material aspects of the manuscripts are in this case just as important as its content. In the past decade, text encoding has gained more and more

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<sup>9</sup> For more information about TEI, see <http://www.tei-c.org/>

importance for the study and editing of medieval and post-medieval manuscripts, and scholars have been trying to achieve the flexibility and user-friendliness which Robinson promoted in 2004.

In addition to electronic editions, the advances in the Digital Humanities have also led to an increasing number of databases designed to assist manuscript scholars in their research. More and more manuscripts worldwide are being made available digitally by collections and libraries. Additionally, more specialized databases, such as for watermarks, illustrations, illuminations, and other more specific manuscript as well as early print features, offer valuable tools. The increased importance of the World Wide Web not only makes material more easily accessible to a larger audience but also allows international networking between individual scholars, research groups, and larger collections, libraries, and other academic organizations.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.3. Manuscript Studies in Scandinavia

In Scandinavia,<sup>11</sup> interest in medieval Icelandic manuscripts and literature began during the sixteenth century, due to an increased interest by Humanists in the sagas as historical sources and historical literature. Christjern Pedersen, who published Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* in 1514, drew a connection between classical literature and the Old Norse-Icelandic Kings' sagas. While Danish historians of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries assumed that the saga literature was of Norwegian origin, the focus shifted towards Iceland at the turn of the century, particularly due to Arngrímur Jónsson's publications, such as *Crymogæa* (1610). The most important early antiquarians researching Scandinavians national histories and literatures were Ole Worm,

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<sup>10</sup> Some of the projects and databases include, for example, *DigiPal*, The Digital Resource and Database of Paleography, manuscript Studies and Diplomatic (<http://www.digipal.eu>); *DMMmaps*, The Digitized Medieval Manuscripts Maps link (<http://digitizedmedievalmanuscripts.org/app/>); The Penn Provenance Online Project (<https://www.flickr.com/people/58558794%40N07/>); The Text Encoding Initiative, TEI (<http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml>); the Icelandic manuscript database, *Handrit.is* (<http://handrit.is/>); the digital manuscript collection of the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies (<http://www.am.hi.is:8087>); The Medieval Nordic Text Archive, *Menota* (<http://www.menota.org/>); or the Icelandic database for poetics, *Bragi – óðfræðivefur* (<http://bragi.info/>), just to name a few.

<sup>11</sup> Excellent summaries of the research history of manuscript studies in Scandinavia can for example be found in O'Donoghue (2004), Malm (2004), and Haugen (2007a). The contents of this chapter, unless noted otherwise, are based on the information given in these publications.

Thomas Bartholin the Younger, and the Icelander Þormóður Torfason (Lat. Thormodus Torfæus; see below).

Icelandic manuscripts were brought to Denmark and later Sweden through various means. The Danish kings appointed delegates to systematically collect Icelandic manuscripts, such as Hannes Þorleifsson (whose ship sank together with the codices he had collected) and most notably Árni Magnússon (see below). Simultaneously, even though King Christian V decreed that manuscripts may only be given to Danish representatives, Sweden began collecting Icelandic codices in the late seventeenth century. The student Jón Jónsson from Rugstaðir, called Jonas Rugman, played a key role in collecting manuscripts for the Swedish Antikvitetskollegiet. Another collector on behalf of the Swedes was Jón Eggertsson.

Besides this systematic collection, manuscripts were also brought abroad by Icelanders, particularly students, possibly to finance their studies, and scholars who donated manuscripts to public collections or the king. These include, for example, Brynjólfur Sveinsson and Björn Þorleifsson, who donated books and manuscripts to the royal house, including the famous Codex Regius (GKS 2365 4to, Brynjólfur Sveinsson) and manuscripts containing *Njáls saga*, such as *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to) and GKS 1002-1003 fol. (Björn Þorleifsson).

In 1648, King Frederik III founded the royal library, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, and hired a translator for saga literature, a position that the Icelander Þórmoður Torfæus held from 1660 onward. Torfæus, who was also appointed Historiographer for Norway, was responsible for the production of many scholarly copies of medieval manuscripts.<sup>12</sup> He worked closely with professional scribes, such as Ásgeir Jónsson.<sup>13</sup> During the same time period, private collections were frequently incorporated into public libraries through donations or purchase. One of the major private collections now part of Det Kongelige Bibliotek is that of Otto Thott, who donated 6000 books and more than 4000 manuscripts to the royal library, which was, nonetheless, only a small portion of his huge private collection (Jørgensen 2007:63).

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<sup>12</sup> The Humanist movement not only resulted in the first systematic collections of medieval Icelandic manuscripts by scholars and private collectors, but also led to an increased effort to produce and copy manuscripts; see also Chapter 2.2. on manuscript production.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 5.3.1. for a discussion of scholarly copies of *Njáls saga* and some of their most prominent scribes.



The most famous collector of Icelandic manuscripts was undoubtedly Árni Magnússon. Unlike many of his predecessors, Árni Magnússon was not solely interested in medieval codices but also collected fragments and younger paper copies. He made note of information about previous owners, the provenance, and history of the manuscripts. Moreover, he had copies made of manuscripts which he was unable to buy from their current owners.

The great fire of 1728, which destroyed large parts of Copenhagen, was a detrimental event, causing the loss of many Icelandic medieval and paper manuscripts housed at the University Library. Þormóður Torfæus, who had borrowed many codices to have them copied in Norway, had returned his manuscripts to the University Library only ten years earlier (Jørgensen 2007:71-72). While the original codices burnt in the fire, the scholarly copies, which Torfæus commissioned, remain. They are particularly valuable today, since they preserve otherwise lost material. Árni Magnússon was able to save most of the manuscripts in his private collection, but most of his printed books and many of his personal notes burnt to ashes. Fortunately, the Royal Library was spared from the flames. Icelandic manuscripts were also destroyed in a fire in Uppsala in 1702.

With the establishment of manuscript collections, most notably by Árni Magnússon, the study of medieval manuscripts, their texts, scripts, scribes, and provenances gained more and more attention during the eighteenth century and thereafter as first editions of the various medieval texts were published (see e.g., Malm 2004; Sveinn Yngvi Egilsson 2004).

The desire of the Scandinavian nations to research their own origin resulted in a “series of Latin editions of Old Norse-Icelandic texts, and learned Latin treatises on Scandinavian origins” (O’Donoghue 2004:108). These Latin editions were not only well received in Scandinavia but all over Europe, where the Old Norse-Icelandic texts were “presented as a significant and valuable alternative to the body of Greek and Roman literature” (O’Donoghue 2004:110). In eighteenth-century Britain, for example, they were valued as a historical source about the history of England and Scotland. In the nineteenth century, when sagas were first translated into English, the British

Victorians used their supposed Viking ancestry as proof of their racial superiority (Jón Karl Helgason 1999:47-64; Wawn 2004).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the focus of manuscript scholars and editors generally lay with the major medieval codices. Earlier scholars, such as Finnur Jónsson, often dismissed younger manuscripts without establishing for certain that they were non-essential for the stemma. On the other hand, Jón Helgason, who initiated the establishment of the two series *Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana* and *Editiones Arnamagnæanæ*, put great stress on the importance of analyzing all extant manuscripts. In this way, Jón Helgason showed a common interest with New Philologists today. He can, therefore, be seen as one of the most important figures in Old Norse-Icelandic textual criticism (see e.g., Haugen 2003; Driscoll 2010).

In addition to advances in Old Norse-Icelandic textual criticism, catalogues for the various manuscript collections, such as Kålund's *Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske håndskriftsamling* (1889-1894), and facsimile editions, like *Corpus Codicum Danicorum Medii Aevi* (1960-), *Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi* (1930-), *Corpus Codicum Suecicorum Medii Aevi* (1943-), *Corpus Codicum Norvegicorum Medii Aevi* (1950-) or *Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile* (1958-), have also aided to develop manuscript studies as a scholarly discipline in Scandinavia, especially in Iceland and Denmark (see also Mazal 1986:21, 24).

While paleography has for a long time been the main focus of manuscript studies in Scandinavia, codicology is now making its way into the research of Old Norse-Icelandic manuscripts, mainly since the advent of the New Philology movement, which is gaining ground in Old Norse-Icelandic studies. In recent years, a number of bachelor's, master's and doctoral theses, particularly at the University of Iceland and the University of Copenhagen, have focused heavily on codicological studies and editions of Icelandic manuscripts.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, new and ongoing research projects, like "The Variance of *Njáls saga*" or *Fornaldarsögur* projects, incorporate various aspects of manuscripts studies, textual analysis, paleography, codicology, and stemmatology. These projects, which are almost exclusively collaborations of various institutions

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<sup>14</sup> These include for example Fahn (2006); Lansing (2011); Stegmann (2011); Hufnagel (2012); Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson (2013); Þorsteinn Árnason Surmeli (2013); Kapitan (2014); Lai (2014).

and encourage interdisciplinary work often embrace the advantages and new innovations of the Digital Humanities.<sup>15</sup>

The increased use of the World Wide Web, online tools, and computer scientific research methods in Old Norse-Icelandic Studies is analogous to developments in other disciplines (see above). The Medieval Nordic Text Archive (Menota) offers scholars guidelines for the electronic encoding of medieval Scandinavian texts, compatible with the TEI guidelines (see above), and a platform to publish digital editions, generally on three levels: facsimile, diplomatic, and normalized. The manuscript database *Handrit.is* not only contains descriptions – often quite detailed – of the contents, codicology, provenance, and further readings of over 8,000 Icelandic manuscripts, largely housed at Den Arnamagnæanske Samling in Copenhagen (The Arnamagnæan manuscript collection), Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum (The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies) and Landsbókasafn Íslands (The National and University Library of Iceland) in Iceland but also provides digital images of many codices.<sup>16</sup> *Bragi* – *óðfræðivefur* is an ever-expanding Icelandic online database for poetics, including poems and verses from medieval to modern times.

This new interconnectedness and globalization in the field of Scandinavian Studies enables scholars to work on the same projects across continents, making it, for example, possible to connect this dissertation, written in the United States, with a research project led by scholars in Iceland, dealing with manuscripts housed in five European countries. It also allows for collaboration and interplay between different disciplines within the field of Old Norse-Icelandic Studies, such as philology, literary studies, and – in this case – codicology.

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<sup>15</sup> For information on “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” project, see [http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/breytileiki\\_njalu](http://www.arnastofnun.is/page/breytileiki_njalu). For information about the *Fornaldarsögur* project “Stories for all time: The Icelandic *Fornaldarsögur*,” see <http://fasnl.ku.dk>.

<sup>16</sup> For links to these websites and databases, see fn. 10.

## 2. Introduction: Codicology and its Methodology

### 2.1. Preface

The study of scripts and changes in scribal traditions, the subject of paleographic studies, allows scholars to date manuscripts, identify scribes, and recreate connections among different scribes or scribal schools. Codicology studies manuscripts as physical artifacts. It incorporates the analysis of various aspects of manuscript production and preservation. It studies the materials a manuscript is made of, such as the type of parchment and ink, and the techniques used to produce the artifact, such as its binding. It also frequently incorporates the examination of decorations, illuminations, and signs of readership, such as ownership marks, marginalia, and glosses. By analyzing the appearances of various manuscripts, including their measurements, types of binding, page layouts, preservation, and paleography, scholars can identify changes and trends in manuscript production, the dates of manuscripts, and their possible provenances. The preservation of a manuscript can tell whether a manuscript was cared for and valued, whether it was used frequently, or whether it had become dispensable and outdated. An important aspect of codicology is the study of marginal notes, which are an essential part of the history of manuscripts. They can point to the milieu in which a scribe or reader was living (e.g., educational or religious); allude to the history of the manuscripts, their owners, and provenance; and allow for an interpretation of the reception of certain text-passages, trends on the literary market, and the relationship between scribe, reader, and text.

Before delving into the methodology utilized in this dissertation to study the codicology of manuscripts and fragments containing *Njáls saga*, a brief overview of manuscript production in general will be given.

### 2.2. From Calf to Call Number: An Introduction to the History of Manuscripts from Production to the Establishment of Collections

Clemens and Graham (2007) note that virtually any material imaginable “has been used to record the written word” (3). Nonetheless, medieval manuscripts were most frequently written on

animal skin until the introduction of paper in the fourteenth century. The prepared animal skin used for manuscripts is called parchment (lat. *pergamenum*), vellum, or membrane. It was supposedly invented by King Eumenes II of Pergamum during his reign (197-159 BC) and replaced papyrus, which had earlier been the preferred writing surface (Clemens and Graham 2007:9). Even though the preparation of the skin may have varied slightly in different regions, it is possible to give a general outline of the individual steps of production.<sup>17</sup>

Usually calf, sheep, or goat skin was used for medieval manuscripts. The latter was used prominently in Italy, whereas calf or sheep was preferred in northern Europe. The initial step in preparing the hide was to remove the wool or fur from the skin, most commonly by soaking the hide in a calcium solution, known as liming.

The vellum of medieval Icelandic manuscripts is usually darker and rougher than those that were produced in continental Europe, likely because Icelandic codices were stored under less than ideal conditions in dark, damp turf-buildings. It is, furthermore, probable that hair or wool was removed from the animal skin by different means in Iceland,<sup>18</sup> which may also have affected the appearance of Icelandic vellum (Soffía G. Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir 2004:46-47).

Once the hair was removed, the skin was stretched and left to dry on a frame under tension. During this production step, the parchment maker worked on removing any remaining hair, fat, or flesh “with a crescent-shaped blade called *lunarium* or *lunellum*” (Clemens and Graham 2007:11). The skin was rubbed with chalk to absorb moisture and fat residues, and after it was completely dry, the skin was cut into equally sized rectangles, which were then bound together in so-called quires or gatherings.

The leaves in a quire could be of various sizes, ranging from *folio* to *duodecimo*, depending on how many times a single sheet of parchment had been folded and cut. Codices today are

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<sup>17</sup> This chapter only outlines the most basic steps. There are several excellent books and articles on manuscript production. For a more detailed general introduction, see for example: Mazal (1986); Löffler and Milde (1997); Schneider (1999); Foerster and Frenz (2004); Clemens and Graham (2007). For an introduction with focus on Scandinavia, see for example: Soffía Guðný Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir (2004); Jørgensen (2007); Haugen (2007a); Driscoll (2013); Soffía Guðný Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir (2013). The contents of this chapter, unless noted otherwise, are based on the information given in these publications.

<sup>18</sup> Soffía Guðný Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir (2004) suggest that the hair may have been removed either by using geothermal water or volcanic ash; a third possibility was to tie the skin to the back of a heifer with the hair-sides of the animal skin and the heifer facing each other, and thus removing the hair by abrasion (47).

catalogued in manuscript collections according to these sizes. Nonetheless, as the size of the original hide could vary, and margins were frequently trimmed in later times, not all manuscripts from one category (e.g., *quarto*) will have the exact same measurements. Since vellum was expensive, it also happened that faulty or misshapen parchment was still used in manuscript production.

The next step in preparing a codex was to mark the writing block. The leaves were pricked or small slits were made along the margins at regular intervals with knives, awls, or compasses to mark out the lines, columns, and margins. The lines between the slits were then ruled. Sometimes, the lines and pricks are still visible, although the markings on the outer margins were frequently lost because they were trimmed during the binding process.

The process of writing the manuscripts included several stages. Generally, the scribe would begin by writing the main text of the manuscript in plain ink, having either an exemplar in front of him or someone reading the text to him aloud. While the scribe wrote the main text, he left empty spaces for titles, initials, illuminations, and decorations, which were added later, usually not by the scribe himself, but by an illuminator. Today, some manuscripts only preserve the main text of the manuscripts, and initials, titles and decorations were never added. According to Clemens and Graham (2007), especially in the later Middle Ages, decorations and illustrations were not drawn in the same place where the manuscript was written but in a different workshop, since “book production had largely moved out of the monasteries and into the hands of secular professionals” (22). The same division of work applied to manuscript production in Iceland, where the scribe of the text was usually not the illuminator, although it is possible that both worked in the same location (Soffía G. Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir 2004:57).

Once the text was written and the illustrations had been inserted, the individual quires of the manuscript had to be bound. The gatherings were sometimes labeled with quire numerals or catchwords in the lower margins to indicate the order in which they should be bound together. The process of binding in Iceland appears to have been the same as that used in continental Europe. The individual gatherings were first sewn together and then bound either in calf, cow,

sheep, or seal leather or in wooden boards.<sup>19</sup> Very few original bindings of Icelandic manuscripts are extant. They often had to be re-bound over time, since the manuscripts were heavily used.

Paper was introduced during the fourteenth century in continental Europe. In Iceland, it began to replace vellum around the Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century.<sup>20</sup> However, vellum remained in use until the seventeenth century, possibly because paper needed to be imported, in contrast to vellum, which could be produced locally (Jørgensen 2007:47). While the bishopric at Hólar was in the possession of a printing press since the middle of the sixteenth century, printing was limited to religious literature. This meant that secular texts, such as the sagas, continued to be copied by hand. The paper used to produce manuscripts almost always has watermarks, a practice that was already introduced in Italy in the late thirteenth century (Jørgensen 2007:46). Since every paper mill generally produced its own watermarks and marks changed through time, they can – if clearly visible – aid in dating manuscripts, although they merely offer a *terminus post quem*.

Like vellum manuscripts, paper manuscripts exist in varying sizes, depending on how many times one large sheet of paper was folded and cut. Scribes either wrote their texts on ready-prepared gatherings, which were later bound together, or on uncut large sheets, which were later folded and cut.<sup>21</sup> The writing block could either be unmarked, marked with ink lines, or the margins could be folded over, creating a crease which the scribe could use as a guideline. Individual lines were almost never marked in paper manuscripts. In an attempt to imitate printed books, scribes often added title pages and a table of contents to their manuscripts, which often included the scribe's name or initials, the date and place of writing, and occasionally a statement alluding to the purpose of the manuscript (Driscoll 2013:53). It is no rarity to find paper manuscripts which were assembled from various codices, written by different scribes, and even

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<sup>19</sup> Since bindings are not discussed as part of the codicological analysis in this dissertation, the binding-process is not described in more detail. For more information, see, for example, Springborg (2000); Bonde and Springborg (2005); Bonde and Springborg (2006).

<sup>20</sup> The oldest existing Icelandic paper manuscript, written 1539-1548, is AM 232 8vo, containing the *cartularium* of the first Protestant bishop, Gissur Einarsson (Driscoll 2013:52; Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Thott 1776 4to III is an example of such an uncut manuscript, which will be discussed in Chapters 4.3.3. and 5.3.2.3.

produced during different time periods. In this dissertation, such manuscripts are referred to as '*patchwork manuscripts*.' These patchwork manuscripts were generally part of private collections.

During most of the early Middle Ages, books were mainly preserved in monasteries, and collections generally contained works focusing on the lives and endeavors of the monks and nuns, such as "scripture, biblical commentary, patristic writings, and devotional works such as saints' lives" (Clemens and Graham 2007:61). Nonetheless, other types of libraries, such as cathedral schools and early universities, began to emerge in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These libraries contained works used to educate the clergy in the seven liberal arts and ensured precise and reasonably priced copies for university students and masters.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, more and more educated laymen, scholars, and especially royal and aristocratic patrons began to acquire private libraries, which in contrast to the clerics' collections, included more secular literature, such as "vernacular romances and popular devotional works" (Clemens and Graham 2007:63). These laymen often bequeathed their collections to the libraries and universities with which they were affiliated, a reason why many libraries contain a large number of private collections even today.

From the fourteenth century onwards, many scholars began to systematically find and acquire manuscripts, often those which were no longer needed or used by monastic and ecclesiastical institutions. Two of the first systematic manuscript collectors were Petrarch and Poggio. This trend of manuscript collection meant that many manuscripts which were formerly housed at monasteries and cathedral schools first fell into private hands and, through donations, eventually landed in public institutions (Clemens and Graham 2007:64).

Similar to developments in Europe, earliest manuscript production in Iceland centered around monasteries, such as those at Þingeyrar (N-Iceland), Munkaþverá (N-Iceland), and Helgafell (W-Iceland), and the episcopal sees at Skálholt (S-Iceland) and Hólar (N-Iceland). Laymen, particularly from influential chieftain families such as the Svalbarð-family (see e.g., Arthur 2012a), were also involved in manuscript production and private ownership early on. Religious and secular work intersected as monasteries not only produced manuscripts for the Church but also



per request of secular chieftains. Additionally, secular educational centers, such as Oddi (S-Iceland), and possibly large farms, such as Möðruvellir (N-Iceland), played an important role in the production and copying of manuscripts from the beginning (see e.g., Stefán Karlsson 1999:151-154<sup>22</sup>; Soffía Guðný Guðmundsdóttir and Laufey Guðnadóttir 2004:54; Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir 2004:19; Vésteinn Ólason 2004:37; Jørgensen 2007:57-58).

The oldest fragments of Old Norse-Icelandic manuscripts date to the late twelfth century, but manuscript production increased greatly and reached its height during the fourteenth century. The detrimental consequences of the Plague in Iceland during the early fifteenth century, however, caused manuscript production to cease almost completely. A similar drop in manuscript production appears to have occurred during the aftermath of the Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century. Additionally, many manuscripts with contents relating to Catholicism were destroyed directly following the Reformation (Driscoll 2013:50-52). Their remnants were occasionally reused in bindings, for palimpsests, or for various other purposes such as clothing patterns.<sup>23</sup>

Although only very few scribes from the medieval period can be identified since most codices were written anonymously, this practiced changed from the seventeenth century onward. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, manuscripts were copied – often for rich farmers, manuscript collectors, and scholars – by professional scribes who were most commonly secular. Manuscript production in Iceland centered geographically around Hólar in the north, Skálholt in the south, and Vigur in the west (see e.g. Springborg 1977:57; Lansing 2011:57-63; Hall and Parsons 2013:§69-71; Arthur 2012a; Margrét Eggertsdóttir 2014). Later on, particularly during the eighteenth century, Old Norse-Icelandic manuscripts were also frequently copied abroad in Denmark and Sweden, after Icelandic manuscripts had been taken there. Scribes who worked for

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<sup>22</sup> Stefán Karlsson's article is an excellent introduction to the problem of localizing and dating Icelandic manuscripts. Its bibliography offers references to further readings, particularly Ólafur Halldórsson (1963); Stefán Karlsson (1970a); and Stefán Karlsson (1998). Many of Stefán Karlsson's articles, including the last two mentioned, have been reprinted in *Stafrókar* (Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson 2000). Several deal with manuscript production in Iceland.

<sup>23</sup> Famous examples include AM 445 c I 4to, a fragment of *Gísla saga*, which was used as a protective binding around a book (Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson 2013:74-75), *Reykjarfjarðarbók* (AM 122 b fol.), of which one folio was cut down to a clothing pattern (Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir 2013:82-83), or AM 666 b 4to, which had been used as a supportive lining in a bishop's miter (Springborg 2013:188-189). – See also Driscoll (2013:52).

manuscript scholars and private collectors, such as Torfæus, Brynjólfur Sveinsson, Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, or Árni Magnússon (see Chapter 1.3.), are particularly known by name, even though the degree to which more detailed information about these men survives varies greatly.<sup>24</sup> Although medieval and post-medieval scribes generally had more flexibility and often took the liberty to alter the text to various degrees while copying manuscripts for themselves or private collectors, scribes who produced scholarly copies were required to copy the text very precisely by their commissioners. This held particularly true regarding the textual contents of the exemplar, meaning that while some scholarly scribes faithfully copied the abbreviations of the exemplar, most took liberties in their orthography and use of abbreviations, as long as they reproduced the meaning of the text accurately (Jørgensen 2007:70-72).

During the same time, large collections of Icelandic manuscripts were established across Scandinavia, and the largest were gathered in Denmark. Even after the first editions of some of the preserved texts, such as the Family Sagas and Legendary Sagas, were published in print during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Icelanders still continued to copy texts by hand, even from printed books occasionally (see e.g., Jørgensen 2007:72; Driscoll 2013). Today, the majority of Icelandic manuscripts are housed in the two Arnamagnæan collections in Reykjavík and Copenhagen, the National and University Library of Iceland (Landsbókasafn), and The Royal Library in Copenhagen (Det Kongelige Bibliotek), but several smaller collections in Iceland and small and large collections around the world also preserve Icelandic manuscripts. Some of the manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, for example, are found in the collections of The Catholic Church in Reykjavík, The Royal Library in Stockholm, the National Library in Oslo, and The British Library in London.

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<sup>24</sup> Some of these scribes, which all have copied *Njáls saga*, are, for example, Ásgeirr Jónsson, scribe for Torfæus; Jón Erlendsson, scribe for Brynjólfur Sveinsson; Jón Vigfússon, scribe for the Antikvitetskollegiet in Stockholm; Jón Magnússon, scribe for his brother Árni Magnússon; Jón Gissurarson, half-brother of Brynjólfur Jónsson; Jón Þórðarson and Magnús Ketilsson, scribes for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur; Páll Sveinsson, scribe for Jón Eyjólfsson in the south of Iceland. See particularly Chapters 4.3. and 5.3.

### 2.3. The Analysis of Physical Aspects of the *Njáls saga* Manuscripts: Methodology and Data Collection

A clear definition of codicology appears to be in the eye of the beholder. Muzerelle (1985) argues that the term is often associated with certain aspects of manuscript studies which have not been considered by other clearly defined disciplines, such as paleography, art history, library studies, and bibliometrics (8-9). Gruijs (1972) briefly defines it as “the study of ancient and mediaeval books” and “the science (λόγος) of the codex” (87). According to Clemens and Graham (2007), codicology is “[t]he study of the physical aspects and structure of a book, including the material on which it is written, its COLLATION, its PRICKING and RULING, and the manner in which the book was bound” (264). Kamerbeek (1970), illustrating the complicated controversy around the term, simply called codicology “dat monsterachtige hybride woord” (3), translated by Gruijs (1972) as “that monstrous hybrid word” (91). In a more recent, excellent review of the history of codicology, Gumbert (2004), dealing with the complicated relationship between paleography and codicology, contemplates that “if ‘paleography’ is to mean ‘study of script for script’s sake’, and ‘codicology’ ‘study of manuscripts for their body’s sake’, then the whole study of manuscripts as embodied texts, manuscripts for their text’s sake, remains nameless!” (507). His solution is to use “Material codicology” (Gumbert 2004:507) specifically for the study of manuscripts and books as strictly physical objects, while maintaining ‘codicology’ as a general term, leaving it up to manuscript scholars “if they want to distinguish themselves by adding another adjective” (Gumbert 2004:507-508). The lack of a clear definition is one of the reasons why no clearly defined methodology for codicological studies exist.

Ideally, a codicological study should examine all physical aspects of a manuscript, beginning with the material (type and thickness), binding, size, layout, margin widths, various ratios (such as the ratio of width to height of the manuscript, leaves, and writing block), text density, watermarks (in the case of paper manuscripts), ink, as well as signs of use,<sup>25</sup> such as marginal notes, colophons, ownership marks, underlined passages, stains, damages, and so forth.

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<sup>25</sup> Signs of use will briefly be discussed in Chapter 6.

Additionally, as the previous sections illustrate, codicology and paleography are closely connected. While it would be desirable to include all aspects of codicology as well as a paleographic analysis<sup>26</sup> of all the *Njáls saga* manuscripts and fragments in this dissertation, the large number of manuscripts and manuscript fragments and the diversity of their preservation (i.e., with or without binding, trimmed and untrimmed margins, fragmented or complete) make it necessary to focus on only certain aspects.

Codicological descriptions of most manuscripts and fragments containing *Njáls saga* are available – in more or less detail – in manuscript catalogues and early editions, most notably in Jón Þorkelsson's (1889) description of manuscripts in Volume 2 of *Njála udgivet efter gamle håndskrifter* (Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson 1875-1889), in Einar Ól. Sveinsson's (1953) discussion of the manuscript tradition of *Njála*, and online at the manuscript database *Handrit.is* or the online catalogue *Gegnir.is*. Instead of giving a detailed codicological description of each individual *Njáls saga* manuscript, the focus of this dissertation is on the measurements taken and on the data collected (see Chapter 4). These are used to discuss trends and changes in manuscript production as well as the purpose of the manuscripts (see Chapter 5). Lastly, the dissertation includes an analysis of the history of readership and reception through marginal notes and paratextual features (see Chapter 6).<sup>27</sup>

The methods utilized to collect measurements and other data (e.g. word/sign count) are generally identical for vellum and paper manuscripts. While I distinguish between vellum and paper manuscripts, the materials of the various *Njáls saga* manuscripts have not been studied closely. To the best of my knowledge, there is no comprehensive study of Icelandic vellum manuscripts that analyzes the types of animal skin used to produce them.<sup>28</sup> Without expert

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<sup>26</sup> Paleography was mainly used for dating purposes and plays a minor role in this dissertation.

<sup>27</sup> The compilation of more detailed codicological descriptions of the manuscripts, whose codicology has not been discussed in the sources listed above, would be a desirable project, which must, however, be saved for a later date. These manuscripts include, for example, *Handrit úr safni Jón Samsonarsonar*, *Handrit í eigu Landakotskirkju (Landakotsbók)*, *The Lost Codex* (reconstructed through the four vellum fragments AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm 4, and the lost Þjms. I, which originally belonged to one codex), AM Acc. 50, or Thott 1776 4to III. As a starting point, a brief history of these manuscripts can be found in Chapter 4. Moreover, *The Lost Codex* as well as *Landakotsbók* are studied in more detail in Chapters 6.2.1. and 6.2.2. respectively.

<sup>28</sup> Jørgensen (2007) mentions that definite examples of parchment produced from skin other than calf in the North (“im Norden”) are rare and none of the Icelandic manuscripts has proven to be written on anything else but calf skin;

knowledge of various animal skins and the possible need for chemical or genetic tests done on the manuscripts in question, it is impossible to determine the type of vellum with absolute certainty. Additionally, the thickness of the vellum or paper was not measured. For the paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, the existence of watermarks was noted. It was, however, often difficult or impossible to identify watermarks, and consequently their date and place of origin. Therefore, a study of the watermarks in detail is not included.<sup>29</sup> Watermarks were sometimes used, however, to tentatively narrow down the date of previously undated manuscripts or to identify compound manuscripts that were put together from various codices.

During the data collection, types of bindings, their size (width, height, thickness) and ratio (width:height) were noted. However, many of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts are unbound or only preserved in modern bindings. The number of original bindings – where it can be determined – is minimal. Since this did not allow for a comparison of types of bindings or the study of the development of bindings throughout the centuries, an analysis or description of bindings has been omitted from this dissertation.

The ratio of width to height (W:H) was calculated for bindings, leaves, and the writing block of all *Njáls saga* manuscripts and fragments. Measurements were, wherever possible, taken on a minimum of five randomly selected pages in each manuscript.<sup>30</sup> In cases of fragments, as many measurements as possible were recorded. In the case of patchwork manuscripts, measurements were taken for each section of the manuscript and recorded separately. All measurements were taken in millimeters. This ratio can theoretically be used to determine whether Icelandic manuscript producers followed standard ratios, such as the ratio  $1:\sqrt{2}$  ( $= 1:1.414 = 0.707$ ), which Tschichold (1975) suggests was commonly used for books during the High Middle Ages (51). Since very few *Njáls saga* manuscripts are preserved with their original bindings, the analysis of

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he suggests that it is possible that Icelanders and Norwegians used sheep skin as well, but that more research is necessary (43).

<sup>29</sup> I did not have access to or funds for tools such as DYLUX paper or beta-radiography which would have made the study of watermarks easier.

<sup>30</sup> It was generally attempted to use at least one page toward the beginning of the saga, three within the middle section, and one toward the end of the manuscript. Wherever possible, only pages on which text was written continuously from top to bottom without chapter divisions were utilized. A mixture of recto and verso pages were taken as samples.

the W:H ratio of bindings was excluded. Moreover, the W:H ratio of the leaves ( $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$ ) was deemed unreliable, since the leaves of many codices (both vellum and paper) have been trimmed or are damaged.  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  was, therefore, mainly used in comparison with the ratio of the writing block ( $W:H_{\text{WB}}$ ) rather than being studied by itself.  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  is, however, included in the detailed study in the following chapters.

Concerning the layout of the manuscripts, it was noted whether the manuscript is written in one column or two. The width (W) and height (H) of the writing block was measured; in the case of manuscripts in two columns, the column width and the width of the space between the columns were measured. When determining the ratio  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$ , the space between the columns was included for the total width of the writing block. Using the size of the leaves as well as the size of the writing block, the percentage the writing block takes up of the page ( $\text{WB}\%$ )<sup>31</sup> was calculated, allowing for an interpretation of the generosity of the overall layout. In the case of manuscripts written in two columns, it was decided to include the space between the two columns as part of the writing block, to make for an easier comparison with results from manuscripts written in long lines. Top, bottom, inner, and outer margins were measured; however, it should be noted that the measurements, particularly of top, bottom, and outer margins are often unreliable as margins have been trimmed. The widths of the margins will, therefore, not be studied in more detail. The number of lines per page ( $\#_{\text{lines}}$ ) or column was counted and taken to establish *Unità di Rigatura* (see below), an indication of text density. The difference between minimum and maximum  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  in a given manuscript was established and is discussed in Chapter 5. For vellum manuscripts, it was noted, wherever possible, if the first line of text was written above or below the first ruling line. This was done under the assumption that the results could then be compared with Már Jónsson's (2002) study. However, the number of medieval codices where this feature could be determined with certainty was too small to draw any definite conclusions about how the *Njáls saga* manuscripts fit in with Már Jónsson's (2002)

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<sup>31</sup> While the size of leaves in paper manuscripts is almost always very consistent throughout the codex, the leaves of vellum manuscripts can show a greater variation due to the uneven size of the animal skins used. When calculating  $\text{WB}\%$  of vellum manuscripts, the actual size of the specific folios of which the writing block was measured were used rather than the maximum folio size.

results.<sup>32</sup> Lastly, it was observed whether manuscripts contain decorations and how elaborate the decorations are, but these features were not examined from the point of view of art history, since the author has no experience in this field.

The size of the manuscript was calculated by adding the width and the height of the leaves (not bindings), resulting in half a circumference (W+H). The same method was utilized by Már Jónsson (2003:28). Due to the trimmed margins, this measurement may on occasion only give an approximate representation of the actual size of the manuscript, but it was deemed a reliable way of comparing manuscripts of various sizes. The results of heavily fragmented manuscripts are indicated with an asterisk (\*). While the size of leaves in paper manuscripts is almost always consistent throughout the codex, the leaves of vellum manuscripts can show a greater variation due to the uneven size of the animal skins used. In Chapters 4 and 5, only the maximum results of W+H are given.

A variety of aspects were considered to determine text density. First, *Unità di Rigatura* (UR) is calculated by dividing the height of the writing block by the number of interlinear spaces, which is equal to the number of lines per page minus one (Muzerelle 1985:107; Maniaci 1998:157).<sup>33</sup> This shows the distance between two successive lines, and thereby indicates how densely the lines were written together. A higher UR indicates a more generous layout with more space between lines and fewer lines in total. UR can even be calculated if the writing block has been trimmed down, even though results of such fragmented writing blocks are less desirable than those of complete folios. Secondly, the number of signs and words were counted for ten lines on two (randomly selected) pages of the manuscript.<sup>34</sup> Based on these numbers, the

<sup>32</sup> Of the 13 fourteenth-century codices, 4 were definitely written above the first line of ruling, 4 definitely below the line, 3 had parts written above the first line and parts written below, and the remaining 2 could not be determined with certainty. Of the 5 fifteenth century manuscripts, 1 was written above the first line of ruling, 1 showed both possibilities, and the remaining 3 could not be determined. The post-medieval vellum manuscripts and fragments did not mark the individual lines of the writing block at all.

<sup>33</sup> The Italian term is used here since it was utilized by Már Jónsson (2003:30) in his codicological survey of Icelandic manuscripts. The term is synonymous with the French terms *Unité de réglure*, *Unité de linéation*, and *interligne* (Muzerelle 1985:107; Arnall i Juan 2002:246; Gumbert 2010:50) and has been translated as *Unit of ruling* into English (Gumbert 2010:50). Gumbert's (2010) *Words for Codices* appears to be a work in progress. The online file was last updated May 17, 2010.

<sup>34</sup> The term *sign* is used to characterize letters, punctuation signs, and abbreviation signs. Ligatures were counted as two signs, with the exception of *æ*. The space between words was not counted.

following aspects of text density *per 10 centimeters of line* were calculated: average number of signs excluding superscript, average number of signs including superscript signs, average number of abbreviation signs, and average number of words. The average number of signs ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ) and words ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ ) on the line indicates how densely the text was written. The average number of signs including superscript and the average number of abbreviation signs were used to estimate the percentage abbreviation signs make up of the total number of signs (ABBR%). This indicates how abbreviated a text is. Moreover, it was calculated how many signs including superscript appear on average on one square decimeter of the leaf<sup>35</sup> (signs/dm<sup>2</sup>), indicating how the scribe used the entire available space.

The features just described will be presented and discussed in detail in Chapters 4 and 5. In the case of manuscripts written by more than one scribe, data (W+H, W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%, UR;  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , ABBR%) was collected for each scribe individually. In the case of single scribe compilations, i.e. manuscripts containing more than one text, data was collected a) for just the section containing *Njáls saga*, b) for the remaining texts combined, and c) for the manuscript overall. For multi-scribe compilations (patchwork manuscripts), data was collected for each individual scribe. In this case, no overall result for the manuscript was calculated. Since this dissertation deals with the codicology of *Njáls saga* specifically, the data analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 only includes results for the *Njáls saga* sections of compilations. Moreover, the data analysis in these chapters excludes younger additions (which generally only consist of a few pages) and only focuses on the part written by the main scribe. Younger additions will, nonetheless, be discussed briefly in Chapter 6.4.3.3. The descriptions of manuscripts in Chapter 4 are dealt with in chronological order. If two or more manuscripts have been dated to the same time period, they are organized by call number.<sup>36</sup> Since there are fragments among the manuscripts which have been cut down from their original size, some of the results displayed must be taken with a grain of salt. It will be mentioned throughout the following sections when a fragment was excluded

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<sup>35</sup> The maximum width and height of the leaves was used, rather than merely the area covered by the writing block. This was done in concordance with Már Jónsson's study (2003:31).

<sup>36</sup> Following common cataloguing traditions, manuscripts of larger size precede smaller manuscripts.



from the calculation of the median of certain codicological features. Generally, fragments have only been excluded if the writing block is damaged (e.g., lines missing at the top or bottom, or not entire width preserved).

Illuminations and other decorations were noted in the data collection process for each manuscript. Since they are, however, subject to art history, in which this author is not trained, the discussion of these manuscript features is more general and plays a role mainly in Chapter 5, particularly as a feature used to distinguish private from scholarly copies. Marginalia and other paratextual features will be introduced and discussed in Chapter 6.4.

By using the data collected and undertaking a comprehensive and comparative codicological analysis of all manuscripts and manuscript fragments containing *Njáls saga*, it is not only possible to analyze trends and changes in manuscript production and reconstruct the history, provenance, and purpose of the manuscripts but also to recreate the history of the readership and reception of Iceland's most famous saga.

### 3. Introduction: *Njáls saga* – Research History and Editions

*Njáls saga* is without question the most famous of all the Icelandic Family Sagas. It was written in the late thirteenth century, likely around 1280. The text survives in Old Norse-Icelandic in 61 manuscripts and fragments, both on vellum and paper.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, Swedish and Danish translations and excerpts in Icelandic of the saga exist in manuscript form.<sup>38</sup> Lönnroth (1976) notes that new transcriptions of *Njáls saga* were made well into the nineteenth century and that the saga also “gave rise to secondary traditions in the form of local legends, ballads, rhymes (rímur), and proverbial sayings” (2).<sup>39</sup> In recent years, these secondary traditions have also taken the form of audio books, plays, movies, comic book adaptations, or adaptations for children.<sup>40</sup>

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Icelandic Arngrímur Jónsson (1610) summarized the biographies of the two main protagonists of *Njáls saga*, Njáll Þorgeirsson and Gunnarr Hámundarson, in his *Crymogæa*, a work in Latin defending his Icelandic home country (153-163).<sup>41</sup> This summary likely presents one of the earliest printed publications based on *Njáls saga* manuscripts. Nonetheless, the first printed edition of *Njáls saga* was not published until 1772. Lönnroth (1976) believes that the rather late interest in *Njáls saga* has to do with the fact that initially the sagas were used by antiquarians, who regarded them as historical sources for “the

<sup>37</sup> This number could be considered slightly inflated. The vellum fragments AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, and likely the lost Þjms. I, are preserved with separate call numbers. The fragments, however, all originally belonged to the same codex (see Chapter 6.2.1.). Similarly, the fragment AM 162 b fol. β and AM 162 b fol. δ likely belonged to the same codex (Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert 2014:164). A more detailed discussion of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts and fragments can be found in Chapter 4.2.

<sup>38</sup> Danish translations are preserved in the manuscripts GKS 1021 fol. and NKS 1221 fol.; A Swedish translation is preserved in Stock. Papp. 93 fol. and Stock. Papp. 96 fol., which are two parts of the same translation; AM 576 a 4to and likely the lost fragment Þjms. II contain excerpts.

<sup>39</sup> Matthías Jóhannessen (1958) gives an overview of poems and *rímur* about *Njáls saga* and the saga’s characters in *Njála í íslenskum skáldskap*.

<sup>40</sup> An audio book is, for example, available in Icelandic, read by Hallmar Sigurðsson (2006); Jóhann Sigurjónsson wrote a play about Mörðr Valgarðsson [unpublished]; Friðrik Þór Friðriksson (1980) made an experimental 18-minute film in which he burns an edition of *Njáls saga* (the short video is available as a special feature on the Icelandic DVD-release of Friðrik Þór Friðriksson’s (2000) *Englar alheimsins/Angels of the Universe*); Björn Br. Björnsson (2003) directed a short movie for TV, focusing on the story of Gunnarr of Hlíðarendi until his first slaying in Iceland; Embla Ýr Bárudóttir and Ingólfur Örn Björgvinsson created a comic-book adaptation of *Njáls saga* in four volumes, recreating the saga in reverse order (2003; 2004; 2005; 2007); and Brynhildur Þórarinsdóttir (2002) retells the saga in an adaptation for children and teenagers.

<sup>41</sup> Summaries of the research history of *Njáls saga* can be found, for example, in Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954); Allen (1971); and Lönnroth (1976). The contents of this chapter, unless noted otherwise, are based on the information given in these publications.

glorious past of the Scandinavian countries, and from this particular viewpoint, *Njála*<sup>42</sup> had little to offer” (1). Olavus Olavius (1772) published the first edition of *Njáls saga* under the title *Sagan af Níáli Þórgeirssyni ok sonum hans*. He used *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to) as his main witness, but added variant readings from *Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol.) and *Kálfalækjarbók* (AM 133 fol.). He did not include descriptions of the manuscripts and their relationship. In the introduction to his edition, he states that *Njáls saga* should be considered a historical work (*Opus historicum*) (Olavius 1772:[n.n]). The Danish historian, Peter Frederik Suhm, who bought Olavus Olavius’ edition of *Njáls saga*, showed great interest in the saga and wrote about it in Volume 4 of *Critisk Historie af Danmark* (1774-1781). Although many scholars after Suhm considered *Njáls saga* a “patchwork of originally independent short sagas” (Lönnroth 1976:3), Suhm (1774-1781) was the first scholar to regard it as a well-structured work of art, written by one unknown author (“ubekiendte Forfatter”) (IV:XI). In addition to buying Olavus Olavius’ entire edition of *Njáls saga* and evaluating the story in *Critisk Historie af Danmark*, Suhm also paid Jón Johnsonius to translate *Njáls saga* into Latin. This translation, *Nials-Saga. Historia Niali et Filiorum*, was finished in 1770 but not published until 1809. Skúli Thorlacius (1809) wrote a preface to the translation, and like Suhm, praised the learnedness and eloquence of the unknown author, particularly his portrayal of the characters and dialogues (XI). Thorlacius (1809) also suggested that the author of *Njáls saga* was the well-known Icelandic priest and scholar Sæmundr fróði (1056-1133) (XV-XIX). He refers to a verse in “cod[ex] M.” (Thorlacius 1809:XV) [= AM 465 4to, mid-17th c], which postulates Sæmundr’s authorship.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Icelanders and Old Norse-Icelandic scholars often use nicknames for some of the Icelandic Family Sagas. *Njáls saga* is, therefore, commonly referred to as *Njála*.

<sup>43</sup> The verse in AM 465 4to and Thorlacius’ corresponding theory are possibly the first written manifestations of the search for the saga’s author. Sæmundr’s authorship is, however, particularly doubtful, as *Njáls saga* was presumably composed more than a century after Sæmundr’s death. For the same reason, the theory of Helgi Haraldsson á Hrafnkelsstöðum, who suggested that Snorri Sturluson wrote *Njáls saga*, must be rejected, since Snorri died about four decades before the presumed time of composition. Helgi Haraldsson defended his views that *Njáls saga* bears Snorri’s stamp in a debate on Nov. 17, 1967 against Gunnar Guðmundsson, Guðmundur Jónsson, and Sigurður Sigurmundsson. The transcript of the debate (which is cited in this dissertation as Helgi Haraldsson 1967) offers a good overview of Helgi’s argument, even though it is not the first time he brought up his theory. The poet Matthías Johannessen discusses the possibility of Sturla Þórðarson’s authorship of *Njáls saga*, who also wrote *Íslendinga saga* (see for example Johannessen 1985). His theory was later revived by Einar Kárason (2010). The most well-known (and debated) theory about the authorship of *Njáls saga* was brought forth by Barði Guðmundsson and published posthumously under the title *Höfundur Njálu* (1958). He argues that *Njáls saga* was written by the well-known

According to Lönnroth (1976), the Danish theologian and professor of theology Peter Erasmus Müller, who became bishop of Roskilde in 1830, was responsible for bringing *Njáls saga* “to the attention of the literary world at large” (4) by declaring in the first volume of his overview of Old Norse-Icelandic saga literature, *Sagabibliothek* (1817-1820), that it was the greatest of all sagas, as it portrayed a realistic and authentic story of Iceland’s past (P. E. Müller 1817:51, 59-60). Müller (1817) also argues that some of the Christian elements in *Njáls saga*, such as the story about the conversion in Chapters 100-107, were later interpolations and not part of the original saga (59). However, in his essay “Indledning til Forelæsninger over *Njals saga* og flere med den beslægtede Sagaer” (1855), the Danish poet Carsten Hauch argues that the Christian elements were key elements to the story, which he called “et virkeligt Digt” (see Lönnroth 1976:6<sup>44</sup>).

Although the saga was considered one of the greatest Scandinavian stories by Scandinavian and German Romanticists during the nineteenth century, some Classicists rejected *Njáls saga* as a valuable piece of literature, such as Torkel Baden (1821) in his pamphlet “*Njals Saga*, den bedste af alle Sagaer.” Despite some criticism, however, *Njáls saga* was of interest all throughout the nineteenth century, especially to the Naturalist school and the neo-Romantic Scandinavian nationalists, and it was translated into many modern languages, including Danish (1841), English (1861), German (1878), Swedish (1879), French (1896), and New Norwegian (1896) (see Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:CLIX; Lönnroth 1976:5).<sup>45</sup>

Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Konrad von Maurer advanced the research of *Njáls saga* in a more scientific way during the late nineteenth century. Von Maurer, a legal historian, had attempted to

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chieftain Þorvarðr Þórarinnsson, who was influential during the latter half of the thirteenth century. Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954) rejected this theory (CVIIICXI).

While some scholars have proposed specific historical figures as the author, most – more cautiously – give a more general description of the possible social, familial, and educational background of the unknown author (see e.g., Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1878:xlili-xliv; Heusler 1914a:6-7, 11-12, 17-19; Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:C-CXII). Rather than speaking of the author of *Njáls saga*, Richard F. Allen (1971) frequently resorts to the terms ‘narrator’ and ‘saga-man’ (i.e., 95 ff.). Considering that only copies of *Njáls saga* survive, the search for the original author may indeed be futile. Taking the ideas of New Philology into account, it may in fact be more viable to take the copyists of the various manuscripts and their social context into account rather than hunting the ghost of a long lost author. The *Njáls saga* manuscripts range from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and while the core of the saga has stayed the same, details have changed. Although some of these changes were likely copying mistakes, others may have been done deliberately. As New Philology suggests, it is important to consider each manuscript by itself with its individual creation, history, and social context. The “Variance of *Njáls saga*” project is a first step in this direction.

<sup>44</sup> This essay was published in *Afhandler og æsthetiske betragtninger* (Hauch 1855), but I was unable to obtain a copy and, therefore, could not double-check Lönnroth’s indirect quotation.

<sup>45</sup> Jón Karl Helgason (1999) offers an excellent discussion of the rewriting and translations of *Njáls saga*.

use *Njáls saga* as a historical source during the middle of the nineteenth century but felt that it was not suitable as such. He suggested that the dating and the saga's relationship to written Icelandic law codes should be researched in more detail. His colleague Guðbrandur Vigfússon began such research. He published some of his ideas as part of the introduction to his edition of *Sturlunga saga* (Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1878:xliv-xlv) and also discussed his conclusions with von Maurer in private letter correspondences, which were published later by Þorleifur Bjarnason (see Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1922). Guðbrandur Vigfússon disagreed with the opinion of earlier scholars, who believed in the historicity of the saga. Instead, he insists that the saga, which he considered to be the work of one author, could not have been written before the end of the thirteenth century. Despite the advances in the *Njáls saga* scholarship that von Maurer and Guðbrandur Vigfússon brought about, their theory that the saga was composed through extensive use of older written and oral sources proved to become the sole focus of most succeeding research. The scholars following Guðbrandur Vigfússon and von Maurer, mainly their pupils Oscar Brenner, Karl Lehmann, and Hans Schnorr von Carolsfeld, reduced *Njáls saga* “to a mere compilation of earlier material” (Lönnroth 1976:8), such as a lost *\*Gunnars saga*, a lost *\*Njáls saga*, medieval laws, a lost saga about the conversion of Iceland, a lost *\*Brjáns saga*, and lost genealogical sources.

The first critical edition of *Njáls saga*, based on *Reykjabók* with variant readings from all medieval and some selected paper manuscripts, was undertaken by Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson (1875-1889) and published in two volumes under the title *Njála udgivet efter gamle Håndskrifter af Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab*. A survey of the existing *Njáls saga* manuscripts and a stemma codicum based on Karl Lachmann's methods appeared in the second volume of this edition, written by Jón Þorkelsson (1889), who assisted Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson. Jón Þorkelsson based his stemma on an earlier one published in *Die Njálssage insbesondere in ihren juristischen Bestandtheilen* by Lehmann and Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1883:145-147). In his stemma, Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests three main branches, based on a) *Reykjabók* and *Kálfalækjarbók*, b) *Möðruvallabók*, and c) *Gráskinna* (GKS 2870 4to) and *Skafinskinna* (GKS

2868 4to) (782). His stemma was supported later by Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954), the editor of the Íslenzk fornrit edition of *Njáls saga* (CLIII).

*Njáls saga* research reached its first peak during the late nineteenth century. However, Lönnroth (1976) suggests that “nothing essentially new was said about the saga as a whole before 1898, when Finnur Jónsson published the second volume of his *Literary History*” (10). Finnur Jónsson (1894-1902), one of the leading figures of saga studies, believed that the sagas were reliable historical sources, derived from oral tradition, and written at the beginning of the thirteenth century or earlier (II:538).<sup>46</sup> He disagreed with Lehmann and Carolsfeld, who suggested a later date for the saga and doubted its historicity. Nonetheless, he agreed that some episodes in *Njáls saga*, most notably the story about the Conversion and the Clontarf episode, were interpolations (Finnur Jónsson 1894-1902:II:529-531).

In 1908, Finnur Jónsson published a new edition of *Njáls saga*, based on *Reykjabók*. Even though *Reykjabók* incorporates a larger number of verses than other *Njáls saga* manuscripts, he did not include these extra verses, since he believed them to be later additions (Finnur Jónsson 1908:XXXIII). In accordance with new developments in textual criticism, instigated by the German philologist Karl Lachmann in the nineteenth century, Finnur Jónsson produced a mixed text, mainly by integrating variant readings from *Möðruvallabók*, in an attempt to recreate the archetype of the text. He concluded that *Njáls saga* in its preserved form was compiled during the late thirteenth century and mainly based on a lost \**Gunnars saga* (mid-13th c) and a lost \**Njáls saga* (~1200) (Finnur Jónsson 1908:XV-XVI, XXII-XXV). Despite criticism of Finnur Jónsson’s theories, his influence was felt for a long time, and scholars tried to argue for and against the historicity of *Njáls saga* which he promoted.<sup>47</sup>

It was the Germanist Andreas Heusler (1914a) who advanced new critical theories about *Njáls saga* in the brief introduction to his German translation *Die Geschichte vom weisen Njal*. Heusler

<sup>46</sup> For Finnur Jónsson’s entire discussion of *Njáls saga* in *Den oldnorske og oldislandske historie*, see Finnur Jónsson (1894-1902:II:525-47).

<sup>47</sup> According to Lönnroth (1976), their efforts included archaeological excavations at Bergþórshváll to find proof for the burning of Njáll and his family as well as intensive analysis of the personalities of Hallgerðr and Skarpheðinn as real historical characters (12).

(1914a) believed that the author of *Njáls saga* had been working with written sources about Njáll and Gunnarr, and that the story about the Conversion and the Clontarf episode were also based on earlier written sources, but he rejected the idea that these episodes were later interpolations (1-5, 17).

Stereotypical motifs of *Njáls saga*, which Heusler had briefly brought up, were studied in more detail by the Dutch scholar Anna Cornelia Kersbergen in her dissertation “Litteraire Motieven in de Njála” (1927). She organized the motifs into various categories, such as public life in Iceland (Kersbergen 1927:63-89), domestic life (Kersbergen 1927:90-117), life abroad (Kersbergen 1927:118-145), and popular belief (Kersbergen 1927:146-167). Based on her analysis of the motifs, Kersbergen (1927) concludes which other sagas *Njáls saga* is related to, i.e., *Hænsa-Póris saga*, *Laxdæla saga*, *Egils saga*, *Hávaðar saga*, *Heiðarvígja saga*, *Eyrbyggja saga*, *Ölkofra saga*, and *Ásbjarnar þáttur Selsbana* (177). She also analyzed how the author of *Njáls saga* used and adapted the stereotypical motifs (Kersbergen 1927:178-183), and to what extent *Njáls saga* contains foreign elements (183-192).

During the middle of the twentieth century, Einar Ól. Sveinsson, who became one of the most recognized authorities on *Njáls saga*, contributed to *Njáls saga* research with a number of important publications, including his dissertation *Um Njálu* (1933a), *Á Njálsbúð: Bók um mikið listaverk* (1943),<sup>48</sup> *Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga* (1953), and the Íslensk Fornrit edition of *Njáls saga* (1954). In this edition, Einar Ól. Sveinsson followed Lachmannian methods and produced a mixed text, choosing *Mörðuvallabók* as his main text, unlike his predecessors, who worked with *Reykjabók* as the basis for their editions. Nonetheless, he wrote in *Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga* (1953) that individual editions of all major medieval manuscripts of *Njáls saga* should be produced (174), possibly foreshadowing the ideas of the New Philology movement. Therefore, Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s research can be considered the onset of a second peak in the study of *Njáls saga*.

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<sup>48</sup> Einar Ól. Sveinsson published a slightly revised English version of this book in 1971 (*Njáls saga: a literary masterpiece*), translated by Paul Schach and with an introduction by Gabriel Turville-Petre.

Even though Maxwell (1957) and Fox (1963) expressed some criticism of Einar Ól. Sveinsson and other bookprose theorists,<sup>49</sup> his views held strong in Icelandic saga studies until the publication of Andersson's *The Problem of Icelandic Saga Origins* (1964). Andersson criticized the conservatism and unchallenged status of bookprose theories and their followers, particularly Einar Ól. Sveinsson's theories about *Njáls saga*'s relationship to earlier (lost) sagas. Andersson (1964) maintains that tracing sagas back to hypothetical lost written sagas is no more viable than tracing them back to oral tradition, since the existence of neither can be thoroughly proven (103). He also argues that Einar Ól. Sveinsson's assumption that parallels between texts (e.g., *Laxdæla saga* and *Njáls saga*) prove literary influences (*rittingar*) is weak and not supported by actual textual evidence (Andersson 1964:98-102). Andersson (1964) concludes that if there were as many parallels as Einar Ól. Sveinsson proposes, "it is reasonable to suppose that the whole story had an oral foundation" rather than that one saga influenced another (102).

Similar to Andersson, Allen (1971) maintained that the sagas should be "viewed as imitations...of primary oral narrative" (xii). He focused on *Njáls saga* as "the work of a single composer" (Allen 1971:xi) in his influential *Fire and Iron: Critical Approaches to Njáls saga*. Allen (1971) also analyzed the Christian context of the saga, offering a more detailed interpretation of the "Christian awareness" of the saga's author as it is reflected in the saga (29). According to Lönnroth (1976), Allen found "subtle theological meanings in many places where previous critics have found nothing but straight narrative" (19). Furthermore, Allen (1971) draws connections between *Njáls saga* and "Western narrative art" (xi).

Before the advent of New Philology, the major studies on *Njáls saga* were Einar Ól. Sveinsson's works on *Njáls saga* in the 1950s (including his *Íslensk fornrit* edition of 1954), Jón Helgason's (1962) facsimile edition of *Reykjabók*, and Lönnroth's *Njáls saga: A Critical Introduction* (1976), which was preceded by his article "Structural divisions in the *Njála*

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<sup>49</sup> Andersson (1964) summarizes the ideas of freeprose and bookprose in *The Problem of Icelandic Saga Origins* (65ff.). The terms were originally coined by Andreas Heusler (1914b:54). According to Andersson (1964), the "freeprose theory postulates a period of highly developed oral saga telling preceding the period of writing... The relationship of the saga writer to his material was that of an editor rather than a creator." (65). Bookprose, on the other hand, argues that the sagas are literary creations by an author and that "each saga be studied with a view to its peculiarities; [and] that the genre 'saga' be deemphasized in favor of the unique creation." (Andersson 1964:69).



manuscripts” (1975). In his article, Lönnroth (1975) stresses the fact that the chapter divisions in the printed editions of *Njáls saga* “have generally been selected rather arbitrarily ... according to modern – but not medieval – practices” (52). Lönnroth’s article represents the first time a scholar showed increased interest in the paratextual features of *Njáls saga*. Moreover, in his overview of previous research on the saga in *Njáls saga: A Critical Introduction*, he concludes that the various theories put forth by both bookprose and freeprose scholars have left it “to the reader’s discretion whether he wants to interpret the saga as a unified whole or as a collection of episodes; as an ‘objective’ narrative about pagan heroes or as a piece of Christian didacticism; as an epitome of realism or as a highly stylized narrative loaded with symbolism” (Lönnroth 1976:21). Following Lönnroth’s work in the 1970s, detailed research of *Njáls saga* has been lacking until recently when scholars began to study various aspects of the saga in the advent of new and advancing disciplines, such as the New Philology movement, Feminism, the History of Readership and Reception, Structuralism, or Narratology.

So far, Sveinn Yngvi Egilsson (2003) is the only scholar who has published an edition of *Njáls saga* following the ideas of New Philology. He based his edition on one manuscript, *Reykjabók*, and included verses which earlier scholars had often omitted as they were believed to be later additions (Sveinn Yngvi Egilsson 2003:290). The missing text of two lacunae in *Reykjabók* has been completed by using *Kálfalekjarbók* and AM 467 4to respectively. Nonetheless, the growing interest in New Philology and other disciplines has led to a number of publications on *Njáls saga* focusing on the textual tradition of the saga. Guðrún Nordal (2005) highlights the interaction between oral (skaldic verse) and literary (prose) text in her article “Attraction of Opposites: Skaldic Verse in *Njáls saga*” and illustrates how the narrative of *Njáls saga* changes throughout some of the earliest manuscripts, depending on the inclusion or exclusion of the many verses. She took another look at variance in the *Njáls saga* verses in “The Dialogue between Audience and Text: The Variants in Verse Citations in *Njáls saga*’s Manuscripts” (Nordal 2008). Sverrir Tómasson (2008) wrote his article “The textual problems of *Njáls saga*: One work or two?” on editorial problems. Additionally, Jón Karl Helgason has dealt with the reception, rewriting, and

translation of *Njáls saga*, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in his doctoral thesis (Jón Karl Helgason 1995) and later publications (1998; 1999; 2001). Most recently, Andrew Joseph Hamer (2008) completed his dissertation “*Njáls saga* and its Christian Background: a Study of Narrative Method,”<sup>50</sup> and William Ian Miller (2014) offers a new interpretation of the saga in *Why is your axe bloody: A Reading of Njáls saga*.

While most scholarly books and articles mentioned so far deal with *Njáls saga* in its entirety, as a work of art, regarding its overall structure, regarding the social and educational background of the author, and so forth, many scholars have published shorter articles on specific themes, scenes, and characters in *Njáls saga*.<sup>51</sup>

The most significant, recent development in *Njáls saga* research is the project “The Variance of *Njáls saga*/Breytileiki *Njáls sögu*.” It is a collaborative effort to study *Njáls saga* from many angles: linguistically, philologically, codicologically, and as a piece of literature.<sup>52</sup> The primary focus lies with the heavily fragmented medieval manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, the codex *Gráskinna* (GKS 2870 4to), and the post-medieval manuscripts, all of which have not yet been studied in detail or edited. The main goals of the project, which received funding from The Icelandic Center for Research (RANNÍS), are creating and maintaining an electronic text archive of *Njáls saga*, a revised stemma, and a new electronic edition of the text. This dissertation is connected to “The Variance of *Njáls saga*,” focusing on the material aspects of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts as well as offering a glimpse at their readership and reception.

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<sup>50</sup> The publication of this doctoral dissertation is pending (see Hamer 2014).

<sup>51</sup> These articles are too numerous to be listed in their entirety. Dronke (1980); O'Donoghue (1992); Ármann Jakobsson (2007); and Cook (2008), for example, deal with sexual themes, female characters, masculinity, love, and romance. McTurk (1992) analyzes supernatural elements in the story. Le Goff (1992) studies “Laughter in *Brennu-Njáls saga*,” a topic that Wolf (2000) has also examined. Miller (1983; 1989) takes a closer look at the central feud in *Njáls saga* and finds legal justification for Skarphéðinn's killing of Höskuldr Hvítanessgoði. Taylor (1986) is interested in the ideas of telling the truth and lying. Torfi Tulinius (2009) illustrates examples of characters seeking death in *Njáls saga*. And Tirosh (2014) offers a new interpretation of Njáll's character.

<sup>52</sup> See fn. 15 for a link to the project's website.

#### 4. Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

##### 4.1. Introduction and Overview

*Njáls saga* is preserved in its entirety, translations (Danish and Swedish), and excerpts in 66 manuscripts and fragments on vellum and paper, dating from the early fourteenth to the nineteenth century. This dissertation examines 61 manuscripts and fragments, which contain or presumably contained the entire saga in the Old Norse-Icelandic original. Of these 61 codices, 22 are written on parchment, 39 on paper. The manuscript collections in the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies (33 manuscripts), the National and University Library of Iceland (11 manuscripts), and the library of the Catholic Church of Iceland (1 manuscript) in Reykjavík house 45 of these manuscripts and fragments. Two fragments in the National Museum of Iceland (Þjms. I and Þjms. II) are currently lost, and are, therefore, not included in the count.<sup>53</sup> The other manuscripts are in the Royal Library (9 manuscripts) and the Arnamagnæan manuscript collection (3 manuscripts) in Copenhagen, the National Library of Norway in Oslo (2 manuscripts),<sup>54</sup> the National Library of Sweden in Stockholm (1 manuscript), and the British Library in London (1 manuscript). Additionally, Árni Magnússon mentions three manuscripts containing *Njáls saga*, which were part of Resens collection (see Kålund 1909: 111, 113-114, 115); these were destroyed in the fire in Copenhagen in 1728. A register of the manuscripts of the late Bishop Hannes Finnsson preserved in ÍBR 78 4to also mentions a *Njáls saga* in quarto on folio 7v. None of the surviving *Njáls saga* manuscripts are said to have belonged to the bishop, although it cannot be ruled out that the manuscript in question could be the manuscript owned by the Catholic Church of Iceland, the so-called *Landakotsbók* (see Chapter 6.2.2.).

<sup>53</sup> Jón Þorkelsson (1889) mentions the two fragments and prints detailed descriptions of them written by Björn Magnús Ólsen (712-716). Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953) gives a brief summary of the fragments, and mentions that his assistant Gunnar Sveinsson worked on the fragments (13-14), indicating that they had access to them. The *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* (1989) lists both fragments as “(tabt?)” [(lost?)] (342). An inquiry by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication) revealed that the fragments could not be located even though efforts were made. It is unknown when or how the two fragments were lost. According to Jón Þorkelsson (1889:716), Þjms. II likely contained excerpts of *Njáls saga*, rather than the complete saga. This fragment will, therefore, not be discussed in this dissertation. Þjms. I likely belonged to the same codex as the fragments AM 421 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, and JS fragm. 4 (see below and Chapter 6.2.1. for details).

<sup>54</sup> The existence of the two manuscripts in Norway (NB 313 4to and NB 372 4to) was not known until the data collection for this dissertation had been completed. Since time did not allow for travel to Norway in order to view the manuscripts in person, all measurements were taken by Dr. art. Bjørg Dale Spørck at the National Library. She also provided photographs of selected pages, which allowed for the calculation of UR, #signs, #words, ABBR%, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup>.

As outlined in the methodology section (see Chapter 2.3.), the codicological description of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts focuses on size, layout, and text density. Distinction is made between medieval and post-medieval manuscripts written on vellum and post-medieval manuscripts written on paper. Within these larger categories, manuscripts are grouped together by centuries. In each section, the MIN, MAX, MDN, or AVG results of the following features are given: W+H, W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%, UR, #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup>.<sup>55</sup> An interpretation of the codicological features outlined here follows in Chapter 5.

## 4.2. Vellum Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

### 4.2.1. Introduction

*Njáls saga* survives in 22 vellum manuscripts, including 13 fragments. Of these, one large codex and three fragments date to the seventeenth century. Distinction has, therefore, been made between medieval and post-medieval vellum manuscripts.<sup>56</sup> With 13 specimens dating from the fourteenth century, *Njáls saga* is preserved in an uncommonly large number of medieval manuscripts. However, none of the earlier manuscripts contains the entire saga.

The most important early witnesses are *Reykjabók* (which contains the largest number of verses), *Gráskinna*, *Möðruvallabók*, *Kálfalækjarbók*, *Skafinskinna*, and *Oddabók*, since they preserve the bulk of the saga text.<sup>57</sup>

Table 1a in Chapter 4.4.1.<sup>58</sup> lists the median results for size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%) for the vellum manuscripts by century and the average for each category for all vellum manuscripts combined, while Table 1b shows median results for text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) for the same manuscripts. The following sections display more detailed results for the manuscripts from each century.

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 2.3. for an explanation of these and other calculated ratios and measurements. An overview of abbreviations used is given in the preface.

<sup>56</sup> Lethbridge (2014) published an excellent recent article that deals with the pre-reformation manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, focusing on the fact that *Njáls saga*, in contrast to most other Icelandic sagas is often preserved by itself in pre-reformation codices. She also offers brief introductions to some of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts from that period.

<sup>57</sup> The call numbers of these codices are given below.

<sup>58</sup> All figures and tables for this chapter will be presented below in Chapter 4.4.

## 4.2.2. Medieval Vellum Manuscripts

### 4.2.2.1. 14th century

*Njáls saga* survives in five largely complete manuscripts and eight fragments from the fourteenth century. The manuscripts and fragments are listed in chronological order:<sup>59</sup>

GKS 2870 4to (*Gráskinna*, c1300),<sup>60</sup> AM 162 b fol. β (c1300), AM 162 b fol. δ (*Þormóðarþók*, c1300), AM 468 4to (*Reykjabók*, c1300-1325), AM 162 b fol. ζ (c1325), AM 162 b fol. γ (*Óssþók*, c1325), AM 162 b fol. θ (c1325), AM 132 fol. (*Möðruvallabók*, c1330-1370), AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalekjarþók*, c1350), AM 162 b fol. κ (c1350), AM 162 b fol. η (c1350), AM 162 b fol. ε (*Hítardalsþók*, c1350-1375),<sup>61</sup> and GKS 2868 4to (*Skafinskinna*, c1350-1400).

**GKS 2870 4to** (*Gráskinna*, c1300) contains only *Njáls saga*, which is written on 120 folios. Additionally, there is one empty leaf with only faint scribbles at the end of the manuscript. The manuscript is bound in sealskin, but the binding is not original and likely dates to the sixteenth century (Springborg 2000:134). The scribe(s) and provenance of *Gráskinna* are unknown. Its first known owner was Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson, who gave the codex its name probably due to its unusual binding (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:699, 702). The manuscript was repaired, and missing text was added during the first half of the sixteenth century (see fn. 60).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Unless noted otherwise, the dates given correspond with the dating in *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* (1989). The exact dates, particularly of vellum manuscripts, are often unknown and dating is done on the basis of, for instance, paleography and orthography. Often only a fairly general time frame can be given. The chronological order is, therefore, not without problems. In cases where a date-range is given, the earlier date was used to place the manuscript in the list.

<sup>60</sup> *Gráskinna*, which is in a rather poor state and apparently already was during the sixteenth century has some younger additions, dated to about 1500-1550. These are generally referred to as *Gráskinnuauki*. The results from *Gráskinnuauki* will not be included in the overview in this chapter. Moreover, the main part of *Gráskinna*, dated to c1300, was written by several hands. While Jón Þorkelsson (1889) distinguishes three hands (two from the fourteenth century and the *Gráskinnuauki* from the sixteenth century) (697-698), Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953) determines that the fourteenth-century text can be divided into four hands (7). Hands 1-3 are very similar [and in fact considered one hand by Jón Þorkelsson (1889:697-698)] and are, therefore, combined in the results in this dissertation as “GKS 2870 4to (S1-3).” The results for Hand 4 (Scribe 4, fols. 74v-76r), corresponding with Jón Þorkelsson’s (1889) second hand (698), are listed separately as “GKS 2870 4to (S4).”

<sup>61</sup> The first folio of AM 162 b fol. ε is significantly younger, probably written around 1500 (see e.g., Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson 2013:35-38; *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* 1989:434). Like the younger additions in *Gráskinna* and in other manuscripts, measurements from this folio were, therefore, not included in calculating the various data points discussed in this dissertation.

<sup>62</sup> The descriptions of the manuscripts in Chapter 4 are kept brief and generally only contain the most basic information, e.g., content, number of leaves, scribe, ownership, provenance, and significant details, such as younger additions. As noted above, more detailed information about most of the manuscripts and their known history can, for example, be found in Jón Þorkelsson (1889), Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953), various manuscript catalogues, or online at *Handrit.is*. References to additional secondary literature regarding certain manuscripts are often mentioned throughout the dissertation and listed in the bibliography.

**AM 162 b fol. β** and **AM 162 b fol. δ** (*Þormóðarþók*) (c1300) likely belonged to the same codex (Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert 2014:164).<sup>63</sup> The beta fragment consists of one leaf, containing parts of Chapters 7-9 of *Njáls saga*.<sup>64</sup> Its scribe and provenance are unknown. The delta fragment consists of 24 leaves, containing parts of Chapters 36-40, 44-51, 56-77, and 88-98. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert (2014) reconstruct that the entire saga would likely have taken up roughly 100 leaves in the original manuscript, although it is impossible to tell whether *Njáls saga* was the only text in the codex (164). A marginal note from the sixteenth or seventeenth century on fol. 24r states that the fragment belonged to a Bjarni (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:679) or Högni (Kålund 1889:119; Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1953:8) Finnbogason. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert (2014) agree with the reading ‘Högni’ and, identify Högni Finnbogason as the son of the farmer Finnbogi Tumasonar at Hof in Vopnafjörður (NE-Iceland, late sixteenth-early seventeenth century) (166-167).<sup>65</sup> Because it was owned by Þormóður Torfæus, evident from a marginal note in his hand (see e.g. Jón Þorkelsson 1889:679-680; Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert 2014:166), AM 162 b fol. δ is referred to as *Þormóðarþók* or *Þormóðsþók*.

**AM 468 4to** (*Reykjabók*, c1300-1325) contains *Njáls saga* and preserves the largest number of verses, some of which have been added in the margins. The manuscript consists of 93 folios and two flyleaves. It is doubtful that the oak boards of the preserved binding are original.<sup>66</sup> A number of previous owners from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century are known. These are Ingjaldur Illugason, Jón Ingjaldsson, Þorkell Arngrímsson, Jacob Golius, and Niels Foss, from whom Árni Magnússon acquired the manuscript in 1707. The text has two lacunae. The missing text of the first lacuna (fol. 7) was replaced during the seventeenth century, although the script on

<sup>63</sup> Codicological evidence, such as the size of the writing block, number of lines, and so forth, supports Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir’s and Zeevaert’s assumption.

<sup>64</sup> The chapter numbers mentioned throughout this chapter correspond with both Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson (1875) and Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954). Even if a fragment begins or ends in the middle of a chapter, those chapter numbers are given as the beginning and end point. The numbering in the actual manuscripts, where evident, often differs from the printed edition, particularly among the manuscripts from the so-called *Gullskinn*-class.

<sup>65</sup> Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert’s (2014) article is the most detailed description and analysis of AM 162 b fol. β and AM 162 b fol. δ.

<sup>66</sup> Springborg (2000) mentions that the upper oak board of *Reykjabók* has been dated to “c. 1390” (139) based on dendrochronology. This result has, however, been revised in Bonde and Springborg (2005), where the authors note that “a new examination of the board done under much better condition revealed that it is necessary to withdraw this result” (20 n. 3), so that the upper board remains undated. The lower board has been dated to “after 1570” (Bonde and Springborg 2005:8).

the added leaf is almost illegible. The second lacuna (fol. 34) likely occurred some time between 1780-1809 when parts of the leaf were reproduced on a plate for the Latin edition of *Njáls saga* (Jón Helgason 1962:XIX). The missing text is, however, preserved in eighteenth century copies of *Reykjabók* (KB Add 565 4to, AM 467 4to, ÍB 421 4to, and *Landakotsbók*).

**AM 162 b fol. ζ** (c1325) consists of five folios preserving Chapters 36-38, 130-131, 133-135 and 137-138 of *Njáls saga* (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:682). Its origin and ownership are unknown, although very faint marginal notes on fols. 1r and 5v may contain a personal name and place name.

**AM 162 b fol. γ** (*Óssbók*, c1325) consists of five folios preserving five textual fragments of *Njáls saga*, corresponding with Chapters 21-23, 59-62, 73-75, 95-97, and 107-109 (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:677-678). Its original place of origin is unknown. A note by Árni Magnússon on folio 4r states that he received the manuscript in 1712 from Jón Hannesson in Reykjarfjörður (Westfjords), but that Jón had obtained it from Ásgeir Sigurðsson at Ós in Steingrímsfjörður (Westfjords); hence the manuscript's name.<sup>67</sup>

**AM 162 b fol. θ** (c1325) consists of two folios preserving parts of Chapters 64-67 and 85-87 of *Njáls saga*. Its place of origin or previous owners are unknown, but a marginal note on folio 2v mentions the name Sveinn.<sup>68</sup>

**AM 132 fol.** (*Möðruvallabók*, c1330-1370) contains *Njáls saga*, *Egils saga*, *Finnboga saga ramma*, *Bandamanna saga*, *Kormáks saga*, *Víga-Glúms saga*, *Droplaugarsona saga*, *Ölkofra þáttur*, *Hallfreðar saga*, *Laxdæla saga*, and *Fóstbræðra saga*. The manuscript consists of 197 folios.<sup>69</sup> The first eleven leaves as well as folios 20 and 30 were added in the seventeenth century to replace missing text due to lacunae. The original manuscript likely consisted of twenty-six gatherings,

<sup>67</sup> Ós in Steingrímsfjörður lies in the Strandir-district in the Westfjords of Iceland. According to the 1703 census of Iceland (see "Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands"), a Jón Hannesson lived at Reykjarfjörður in the Strandir-district (Westfjords). This Jón Hannesson would have, however, only been eleven years old in 1712 when Árni Magnússon received the manuscript. The same census lists another Jón Hannesson living at Reykjarfjörður in the Norður-Ísafjörður-district (Westfjords), who would have been 34 in 1712. It seems probable that the latter is the Jón Hannesson referred to and the *r* in Reykjarfjörður in Árni Magnússon's note is erroneous.

<sup>68</sup> For a recent detailed discussion of AM 162 b fol. θ, see Stegmann (2011).

<sup>69</sup> The modern foliation numbers in the manuscript go from 1-201. There are, however, mistakes in the counting, which explains the discrepancy between the actual number of folios and foliation numbers. The foliation numbers mentioned here correspond with the ones in the manuscript, even though they may be erroneous.

each made up of eight leaves. It has been argued that *Njáls saga* and a now lost text (*Gauks saga Trandilssonar*), mentioned in a (today illegible) note on the page following *Njáls saga*, may not originally have been intended to be part of the same codex as the remaining texts (see e.g., Jón Helgason 1959:103; Chesnutt 2010:152; Lethbridge 2014:61-64). The manuscript is bound in wooden boards, but the binding is not original (see e.g. Sigurgeir Steingrímsson 1995:63; Chesnutt 2010:148-149). Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Thomas Bartholin in 1691. Björn Magnússon had given it to Bartholin as a gift in 1684. Björn's father, Magnús Björnsson wrote his name in the manuscript in 1628, stating that he did so in the large sitting room at Möðruvellir; hence the name of the manuscript.<sup>70</sup> The manuscript was likely produced in the north of Iceland.

**AM 133 fol.** (*Kálfalækjarbók*, c1350) preserves *Njáls saga* on 95 folios. Some of the leaves are badly damaged. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) assumes that the codex originally contained 120 or 121 leaves (670). Kålund (1889:97) and Jón Þorkelsson (1889:670) point out that two missing leaves (following fols. 56 and 60) were seemingly lost after 1809, since variant readings of these pages are present in the 1772 edition and the 1809 Latin translation of *Njáls saga*. Three initials in the manuscript are elaborately illuminated.<sup>71</sup> Its place of origin is unknown. Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Þórður Jónsson at Staðarstaður (Snæfellsnes-peninsula, W-Iceland) in 1697, who obtained it from Finnur Jónsson at Kálfalækur in the Mýrar-district (W-Iceland); hence the name of the codex (see e.g. Kålund 1889:98). Árni Magnússon (see Kålund 1909:27; Jón Þorkelsson 1889:670-672) mentions that Finnur received the manuscript from his cousin Þórður Steindórsson (c1630-1707), who was *sýslumaður* and stemmed from the Snæfellsness-peninsula (W-Iceland). Letter correspondence by Árni Magnússon with Þórður Steindórsson's son Páll Þórðarson, who provides a reply from his father, indicate that Árni tried in vain to learn more about the history of the manuscript, but that Þórður Steindórsson provided him with no useful

<sup>70</sup> It is unclear whether Magnús Björnsson refers to Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður or Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur. See, for example, Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1933b:21); Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson (1994:118, 124); Arthur (2012a:209-211).

<sup>71</sup> Liepe (2008) discusses these initials in detail.



information, and could not remember where he received the manuscript from.<sup>72</sup> Jón Þorkelsson (1889) points out that both Finnur Jónsson and Þórður Steindórsson have ties to the influential Akrar-family, whose members also included Finnur Jónsson and Jón Finsson from Flatey in Breiðafjörður (W-Iceland), who had owned *Flateyjarbók* (673; see also Arthur 2012a:212-214, 225 Figure 2). Their ancestry is, therefore, rooted in the west of Iceland. While *Kálfalækjarbók* may have been a family heirloom of Þórður's side of the family (although it is curious that he would then not remember where he received it from), it could also have come from his wife's side of the family, Ragnhildur Þórólfsdóttir, who was the granddaughter of Finnur Jónsson from Flatey. Jón Halldórsson (Mýrar-district, W-Iceland) made a copy of *Kálfalækjarbók* in 1697 (AM 464 4to), when it was still more complete. Variant readings from *Kálfalækjarbók* are found in the margins of AM 470 4to, a manuscript written by Árni Magnússon's grandfather Ketill Jörundsson (Dalir-district, W-Iceland) in the mid-seventeenth century. Considering the manuscript's close connection to western Iceland, it seems possible that the manuscript originally stems from this region, possibly the monastery at Helgafell, which is thought to have produced prestigious and highly decorated manuscripts such as for example AM 226 fol., AM 350 fol., and SÁM 1 (see e.g. Ólafur Halldórsson 1966:particularly 41-45; Stefán Karlsson 1967:19-21; Jakob Benediktsson† 2004:25). However, a connection to a certain area in the later life of a manuscript does obviously not necessarily indicate its place of origin. The aforementioned *Flateyjarbók* (GKS 1005 fol.) serves as an example, as it was for the longest time in the west of Iceland, but likely produced in the north (see e.g. Kålund 1900:10, 15; Finnur Jónsson 1930:[3]; Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir 2010; Arthur 2012a:212-214). The fact that Þórður Steindórsson and his wife Ragnhildur have family ties to the owners of *Flateyjarbók*, could add to the hypothesis that *Kálfalækjarbók* was an heirloom in the same family, with connections to the north. A northern origin of *Kálfalækjarbók* can, therefore, not be ruled out. Liepe (2008) notes that aspects of the decorated initials in *Kálfalækjarbók* show similarities with initials in manuscripts attributed to the Benedictine monastery at Þingeyrar (Austur-Húnavatn-district, NW-Iceland), but that there is "no

<sup>72</sup> The letters are merely mentioned in Kålund (1889-1894:98) and Kålund (1909:27-28), but Jón Þorkelsson (1889) prints Árni's notes (671-672).

philological evidence ... that could support a hypothesis claiming a possible closer relation between the manuscripts” associated with Þingeyrar and *Kálfalækjarbók* (181-183). The Benedictine monastery at Munkaþverá and Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður (N-Iceland) remain other possibilities. A marginal note on fol. 37r in *Kálfalækjarbók* mentions the name Pétur Pálsson. A search in “FamilySearch. Community Trees”<sup>73</sup> results in only seven men by that name (and two entries appear to refer to the same person); only two entries seem plausible candidates based on their years of birth. The first Pétur Pálsson was born c1477 or c1496. He became priest in 1502, was “trúnaðarmaður” of Bishop Gottskálk Nikulásson, and abbot at Munkaþverá from 1532 to 1546 (*Sunnudagsblaðið* 1966:236; see also Gunnar Kristjánsson and Óskar Guðmundsson 2006:324-325, 859). Moreover, his concubine Ólöf Einarsdóttir was a descendant of Eriður *auðgi* Magnússon, who shows possible connections to *Möðruvallabók* (see Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson 1994:120-125; C. Müller 2001:223-224; Arthur 2012a:209-210). The second Pétur Pálsson (1566-1621) lived at Staðarhóll (Dalir-district, W-Iceland). His mother, Helga Aradóttir, originated from Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður (N-Iceland) and was the granddaughter of Bishop Jón Arason, whereas his father, Páll Jónsson (Staðarhóls-Páll), is of the influential Svalbarð-family, who also had ties to Möðruvellir (see Arthur 2012a:205 fn.13). However, considering that *Möðruvallabók* was likely produced in the Eyjafjörður or Skagafjörður area of northern Iceland (see above), but *Kálfalækjarbók* and *Möðruvallabók* belong to two different branches in the *Njáls saga* stemma (*Kálfalækjarbók* = X-class, *Möðruvallabók* = Y-class, see e.g. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:CLII), the possibility that *Kálfalækjarbók* was written in a different geographical area of Iceland (e.g. Helgafell, W-Iceland or Þingeyjar, NW-Iceland) is perhaps more likely, although the differences could also be dependent on the instructions of the commissioner and intended audience. In the case of a western origin, it may be more plausible that the marginal note on fol. 37r refers to Pétur Pálsson of Staðarhóll. While his ancestors lived in the north of Iceland during the time *Kálfalækjarbók* was produced, he himself (and his parents before him) lived in the west, which

<sup>73</sup> “FamilySearch. Community Trees” is an excellent online source for researching Icelandic family trees (for non-Icelanders without access to the Icelandic genealogy database *Islendingabók.is*). Its entries are based on written sources, such as for example Bogi Benediktsson (1881-1915) or Páll Eggert Ólason (1948-1952), which are always exactly cited at the bottom of each entry.

would have allowed for possible connections to the Snæfellsnes-area and access to manuscripts produced in the west.<sup>74</sup>

**AM 162 b fol. x** (c1350) consists of two folios preserving one fragment of *Njáls saga*, corresponding with Chapters 134-137. Its place of origin and previous ownership are unknown.<sup>75</sup>

**AM 162 b fol. η** (c1350) preserves three fragments of *Njáls saga* on three folios, corresponding with Chapters 44-45, 53-54, and 86-87. The first folio is badly damaged on the outer margin. The manuscript's provenance and ownership are unknown. Some faint personal names are visible on folio 2v, although they are almost completely illegible.

**AM 162 b fol. ε** (*Hítardalsbók*, c1350-1375) consists of eight folios preserving five textual fragments of *Njáls saga*. The first folio is significantly younger, likely written around 1500 (see for example Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson 2013:35-38; *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* 1989:434; see also fn. 61). The manuscript's place of origin is unknown. Árni Magnússon states that folios 2 and 3 have notes by Þórður Jónsson at Hítardalur (c1609-1670, W-Iceland) and suggests that he owned the fragments; hence the name of the manuscript (see e.g. Kålund 1889:119; Jón Þorkelsson 1889:680). A note in Árni Magnússon's hand on fol. 6r indicates that this leaf also at some point belonged to Þórður Jónsson. Further names on the folios are Þorsteinn Þórðarson, Jón Jónsson, Jón Halldórsson, Kolbeinn, Jón Arnason, Þorleifur and Pétur.<sup>76</sup> Árni Magnússon received two of the leaves from Ormur Daðason in 1717 (see e.g. Kålund 1889:119; Jón Þorkelsson 1889:681). Jón Þorkelsson (1889) argues that because Árni Magnússon received the various fragments of AM 162 b fol. ε from different places, the original manuscript was already divided into various parts during the early seventeenth century (681-682). He also maintains that some of the loose leaves were in the possession of Þórður Jónsson at Hítardalur, where they were used for notes and pen trials by various household members. A marginal note on fol. 1 in the hand of Árni Magnússon indicates that he received it "fra Radz mannum 1704." Kålund (1889)

<sup>74</sup> More research in the history of *Kálfalækjarbók* and its owners is necessary. Several other names appear in the margins of the manuscript, which may allow for a more precise speculation of the manuscript's origin. This research will, however, have to be saved for a later point.

<sup>75</sup> For a recent detailed discussion of AM 162 b fol. x, see Stegmann (2011).

<sup>76</sup> For more on "Pétur" see Chapter 6.4.3.2.1.

suggests that this must have been a *ráðsmaður* ('household manager') at Skálholt (119). Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson (2013) points out that Arngrímur Bjarnason was *ráðsmaður* at Skálholt at the time, a known associate of Árni Magnússon (44).<sup>77</sup>

**GKS 2868 4to** (*Skafinskinna*, c1350-1400) consists of 45 folios preserving three fragments of *Njáls saga*. The manuscript is thought to be a possible palimpsest, and Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953:10), therefore, gives it the name *Skafinskinna* ['scraped off skin'].<sup>78</sup> Also, fol. 31 is a seventeenth-century addition to fill a lacuna. The provenance of the manuscript is unknown, but several personal names are mentioned in the margins. These include Sigurður Brynjólfsson, Jón Ólafsson, Þorsteinn Björnsson, and Jón Ormsson.

Five of the fourteenth-century witnesses are written in two columns (AM 132 fol., AM 162 b fol. β, AM 162 b fol. γ, AM 162 b fol. δ, AM 162 b fol. ε), while the remaining eight are written in a single block. In the tables throughout the dissertation, manuscripts in two columns are marked blue. Three manuscripts, *Gráskinna* (GKS 2870 4to), *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to), and *Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol.) are bound, although the bindings are not original (see above). The ratio of width to height (W:H) of the bindings are 0.7 for *Gráskinna*, 0.68 for *Reykjabók*, and 0.67 for *Möðruvallabók*.<sup>79</sup>

Tables 2a, 2b, and 2c give an overview of size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>; WB%), while Tables 2d, 2e, and 2f illustrate text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) in the *Njáls saga* manuscripts and fragments dating to the fourteenth century. Results have been organized in ascending order (lowest to highest). The results of #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% are combined in one table, but each category is represented separately and has been organized in ascending order. In Tables 2a through 2c, as well as in Table 2f, the results of AM 162 b fol. θ have been marked by an asterisk and are not included in the calculation of the medians. This is because AM 162 b fol. θ

<sup>77</sup> For a detailed summary of the known history of AM 162 b fol. ε, see Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson (2013:44-48).

<sup>78</sup> Jiri Vnoucek (pers. communication) notes that he was unable to detect signs of the manuscript being a palimpsest, and his preliminary observations are overall convincing, although he admits that he did not specifically study this phenomenon. During my own research, the existence of red ink remains from initials and possibly a rubric underneath the *Njáls saga* text were noticed on fols. 3v and 4v. Moreover, some folios show more than one set of ruling lines, of which only one set corresponds with the *Njáls saga* text. These two observations possibly support the original palimpsest-theory. More in-depth research would be necessary to come to a definite conclusion.

<sup>79</sup> As noted in Chapter 2.3., the ratio W:H of binding will not be studied in detailed due to the very small number of manuscripts preserved in their original binding.

is fragmented, and part of the writing block – presumably one line at the bottom – is missing. As UR,  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , and ABBR% can be calculated even in cases where the height of the writing block has been damaged, the results of AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$  are fully included in Tables 2d and 2e.

#### W+H (Table 2a)

- Overall: 358-573 mm (Average: 426 mm; excluding AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$ );
- Manuscripts in long lines: 358-506 mm (Average: 392 mm);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 409-573 mm (Average: 481 mm);
- AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$  (excluded): 355\* mm<sup>80</sup>

Ten of the thirteen manuscripts from the fourteenth century fall into the category of small-medium manuscripts, while three (AM 133 fol. = 506 mm; AM 162 b fol.  $\epsilon$  = 526 mm; AM 132 fol. = 573 mm) can be categorized as medium-large.<sup>81</sup>

#### W:H<sub>WB</sub> (Table 2b)

- Overall MDN: 0.62-0.76 (Average: 0.69; excluding AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$ );
- Manuscripts in long lines: 0.62-0.71 (Average: 0.67);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 0.66-0.76 (Average: 0.71);
- AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$  (excluded): 0.66\*.

#### WB% (Table 2c)

- Overall: 52.6-70.8 (Average: 62.2, excluding AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$ );
- Manuscripts in long lines: 52.6-70.8 (Average: 63.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 55.2-62.6 (Average: 59.6);
- AM 162 b fol.  $\theta$  (excluded): 70.9\*.

<sup>80</sup> As previously noted, all results will be interpreted in Chapter 5.

<sup>81</sup> The categorization of size is taken from Bozzolo and Ornato (1983:218).

The lowest WB% measured was 49.4 percent for fol. 71v in AM 133 fol., whereas the highest number (73.7%) was calculated for fol. 18r in GKS 2868 4to. As a precaution for the reader, it must be mentioned that when viewing these numbers, it must be taken into consideration that pages were frequently trimmed down, and that most of the fourteenth-century manuscripts are fragmentary, which may slightly distort the results.

#### UR (Table 2d)

- Overall: 5.3-8.5 (Average: 6.1);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 5.3-8.5 (Average: 6.1);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 5.9-6.3 (Average: 6.1).

AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalækjarbók*) has by far the highest UR (8.3-8.8, MDN: 8.5) and therefore most generous layout of lines. If the result of AM 133 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the overall average UR, the number drops from 6.1 to 5.9. Similarly, for manuscripts written in long lines, the exclusion of AM 133 fol. results in an average of 5.8. These two numbers (5.9 and 5.8) may represent a more precise result, since AM 133 fol. appears to be an exceptional manuscript.<sup>82</sup>

#### #signs (Table 2e)

- Overall: 32.3-51.0 (Average: 42.1);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 32.3-51.0 (Average: 43.5);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 33.3-44.8 (Average: 39.7).

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<sup>82</sup> See Chapter 5.2. for a more detailed interpretation of these results and a brief discussion of the status of AM 133 fol. based on codicological features.

#<sub>words</sub> (Table 2e)

- Overall: 10.2-15.0 (Average: 13.3);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 10.2-15.0 (Average: 13.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 10.9-13.5 (Average: 12.5).

ABBR% (Table 2e)

- Overall: 11.7-20.7 (Average: 15.2);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 11.7-20.7 (Average: 15.5);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 12.8-15.7 (Average: 14.6).

signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (Table 2f)

- Overall: 226.9-810.8 (Average: 481.9; excluding AM 162 b fol. θ);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 226.9-810.8 (Average: 543.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 303.8-480.8 (Average: 382.7);
- AM 162 b fol. θ (excluded): 701.1\*.

AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalækjarbók*) has by far the lowest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (226.9), which again illustrates the manuscript's generous layout. If the result of AM 133 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the average for manuscripts written in long lines, the average rises from 543.8 to 589.1. This may be a more precise result for manuscripts in a single writing block, since AM 133 fol. appears to be an exceptional manuscript.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> See fn. 82.

#### 4.2.2.2. 15th century

Three manuscripts and two fragments containing *Njáls saga* survive from the fifteenth century. These manuscripts and fragments are in chronological order: AM 162 b fol. α (c1390-1440<sup>84</sup>), GKS 2869 4to (*Sveinsbók*, c1400), AM 162 b fol. ι (*Reykjarfjarðarbók*, c1400-1425), AM 466 4to (*Oddabók*, c1460), and AM 309 4to (*Bæjarbók*, 1498).

**AM 162 b fol. α** (c1390-1440) consists of two collated leaves preserving parts of Chapters 7-9 of *Njáls saga*. The manuscript's provenance and previous ownership are unknown, although Kapitan (2014) assumes a northwestern Icelandic origin (34). She also offers a more precise dating of the fragment, which previously had been dated very generally to the fifteenth century. Kapitan (2014) concludes that the manuscript was written “between the last decade of the 14th century and the first decades of the 15th century (1490-1540 [*sic*?]<sup>85</sup>)” (70).<sup>86</sup>

**GKS 2869 4to** (*Sveinsbók*, c1400) consists of eleven leaves, preserving four textual fragments of *Njáls saga*, corresponding with Chapters 131-136, 139-144, 145-151, and 155-157. The provenance of the manuscript is unknown, but a marginal note on 10v states that “Sveinn Ormsson hefur skrifat Bokina.” Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953), who gave the manuscript its name, believes that *skrifat* is here used in the meaning ‘copied,’ rather than ‘written,’ and that Sveinn Ormsson might be the son of Ormur Jónsson of Skúmsstaðir (Rangárvellir-district, S-Iceland) (11).

**AM 162 b fol. ι** (*Reykjarfjarðarbók*, c1400-1425) consists of four leaves, preserving three fragments of *Njáls saga*, corresponding with Chapters 102-105, 109-117, and 119-121. Fols. 1 and 4 are extremely fragmented, preserving only part of one of the two columns. The width of fol. 2 is also damaged and parts of the second column missing. Fols. 2 and 3 appear to have been used in bindings. The provenance of the codex is unknown. According to a note by Árni Magnússon, the

<sup>84</sup> *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* (1989) dates the manuscript to “c1400-1500” (341). Kapitan's (2014) recent analysis of the fragment, offers a more precise and earlier dating (70).

<sup>85</sup> The date must correctly read 1390-1450.

<sup>86</sup> See Kapitan (2014) for an analysis and edition of AM 162 b fol. α.



manuscript was in the possession of Gísli Jónsson from Reykjarfjörður in Arnarfjörður (Westfjords), who dismantled the codex; hence the manuscript's name.<sup>87</sup>

**AM 466 4to** (*Oddabók*, c1460) consists of 57 folios, preserving six fragments of *Njáls saga*. Its place of origin is unknown.<sup>88</sup> Árni Magnússon received the codex from Björn Þorleifsson, who was then priest at Oddi in the Rangárvellir-district (S-Iceland); hence the manuscript's name. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) determines, therefore, that Árni obtained the manuscript before 1697, when Björn Þorleifsson became bishop at Hólar (692). A marginal note on fol. 46r identifies Björn's father, Þorleifur Jónsson, as the owner of the manuscript in 1645, which suggests that the codex may have been the private property of Björn's family (see Arthur 2012a:215-216). Another marginal note on fol. 47v mentions that "Stein þor gisla son" owned the manuscript. The marginalia is written in a fairly clumsy script, seemingly done by an untrained hand. This makes it difficult to estimate its date, although it is likely not younger than from the late seventeenth century, since Árni Magnússon received the manuscript before 1697. The 1703 census of Iceland does not list a man by the name of Steinþór Gíslason, nor possible alternatives such as Steindór Gíslason or Steinn Þór Gíslason (see "Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands"). The online database "FamilySearch. Community Trees," however, finds a Steindór Gíslason (c1570-1668). He was for some time *sýslumaður* in the Snæfellsnes-district (W-Iceland), the son of the *lögmaður* Gísli Þórðarson and Ingibjörg Árnadóttir, whose father was *sýslumaður* at Hlíðarendi (S-Iceland) (see Bogi Benediktsson 1881-1915:III:96-106).<sup>89</sup> Based on the fact that the script of the marginalia appears fairly untrained, it seems possible that Steindór, if in fact the author of the note, wrote it at a young age, while living in the south of Iceland. Moreover, a marginal note on fol. 51v, in which a copyist complains about the poor state of his exemplar, is likely written by the same scribe who wrote *The Lost Codex* (see below) and AM 396 fol.

<sup>87</sup> For a detailed discussion and edition of AM 162 b fol. 1, see Lai (2014).

<sup>88</sup> Arthur (2012a) discusses the possibility that the manuscript was the hereditary property of Þorleifur Jónsson (215-216). Þorleifur can trace his ancestry back to Loftur Ormsson, who lived in the north and north-west of Iceland around the time when *Oddabók* was written. It is, therefore, possible that the manuscript has its origin in the north of Iceland, although further research would be necessary to confirm this hypothesis.

<sup>89</sup> According to the database, "FamilySearch. Community Trees," Steindór Gíslason was the "2 x cousin once removed" of Þorleifur Jónsson. It seems more likely, however, that location (Oddi or Skálholt) rather than family ties connect the two presumed owners of *Oddabók*, Steindór and Þorleifur, in this case.

AM 309 4to (*Bæjarbók*, 1498) consists of 48 leaves, containing parts of *Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar*, *Þáttr af Sneglu-Halla*, *Laxdæla saga*, *Eyrbyggja saga*, and *Njáls saga* (fols. 39-48, corresponding with Chapters 38-42, 49-54, 62-89, and 118-120). The *Njáls saga* part is written in long lines, whereas the remaining parts are in two columns. The manuscript was likely put together from different codices (see e.g., Scott 2003:106\*), but the script appears to be the same throughout. While the first part of the manuscript can be dated exactly to 1498 due to an introductory note by the scribe, the remaining parts may be slightly younger or older. Scott (2003) suggests, therefore, a more general dating of these sections, including *Njáls saga*, to “ca 1500” (110\*). A marginal note on fol. 17v states that this section of the manuscript belonged to the *lögréttumaður* Jón kollur Oddsson, and the theory has been put forth that he could have been the scribe himself (Scott 2003:110\*).<sup>90</sup> Árni Magnússon received most of the *Njáls saga* part from Bær í Flóa, i.e. Gaulverjabær (Árnes-district, S-Iceland). Accordingly, Jón Þorkelsson (1889) calls the manuscript *Bæjarbók* or *Bæjarbókarbrot* (691). Scott (2003) assumes that since Árni received manuscripts from Gaulverjabær from Torfi Jónsson and his son Halldór, relatives of Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson, the manuscript may originally have belonged to the bishop (105\*). Moreover, Scott (2003) postulates that the “Th. Th.” to whom Árni Magnússon refers in a note regarding the part of the manuscript containing *Laxdæla saga* and *Eyrbyggja saga*, was Þorlákur Þórðarson, son of Bishop Þórður Þorláksson at Skálholt, who went by the pen name Thorlacus Thorlacius and who did bring manuscripts from Iceland to Copenhagen (105\*).<sup>91</sup>

Three of the fifteenth-century manuscripts (GKS 2869 4to, AM 466 4to, AM 162 b fol. α) are written in one column. One fragment (AM 162 b fol. ι) is in two columns. And – as mentioned – AM 309 4to has the majority (38 leaves) written in two columns, but 10 leaves containing *Njáls saga* are in a single writing block. Since this chapter deals only with the sections containing *Njáls saga*, and since it is uncertain if the parts in *Bæjarbók* in two columns were originally in the same

<sup>90</sup> According to Scott (2003), Ólafur Halldórsson put forth this theory in an unpublished paper (110\* fn. 11).

<sup>91</sup> Scott (2003) got this idea from a penciled note in the hand of Jón Helgason in an edition of Kålund's catalogue (105\*).

codex as the one in long lines, *Bæjarbók* is treated as a manuscript written in long lines. None of the fifteenth-century manuscripts are preserved in their original or a medieval binding.

Tables 3a, 3b, and 3c give an overview of size and layout ( $W+H$ ;  $W:H_{WB}$ ;  $WB\%$ ), while Tables 3d, 3e, and 3f illustrate text density ( $UR$ ;  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ ,  $ABBR\%$ ,  $\text{signs}/\text{dm}^2$ ) of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts and fragments dating to the fifteenth century. Results have been organized in ascending order (lowest to highest). The results of  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , and  $ABBR\%$  are combined in one table, but each category is represented separately and has been organized in ascending order. None of the manuscripts have been excluded from the calculation of the overall median. While fols. 1 and 4 of AM 162 b fol. 1 are considerably fragmented, and the width of fol. 2 has been damaged, fol. 3 is minimally distorted, and its results have been used to calculate  $W+H$ ,  $W:H_{WB}$ , and  $WB\%$ .

#### $W+H$ (Table 3a)

- Overall: 350-477 mm (Average: 424 mm);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 350-475 mm (Average: 411 mm);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 477 mm (AM 162 b fol. 1).

All of the fifteenth-century manuscripts fall into the category of small-medium manuscripts.

#### $W:H_{WB}$ (Table 3b)

- Overall: 0.65-0.80 (Average: 0.74);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 0.65-0.79 (Average: 0.73);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 0.80 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

WB% (Table 3c)

- Overall: 57.6-70.5 (Average: 64.0);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 57.6-70.5 (Average: 63.7);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 65.2 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

The lowest WB% measured was 55.0 for fol. 1v of AM 162 b fol. α, whereas the highest number (74.4%) was calculated for fol. 44v in AM 309 4to. When analyzing these numbers, it must be taken into consideration that pages were frequently trimmed, and some of the fifteenth-century manuscripts are fragmentary, which may slightly distort the results.

UR (Table 3d)

- Overall: 4.3-6.4 (Average: 5.3);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 4.3-6.4 (Average: 5.1);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 6.0 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

#<sub>signs</sub> (Table 3e)

- Overall: 29.3-48.2 (Average: 41.3);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 29.3-48.2 (Average: 40.7);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 43.5 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

#<sub>words</sub> (Table 3e)

- Overall: 9.0-14.9 (Average: 13.1);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 9.0-14.9 (Average: 12.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 14.2 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

### ABBR% (Table 3e)

- Overall: 11.9-25.1 (Average: 17.1);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 11.9-25.1 (Average: 17.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 14.0 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

### signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (Table 3f)

- Overall: 320.0-724.7 (Average: 589.3);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 320.0-724.7 (Average: 603.2);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 533.5 (AM 162 b fol. 1).

### 4.2.3. Post-Medieval Vellum Manuscripts

*Njáls saga* survives in one large vellum compilation and three vellum fragments from the seventeenth century. The three fragments and presumably also a now lost fragment (Pjms. I), are derived from the same codex, which I have named ‘*The Lost Codex*.’ The manuscripts are in chronological order: *The Lost Codex* (AM 921 4to I; Lbs fragm. 2; JS fragm. 4; c1600-1650<sup>92</sup>), and GKS 1003 fol. (part of a two-volume compilation GKS 1002-1003 fol; 1667-1670<sup>93</sup>).

Three one-leaf fragments of *The Lost Codex* (c1600-1650) survive. **AM 921 4to I**, is the least damaged leaf. It comprises parts of Chapter 142 of *Njáls saga*.<sup>94</sup> Most reconstructed data for *The Lost Codex* is based on measurements taken from AM 921 4to I. A note accompanying the fragment suggests that originally it consisted of two leaves. It is unknown if the note is faulty or what happened to the second leaf (should it have existed). From its dimensions, it is clear that the second leaf could not have been the now-lost **Pjms. I**. However, the description of Pjms. I, its recorded size, text (Chapters 136-141), and layout (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:712-715) strongly suggest that this fragment originally belonged to the same codex. **Lbs fragm. 2**, preserving

<sup>92</sup> Dating based on my own research (see Chapter 6.2.1.).

<sup>93</sup> Dating based on Slay (1960a) who was able to read the erased title pages of the two codices.

<sup>94</sup> Jón Þorkelsson (1889) prints a transcription of the fragment (707-712).

Chapters 38-42, and **JS. fragm. 4**, preserving Chapters 132-136 also clearly belonged to the same codex. All fragments are written in the same hand as a *Njáls saga* text preserved in the paper manuscript AM 396 fol., suggesting a seventeenth-century date. A marginal note in *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to) is also written in the same hand.<sup>95</sup>

**GKS 1003 fol.** is part of a two-volume collection (GKS 1002-1003 fol., 1667-1670). GKS 1002 fol., with a total of 166 folios, comprises *Karlamagnússar saga*, *Grettis saga*, *Mágus saga*, *Hrólfs saga kraka*, *Flóres saga og Leó*, *Sigrarðs saga frækna*, *Hektors saga*, *Sigurðar saga þögla*, and *Önundar þáttir tréfóts* (which is described as the beginning of *Grettis saga* and missing from the *Grettis saga* in the same volume). The contents of GKS 1003 fol. (144 folios) are *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*, *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*, *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, *Njáls saga*, *Finnboga saga ramma*, *Þórðar saga hreðu*, *Kjalnesinga saga*, *Jökuls þáttir Búasonar*, and *Orms þáttir Stórolfssonar*. The manuscripts are bound in red velvet. The ratio of W:H of the bindings is 0.82 for GKS 1002 fol. and 0.8 for GKS 1003 fol. The manuscripts were written in 1667 and 1670 by Páll Sveinsson in the south of Iceland for the farmer Jón Eyjólfsson of Múli and other men in the Rangárvellir-district. They were later given to King Christian V as a gift by Björn Þorleifsson in 1692. The text on two title pages of the volumes has been deliberately erased, possibly by Björn Þorleifsson, in order to disguise the original owners.<sup>96</sup>

All of the post-medieval vellum manuscripts are written in two columns.

Tables 4a, 4b, and 4c give a survey of size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>; WB%), while Tables 4d, 4e, and 4f illustrate text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) of the *Njáls saga* vellum manuscript and fragments from the seventeenth century. Results have been organized in ascending order (lowest to highest). The results of #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% are combined in one table, but each category is represented separately and has been organized in ascending order. The reconstructed results for *The Lost Codex* are, wherever possible, based on measurable features from each fragment (e.g., column width). When a complete measurement could not be taken for

<sup>95</sup> For a detailed discussion of *The Lost Codex* see Chapter 6.2.1.

<sup>96</sup> See Slay (1960a) for a detailed discussion of GKS 1002-1003 fol. and their history, as well as Lansing (2011) for more information on GKS 1002 fol.

fragments Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 (e.g., height of the writing block), the maximum result of AM 921 4to I, the only complete fragment, was used as a substitute. The results for Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4, which are heavily fragmented, and the reconstructed results for *The Lost Codex* have been marked by an asterisk and are not included in the calculation of the medians. As UR, #signs, #words, and ABBR% can be calculated even in cases where the height of the writing block has been damaged, the results of Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 are fully included in Tables 4d and 4e, but the reconstructed results for *The Lost Codex* are still marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the medians. The extremely limited number of post-medieval vellum manuscripts containing *Njáls saga* and the fragmented state of some of the specimen, make a definite comparison difficult and results should be studied cautiously.

#### W+H (Table 4a)

- Overall: 542-601 mm (Average: 572 mm; excluding Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, *The Lost Codex*);
- AM 921 4to I: 601 mm;
- GKS 1003 fol.: 542 mm;
- Lbs fragm. 2 (excluded): 468\* mm;
- JS fragm. 4 (excluded): 377\* mm;
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 601\* mm.

All of the manuscripts in this category can be categorized as medium-large.

#### W:H<sub>WB</sub> (Table 4b)

- Overall: 0.70-0.74 (Average: 0.72; excluding Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, *The Lost Codex*);
- AM 921 4to I: 0.70;
- GKS 1003 fol.: 0.74;
- Lbs fragm. 2 (excluded): 0.67\*;

- JS fragm. 4 (excluded): 1.34\*;
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 0.73\*.

#### WB% (Table 4c)

- Overall: 67.0-70.1 (Average: 68.6; excluding Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, *The Lost Codex*)
- AM 921 4to I: 70.1;
- GKS 1003 fol.: 67.0;
- Lbs fragm. 2 (excluded): 85.5\*;
- JS fragm. 4 (excluded): 78.2\*;
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 72.0\*.

The lowest WB% measured was 65.0 for fol. 107r of GKS 1003 fol., whereas the highest number (70.4%) was calculated for fol. 1v in AM 921 4to I. When taking the reconstructed results of *The Lost Codex* into consideration, the highest WB% would be 75.1\*, based on measurable features of JS fragm. 4 and substituted results from AM 921 4to I.

#### UR (Table 4d)

- Overall: 5.4-6.2 (Average: 5.8; excluding *The Lost Codex*);
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 5.6\*.

#### #<sub>signs</sub> (Table 4e)

- Overall: 39.1-46.1 (Average: 43.1; excluding *The Lost Codex*);
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 43.6\*.



#words (Table 4e)

- Overall: 13.0-16.3 (Average: 14.6; excluding *The Lost Codex*);
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 15.0\*.

ABBR% (Table 4e)

- Overall: 19.4-23.1 percent (Average: 20.8; excluding *The Lost Codex*);
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 21.6\*.

signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (Table 4f)

- Overall: 476.2-676.2 (Average: 576.2; excluding Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, *The Lost Codex*);
- AM 921 4to I: 676.2;
- GKS 1003 fol.: 476.2;
- Lbs fragm. 2 (excluded): 939.7\*;
- JS fragm. 4 (excluded): 809.0\*;
- *The Lost Codex* (excluded): 677.7\*.

4.3. Paper Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*4.3.1. Introduction

*Njáls saga* survives in 39 paper manuscripts, including 1 heavily fragmented leaf. Of these, 17 manuscripts date to the seventeenth century, 21 to the eighteenth, and 1 to the nineteenth century.

Table 5a lists the median results for size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%) for the paper manuscripts by century and a median for each category for all paper manuscripts combined, while Table 5b shows median results for text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) for the

same manuscripts. The following sections display more detailed results for the manuscripts from each century.

While results in this chapter are presented by century, it is important to note that layout changes and, therefore, changes in the codicological features, among the paper manuscripts are more influenced by the purpose of the manuscripts, independent of their date. Correspondingly, the assumed purpose of the manuscript in question (scholarly, private-scholarly, private) often plays a more significant role in the interpretation of the data in Chapter 5.3. than the dating of the manuscripts.

#### 4.3.2. 17th century

*Njáls saga* survives in 17 complete or largely complete paper manuscripts from the seventeenth century. The manuscripts are listed in chronological order:<sup>97</sup>

AM 396 fol. (c1600-1650,<sup>98</sup> *Melanesbók/Lambavatnsbók*), AM 136 fol. (c1640-1643), AM 555 c 4to (c1640-1660, *Breiðarþólstaðarbók*), AM 134 fol. (c1640-1656,<sup>99</sup> *Hofsþók*), AM 470 4to (c1640-1660,<sup>100</sup> *Hvammssbók*), AM 137 fol. (c1640-1672,<sup>101</sup> *Vigfúsarbók*), AM 163 d fol. (c1650-1682, *Ferjubók*), AM 465 4to (c1650-1699), AM 555 a 4to (1663-1665<sup>102</sup>), AM 163 i fol. (1668,

<sup>97</sup> While the dating of the vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is generally based on *Ordbog over Det Norrøne Prosasprog* (1989), the dates given for the paper manuscripts, unless noted otherwise, stem from the online database *Handrit.is*, since not all paper manuscript are mentioned in the *Ordbog*.

<sup>98</sup> The dating refers to the *Njáls saga* section only and is based on my own research. The date for the codex overall is given as 1675-1700 on *Handrit.is*, corresponding with Kålund (1889), who dates the manuscript to the end of the seventeenth century (306). This dating must be revisited. See below and Chapter 6.3. for more information on AM 396 fol.

<sup>99</sup> The two manuscripts by Jón Erlendsson (AM 134 fol. and AM 137 fol.) have perviously been dated to 1625-1672 (see *Handrit.is*), the latter being the year in which Jón died. However, it is generally assumed that Jón Erlendsson copied the manuscripts for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson and indeed both manuscripts have marginal notes by the bishop. Brynjólfur Sveinsson became bishop of Skálholt in 1639. According to Pétur Pétursson (1884), King Frederick III of Denmark offered him the position of Royal Historian in a letter dated to 1650, which Brynjólfur, however, declined (56). The king in turn asked Brynjólfur to collect manuscripts in Iceland either in original or copy, a request which Brynjólfur presented at the Alþing in 1656 (Pétur Pétursson 1884:56). It may, therefore, be assumed that Jón Erlendsson produced the two manuscripts no sooner than 1639 and possibly not before 1650 when Brynjólfur extensively began collecting manuscripts for the Danish king. This assumption is supported by the fact that a number of manuscripts written by Jón Erlendsson can be dated more precisely due to their colophons to 1651 (e.g., AM 113 a fol.; AM 148 fol.).

<sup>100</sup> Dating based on Már Jónsson (1996:53). *Handrit.is* gives a more general date of 1620-1670.

<sup>101</sup> Like AM 134 fol., AM 137 fol. is dated more generally to 1625-1672 on *Handrit.is*, but I believe the date can be narrowed down (see fn. 99).

<sup>102</sup> Dating based on Már Jónsson (1996:53).

*Saurbæjarbók*), Stock. Papp. 9 fol. (1684<sup>103</sup>), BL Add 4867 fol. (1690<sup>104</sup>), AM 135 fol. (c1690-1697), AM 464 4to (1697), Lbs 222 fol. (1698<sup>105</sup>, *Rauðskinna*), NKS 1220 fol. (1698<sup>106</sup>, *Vigursbók*), and Lbs 3505 4to (1698).

**AM 396 fol.** (c1600-1650,<sup>107</sup> *Melanesbók/Lambavatnsbók*) is a composite manuscript (or patchwork manuscript), consisting of 201 folios, which, however, did not originally all belong to the same manuscript. The title page (fol. 2r) states that the manuscript was bound together in 1731, but some of its parts are as old as the early-mid seventeenth century. The *Njáls saga* section (fols. 100r-145v) is presumably the oldest part (see Chapter 6.3.), dating to c1600-1650. The scribe is unknown, but is identical to the scribe of *The Lost Codex* as well as a marginal note in *Oddabók*. The provenance of the *Njáls saga* part is unknown, but it is possible that it was written in the north or northwest of Iceland (see Chapter 6.3.). Two sections of the manuscript were written in the Westfjords by Jón Ólafsson at Melanes (1676) and Lambavatn (1687) respectively; hence the manuscript's names. The remaining sections, by unknown scribes, appear to be younger, dating to the eighteenth century. Jón Egilsson at Vatnshorn in Haukadalur (W-Iceland) owned the manuscripts in the eighteenth century. It can be concluded that the manuscript was put together from six units: Unit 1 is the section written by Jón Ólafsson in 1676 at Melanes. It begins with *Hungurvaka* (fols. 3r-10v), *Þorláks saga helga* (fols. 10v-20r), *Páls saga biskups (Frásögn hin sérlegasta af Páli Jónssyni Skálholtsbiskupi, og fleirum öðrum biskupum)* (fols. 20r-27v). At this point in the manuscript, Unit 2 was inserted during the eighteenth century, comprising *Biskupaannálar Jóns Egilssonar* (fols. 27v-34r). Unit 1 then continues with *Frásögn hin sérlegasta af Páli Jónssyni Skálholtsbiskupi, og fleirum öðrum biskupum* (fols. 34r-49v), *Jóns saga helga* (fols. 50r-65v), and some verses (fols. 66r-69r). Unit 3 (18th century) follows with *Um Jón Arason biskup* (fols. 70r-75v), and Unit 4 with *Vatnsdæla saga* (fols. 76r-99r). *Njáls saga* (fols. 100r-145v) is Unit 5. The final Unit 6

<sup>103</sup> Dating based on colophon in manuscript. See also Gödel (1897-1900:126).

<sup>104</sup> Dating based on colophon within the *Njáls saga* section of the manuscript. The remaining texts of the manuscript appear to be slightly younger with colophons mentioning the years 1691 and 1692.

<sup>105</sup> Dating based on colophon within the *Njáls saga* section of the manuscript. The remaining texts date to 1695-1696, with significantly younger additions from 1731 and 1746 (see *Handrit.is*).

<sup>106</sup> Dating based on colophon.

<sup>107</sup> See fn. 98.

is again written by Jón Ólafsson, this time at Lambavatn in 1687. It comprises *Laxdæla saga* (fols. 146r-180v) and *Eyrbyggja saga* (fols. 181r-201v).

**AM 136 fol.** (c1640-1643) consists of 89 folios, preserving *Njáls saga*, possibly a direct copy of the now lost \**Gullskinna*-manuscript (see Zeevaert et al. 2015:16-17, 20<sup>108</sup>). The manuscript was written at Núpur in the Westfjords of Iceland by Jón Gissurarson, half-brother of bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson and father of Torfi Jónsson at Gaulverjabær (S-Iceland). Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Torfi's son Sveinn Torfason in 1704. Árni states in a note accompanying the manuscript that it must be older than 1643. According to *Handrit.is*, the manuscript was part of a larger compilation, which also contained the manuscripts AM 126 fol. (containing *Laxdæla saga*, *kappakvæði* by Þórður Magnússon about Kjartan and Bolli, and *Eyrbyggja saga*), AM 138 fol. (*Vatnsdæla saga*), AM 165 f I fol. (*Hænsa-Þóris saga*), and parts of AM 165 m II fol. (containing the end of *Vatnsdæla saga*, *Vitranir*, the beginning and end of *Hænsa-Þóris saga*, *Flóamanna saga*, *Kjalnesinga saga*, and *Jökuls þáttr Búasonar*). It was unclear which parts of AM 165 m II fol. may have been part of this codex, although the overview of AM 165 m II fol. on *Handrit.is*, suggests that it preserves the end of the *Vatnsdæla saga* preserved in AM 138 fol., and the beginning and end of the *Hænsa-Þóris saga* in AM 165 f I fol. Stegmann (pers. communication), who is working on rearranged manuscripts for her dissertation project, has reconstructed the codex that contained AM 136 fol. as follows: “\*AM 136 fol. (*Njáls saga*), AM 126 fol. (*Laxdæla saga*, *Eyrbyggja saga*), AM 138 fol. (*Vatnsdæla saga*), AM 165 m fol. CU2 (*Vitranir*), AM 165 f fol. CU1 (*Hænsa-Þóris saga*), AM 165 m fol. CU3 (*Flóamanna saga*).”<sup>109</sup> Her research in this case is based on Slay (1960b:155).

<sup>108</sup> The article by Zeevaert et al. (2015) about their new stemma of *Njáls saga* based on an analysis of Chapter 86 is still “a working paper, intended for publication,” (1) which was, nonetheless, made available online. Their preliminary results are quite insightful and I consider the article and accompanying stemma a milestone in the stemmatology of *Njáls saga*. Since the analysis is, however, based on only one chapter, it is necessary to be cautious about drawing conclusions from their results, although they certainly offer indications about the connections between the various *Njáls saga* manuscripts.

<sup>109</sup> Stegmann (pers. communication) explains that the asterisk marks a section whose exact position within the original codex is not confirmed but hypothetical. CU stands for “Codicological Unit,” a term coined by Gumbert (see e.g. Gumbert 2010), in this case used to further break down sections listed under one call number that did not necessarily originally belong together.

**AM 555 c 4to** (c1640-1660, *Breiðarbólstaðarbók*) consists of 75 folios, preserving *Njáls saga* (fols. 1-75r) and “Lytid Intak wr Sögu Gudmundar Biskups” (fols. 75r-v). The manuscript was written by Halldór Guðmundsson from Sílastaðir (Eyjafjörður-district, N-Iceland), who was scribe for bishop Þorlákur Skúlason at Hólar (N-Iceland), although Stefán Karlsson (1970b) points out that he also wrote manuscripts for personal use (107).<sup>110</sup> It is, therefore, almost certain that the manuscript was produced in the north of Iceland. Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Jón Torfason from Breiðabólstaður (Rangárvellir-district, S-Iceland) in 1721; hence the name of the manuscript. Since Jón Torfason was a son of Torfi Jónsson at Gaulverjabær, there may be a possible connection between this manuscript and AM 136 fol.. AM 555 c 4to was part of a larger codex, which Beeke Stegmann (pers. communication), based on Stefán Karlsson's research (1970b:83-86), reconstructs as follows: “(lost (*Landnáma*)), AM 555 c 4to (*Njáls saga*, *Guðmundar saga biskups* (excerpt)), (lost (*Úlf's saga Uggasonar*)), (lost (*Sigurðar saga fót's*)), AM 779 c 4to CU5 (*Grænlands chronica*), AM 555 b 4to (*Um Saracenos*), \*AM 614 a 4to (*Rollants rímur*), \*AM 614 b 4to (*Hervarar rímur*, *Grettis rímur*), \*AM 614 c 4to (*Viglundar rímur*), \*AM 614 d 4to (*Pontus rímur*), \*AM 614 e 4to (*Valdemars rímur*), \*AM 614 f 4to (*Króka-Refs rímur*).”<sup>111</sup> According to *Handrit.is*, AM 614 b 4to contains the year 1656 in a colophon, which could potentially narrow down the date of the *Njáls saga* section.

**AM 134 fol.** (c1640-1656, *Hofsbók*) preserves *Njáls saga* on 148 folios. The manuscript was written by Jón Erlendsson, pastor at Villingaholt in Flói and scribe for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson. The manuscript preserves some marginal notes in the hand of the bishop. It was likely written at Villingaholt in the south of Iceland. *Handrit.is* gives the date of the manuscript as 1625-1672. Since the manuscript was written for Brynjólfur Sveinsson, however, who became bishop in 1639, it is unlikely that the manuscript was written before c1640 (see also fn. 99). In the margins of the manuscript are variant readings in Jón Erlendsson's hand from the now lost \**Gullskinna* manuscript, *Gráskinna*, and other manuscripts. Accordingly, it is likely that the manuscript was written before 1656, when Brynjólfur Sveinsson sent *Gráskinna* to Denmark (see Jón Þorkelsson

<sup>110</sup> For more information on Halldór Guðmundsson, see Stefán Karlsson (1970b).

<sup>111</sup> See fn. 109 for an explanation of signs and abbreviations used by Stegmann.

1889:699). Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Ólafur Gíslason at Hof in Vopnafjörður (E-Iceland); hence the manuscript's name. AM 134 fol. was part of a larger codex that also included AM 182 fol. (c1635-1648<sup>112</sup>), containing *Vilhjálm's saga sjóðs* and *Ála flekks saga*.

**AM 470 4to** (c1640-1660, *Hvammsbók*) was written by Árni Magnússon's grandfather, Ketill Jörundsson at Hvammur in the Dalir-district (W-Iceland); hence the manuscript's name. Már Jónsson (1996) dates the manuscript to about 1640-1660 (53). The manuscript preserves *Njáls saga* on 160 folios, and is potentially a direct copy of the lost *\*Gullskinna* (see Zeevaert et al. 2015:16-17, 20). Ketill Jörundsson has added several marginal notes, as well as variant readings from other manuscripts, including *Kálfalækjarbók*, in the margins and between the lines of the codex. Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Þorvarður Magnússon at the Althing in 1704. Árni states in a note that the manuscript has been with his brother Jón Magnússon between 1709 and 1723. He also recollects that his uncle, Páll Ketilsson, mentioned the manuscript to him in a letter dating to 1699, suggesting that it was a copy of *Kálfalækjarbók*. In 1700, Páll corrects himself, saying that the manuscript was merely compared with *Kálfalækjarbók*.

**AM 137 fol.** (c1640-1672, *Vigfúsarbók*) was, like AM 134 fol., written by Jón Erlendsson at Villingaholt in the south of Iceland, possibly for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson (see below). It preserves *Njáls saga* on 170 folios. The text belongs to the *\*Gullskinna*-class. Vigfús Hannesson from Bræðratunga, who was *sýslumaður* in the Árnes-district (S-Iceland) in 1694, is identified as the owner of the manuscript in an ownership mark dated to 1699; hence the manuscript's name. According to another note, his wife, Guðríður Sigurðardóttir, was the owner in 1700.<sup>113</sup> It is possible that Vigfús gave the manuscript to Guðríður as a wedding gift (Arthur 2012a:202 fn. 5). Jón Þorkelsson (1889) comments that some marginal notes in the manuscript are in the hand of Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson. He argues that the manuscript came from Brynjólfur to the family in Bræðratunga and that Vigfús, one of its family members, then gave the manuscript to Árni Magnússon in 1711 (722-723).

<sup>112</sup> Dating based on *Handrit.is*.

<sup>113</sup> Guðríður was the daughter of Sigurður Björnsson (see description of AM 163 i fol. below).

**AM 163 d fol.** (c1650-1682, *Ferjubók*) preserves *Flóamanna saga* (fols. 1-7v) and *Njáls saga* (fols. 7v-37v). The scribe and provenance of the manuscript are unknown. Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Sigurður Magnússon at Sandhólaferja in Flói (S-Iceland), which suggests that it was written in the southern region of Iceland. The manuscript received its name from an abbreviation of Sandhólaferja. The manuscript contains many marginal notes in the hand of the main scribe, who marks verses, proverbs, identifies dates of events, and so forth. The manuscript was part of a larger codex, which Árni Magnússon bought from Sigurður in 1711 and took apart. Árni states in a note that the manuscript was older than 1683. Since the original folio numbers are still visible, it is possible to reconstruct the set-up of the original codex. Fols. 1-23 are preserved in AM 110 fol., consisting of *Landnámabók með viðauka* and *Um erlenda biskupa á Íslandi*. AM 163 d fol. followed with *Flóamanna saga* and *Njáls saga* (original foliation fols. 24-60). Fols. 63-76 are preserved in AM 125 fol., which begins with a crossed-out text passage (see below), followed by *Eyrbyggja saga*, written in two columns and a script different from the main scribe. AM 163 c fol. (fols. 77-78) contains the end of *Eyrbyggja saga*, followed by *Kjalnesinga saga* (still written in two columns), and *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar*. Since the foliation in AM 163 c fol. discontinues after fol. 78 and the script differs from that of the main scribe, it is possible that this part was added later and was not part of the manuscript written by the unknown scribe of *Njáls saga* and the majority of the manuscript. Fols. 79-100 are again preserved in AM 125 fol., containing *Laxdæla saga*, and some *fjósarímur* about Kjartan and Bolli by Þórður Magnússon. AM 163 a fol. contains fols. 101-112, in addition to some leaves that were added at a later point. It comprises *Vatnsdæla saga*, and *Önundar þáttur Tréfóts* (beginning on fol. 112 and continuing on the extra leaves). The next section of the manuscript (fols. 113-145) is preserved in AM 163 b fol., containing *Grettis saga*, some *lausavísur* about Grettir, *Gunnars saga Keldugnúpsfífls*, *Þórðar saga breðu*, *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar*. Lastly, fols. 147-148 are preserved in AM 202 g fol. II, containing *Rauðúlfs þáttur og sona hans*.<sup>114</sup> The crossed-out text in AM 125 fol. preserves simplified family trees of Magnús Jónsson in Ögur and Björn Þorleifsson ríki and Ólöf Loftsdóttir, as well as the

<sup>114</sup> Jakob Benediktsson (1958:xiv-xv) and Beeke Stegmann (pers. communication) come to the same conclusion as myself regarding the reconstruction of the original setup of the manuscript.

beginning of a family history of these families. Both family trees end with Kristín Einarsdóttir, suggesting that the manuscript may have been prepared with her in mind, as a gift or in her honor after her death in 1673 (Arthur 2012a:220-221, 227-228).

**AM 465 4to** (c1650-1699) contains *Njáls saga* and some verses about the saga and saga's heroes on 133 folios. The provenance and scribe are unknown. Árni Magnússon reconstructs one of the verses, which is incomplete due to damage to the leaf that preserves it and concludes that it reveals the name Túmas, according to Jón Þorkelsson (1889) the name of the copyist (736). Since the verse is incomplete, the patronymic of Túmas cannot be reconstructed. Árni Magnússon states in a note accompanying the manuscript that he received it in 1714 in Copenhagen from Andreas Bussæus, who in turn had obtained it from a good friend, who wanted to stay anonymous. Árni thinks he remembers the friend being 'Andreas Stud.'<sup>115</sup> The manuscript was part of the same codex as AM 282 4to (containing *Ragnars saga loðbrokar*) and AM 575 b 4to (containing *Drauma-Jóns saga*). One of the verses in AM 465 4to suggests that *Njáls saga* was written by Sæmundur fróði, a theory that was later picked up by early scholars of *Njáls saga* (see fn. 43). While AM 465 4to is generally dated to c1650-1699, the watermark, a foolscap with a five-pointed collar, indicates that the earliest date for the manuscript could be c1670.<sup>116</sup> The final page of the manuscript has been filled with various pen trials in different hands, containing – among other things – a number of personal names (Einar, Jón Guðmundsson, Bjarni), as well as the beginning of an epigram by John Owen.

**AM 555 a 4to** (1663-1665) preserves a \**Gullskinna*-version of *Njáls saga* on 65 folios. The manuscript is in the hand of Árni Magnússon's uncle, Páll Ketilsson, with the exception of the

<sup>115</sup> This Andreas Stud cannot be identified. It seems possible that rather than stating the name of Bussæus' friend, Árni merely remembers that this friend was a student of Andreas Bussæus ("Andreas' stud(ent)").

<sup>116</sup> As noted above (fn. 29), I did not have the necessary tools to study watermarks in detail. The detected foolscap was only partly visible. The earliest example of a foolscap with a five-pointed collar in *The Thomas L. Gravel Watermark Archive* is found in a document dating to 1649 (Mosser and Sullivan II 1996:FCP.003.1). In Heawood (1950) the earliest foolscap with a five-pointed collar occurs in a document from 1629 (108, Pl. 274:Nr.1929). Comparison of the watermark in AM 465 4to with watermarks in Heawood (1950:108-118, see particularly Pl. 274-282 for similar foolscaps) and Mosser and Sullivan II (1996) suggests, however, that it best resembles foolscap-watermarks in documents dating between the late 1660s and the late 1680s, and particularly some watermarks from the early to mid 1670s (e.g. Heawood 1950:Pl. 275:Nr.1936, Pl. 276:Nr. 1943-1945). Comparison with Churchill (1985:[80-82]) showed similar results. Churchill (1985) also notes that the foolscap "watermark was sought for as a guarantee of quality" ([43]).



first two leaves, which were written very sloppily and on crooked lines by an unknown scribe.<sup>117</sup> According to Már Jónsson (1996), the manuscript was likely written between 1663 and 1665 while Páll was studying in Copenhagen (53). Már Jónsson (pers. communication) bases this assumption on the fact that Árni Magnússon received AM 555 a 4to from the collection of Frederik Rostgaard in Copenhagen, which is confirmed by a note in Árni's hand accompanying the manuscript. Árni also copies the contents of a letter, which he received from his uncle in 1699, in which Páll suggests "Eg helld ad ecke mune merkilegt þad Nialu exemplar, sem þier sied hafed med minni hendi utanlands. (puta hia Sera Peder Syv)."<sup>118</sup> The letter also mentions AM 470 4to, written by Páll's father and Árni's grandfather, Ketill Jörundsson. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests that the text is for the most part identical with AM 470 4to and that AM 555 a 4to is a direct copy of it (740). New research on the stemma of *Njáls saga* based on Chapt. 86 of the saga, however, suggests that AM 555 a 4to may in fact be "an independent witness to \*Gullskinna" (Zeevaert et al. 2015:18).

**AM 163 i fol.** (1668, *Saubæjarbók*) was written in Saubær at Kjalarnes in the southwest of Iceland; hence the manuscript's name. The manuscript preserves *Njáls saga* on 60 folios. Fols. 1-3 were written by an unknown scribe,<sup>119</sup> but the remainder is in the hand of Henrik Magnússon, who states in the colophon that the manuscripts was commissioned by Daði Jónsson, *konungsumboðsmaður* for the Kjós-district in 1668.<sup>120</sup> Árni Magnússon received the manuscript from Sigurður Magnússon at Sandhólaferja (S-Iceland). Accompanying the manuscript are paper slips from an older binding, which contain a number of personal names and dates. Two dates

<sup>117</sup> Since the manuscript appears to have gone through the hands of Peder Syv and Frederik Rostgaard (see above), it is possible that these two folios were written while in their possession, although no further research was done in that regard.

<sup>118</sup> All direct quotations from the *Njáls saga* manuscripts are presented as close to the original as possible (diplomatic) but with abbreviations expanded. Unless noted otherwise, all translations are my own. – Translation: 'I don't think the *Njála* exemplar, which you have seen abroad in my hand (for example at Rev. Peder Syv's), will be considered remarkable.'

<sup>119</sup> On fol. 1r the name of Daði Jónsson's wife, Margrét Pétursdóttir Gamm, is mentioned, which may indicate that the first three folios were added (likely to replace missing leaves), after Daði received the manuscript from Henrik Magnússon.

<sup>120</sup> Henrik Magnússon was *lögsagnari* in the Kjós-district 1683-1687, and *lögréttumaður* for the Kjalarnesþing 1860-1686. He is said to have been quite wealthy, but somewhat eccentric ("sérvitur") (see Aðalsteinn Halldórsson et al. 1969-2007:IV:413). Bogi Benediktsson (1881-1915) notes that Daði Jónsson was abroad for some time and learned carpentering or carving ("snikkaraverk"). He suggests furthermore that Daði did likely not receive any higher education. He became *embattismaður* and *sýslumaður* in 1663 (Bogi Benediktsson 1881-1915:IV:60-62).

from July 1695 appear on the slips, once referencing the name of Séra Helgi Vigfússon, who lived at Laugarbrekka (Snæfellsness-peninsula, W-Iceland) (see Bogi Benediktsson 1881-1915:II:281). Another person that can be identified with certainty is the *lögmaður* Sigurður Björnsson, who at some point lived and shared property with the scribe Henrik Magnússon at Saurbær (Aðalsteinn Halldórsson et al. 1969-2007:IV:413). A Guðríður Sigurðardóttir, mentioned on the paper slips, is most likely the daughter of Sigurður Björnsson. While he had two daughters named Guðríður, it is quite probable that it is the one mentioned as the owner of AM 137 fol., who was married to Vigfús Hannesson (see above). A possible textual connection between AM 163 i fol. and AM 137 fol. can, therefore, not be ruled out, but would require more research. The remaining names, such as Jón Thorkelsson, Ólafur, and Magnús, are too common to be identified. A unique feature of AM 163 i fol. is the addition of verses to the saga within the text or in the margins, attributed to a “Björn S.S. a. Sk.a.”<sup>121</sup>

**Stock. Papp. 9 fol.** (in the following referred to as Stock. 9 fol.; 1684) preserves *Njáls saga* on 459 folios. It was written between July 1 and October 7, 1684 by the Icelander Jón Vigfússon for the Swedish Antikvitetskollegiet. It is generally described as being written in two columns with one column left blank, possibly to add a Swedish translation (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:759; Gödel 1897-1900:126). For this reason, it is highlighted in blue in the tables below. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) states that some chapter divisions are identical with *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to), indicating that it may be related to *Oddabók*, but other comparison does not point in this direction (759). The manuscript contains many marked and underlined phrases and passages (see Chapter 6.4.3.2.2.).

**BL Add 4867 fol.** (1690) consists of 270 folios,<sup>122</sup> containing *Njáls saga* (fols. 1r-99v), *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds* (fols. 100r-103r), *Eiríks saga rauða* (fols. 103v-111r), *Droplaugarsona saga* (fols. 111v-144v), *Vápnfirðinga saga* (*Brodd-Helga saga*, fols. 145r-155r), *Ljósvetninga saga* (fols. 155v-185v), *Bjarnar saga Hítðalakappa* (fols. 186r-206v), *Jóns saga Hólabiskups* (fols. 207r-225v, followed

<sup>121</sup> There is no doubt that the initials of the patronymic read “S.S.,” even though “a. Sk.a.” certainly brings the name Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá to mind. It has so far been impossible to identify the poet of these verses. (See also Chapter 6.4.3.3.1. for more information about the added verses.)

<sup>122</sup> The official folio count in the margins of the manuscript is 261 folios, since a number of empty pages were seemingly not counted by the responsible librarian. The folio numbers given for the beginning and end of the texts in the manuscript correspond to the official folio numbers.

by seven empty leaves), *Lárentíuss saga* (fols. 226r-249v, including a register of Lárentíus's life's events on fol. 249), *Þorsteins saga hvíta* (fols. 250r-255v, followed by two empty leaves), and *Gorms saga gamla* (fols. 256r-261v). The majority of the manuscript, including *Njáls saga*, were written in the Westfjords by Jón Þórðarson for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur between 1690 (*Njáls saga*) and 1692. Some sections are in the hand of Jón's son, Þórður, while the remaining scribes are unknown. According to Jón Þorkelsson (1889), the manuscript was part of the collection of Icelandic manuscripts which Sir Joseph Banks received from the Stiftamtmand Ólafur Stephensen during the years 1773-1777 (761). Jón Þórðarson divides *Njáls saga* into two parts. The second part, which he preludes with a brief introduction, begins with the Conversion episode.<sup>123</sup> The same two-part division, which is a unique feature among the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, can be found in Lbs 222 fol., also written by Jón Þórðarson (see below).

**AM 135 fol.** (c1690-1697) contains *Njáls saga* on 188 folios. The manuscript was written by Ásgeir Jónsson<sup>124</sup> for Þormóður Torfæus. Már Jónsson (2009) concludes that the manuscript was written between 1690-1697 at Stangarland in Norway (290). According to a note by Árni Magnússon, the manuscript is mainly a copy of *Gráskinna*. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) states that while Árni's identification of *Gráskinna* as the exemplar is generally correct, parts of the manuscript were copied from a different manuscript (720-721). Zeevaert et al. (2015) suggest in their stemmatological analysis of Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga*, that while the first half of the chapter was copied from *Gráskinna*, the second half was copied from *Skafinskinna* (9).

**AM 464 4to** (1697) contains *Njáls saga* on 162 folios. The manuscript was written and owned by the priest, author, and scholar Jón Halldórsson in Hítardalur (Mýrar-district, W-Iceland). Jón Halldórsson became priest at Hítardalur in 1692 and held this office until his death, with the short exception of 1708 to 1710, when he was appointed headmaster of the school at Skálholt (S-Iceland) by Bishop Jón Vídalín. After Jón Vídalín's death (1720), he was interim-bishop for two

<sup>123</sup> This is generally Chapter 100 in editions of *Njáls saga*, but Chapter 93 in BL Add 4867 fol. and Lbs 222 fol., belonging to the \**Gullskinna*-class.

<sup>124</sup> A recent interesting study of the different scripts that Ásgeir Jónsson utilizes in the various texts he wrote, was undertaken by Verri (2011).

years until Jón Árnason took office.<sup>125</sup> The manuscript is a copy of *Kálfalækjarbók*. Lacunae in *Kálfalækjarbók* were completed with the help of AM 137 fol.. Variant readings from AM 137 fol. and other paper manuscripts can be found in the margins. Moreover, Jón Halldórsson explains abbreviations and little signatures he uses on the final page of the manuscript. Árni Magnússon wrote a lengthy note about the manuscripts, showing himself quite impressed with Jón Halldórsson's work.<sup>126</sup> Jón Halldórsson gave Árni the manuscript in 1711, after he had made another copy, possibly NB 313 4to (see section 4.3.3.).

The majority of **Lbs 222 fol.** (1698, *Rauðskinna*) was, like BL Add 4868 fol., written by Jón Þórðarson, although some later additions were made in 1731 and 1746 (see below). According to the title page, Jón Þórðarson wrote the manuscript between 1695 and 1698 at Sandar in Dýrafjörður (Westfjords). The manuscript, consisting of 347 folios, contains *Clarus saga* (fols. 1r-13r), *Haralds saga Hringsbana* (fols. 13v-26r), *Sigurðar saga fóts* (fols. 26v-30v), *Sturlaugs saga starfsama* (fols. 31r-42v), *Knyttlinga saga* (fols. 43r-89r), *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar* (fols. 98v-93r), *Bragða-Ölvis saga* (fols. 93v-96r), *Griseldis saga* (fols. 96v-99v), *Galmey's saga riddara* (fols. 100r-175v), *Bósa saga* (fols. 176r-195v), *Stjörnu-Odda draumur* (fols. 196r-202r), *Esópus saga* (fols. 202v-214v), *Eitt ævintýr sem kallast Brita þáttur* (fols. 215r-217v), *Trönu þáttur* (fols. 218r-219r), *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* (fols. 219v-233r), *Valdimars saga* (fols. 233v-239v), a *sendibréf* dated to 1731 (fols. 240r-242r), *Njáls saga* (fols. 243r-345r; written in 1698), and a number of *vísur* about *Njáls saga*, which were composed 1746 (fols. 345v-347r). As in BL Add 4868 fol., *Njáls saga* is divided into two parts (see above). It is unclear where the manuscript's name, *Rauðskinna*, stems from, although it is likely due to the reddish color of the binding. The manuscript came into the possession of Landsbókasafn from the collection of Jón Pétursson (1812-1896). The title page identifies Brynjólfur Oddsson *bókbindari* (1825-1887) as one of the previous owners. Moreover, the names Jón Pétursson (fol. 2r, likely the aforementioned), Gissur Jónsson (fol. 42v), Þuríður Gísladóttir at Tröð (fol. 99v and elsewhere), and Kjartan Ólafsson (fol. 347v) can be found in the margins of the manuscript; presumably owners and readers of the manuscript. The 1816 census

<sup>125</sup> For more information on Jón Halldórsson, see Jón Helgason (biskup) (1939).

<sup>126</sup> A transcription of the note as well as digital images can be found in the entry of AM 464 4to on *Handrit.is*.

of the Ísafjörður-district (Westfjords) mentions a Þuríður Gísladóttir at Tröð 1, the 16-year-old daughter of the farmer Gísli Jónsson and his wife Þuríður Jónsdóttir (Hálfðan Helgason:17). While this is a possibility, another Þuríður Gísladóttir appears to be the more likely candidate, namely the mother of Kjartan Ólafsson, living at Eyri in 1816 (Hálfðan Helgason:10).<sup>127</sup> In the 1835 census, this Kjartan is listed as the *húsbóndi* at Tröð, and held the office of *breppstjóri* (see “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”). Gissur Jónsson cannot be identified with certainty, although it may be assumed that he, like the remaining users of the manuscript, lived in the Ísafjörður-district. The 1835 census lists only two Gissur Jónsson in this district, one an infant at Núpur, the second a 55-year-old *húsmaður* living at Steinúlfsstaðir (“Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”).

**NKS 1220 fol.** (1698, *Vigurbók*) contains *Njáls saga* on 108 folios. The manuscript was written in 1698 by Magnús Ketilsson for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (Westfjords); hence the manuscript’s name. According to Jón Þorkelsson (1889), the text seems to be shortened and cannot be associated with any particular manuscript class (745). Zeevaert et al. (2015) come to the conclusion that NKS 1220 fol. and Lbs 3505 4to (see below) “both derive from a manuscript which conflated a \*Gullskinna text with the text in AM 396 fol (or a close relative)” (19). NKS 1220 fol. used to be part of the same codex as AM 426 fol., written between 1670-1682 (Loth 1967:93-94). AM 426 fol. contains *Egils saga*, *Gunnlaugs saga ormstunga*, *Brandkrossa þáttur*, *Stúfs þáttur*, *Bergbúa þáttur*, *Draumur Þorsteins Síðu-Hallssonar*, *Grettis saga*, *Þórðar saga hreðu*, *Svarfdæla saga*, *Þorsteins þáttur forvitna*, *Valla-Ljóts saga*, *Gunnars þáttur Þiðrandabana*, *Þorsteins þáttur stangarhöggs*, *Þorsteins þáttur hvíta*, *Egils þáttur Síðu-Hallssonar*, *Arons saga Hjörleifssonar*, *Flóamanna saga*, *Fóstbræðra saga*, *Hávarðar saga Ísfirðings*, *Þorsteins þáttur sögufróða*, *Þorsteins þáttur Austfirðings*, *Kumblbúa þáttur*, *Hrafns saga Sveinbjarnarsonar*, *Ölkofra þáttur*, *Þorsteins þáttur uxafóts*, *Hreiðars þáttur heimiska*, and *Sneglu-Halla þáttur*. The manuscript also contains three drawings of Egill Skallagrímsson, Grettir Ásmundarson, and Guðmundur ríki Eyjólfsson, likely by Hjalti Þorsteinsson from Vatnsfjörður (Westfjords) (Loth 1967:94-95). A corresponding drawing of Njáll by the same artist is preserved

<sup>127</sup> Brynjólfur Oddsson *bókbindari* also lived at Eyri for some time (see “FamilySearch. Community Trees”).

in Lbs 3505 4to. The picture was, however, too big to fit and was, therefore, folded, which suggests that it did not originally belong to Lbs 3505 4to, but rather to NKS 1220 fol. This is supported by the fact that the text under the drawing appears to be written by Magnús Ketilsson (Loth 1967:94-95). Zeevaert et al. (2015) conclude that as both NKS 1220 fol. and Lbs 3505 4to were copied in 1698, seemingly from the same exemplar, and Lbs 3505 4to contains the drawing which should rightfully be attributed to NKS 1220 fol., both manuscripts were likely produced in close proximity, presumably around Vigur (15).

The scribe of **Lbs 3505 4to** (1698) is unknown, but the manuscript was later owned by Skúli Magnússon (1768-1837, Dalir-district, W-Iceland), who then gave it as a gift to Bogi Benediktsson (1771-1849, Dalir-district, W-Iceland). The poet and author Jón úr Vör (Jón Jónsson from Vör) sold the manuscript to Landsbókasafn in 1956. The elaborate title page of the manuscript states that the manuscript is “Fröðlig Sagna Bök Innehalldande Eptertecktaverðar Historiur Nockra Nafnfrægra Jslendskra Manna, huoriar fordum týd þessa lands Jnnbiggiarar hafa uppteiknad og epter Sig læted. Nu ad nýu uppskrifadar Anno 1698 epter þeim ordriettustu gomlu Bökum, er menn meina fillstar og Sannferdugastar vera. Fröðleiksgiornum Lesara til idkunar og ihugunar enn þeim til Lærdöms og Listeseme Sem þesskonar Skiemtun hlýða nenna.”<sup>128</sup> Lbs 3505 4to consists of 386 folios and contains *Njáls saga* (fols. 2r-180v), *Hungurvaka* (fols. 182r-196r), *Þorláks saga helga* (fols. 196v-253r), *Af jarteiknum Þorláks biskups* (fols. 230r-253r), *Páls saga biskups* (fols. 253v-257v), *Lárentiuss saga biskups* (fols. 258r-310r), *Guðmundar saga biskups* (fols. 311r-373v), an overview of kings of Norway, Denmark, and England (fols. 276r-278v), and an overview of bishops in Iceland, *lénshöfðingjar*, and *lögmenn*. The latter list was continued later on by a younger hand who added the names of the *lögmenn* up to 1800.

Technically, all of the seventeenth-century paper manuscripts are written in long lines. However, Stock. 9 fol. is generally described as being written in two columns with one column

<sup>128</sup> Translation: ‘an informative story-book, which contains remarkable histories of some famous Icelanders, which the inhabitants of this land during the olden days drew up and left behind. Now copied anew in the year 1698 after the most accurate old books that people consider to be most complete and most truthful. For the pursuit and reflection of the knowledge-seeking reader, or for the study and pleasure of those who bother to listen to this kind of entertainment.’

left blank. Since it holds a unique status, it is highlighted in blue in the tables below, and, therefore, treated like a manuscript written in two columns.

Tables 6a, 6b, and 6c give an overview of size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>; WB%), while Tables 6d, 6e, and 6f illustrate text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) of the *Njáls saga* paper manuscripts dating to the seventeenth century. Results have been organized in ascending order (lowest to highest). The results of #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% are combined in one table, but each category is represented separately and has been organized in ascending order. None of the manuscripts have been excluded from the calculation of the overall median.

#### W+H (Table 6a)

- Overall: 354-540 mm (Average: 445 mm);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 540 mm.

Eleven of the manuscripts fall in the category of small-medium manuscripts, while six can be categorized as medium-large.<sup>129</sup> Stock. 9 fol., which holds a unique status as being written in one very narrow column (see above), is the largest manuscript with a W+H of 540 mm. However, AM 163 d fol. is only 1 mm smaller. It is important to bear in mind that paper manuscripts, even more so than vellum manuscripts, were often trimmed, particularly when they were rebound and fitted for new bindings.

#### W:H<sub>WB</sub> (Table 6b)

- Overall: 0.32-0.83 (Average: 0.66);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 0.32.

Considering the unusual design of Stock. 9 fol., with a very narrow writing block, its result of 0.32 somewhat distorts the overall average. If the result from Stock. 9 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the overall average, the result changes to 0.67.

<sup>129</sup> It should be noted that Bozzolo and Ornato's (1983:218) categories are designed for vellum manuscripts. However, there is no reason, why the same categories should not be applied to paper manuscripts as well.

WB% (Table 6c)

- Overall: 27.0-80.2 percent (Average: 63.6);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 27.0.

If the unusually low result from Stock. 9 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the overall average, the average WB% rises significantly to 66.0. The lowest WB% measured was 26.3 for two folios in Stock. 9 fol.,<sup>130</sup> whereas the highest number (82.1%) was calculated for fol. 63v in AM 555 a 4to.

UR (Table 6d)

- Overall: 4.2 to 9.8 (Average: 6.8)
- Stock. 9 fol.: 9.8.

AM 134 fol. and Stock. 9 fol. have the highest MDN UR with 9.8.

#<sub>signs</sub> (Table 6e)

- Overall: 22.8-50.6 (Average: 35.1);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 27.3.

The unusually designed Stock. 9 fol. has the second lowest #<sub>signs</sub>, with 27.3.

#<sub>words</sub> (Table 6e)

- Overall: 5.8-14.8 (Average: 9.7);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 5.8.

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<sup>130</sup> The exact folio numbers for Stock. 9 fol. were, unfortunately, not recorded during the data collection process. The samples were merely numbered from 1-5.



ABBR% (Table 6e)

- Overall: 0.0-19.2 (Average: 9.5);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 0.0.

No abbreviations were detected in Stock. 9 fol., which, accordingly, has an ABBR% of 0.0. If the result from Stock. 9 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the overall average ABBR% the result rises to 10.1.

signs/dm2 (Table 6f)

- Overall: 26.0-779.4 (Average: 411.8);
- Stock. 9 fol.: 26.0.

If the extremely low result of Stock. 9 fol. (26.0) is excluded from the calculation of the overall average, it rises to 435.9.

4.3.3. 18th century

*Njáls saga* survives in 20 complete or largely complete paper manuscripts and one heavily damaged fragment from the eighteenth century. The manuscripts are listed in chronological order:<sup>131</sup>

SÁM 33 (18th c), AM 469 4to (1705, *Fagureyjarbók*), NB 313 4to (1711<sup>132</sup>), KB Add 565 4to (c1707-1722<sup>133</sup>), ÍB 421 4to (c1707-1722), AM 467 4to (c1707-1722), ÍB 261 4to (1740, *Lágafellsbók*), Thott 1776 4to III (c1742-1800<sup>134</sup>), Thott 984 fol. III (c1750<sup>135</sup>), Thott 1765 4to

<sup>131</sup> Unless mentioned otherwise, dating based on information on *Handrit.is*. See fn. 97.

<sup>132</sup> Dating based on colophon as documented in Jónas Kristjánsson (1967:76-77). Jónas Kristjánsson's typewritten catalog of Icelandic manuscripts in Norway is unpublished. Björg Dale Spørck from the National Library in Oslo was kind enough to scan the necessary pages of the catalogue for me.

<sup>133</sup> Dating of KB Add 565 4to, ÍB 421 4to, and AM 467 4to based on Jón Helgason (1962:XVI). See below for further details.

<sup>134</sup> Kålund (1900) dates the manuscript generally to the eighteenth century (345), but the watermark (see below) proves that the manuscript cannot have been written prior to 1742.

<sup>135</sup> Kålund (1900) dates the manuscript very generally to the eighteenth century, but mentions that the date 1755 is written in a decorated initial (317). Since the majority of the manuscript was written by the same scribe (see below), it seems likely that the *Njáls saga* section was written during the middle of the eighteenth century as well, thus the dating of c1750 (in accordance with a list of *Njáls saga* manuscripts and their dating by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, pers. communication).

(c1750<sup>136</sup>), Kall 612 4to (1753<sup>137</sup>), ÍB 322 4to (c1750-1770<sup>138</sup>), NKS 1788 4to (1760<sup>139</sup>, *Bjarnarstaðarbók*), Handrit í eigu Landakotskirkju (c1760-1780<sup>140</sup>, *Landakotsbók*), NKS 1219 fol. (c1760-1780<sup>141</sup>), Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (1767-1769<sup>142</sup>, *The Younger Flateyjarbók*), AM Acc. 50 (1770<sup>143</sup>), Lbs 1415 4to (c1770), ÍB 270 4to (c1770<sup>144</sup>, *Urðabók*), NB 372 4to (1772<sup>145</sup>), Lbs 437 4to (1773<sup>146</sup>).

**SÁM 33** (18th c) is a single-leaf fragment of *Njáls saga*. The scribe and provenance of the leaf are unknown, which makes it difficult to determine the date of the fragment. It contains parts of Chapters 143-145 of *Njáls saga*. According to *Handrit.is*, the fragment likely came into the possession of the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies shortly after its establishment (c1965) and had previously been housed at Þjóðskjalasafn.

**AM 469 4to** (1705, *Fagureyjarbók*) contains *Njáls saga* and a number of verses about the saga's heroes on 150 folios. Folios 149v-150v are empty. In addition to five verses about Gunnarr, Njáll, Skarphéðinn, Kári, and Flosi directly following the saga, the scribe also added a verse about Høskuldr Hvítanessgoði in the margin of folio 86v. The colophon of the manuscript states that the manuscript was written at Fagurey in Helgafellssveit, i.e. in Breiðafjörður (W-Iceland), from March 13 to April 19, 1705; hence the manuscript's name. Although the name of the scribe is not given, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson (pers. communication) have identified the scribe as Einar Eiríksson, who was *húsmaður* at Bjarneyjar (W-Iceland) in 1703.

<sup>136</sup> Kålund (1900) dates the manuscript to c1700 (342). Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests a dating to the middle of the eighteenth century (746), which seems more accurate, thus the dating of c1750 (in accordance with a list of *Njáls saga* manuscripts and their dating by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, pers. communication).

<sup>137</sup> Kålund (1900) dates the manuscript very generally to the eighteenth century (382), but mentions a colophon containing the date 1753 on fol. 311v (383).

<sup>138</sup> Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests that the hand is not younger than from c1700 (758). Considering, however, that the scribe has been identified as Jón Helgason, who was born 1699, and whose other known manuscripts all date to roughly 1750-1770 (see *Handrit.is*), Jón Þorkelsson's date is wrong and the date of the manuscript has, accordingly, been given as c1750-1770. *Handrit.is* lists the date of the manuscript as "1770?".

<sup>139</sup> Dating based on colophon.

<sup>140</sup> Dating based on my own research, see Chapter 6.2.2.

<sup>141</sup> Kålund (1900) dates the manuscript very generally to the eighteenth century (139). A list of *Njáls saga* manuscripts provided to me by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication), revised the date to c1750. My own research (see below) suggests, however, that the manuscript might be slightly younger (c1760-1780).

<sup>142</sup> Dating based on colophons.

<sup>143</sup> Dating based on colophon.

<sup>144</sup> Dating refers to *Njáls saga* section only.

<sup>145</sup> Dating based on colophon as documented in Jónas Kristjánsson (1967:83).

<sup>146</sup> Dating based on colophon and refers to *Njáls saga* section only.

They come to their conclusion through script comparison with Kall 611 4to, which Einar wrote in 1704.<sup>147</sup>

**NB 313 4to** (formerly UB 313 4to<sup>148</sup>; 1711) consists of 157 folios containing parts of *Bjarnar saga Hitdælakappa* (fols. 1-31), ‘*Um alldr Biarnar*’ by Vigfús Jónsson in Hítardal (fol. 32), and *Njáls saga* (fols. 33-157). With the exception of fol. 32, the manuscript was written by Jón Halldórsson at Hítardalur (Mýrar-district, W-Iceland) in 1711, who also wrote AM 464 4to. According to the description of the manuscript in an unpublished catalogue by Jónas Kristjánsson (1967), the manuscript was likely put together from two codices, since the pagination of the manuscript (in the scribe’s hand) begins anew in the *Njáls saga* section (76-78). A note by Árni Magnússon, accompanying AM 464 4to, states that Árni received AM 464 4to in 1711 after Jón Halldórsson had made a new copy. This new copy is likely NB 313 4to, and Jónas Kristjánsson (1967) concludes that it was directly copied from AM 464 4to (77). Like AM 464 4to, NB 313 4to also includes variant readings from other manuscripts. Nothing is known about the history of the manuscript after its composition and the younger addition of fol. 32 by Jón Halldórsson’s son, Vigfús (1706-1776).

**KB Add 565 4to** (c1707-1722) is one of three surviving copies of *Reykjabók* in the hand of Árni Magnússon’s brother, Jón Magnússon. KB Add 565 4to consists of 333 folios. According to Kålund (1900), Árni Magnússon commissioned the writing of KB Add 565 4to from his brother Jón Magnússon (448). Jón Helgason (1962) assumes that KB Add 565 4to is the only of the three copies which was made directly from *Reykjabók* (XVII). He, furthermore, concludes that *Reykjabók* was in Iceland at Jón Magnússon’s disposal from 1707 to 1722, when he returned it to Copenhagen (Jón Helgason 1962:XVI). Since AM 467 4to (see below), however, was clearly used by Árni Magnússon, which is evident from notes in his handwriting, it can be assumed that Árni may have asked for more than one copy. ÍB 421 4to (see below), on the other hand, never seems to have left Iceland. Since all three manuscripts are extremely similar, it seems likely that they

<sup>147</sup> For a brief discussion of AM 469 4to, see Arthur (2014).

<sup>148</sup> Björg Dale Spørck (pers. communication) informed me that the sigla have been changed to NB (Nasjonalbiblioteket) since the National Library took over ownership over the manuscripts previously owned by the University Library (Universitetsbiblioteket = UB).

were produced very close together, even though KB Add 565 4to may be the only direct copy of *Reykjabók*. It is, therefore, probable that all three manuscripts were written during the time when *Reykjabók* was in the possession of Jón Magnússon, meaning 1707-1722. A verse in KB Add 565 4to about Njáll added on fol. 332v is identical to a verse also preserved in AM 469 4to (fol. 149r) (see Chapter 6.4.3.3.1.).

ÍB 421 4to (c1707-1722) is another copy of *Reykjabók* on 325 folios, copied by Jón Magnússon. According to a note by Jón Þorkelsson (dated 12/2/1888) on a flyleaf in the manuscript, the text corresponds to AM 467 4to, also a copy of *Njáls saga* by Jón Magnússon (see below). ÍB 421 4to contains fragments of letters and envelopes addressed to Magnús Einarsson at Vestdalur in Seyðisfjörður (E-Iceland) (d. 1894) from Sæbjörn Egilsson (1837-1894). The manuscript collection acquired ÍB 421 4to from Sigmundur Matthíasson Long in 1887. According to the description of the manuscript in the online catalogue of Landsbókasafn, *Gegnir.is*, Magnús Einarsson was married to the sister of Sigmundur Matthíasson Long, which suggests that Sigmundur received the manuscript either directly from his brother-in-law or from his sister. The following names appear in the margins of ÍB 421 4to: Anna Torfadóttir at Sandbrekka (fol. 1v), Torfi Jónsson (fols. 38v), and Gunnar Einarsson (fol. 111v). According to the 1855 census of Iceland (see “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”), an Anna Una Torfadóttir lived at Sandbrekka in the Norður-Múlar-district (E-Iceland). She was one year old at the time of the census. Her father is listed as Torfi Jónsson (c1806-1885). She was later a *vinnukona* at Fjarðaralda (Seyðisfjörður-district, E-Iceland), and in 1883, at age 28, immigrated to Quebec, Canada (Júníus H. Kristinsson 1983:48). She died in Gimli, Manitoba, in 1945 (Reykdal and Davidson 2010).<sup>149</sup> Gunnar Einarsson cannot be identified with certainty; he could possibly be a relative of Magnús Einarsson. This suggests that the manuscript was in the East Fjords of Iceland during the mid-nineteenth century, possibly being passed on from the family at Sandbrekka to

<sup>149</sup> *FaroeIceland.ca* (cited as Reykdal and Davidson 2010) is the private website of Linden Davidson and his wife Janet Reykdal, containing their families’ geneology (with references to sources used). The precise link to Anna Una Torfadóttir’s entry in their database is <http://www.faroeiceland.ca/html/ghtout/np425.html#iin6953>

the people at Vestdalur. While the manuscript, like KB Add 565 4to and AM 467 4to is a scholarly copy (see Chapter 5.3.1.), it appears to have been used and owned in a private setting.

**AM 467 4to** (c1707-1722) is another copy of *Reykjabók* (308 fols.) written in Iceland by Jón Magnússon. On folios 300r-301r, Árni Magnússon later added five verses (presumably copied from *Reykjabók*). According to the custodial history of the manuscript on *Handrit.is*, the manuscript was bound in Copenhagen some time between 1700-1730.

**ÍB 261 4to** (1740, *Lágafellsbók*) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 136 folios. The first five and final two leaves of the manuscripts are written in a young hand (mid-nineteenth century) and were added to fill the missing text of the damaged manuscript. Following *Njáls saga*, the younger hand added four verses (*Sextánmælt*, *Langlökur*, *Kimlabönd*, *Tröllaslagur*) on fols. 135r-v, and a fifth one on fol. 136r, which, according to Jón Þorkelsson (1889), reveals the name of the scribe, Jón J[óns]s[on], and composition date (1740) of the original manuscript (751-752). The name of the manuscript, *Lágafellsbók*, is written in square brackets on fol. 2r. Two leaves accompanying the manuscript, which were part of the front cover, contain debt and credit statements featuring several personal names and place names as well as the year 1799. These names indicate that the manuscript was in the Breiðafjörður region (likely close to the Dalir-district, W-Iceland) during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.<sup>150</sup> One of the names mentioned in the manuscript is Þórður Jónsson (1762-1827), who is named farmer at Lágafell ytra in the 1801 census.<sup>151</sup> It seems likely that the manuscript was named after this farm. On folio 2r, a Ragnhildur Jónsdóttir identifies herself as the rightful owner of the manuscript, but she cannot be identified. The manuscript came into the possession of the manuscript collection at Landsbókasafn from Baldvin M. Stefánsson *prentari*.

<sup>150</sup> The featured names include: Jón Þorsteinsson from Ketilsstaðir (1739-1808), Benedict Bogason from Staðarfell (1749-1819), his father Bogi Benediktsson from Hráppsey (1723-1803?; or possibly his grandson, 1771-1849), Jón Þorgeirsson from Skerðingastaðir (1759-1843), Jón Þorgeirsson from Laugar (1767-1843), Þorsteinn Guðmundsson from Arnarbæli (unidentified), Þorleifur Guðbrandsson from Hofstaðir (1770-1800; *breppstjóri* according to *Islendingabók.is*), and Þórður Jónsson from Lágafell (1762-1827). – Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication) provided me with information from *Islendingabók.is*, a genealogy database which only Icelandic citizens have access to.

<sup>151</sup> Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication) provided me with this biographical information about Þórður Jónsson, which she obtained through *Islendingabók.is*.

**Thott 1776 4to** (c1742-1800) is a collection of manuscripts and fragments of various sagas which did not originally belong together (Kålund 1900:345). The third section, Thott 1776 4to III contains *Njáls saga* on 86 folios with a detailed index on fols. 82v-85v. The text belongs to the \**Gullskinna*-class. The final folio (86r-v) is empty. The scribe and provenance of the manuscript are unknown. A crown, likely part of the Arms of Amsterdam, is visible in the watermark of the paper as well as some text, including “PERIGORD 1742.”<sup>152</sup> The date in the watermark offers a definite *terminus post quem* for the manuscript, although it cannot be determined how long after its production the paper was used. The gatherings, consisting of eight leaves each (= two large folded sheets) are unbound. It is evident that the text was written on large uncut sheets rather than ready-prepared gatherings. Only one fold in each gathering has been cut (presumably in modern times).<sup>153</sup> The order of the two large sheets in the second gathering of the manuscript is reversed, but it is impossible to tell whether this gathering was put together in the wrong order from the beginning or if it happened at a later time.

**Thott 984 fol.** (c1750) is a large three-volume collection of sagas on 2232 folios.<sup>154</sup> *Njáls saga* is preserved in Volume III. The precise contents of the manuscript are as follows: *Bandamanna saga* (1r-26r), *Króka-Refs saga* (fols. 27r-56v), *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* (fols. 57r-232r), *Egils saga Siðu-Hallssonar* (fols. 233r-240v), *Hólmverja saga* (fols. 241r-274v), *Þórðar saga hreðu* (fols. 275r-308v), *Ölkofra saga* (fols. 309r-315v), *Gunnars saga Piðrandabana* (fols. 317r-328r), *Hrafnkels saga* (fols. 329r-352r), *Kjalnesinga saga* (fols. 353r-390r, “Sagann af Bua Æseu Fostra” and “Jökla Búa

<sup>152</sup> The photographs I took of the manuscript only reveal part of the watermark. Based on online research and catalogue descriptions of watermarks, the Arms of Amsterdam was indeed a common countermark for the PERIGORD 1742 watermark (see e.g. Heawood 1950:Pl. 67 Nrs. 407 and 408; Mosser and Sullivan II 1996:NAME.432.1; Churchill 1985:[59]-[60], and Pl. [XXXVI] Nr. 56). Churchill (1985) gives a time-frame of 1635-1796 for the use of the Arms of Amsterdam watermark ([28]). He also lists several French papermakers (e.g. Barre, Dumas, Jardel, Juilhard, Marot, Nadel, Perie, Sailhan, Valet) located in Périgord, France, that worked for the Dutch market between the late seventeenth to late eighteenth centuries (Churchill 1985:[19]-[20]) and states, furthermore, that the papermills in Périgord “produced the finest qualities” of paper ([59]).

<sup>153</sup> The phenomenon of manuscripts being written on large uncut sheets rather than ready prepared gatherings appears more common than maybe expected. De Hamel (1992) briefly discusses it (20) and shows an example of a French Book of Hours from the fifteenth century (25), which is preserved on uncut sheets; moreover, Silvia Hufnagel (pers. communication) has come across other Icelandic examples. Silvia Hufnagel and I hope to collaborate on an article about this topic in the near future, which will include a more detailed analysis of Thott 1776 4to III.

<sup>154</sup> The foliation numbers written in the margins of the manuscript end in 2218, indicating that mistakes were made when the leaves were counted. These mistakes were corrected by adding letters to the foliation numbers (e.g., folio 400a is technically folio. 401). The folio numbers given for the beginning and end of each saga correspond with the numbers written in the manuscript, even if this may be a deviation from the actual count.

sonur”), *Gísla saga Súrssonar* (fols. 391r-433v), *Ljósvetninga saga* (fols. 434r-489r), *Víglundar saga* (fols. 490r-516v), *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu* (fols. 518r-536v), *Vatnsdæla saga* (fols. 538r-589v), *Eiríks saga rauða* (fols. 590r-603v), *Eiríks saga rauða* (fols. 605r-617v, different script and paper), *Barðar saga Snæfellsáss* (fols. 618r-642v), *Víga-Glúms saga* (fols. 643r-682v), *Flóamanna saga* (fols. 683r-715r), *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar hins sterka* (fols. 716r-823v), *Finnboga saga ens rama* (fols. 824r-869r), *Reykðæla saga* (fols. 870r-918v), *Ólafs saga konungs hins helga* (fols. 919r-1192v), *Þættir tveir ór sögu Ólafs konungs hins helga* (fols. 1193r-1196v), *Magnúss saga konungs ens góða* (fols. 1201r-1292v), *Hrafn saga Sveinbjarnarsonar* (fols. 1295r-1333v, different script), *Haralds saga konungs Sigurðarsonar* (fols. 1335r-1395r, ends in a lacuna in chapt. LXI / *Hemings þáttir*), *Sverris saga konungs* (fols. 1399r-1547r), *Njáls saga* (fols. 1551r-1718v), *Laxdæla saga* (fols. 1721r-1844v), *Hávarðar saga halta* (fols. 1845r-1873r), *Þorsteins þáttir suðrfara* (fols. 1874r-1875v), *Svarfdæla saga* (fols. 1877r-1916v), *Eyrbyggja saga* (fols. 1917r-1085r), *Þorsteins þáttir stangarhöggis* (fols. 1986r-1990v), *Þorsteins þáttir fróða* (fols. 1990v-1991v), *Gunnars saga Keldugnúpsfífls* (fols. 1997r-2012v), *Hænsa-Þóris saga* (fols. 2013r-2032r), *Fóstbræðra saga* (fols. 2037r-2109r, different script), *Valla-ljóts saga* (fols. 2111r-2129v, same hand as previous?), and *Árna saga biskups Þorlákssonar* (fols. 2131r-2218v). The manuscript was for the most part written by Jón Ólafsson the Younger (1738-1775) in Copenhagen for the manuscript collector Otto Thott, but some sections are in a different hand by an unknown scribe.<sup>155</sup> While the layouts of some sections (e.g., *Laxdæla saga* and *Njáls saga*) are almost identical, other sections show a greater diversity, indicating that the various units were maybe not intended to be part of the same codex. Two initials on fol. 870r (*Reykðæla saga*) and fol. 1845r (*Hávarðar saga*) contain the date 1755. The manuscript is unbound, and there are no physical signs that the codex had ever been fitted with a binding. The edges of the leaves are slightly rough, indicating that the leaves were never trimmed down. Multiple gatherings have usually been sewn together into larger units. Within *Njáls saga*, for example, three gatherings have been sewn together with the exception of the final unit, which consists of four gatherings. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests that the manuscript is a (direct) copy of *Oddabók* (746). Zeevaert

<sup>155</sup> The script of *Hrafn saga Sveinbjarnarsonar* is quite similar to the script in *Landakotsbók*, although it is uncertain if the scribes are identical.

et al. (2015), however, come to the conclusion that Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga* in Thott 984 fol. III is not derived from *Oddabók*, but belongs to the \**Gullskinna*-class (9), and that further research is necessary (20).

**Thott 1765 4to** (c1750) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 138 folios. The main hand of the manuscript (unknown scribe) breaks off on fol. 112v, and a different, but contemporary, scribe begins on fol. 113r. The latter also adds a short report about the murder of Magnús Jónsson in 1471 (wrongfully 1488 in the manuscript) at Kross in Landeyjar and excerpts from the judgment over the killers, known as *Krossreiðardómur* following *Njáls saga* on fol. 138v. The name Þorvarður Bárðarson appears in the margin of fol. 1r. Þorvarður Bárðarson (c1690/1691-1767) was born at Fagurey (Snæfellsnes-district, W-Iceland) (“FamilySearch. Community Trees”), but he was later priest in the north of Iceland; first at Bergsstaðir in Svartárdal (Húnavatn-district) in 1715, then at Kvíabekkur (Eyjafjörður-district) from 1725-1754, and finally at Fell in Sléttuhlíð (Skagafjörður-area) from 1754 until his death in 1767 (Jón Árnason 1862-1864:I:259 fn. 1). Additionally, a letter is glued on the inside of the front cover dated to February 10, 1766, and signed by Stefán Þorleifsson (Stephan Thorleifsson) (1720-1797), priest at Presthólar (Norður-Pingey-district, NE-Iceland). This could mean that the manuscript has its origin in the north of Iceland. The manuscript was later owned by Otto Thott.

**Kall 612 4to** (1753) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class, fols. 1-214), *Egils saga einhenda* (fols. 216-238r), *Sturlaugs saga starfsama* (fols. 238v-265), and *Ectors saga ins sterka* (fols. 268-311).<sup>156</sup> Based on codicological features, it can be determined that the manuscript was put together from three units: 1) *Njáls saga*, 2) *Egils saga einhenda* and *Sturlaugs saga starfsama*, and 3) *Ectors saga ins sterka*. A colophon at the end of *Ectors saga* states that the saga was finished February 6, 1753 at Eyri by Seyðisfjörður (Ísafjarðardjúp, Westfjords). Letters, preserved in the binding contain several names, dates, and place names. These include: the recipient Þorlákur Jónsson at Búð by

<sup>156</sup> The folioation numbers correspond with the numbers written in the margin of the manuscript. Technically, however, the manuscript has 313 folios, since the librarian who counted the folios accidentally skipped over some leaves.



Hnífsdal (Westfjords), the addressee Ólafur Jónsson (with the date March 26, 1751<sup>157</sup>), and the place Bjarnastaðir (with the date 1750). Ólafur Jónsson is, moreover, addressed as “mínun tengda-bróðir” [‘to my brother-in-law’] in one of the letters, but the name of the addressee is unknown. This Ólafur Jónsson (c1690-1761) is most likely identical to the *sýslumaður* at Eyri by Seyðisfjörður of the same name. He was the father of Ólafur Olavius, who published the first edition of *Njáls saga* in 1772. From the colophon and preserved names and dates, Jón Þorkelsson (1889) concludes that the manuscript was likely written in the Westfjords, by two or three different hands in the middle of the eighteenth century (748). The manuscript later came into the possession of manuscript collector Abraham Kall. Considering the possible connection of Kall 612 4to to Ólafur Olavius’s father, it seems possible that Olavius brought the manuscript to Copenhagen, where Abraham Kall obtained it.<sup>158</sup>

ÍB 322 4to (c1750-1770) contains four fragments of *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 128 folios. The manuscript (like NKS 1788 4to, see below) was written by Jón Helgason from Bjarnastaðagerði (N-Iceland). The manuscript is written in two columns. The top and sides of the writing blocks have been marked by ink lines. The design is sloppily done; the width of the columns often varies on the pages. The manuscript came into the possession of Íslenska Bókmenntafélagið (ÍB) from Jón Borgfirðingur in Reykjavík, but it is not known from where he received the manuscript.

NKS 1788 4to (1760, *Bjarnarstaðarbók*) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 207 folios. Like ÍB 322 4to, it was written by the priest Jón Helgason. According to the colophon on fol. 207r, Jón finished the copy on March 14, 1760, at Bjarnastaðagerði (N-Iceland); hence the manuscript’s name. A dedication on fol. 207v, dated September 20, 1762, states that Jón gave the manuscript as a gift to Sören Pens, a merchant at Hofsós.<sup>159</sup> The manuscript has the same,

<sup>157</sup> Jón Þorkelsson (1889) states the date as 1731 (750), but my own reading of the text renders 1751.

<sup>158</sup> Though it could merely be a coincidence, it is interesting that Ólafur Olavius also had close connections to Bogi Benediktsson of Hrappsey, who is mentioned in ÍB 261 4to. Both were involved in the production of Iceland’s first newspaper, *Íslandske Maanedstidender*; Olavius helped establish the printing press at Hrappsey in 1773, which produced the newspaper, and Bogi owned the press (Gils Guðmundsson 1958:12-14).

<sup>159</sup> Sören Pens was also involved in the publication of the first Danish edition and Latin translation of *Konungs skuggsjá*, by bearing the entire costs of the publication (Einersen 1768:XXVIII).

somewhat sloppy, two-column design as ÍB 322 4to. It contains occasional notes and variant readings in the margins, some of which are barely visible, since they reside on the inside margin, and the manuscript is bound so tightly that the book cannot be opened wide enough to expose the marginal notes (see Chapter 6.4.3.3.).

**Handrit í eigu Landakotskirkju** (c1760-1780, *Landakotsbók*) contains *Njáls saga* on 240 folios (= 479 pages). The Catholic Church of Iceland (Landakotskirkja) owns this manuscript; hence the manuscript's name, which it received from the participants of "The Variance of *Njáls saga*"-project. The manuscript likely came into the possession of Landakotskirkja during the time (c1896-1923) of prefect Marteinn Meulenberg,<sup>160</sup> who in 1929 became the first Catholic Bishop of Iceland after the Reformation. Two faint signatures of a Jóhann Árnason (page 1<sup>161</sup>) and an Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir (page 478) can be found in the margins, but these people cannot be identified with certainty. Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir presumably also writes a geographical location (ending in 'stöðum') next to her name, but the exact location cannot be deciphered. The bottom half of the final page (page 479) has been cut off immediately following the final sentence of *Njáls saga* and replaced with a blank paper in later times (likely after it had come into the possession of The Catholic Church). It is possible that this was done to destroy paratextual features, possibly even a colophon. The backside of this final leaf has also been covered with a blank paper. Viewing this page against a light source reveals, nonetheless, that the original half page contains some scribbles and another signature (possibly again Jóhann). The manuscript is likely a direct copy of *Reykjabók*, quite possibly copied in Copenhagen.<sup>162</sup>

**NKS 1219 fol.** (c1760-1780) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 243 folios. A title page, which is decorated with black ink, bears the title "Niaala." The manuscript is neatly written and each chapter is introduced with a large initial, decorated with black ink lines, similar to the title page. The scribe and provenance are unknown, but the manuscript was previously part of Peter

<sup>160</sup> This information is based on a list of *Njáls saga* manuscripts provided to me by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir when work on this dissertation began (pers. communication).

<sup>161</sup> References to passages within *Landakotsbók* are given in accordance with the pagination in the codex rather than folio-numbers.

<sup>162</sup> For more details on the history of *Landakotsbók* see Chapter 6.2.2.

Frederick Suhm's collection (Suhm's saml. 447 fol.; see Kålund 1900:139). Based on its dating to the mid-eighteenth century (a time when many copies of Icelandic manuscripts were produced in Copenhagen), its current location, and its connection to Suhm's collection, NKS 1219 fol. was quite possibly produced in Copenhagen. The paper's watermark bears the name of the renowned Dutch papermill J. Honig & Zoonen (active 1737-1787; see Churchill 1985:[15]).<sup>163</sup> Similar watermarks in catalogues and databases were used in books and documents dating between the late 1770s to the early nineteenth century (see e.g. Mosser and Sullivan II 1996:WORD.063.1, NAME.401.1, WORD.187.1, WORD.207.1). *Landakotsbók* (see above), which was presumably produced in Copenhagen c1760-1780, also contains a Honig-watermark (see Chapter 6.2.2.). While it is certainly possible that this paper was exported to Iceland, the evidence, nonetheless, suggests that NKS 1219 fol. was likely produced in Copenhagen for one of the Danish manuscript collectors around the same time as *Landakotsbók* (i.e. c1760-1780).

The manuscript from the collection of Jón Samsonarson (**Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar**; 1767-1769, *The Younger Flateyjarbók*) consists of 234 folios.<sup>164</sup> It preserves *Kormáks saga* (fols. 2r-16v), *Bandamanna saga* (fols. 17r-27v), *Vatnsdæla saga* (fols. 27v-55v), *Laxdæla saga* (fols. 56r-108r), *Eyrbyggja saga* (fols. 108v-147v), and *Njáls saga* (fols. 148r-234v, \**Gullskinna*-class). *Njáls saga* is incomplete, and many pages of the manuscript are damaged or partly deteriorated. From the title page and two colophons it can be determined that the majority of the manuscript was written between 1767 and 1769 at Flatey in Breiðafjörður (W-Iceland); hence the manuscript's name. The title page also states that additions were made to the manuscripts in 1877 by a "J.J.S." (likely Jón Jónsson,<sup>165</sup> judging by a marginal note on fol. 116r). Two distinct nineteenth-century hands can, however, be distinguished. The scribe of the main

<sup>163</sup> For more information on this paper mill, see e.g. Voorn (1960:554).

<sup>164</sup> The manuscript's official name has been abbreviated to "Hdr. Jóns Samsonars." in all tables to preserve space. *The Younger Flateyjarbók*, my own creation, is generally used throughout the text of this dissertation.

<sup>165</sup> A note accompanying the manuscript, likely written by Guðmundur Baldvinsson, suggests that the scribe may have been Jóhannes Jónsson (Smyrlhóll, Dalir-district, W-Iceland). Comparison of scripts, however, does not suggest this. Þorsteinn Jónsson (1996b) mentions a Jón Jónsson *Flateyngur*, living at Flatey during the time in question (198). Of him it is said that "hann fékkst talsvert við bókaviðgerðir, en ekki þótti það hýrt handbragð" (Þorsteinn Jónsson 1996b:198) ['He quite often supplied book repairs, but it was not considered good handiwork.']. Since Jón Jónsson is, however, a very common name and it is uncertain whether the additions in the manuscripts were in fact made at Flatey, it is at this point impossible to tell who wrote the additions in the manuscript.

part, including *Njáls saga*, has been identified as Markús Snæbjörnsson, who was priest at Flatey between 1754-1787.<sup>166</sup> Guðmundur Baldvinsson from Hamraendar (Dalir-district, W-Iceland) gave the manuscript to Jón Samsonarson after Jón had given a lecture about Snóksdalskirkja in 1978.<sup>167</sup>

**AM Acc. 50** (1770) consists of 140 folios, containing *Njáls saga* and a poem about the saga by the scribe. The scribe occasionally inserts comments within the text of *Njáls saga* (see Chapter 6.4.3.3.1. as well as Arthur 2012b:6-7). According to its colophon, the manuscript was written in 1770 by Jakob Sigurðsson at Norður-Skálanes in Vopnafjörður (E-Iceland). Jakob Sigurðsson (1727-1779) has copied a number of other manuscripts, some of which contain beautiful drawings (e.g., ÍB 299 4to, Lbs 781 4to, SÁM 2, SÁM 66). He was a scribe, author, and poet.<sup>168</sup> Jakob paginated the manuscript and also marks the first three recto pages of each gathering with letters and numerals (e.g. gathering one: 1r = A, 2r = A2, 3r = A.3, 4r unmarked). The ink lines that mark off the writing block seem to align across pages, suggesting that, like Thott 1776 4to III (see above), the manuscript may have been written on large sheets before they were folded and cut into gatherings. The beginning of *Njáls saga* is highlighted with a very large, decorated initial. According to Zeevaert et al. (2015), the Pars-Drawgram clustering utilized for their study filiates AM Acc. 50 as a sibling of AM 162 b fol. θ based on Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga*, which “would be remarkable if true, making it an almost unique witness to a lost early manuscript” (16). Zeevaert et al. (2015) admit, however, that AM Acc. 50 is “highly innovative” (16), which makes it difficult to filiate it correctly. They consider it equally possible that the manuscript belongs to the \**Gullskinna*-class and suggest that further research is necessary (Zeevaert et al. 2015:16).

<sup>166</sup> A note accompanying the manuscript, likely written by Guðmundur Baldvinsson, suggests that Magnús Magnússon from Eyri was the scribe, based on a quote from *Frá yztu nesjum* (Gils Guðmundsson 1942) that he was “kostulegur og iðinn bóka skrifari” (IV:64) [‘an expensive and diligent book scribe’]. The colophon following *Kormáks saga* on fol. 16v, however, clearly says “Flateyio” and not “Flateyri.” It seems probable that Guðmundur misread the colophon. Based on the location and date, I searched for potential scribes among the population of Flatey at the time, and found information about Markús Snæbjörnsson in Þorsteinn Jónsson (1996a:98) and Þorsteinn Jónsson (1996b:239). A comparison of the script in *The Younger Flateyjarbók* with Lbs 356 fol., which is undoubtedly written by Markús Snæbjörnsson, showed that the two scripts are identical.

<sup>167</sup> According to a note accompanying the manuscript (written by Einar G. Pétursson), Guðmundur Baldvinsson took the manuscript out of the altar of the church. Considering the restoration history of Snóksdalskirkja (outlined in Jón Samsonarson 1991) it seems, however, more likely that the manuscript was not in the possession of the church, but possibly the private possession of Guðmundur Baldvinsson.

<sup>168</sup> Jakob Sigurðsson’s life and work, particularly his illustrations in SÁM 66, the so-called Melsteðs-Edda, have, for example, been discussed in Gísli Sigurðsson (2004a) and Baer (2013).

According to *Handrit.is*, the Arnarnagnæan Collection acquired the manuscript in the winter of 2002-2003, but *The Arnarnagnæan Institute and Dictionary. Bulletin* (“A Recent Addition to the Arnarnagnæan Collection.” 2004) has a brief announcement regarding the purchase of AM Acc. 50, stating that it was bought “in the summer of 2002 ... from a Copenhagen dealer” (17). The article also states that no further information exists about previous owners or the circumstances of it reaching Copenhagen.<sup>169</sup>

**Lbs 1415 4to** (c1770) contains *Njáls saga* (\**Gullskinna*-class) on 239 folios. The scribe is unknown. The first 104 folios bear foliation numbers in the hand of the scribe. Additionally, the gatherings are marked by letters. Folios 225-226 are written in two different and younger hands (nineteenth century). Folio 225v bears the name Indriði Arngrímsson, likely farmer at Birningsstaðir (Þingey-district, N-Iceland), who was born 1797 and died 1858. The names Hallgrímur as well as Jón Jónatansson are written on fol. 226v. Jón Jónatansson (1853-1945) was the eldest son of Jónatan Þorláksson (1825-1906) at Þórðarstaðir (Þingey-district, N-Iceland) from whose collection the manuscript was bought in 1906-1907 after Jónatan’s death. Jónatan’s name is written on fol. 1r. Jón Jónatansson lived at Öngulsstaðir (Eyjafjörður-district, N-Iceland), and his father moved there during the last years of his life (Jón Kr. Kristjánsson 1988:70). While the provenance of the manuscript is unknown, it is possible that it stems from northern Iceland (Þingey- or Eyjafjörður-district). On the back cover, some faint text contains the date 1796 or 1798.

**ÍB 270 4to** (c1770, *Urðabók*) consists of 150 folios containing *Gunnlaugs saga ormstunga* (c1800-1820, fols. 1r-16v), *Njáls saga* (c1770, fols. 17r-149v), and verses about various *Njáls saga* characters (fols. 149-150v). Wawn (2012) identifies the scribe of the *Njáls saga* section as Magnús Einarsson of Tjörn (1734-1794, N-Iceland) and suggests that Magnús wrote the manuscript for his friend Jón Sigurðssonar at Urðir (N-Iceland) (10). Magnús Einarsson lived at Upsir from 1765 to 1769 and at Tjörn from 1769 to 1794 (Páll Eggert Ólason 1948-1952:III:417); Upsir is approximately 17 km from Urðir, Tjörn less than 10 km. According to Jón Þorkelsson (1889), the

<sup>169</sup> Matthew James Driscoll (pers. communication), curator of the Arnarnagnæan manuscript collection, brought the Bulletin-article to my attention.

manuscript came into the possession of Íslenska Bókmenntafélagið (ÍB) from Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson from Upsir (Eyjafjörður-district, N-Iceland) in 1871, but had previously been at Urðir in Svarfaðardalur (Eyjafjörður-district, N-Iceland), which is evident from notes that were part of a previous binding; hence the manuscript's name (*Urðabók*) (754). The notes, which Jón Þorkelsson (1889:754) reproduces and which, according to Páll Eggert Ólason (1918-1996), were thrown away when the manuscript was rebound (Vol. 2:792), contained statements such as “Jón á Urðum” “Páli Þórðarsyni á Urðum” and “Þessa bók [á] Halldór Þorkelsson á Urðum 1843. Vitnar Jón Halldórsson”<sup>170</sup> (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:754). The name Jón could refer to the *hreppstjóri* Jón Sigurðsson (1736-1821), for whom, according to Wawn (2012), the manuscript may have been written (10), to Jón Sveinsson (1766-1841), who is listed as “húsbóndi, kirkjunnar umboðsmaður, eigandi jarðarinnar”<sup>171</sup> at Urðir in the census of 1835 (see “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”), or to Jón Halldórsson (see below). Halldór Þorkelsson (1795-1863) is listed as a *húsbóndi* at Tungufell (close to Urðir) in the census of 1835, as a *vinnumaður* at “Urðir Tjarnarannexía” in the census of 1840, and as *sjálfseignarbóndi* at “Urðir kirkjustaður” in the census of 1845 (see “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”). His son was Jón Halldórsson (1822-1895). Páll Þórðarsson could be the son of Þórður Jónsson and Sigríður Guðmundsdóttir; he was born 1810 at Hnjúkur (died 1875),<sup>172</sup> less than 15 km from Urðir. The census of 1835 lists, seemingly the same Páll Þórðarson (based on his age), as the *húsbóndi* at Hjaltastaðir, less than 10 km from Urðir; in the same census, his mother Sigríður (identification also based on age, born c1773) is named the *bústýra* [‘housekeeper’] at Hæringsstaðir, less than 4 km from Urðir (“Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”).<sup>173</sup> Considering the close proximity of Páll and his family to Urðir, it seems possible that at some point Páll Þórðarson lived or worked at Urðir, allowing him to use the phrase “á Urðum” in the notes that were part of the manuscript's binding (see above). Jón

<sup>170</sup> Translations: ‘Jón at Urðir;’ ‘by Páll Þórðarson at Urðir;’ and ‘Halldór Þorkelsson at Urðir owns this book in 1843. Jón Halldórsson witnesses.’

<sup>171</sup> Translation: ‘Farmer, church manager, property owner.’

<sup>172</sup> This information is based on an entry in “FamilySearch. Community Trees.” The exact link to Sigríður Guðmundsdóttir's entry in the database, is: <https://histfam.familysearch.org//getperson.php?personID=I126161&tree=Iceland>, which lists the census from 1801 as its source. This census is not currently available on “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands.”

<sup>173</sup> The censuses on “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands” also list other men by the name Páll Þórðarson living in the Eyjafjörður-district, but not in as close proximity to Urðir.

Porkelsson (1889) thinks that ÍB 270 4to is mostly identical to AM 137 fol (\**Gullskinna*-class) (753). Zeevaert et al. (2015), however, conclude that within Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga*, ÍB 270 4to shares several readings with ÍB 261 4to rather than AM 137 fol., which suggests a common ancestor, but at more removes from the original \**Gullskinna*-manuscript than AM 137 fol. (18).

**NB 372 4to** (formerly UB 372 4to;<sup>174</sup> 1772) consists of 169 folios, containing *Njáls saga*. The manuscript was, according to the colophon, written in 1772 by Engilbert Jónsson (1747-1820) at Hítardalur (W-Iceland). Jónas Kristjánsson (1967) considers the manuscript a direct copy of NB 313 4to (83). He also notes that Engilbert was at that time a deacon at Hítardalur under Vigfúss Jónsson, the son of Jón Halldórsson, who wrote NB 313 4to. The university library (UB) in Oslo received the manuscript in 1851, but it is unknown who donated it. Engilbert Jónsson's handwriting in NB 372 4to is almost identical to Jón Halldórsson's script, suggesting that Engilbert may have tried to not only copy the text but also the script and overall design of his exemplar. According to Bjørg Dale Spørck (pers. communication), Engilbert did not copy the variant readings and other marginal comments that Jón Halldórsson's copy contains.<sup>175</sup>

**Lbs 437 4to** (1773<sup>176</sup>) consists of 290 folios, containing the following texts: *Háttalykill hinn skemmri* by Loftur Guttormsson (fols. 1r-9r), *Bragfræði* (fols. 9r-14r), *Hugsvinnsmál* (fols. 14v-22v), *Skynsamlegar spurningar með andsvörum* (fols. 22v-30r), *Sólarljóð* (with interlinear Latin translation, fols. 30v-33v), *In præfatione lexicæ Gudmundi Andreae* (fol. 34r), *Onomatologia nominum propriorum gentis Islandicæ eorumque etymon* (written/composed 1646, fols. 34v-64r), *Njáls saga* (fols. 65r-239r), *Fornmennisbúðir á Alþingi* (fols. 239v-240r), *Háttalykill* by Loftur Guttormsson with annotations by Sveinbjörn Egilsson (fol. 240v-258r), *Aldraháttur* by Þorlákur Guðbrandsson Vídalín (fols. 258r-262v), *Háttalykill* by Þorlákur Guðbrandsson Vídalín (fols. 263r-267v), *Frá Hallmundi og hans vísum* by Einar Eyjólfsson<sup>177</sup> (fols. 268r-276v), beginning of *Bergbúa þáttur* (fol.

<sup>174</sup> See fn. 148.

<sup>175</sup> Since NB 313 4to and NB 372 4to could not be viewed in person (see above), I have to rely on Jónas Kristjánsson's catalogue and the information and photographs provided by Bjørg Dale Spørck from the National Library in Oslo.

<sup>176</sup> Dating refers to *Njáls saga* part only.

<sup>177</sup> A note to this section of the manuscript in the entry of Lbs 437 4to on *Handrit.is* says: "Skýringar á Bergbúaþætti sem munu vera samdar af Einari Eyjólfssyni sýslumanni." ['Notes on *Bergbúa þáttur* which appear to be composed by sýslumaður Einar Eyjólfsson.']

276v), *Ævisöguflokkur síra Einars Sigurðssonar, anno 1616* (fols. 277r-290r), and continuation of *Bergbúa þáttur* (fols. 290r-290v). According to its colophon (fol. 239r), *Njáls saga* was completed on March 27, 1773. Zeevaert et al. (2015) conclude that the manuscript belongs to the *\*Gullskinna*-class,<sup>178</sup> but a later reader replaced the original chapter numbers with numbers corresponding to the Höfn 1772 edition of *Njáls saga* and also added chapter titles from the printed edition (8).<sup>179</sup> The manuscript is for the most part written in one hand. The scribe is unknown. Fols. 268-276 and 290 are written in a different hand. Sveinbjörn Egilsson (1791-1852), who wrote annotations in parts of the manuscript, was a theologian, translator, and poet. Finnbogi Guðmundsson (1952) gives a detailed account of Sveinbjörn's life in *Lesbók Morgunblaðsins*. Sveinbjörn was born at Innri-Njarðvík (Gullbringa-district, SW-Iceland), the son of the farmer Egill Sveinbjarnarson. He was fostered by Magnús Stephensen and later studied in Copenhagen. When he returned to Iceland, he began working for the school at Bessastaðir, and became its rector when the school was moved to Reykjavík. Nothing more is known about the history of the Lbs 437 4to.

Nineteen of the eighteenth-century paper manuscripts are written in long lines; two are written in two columns.

Tables 7a, 7b and 7c give an overview of size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>; WB%), while Tables 7d, 7e, and 7f illustrate text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) of the *Njáls saga* paper manuscripts dating to the eighteenth century. Results have been organized in ascending order (lowest to highest). The results of #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% are combined in one table, but each category is represented separately and has been organized in ascending order. The results of SÁM 33, which is heavily fragmented, have been marked by an asterisk and are not included in the calculation of the medians in Tables 7a, 7b, 7c and 7f. As UR, #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% can be calculated even in cases where the height of the writing block has been damaged, the results of SÁM 33 are fully included in Tables 7d and 7e.

<sup>178</sup> See their stemma at [http://alarichall.org.uk/njala\\_sandpit/njala\\_stemma.php](http://alarichall.org.uk/njala_sandpit/njala_stemma.php).

<sup>179</sup> Considering the relatively early date of the first printed edition of the saga (1772), it is interesting that seemingly only two *Njáls saga* manuscripts, Lbs 437 fol. and Lbs 747 fol. (see below), show an interaction between print and script culture. More research in that regard might be wishful.



W+H (Table 7a)

- Overall: 330-540 mm (Average: 386 mm; excluding SÁM 33);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 330-540 mm (Average: 390 mm);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 333-368 mm (Average: 351 mm);
- SÁM 33 (excluded): 383\* mm.

Seventeen of the manuscripts, including the two written in two columns, fall in the category of small-medium manuscripts, while two can be categorized as medium-large.<sup>180</sup>

W:H<sub>WB</sub> (Table 7b)

- Overall: 0.60-0.86 (Average: 0.74; excluding SÁM 33);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 0.60-0.82 (Average: 0.73);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 0.82-0.86 (Average: 0.84);
- SÁM 33 (excluded): 0.77\*.

The two manuscripts written in two columns show the highest W:H<sub>WB</sub> with an average of 0.82 for NKS 1788 4to and 0.86 for ÍB 322 4to. Nonetheless, NKS 1788 4to, which has a slightly lower average W:H<sub>WB</sub> than ÍB 322 3to, shows a greater diversity with its lowest result (0.76) calculated for fols. 8r and 20v, and the highest result (0.92) calculated for fol. 111r.

WB% (Table 7c)

- Overall: 44.1-75.4 (Average: 60.5; excluding SÁM 33);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 44.1-75.4 (Average: 60.8);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 51.6-64.2 (Average: 57.9);
- SÁM 33 (excluded): 88.8\*.

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<sup>180</sup> See fn. 129.

UR (Table 7d)

- Overall: 4.5-10.1 (Average: 7.3);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 4.5-10.1 (Average: 7.5);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 5.8-6.0 (Average: 5.9).

#signs (Table 7e)

- Overall: 25.9-42.5 (Average: 32.9);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 25.9-42.5 (Average: 33.1);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 31.6-31.8 (Average: 31.7).

#words (Table 7e)

- Overall: 6.3-12.4 (Average: 9.2);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 6.3-12.4 (Average: 9.3);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 7.7-8.4 (Average: 8.1).

ABBR% (Table 7e)

- Overall: 0.0-22.1 percent (Average: 8.9);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 0.0-22.1 percent (Average: 9.3);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 5.7-6.0 (Average: 5.9).

No abbreviations were detected in *Landakotsbók*, which, accordingly, has an ABBR% of 0.0. If the result from *Landakotsbók* is excluded from the calculation of the overall average ABBR% the result rises to 9.4. If the result from *Landakotsbók* is excluded from the calculation of the overall average of manuscripts written in long lines, the average rises to 9.8.

signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (Table 7f)

- Overall: 129.9-651.1 (Average: 332.5; excluding SÁM 33);
- Manuscripts in long lines: 129.9-651.1 (Average: 332.0);
- Manuscripts in two columns: 292.9-379.4 (Average: 336.2);
- SÁM 33 (excluded): 420.4\*.

#### 4.3.4. 19th century

*Njáls saga* survives in one paper manuscript, **Lbs 747 fol.**, from the nineteenth century. Lbs 747 fol. may be considered part of a two-volume collection of sagas and *þættir* together with Lbs 748 fol.. Both were written between 1871-1875 by the brothers Guðlaugur (1848-1917) and Guðmundur (1850-1915) Magnússon, farmers in the Dalir-district (Hafurstaðir and Beiðabólsstaður respectively, W-Iceland). Guðlaugur writes the majority of the manuscript, including *Njáls saga*, while Guðmundur possibly took over the scribal activity after his brother immigrated to North-America in 1875.<sup>181</sup> The two manuscripts are illustrated with drawings of saga characters and scenes from the stories. The characters are dressed in nineteenth-century clothing.<sup>182</sup> Lbs 747 fol. consists of 379 unbound folios and contains the following texts: Title page and table of contents (fols. 1r-v), *Njáls saga* (fols. 2r-90r), *Svarfdæla saga* (fols. 90v-114v), *Valla-Ljóts saga* (fols. 115r-122v), *Víga-Glúms saga* (fols. 123r-144r), *Þorvalds þáttur tasalda* (fols. 144v-146v), *Reykðæla saga* (fols. 147r-173v), *Bjarnar saga Hítðelakappa* (fols. 174r-196r), parts of *Óláfs saga helga* (fol. 196v), *Þorsteins saga hvíta* (fols. 197r-202r), *Vápnfirðinga saga* (fols. 202v-216r), *Landnámabók: Viðbætur* (fol. 216r), *Þorsteins þáttur stangarhöggss* (fols. 216v-220r), *Brandkrossa þáttur* (fols. 220v-223v), *Droplaugarsona saga* (fols. 223v-238v), *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* (fols. 239r-340v), a timeline of *Egils saga* (fols. 341r-342v) based on that of Guðbrandur Vigfússon in *Safn til sögu Íslands* (1856:1.185-502), *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu* (fols. 344r-362r), *Stúfs þáttur* (fols. 362v-363v), *Þorsteins saga Síðu-Hallssonar* (fols. 364r-371r), *Þorsteins þáttur tjaldstæðings* (fols. 371v-

<sup>181</sup> For a discussion of the history of Lbs 747-748 fol. and Guðlaugur and Guðmundur Magnússon, see Finnbogi Guðmundsson (1965).

<sup>182</sup> For a discussion of the drawings in the *Njáls saga* section of Lbs 747 fol., see Þorsteinn Árnason Surmeli (2013).

374r), and *Egils þáttur Síðu-Hallssonar* (fols. 374v-378v). Fol. 379r-v is empty. Lbs 748 fol. consists of 324 folios and contains the following texts: Title page and table of contents (fols. 1r-1v), *Landnámabók* (fols. 2r-67v), *Viðbætir Landnámu* (fols. 67v-71v), *Ölkofra þáttur* (fols. 72r-75v), *Bandamanna saga* (fols. 76r-92r), *Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss* (fols. 93v-102r), *Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss* (fols. 102v-112r), *Gunnars þáttur Þiðrandabana* (fols. 112v-118r), *Finnboga saga ramma* (fols. 118v-157r), *Sneglu-Halla þáttur* (fols. 157r-164r), *Harðar saga* (fols. 164v-186v), *Víglundar saga* (fols. 187r-202v), *Kjalnesinga saga* (fols. 203r-215v), *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar* (fols. 215v-219v), *Ljósvetninga saga* (fols. 220r-256r), *Þórarins þáttur ofsa* (fols. 255r-256r), *Heiðarvíga saga* (fols. 256v-268r), *Heiðarvíga saga* (fols. 268v-282v), *Þórarins þáttur Nefjólfssonar* (fols. 283r-285r), *Steins þáttur Skaptasonar* (fols. 285v-288r), *Þórodds þáttur Snorrasonar* (fols. 288v-291r), *Gellis þáttur Þorkelssonar* (fols. 291r-291v), *Flóamanna saga* (fols. 293r-304r), and *Vatnsdæla saga* (fols. 304v-324v). According to its colophon (fol. 90r), Guðlaugur Magnússon finished copying *Njáls saga* on January 28, 1872. Zeevaert et al. (2015) conclude in their study of Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga* that the text was copied from the Höfn 1772 edition rather than from a handwritten manuscript (8). As mentioned, Guðmundur possibly took over the completion of the manuscripts when his brother Guðlaugur moved to North-America in 1875 and owned the two volumes. He gave them to his nephew Magnús Jónsson from Ás by Stykkishólmur (Snæfellsnes-peninsula, W-Iceland), shortly before his own death in 1915. Magnús then owned the manuscripts from 1915 to 1943. He gave the two volumes to his son-in-law, Björn Jónsson from Kóngsbakki in Helgafellssveit (Snæfellsnes-peninsula, W-Iceland), in 1943, who sold them to Landsbókasafn in 1965.

Tables 8a, 8b, and 8c give an overview of size and layout (W+H; W:H<sub>WB</sub>; WB%), while Tables 8d, 8e, and 8f illustrate text density (UR; #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) of Lbs 747 fol., the only *Njáls saga* paper manuscripts dating to the nineteenth century. The results of #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% are combined in one table. Since there is only one manuscript in this group, the results are presented only in tabular form in Chapter 4.4.8. without further text.

#### 4.4. Figures and Tables

##### 4.4.1. Vellum manuscripts overall

<i>Vellum</i>	W+H	W:H <sub>WB</sub>	WB%
14th c	426	0.69	62.2
15th c	424	0.74	64.0
17th c	572	0.72	68.6
Average	440	0.70	63.3

Table 1a: Median results for size and layout of vellum manuscripts.<sup>183</sup>

<i>Vellum</i>	UR	#signs	#words	ABBR%	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
14th c	6.1	42.1	13.3	15.2	481.9
15th c	5.3	41.3	13.1	17.1	589.3
17th c	5.8	43.1	14.6	20.8	576.2
Average	5.9	42.1	13.5	16.6	518.1

Table 1b: Median results for text density of vellum manuscripts.

##### 4.4.2. Fourteenth-century manuscripts

<i>14th c</i>	W+H
Call number	MAX
AM 162 b fol. θ	355*
AM 162 b fol. η	358
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	359
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	359
AM 162 b fol. ζ	363
AM 162 b fol. ξ	376
AM 468 4to	380
AM 162 b fol. β	409
AM 162 b fol. δ	429
GKS 2868 4to	430
AM 162 b fol. γ	467
AM 133 fol.	506
AM 162 b fol. ε	526
AM 132 fol.	573
Average	426

Table 2a: Maximum results for W+H for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>183</sup> The overall averages in Tables 1a and 1b are based on all manuscripts, rather than on the average of each century.

<sup>184</sup> As previously mentioned, manuscripts highlighted blue in the tables below are written in two columns.

<i>14th c</i>	<b>W:H<sub>WB</sub></b>		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	0.57	0.65	0.62
AM 162 b fol. $\beta$	0.65	0.66	0.66
AM 162 b fol. $\delta$	0.63	0.68	0.66
AM 468 4to	0.62	0.69	0.66
AM 162 b fol. $\zeta$	0.62	0.72	0.66
AM 162 b fol. $\theta$	0.65*	0.68*	0.66*
AM 162 b fol. $\kappa$	0.66	0.67	0.66
AM 162 b fol. $\eta$	0.65	0.69	0.68
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	0.69	n/a	0.69
AM 133 fol.	0.66	0.72	0.71
AM 132 fol.	0.69	0.73	0.71
GKS 2868 4to	0.65	0.75	0.71
AM 162 b fol. $\gamma$	0.74	0.77	0.76
AM 162 b fol. $\epsilon$	0.73	0.79	0.76
Average	0.66	0.71	0.69

Table 2b: Minimum, maximum, and median results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>14th c</i>	<b>WB%</b>		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
AM 133 fol.	49.4	57.9	52.6
AM 162 b fol. $\epsilon$	53.2	56.8	55.2
AM 162 b fol. $\eta$	56.9	60.8	58.7
AM 162 b fol. $\gamma$	58.9	60.4	59.6
AM 162 b fol. $\beta$	59.8	60.7	60.2
AM 132 fol.	59.1	61.4	60.5
AM 162 b fol. $\delta$	57.6	66.2	62.6
AM 468 4to	57.4	68.0	64.2
AM 162 b fol. $\kappa$	63.7	66.0	64.5
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	60.4	71.8	65.2
AM 162 b fol. $\zeta$	64.3	69.4	66.1
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	68.6	n/a	68.6
GKS 2868 4to	65.6	73.7	70.8
AM 162 b fol. $\theta$	70.4*	71.5*	70.9*
Average	59.6	64.4	62.2

Table 2c: Minimum, maximum, and median results for WB% for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>14th c</i> Call number	UR		
	MIN	MAX	MDN
AM 162 b fol. ζ	5.1	5.4	5.3
AM 162 b fol. θ	5.4	5.5	5.5
AM 162 b fol. η	5.7	5.9	5.7
AM 162 b fol. κ	5.8	5.8	5.8
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	5.8	6.0	5.9
AM 162 b fol. ε	5.7	6.0	5.9
AM 162 b fol. β	5.8	6.2	6.0
AM 468 4to	5.8	6.5	6.0
GKS 2868 4to	5.1	6.7	6.0
AM 162 b fol. γ	5.8	6.3	6.1
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	6.2	n/a	6.2
AM 162 b fol. δ	5.9	6.7	6.2
AM 132 fol.	6.1	6.5	6.3
AM 133 fol.	8.3	8.8	8.5
Average	5.9	6.3	6.1

Table 2d: Minimum, maximum, and median results for UR for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>14th c</i>	#signs		#words		ABBR%
Call number	MDN	Call number	MDN	Call number	MDN
AM 133 fol.	32.3	AM 133 fol.	10.2	AM 162 b fol. η	11.7
AM 162 b fol. ε	33.3	AM 162 b fol. ε	10.9	AM 162 b fol. κ	12.4
GKS 2868 4to	37.8	GKS 2868 4to	12.1	AM 162 b fol. β	12.8
AM 162 b fol. δ	38.6	AM 162 b fol. δ	12.4	AM 162 b fol. γ	13.4
AM 132 fol.	39.7	AM 162 b fol. γ	12.5	AM 162 b fol. θ	13.5
AM 162 b fol. ζ	39.9	AM 132 fol.	13.3	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	13.6
AM 162 b fol. γ	42.0	AM 162 b fol. β	13.5	AM 162 b fol. ε	15.5
AM 162 b fol. β	44.8	AM 162 b fol. ζ	14.2	AM 162 b fol. δ	15.7
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	45.2	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	14.2	AM 132 fol.	15.7
AM 468 4to	45.2	AM 162 b fol. θ	14.3	AM 133 fol.	16.0
AM 162 b fol. η	46.1	AM 162 b fol. η	14.6	GKS 2868 4to	16.4
AM 162 b fol. θ	46.4	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	14.6	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	16.9
AM 162 b fol. κ	47.5	AM 468 4to	14.9	AM 162 b fol. ζ	18.0
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	51.0	AM 162 b fol. κ	15.0	AM 468 4to	20.7
Average	42.1	Average	13.3	Average	15.2

Table 2e: Median results for #signs, #words, and ABBR% for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>14th c</i>	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
Call number	AVG
AM 133 fol.	226.9
AM 132 fol.	303.8
AM 162 b fol. ε	317.8
AM 162 b fol. δ	389.2
AM 162 b fol. γ	422.1
AM 162 b fol. β	480.8
GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	501.6
AM 162 b fol. η	518.8
AM 468 4to	529.0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	575.7
GKS 2870 4to (S4)	585.6
AM 162 b fol. ξ	602.1
AM 162 b fol. θ	701.1*
GKS 2868 4to	810.8
Average	481.9

Table 2f: Average results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for fourteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

#### 4.4.3. Fifteenth-century manuscripts

<i>15th c</i>	W+H
Call number	MAX
AM 162 b fol. α	350
GKS 2869 4to	402
AM 466 4to	416
AM 309 4to	475
AM 162 b fol. ι	477
Average	424

Table 3a: Maximum results for W+H for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>15th c</i>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
GKS 2869 4to	0.63	0.69	0.65
AM 466 4to	0.69	0.76	0.73
AM 162 b fol. α	0.72	0.77	0.74
AM 309 4to	0.77	0.82	0.79
AM 162 b fol. ι	0.79	0.80	0.80
Average	0.72	0.77	0.74

Table 3b: Minimum, maximum, and median results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.



<i>15th c</i>	WB%		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
AM 162 b fol. $\alpha$	55.0	59.2	57.6
AM 466 4to	55.1	61.4	58.5
AM 162 b fol. $\tau$	64.1	65.2	65.2
GKS 2869 4to	63.2	71.9	68.0
AM 309 4to	68.6	74.4	70.5
Average	61.2	66.4	64.0

Table 3c: Minimum, maximum, and median results for WB% for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>15th c</i>	UR		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
GKS 2869 4to	3.4	5.7	4.3
AM 466 4to	4.2	5.0	4.6
AM 309 4to	4.8	5.1	5.0
AM 162 b fol. $\tau$	5.9	6.2	6.0
AM 162 b fol. $\alpha$	6.0	6.5	6.4
Average	4.9	5.7	5.3

Table 3d: Minimum, maximum, and median results for UR for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>15th c</i>	#signs		#words		ABBR%
Call number	MDN		MDN	Call number	MDN
AM 162 b fol. $\alpha$	29.3		9.0	GKS 2869 4to	11.9
AM 309 4to	42.6		12.5	AM 162 b fol. $\tau$	14.0
GKS 2869 4to	42.8		14.2	AM 162 b fol. $\alpha$	15.8
AM 162 b fol. $\tau$	43.5		14.7	AM 466 4to	18.5
AM 466 4to	48.2		14.9	AM 309 4to	25.1
Average	41.3		13.1	Average	17.1

Table 3e: Median results for #signs, #words, and ABBR% for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>15th c</i>	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
Call number	AVG
AM 162 b fol. $\alpha$	320.0
AM 162 b fol. $\tau$	533.5
AM 466 4to	678.1
AM 309 4to	690.0
GKS 2869 4to	724.7
Average	589.3

Table 3f: Average results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for fifteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

## 4.4.4. Post-medieval vellum manuscripts

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	W+H
Call number	MAX
JS fragm. 4	377*
Lbs fragm. 2	468*
GKS 1003 fol.	542
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	601*
AM 921 4to I	601
Average	572

Table 4a: Maximum results for W+H for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Lbs fragm. 2	0.66*	0.67*	0.67*
AM 921 4to I	0.69	0.71	0.70
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.69*	0.75*	0.73*
GKS 1003 fol.	0.72	0.77	0.74
JS fragm. 4	1.33*	1.34*	1.34*
Average	0.71	0.74	0.72

Table 4b: Minimum, maximum, and median results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	WB%		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
GKS 1003 fol.	65.0	70.0	67.0
AM 921 4to I	69.9	70.4	70.1
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	69.9*	75.1*	72.4*
JS fragm. 4	78.0*	78.4*	78.2*
Lbs fragm. 2	84.5*	86.5*	85.5*
Average	67.5	70.2	68.6

Table 4c: Minimum, maximum, and median results for WB% for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	UR		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Lbs fragm. 2	5.3	5.6	5.4
AM 921 4to I	5.4	5.6	5.5
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	5.3*	6.2*	5.6*
JS fragm. 4	6.2	6.2	6.2
GKS 1003 fol.	5.8	6.9	6.2
Average	5.7	6.1	5.8

Table 4d: Minimum, maximum, and median results for UR for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	#signs		#words		ABBR%
Call number	MDN	Call number	MDN	Call number	MDN
GKS 1003 fol.	39.1	GKS 1003 fol.	13.0	JS fragm. 4	19.4
Lbs fragm. 2	41.5	JS fragm. 4	14.4	GKS 1003 fol.	20.1
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	43.6*	Lbs fragm. 2	14.8	AM 921 4to I	20.6
JS fragm. 4	45.6	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	15.0*	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	21.6*
AM 921 4to I	46.1	AM 921 4to I	16.3	Lbs fragm. 2	23.1
Average	43.1	Average	14.6	Average	20.8

Table 4e: Median results for #signs, #words, and ABBR% for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>17th c (vellum)</i>	#signs per dm <sup>2</sup>
Call number	AVG
GKS 1003 fol.	476.2
AM 921 4to I	676.2
<i>The Lost Codex</i>	677.7*
JS fragm. 4	809.0*
Lbs fragm. 2	939.7*
Average	576.2

Table 4f: Average results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for post-medieval vellum manuscripts in ascending order.

#### 4.4.5. Paper manuscripts overall

<i>Paper</i>	W+H	W:H <sub>WB</sub>	WB%
17th c	445	0.66	63.6
18th c	386	0.74	60.5
19th c	548	0.62	67.0
Average	417	0.70	62.1

Table 5a: Median results for size and layout of paper manuscripts.<sup>185</sup>

<i>Paper</i>	UR	#signs	#words	ABBR%	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
17th c	6.8	35.1	9.7	9.5	411.8
18th c	7.3	32.9	9.2	8.9	332.5
19th c	5.9	31.3	7.8	0.0	362.9
Average	7.1	33.8	9.4	9.0	368.7

Table 5b: Median results for text density of paper manuscripts.

<sup>185</sup> The overall averages in Tables 5a and 5b are based on all manuscripts, rather than on the average of each century.

#### 4.4.6. Seventeenth-century paper manuscripts

<i>17th c (paper)</i> Call number	W+H MAX
Lbs 3505 4to	354
AM 555 c 4to	360
AM 465 4to	365
AM 555 a 4to	365
AM 464 4to	370
AM 470 4to	382
AM 137 fol.	442
Lbs 222 fol.	455
AM 396 fol.	480
AM 136 fol.	481
NKS 1220 fol.	490
AM 134 fol.	498
AM 163 i fol.	509
BL Add 4867 fol.	510
AM 135 fol.	520
AM 163 d fol.	539
Stock. 9 fol.	540
Average	445

Table 6a: Maximum results for W+H for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>17th c (paper)</i> Call number	W:H <sub>WB</sub>		
	MIN	MAX	MDN
Stock. 9 fol.	0.30	0.33	0.32
AM 134 fol.	0.54	0.58	0.56
AM 137 fol.	0.53	0.61	0.57
AM 163 i fol.	0.55	0.6	0.57
AM 135 fol.	0.56	0.58	0.57
AM 163 d fol.	0.56	0.61	0.59
AM 396 fol.	0.59	0.63	0.61
NKS 1220 fol.	0.59	0.62	0.61
BL Add 4867 fol.	0.61	0.63	0.62
Lbs 222 fol.	0.60	0.64	0.63
AM 136 fol.	0.62	0.69	0.66
AM 555 c 4to	0.74	0.78	0.77
AM 465 4to	0.74	0.88	0.77
Lbs 3505 4to	0.75	0.79	0.77
AM 470 4to	0.75	0.80	0.78
AM 555 a 4to	0.79	0.85	0.82
AM 464 4to	0.80	0.86	0.83
Average	0.63	0.68	0.66

Table 6b: Minimum, maximum, and median results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (paper)</i>	WB%		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Stock. 9 fol.	26.3	28.3	27.0
AM 464 4to	50.6	55.8	52.5
AM 135 fol.	54.5	58.6	56.7
AM 137 fol.	56.2	66.0	59.7
BL Add 4867 fol.	59.3	63.7	61.2
Lbs 3505 4to	61.0	64.8	62.5
AM 134 fol.	60.6	66.2	62.6
AM 136 fol.	60.4	65.9	63.5
AM 465 4to	62.2	66.3	64.5
AM 555 c 4to	60.0	69.1	64.8
NKS 1220 fol.	64.0	70.1	67.1
AM 470 4to	65.8	68.4	67.5
AM 163 d fol.	66.6	69.3	67.7
AM 163 i fol.	67.8	77.9	70.9
AM 396 fol.	74.5	78.5	76.4
Lbs 222 fol.	75.0	78.5	77.4
AM 555 a 4to	78.3	82.1	80.2
Average	61.3	66.3	63.6

Table 6c: Minimum, maximum, and median results for WB% for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (paper)</i>	UR		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
AM 163 d fol.	3.8	4.7	4.2
AM 555 a 4to	4.7	5.7	5.1
AM 555 c 4to	5.0	5.6	5.2
Lbs 3505 4to	5.1	5.9	5.4
AM 136 fol.	4.8	6.4	5.5
AM 465 4to	5.1	6.0	5.5
AM 464 4to	5.9	6.5	6.1
AM 396 fol.	5.9	6.7	6.2
AM 163 i fol.	4.4	7.2	6.4
Lbs 222 fol.	6.8	7.3	7.0
BL Add 4867 fol.	7.0	7.4	7.3
NKS 1220 fol.	7.0	8.6	7.9
AM 470 4to	7.7	8.6	8.2
AM 135 fol.	8.8	9.4	9.1
AM 137 fol.	8.5	10.1	9.3
AM 134 fol.	9.0	10.3	9.8
Stock. 9 fol.	8.9	11.1	9.8
Average	6.3	7.4	6.8

Table 6d: Minimum, maximum, and median results for UR for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>17th c (paper)</i> Call number	#signs MDN	Call number	#words MDN	Call number	ABBR% MDN
AM 135 fol.	22.8	Stock. 9 fol.	5.8	Stock. 9 fol.	0.0
Stock. 9 fol.	27.3	AM 135 fol.	6.6	Lbs 3505 4to	4.8
AM 136 fol.	30.3	Lbs 3505 4to	7.5	Lbs 222 fol.	5.2
NKS 1220 fol.	31.0	AM 137 fol.	8.0	BL Add 4867 fol.	5.6
BL Add 4867 fol.	31.4	BL Add 4867 fol.	8.0	AM 135 fol.	5.9
AM 137 fol.	31.9	NKS 1220 fol.	8.0	AM 470 4to	7.4
AM 134 fol.	32.0	AM 136 fol.	8.1	AM 134 fol.	7.5
Lbs 222 fol.	32.5	AM 134 fol.	8.2	AM 137 fol.	8.0
Lbs 3505 4to	33.0	Lbs 222 fol.	8.2	AM 136 fol.	8.3
AM 465 4to	33.5	AM 470 4to	9.2	AM 163 i fol.	9.1
AM 470 4to	33.6	AM 465 4to	9.4	AM 464 4to	9.1
AM 163 d fol.	38.7	AM 464 4to	10.9	AM 465 4to	9.7
AM 464 4to	41.1	AM 163 i fol.	11.9	NKS 1220 fol.	14.0
AM 555 a 4to	41.5	AM 163 d fol.	12.9	AM 555 c 4to	14.3
AM 163 i fol.	41.9	AM 555 a 4to	13.4	AM 555 a 4to	15.9
AM 396 fol.	43.0	AM 396 fol.	14.2	AM 396 fol.	18.0
AM 555 c 4to	50.6	AM 555 c 4to	14.8	AM 163 d fol.	19.2
Average	35.1	Average	9.7	Average	9.5

Table 6e: Median results for #signs, #words, and ABBR% for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>17th c (paper)</i> Call number	signs/dm <sup>2</sup> AVG
Stock. 9 fol.	26.0
AM 135 fol.	165.2
AM 134 fol.	223.1
AM 137 fol.	231.1
BL Add 4867 fol.	287.3
NKS 1220 fol.	305.2
AM 470 4to	313.9
Lbs 222 fol.	386.9
AM 136 fol.	398.0
AM 464 4to	399.0
Lbs 3505 4to	409.9
AM 465 4to	439.7
AM 163 i fol.	522.3
AM 396 fol.	636.0
AM 555 c 4to	717.0
AM 163 d fol.	760.0
AM 555 a 4to	779.4
Average	411.8

Table 6f: Average results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for seventeenth-century paper manuscripts in ascending order.

4.4.7. Eighteenth-century paper manuscripts

<i>18th century</i> Call number	W+H MAX
KB Add 565 4to	317
IB 421 4to	330
IB 322 4to	333
AM 467 4to	340
IB 261 4to	346
AM Acc. 50	348
Kall 612 4to	353
NB 313 4to	359
Lbs 1415 4to	359
AM 469 4to	364
Thott 1765 4to	365
NKS 1788 4to	368
Lbs 437 4to	368
IB 270 4to	372
NB 372 4to	373
Thott 1776 4to III	375
SAM 33	383*
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	479
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	485
Thott 984 fol. III	540
NKS 1219 fol.	540
Average	386

Table 7a: Maximum results for W+H for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>18th century</i> Call number	$W:H_{WB}$		
	MIN	MAX	MDN
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.59	0.61	0.60
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.59	0.63	0.61
Thott 984 fol. III	0.61	0.63	0.62
IB 421 4to	0.63	0.69	0.65
KB Add 565 4to	0.61	0.68	0.65
NKS 1219 fol.	0.59	0.74	0.65
AM 467 4to	0.65	0.68	0.67
IB 261 4to	0.73	0.79	0.75
NB 372 4to	0.74	0.78	0.76
Lbs 437 4to	0.74	0.79	0.77
IB 270 4to	0.74	0.80	0.77
SAM 33	0.77*	n/a	0.77*
Thott 1765 4to	0.74	0.81	0.78
AM Acc. 50	0.77	0.82	0.80
AM 469 4to	0.79	0.81	0.80
Kall 612 4to	0.76	0.83	0.81
Lbs 1415 4to	0.75	0.89	0.81
Thott 1776 4to III	0.80	0.84	0.82
NB 313 4to	0.79	0.84	0.82
NKS 1788 4to	0.76	0.92	0.82
IB 322 4to	0.83	0.89	0.86
Average	0.71	0.77	0.74

*Table 7b:* Minimum, maximum, and median results for  $W:H_{WB}$  for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.



<i>18th century</i> Call number	WB%		
	MIN	MAX	MDN
NKS 1219 fol.	42.3	47.0	44.1
Thott 984 fol. III	49.2	53.0	50.4
AM 467 4to	48.4	53.9	50.5
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	49.9	51.6	50.6
NKS 1788 4to	46.7	56.4	51.6
IB 421 4to	49.0	54.4	51.8
KB Add 565 4to	53.1	59.6	56.1
Thott 1765 4to	54.1	59.0	56.1
NB 372 4to	58.0	62.1	60.5
Lbs 437 4to	58.2	63.8	60.8
AM 469 4to	60.5	65.7	62.2
IB 322 4to	56.4	67.9	64.2
Kall 612 4to	60.9	67.4	64.7
Lbs 1415 4to	61.3	69.3	65.2
NB 313 4to	61.4	72.6	65.7
IB 270 4to	60.5	72.7	66.8
AM Acc. 50	66.5	70.5	68.7
Thott 1776 4to III	68.7	73.9	71.1
IB 261 4to	69.7	75.9	73.2
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	71.5	78.2	75.4
SAM 33	88.8*	n/a	88.8*
Average	57.3	63.7	60.5

*Table 7c:* Minimum, maximum, and median results for WB% for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>18th century</i> Call number	UR		
	MIN	MAX	MDN
Thott 1776 4to III	4.1	5.3	4.5
Thott 1765 4to	5.0	6.2	5.4
IB 322 4to	5.3	6.3	5.8
NB 313 4to	5.5	6.2	5.9
AM Acc. 50	5.6	6.2	5.9
NKS 1788 4to	5.0	7.1	6.0
IB 270 4to	5.7	6.8	6.2
AM 469 4to	5.9	7.1	6.4
IB 261 4to	6.1	7.9	6.9
Lbs 437 4to	6.4	7.3	6.9
SAM 33	7.0	7.1	7.0
NB 372 4to	6.6	7.6	7.0
Kall 612 4to	6.9	7.9	7.3
Lbs 1415 4to	6.3	9.3	7.6
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	7.6	8.4	7.9
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	8.3	9.6	9.0
AM 467 4to	8.9	9.7	9.3
IB 421 4to	9.4	9.9	9.7
KB Add 565 4to	8.9	10.3	9.7
NKS 1219 fol.	8.4	10.7	9.7
Thott 984 fol. III	9.8	10.2	10.1
Average	6.8	8.0	7.3

*Table 7d:* Minimum, maximum, and median results for UR for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order of median.

<i>18th century</i> Call number	#signs MDN	Call number	#words MDN	Call number	ABBR% MDN
NKS 1219 fol.	25.9	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	6.3	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.0
Lbs 1415 4to	26.5	NKS 1219 fol.	6.7	Thott 984 fol. III	2.1
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	27.5	Lbs 1415 4to	6.8	NKS 1219 fol.	2.7
Kall 612 4to	29.5	Kall 612 4to	7.0	Kall 612 4to	4.3
IB 421 4to	29.7	Thott 984 fol. III	7.6	AM 469 4to	5.6
KB Add 565 4to	29.9	IB 322 4to	7.7	Thott 1765 4to	5.7
AM 467 4to	30.0	SAM 33	8.3	NKS 1788 4to	5.7
Lbs 437 4to	31.5	NKS 1788 4to	8.4	IB 322 4to	6.0
NKS 1788 4to	31.6	Lbs 437 4to	8.6	Lbs 1415 4to	6.1
Thott 984 fol. III	31.7	AM Acc. 50	9.5	Lbs 437 4to	6.2
IB 322 4to	31.8	IB 270 4to	9.5	SAM 33	7.2
IB 261 4to	34.1	AM 469 4to	9.7	Hdr. J. Samsonars.	7.7
IB 270 4to	34.1	Thott 1765 4to	9.7	AM Acc. 50	7.9
SAM 33	34.3	Hdr. J. Samsonars.	9.7	NB 372 4to	10.4
AM Acc. 50	35.2	Thott 1776 4to III	10.2	IB 270 4to	11.2
Hdr. J. Samsonars.	35.6	AM 467 4to	10.4	NB 313 4to	11.4
Thott 1776 4to III	35.7	KB Add 565 4to	10.6	Thott 1776 4to III	12.3
Thott 1765 4to	36.4	NB 372 4to	10.6	IB 421 4to	16.5
NB 372 4to	37.4	IB 421 4to	10.7	AM 467 4to	18.1
AM 469 4to	40.9	NB 313 4to	12.2	KB Add 565 4to	18.2
NB 313 4to	42.5	IB 261 4to	12.4	IB 261 4to	22.1
Average	32.9		9.2		8.9

Table 7e: Median results for #signs, #words, and ABBR% for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

<i>18th century</i>	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
Call number	AVG
NKS 1219 fol.	129.9
<i>Landakotsbók</i>	159.1
Thott 984 fol. III	166.5
IB 421 4to	193.1
AM 467 4to	204.3
KB Add 565 4to	212.5
Lbs 1415 4to	256.4
Kall 612 4to	281.0
NKS 1788 4to	292.9
Lbs 437 4to	302.8
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	369.9
NB 372 4to	376.1
IB 322 4to	379.4
Thott 1765 4to	406.9
IB 270 4to	417.8
SAM 33	420.4*
AM 469 4to	433.3
AM Acc. 50	450.8
IB 261 4to	467.2
NB 313 4to	498.0
Thott 1776 4to III	651.1
Average	332.5

Table 7f: Average results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for eighteenth-century manuscripts in ascending order.

#### 4.4.8. Nineteenth-century paper manuscripts

<i>19th century</i>	W+H
Call number	MAX
Lbs 747 fol.	548

Table 8a: Maximum result for W+H for nineteenth-century manuscript.

<i>19th century</i>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Lbs 747 fol.	0.59	0.65	0.62

Table 8b: Minimum, maximum, and median result for W:H<sub>WB</sub> for nineteenth-century manuscript.

<i>19th century</i>	WB%		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Lbs 747 fol.	63.1	75.2	67.0

Table 8c: Minimum, maximum, and median result for WB% for nineteenth-century manuscript.

<u>19th century</u>	UR		
Call number	MIN	MAX	MDN
Lbs 747 fol.	5.5	6.5	5.9

*Table 8d:* Minimum, maximum, and median result for UR for nineteenth-century manuscript.

<u>19th century</u>	# <sub>signs</sub>	# <sub>words</sub>	ABBR%
Call number	MDN	MDN	MDN
Lbs 747 fol.	31.3	7.8	0.0

*Table 8e:* Median result for #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR% for nineteenth-century manuscript.

<u>19th century</u>	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>
Call number	AVG
Lbs 747 fol.	362.9

*Table 8f:* Average result for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for nineteenth-century manuscript.

## 5. ‘Og lúkum vér þar Brennu-Njáls sögu.’ When the Story is Finished, the History Begins

### 5.1. Introduction

The data presented in the previous chapter is analyzed in more detail here. Manuscripts written on vellum and paper are first discussed separately. A comparison between vellum and paper codices is presented at the end of the chapter. The three main aspects studied are size (W+H), layout (W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%), and text density (UR, #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>). Where possible, comparisons are drawn with similar studies. As outlined in Chapter 2.3., only the *Njáls saga* parts of the manuscripts and only sections written by the main scribe are taken into consideration.

### 5.2. Vellum Manuscripts

A comparison of the results from the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts with a study conducted by Már Jónsson (2003)<sup>186</sup> shows that while the *Njáls saga* manuscripts compare well with Már’s results in some of the categories discussed they differ in others.<sup>187</sup> The post-medieval vellum manuscripts will not be directly compared with Már Jónsson’s results, since his study focusses exclusively on early- to late-medieval manuscripts.

#### 5.2.1. Size (W+H)

Már Jónsson (2003) notes that in his study the average size of the manuscripts (W+H) for Icelandic manuscripts written in one column was 346 mm and 485 mm for manuscripts written in two columns, resulting in a total average of 372 mm (28). Since multi-column codices were generally of higher status, it is not surprising that the average size of manuscripts written in two columns would be considerably larger than that of manuscripts written in a single writing block.

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<sup>186</sup> The data for W+H in Már’s study is based on 616 manuscripts (Már Jónsson 2003:28, Tafla 3); the data for the ratio of W:H of the leaves is based on 675 manuscripts (Már Jónsson 2003:30, Tafla 4); the data for UR, signs per line, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup> is based on 80 manuscripts (Már Jónsson:31, Tafla 5). The manuscripts date between the thirteenth through the sixteenth century (Már Jónsson 2003:27).

<sup>187</sup> Due to the small sample size and the fact that many of the fourteenth century witnesses are fragmented or trimmed down, which made their measurements unreliable for a comparative study, the results presented in this chapter must be taken with a grain of salt.

This difference in size between the two layout styles can also be observed among the *Njáls saga* manuscripts.

The *Njáls saga* manuscripts from the fourteenth century written in long lines range from 358 mm to 506 mm (Table 2a). Their average W+H (392 mm) is in comparison slightly higher than Már's result.<sup>188</sup> The results for W+H are within 350 mm to 475 mm (Average: 411 mm) for fifteenth-century manuscripts written in long lines (Table 3a), which is again larger than the average in Már's study. The fourteenth-century manuscripts written in two columns give a result similar to Már's analysis with an average of 481 mm (409-573 mm). With the exception of *Kálfalækjarbók* and GKS 2868 4to, only manuscripts written in two columns are larger than 400 mm among the fourteenth-century manuscripts. This emphasizes the more prestigious status of manuscripts written in two columns. The only fifteenth-century manuscript written in two columns (AM 162 b fol. ι) has a size of 477 mm, which is slightly smaller than the average in Már's study. All but one of the fifteenth-century manuscripts (AM 162 b fol. α) are larger than 400 mm. As Már Jónsson (2002) points out, the production of manuscripts in two columns declined during the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century the majority of codices were written in a single writing block (227). As the one-column design became the norm, it makes sense that the distinct difference in size between one- and two-column layouts observed among the fourteenth-century manuscripts became less significant. Nonetheless, the only *Njáls saga* manuscript written in two columns from the fifteenth century (AM 162 b fol. ι) is still the largest, albeit only by a very narrow margin.

The combined average of manuscripts in long lines and those in two columns in the fourteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is 426 mm, and 424 mm for the fifteenth-century manuscripts, which results in an average of 425 mm, if both centuries are combined. These averages are significantly larger than the 372 mm in Már's study. This suggests that on average, the manuscripts containing *Njáls saga*, irrespective of their layout, were larger and therefore

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<sup>188</sup> If the result from *Kálfarlækjarbók* (AM 133 fol.) is excluded from the calculation of the average, it falls to 375 mm, which maybe gives a more accurate picture for the majority of the fourteenth century witnesses, since *Kálfalækjarbók* clearly appears to be an exception. See below for a more detailed discussion of *Kálfalækjarbók* and its status.

presumably of higher status than other medieval Icelandic manuscripts. This assumption is supported by the fact that 29.4% of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts are written in two columns.<sup>189</sup> In comparison, Már Jónsson (2003) notes that only 19% of the over 600 consulted Icelandic manuscripts for his study were written in two columns, compared to 38% of Norwegian manuscripts (28). It is, however, important to remember the relatively small sample size of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts in this comparison.

The average W+H of the post-medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (GKS 1003 fol. and *The Lost Codex*) is 572 mm (Table 4a), which is considerably higher than the average for the medieval manuscripts. Only one of the medieval manuscripts (*Möðruvallabók*, AM 132 fol., W+H: 573 mm) compares in size. The manuscripts' production (e.g., preparation of vellum, preparation of the writing block) is inferior to that of the medieval counterparts. The vellum, particularly of GKS 1003 fol., is thicker and rougher compared to the medieval manuscripts, and rather than precisely marking each line as well as the borders of the writing block, only the writing block, but not the individual lines have been marked in the post-medieval manuscripts.<sup>190</sup> In the case of GKS 1003 fol., it can, furthermore, be observed that the precision with which the writing block was marked varies considerably throughout the manuscript. Nonetheless, the large size, two-column design, and the fact that both manuscripts were produced on vellum during a time when paper had become readily available and the norm, suggest that the post-medieval vellum manuscripts were designed to imitate the most prestigious medieval codices. Their purpose was likely that of a high-prestige object.

## 5.2.2. Layout (W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%)

### 5.2.2.1. W:H<sub>WB</sub>

According to Tschichold (1975) the leaves and writing blocks of any book or manuscript should ideally have the same proportions (52). Among the *Njáls saga* manuscripts written on vellum

<sup>189</sup> AM 162 b fol. β and AM 162 b fol. δ were counted as one specimen for this calculation, since they likely belonged to the same codex (see Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Zeevaert 2014:164).

<sup>190</sup> An exception is the title page of GKS 1003 fol. (fol. 1r), which also marks some of the lines.



(fourteenth to seventeenth century) this correspondence between the proportions of the leaves and those of the writing blocks can be observed quite well. Discrepancies between the two ratios are generally minimal (see Table 9a),<sup>191</sup> suggesting that these manuscripts were produced to create a harmonious layout.

As outlined in Chapter 2.3., the ratio of width to height of the leaves ( $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$ ) of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts were not included in the detailed codicological study, since most manuscripts have been trimmed to a greater or lesser degree, and so the results may not be reliable. The focus is instead on the ratio  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$ . In his study, Már Jónsson (2003) does, however, utilize the ratio of the leaves (30). The correlation between the proportions of the leaves and the writing block, nonetheless, allows for a cautious comparison of the results from the *Njáls saga* manuscripts with Már's results.

In the fourteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, the median ratio  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  ranges from 0.62 to 0.71 in manuscripts written in long lines (Average: 0.67) and 0.66-0.76 (Average: 0.71) in manuscripts in two columns. The overall average is 0.69, which is comparable to the ratio  $1:\sqrt{2}$  ( $= 1:1.414 = 0.707$ ), which Tschichold (1975) suggests was commonly used in books during the High Middle Ages (51). The lowest ratio (0.57) was measured on folio 32r in GKS 2870 4to (S1-3), while AM 162 b fol. ε, fol. 5r had the highest  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  (0.77).

The median  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  ranges from 0.65 to 0.79 (Average: 0.73) among the fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts written in one column. The average is comparable to the results of Már's study (2003), which determined a ratio of 0.737 for Icelandic manuscripts written in a single writing block (30).<sup>192</sup> The  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  is 0.80 for the AM 162 b fol. ι, the only codex written in two columns from this century. This also represents the highest  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  among the fifteenth-century manuscripts. The lowest  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  (0.63) was measured on fol. 8r in GKS 2869 4to.

<sup>191</sup> Figures and tables, which were not already supplied in Chapter 4.4., are presented at the end of this chapter in section 5.5.

<sup>192</sup> It must be noted again that Már Jónsson's results refer to the ratio of  $W:H$  of the leaves of the manuscripts, rather than the writing block. As previously mentioned, however, ideally the ratio of the writing block should be identical to that of the leaves.

In the post-medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (all written in two columns),  $W:H_{WB}$  ranges from 0.7 to 0.74 (Average: 0.72). The reconstructed result for *The Lost Codex* is 0.73\*. The lowest result (0.69) was measured on fol. 1v of AM 921 4to I, while fol. 67r in GKS 1003 fol. showed the largest  $W:H_{WB}$  (0.77).

According to Már Jónsson (2003), there is not much difference in the ratio of  $W:H$  among Icelandic manuscripts written in long lines (Average: 0.737) and those written in two columns (Average: 0.749) (30). The *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts, however, show a more significant gap between the two layout styles. The average  $W:H_{WB}$  of all *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts in long lines is 0.69, while it is 0.72 for manuscripts written in two columns. The writing blocks of *Njáls saga* manuscripts written in one column (and somewhat correspondingly the manuscripts themselves) are, therefore, narrower than those written in two columns.

Már Jónsson (2003) claims that the ratio of Icelandic manuscripts was more clumsy (“búralegrí”) compared to that of manuscripts abroad and points out that Icelandic codices were slightly wider and smaller than those in other countries at the same time (30). According to Már (2003), the average ratio of width to height in Icelandic manuscript written in one column is 0.737, in manuscripts in two columns 0.749, with a total average of 0.739. Furthermore, their size diminished while their width increased with every passing century (30).

This decrease in size, which Már Jónsson suggests, cannot be observed from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century in the vellum *Njáls saga* manuscripts. The average size ( $W+H$ ) is almost identical to 426 mm in the fourteenth-century manuscripts, and 424 mm in the manuscripts dating to the fifteenth century. It increases significantly in the post-medieval vellum manuscripts (572 mm). The average  $W:H_{WB}$ , however, is higher in manuscripts from the fifteenth century (0.74) and in the post-medieval manuscripts (0.72). Comparing this to 0.69 in the fourteenth century, it is confirmed that the width of the writing blocks (and thereby codices) increased throughout time.

Nonetheless, the *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts written in one column particularly show a lower ratio than the average Icelandic manuscript, often approximating standards which,

according to Tschichold (1975), were used during the High Middle Ages ( $1:\sqrt{2} = 0.707$  or  $2:3 = 0.667$ ) (51). This may be an indication that the makers of some of these manuscripts followed commonly accepted standards for manuscript production in Europe rather than national practices. A reason for this might be that the commissioners possibly considered these manuscripts and their content, including *Njáls saga*, to be of particular importance, and that they therefore wished to display the texts in a format which was in accordance with common manuscript production standards, as well as pleasing to the eye.

Már Jónsson (2003) points out that modern sheets of paper of the DIN A norm have a ratio of 0.707, which remains the same, even if the leaves are folded (29). Sheets made of animal skins, however, have a different ratio, generally between 0.790-0.830 (Már Jónsson 2003:29). The ratio, therefore, changes when these sheets are folded. If the original skin, for example, had a ratio of 0.790, it would change to 0.624 if folded once, and back to 0.790 if folded twice. Már (2003) concludes that quarto manuscripts (for which the original sheet has been folded twice) are wider compared to folio manuscripts (29). Tschichold (1975) comes to the same conclusion, using a common 0.75 (3:4) format for old large sheets, which then alternates between a 2:3 (0.667) ratio for folio, 3:4 (0.75) for quarto, and 2:3 for octavo sizes (50).

Concerning the vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, it can be observed that the smallest manuscript (AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$ , W+H: 350 mm) has a W:H<sub>WB</sub> of 0.74 (roughly 3:4) – comparable to the larger manuscripts with a W+H of 430 mm and more, whose W:H<sub>WB</sub> is between 0.70-0.80 (Average: 0.74). The remaining manuscripts, with a W+H of 358-429 mm, have a W:H<sub>WB</sub> between 0.62-0.69 (Average: 0.66, roughly 2:3), with the exception of AM 466 4to (W+H: 416 mm, W:H<sub>WB</sub>: 0.73) (see Table 9b).

The larger manuscripts are therefore generally wider than the smaller ones. This contradicts Már's and Tschichold's statements that the quarto (= smaller) sizes are wider than the folio (= larger) manuscripts. Jørgensen (2007) gives rough measurements for the various manuscript sizes (fol., 4to, 8vo, and so forth), suggesting that Icelandic folio manuscripts begin at a height of approximately 280 mm (49). Jørgensen (2007) points out, however, that these sizes do not follow

a definite standard (49). It is, therefore, advisable not to use quarto and folio as indicative of size, but rather of the times that the original sheet has been folded (folio = folded once, quarto = folded twice). Considering that an average calfskin-hide can be considerably larger than some of the largest *Njáls saga* manuscripts,<sup>193</sup> it is possible that the larger codices with a higher W:H<sub>WB</sub> and, therefore, wider layout, are ‘quarto’ in the sense that the sheets used to produce them had been folded twice. The smaller manuscripts, would, correspondingly, be octavo (folded three times), and the smallest manuscript duodecimo (folded four times). Alternatively, it is also possible that the sheets used to produce these manuscripts were of a different size (and therefore ratio) or produced from the hide of a smaller animal.

#### 5.2.2.2. WB%

Generally speaking, it appears that Icelandic manuscripts were designed with narrower margins in order to create a larger block of text and thereby save vellum. In his examination of 80 Icelandic manuscripts, Már Jónsson (2003) states that the writing block on average takes up 55.4% of the whole page, which is far more than, for example, in Humanistic (35%) or Italian monastic (42.5%) manuscripts (31). The high cost of vellum production, both with regard to money and labor, and the presumably generally less prosperous economic state of medieval Iceland – a remote island – compared to that of mainland Europe, may have led to the space-saving layout of Icelandic manuscripts.

In the fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts, the MDN WB% ranges from 52.6 to 70.8 (Average: 62.2) (Table 2c). The results are between 52.6 and 70.8 in manuscripts written in long lines (Average: 63.8),<sup>194</sup> and between 55.2 and 62.6 in manuscripts in two columns (Average:

<sup>193</sup> In my search for the average size of a calf-hide, I came across an informative leaflet from Townsend Leather (<http://www.townsendleather.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/70-AverageHideChart.pdf>) with different types of hides and their sizes. The measurements are given in inches, showing that an average calf-hide can produce a rectangle of approximately 45x50 inches (approximately 114x127cm). It must be kept in mind, however, that animals during the Middle Ages were smaller than today.

<sup>194</sup> If the result from *Kálfalækjarbók* (AM 133 fol.) is excluded from the calculation of the average, it rises to 65.4, which maybe gives a more accurate picture for the majority of the fourteenth century witnesses in long lines, since *Kálfalækjarbók* clearly appears to be an exception.

59.6). The lowest WB% (49.4) was measured for fol. 71v in AM 133 fol., written in one column, while the highest WB% (73.7) was calculated for fol. 12v in GKS 2868 4to.

The MDN WB% is between 57.6 and 70.0 (Average: 63.9) in the fifteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (Table 3c). The same range, with an average of 63.5, applies to manuscripts in long lines, while AM 162 b fol. ι, written in two columns, has a MDN WB% of 65.2. The lowest result (55.0) was measured on fol. 1v of AM 162 b fol. α, while fol. 44v in AM 309 4to showed the highest WB% (74.4) among the fifteenth-century manuscripts.

The MDN WB% of the post-medieval vellum manuscripts is 67.0 for GKS 1003 fol. and 70.1 for AM 921 4to I (Table 4c). The MDN reconstructed result for *The Lost Codex* is 72.4\*. The lowest result was measured for fol. 107r in GKS 1003 fol., while fol. 1v in AM 921 4to I had the highest measurable result (70.4). The highest reconstructed WB% for *The Lost Codex* is 75.1\*.

With the exception of AM 133 fol. (MDN WB%: 52.6) and AM 162 b fol. ε (MDN WB%: 55.2), both dating from the fourteenth century, all vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are above Már's suggested average of 55.4%. It is possible that the results differ from Már's average due to the fact that many of the *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts are fragments or may have trimmed margins, making their measurements more unreliable. However, as mentioned above, the costs of producing vellum may have led Icelanders to use more of the available space on each page than scribes in other countries. Considering the fact that *Njáls saga* is by far the longest of the Icelandic family sagas, it is possible that the length of the text added to the need to design larger writing blocks in order to use less vellum, which may explain why the MDN WB% of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts exceeds that of the average Icelandic manuscript, and why the *Njáls saga* manuscripts are larger (see previous section). While the writing blocks of manuscripts written in long lines seem to take up more space compared to average Icelandic manuscripts, it should be noted that some of the same manuscripts show a higher UR than the Icelandic average of 5.6 calculated by Már Jónsson (2003:31), and therefore a lower text density (see below).

Another trend in the *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts is a clear change in WB% over time. In Table 9c it is obvious that the top half of the table, exhibiting manuscripts with a lower median

WB%, is dominated by manuscripts dating from the fourteenth century, while the bottom half represents a mix of fourteenth-, fifteenth-, and post-medieval manuscripts, with a WB% of more than 65.0.

The trend of increasing WB% over time can also be shown by comparing the average WB% from each century (see Table 1a), which increases from 62.2 in the fourteenth-century manuscript, to 63.9 in the fifteenth century and to 68.6 in the post-medieval manuscripts. Manuscripts written in two columns show a more generous layout (lower WB%) only among the fourteenth century manuscripts. From this it can be concluded that the two-column design, in combination with a low WB%, was an indication of prestige during the fourteenth century. During the fifteenth century and later, it appears that the need to save even more space in the production of a manuscript increased, leading to larger writing blocks, independent of the number of columns.<sup>195</sup> Possible explanations may be a general decline in vellum and manuscript production and increasing lack of knowledge of the precise production steps. While Icelandic manuscript production was at its heyday during the fourteenth century, compiling manuscripts not only for use in Iceland but also for the Norwegian royal house, the book export to Norway declined rapidly during the fifteenth century (Stefán Karlsson 2000a:204; Stefán Karlsson 2000b:226). Stefán Karlsson (2000a) argues that the Norwegian language changed significantly after Norway became a part of the Danish kingdom in 1380, which meant that the Icelandic texts became difficult to read for a Norwegian audience (204). Stefán (2000b) also points out that the Black Death epidemic of 1402-1404 (assumed to have killed almost half of Iceland's population) had detrimental consequences for Icelandic manuscript production, particularly during the early fifteenth century (226).<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> It must be remembered, however, that there are only five witnesses dating to the fifteenth century, and only one of these written in two columns, which makes it difficult to draw definite conclusions about the status of two-column manuscripts during this time period.

<sup>196</sup> Stefán Karlsson (2000a) was originally published in *Maal og Minne* 1979 (see Stefán Karlsson 1979); Stefán Karlsson (2000b) was originally published in *Íslenska söguþingið* 28.-31. maí 1997 (see Stefán Karlsson 1998).

### 5.2.3. Text Density (UR, $\frac{\#_{\text{signs}}}{\#_{\text{words}}}$ , ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>)

#### 5.2.3.1. UR

In his study of Icelandic manuscripts, Már Jónsson (2003) establishes an average UR of 5.6 for Icelandic manuscripts (31). The MDN UR of the fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts ranges from 5.3 to 8.5 (Average: 6.1) (Table 2d). The range and average are identical to those manuscripts written in long lines. If the result from *Kálfalækjarbók* (AM 133 fol.) is excluded from the calculation of the average for manuscripts written in long lines, the average UR falls to 5.8, which maybe gives a more accurate picture for the majority of the fourteenth-century witnesses in a single writing block, since *Kálfalækjarbók* clearly appears to be an exception. *Njáls saga* manuscripts written in two columns from the fourteenth century have a UR between 5.9 and 6.3 (Average: 6.1). Manuscripts written in two columns, therefore, exhibit a more generous and more homogeneous layout with regard to text density, while manuscripts with a single writing block show greater variation.

All but two of the fourteenth-century manuscripts (AM 162 b fol. ζ: MDN UR: 5.3; AM 162 b fol. θ: MDN UR: 5.5) have a higher UR than Már's calculated average of 5.6, indicating that the majority of *Njáls saga* manuscripts from the fourteenth century were designed with slightly more space between the lines compared to other manuscripts. By far the most generous vellum manuscript, with regard to UR, is AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalækjarbók*), which will be discussed in more detail below.

The MDN UR of the fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts ranges from 4.3 to 6.4 (Table 3d). The average is 5.3, slightly lower than that in Már's study. This shows that most of the *Njáls saga* scribes during the fifteenth century placed their lines closer, compared to those of the fourteenth century, presumably to write more on each leaf and preserve vellum (see Table 9d). The URs of AM 162 b fol. ι (the only fifteenth-century manuscript in two columns) and AM 162 b fol. α are above the average for the fifteenth-century manuscripts and above Már's average result. This suggests that these two manuscripts were designed more generously.

For the post-medieval vellum manuscripts, the results are between 5.4 and 6.2. (Average: 5.8) (Table 4d). While the results of the fragments AM 921 4to I, JS. fragm. 4, and Lbs fragm. 2, as well as the reconstructed result of *The Lost Codex*, are comparable to the more tightly written manuscripts of the fifteenth century, the design of GKS 1003 fol. is more generous, comparable to manuscripts written in two columns from the fourteenth-century (see Table 9d). This suggests that GKS 1003 fol. was designed to try to imitate the prestigious fourteenth-century codices.<sup>197</sup>

Overall, UR ranges from 4.3 to 8.5 for all vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (see Table 9d). The average of 5.9 is above Már's average, possibly indicating a more spacious layout. However, when the exceptional result of *Kálfalækjarbók* (UR: 8.5) is excluded, the average UR falls to 5.75, quite comparable to Már Jónsson's 5.6.

#### 5.2.3.2. $\#_{\text{signs}}$ , $\#_{\text{words}}$ , ABBR%

The average number of signs per 10 cm of line ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ) among the fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts is 42.1, whereas the average  $\#_{\text{words}}$  is 13.3 (Table 2e).<sup>198</sup> It is evident that manuscripts written in two columns were written less densely (Average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 39.7 / Average  $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 12.5) than manuscripts in a single writing block. Only one manuscript written in two columns (AM 162 b fol.  $\beta$ ) is above the overall averages. The average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  for manuscripts written in a single writing block is 43.5, the average  $\#_{\text{words}}$  13.8. If the results from the exceptional *Kálalækjarbók* are excluded, the average rises to 44.0 for  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  and 14.2 for  $\#_{\text{words}}$ . This indicates once again a clear distinction between the more generous and prestigious designs of fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts written in two columns and those written in long lines. Concerning the ABBR%, the difference between the two layout styles is less distinct; nonetheless, manuscripts in two columns have a lower average ABBR% (14.6) than manuscripts written in long lines (15.5).

<sup>197</sup> The correlation between UR and WB% will be discussed in Chapter 5.2.3.4., taking also signs/dm<sup>2</sup> into consideration. See also Table 9e.

<sup>198</sup> Már Jónsson (2003) calculates an average number of 52.7 signs per line for Icelandic manuscripts (31). The study does not indicate, however, whether the variable lengths of the lines in different manuscripts were taken into account. In order to allow for a direct comparison within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, signs were calculated for 10 cm of line, rather than whole lines in this dissertation. This means that the results of this study cannot be compared with the ones in Már Jónsson's.



The average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  (41.3) and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  (13.1) for the fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* (Table 3e) manuscripts is minimally lower, compared to those from the fourteenth-century. However, the results for AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  are significantly lower than the remaining manuscripts ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 29.3,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.0). Like *Kálfalækjarbók* among the fourteenth-century manuscripts, AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  holds a unique status among the fifteenth-century manuscripts. If the results from AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  are excluded from the calculation of the average, the  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  rises to 44.3 and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  rises to 14.1, suggesting that most fifteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts were slightly more densely written compared to those from the fourteenth century. Additionally, the significantly higher ABBR% (17.1) of the fifteenth-century manuscripts also suggests that the scribes of the fifteenth century were more prone to saving vellum by all means available (higher WB%, lower UR, higher  $\#_{\text{signs}}/\#_{\text{words}}$ , ABBR%). The results of AM 162 b fol.  $\iota$ , the only fifteenth-century manuscript written in two columns, do not appear to differ from the manuscripts written in a single writing block. As previously noted, the use of the two-column design declined during the fifteenth century, and its clear difference in prestige, and therefore generosity with regard to layout, became less distinct.

The average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  for post-medieval vellum manuscripts is 43.1 (Table 4e), which is comparable to the results from the fourteenth and fifteenth century. The  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , however, is higher (14.6), likely influenced by a very high ABBR% (20.8). This indicates that the scribes tried to condense the text and preserve vellum through the increased use of abbreviations, even though the post-medieval vellum manuscripts – as previously noted – were designed as prestige objects and imitated the high-class fourteenth-century manuscripts.

### 5.2.3.3. signs/dm<sup>2</sup>

The average number of signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts is 481.9.<sup>199</sup> However, as in previous categories, the result for *Kálfalækjarbók* (226.9) is quite unusual,

<sup>199</sup> Már (2003) gives an average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of 895 for the Icelandic manuscripts in his study (31). This number is considerably higher than any result calculated for the *Njáls saga* manuscripts. Már (pers. communication) kindly provided me with the data he collected for AM 132 fol. and GKS 2870 4to, two *Njáls saga* manuscripts that were part

highlighting the manuscript's exceptional status. If the result from *Kálfalækjarbók* is excluded from the calculation of the overall average, the number of signs/dm<sup>2</sup> rises by more than 20 signs to 503.1. Even more significantly, the average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for manuscripts written in long lines rises from 543.8 to 589.1, a difference of more than 40 characters. Table 2f illustrates that, with the exception of *Kálfalækjarbók*, manuscripts written in two columns are far more generously designed, than those written in a single writing block. All of the manuscripts with a two-column design are below the overall average. No other characteristic analyzed in this dissertation demonstrates a more distinct difference between the two layout styles during the fourteenth century.

The average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the fifteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is 589.3 (Table 3f), significantly higher than the result for the fourteenth-century manuscripts. Similar to *Kálfalækjarbók* among the manuscripts from the fourteenth century, AM 162 b fol. α has a significantly lower signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (320.0) among the fifteenth-century manuscripts. If the result from AM 162 b fol. α is excluded from the calculation of the overall average, the difference between the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts becomes even more significant, as the average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the fifteenth century rises to 656.6. While a clear distinction between manuscripts written in long lines and those written in two columns can not be observed in the categories WB%, #signs, #words, and ABBR%, AM 162 b fol. ι does have the second lowest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> among the fifteenth-century manuscripts. This suggests that while the clear difference between the two layout designs became less distinct during the fifteenth-century, the two-column layout still retained its more generous design, and thereby possible higher status.

The average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the post-medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is 576.2 (Table 4f). However, since only two manuscripts (GKS 1003 fol. and AM 921 4to I) can be used to calculate a reliable result, the average is misleading. GKS 1003 fol. has a signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of 476.2, while

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of his study. His measurements, as well as number of signs/words/abbreviations compare well with the ones presented in this dissertation. He, however, informed me that a student in the mathematics department had calculated the signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for him in a different application that he had no access to. It cannot be ruled out that the methods for calculating the number of signs/dm<sup>2</sup> differ between the two studies. I will, therefore, refrain from comparing my results with those of Már Jónsson's study.

the result is significantly higher for AM 921 4to I (676.2). This demonstrates that while both post-medieval manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (GKS 1003 fol. and *The Lost Codex*) were likely designed as prestige objects, imitating medieval manuscripts, GKS 1003 fol. was designed more generously, and, therefore, holds a higher status than *The Lost Codex*.

#### 5.2.3.4. Correlation between size, layout, and text density - Selected examples

The correlation between signs/dm<sup>2</sup>, WB%, and UR (see Table 9e) reveals that some manuscripts, notably AM 132 fol. (*Möðruvallabók*, c1330-1370), AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalækjarbók*, c1350), AB 162 b fol. ε (*Hítardalsbók*, c1350-1375), and AM 162 b fol. α (c1390-1440), exhibit an extremely low signs/dm<sup>2</sup> ( $\leq 320.0$ ), low WB% ( $\leq 60.5$ ), and average to high UR ( $\geq 5.9$ ) resulting in a particularly generous layout.

*Möðruvallabók* and *Kálfalækjarbók* are two of the most important and most famous medieval Icelandic manuscripts. AM 162 b fol. ε is a fragment of eight folios, of which the first folio is significantly younger than the remaining seven (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.). These three manuscripts are large in size and have the most generous layout, with wider margins and a lower text density. *Möðruvallabók* is the largest of the medieval *Njáls saga* witnesses (W+H: 573 mm), followed by AM 162 b fol. ε (W+H: 526 mm). *Kálfalækjarbók* is by far the largest vellum manuscript in one column (W+H: 506 mm). The W:H<sub>WB</sub> for *Möðruvallabók* and *Kálfalækjarbók* approximates the common medieval standard 1:1.414 (1:  $\sqrt{2} = 0.707$ ), whereas AM 162 b fol. ε has an average W:H<sub>WB</sub> of 0.76, close to a 3:4 ratio. As previously mentioned, the writing block of an average Icelandic manuscript takes up 55.4% of the page, according to Már Jónsson's study (2003:31). The median WB% of *Möðruvallabók* is 60.5%, above the Icelandic average of 55.4% calculated by Már (2003:31), but below the average for vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (63.3%). WB% for AM 162 b fol. ε ranges from 53.2 to 56.8 (MDN: 55.2), which is comparable to Már's average and the lowest result for *Njáls saga* manuscripts written in two columns. The writing block of *Kálfalækjarbók* takes up only between 49.4 and 57.9 percent of the page (MDN: 52.6). This is not only the lowest percentage of the fourteenth-century manuscripts, but also by far the lowest

percentage of all *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts (and most paper manuscripts). Both *Möðruvallabók* (UR: 6.1-6.5, MDN: 6.3) and *Kálfalækjarbók* (UR: 8.3-8.8, MDN: 8.5) are above the Icelandic average of 5.6 (Már Jónsson 2003:31) and the average for vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (5.9). AM 162 b fol. ε has a median UR of 5.9, identical with the average for the vellum *Njáls saga* manuscripts. The UR of *Kálfalækjarbók* is more than two points higher than that of *Möðruvallabók*, which has the second highest UR of the fourteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts, and third-highest of all vellum manuscripts. Additionally, *Möðruvallabók*, *Kálfalækjarbók*, and AM 162 b fol. ε also show the lowest results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the vellum *Njáls saga* manuscripts, with 317.8 for AM 162 b fol. ε, 303.8 for *Möðruvallabók* and only 226.9 for *Kálfalækjarbók*. With regards to the codices in this category, therefore, AM 162 b fol. ε, AM 132 fol., and particularly AM 133 fol. have an exceptionally low text density. This shows that these manuscripts were not only produced according to the high standards of medieval book production, but also with a more generous layout (larger pages, wider margins, lower text density) to highlight their sophistication and status. Based on its history, it is clear that *Möðruvallabók* was a valuable prestige object, and the same can be assumed for *Kálfalækjarbók* (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.). While the history of AM 162 b fol. ε is less clearly documented, its codicological setup, nonetheless, suggests that the codex to which AM 162 b fol. ε belonged was also a highly valued prestige object. Considering the fact that the first folio of AM 162 b fol. ε is significantly younger, but likely still belonged to the same codex (Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson 2013:49-51) and imitated the fourteenth-century layout almost exactly, it can be presumed that the manuscript was, in fact, so valued that repairs were commissioned during the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century by the owner in order to restore the manuscript's original beauty.

AM 162 b fol. α (c1390-1440) is a fragment consisting of two collated leaves. Like *Möðruvallabók*, *Kálfalækjarbók*, and AM 162 b fol. ε, it exhibits a particularly generous layout with a low WB% and low text density. However, while *Möðruvallabók*, *Kálfalækjarbók*, and AM 162 b fol. ε are among the largest of the medieval *Njáls saga* witnesses, AM 162 b fol. α, on the other hand, is the smallest of all the vellum *Njáls saga* manuscripts (W+H: 350 mm). Based on

comparison with the normalized text of *Reykjabók*, Kapitan (2014) estimates that *Njáls saga* in AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  would have taken up between about 190-195 leaves (14, 88).<sup>200</sup> *Gráskinna* (GKS 2870 4to) is the only vellum manuscript of *Njáls saga* somewhat comparable in size (W+H: 359 mm) that is almost complete. It consists of 121 folios and is 67 mm thick. Judging by its appearance (e.g., leather binding, signs of repairs), *Gráskinna* was designed and used as a reading copy for personal use. *Möðruvallabók*, clearly a prestigious and far less portable object, with just over 200 leaves (but multiple texts in it), has a thickness of 107 mm (not including the wooden boards of the binding). AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  would likely have been comparable in thickness to *Möðruvallabók*, but significantly smaller. It seems likely that a very small and thick manuscript like AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  would, like *Gráskinna*, have only contained one text.<sup>201</sup> The question remains whether AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  was, like *Gráskinna*, solely intended as a portable, private reading copy. No definite conclusions about its status can be drawn from initials. The scribe leaves empty spaces for initials, with a height of two lines of text, comparable to the design in *Gráskinna*. The initials were, however, never added, and it is impossible to speculate about the degree in which they would have been decorated. Their relatively small size suggests a plain look, similar to *Gráskinna*. Kapitan (2014) estimates that the *Njáls saga* text in AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  would have begun either on fol. 3v or more likely on fol. 1v (14).<sup>202</sup> While its small size and plain design make AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  comparable to a reading copy, like *Gráskinna*, its particularly generous layout, with a high UR (6.4), low WB% (57.4) and low signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (320.0), suggest that it was also intentioned to a certain degree as a prestige object. The decorated ascenders on the top line on

<sup>200</sup> My own rough calculation of the number of leaves of AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$ , based on comparison with AM 396 fol. and ÍB 421 4to, resulted in at least between 173 and 177 folios. Kapitan's reconstruction seems, however, plausible and more accurate.

<sup>201</sup> Lethbridge (2014) studies the phenomenon of *Njáls saga*, more than other Icelandic sagas, being preserved by itself in pre-reformation manuscripts, rather than as part of a compilation. She argues that while the sheer length of the saga may have been a reason (57, 77), other factors may have played a role, and *Njáls saga*, from the beginning may have been "perceived as having a particular intrinsic worth and a different symbolic significance" (77) compared to other sagas, resulting in it being preserved as a stand-alone text.

<sup>202</sup> My personal experience in working with *Njáls saga* manuscripts makes me believe that it is more likely that the saga began on a recto page, but Kapitan's overall conclusions about the makeup of the manuscript certainly are within the realm of possibilities, and her statement (Kapitan 2014:14) that examples of *Njáls saga* beginning on a verso page exist is true. Moreover, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication) has pointed out to me that the first recto page, which was more prone to being exposed to signs of wear, was sometimes left blank to protect the text.

each page, which Kapitan (2014) discusses in more detail (30-33), also point toward a higher status.

In contrast to the four manuscripts just described, other manuscripts, such as GKS 2868 4to (*Skafinskinna*, c1350-1400), GKS 2869 4to (*Sveinsbók*, c1400), AM 309 4to (*Bæjarbók*, c1498), and *The Lost Codex* (c1600-1650), have a significantly above average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> ( $\geq 676.2$ ), high WB% ( $\geq 68.0$ ), and low UR ( $\leq 6.0$ ), suggesting that the scribes wrote particularly tightly and over a large space of the page in order to preserve vellum.

GKS 2868 4to (*Skafinskinna*, c1350-1400) has a W+H of 430mm, just above the fourteenth-century average of 426 mm as well as the overall medieval (14th-15th c) average of 425mm. Its design seems somewhat irregular, with W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%, and UR all showing a wide range. The W:H<sub>WB</sub> is between 0.65 and 0.75 (MDN: 0.71); WB% ranges from 65.6 to 73.7. The MDN WB% (70.8) is the highest of all vellum manuscripts (with the exception of fragments marked with an asterisk). The median UR for *Skafinskinna* is 6.0, which is very comparable to the fourteenth-century and overall vellum average. However, like W:H<sub>WB</sub> and WB%, UR shows a wide range, between 5.1 (the lowest measured result of the fourteenth-century manuscripts)<sup>203</sup> and 6.7. The manuscript has a lower UR (higher density) towards the end of the manuscript, whereas the lines are placed more generously (higher UR) at the beginning. This indicates that the scribe realized that he was running out of vellum and, therefore, started writing lines closer together. The possible desire of the scribe to save space is also evident from his extensive use of abbreviations (ABBR%: 16.4).<sup>204</sup> The combination of a high WB%, high ABBR%, and low to average UR, results in the highest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (810.8) of all *Njáls saga* manuscripts<sup>205</sup> (on vellum and paper). The hypothesis that *Skafinskinna* was a palimpsest (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.) – if proven to be true – adds to the assumption that the manuscript was produced under certain economic constraints, i.e. lack of available vellum. The surviving initials are plain and have a height of only 2

<sup>203</sup> Among the fourteenth-century manuscripts an UR of 5.1 was calculated for fol. 38v in GKS 2868 4to and fol. 5v in AM 162 b fol. 7.

<sup>204</sup> Unlike UR, ABBR% appears to be relatively consistent throughout the entire manuscripts. The two random samples to calculate ABBR% were taken from fol. 6r (ABBR%: 16.1) and fol. 33r (ABBR%: 16.7). This suggests that the scribe decided to heavily abbreviate the text right from the beginning.

<sup>205</sup> Not including fragments marked with an asterisk.

lines of text. In some cases, the initials were never added. The extreme density and plain look of *Skafinskinna* suggest that the manuscript was a portable reading copy, possibly for personal use.

The same conclusions can be drawn for GKS 2869 4to (*Sveinsbók*, c1400). *Sveinsbók* is relatively small in size, with a W+H of 402mm. This is below the overall average of vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, which is 440mm. The writing block takes up between 63.2 and 71.9 percent of the page (MDN: 68.0), which is also above the overall average of 63.3. *Sveinsbók* has by far the lowest UR (3.4-5.7, MDN: 4.3), demonstrating that the lines in the manuscript are placed extremely close together. GKS 2869 4to has the second highest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (724.7).<sup>206</sup> Table 9f illustrates that the results for WB% are higher towards the end of the fragment, and correspondingly the UR is lower (thus more densely written).<sup>207</sup> This indicates that the scribe realized that he was running out of vellum. Furthering this hypothesis is the fact that fol. 11v has 60 lines, about 10-25 more than the remaining leaves. None of the leaves have signs of slits on the margins, indicating where ruling lines should have been scratched into the vellum. It appears, therefore, that *Sveinsbók* was not as carefully pre-planned as other medieval manuscripts.<sup>208</sup> The red initials are plain and relatively small, with a height of 2-3 lines. *Sveinsbók* has the second lowest ABBR% (11.9). While some scribes (see for example *Skafinskinna* above) preserve vellum by abbreviating the text more heavily, the scribe of GKS 2869 4to appears to have opted for a different solution, namely to write his text more densely and on a larger part of the available parchment. The relatively small size, extreme denseness, and plain look of *Sveinsbók*, suggest that, like *Skafinskinna*, the manuscript was a portable reading copy; the lower ABBR% may, however, imply that it was not necessarily written for personal use, although this is a mere speculation.

Like *Skafinskinna* and *Sveinsbók*, AM 309 4to (*Bæjarbók*) exhibits a particularly dense text and layout. It is larger (475 mm) than *Skafinskinna* and *Sveinsbók*. Its WB% (68.6-74.4, MDN: 70.5) is

<sup>206</sup> This statement is based on the fact that the results of JS fragm. 4 and Lbs fragm. 2 cannot be used for comparison, since these manuscripts are heavily fragmented and only part of the leaf is preserved. Therefore, only GKS 2868 4to can be said to have a higher signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (810.8).

<sup>207</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 4.2.2.2., *Sveinsbók* preserves four textual fragments of *Njáls saga*. The final fragment preserves parts of Chapters 155-157 of *Njáls saga* and ends in the middle of the first verse of *Darraðarljóð* (corresponding with Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:454). This is very close to the end of the saga, which in most editions (e.g. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954) has 159 chapters total.

<sup>208</sup> It must be mentioned, however, that some of the leaves appear to have been trimmed.

higher than that of *Sveinsbók*, but slightly lower than that of *Skafinskinna*. UR ranges from 4.8 to 5.1 (MDN: 5.0), which is the third lowest average of the vellum manuscripts. Moreover, *Bæjarbók* has the third highest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (690.0).<sup>209</sup> In contrast to the scribe of *Sveinsbók*, who wrote on a high number of lines that were placed extremely close together, the scribe of *Bæjarbók* condensed his text and saved vellum by heavily abbreviating his text, similar but even more extreme than the scribe of *Skafinskinna*. ABBR% for AM 309 4to is 25.1, the highest of all *Njáls saga* manuscripts (vellum and paper). While this chapter only analyzes the *Njáls saga* part of *Bæjarbók* (Part 3) and the remaining two parts, written in two columns, most certainly did not originally belong to the same codex (see e.g. Scott 2003:106\*, and Chapter 4.2.2.2.), it is interesting to note that Parts 1 and 2 were even more tightly written with a somewhat comparable WB% (Part 1: 63.2-74.6, MDN: 68.2; Part 2: 66.0-88.2, MDN: 73.6) but an even lower UR (Part 1: 3.7-4.3, MDN: 3.9; Part 2: 3.9-4.9, MDN: 4.5). ABBR% and signs/dm<sup>2</sup> were not calculated for Parts 1 and 2, but Scott (2003) points out that the text of *Eyrbyggja saga* (part of Part 2) is heavily abbreviated to the extent that occasionally “the reader is left to guess the word” (113\*). Scott (2003) also points out that the scribe sometimes writes letters superscript “especially towards the end of a line, even when this results in no reduction of letters” (113\*). He assumes that the scribe tried to preserve vellum this way, rather than merely to save time (Scott 2003:113\*). The same reasoning can be concluded for the *Njáls saga* text written by the same scribe. Unlike *Skafinskinna* and *Sveinsbók*, where the scribes were especially trying to preserve vellum towards the end of the manuscripts, the scribe of *Bæjarbók* ensured sparing use of vellum consistently, through the extensive use of abbreviations and consistently high WB% and low UR. As in *Sveinsbók*, slits indicating where lines should be ruled are not visible, suggesting that the manuscript was not as carefully planned as other medieval codices. However, occasionally slits at the top and bottom margins show that at least the width of the columns was marked, and the number of lines per page is rather consistent with between 42 to 44 lines. While *Bæjarbók* may be considered of higher status than *Skafinskinna*

<sup>209</sup> This statement is based on the fact that the results of JS fragm. 4, Lbs fragm. 2, and AM 162 b fol. θ cannot be used for comparison, since these manuscripts are heavily fragmented and only part of the leaf is preserved. Therefore, only GKS 2868 4to and GKS 2869 4to can be said to have a higher signs/dm<sup>2</sup>.



and *Sveinsbók*, its extreme space-saving design suggests that the commissioner or producer may have been under economic constraints, resulting in a manuscript which appears aesthetically inferior to the highly prestigious fourteenth-century codices like *Möðruvallabók* and *Kálfalækjarbók*. Another possibility is that the manuscript was written for personal use, possibly by Jón *kollur* Oddsson (see Chapter 4.2.2.2.). A scribe writing for himself could abbreviate a text more heavily without losing comprehension of the text; and he may have preferred to save space to ensure a smaller, more portable copy.

A fourth manuscript that exhibits a particularly dense layout is *The Lost Codex* (c1600-1650), best illustrated by AM 921 4to I, the most complete surviving leaf of the original manuscript. AM 921 4to I is the largest vellum manuscript of *Njáls saga* (W+H: 601 mm). The writing block takes up between 69.9 and 70.4 percent of the page (MDN: 70.1), which is the third highest median result (not including fragments marked with an asterisk). The UR of AM 921 4to I (5.4-5.6, MDN: 5.5) is below the average for the vellum *Njáls saga* manuscripts, indicating that lines are placed relatively close together. The space-saving design is also evident from the signs/dm<sup>2</sup> (676.2), which is significantly above the average of 518.1. The text is also highly abbreviated (ABBR%: 20.6). The four known fragments of *The Lost Codex* likely belonged to a larger compilation (see Chapter 6.2.1.). Vellum manuscripts during the seventeenth century (when paper was already readily available) were likely primarily produced as decorative objects, imitating the valuable medieval Icelandic manuscripts, the pride of the Icelandic nation. The two-column design and exceptional size of *The Lost Codex* add to the assumption that the manuscript was a high-status copy. Nonetheless, the space-saving design and high text density suggest economic constraints by the producer or commissioner.

As the discussion above demonstrates, some vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, particularly from the fourteenth century (the heyday of Icelandic manuscript production) are designed extremely generously, while others are particularly dense and space-saving. Most *Njáls saga* vellum manuscripts, however, fall between the two extremes just described. Their scribes likely

tried to find a balance between saving space and vellum, thereby keeping production costs lower and ensuring the legibility and aesthetics of their manuscripts.

#### 5.2.4. Vellum Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*: Summary and Conclusion

Through the analysis of size (W+H), layout (W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%), and text density (UR, #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) of vellum manuscripts and fragments containing *Njáls saga* some trends and changes in the codicology of Iceland's most famous saga from the fourteenth to the mid-seventeenth century were observed. A comparison with results from Már Jónsson (2003) reveal that vellum manuscripts containing *Njáls saga* are on average larger than the average Icelandic manuscript. At the same time, the WB% of *Njáls saga* manuscripts on vellum is on average higher than the Icelandic average proposed by Már, suggesting that scribes attempted to preserve vellum, possibly due to the extreme length of *Njáls saga* compared to other Icelandic sagas.

A comparison of vellum manuscripts written in long lines and those written in two columns shows that a clear difference in codicological features between the two layout styles was evident among the fourteenth-century manuscripts. Two-column manuscripts were on average larger and more generously designed during the fourteenth century compared to those from the fifteenth century. This shows that during the fourteenth century manuscripts written in two columns held a higher status than those written in a single writing block, whereas the distinction in status between the two layout styles diminished during the fifteenth century. It is, however, noteworthy that the by far most generous vellum manuscript of *Njáls saga*, AM 133 fol. (*Kálfalækjarbók*), is written in a single writing block, showing that prestige was not inherently tied to the two-column design. With the exception of AM 162 b fol. α, all fifteenth-century specimens exhibit a dense layout, intended to preserve vellum. The post-medieval vellum manuscripts, both written in two columns, were designed as prestige objects, imitating the fourteenth-century codices, but still displaying a desire to save vellum.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> The history of *The Lost Codex* (see Chapter 6.2.1.) suggests that it was never completed, possibly in part due to the expensive costs of producing a vellum manuscript and the increased use of paper.

### 5.3. Paper Manuscripts

Thirty-nine of the sixty-one extant codices and fragments of *Njáls saga* are written on paper. These paper copies (dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries) can be divided into various types of manuscripts, based on their purpose and codicological features.<sup>211</sup> Other codicological studies of Icelandic manuscripts have also resulted in the establishment of different types of manuscripts. In her study of manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka*, Hufnagel (2012) distinguishes between scholarly (164-174) and non-scholarly (174-196) manuscripts. She also identifies certain sub-categories within the non-scholarly manuscripts, such as highly decorated “symbols of status,” or very plain “paperbacks” (Hufnagel 2012:180). Lansing (2011) establishes four types of manuscripts in her study of manuscripts containing *Hrólfs saga kraka*, namely “the learned manuscript, the literary manuscript, the decorative manuscript and the plain manuscript” (85). Her learned category is comparable (though not identical) with Hufnagel’s scholarly category. Similarly, manuscripts of *Sörla saga sterka*, which Hufnagel denotes as symbols of status correspond to Lansing’s description of decorative manuscripts, and Hufnagel’s “paperbacks” parallel Lansing’s plain manuscripts. Taking Hufnagel and Lansing’s categorizations as guidelines, the *Njáls saga* paper manuscripts are divided into two large categories: scholarly and private manuscripts. Four sub-categories are, furthermore, established within the private manuscripts: private-scholarly hybrids, decorative reading<sup>212</sup> manuscripts, moderate reading manuscripts, and plain reading manuscripts. Each category will be defined and studied in more detail in the subsequent sections.<sup>213</sup>

<sup>211</sup> The two post-medieval vellum manuscripts, *The Lost Codex* and GKS 1003 fol., will also be discussed briefly in this chapter since they fit chronologically within the same corpus as the paper manuscripts. Their results are, however, generally excluded in the accompanying tables (marked by an asterisk).

<sup>212</sup> While both scholarly and private manuscripts were obviously read, the term ‘reading manuscript,’ used for the majority of private manuscripts, refers to reading for entertainment in contrast to reading for academic purposes of scholarly and private-scholarly copies.

<sup>213</sup> Different colors were used to indicate manuscripts from each category in the tables accompanying this chapter. An explanation of the color codes are presented in Figure 1.

### 5.3.1. Scholarly Manuscripts

#### 5.3.1.1. Definition

Jørgensen (2007) states that scholarly copies (“Akademische Abschriften”) were often created as part of the publishing process of Old Norse-Icelandic texts or as source texts for philologists and historians (70). He argues, furthermore, that medieval scribes, who generally copied texts for entertainment purposes, cared less about copying their exemplar exactly<sup>214</sup> compared to scribes of scholarly copies, who were preserving the text as an unaltered source for scholars (Jørgensen 2007:70). Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson (2001) discusses Árne Magnússon’s desire for accuracy and offers several examples of detailed instructions by Árne to his scribes, requesting to copy manuscripts as accurately as possibly, including the distinction between different letter forms (e.g. regular s and tall f), its abbreviations and mistakes. Jørgensen (2007) admits that some scribes were more liberal in copying the orthography and abbreviations of their exemplar, but that the content and redaction of the exemplar were copied more truthfully than was common during the Middle Ages (71). Hufnagel (2012) defines her category of scholarly copies as “manuscripts where evidence proves that they were written for or by scholars, either working for universities or other learned institutions, or in the case of the Brothers Grimm, were about to work for such institutions” (100). She notes, furthermore, that the exemplar of her scholarly copies are known. Additionally, some of her scholarly copies “archaize the text in regard to morphology, orthography and script” (Hufnagel 2012:113). The definition of scholarly manuscripts for this dissertation (see below) corresponds with Hufnagel’s. Slightly differently, Lansing’s (2011) defines her category of learned manuscript as a manuscript which “contains paratextual elements indicating that the text has been subjected to philological or historical study” (85). She only includes manuscripts in this category in which the paratextual features, namely marginal notes or a learned preface, are written by the same scribe as the main text (Lansing 2011:85). Her category, therefore, also includes manuscripts which, for the purpose of this dissertation, are classified as

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<sup>214</sup> While Jørgensen only distinguishes between medieval scribes and post-medieval scholarly copiers, it must be noted that the same could be argued for post-medieval scribes who copied for their own or a commissioner’s enjoyment rather than scholarly research (see Chapter 5.3.2.).

private-scholarly hybrids (see below). Lansing (2011) concludes that her learned manuscripts have wider margins, fewer abbreviations, a low text density, and a “plain design without significant ornamental features” (85-86).

For the purpose of this dissertation, scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are defined as manuscripts that were commissioned by scholars and highly educated collectors. The copies were often made or intended for use abroad. The scribes as well as commissioners are generally known.<sup>215</sup> Scholarly copies are closely related to and often direct copies of some of the most important medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga*. The scripts of scholarly copies are easily legible. The scribe follows its exemplar closely and occasionally imitates its orthography and abbreviations. Some scholarly copies contain variant readings from other manuscripts, although this feature is not limited to these types of manuscripts and can be found in private copies as well (see Chapter 6.4.3.3.). Some scholarly copies exhibit paratextual features, such as Latin comments or small signs, commenting on the exemplar, e.g. pointing out defect or illegible passages. With the possible exception of the beginning of the saga, scholarly copies are plain and do not contain decorations or enlarged initials. They often preserve only one text rather than a collection of texts, although this feature can also be found among the private manuscripts (see Chapter 6.1.).<sup>216</sup> All scholarly copies are, furthermore, generously designed, with wide margins and liberal spacing of lines to allow for commentary, variant readings, and possibly even translations. Yet, somewhat contradictorily, scholarly manuscripts generally have very few marginal notes (see Chapter 6.4.). All in all, the appearance of the script and layout of scholarly copies is very tidy and clear. The uniformity in layout and design of the scholarly copies becomes apparent in the discussion of codicological features below.

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<sup>215</sup> The only exception is *Landakotsbók*, which can, however, be classified as a scholarly copy based on codicological features. For more details on *Landakotsbók*, see Chapter 6.2.2.

<sup>216</sup> Since collectors frequently took apart manuscripts to separate various texts, it cannot always be said with certainty whether a codex originally preserved only one text or a variety of texts. Nonetheless, catalogue descriptions frequently mention whether other manuscripts were part of the same codex and this has generally not been observed with regards to the scholarly copies of *Njáls saga*. Thott 984 fol. III is part of a large three volume collection of texts, and may, thus, be an exception. There is no physical evidence, however, that the texts were ever bound or intended to be bound together. Beeke Stegmann is currently working on the phenomenon of disassembled manuscripts for her doctoral dissertation (see also Chapter 4.3.2., description of AM 136 fol.).

### 5.3.1.2. Scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

The following nine manuscripts (organized in chronological order) have definitely been copied for scholarly use: AM 134 fol. (c1640-1656), AM 137 fol. (c1640-1672), Stock. 9 fol. (1684), AM 135 fol. (c1690-1697), KB Add 565 4to (c1707-1722), ÍB 421 4to (c1707-1722), AM 467 4to (c1707-1722), Thott 984 fol. III (c1750), and *Landakotsbók* (c1760-1780).

**AM 134 fol.** (c1640-1656) and **AM 137 fol.** (c1640-1672) were both written by Jón Erlendsson from Villingaholt for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson in the south of Iceland (Árnes-district). The exemplar of AM 134 fol. is not certain, although Zeevaert et al. (2015) conclude that Chapt. 86 in AM 134 fol. is a direct copy of AM 309 4to (9). AM 134 fol. does exhibit clear scholarly interest since it preserves variant readings from *Gráskinna*, the lost *\*Gullskinna*, and other *Njáls saga* manuscripts. Már Jónsson (1996) has shown that AM 137 fol. is a direct copy of AM 136 fol., which in turn appears to be a direct copy of *\*Gullskinna* by Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson's half-brother Jón Gissurarson (52). Jón Þorkelsson (1889) notes that AM 137 fol. contains some marginal notes written in the hand of Brynjólfur Sveinsson, which suggests that the manuscript was originally written for the bishop (722-723).

**Stock. 9 fol.** (1684) was written by Jón Vigfússon for the Swedish Antikvitetskollegiet in Stockholm. Jón writes his text in one very narrow column. Gödel (1897-1900) suggests that the one column design was chosen to allow space for a Swedish translation (126). The exemplar is not known, but Stock. 9 fol. can, nonetheless, be classified as a scholarly manuscript based on its commissioner and layout.

**AM 135 fol.** (c1690-1697) was written by Ásgeir Jónsson for Þormóður Tofæus, at Stangarland, Norway. It is for the most part a copy of *Gráskinna*, although Zeevaert et al. (2015) conclude that while the first part of Chapt. 86 is copied from *Gráskinna*, the second part appears to correspond with *Skafinskinna* (9).

**KB Add 565 4to** (c1707-1722), **ÍB 421 4to** (c1707-1722), and **AM 467 4to** (c1707-1722) were written in the north of Iceland (Skagafjörður-district) by Jón Magnússon for his brother Árni Magnússon. They are all closely related to *Reykjabók* and copy the manuscript very accurately,

including its abbreviations. Jón Helgason (1962) assumes that KB Add 565 4to is the only of the three copies which was made directly from *Reykjabók* (XVII). He, furthermore, concludes that *Reykjabók* was in Iceland at Jón Magnússon's disposal from 1707 to 1722, when he returned it to Copenhagen (Jón Helgason 1962:XVI).

**Thott 984 fol. III** (c1750) was written by Jón Ólafsson the Younger, presumably for Otto Thott in Copenhagen, Denmark. While Jón Þorkelsson (1889) assumes that the manuscript is a direct copy of *Oddabók* (746), Zeevaert et al. (2015) state that Chapt. 86 in Thott 984 fol. III belongs to the \**Gullskinna*-class (9). The exact exemplar of the manuscript is at this point unclear. It is, nonetheless, categorized as a scholarly copy, since it was written abroad and most likely commissioned by the scholar Otto Thott.

The scribe and commissioner of *Landakotsbók* (c1760-1780) are unknown, but the manuscript was almost certainly written in Copenhagen, Denmark (see Chapter 6.2.2.). The text is a direct copy of *Reykjabók*, which is also evident from Latin comments by the scribe who identifies missing or illegible text passages in his exemplar that correspond with lacunae and darkened pages in *Reykjabók*.

### 5.3.1.3. Analysis of Codicological Features

All scholarly manuscripts are written in a single writing block, even though Stock. 9 fol. is highlighted in blue ('two columns') in all tables to emphasize its unusual design. Its writing block is extremely narrow – as mentioned – with the possible intention of adding a Swedish translation in a second column.

The size (W+H) of the scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (see Table 10a) is between 317 mm and 540 mm (Average: 446 mm). The average is almost 30 mm higher than the overall average W+H of paper manuscripts containing *Njáls saga* (417 mm).<sup>217</sup> The three scholarly copies written by Jón Magnússon (KB Add 565 4to, W+H: 317 mm; ÍB 421 4to, W+H: 330 mm; and

<sup>217</sup> The margins of paper manuscripts are generally more likely to have been trimmed down, i.e., during re-binding, than those of medieval vellum manuscripts, which may give a distorted picture about the sizes and ratios of the paper manuscripts. Nonetheless, with regards to the scholarly copies it seems that their margins were generally only trimmed to a small degree.

AM 467 4to, W+H: 340 mm) are the only scholarly manuscripts that are below the overall average. They are, in fact, three of the smallest *Njáls saga* manuscripts (both vellum and paper), and were possibly designed as portable scholarly copies. The remaining scholarly copies (W+H  $\geq$  442 mm) may instead have been copied primarily for use at the private libraries of the respective manuscript scholars and collectors. Hufnagel (2012) also observed in her study of manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka* that scholarly manuscripts were generally larger (161).

The W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the scholarly copies ranges from 0.32 to 0.67. The average is 0.58, but if the exceptionally result of Stock. 9 fol. (0.32) is excluded from the calculation, the average rises to 0.61. While all paper manuscripts show some variation within their W:H<sub>WB</sub>,<sup>218</sup> the average DIFF between MIN and MAX results for the scholarly copies is 0.04, compared to 0.06 for the private manuscripts and 0.08 overall (see Table 10b). Though the difference is minimal, it can be stated that most scholarly manuscripts are more homogeneously designed with less variance in the proportions of the writing block. All scholarly copies of *Njáls saga* are below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (0.70). This means that the writing blocks of the scholarly manuscripts are narrower. Tschichold (1975) proposes that handheld books (in contrast to very large, unwieldy books that generally lie on a desk while being used) should preferably be narrow with a ratio of 1:√3 (=0.577, very narrow), 3:5 (=0.6), 1:1.618 (=0.618), and 2:3 (=0.667) (50). The ratios of the scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, with the exception of the unusually narrow Stock. 9 fol., correspond or approximate these narrow ratios, namely 1:√3 (AM 134 fol., AM 137 fol., AM 135 fol.), 1:1.618 (*Landakotsbók*, Thott 984 fol. III), 1:1.538<sup>219</sup> (ÍB 421 4to, KB Add 565 4to), and 2:3 (AM 467 4to). As mentioned above, the leaf and writing block of a book or manuscript should, according to Tschichold (1975), ideally have the same ratio to give it a harmonious look (52). While this correlation can be observed quite well among the vellum manuscripts (see Table 9a),

<sup>218</sup> The writing blocks of paper manuscripts are generally less precisely drawn and preplanned than those of vellum manuscripts. If the writing block is marked off, it is usually only the inner and outer margins that are marked, i.e., by folding over the leaves or by drawing ink lines. Since the top and bottom margins are not marked, the scribes may vary the number of lines on each page throughout the manuscript, which affects the height of the writing block and, thereby, W:H<sub>WB</sub>.

<sup>219</sup> The ratio 1:1.538 (=0.65) is the ratio resulting from deriving a rectangle from a pentagon (see Tschichold 1975:Figure 1), and it is another geometrically defined irrational ratio which Tschichold (1975) considers clear, deliberate, and definite, and, therefore, resulting in a pleasing look of the manuscript or book (47-48).



the two ratios do not always correspond in many of the *Njáls saga* paper manuscripts, including some of the scholarly copies (see Table 10c). The reason for this discrepancy may in some cases be that the paper manuscripts were not designed according to common standards. Particularly, if a scribe wrote a manuscript for personal use, he may have been less concerned with giving the manuscript a standardized layout, but would rather have used as much of the available space as possible without thinking excessively about the proportions of the writing block in connection with the proportions of the leaves. Another, in many cases more likely, possibility why the ratios of leaves and writing block do not match up is that the leaves were trimmed down at some point, i.e., during re-binding, which, depending on how strongly each margin was trimmed, would have altered the  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$ , but of course would have left the  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  untouched.<sup>220</sup> Even though the trimmed margins distort the results of  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$ , it can still be observed that the scholarly manuscripts are on average narrower (0.63-0.81, Average: 0.69) than the private manuscripts (0.62-0.84, Average: 0.74). Tschichold (1975) explains that full-sized large sheets generally had a common format of 3:4 (=0.75) and folding such a sheet would alternately lead to leaves with the ratios 2:3 (=0.667, folio-size), 3:4 (quarto), 2:3 (octavo), and 3:4 (duodecimo) (50). This difference in ratios between the smaller ( $W+H \leq 382$  mm) and larger ( $W+H \geq 442$  mm) paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is clearly noticeable (see Table 10d). The smaller quarto manuscripts are wider ( $W:H_{\text{leaf}} \geq 0.76$ ) compared to the larger folio manuscripts ( $W:H_{\text{leaf}} \leq 0.68$ ).<sup>221</sup> With regard to the scholarly manuscripts, this means that only the three manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon (KB Add 565 4to, ÍB 421 4to, and AM 467 4to), which are small in size, have a wider design, whereas the remaining scholarly copies are narrower.

The WB% of the scholarly manuscripts is between 27.0 and 62.6 (see Table 10e). The average is 51.7, which rises to 54.8 when the exceptionally low result of Stock. 9 fol. is excluded from the calculation. All scholarly copies, with the exception of AM 134 fol., are below the overall average

<sup>220</sup> If this was the case, it would theoretically be possible to reconstruct the approximate original size of the manuscript based on the ratio of the writing block. This reconstruction was, however, not attempted.

<sup>221</sup> The ratios of the two post-medieval vellum manuscripts (GKS 1003 fol. and *The Lost Codex*) cannot be taken into consideration here, since the ratio of the used vellum sheets was presumably of different proportions than a standard full sheet of paper.

WB% of the paper manuscripts (62.1). AM 134 fol. has a WB% of 62.6, only slightly above average. Compared to the majority of private manuscripts, scholarly manuscripts are designed more generously, with a smaller writing block and correspondingly wider margins. As previously mentioned, these wider margins were most likely established to allow for commentary, variant readings, and possibly even translations. Hufnagel (2012) comes to the same conclusion in her study of manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka* (161, 174). As with the results for  $W:H_{WB}$ , WB% varies within each paper manuscript. The average DIFF between the MIN and MAX results of WB% for the scholarly manuscripts is lower (4.9) compared to 6.4 for the private manuscripts. While the range for the scholarly copies is relatively wide (1.7-9.8), the private copies show even greater variation (2.6-12.2). This suggests that, like the medieval vellum manuscripts, whose layout was carefully planned and marked off, more time, preparation, and thought went into the design of the scholarly copies, resulting in a more homogeneous look.

UR for the scholarly copies is between 9.0 and 10.1 (see Table 10f). The overall average (9.5) is significantly higher than that of the private manuscripts (6.4). Only one private manuscript, NKS 1219 fol., has a UR above 9.0.<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, even though the average number of lines ( $\#_{lines}$ ) per page varies greatly among the various scholarly copies (see Table 10g), the number is overall lower and more consistent in each individual manuscript compared with the private copies. The average DIFF between the MIN and MAX  $\#_{lines}$  in the scholarly manuscripts is 3, and only one scholarly copy (Stock. 9 fol.) is above the overall average DIFF of 6 lines. The average DIFF between the MIN and MAX  $\#_{lines}$  for the private manuscripts is more than twice that of the scholarly manuscripts.<sup>223</sup> The high results for UR and relatively low variation between the  $\#_{lines}$  (comparable to the lower variation of  $W:H_{WB}$  and WB%) illustrate that the lines in the

<sup>222</sup> NKS 1219 fol. was likely written in Copenhagen. It has many codicological features in common with the scholarly copies, but is highly decorated (see section 5.3.2.2.)

<sup>223</sup> While the  $\#_{lines}$  obviously also depends on the size of the manuscript and it is, therefore, difficult to compare the  $\#_{lines}$  between manuscripts of different sizes, it can, nonetheless, be observed that all of the scholarly manuscripts are below the average  $\#_{lines}$  for the paper manuscripts ( $\#_{lines}$ : 30) (see Table 10g); six have between 25 and 29 lines, and the three manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon (ÍB 421 4to, KB Add. 565 4to, AM 467 4to) have between 16 and 17 lines per page on average.

scholarly copies are significantly more spaciouly placed and more carefully preplanned, resulting in a lower text density and more homogeneous layout.

The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  (22.8-32.0, Average: 29.2) and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  (5.8-10.7, Average: 8.2) for the scholarly copies are below the overall averages for the paper manuscripts ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 33.8;  $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.4) (see Tables 10h and 10i). The three manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon (AM 467 4to, KB Add 565 4to, ÍB 421 4to) have the highest  $\#_{\text{words}}$  of the scholarly manuscripts (10.4-10.7), likely the result of a much higher ABBR%. ABBR% varies greatly amongst the scholarly manuscripts, between 0.0 and 18.2 percent (Average: 8.5) (see Table 10j). The average ABBR% of the scholarly copies, nonetheless, is below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (9.0). Lansing (2011) states that within the corpus of manuscripts containing *Hrólfs saga kraka*, learned manuscripts, which correspond more or less with the category of scholarly manuscripts in this dissertation (see above), have the lowest percentage of abbreviations (85). Hufnagel (2012) comes to the same conclusion in her study of manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka* (165, 174). Within the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, this only holds true for those manuscripts that do not attempt to create an exact replica of their exemplar. Three manuscripts by Jón Magnússon are above the overall average, with ABBR% between 16.5 and 18.2. The ABBR% of Jón Magnússon's copies are higher, since Jón not only copies the text but also the abbreviations of his exemplar *Reykjabók*, which has an ABBR% of 20.7.<sup>224</sup> The remaining scholarly manuscripts, similar to Lansing's learned and Hufnagel's scholarly manuscripts, have a much lower ABBR% (0.0-8.0, Average: 3.9), indicating that the scholars who commissioned the manuscripts were mainly interested in the text as a literary or possibly historical source rather than receiving an exact duplicate of the exemplar. Hufnagel (2012) argues that scholarly manuscripts were less abbreviated, because they were often written for non-Icelanders, who required fewer abbreviations in order to keep the Icelandic text comprehensible (166). This hypothesis may also hold true for at least some of the *Njáls saga* scholarly manuscripts.

<sup>224</sup> The discrepancy within the ABBR% results of Jón Magnússon's three copies and the difference between the ABBR% of his copies compared to *Reykjabók*, results from the fact that  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , ABBR%, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup> were not calculated for the exact same text passages in each manuscript, but instead (as with all manuscripts) on 10 lines each on two randomly selected pages in each manuscript.

Like UR, the results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the scholarly manuscripts (see Table 10k) demonstrate very clearly that the manuscripts in this category were designed much more generously compared to the private manuscripts, exhibiting a particularly low text density. The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> are between 26.0 and 231.1 (Average: 175.7). When the exceptionally low result of Stock. 9 fol. is excluded from the calculation of the average, it rises to 194.4, which is, nonetheless, far less than the overall average for the private manuscripts (signs/dm<sup>2</sup>: 428.7). With the exception of the private manuscript NKS 1219 fol., all scholarly copies are at the top of Table 10k, indicating the much more generous design of scholarly copies, a result of a smaller WB%, higher UR, and wider margins. Hufnagel (2012) also found that her scholarly manuscripts of *Sörla saga sterka* had a lower text density than the non-scholarly copies (166, 174).

A summary and conclusion of the codicological analysis of the scholarly manuscripts is presented in Chapter 5.3.3.

### 5.3.2. Private Manuscripts

Thirty of the thirty-nine paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* can be categorized as private manuscripts, which were either commissioned by rich farmers in Iceland or written for personal use. Private manuscripts can vary greatly in their appearance and are far less homogeneously designed than the scholarly manuscript. Unlike most scholarly copies and private-scholarly hybrids (see below), most private manuscripts contain more than one text. It is, therefore, possible to divide the private manuscripts into various subgroups. Such a categorization is, obviously, somewhat subjective and some manuscripts may be borderline cases that could fall into one or the other category. Nonetheless, four subcategories of private manuscripts have been established and will be defined and described below: private-scholarly hybrids, decorative reading manuscripts,<sup>225</sup> moderate reading manuscripts, and plain reading manuscripts.

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<sup>225</sup> See fn. 212.

### 5.3.2.1. Private-Scholarly Hybrids

#### 5.3.2.1.1. Definition

Private-scholarly hybrids are defined for this dissertation as manuscripts that exhibit a scholarly interest by the scribe similar to the presumed interest of the commissioners of true scholarly copies. In contrast to the commissioned scholarly manuscripts, however, private-scholarly hybrids were most likely written by the scribe for personal use. Unlike Lansing (2011), who includes marginal notes by the scribe that show an interest in history (i.e., dates, historical events) in her category of learned manuscripts (85), only marginal notes that exhibit an interest in manuscript transmission (i.e., variant readings) are considered to illustrate a true ‘scholarly’ interest by the scribe for the purpose of this dissertation. While some private-scholarly hybrids include marginal notes with historical dates and events, this feature is also found in some of the true private copies below. Extensive variant readings in private manuscripts, on the other hand, are less common. The exemplar of private-scholarly hybrids, similar to the scholarly copies, are generally known. Occasionally, the scribe will imitate the orthography and abbreviations of his exemplar, similar to the scholarly copies in the hand of Jón Magnússon. Moreover, like scholarly manuscripts, private-scholarly hybrids often only contain one text (see Chapter 6.1.). Similar to scholarly copies, private-scholarly hybrids generally have a neat appearance and lack decorations. They are, however, less generously designed compared to the scholarly manuscripts. The codicological makeup of the private-scholarly hybrids will be discussed in more detail below.

#### 5.3.2.1.2. Private-Scholarly Hybrids of *Njáls saga*

Four paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are defined as private-scholarly hybrids. These are, in chronological order: AM 470 4to (c1640-1660, *Hvammsbók*), AM 464 4to (1697), NB 313 4to (1711), and NB 372 4to (1772).

**AM 470 4to** (c1640-1660, *Hvammsbók*) was written by Ketill Jörundsson, grandfather of Árni Magnússon. The manuscript preserves the *\*Gullskinna*-version of *Njáls saga*, and is possibly a direct copy of the medieval manuscript or at least very closely related (see Zeevaert et al. 2015:16-

17). Ketill Jörundsson has added several marginal notes, as well as variant readings from other manuscripts, including *Kálfalækjarbók*, in the margins and between the lines of the codex, illustrating his scholarly interest. Zeevaert et al. (2015) suggest that Ketill considered the *Njáls saga* text in *Kálfalækjarbók* superior to the slightly shortened *\*Gullskinna*-version, and therefore added the variant readings as corrections (19). The manuscript is neatly written and designed with much space between the lines, plain and without decorations. Chapter numbers are given in Arabic numerals in the margins and page numbers are written in the top outer corner of every page.

**AM 464 4to** (1697) and **NB 313 4to** (1711) were both written by Jón Halldórsson (see Chapters 4.3.2. and 4.3.3.). **AM 464 4to** is a direct copy of *Kálfalækjarbók*, with marginal variant readings from other manuscripts, including **AM 137 fol.**, exhibiting Jón's scholarly interest. Jón, furthermore, adds a legend to symbols and abbreviations he uses on the final page. **NB 313 4to** is an exact copy of **AM 464 4to**, which Jón Halldórsson likely produced before giving **AM 464 4to** to Árne Magnússon, who desired to own Jón's impressive private copy (see Chapter 4.3.2.). Jón copies the main text as well as his variant apparatus and legend in **NB 313 4to**. Both manuscripts are neatly designed. The width of the writing block is marked with ink lines and Jón Halldórsson adds page numbers and the title of the text (*Njála*) as a running head on every page. The manuscripts do not contain decorations.

A somewhat problematic case is **NB 372 4to** (1772), written by Engilbert Jónsson. The manuscript is a direct copy of **NB 313 4to**. Engilbert does not copy Jón Halldórsson's variant apparatus or legend,<sup>226</sup> which deprives the manuscript of one of the characteristics of a private-scholarly copy. However, Engilbert produces an otherwise exact replica of his exemplar, imitating its orthography, abbreviations, and layout, which justifies its categorization. It is unclear whether Engilbert copied the manuscript for personal use.

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<sup>226</sup> Since I was unable to examine **NB 372 4to** in person, I rely on information from Bjørg Dale Spørck (pers. communication) from the National Library in Oslo, who confirmed that Engilbert Jónsson, the scribe of **NB 372 4to**, did not copy the variant readings found in the margins of his exemplar, **NB 313 4to**.

### 5.3.2.1.3. Analysis of Codicological Features

The W+H of the private-scholarly copies varies between 359 mm and 382 mm (see Table 10a). With an average size of 371 mm, all private-scholarly copies are below the overall average W+H of the paper manuscripts (417 mm). The smaller size possibly indicates that they were written for personal use and in a less prosperous setting than the scholarly manuscripts (see above) or decorative reading manuscripts (see below).

The median W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the private-scholarly manuscripts (see Table 10b) is between 0.76 to 0.83 (Average: 0.80). The writing blocks of all private-scholarly copies are therefore wider than those of the average paper manuscript of *Njáls saga* (W:H<sub>WB</sub>: 0.70) and particularly the scholarly copies (Average: 0.58). However, similar to the scholarly copies, the DIFF between MIN and MAX results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the private-scholarly hybrids (0.04-0.06, Average: 0.05) is below the overall average of 0.08. With the exception of NB 313 4to, the W:H<sub>leaf</sub> and W:H<sub>WB</sub> correspond well (see Table 10c). In the case of NB 313 4to, the leaf is narrower than the writing block, although pictures provided by Bjørg Dale Spørck (pers. communication) prove that the margins of the manuscript were trimmed, which could explain the discrepancy. Since all private-scholarly hybrids are relatively small in size, it is not surprising that their leaves are wider than those of the scholarly copies, which, with the exception of the three manuscripts by Jón Magnússon, are all above average size (see Table 10d). The wider design corresponds with Tschichold's (1975) explanation that the ratio of the leaves alternates between approximately 3:4 (0.75) and 2:3 (0.667) depending on how often a full-sized large sheet is folded (50). Smaller paper manuscripts in quarto, like the private-scholarly hybrids, therefore, have a wider design (3:4) than larger ones in folio (2:3).

The MDN WB% of the private-scholarly copies shows a wide range from a very low 52.5 for AM 464 4to to a relatively high 67.5 for AM 470 4to (see Table 10e). The average of the private-scholarly hybrids is 61.6, which is comparable to the overall average for paper manuscripts (62.1). Interestingly, AM 464 4to has the lowest percentage, whereas NB 313 4to, written by the same scribe, has a much higher WB% (65.7). This suggests that Jón Halldórsson had to be more

resourceful when he made his second copy. He also possibly produced it more quickly with less precise pre-planning, since Árni Magnússon was waiting to receive Jón's first copy, AM 464 4to, the exemplar of NB 313 4to. While the average WB% of AM 464 5to and NB 372 4to is comparable with that of the true scholarly copies, NB 313 4to and AM 470 4to have a higher WB%, rooting them more firmly within the corpus of private manuscripts. The average DIFF between MIN and MAX results for WB% for the private-scholarly hybrids is 5.8, close to the overall average (6.0). Nonetheless, the range is relatively wide. The WB% of AM 470 4to is most homogeneously designed (DIFF: 2.6). NB 313 4to, on the other hand, has one of the highest DIFFs (11.2), significantly higher than its exemplar AM 464 4to (5.2). This can be seen as another indication that Jón Halldórsson planned his first copy of *Njáls saga*, AM 464 4to, more carefully, precisely, and homogeneously than its copy NB 313 4to.

The MDN UR of the private-scholarly hybrids of *Njáls saga* is between 5.9 and 8.2 (see Table 10f). The average of 6.8 is slightly above the average for the private manuscripts (6.4), but significantly below the average for the scholarly copies (9.5). This shows that the lines of private-scholarly hybrids were placed much closer than those of true scholarly copies. Nonetheless, the private-scholarly hybrids are overall less densely written than some of the other private manuscripts. The average DIFF between MIN and MAX UR of the private-scholarly hybrids is only 0.8, below the overall average of 1.1. The private-scholarly hybrids have, therefore, a more consistent UR than some of the scholarly copies. AM 470 4to has the highest UR (8.2) of the private-scholarly hybrids, bringing it closer to the true scholarly copies in this regard. NB 313 4to, on the other hand, has the lowest UR (5.9), indicating once more that it was more densely written than its exemplar AM 464 4to, and is more closely connected to the private manuscripts. The average  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  (see Table 10g) of the private-scholarly hybrids is between 23 and 25 (Average: 25), which is below the overall average of 30. The DIFF between MIN and MAX  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  is low (2-3, Average: 3) and comparable with the scholarly copies, illustrating that, like the scholarly copies, private-scholarly hybrids were designed fairly homogeneously.



The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  for the private-scholarly hybrids (see Table 10h) ranges between 33.6 and 42.5. The average of 38.7 is above the overall average of 33.8, and significantly above the average for the scholarly copies (29.2). AM 470 4to has the lowest result (33.6), bringing it closest to the true scholarly copies. AM 464 4to (41.1) and its copy NB 313 4to (42.5) have comparable results, suggesting that Jón Halldórsson wrote both copies with a relatively consistent text density. The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  varies between 9.2 and 12.2 (see Table 10i). The average of 10.7 is above the overall average of 9.4. AM 470 4to has the lowest  $\#_{\text{words}}$  (9.2) of the private-scholarly hybrids. NB 372 4to (10.6) and AM 464 4to (10.9) compare very closely with the scholarly manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon. NB 313 4to, on the other hand, has the highest  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  (42.5) and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  (12.2), possibly a result of having to save space and writing under certain time constraints.

ABBR% ranges from 7.4 to 11.4 (see Table 10j). With an average ABBR% of 9.6, the private-scholarly hybrids are above the overall average of 9.0. The only manuscript below average is AM 470 4to (ABBR%: 7.4). NB 313 4to has the highest ABBR% (11.4), although it is possible that the difference to its exemplar AM 464 4to is due to different text passages in the two manuscripts being used to calculate  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , ABBR%, and  $\text{signs}/\text{dm}^2$ . *Kálfalækjarbók*, the exemplar for AM 464 4to, has an ABBR% of 16.0. The fact that Jón Halldórsson's ABBR% is below the result of *Kálfalækjarbók*, may indicate that Jón Halldórsson only copied some of his exemplar's abbreviations, although closer comparison between the various manuscripts would be necessary to come to a definite conclusion. Since Jón Halldórsson made an exact copy of AM 464 4to in NB 313 4to, which was then later exactly reproduced by Engilbert Jónsson, it is only logical that all three manuscripts should have a comparable ABBR%. A higher ABBR% as is evident in AM 464 4to, NB 313 4to, and NB 372 4to, as well as some other private manuscripts (see below) can be explained with two hypotheses. Firstly, it is possible that the scribes copied the abbreviations of their exemplars either exactly or to certain extents. Alternatively, scribes who wrote manuscripts for their own personal use, such as the scribes of the private-scholarly hybrids, may have abbreviated the text more heavily to save space, since they – the sole users of the manuscripts – had no problem deciphering their own abbreviations later on. Commissioners, such as those for

the scholarly copies, possibly wished to have the text less abbreviated to make for easier reading.<sup>227</sup>

The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the private-scholarly manuscripts ranges from 313.9 to 498.0 (see Table 10k). The average of 396.8 is above the overall average of 368.7, and significantly above the average for the scholarly copies (194.1). AM 470 4to (313.9) is the only private-scholarly hybrid with a below-average signs/dm<sup>2</sup>. It is, therefore, closest to the true scholarly copies, but nonetheless still significantly more densely written. NB 313 4to has the highest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the private-scholarly hybrids (498.0), almost 100 signs more per dm<sup>2</sup> than its exemplar AM 464 4to. This indicates, once more, that Jón Halldórsson wrote his second copy of *Njáls saga* more densely, thereby preserving space (and possibly time).

A summary and conclusion of the codicological analysis of the private-scholarly hybrids is presented in Chapter 5.3.3.

### 5.3.2.2. Decorative Reading Manuscripts

#### 5.3.2.2.1. Definition

The definition of decorative reading manuscripts in this dissertation corresponds with Lansing's (2011) category of "decorative manuscript" (85-86) and manuscripts which Hufnagel (2012) considers "symbols of status" (180).

According to Lansing (2011), decorative manuscripts are "so impressive that its quality as an object of prestige may have overshadowed its textual contents" (86). Lansing (2011) concludes that decorative manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka* are large in size and written on high-quality paper or even vellum (86). Additionally, these manuscripts are highly decorated, sometimes even with color, and their margins are wide, in part to allow for the more elaborate decorations. Moreover, this category has the highest percentage of abbreviations in Lansing's (2011) study, even though

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<sup>227</sup> Hufnagel (2012) observed that the scribe Guðmundur Ólafsson, who worked for the Atikvitetskollegiet in Sweden, used very few abbreviations in a scholarly copy he produced of *Sörla saga sterka*, but abbreviated the text much more heavily in another copy of the same text (165). Hufnagel (2012) believes that Guðmundur may have written the heavily abbreviated manuscript for himself to be used as a basis for a Swedish translation (165). As previously mentioned, Hufnagel (2012) also asserts that scholarly manuscripts of *Sörla saga sterka* contain fewer abbreviations since they were largely written for non-Icelanders (166).

the “text density within the written area ... does not differ significantly from other literary manuscripts” (86). Lansing (2011) argues that the scribes achieved “the impression of lavishness by means of large margins,” rather than through a low text density (86). Lastly, Lansing (2011) notes that decorative manuscripts have either a historicized look, imitating medieval manuscripts, or they “can be quite modern, i.e. baroque in all its abundance” (86).

Hufnagel (2012) states that some of the manuscripts of *Sörla saga sterka*, generally commissioned or written by wealthy scribes, “give the impression of being prestigious and decorative artefacts” that may even be considered “symbols of status” (180). These manuscripts in Hufnagel’s (2012) dissertation have more decorations, including “title pages, large or decorated initials, colouring and the last lines of items written in half-diamond indentation” (180). Hufnagel (2012) also observed that decorative manuscripts had a slight tendency to be older compared to the more plain manuscripts, and she concludes that decorative manuscripts have wider margins, fewer abbreviations, and a relatively low text density compared to other private copies (180, 196).

For the purpose of this dissertation, decorative reading manuscripts share the following characteristics: These manuscripts were most likely commissioned, and both the scribes and commissioners are generally known. Decorative reading manuscripts contain, furthermore, initials that are either large in size (at least 3-4 lines of regular text) and/or heavily decorated, sometimes with color. Compared to the moderate and plain reading manuscripts, the writing blocks of decorative reading manuscripts are proportionally generally smaller and, correspondingly, margins are wider. They are neatly organized, with clear chapter divisions, occasionally repeating the title of the text at the top of every page (as running heads), and ending the text in a tip.<sup>228</sup> Lines in the manuscripts are overall very or fairly straight. Decorative reading manuscripts often have a title page that can be quite elaborately decorated and, in contrast to many scholarly manuscripts and private-scholarly hybrids, usually contain a compilation of texts (see Chapter 6.1.), of which the exact exemplar are often unknown. The quality of the paper was

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<sup>228</sup> Hufnagel (2012) describes the same phenomenon of ending the text in a tip as writing “the last lines of items ... in half-diamond indentation” (180).

not particularly studied for this dissertation, but it can be assumed that decorative copies were written on higher-quality paper and – in two cases (see below) – on vellum.

#### 5.3.2.2.2. Decorative Reading Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

Two paper manuscripts and two vellum manuscripts have been categorized as decorative reading manuscripts. These are, in chronological order: *The Lost Codex* (c1600-1650), GKS 1003 fol. (1667-1670), NKS 1220 fol. (1698), and NKS 1219 fol. (c1760-1780).

Two post-medieval vellum manuscripts, *The Lost Codex* and GKS 1003 fol. can be considered decorative reading manuscripts. Even though they were already discussed among the vellum manuscripts (see above), they will be revisited in this chapter since they are closely related to the paper manuscripts (based on their dating).

Due to the unusual use of vellum in times when paper was already readily available, *The Lost Codex* (c1600-1650) can be categorized as a decorative reading manuscript, even though it lacks elaborate decorations and its initials – which for the most part are missing – are relatively small (3 lines of regular text). The use of vellum can be associated with higher production costs and a more time-consuming preparation of the manuscript, resulting in a product of higher value. The two-column design of *The Lost Codex* adds to its more prestigious status, since it clearly imitates the medieval vellum manuscripts. The codex most likely contained more than one text (see Chapter 6.2.1.). Interestingly, *The Lost Codex* was possibly never completed and the paper manuscript AM 396 fol., written by the same scribe, was possibly written as a cheaper substitute (see Chapter 6.2.1.).

Like *The Lost Codex*, **GKS 1003 fol.** (1667-1670) can be categorized as a decorative reading copy based on the unusual use of vellum and its two-column design. Both the scribe and commissioner of the manuscript are known. It was written by Páll Sveinsson for Jón Eyjólfsson of Múli (S-Iceland), and is part of a two-volume compilation together with GKS 1002 fol. Both manuscripts are bound in red velvet and were at a later point given to the Danish royal house as gifts, solidifying their status as decorative and prestigious objects. Lansing (2011) defines GKS

1002 fol, containing *Hrólfs saga kraka*, as a decorative manuscript (95). The title pages of both manuscripts indicate that the volumes were written for entertainment purposes – not only for the commissioner Jón Eyjólfsson, but also for other, wealthy and influential, men living in the same district in the south of Iceland (see Slay 1960a:144-145). The first initial of *Njáls saga* in GKS 1003 fol. has a height of approximately eight lines of normal text and is elaborately decorated, like all first initials in the two volumes. The remaining initials are also decorated but only about 2-3 lines high.

**NKS 1220 fol.** (1698, *Vigurbók*) was written by Magnús Ketilsson for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (Westfjords). The initials, particularly on the first page, are highly decorated, partly with color. They are between 3-4 lines high. The saga ends in a tip. Magnús Ketilsson, furthermore, utilizes an archaic looking script. A drawing of Njáll, preserved in Lbs 3505 4to, was likely originally part of NKS 1220 fol. (see Chapter 4.3.2.). The highly and colorfully decorated initials, archaic script, and neat layout categorize NKS 1220 fol. as a decorative reading copy. It is more elaborately decorated than other copies of *Njáls saga* written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (BL Add 4867 fol., and possibly Lbs 3505 4to and Lbs 222 fol.).

The scribe and commissioner of **NKS 1219 fol.** (c1750) are unknown. The manuscript was part of Peter Frederick Suhm's collection, but it is unknown if it was written for him even though this is a definite possibility. NKS 1219 fol. was quite possibly produced in Copenhagen (see Chapter 4.3.3.). The manuscript has an elaborately decorated title page as well as very large, highly decorated initials with a height of approximately six to eleven lines of regular text. It is very neatly written. The lines are very straight and generously placed. Moreover, the writing block is relatively small, resulting in lavish, wide margins.

#### 5.3.2.2.3. Analysis of Codicological Features

The W+H of the two decorative reading manuscripts on paper is 490 mm for NKS 1220 fol. and 540 mm for NKS 1219 fol. (see Tables 10a and 11a). The decorative reading manuscripts on vellum have a W+H of 542 mm for GKS 1003 fol. and 601 mm for *The Lost Codex*. All of the

decorative reading manuscripts are, therefore, larger than the average paper manuscript of *Njáls saga* (W+H: 417 mm; see Table 10a) and larger than the average private reading manuscript<sup>229</sup> (W+H: 415 mm; see Table 11a), indicating their higher status.

W:H<sub>WB</sub> is 0.61 for NKS 1220 fol. and slightly higher (0.65) for NKS 1219 fol. Both results are below the average result for the private reading manuscripts of 0.72 (see Table 11b), leading to a more narrow design. The DIFF between MIN and MAX results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> is very small (0.03) for NKS 1220 fol., but quite significant (0.15) for NKS 1219 fol. The W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the decorative reading manuscripts on vellum is comparable with 0.73 for *The Lost Codex* and 0.74 for GKS 1003 fol. The DIFF between MIN and MAX results is between 0.05-0.06, indicating a relatively homogeneous design throughout the entire saga in the two vellum manuscripts. The average W:H<sub>WB</sub> of NKS 1220 fol. is 0.61, whereas the W:H<sub>leaf</sub> is 0.66 (see Tables 10c and 11c). The discrepancy is likely largely the result of the leaves having been trimmed at some point. The average W:H<sub>WB</sub> of NKS 1219 fol. (0.65) compares well with the average W:H<sub>leaf</sub> of the manuscript (0.64), although the manuscript, as previously mentioned, shows a wide range of W:H<sub>WB</sub> (0.59-0.74). For the two vellum manuscripts the MAX results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> (0.75 for *The Lost Codex*; 0.77 for GKS 1003 fol.) compare better with the W:H<sub>leaf</sub> (0.76 for *The Lost Codex*; 0.77 for GKS 1003 fol.) than the MDN results (0.73 for *The Lost Codex*; 0.74 for GKS 1003 fol.). This suggests that overall, decorative reading manuscripts (both on vellum and paper) were designed with a uniform look in mind, attempting to use the same proportions for the writing blocks and the leaves. The correlation between W+H and W:H<sub>leaf</sub> (see Tables 10d and 11d) for the decorative reading manuscripts fits well. The two paper manuscripts both have a narrower design, corresponding with the narrower design of other larger paper manuscripts; this is the result of the change in ratios depending on how many times a large sheet had been folded (see above for details). The two vellum manuscripts have a wider design, most certainly due to the fact that the original hides being used to produce the codices had a different ratio than standard large paper sheets.

<sup>229</sup> Here and in the following sections the term ‘private reading manuscripts’ refers to decorative, moderate, and plain private reading manuscripts. The average does not include the private-scholarly hybrids (see Tables 11a-k).

WB% of the decorative reading manuscripts shows a great variation (see Tables 10e and 11e). NKS 1219 fol. has the lowest WB% (44.1) of all paper manuscripts with the exception of the highly unusual Stock. 9 fol. Since the manuscript was presumably produced in Denmark, the commissioner may have had more monetary means compared to commissioners in Iceland. This allowed the scribe to produce a manuscript with a more generous layout (lower WB%, higher UR, lower signs/dm<sup>2</sup>). The WB% of NKS 1220 fol. (67.1) is above the overall average for the paper manuscripts (62.1; see Table 10e), and slightly above the average for the private reading manuscripts (65.7; see Table 11e). Similarly, the results for the two vellum manuscripts are above average (67.0 for GKS 1003 fol.; 72.0 for *The Lost Codex*). This indicates that the scribes, even though they were producing a high-status reading manuscript, had certain restrictions and needed to save material. This is particularly evident with regard to the vellum manuscripts, since vellum was more expensive and more difficult to prepare.

The UR of NKS 1219 fol. (9.7) is comparable to URs measured for the generously designed scholarly manuscripts (see Table 10f). Like the low WB%, this is likely due to the fact that the commissioner may have been quite wealthy and could afford a more lavish design. The UR of NKS 1220 fol. (7.9) is above the overall average for the paper manuscripts (7.1; see Table 10f) and significantly above the average for the private reading manuscripts (6.3; see Table 11f). Even though the scribe, Magnús Ketilsson, saved paper by utilizing a larger writing block, he nonetheless ensured a generous look by spacing the lines further apart. The UR of the two vellum manuscripts (6.2 for GKS 1003 fol.; 5.6 for *The Lost Codex*) is around or below the overall average of the paper manuscripts. These two decorative reading manuscripts are, therefore, more densely written than the two decorative manuscripts on paper. The use of the more expensive vellum made it necessary to save space not only by designing larger writing blocks, but also by placing the lines more closely. The #<sub>lines</sub> for the decorative reading manuscripts on paper (see Tables 10g and 11g) is around or slightly below average. The DIFF between MIN and MAX #<sub>lines</sub> is average (5-6 lines). The #<sub>lines</sub> is higher for the two vellum manuscripts; a result of a lower UR and higher WB%.

NKS 1219 fol. has a median  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  of 25.9; the result is 31.0 for NKS 1220 fol. (see Tables 10h and 11h). Both results are below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (33.8; see Table 10h) and below the average for the private reading manuscripts (34.7; see Table 11h). The results for the vellum manuscripts are above these averages (39.1 for GKS 1003 fol.; 43.6 for *The Lost Codex*). The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  is 6.7 for NKS 1219 fol., which is the lowest result for a private reading manuscript (see Tables 10i and 11i). The result is 8.0 for NKS 1220 fol.. Both results are below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (9.4; see Table 10i) and below the average for the private reading manuscripts (9.6; see Table 11i). The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  is significantly above average for the two vellum manuscripts (13.0 for GKS 1003 fol.; 15.0 for *The Lost Codex*). Like the results for UR and WB%, the  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  indicate that the decorative reading manuscripts on paper were designed more generously than those on vellum.

The ABBR% for NKS 1219 fol. is very low (2.7) (see Tables 10j and 11j). It is possible that the commissioner was interested in receiving a text with as few abbreviations as possible to ensure better legibility.<sup>230</sup> The ABBR% of NKS 1220 fol., on the other hand, is quite high (14.0). Magnús Ketilsson uses an archaic script for his copy and it is possible that he utilizes more abbreviations to add to the historicized look of his manuscript by imitating the more highly abbreviated medieval manuscripts. The ABBR% for the two manuscripts on vellum is extremely high (20.1 for GKS 1003 fol.; 21.6 for *The Lost Codex*). Both are closely related to *Oddabók*, which has an ABBR% of 18.5. It is possible that the scribes copied abbreviations of their exemplar or abbreviated the text even more to preserve the expensive vellum material.

With the exception of the unusual Stock. 9 fol., NKS 1219 fol. has the lowest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of all paper manuscripts (129.9) (see Tables 10k and 11k), the result of a very low WB% and high UR. As previously noted, this may be due to its presumed place of origin in Denmark and correspondingly wealthier commissioner. The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for NKS 1220 fol. (305.2) is below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (368.7; see Table 10k) and significantly below the

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<sup>230</sup> As previously mentioned, Hufnagel (2012) suggests that manuscripts produced for non-Icelanders contained fewer abbreviations since their inferior knowledge of Icelandic would have made it difficult to understand a heavily abbreviated text (166).



average for the private reading manuscripts (433.8; see Table 11k), meaning that the codex was more generously designed than most other private reading copies. The two vellum manuscripts have an above-average signs/dm<sup>2</sup>, particularly *The Lost Codex* (signs/dm<sup>2</sup>: 677.7), proving once again that the more expensive vellum copies achieved their prestigious status largely through the use of an unusual material and their two-column design, rather than through an exceptionally generous layout. The need to save the expensive parchment material made it necessary to write a highly abbreviated text on larger writing blocks, with closely placed lines.

A summary and conclusion of the codicological analysis of the decorative reading manuscripts is presented in Chapter 5.3.3.

### 5.3.2.3. Moderate Reading Manuscripts

#### 5.3.2.3.1. Definition

Moderate reading manuscripts are either commissioned or written for personal use. The exemplars are most often unknown. Initials are enlarged (at least 2-3 lines of regular text) or empty spaces indicate that the larger initials should have been added later on. If initials are present they are decorated in varying degrees from simple decorative lines to more elaborate designs. The first page of the saga is often more elaborately decorated with a possible larger title heading and a particularly enlarged first initial. The saga generally ends in a tip. Moderate reading manuscripts are overall neatly organized with relatively wide margins, straight lines, and clearly marked or separated chapters. Neither Lansing (2011) nor Hufnagel (2012) define a clear category of moderate manuscripts, even though their analyses certainly discuss moderately designed manuscripts. Lansing (2011) identifies “literary” manuscripts, with a “lightly decorated initial and ending but ... otherwise modest looking” (86). According to Lansing (2011), the literary manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka* occurred in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries and had varying degrees of decorations but the largest writing blocks and correspondingly smallest margins (86). Lansing’s definition differs from the proposed manuscript categories in

this dissertation, and some of her literary manuscripts would likely be considered plain for the purpose of this dissertation (see below).

#### 5.3.2.3.2. Moderate Reading Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

Thirteen paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* have been categorized as moderate reading manuscripts. The lines between decorative, moderate, and plain reading manuscripts are, however, not clear cut. It will be noted which manuscripts can be considered borderline between two categories. Six moderate reading manuscripts contain *Njáls saga* by itself, while seven contain other texts as well (see Chapter 6.1.). The moderate reading manuscripts are, in chronological order: AM 396 fol. (c1600-1650, *Melanesbók/Lambavatnsbók*), AM 136 fol. (c1640-1643), AM 555 c 4to (c1640-1660, *Breiðarbólstaðarbók*), AM 163 i fol. (1668, *Saurbæjarbók*), BL Add 4867 fol. (1690), Lbs 222 fol. (1695-1698, *Rauðskinna*), Lbs 3505 4to (1698), AM 469 4to (1705, *Fagureyjarbók*), ÍB 261 4to (1740, *Lágafellsbók*), Thott 1776 4to III (c1742-1800), AM Acc. 50 (1770), Lbs 1415 4to (c1770), and Lbs 747 fol. (1871-1875).

The scribe of *Njáls saga* in **AM 396 fol.** (c1600-1650, *Melanesbók/Lambavatnsbók*) is unknown. The hand is, however, identical with that of *The Lost Codex*, and a marginal note in *Oddabók*, its possible exemplar (see Chapters 4.2.3., 4.3.2., and 6.2.1.). Its connection to *The Lost Codex* suggests that the *Njáls saga* text may have been commissioned. The use of a one-column design and paper instead of vellum may indicate, nonetheless, that the manuscript held a lesser status compared to *The Lost Codex*.<sup>231</sup> AM 396 fol. is, therefore, categorized as a moderate reading manuscript, even though its clear categorization is problematic (see fn. 231 and Chapter 6.2.1). The text is neatly designed. As in *The Lost Codex*, the scribe leaves empty spaces for initials and rubrics. Even though the margins have been trimmed, one can occasionally see small letters in the scribe's hand in the margin, indicating what letter should be used for the initial. The scribe most certainly follows medieval traditions in this respect. The initials have a height of approximately 3

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<sup>231</sup> Alternatively, it is possible that the assumed commissioner of *The Lost Codex* and AM 396 fol. preferred paper manuscripts to vellum codices. In this case, the commissioner may have considered AM 396 fol. of higher value (see also Chapter 6.2.1.).

lines of regular text. The text contains some decorated initials, which were, however, added much later and are not original. The *Njáls saga* text was combined with other texts from various time periods in one codex during the eighteenth century. The eighteenth-century title page indicates that the manuscript as a whole was intended as a reading copy for entertainment, but also as a reminder of Iceland's Golden Age and its heroes (see Chapter 6.3.).

**AM 136 fol.** (c1640-1643) was written by Jón Gissurarson, likely for personal use. The saga is fairly tightly written, but neatly organized with quite generous margins. The first initial has a height of 5 lines of text. For the remainder of the saga, Jón leaves empty spaces for initials with a height of 4-5 lines. The saga ends in a tip. This *Njáls saga* was part of a larger compilation of sagas in Jón Gissurarson's hand (see Chapter 4.3.2.).

**AM 555 c 4to** (c1640-1660, *Breiðarbolstaðarbók*) was written by Halldór Guðmundsson from Sílastaðir (N-Iceland), either commissioned for Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason at Hólar (for whom Halldór frequently worked), or possibly written for personal use (see Stefán Karlsson 1970b:107). The manuscript is neatly designed. Halldór leaves empty spaces for initials with a height of 2-3 lines of regular text. Some of the lines on the first page of *Njáls saga* are highlighted with red ink. Chapter numbers in Arabic numerals are indicated in the margins and Halldór writes the first line of each chapter minimally larger and in a slightly different script. He also highlights verses ('v') and proverbs (*málsháttir/málsh:*) in the margins. The saga ends in a tip. AM 555 c 4to was originally part of a larger codex containing various texts (see Chapter 4.3.2.).

**AM 163 i fol.** (1668, *Saurbæjarbók*) was written by Henrik Magnússon and commissioned by Daði Jónsson (SW-Iceland; see Chapter 4.3.2.). The manuscript has a fairly neat layout with straight lines. The initials are occasionally slightly larger than the regular text and minimally decorated, but most initials are not particularly emphasized. Henrik leaves space between each chapter and writes 'Cap.' and a chapter number to indicate the beginning of new chapters. The numbers are, however, missing towards the end and Henrik only notes 'Cap.' The initials on the first few leaves of the manuscript are more significantly decorated (partly with faces), and are larger. The first few pages were, however, not written by Henrik Magnússon, although they

seem to stem from the same time period. AM 163 i fol. is somewhere between a moderate and plain reading manuscript. It is categorized as a moderate reading copy since it was commissioned and has some decorated initials.

**BL Add 4867 fol.** (1690) was for the most part written by Jón Þórðarson for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (Westfjords). The manuscript contains various texts. *Njáls saga* is separated in two parts (see Chapter 4.3.2.) and each part ends in a tip. Particularly the first page of *Njáls saga*, as well as the beginning of the second part of the saga, are highly decorated. The first initial of each part extends over more than ten lines of regular text. The remaining initials are approximately 2-3 lines high and significantly decorated, partly with faces. Jón Þórðarson shows some learned interest, evident through marginal notes like ‘membr.’ and variant readings. The manuscript is somewhere between a decorative and a moderate reading manuscript. It is categorized as moderate since the majority of the initials, though decorated, are relatively small.

Like BL Add 4867 fol., **Lbs 222 fol.** (1695-1698, *Rauðskinna*) was for the most part written by Jón Þórðarson. It is not clear if the manuscript was also commissioned by Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, but it is a possibility. It contains various texts, but, with the exception of *Njáls saga*, different texts than BL Add 4867 fol.. While BL Add 4867 fol., the more decorative and prestigious copy of the two, contains *Njáls saga* alongside Icelandic family sagas and *þattir* as well as some religious texts, Lbs 222 fol. contains Chivalric and Legendary sagas, a *Sendibréf* from Alexander to Aristoteles, and *Njáls saga*. It is worth mentioning that *Njáls saga* is the first text in BL Add 4867 fol., whereas it comes last in Lbs 222 fol., and, judging by the colophon, was written two years later than other texts bound in the same codex. *Njáls saga* may, in this case, have been added to Lbs 222 fol. as a kind of addendum. If both manuscripts were written for Magnús Jónsson, it is possible that he may have wanted to give one of the codices away. If he had wanted to keep BL Add 4867 fol., the person receiving Lbs 222 fol. may have wished to also receive *Njáls saga*, leading to another copy being made by Jón Þórðarson in 1698; alternatively, if Magnús wanted to pass on BL Add 4867 fol., he may have wished to keep a copy of *Njáls saga*, which Jón Þórðarson produced in 1698 and which was then added to Lbs 222 fol. *Njáls saga* in Lbs 222 fol.

is, again, divided into two parts, both of which end in a tip (see Chapter 4.3.2.). Jón Þórðarson leaves an empty space for the first initial, which is, however, smaller (approximately 7 lines of regular text) than the first initial in BL Add 4867 fol. The first initial of the second part is more elaborately decorated, but extends over only 5 lines of regular text. The remaining initials are all smaller and far less or not at all decorated, compared to BL Add 4867 fol.. Lbs 222 fol. is, therefore, definitely a moderate reading manuscript and less decorative than BL Add 4867 fol..

The scribe and commissioner of **Lbs 3505 4to** (1698) are unknown. The manuscript shows a close connection to NKS 1220 fol., written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (see Chapter 4.3.2.) and it is possible that Magnús or someone in the proximity of Vigur was involved in the manuscript's production as a commissioner and/or scribe. Lbs 3505 4to contains an elaborate title page with colored decorations, which identifies the manuscript as a reading manuscript intended to encourage the user to reflect upon the various texts it preserves, learn from them, and enjoy them. The first initial of *Njáls saga* extends over more than six lines of regular text and is elaborately decorated. The remaining initials, however, are no more than two lines high and barely or not at all decorated. The first line of each chapter is written minimally larger and in a slightly different script. The scribe writes 'Cap.' and corresponding chapter numbers in Arabic numerals centered before each new chapter. The saga ends in a slight tip.

**AM 469 4to** (1705, *Fagureyjarbók*) was written by Einar Eiríksson (W-Iceland, see Chapter 4.3.3.). It is unknown whether the manuscript was commissioned, but considering both the fact that Einar appears to be a somewhat reluctant scribe (see Arthur 2014) and the significant decorations, it seems a definite possibility. The initials in the manuscript have a height of about two to five lines of text and are all decorated. There is, however, a significant variety in the extent of decorations. Some contain facial images, while most are decorated with swirly lines. Two initials on fols. 83r and 83v seem to be designed with two colors: the regular black ink used for the main text and a second, brownish ink. The saga ends in a tip and Einar writes five verses around the tip. He also adds a sign at the bottom, which likely includes his initials. The

manuscript is overall neatly designed with relatively wide margins and fairly straight lines. There is no sign that the manuscript was part of a larger compilation of texts.

The *Njáls saga* in **ÍB 261 4to** (1740, *Lágafellsbók*) was likely written by a Jón J[óns]s[on] (see Chapter 4.3.3.). The manuscript contains small initials with a height of approximately one to three lines of regular text, which are often neatly decorated, justifying the categorization as a moderate reading manuscript. The scribe indicates new chapters by writing chapter numbers in Arabic numerals centered before each new chapter. The first few pages of the manuscript were added at a later date to replace damaged pages in the original codex. It is, therefore, unclear if the original first page of the manuscript was more elaborately decorated. The end of the saga was, likewise, missing and replaced at a later date, which makes it impossible to determine whether the saga ended in a tip. There is no indication that the manuscript contained more than one text.

**Thott 1776 4to III** (c1742-1800) was written by an unknown scribe. Even though the manuscript is part of a large collection of manuscripts and fragments of various sagas, the texts did not originally belong together. There is no indication that *Njáls saga* was initially part of a larger compilation of texts. The first initial of *Njáls saga*, which is nicely decorated, extends over five lines of text, with the first line being written larger than the remaining ones. The remaining initials are smaller (approximately 2-4 lines), but nonetheless decorated. The manuscript is neatly organized but very tightly written. The writing block is marked with ink at the top and outer margin. The scribe adds chapter numbers in Arabic numerals and chapter titles centered before each new chapter. He, furthermore, writes verses and bynames in a different script, and marks verses in the margins with a small *v*. The saga ends in a slight tip and is followed by a large knotted decoration. An unusual feature of Thott 1776 4to III that indicates a great deal of work and preparation on the part of the scribe is the inclusion of a detailed index of characters and events referring to the exact chapters in which they occur.

**AM Acc. 50** (1770) was written by Jakob Sigurðsson (Vopnafjörður, E-Iceland; see Chapter 4.3.3.), possibly for personal use. It only contains *Njáls saga*. The first initial extends over sixteen lines of text and is significantly decorated. The remaining initials have a height of about two to

four lines of text and are decorated, partly with faces. Jakob uses a slightly different script for the first line in each chapter and for verses. He adds chapter numbers in Roman numerals centered before each chapter. The manuscript is nicely organized. The top margin of the writing block is marked with ink and the title of the saga is repeated at the top of every page as a running head. Jakob also adds pagination in the top outer corners and gathering numbers centered on the bottom margin, quite possibly an influence from print culture. The saga ends in a tip. AM Acc. 50 is somewhere between a decorative and a moderate reading manuscript. It is categorized as a moderate reading manuscript since it appears to be written for personal use and the majority of initials are relatively small.

The scribe of **Lbs 1415 4to** (c1770) is unknown, but the manuscript appears to be written for personal use. It only contains *Njáls saga*. The first page contains a large title for the saga and the first initial is larger (2-3 lines) and decorated. Chapters are clearly separated and chapter numbers in Arabic numerals have been placed centered before each new chapter. The first line of each chapter is written somewhat larger and in a slightly different script. The manuscript contains decorated initials with a height of 2-5 lines of regular text. The initials become larger and more significantly decorated towards the end of the saga. The scribe also adds gathering numbers centered at the bottom margin of every recto page.

**Lbs 747 fol.** (1871-1875), which can be considered part of a two-volume collection together with Lbs 748 fol., was written by the brothers Guðlaugur and Guðmundur Magnússon (W-Iceland) and contains a variety of texts. The manuscripts were certainly written for the personal use of the brothers and their families and remained in family possession until they were given to *Landsbókasafn* (see Chapter 4.3.4.). Guðlaugur copied *Njáls saga* from the 1772 edition. Lbs 747 fol. has an elaborate title page with colored decorations. *Njáls saga*, as all texts in Lbs 747 fol., contains large colored illustrations of scenes and characters from the text. Nonetheless, the initials in the text are not significantly larger and are only moderately decorated. Due to the lack of significant decorations in the written text and the fact that the manuscript was written for

personal use, Lbs 747 fol. is categorized as a moderate reading manuscript, even though the colored illustrations bring it close to the status of a decorative reading manuscript.<sup>232</sup>

#### 5.3.2.3.3. Analysis of Codicological Features

The W+H of the moderate reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* varies between 346 mm and 548 mm (see Tables 10a and 11a). The average of 422 mm is comparable with the overall average of the paper manuscripts (417 mm; see Table 10a) and the average of the private reading manuscripts (415 mm; see Table 11a). There is, however, an obvious difference between manuscripts from different time periods. The seventeenth-century moderate reading manuscripts have a W+H between 354 mm to 510 mm, with an average of 450 mm, higher than the average of both paper manuscripts in general as well as private reading manuscripts more specifically. Two seventeenth-century manuscript, Lbs 3505 4to and AM 555 c 4to, are below average, 354 mm and 360 mm respectively. The moderate reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century are much smaller (W+H: 346-375, AVG: 358). Glauser (1994:412), Lansing (2011:73), and Hufnagel (2012:165, 179) observe similar trends in their studies of *riddarsögur*, *Hrólfs saga kraka*, and *Sörla saga sterka*. In each case, manuscripts from the eighteenth century are generally small (quarto or octovo), and larger formats are limited to the seventeenth or very early eighteenth centuries. The only *Njáls saga* manuscript from the nineteenth century, Lbs 747 fol., is the largest paper manuscript (W+H: 548 mm). In this respect, the result differs from Hufnagel (2012:179) and Lansing (2011:74-75), whose manuscript from the nineteenth century are smaller (quarto). Hufnagel (2012) notes, furthermore, that scribes during the nineteenth century “came from lower social spheres, and the manuscripts tend to be simpler and less decorated” (29). Lbs 747 fol. diverges in this respect, as the manuscript contains various large illustrations. The scribes of Lbs 747 fol., therefore, seem to have had a different attitude toward their copying process. They not only copied the texts for reading purposes and personal use like their fellow nineteenth-century

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<sup>232</sup> As previously mentioned (see fn. 182), Þorsteinn Árnason Surmeli (2013) discusses the manuscript and its drawings in more detail.



scribes, but deliberately designed a borderline-decorative reading manuscript for personal use, possibly also as a family-heirloom.

The  $W:H_{WB}$  of the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 0.57 and 0.82 (see Tables 10b and 11b). The average of 0.71 is comparable with those of the paper manuscripts overall (0.70; see Table 10b) and those of all private reading manuscripts combined (0.72; see Table 11b). Nonetheless, the moderate reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century are overall narrower ( $W:H_{WB}$ : 0.57-0.77, AVG: 0.66), whereas the manuscripts from the eighteenth century are wider ( $W:H_{WB}$ : 0.75-0.82, AVG: 0.80). Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has a narrower writing block with a  $W:H_{WB}$  of 0.62. The DIFF between MIN and MAX results for  $W:H_{WB}$  for the moderate reading manuscripts is quite low for all but one of the manuscripts. It generally varies between 0.02 and 0.07 (AVG: 0.04), with the exception of Lbs 1415 4to with a DIFF of 0.14. This suggests that the writing blocks of the majority of moderate reading manuscripts, independent of age, were designed very homogeneously. The  $W:H_{leaf}$  and  $W:H_{WB}$  correspond relatively well for the majority of moderate reading manuscript (see Tables 10c and 11c), although a slightly more significant difference between the ratio of the leaves and ratio of the writing block can be observed for most eighteenth-century manuscripts. The results for  $W:H_{WB}$  and  $W:H_{leaf}$  correspond well with the difference in  $W+H$  between the various centuries. In accordance with Tschichold (1975:50), the overall larger manuscripts from the seventeenth century and the large Lbs 747 fol. (19th c) have a narrower  $W:H_{WB}$  than the overall smaller eighteenth-century codices and the two smaller manuscripts from the seventeenth century (see Tables 10d and 11d).

The WB% of the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 61.2 to 77.4 (see Tables 10e and 11e). The average of 68.0 is above the overall average for the paper manuscripts (62.1; see Table 10e) and also above the average for all private reading manuscripts combined (65.7; see Table 11e). There is little variation between moderate reading manuscripts from different time periods; WB% ranges from 61.2 to 77.4 (AVG: 68.1) for the seventeenth-century manuscripts, 62.2-73.2 (AVG: 68.1) for manuscripts from the eighteenth century, and 67.0 for Lbs 747 fol.

from the nineteenth century. The DIFF between MIN and MAX WB% results varies between 3.5 and 12.1. The average of 6.2 is higher than that of all paper manuscripts (6.0), but slightly lower than the overall average of the private reading manuscripts (6.4). However, the average DIFF is lower for the seventeenth and eighteenth-century manuscripts (17th c: 3.5-10.1, AVG: 5.8; 18th c 4.0-8.0, AVG: 5.7), but significantly higher for Lbs 747 fol. (12.1). The manuscripts with the greatest variance between MIN and MAX WB% (in descending order) are Lbs 747 fol. (12.1; 19th c), AM 163 i fol. (10.1; 17th c), AM 555 c 4to (9.1; 17th c), and Lbs 1415 4to (8.0; 18th c). In the cases of AM 555 c 4to and AM 163 i fol., the writing blocks toward the beginning of the manuscripts are smaller, and get continuously larger toward the end, indicating that the scribes ran out of material and had to save paper by using more of the available page. In the case of AM 555 c 4to, however, the scribe seems to realize that he is ‘out of the woods,’ and he decreased the size of the writing blocks again on the final few pages. A similar phenomenon can be observed in Lbs 747 fol., where Guðlaugur Magnússon begins *Njáls saga* with a smaller writing block, continuously increases the size until about the middle of the saga, and then decreases the size again. In the case of Lbs 1415 4to the size of the writing blocks changes randomly throughout the manuscript. The scribe did not seem to be concerned with saving paper, but was simply more flexible in his layout design. A possible reason is that the manuscript appears to be written for personal use and the scribe, therefore, cared less about a homogeneous look. The variance in the size of the writing blocks in Lbs 1415 4to also explains why  $W:H_{WB}$  varies more greatly in this manuscript (see above). The remaining moderate reading manuscripts have a lower DIFF between MIN and MAX WB% (3.5-6.2; AVG: 4.6), indicating that they were designed more carefully.

UR of the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 4.5 and 7.6 (see Tables 10f and 11f). The average of 6.2 compares well with the 6.3 average for the private reading manuscripts overall (see Table 11f), but is significantly below the overall average for the paper manuscripts (7.1; see Table 10f). There is not a remarkable difference in UR between various time periods; UR for seventeenth-century manuscripts varies between 5.2 and 7.3 (AVG: 6.1), those from the

eighteenth century have a UR of 4.5 to 7.6 (AVG: 6.3), and Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has a slightly lower UR of 5.9. Like most private reading manuscripts, the moderate reading manuscripts are more tightly written (= lower UR) than the scholarly manuscripts. Thott 1776 4to III has the lowest UR (4.5) and is, therefore most tightly written, presumably to preserve paper. Lbs 1415 4to has the highest UR (7.6) of the moderate reading manuscripts. Nonetheless, the elaborate ascenders and descenders used by the scribe of Lbs 1415 4to still give the text a cramped appearance despite the more generous placing of the lines. It can be observed that moderate reading manuscripts that were definitely or likely commissioned (AM 396 fol., AM 163 i fol., AM 469 4to, Lbs 222 fol., BL Add. 4867 fol.) have an overall higher UR (> 6) and are, therefore, generally more generously written than most manuscripts written for personal use. The two possible exceptions are AM 555 c 4to and Lbs 3505 4to (both with low URs), but in both cases it is not certain whether they were commissioned. The low UR of AM 555 c 4to may, in fact, strengthen the hypothesis that Halldór Guðmundsson wrote the manuscript for personal use (see below) rather than for Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason (see Chapter 4.3.2.). The DIFF between MIN and MAX UR for each moderate reading manuscript varies between 0.4 to 3. The average of 1.3 is close to the average of the private reading manuscripts overall (see Table 11f). The DIFF varies between 0.4 and 2.8 (AVG: 1.1) for the moderate reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century; it ranges from 0.6 to 3 (AVG: 1.6) for those from the eighteenth century, and Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has a DIFF of 1.0. The manuscripts with an above-average DIFF are (in descending order): Lbs 1415 4to (DIFF: 3; 18th c), AM 163 i fol. (DIFF: 2.8; 17th c), ÍB 261 4to (DIFF: 1.8; 18th c), and AM 136 fol. (DIFF: 1.6; 17th c). The UR of Lbs 1415 4to gets denser toward the end of the saga, but is slightly more generous again on the final pages of the manuscript. While the fluctuation in WB% in Lbs 1415 4to seems random, the change in UR may indicate that the scribe felt the need to preserve paper toward the end and realized toward the final pages that he had been too cautiously. In the case of AM 163 i fol., UR fluctuates between 7.2 and 6.4 throughout the manuscript, but gets extremely low (4.4) toward the final pages. As with the increase in WB% in AM 163 i fol., the extreme increase in UR toward the end of the

manuscript demonstrates that the scribe was running out of material and had to save paper at all costs. The UR of AM 136 fol. differs slightly throughout the entire manuscript. It is highest toward the middle of the manuscript, indicating that the scribe, Jón Gissurarson, wrote more densely at the beginning and end of the saga.

The #<sub>lines</sub> for the moderate reading manuscripts varies greatly between 23 and 48 lines. The average of 35 lines is comparable with the average for the private reading manuscripts overall (34; see Table 11g) but above the average for all paper manuscripts combined (30; see Table 10g). The DIFF between MIN and MAX #<sub>lines</sub> within the various moderate reading copies ranges from an extremely low 2 to an extremely high 26 (AVG: 8) (see Tables 10g and 11g). The same range and average apply for manuscripts from the seventeenth century. The DIFF is lower for manuscripts from the eighteenth century (3-11, AVG: 7). Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has an above average DIFF of 10. The manuscripts with an average or above-average DIFF are (in descending order): AM 163 i fol. (26; 17th c), AM 136 fol. (13; 17th c), Thott 1776 4to III (11; 18th c), Lbs 747 fol. (10; 19th c), Lbs 1415 4to (9; 18th c), and AM 396 fol. (8; 17th c). The immense DIFF of 26 lines between the MIN and MAX #<sub>lines</sub> for AM 163 i fol. corresponds with the higher WB% and lower UR toward the end of the manuscript. The scribe is fairly consistent in his #<sub>lines</sub> for the majority of the codex (#<sub>lines</sub>: 39-44), and then jumps to 65 lines on fol. 60r. He seemingly ran out of material and therefore wrote his text more and more densely, placing more and more lines on the final pages. The #<sub>lines</sub> also increases toward the end of AM 136 fol. Jón Gissurarson places between 37 and 44 lines on each page for about the first half of the text, then increases the number to 45 to 50 in the second half. The same trend can be observed in Thott 1776 4to III, where the scribe begins with 33-39 lines and then increases the #<sub>lines</sub> to 43-44. In contrast, Guðlaugur Magnússon, scribe of *Njáls saga* in Lbs 747 fol. decreases the number of lines throughout the text, beginning with between 48 and 53 lines and lowering the number to 43 to 45 toward the end of the text.<sup>233</sup> Lbs 1415 4to has one of the fewest #<sub>lines</sub> (18-27, AVG: 23) among the private reading manuscripts, corresponding with a higher UR. Nonetheless, the DIFF

<sup>233</sup> Number of lines in Lbs 747 fol. were always counted on pages that did not contain any drawings.

between MIN and MAX  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  (9) is slightly above-average. The DIFF in  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  in Lbs 1415 4to corresponds with the DIFF in UR, meaning that the scribe starts out with a lower  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  (18-21), increases it to 25-27 to save paper and then decreases the number again to 24 toward the end, likely realizing that he has more paper available than he thought. The same trend is evident in AM 396 fol. (with an average DIFF of 8 lines between MIN and MAX  $\#_{\text{lines}}$ ) where the  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  is lower at the beginning (43) and end (39-41) of the saga, but higher (45-47) in the middle.

The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  for the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 26.5 and 50.6. The average of 35.9 is slightly higher than both the average for all paper manuscripts combined (33.8; see Table 10h) and the average for all private reading manuscripts (34.7; see Table 11h). The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  for the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 6.8 and 14.8. As with the  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ , the average  $\#_{\text{words}}$  of 9.9 is above the average for all paper manuscripts (9.4; see Table 10i) and above the average for the private reading manuscripts (9.6; see Table 11i). The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the moderate reading manuscripts varies between 256.4 and 717.0. The average of 460 is both above the average for the paper manuscripts overall (368.7; see Table 10k) and above the average for the private reading manuscripts (433.8; see Table 11k).

The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  varies between 30.3 and 50.6 (AVG: 37.5) for moderate reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century; the  $\#_{\text{words}}$  between 7.5-14.8 (AVG: 10.4); and the signs/dm<sup>2</sup> between 287.3 and 717.0 (AVG: 480). The seventeenth-century manuscripts, therefore, show a significant range in all three categories. Most notably the manuscripts AM 136 fol., BL Add 4867 fol., Lbs 222 fol., and Lbs 3505 4to have a below average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , and signs/dm<sup>2</sup> among the seventeenth century manuscripts. AM 136 fol. was written by Jón Gissurarson, likely for personal use. Even though the manuscript does not contain marginal notes indicating a scholarly interest, it is possible that Jón, as a diligent scribe as well as half-brother and close collaborator of manuscript collector Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson, designed his personal manuscripts more generously in accordance with scholarly traditions. BL Add 4867 fol., Lbs 222 fol., and Lbs 3505 4to are all certainly or possibly commissioned moderate reading manuscripts. They were all potentially written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur (see above), who is also connected to NKS 1220

fol., one of the decorative reading manuscripts. There appears to be a direct correlation between the lower  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ ,  $\text{signs/dm}^2$ , and ABBR% (see below) and their status as manuscripts presumably commissioned by the same person, a particularly wealthy and educated Icelandic farmer.<sup>234</sup> Magnús Jónsson likely instructed his scribes to write the manuscripts with a more generous design. Other manuscripts from the seventeenth century, most notably AM 163 i fol., AM 396 fol., and AM 555 c 4to have particularly high  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , and  $\text{signs/dm}^2$ . AM 163 i fol. was commissioned; AM 396 fol. was presumably commissioned; whereas AM 555 c 4to may have been commissioned or – possibly more likely (see below) – written for personal use (see Chapter 4.3.2.). AM 163 i fol. was written by Henrik Magnússon and commissioned by Daði Jónsson. As previously noted, the manuscript falls between a moderate and plain reading manuscript and holds its moderate status largely due to the fact that it was not written for personal use. As the increase in WB%, UR, and  $\#_{\text{lines}}$  indicate, Henrik Magnússon had problems keeping his design consistent throughout the manuscript and seemingly ran out of material toward the end. He also gets sloppier and stops providing chapter numbers. It is possible that it was not just a lack of material but also time constraints that resulted in a less homogeneous reading manuscript. Unlike Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, who appears to have provided clear guidelines for his scribes, Daði Jónsson – who is said to have had no higher education (Bogi Benediktsson 1881-1915:IV:61) – may have been more concerned with receiving the text of *Njáls saga* and less interested in a consistent design. The high  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ ,  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , and  $\text{signs/dm}^2$  are partly dependent on a particularly high ABBR% in both manuscripts. The high ABBR% in AM 396 fol. can be explained due to its close connection to *The Lost Codex*, whose possible exemplar is *Oddabók*. The scribe of both manuscripts appears to copy *Oddabók* quite accurately, including many of its abbreviations.<sup>235</sup> *Oddabók* has an ABBR% of 18.5, which compares well with the ABBR% of AM 396 fol. (18.0). AM 555 c 4to is closely connected to *\*Gullskinna* and potentially a direct copy of it (Zeevaert et al.

<sup>234</sup> Hufnagel (2012:181) nicely summarizes Magnús Jónsson's biography and financial background.

<sup>235</sup> I compared short random passages of *Oddabók* with the same sections in AM 396 fol. and did, in fact, notice considerable congruence between abbreviations used in both manuscripts. More extensive comparison would be necessary to come to a definite conclusion whether the scribe of *The Lost Codex* and AM 396 fol. deliberately copied the abbreviations of his exemplar.

2015:17).<sup>236</sup> The manuscript was written by Halldór Guðmundsson from Sílastaðir (N-Iceland), either for Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason at Hólar or for personal use. The high ABBR% of AM 555 c 4to (14.3) is comparable to ABBR% found in medieval manuscripts (see Tables 2e and 3e). If \**Gullskinna* was indeed Halldór's exemplar, it is possible that the high ABBR% is the result of him copying the abbreviations of his exemplar to a certain extent. Alternatively, and possibly more likely, Halldór wrote AM 555 c 4to for personal use, which allowed him to abbreviate the text more heavily without losing comprehension of the text. Some of the marginalia in AM 555 c 4to, commentary on the text in Halldór's hand (see Chapter 6.4.), add to the assumption that he may have been the primary user of the manuscript.

The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  for the eighteenth century moderate reading manuscripts varies between 26.4 and 40.9 (AVG: 34.5; see Tables 10h and 11h). ÍB 261 4to ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 34.1), AM Acc. 50 ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 35.2), and Thott 1776 4to III ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 35.7) are close to the average. Lbs 1415 4to has a significantly lower  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  (26.5) comparable with the result of the decorative copy NKS 1219 fol. (25.9) among the private reading manuscripts. AM 469 4to ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 40.9) has the highest  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  of the eighteenth-century moderate reading manuscripts. The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  of the eighteenth-century manuscripts varies between 6.8 and 12.4 (AVG: 9.7; see Tables 10i and 11i). In this case, AM Acc. 50 ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.5), AM 469 4to ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.7), and Thott 1776 4to III ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 10.2) are close to average. Lbs 1415 4to has again the lowest  $\#_{\text{words}}$  (6.8). However, the highest  $\#_{\text{words}}$  can be found in ÍB 261 4to (12.4). The discrepancy between an average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  and an above-average  $\#_{\text{words}}$  in ÍB 261 4to is the result of a very high ABBR% (22.1) (see below). AM 469 4to, which has the highest  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  has a below-average ABBR% of 5.6, explaining the average  $\#_{\text{words}}$ . The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the eighteenth-century moderate reading manuscripts vary between 256.4 and 651.1 (AVG: 451.8; see Tables 10k and 11k). Lbs 1415 4to (signs/dm<sup>2</sup>: 256.4) has a significantly lower signs/dm<sup>2</sup>; the lowest aside from the scholarly manuscripts and the highly decorative NKS 1219 fol. This is the result of a high UR, low  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  and  $\#_{\text{words}}$  and relatively low ABBR% (6.1). Despite the fact that the codicological

<sup>236</sup> As previously mentioned (see fn. 108) it is necessary to be cautious about drawing conclusions from the stemmatic analysis by Zeevaert et al. (2015), since it is based on only one chapter (Chapter 86). Their results, nonetheless, offer indications about the connections between the various *Njáls saga* manuscripts.

features portray Lbs 1415 4to as a quite generous manuscript, the manuscript – as previously mentioned – nonetheless leaves the impression of being written quite tightly due to the exaggerated ascenders and descenders in the scribe's script. The remaining eighteenth-century moderate reading manuscripts are close to or above the average for the private reading manuscripts (433.8). If the low result of Lbs 1415 4to is excluded from calculating the average signs/dm<sup>2</sup> for the eighteenth-century moderate reading manuscripts, it rises from 451.8 to 500.6, significantly above the average for the private reading manuscripts. This indicates that the majority of moderate reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century were written more densely.

Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has a #<sub>signs</sub> of 31.3, #<sub>words</sub> of 7.8, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of 362.9. It is, therefore, significantly below the averages of the moderate reading manuscripts in each category, and also below the averages of all private reading manuscripts combined (see Tables 11h, 11i, and 11k).

ABBR% ranges from 0.0 to 22.1 for the moderate reading manuscripts (see Tables 10j and 11j). The average of 9.2 is slightly above the overall average of 9.0, which is identical with the average for just the private reading manuscripts. However, Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century has an ABBR% of 0.0, due to it being copied from a printed normalized edition. The remaining manuscripts have an ABBR% between 4.8 and 22.1, and therefore a significantly higher average (9.9). The moderate reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century have an ABBR% between 4.8 and 18.0 (AVG: 9.3; see Table 11j). As already noted, the three moderate reading manuscripts definitely or likely associated with Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, Lbs 3505 4to (ABBR%: 4.8), Lbs 222 fol. (ABBR%: 5.2), and BL Add 4867 fol. (ABBR%: 5.6) have a relatively low ABBR%, likely the result of Magnús requesting a less abbreviated text to ensure easier legibility. AM 136 fol. (ABBR%: 8.3) and AM 163 i fol. (ABBR%: 9.1) have a fairly average ABBR%. AM 555 c 4to (ABBR%: 14.3) and AM 396 fol. (ABBR%: 18.0) have the highest ABBR% among the seventeenth-century manuscripts. As previously mentioned, the high ABBR% in the case of AM 396 fol. may be based on the fact that the scribe copied the



abbreviations of his (medieval) exemplar. The same could be true in the case of AM 555 c 4to, although it seems more likely that the scribe Halldór Guðmundsson wrote the manuscript for personal use and, therefore, decided to abbreviate the text more heavily (see above).

ABBR% varies between 5.6 and 22.1 (AVG: 10.8) for the moderate reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century (see Tables 10j and 11j). AM 469 4to (ABBR%: 5.6), Lbs 1415 4to (ABBR%: 6.1), and AM Acc. 50 (ABBR%: 7.9) have a below-average ABBR%. AM 469 4to was likely commissioned (see above) and the commissioner, like Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, may have requested fewer abbreviations to ensure legibility. The manuscript was written in the very early eighteenth century (1705), bringing it chronologically close to the manuscripts written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur. Lbs 1415 4to and AM Acc. 50 were both written around 1770 and were both likely for personal use. The scribe's own preference may have been to use fewer abbreviations. Lbs 1415 4to has a low text density, indicating that the scribe was unconcerned with preserving paper. AM Acc. 50 is overall quite average, suggesting that the scribe was neither overly cautious nor overly generous with his material. ÍB 261 4to (ABBR%: 22.1) and Thott 1776 4to III (ABBR%: 12.3) paint a quite different picture. The extremely high ABBR% of ÍB 261 4to is unlikely the result of copying a highly-abbreviated medieval manuscript. ÍB 261 4to is related to *\*Gullskinna* but likely several generations removed from the original codex (Zeevaert et al. 2015:18). The more likely explanation is that the scribe wrote the manuscript for personal use and could, therefore, abbreviate heavily without losing legibility. The same hypothesis can potentially be applied to Thott 1776 4to III. The manuscript is overall designed to save space (low UR, high WB%, slightly above #<sub>signs</sub> and #<sub>words</sub>), and the high ABBR% is another space-saving technique. The sheets that the manuscript was written on were never cut (see Chapter 4.3.3.), meaning that it was never really utilized after its completion. If the manuscript was written for personal use (as some of the aforementioned codicological features may suggest), the scribe and owner may have passed away shortly after the completion; he may also have moved on to other projects without ever needing to return to his copy of *Njáls saga*; or (depending on when the copy was written after 1742; see Chapter 4.3.3.) the first printed edition of *Njáls saga* may have become available.

Alternatively, it is possible that Thott 1776 4to III was commissioned, but that the patron did not collect the finished product or did not pay for it.<sup>237</sup>

A summary and conclusion of the codicological analysis of the moderate reading manuscripts is presented in Chapter 5.3.3.

#### 5.3.2.4. Plain Reading Manuscripts

##### 5.3.2.4.1. Definition

As the name suggests, plain reading manuscripts are defined as manuscripts with a particular simple look. With the possible exception of the first page of the saga, initials are not or only minimally larger than the regular text and undecorated or only minimally decorated. The first page can be slightly more elaborately designed, but not to the extent of the moderate and decorative reading manuscripts. The general look of the manuscript is often less professional, with more crooked lines and smaller margins. Plain reading manuscripts can, however, still have a fairly neat organization with clearly separated chapters. Instead of significantly enlarging and/or decorating initials, the beginnings of chapters are occasionally highlighted by writing the first line of each chapter in a slightly different script. The most extreme plain reading manuscript has virtually no decorations, no uniform design, and barely any indication of where a new chapter begins. Plain reading manuscripts are generally written for personal use. Most plain reading manuscripts contain more than one text (see Chapter 6.1.). The names of the scribes are often unknown, suggesting a lower socio-economic status. Hufnagel (2012), who also points out that these simpler manuscripts were written by poorer scribes, notes that the main function of the plain manuscripts (which she christens “paperback-manuscript”) is that of a pure reading manuscript, focusing on the text (180). Lansing (2011) identifies plain manuscripts with almost no decorations and no signs of use and, as mentioned above, literary manuscripts, with a “lightly decorated initial and ending but ... otherwise modest looking” (86). Her plain manuscripts all date to the seventeenth century and had wide margins, whereas the literary manuscripts date to the

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<sup>237</sup> The latter is an idea put forth by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication).

seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. The literary manuscripts had varying degrees of decorations but smaller margins (Lansing 2011:86). All of Lansing's plain and likely some of the literary manuscripts would likely be considered plain for the purpose of this dissertation.

#### 5.3.2.4.2. Plain Reading Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*

Eleven paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* have been categorized as plain reading manuscripts. As noted above, the lines between decorative, moderate, and plain reading manuscripts are not clear cut. It will be noted which manuscripts can be considered borderline between two categories. The plain reading manuscripts are, in chronological order: AM 163 d fol. (c1650-1682, *Ferjubók*), AM 465 4to (c1650-1699), AM 555 a 4to (1663-1665), SÁM 33 (18th c), Thott 1765 4to (c1750), Kall 612 4to (1753), ÍB 322 4to (c1750-1770), NKS 1788 4to (1760, *Bjarnarstaðarbók*), Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (1767-1769, *The Younger Flateyjarbók*), ÍB 270 4to (c1770, *Urðabók*), and Lbs 437 4to (1773).

The scribe of *Njáls saga* in **AM 163 d fol.** (c1650-1682) is unknown. The original codex contained a multitude of texts (see Chapter 4.3.2.). The manuscript is neatly designed. The title *Njála* is repeated at the top of every page as a running head, chapter numbers are marked in the (relatively wide) margins, and the saga ends in a tip. It is, however, quite tightly written. Initials are not decorated and not enlarged. The first line of each chapter is slightly indented. The only exception is the beginning of the saga, where the first initial (and entire first line) has a height of about 3 lines of text and some decorations.

The scribe of **AM 465 4to** (c1650-1699) is presumably Túmas, but his patronymic is not preserved (see Chapter 4.3.2.). The manuscript was part of a larger codex. Like AM 163 d fol., the manuscript is neatly designed, but tightly written. Chapter numbers are added in the margins. The scribe also highlights verses and proverbs. With the exception of the first initial, which has a height of 7 lines of regular text and is highly decorated, none of the initials show any decoration. They may be minimally larger than the regular line, but no more than about 1.5 lines. The first line of each chapter is occasionally, but not consistently, slightly indented. The saga ends in a tip.

**AM 555 a 4to** (1663-1665) was written by Árni Magnússon's uncle, Páll Ketilsson, most certainly for personal use (see Chapter 4.3.2.). It is quite possibly the plainest of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts; a true “paperback” in Hufnagel's sense (2012:180). The manuscript contains no decorations. Chapters are barely separated, although the first line of each chapter is slightly indented and a later user occasionally provides chapter numbers in the margins. The saga does not end in a tip. Particularly the first few pages (fols. 1-2), not written by Páll Ketilsson, are very sloppily written with particularly crooked lines and almost no marginal space.<sup>238</sup>

Due to the fragmented state of **SÁM 33** (18th c) it is difficult to clearly judge the design of the overall manuscript and categorize it. With the exception of UR, #signs, #words, and ABBR% its results had to be excluded from the discussion of codicological features. The unknown scribe adds chapter numbers and also brief marginal notes summarizing the content of the chapters. The first line of each chapter is written larger and in a slightly different script. The margins are marked with ink. The fragment leaves the impression that the original codex was neatly organized, but not highly decorated.

**Thott 1765 4to** (c1750) was written by an unknown scribe (see Chapter 4.3.3.), who adds chapter numbers in the margins. The initials are, however, barely larger than a regular line of text and not decorated. The first line of each chapter is sometimes written in a slightly different script.

**Kall 612 4to** (1753) was written in the Westfjords of Iceland by an unknown scribe. The manuscript contains three texts, which – based on codicological features – were once separate units (see Chapter 4.3.3.). The scribe provides chapter numbers between chapters. The first initial is decorated, but only slightly larger (approx. 2 lines of regular text). The remaining initials are undecorated. The saga does not end in a tip.

The two-column design of **ÍB 322 4to** (c1750-1770) and **NKS 1788 4to** (1760), both written by Jón Helgason from Bjarnastaðagerði (N-Iceland; see Chapter 4.3.3.), may suggest that the scribe had a more prestigious intent for his copies. The manuscripts are, however, overall very plain and quite sloppily designed. Initials are not decorated and the column width varies greatly, not only

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<sup>238</sup> See Chapter 4.3.2., particularly fn. 117.

between different pages but occasionally even on the same page. The writing blocks are marked with ink lines, but the lines are hastily drawn, often of different lengths and crooked on the page. That Jón Helgason considered his copies valuable is evident from the fact that he gave NKS 1788 4to as a gift to the merchant Sören Pens. On the inner margins of NKS 1788 4to, sometimes barely visible, are occasional alternate readings in Jón Helgason's hand, indicating a possible scholarly interest.

**Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar** (1767-1769, *The Younger Flateyjarbók*) was written by Markús Snæbjörnsson (W-Iceland) and contains various texts (see Chapter 4.3.3.). Markús provides chapter numbers and occasionally chapter titles between chapters. The first line of each chapter is written in a slightly different script. Markús writes verses in a modern verse layout with each line of the verse on a separate row. His initials are small (1-2 lines of regular text), but minimally decorated. Alternate readings within the text in parentheses indicate a possible scholarly interest. The manuscript falls somewhere between a moderate and a plain reading manuscript, but was categorized as plain due to the rather small initials and the fact that the manuscript was likely written for personal use.

**ÍB 270 4to** (c1770, *Urðabók*) was written by Magnús Einarsson of Tjörn as a gift for Jón Sigurðsson at Urðir (N-Iceland) (see Chapter 4.3.3.). The manuscript is neatly written and designed, but lacks decorations. Magnús uses a different script for the beginnings of chapters, as well as for verses and names. Verses are written in modern layout with each line on a separate row. The saga ends in a tip.

The scribe of **Lbs 437 4to** (1773) is unknown. The manuscript contains a variety of texts. The scribe provides chapter numbers and titles sometimes in the margins, sometimes between chapters. He writes verses in modern layout with each line in a separate row. The first initial is minimally decorated and extends over approximately 2 lines of regular text. The remaining initials are undecorated. The first line in each chapter is minimally larger and written in a slightly different script.

#### 5.3.2.4.3. Analysis of Codicological Features

The W+H of the plain reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* varies between 333 and 539 mm (see Tables 10a and 11a). The fragmented result of SÁM 33 is excluded from the calculation. The average of 391 mm is below both the average of the private reading manuscripts (415 mm; see Table 11a) and the average for all paper manuscripts combined (417 mm; see Table 10a). The W+H for the plain reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century is 365 mm for both AM 465 4to and AM 555 a 4to, and 539 mm for AM 163 d fol. (AVG: 423 mm). The eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts have a W+H between 333 mm and 479 mm. The average of 377 mm of the eighteenth-century manuscripts is significantly below the averages for the private reading manuscripts and paper manuscripts overall. The results of W+H of the plain reading manuscripts indicate that most plain manuscripts, particularly in the eighteenth century, were rather small.

W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the plain reading manuscripts varies between 0.59 and 0.86 (see Tables 10b and 11b). The average of 0.76 is above the average for the private reading manuscripts (0.72; see Table 11b) and over the average of all paper manuscripts combined (0.70; see Table 10b). The result of the fragmented SÁM 33 is excluded from the calculation. For the plain reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century W:H<sub>WB</sub> are 0.59 for AM 163 d fol., 0.77 for AM 465 4to, and 0.82 for AM 555 a 4to (AVG: 0.73). W:H<sub>WB</sub> ranged between 0.61 and 0.86 (AVG: 0.77) for the plain reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century. The DIFF between MIN and MAX W:H<sub>WB</sub> varies between 0.04 and 0.16 (AVG: 0.08). AM 465 4to (DIFF: 0.14) and NKS 1788 4to (DIFF: 0.16) have the greatest variance between MIN and MAX W:H<sub>WB</sub>, whereas the DIFF ranges from only 0.04 to 0.07 (AVG: 0.06) for the remaining plain manuscripts. A significant discrepancy between W:H<sub>WB</sub> and W:H<sub>leaf</sub> can be observed for the two manuscripts written in two columns by Jón Helgason (see Tables 10c and 11c); both manuscripts have a W:H<sub>leaf</sub> of 0.79, whereas the AVG W:H<sub>WB</sub> are 0.82 (NKS 1788 4to) and 0.86 (ÍB 322 4to); the difference is even more significant when taken the MAX W:H<sub>WB</sub> results into account with a MAX W:H<sub>WB</sub> of 0.92 for NKS 1788 4to and 0.89 for ÍB 322 4to. AM 465 4to also shows a greater difference between

$W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  (0.84) and  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  (AVG: 0.77, MAX: 0.88). It is possible that the margins of these manuscripts have been cut, thereby altering the ratio of the leaf, but the manuscripts presumably already had a slight discrepancy when the manuscript were produced, since particularly NKS 1788 4to and AM 465 4to also exhibit a great variation in the  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  (see above). The remaining plain reading manuscript have comparable results for  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  and  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  (see Tables 10c and 11c). The correlation between  $W+H$  and  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  (and  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$ ) shows the same results as previous types of manuscripts (see Tables 10d and 11d). The two larger plain reading manuscripts, AM 163 d fol. (17th c) and Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (18th c) have a lower  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  and  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  and therefore narrower design, whereas the remaining plain manuscripts, all small in size, have a higher  $W:H_{\text{leaf}}$  and  $W:H_{\text{WB}}$  resulting in a wider design.

WB% ranges from 51.6 to 80.2 for the plain reading manuscripts (see Tables 10e and 11e). The result from SÁM 33 is excluded from the calculation. The average of 65.2 is comparable to the average of all private reading manuscripts (65.7; see Table 11e) and slightly above the average of all paper manuscripts combined (62.1; see Table 10e). The plain reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century have a WB% of 64.5 for AM 465 4to, 67.7 for AM 163 d fol., and 80.2 for AM 555 a 4to, which is the highest result for all paper manuscripts, with the exception of the fragmented and excluded SÁM 33 (WB%: 88.8\*). Only one of the seventeenth-century plain reading manuscripts, therefore, has a below-average WB%. The eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts have a WB% between 51.6 and 75.4 (AVG: 62.8). Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (WB%: 75.4) and ÍB 270 4to (WB%: 66.8) have a significantly above average WB%, whereas NKS 1788 4to (WB%: 51.6), Thott 1765 4to (WB%: 56.1), and Lbs 437 3to (WB%: 60.8) have below-average WB%. The remaining plain reading manuscripts approximate the average. As previously noted, AM 555 a 4to is the plainest manuscript of *Njáls saga*, and clearly written for personal use. Páll Ketilsson is not concerned with a distinguished layout for his manuscript. He wants to preserve the saga for his own purposes on as little material as possible. The same may hold true for Handrit úr safni Jón Samsonarsonar, which appears to have been written by Markús Snæbjörnsson for personal use. While Jón Helgason's design in NKS 1788

4to may be rather sloppy (see for example the high discrepancy between MIN and MAX W:H<sub>WB</sub> above and high discrepancy between MIN and MAX WB% below), he nonetheless tries to add a prestigious touch to his manuscript by giving it a more generous design with an overall low WB% (and by writing it in two columns like the high-status medieval manuscripts). The DIFF between MIN and MAX WB% varies between 2.7 and 12.2 for the plain reading manuscripts (AVG: 6.8). The average is significantly lower for the three manuscripts from the seventeenth century (DIFF: 2.7-4.1, AVG: 3.5). With regard to the eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts the DIFF varies greatly between 4.9 and 12.1 (AVG: 8.2). Thott 1765 4to (DIFF: 4.9) and Lbs 437 4to (DIFF: 5.6), which also have a relatively low WB%, have the lowest DIFF, indicating that the two unknown scribes designed relatively generous and homogeneous manuscripts with a modest look. ÍB 322 4to (DIFF: 11.5) and NKS 1788 4to (DIFF: 9.7), both written by Jón Helgason, have a relatively high DIFF. The highest discrepancy between MIN and MAX WB% can be found in ÍB 270 4to with a DIFF of 12.2.

The results for UR of the plain reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* vary between 4.2 and 7.9 (see Tables 10f and 11f). The average of 6.1 is slightly below the average for the private reading manuscripts (6.3; see Table 11f) and significantly below the average for all paper manuscripts combined (7.1; see Table 10f). Particularly the manuscripts from the seventeenth century are very tightly written with below average URs between 4.2 and 5.5 (AVG: 4.9). The eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts are in comparison slightly more generously written with URs between 5.4 and 7.9 (AVG: 6.6). Thott 1765 4to (UR: 5.4), ÍB 322 4to (UR: 5.8) and NKS 1788 4to (UR: 6.0) are more tightly written. Even though these three manuscripts have a comparably low WB% (see above), they, nonetheless, ensure efficient use of space by writing their text more densely. ÍB 270 4to has an average UR of 6.2. The remaining plain reading manuscripts, Lbs 437 4to (UR: 6.9), SÁM 33 (UR: 7.0), Kall 612 4to (UR: 7.3), and Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (UR: 7.9) place their lines slightly more generously. While Jón Helgason gives his manuscripts the illusion of generosity by using smaller writing blocks (low WB%), but preserves space by placing lines more tightly (low UR), Markús Snæbjörnsson takes the opposite approach, placing his lines



more generously (high UR), but using more of the page (higher WB%). The DIFF between MIN and MAX UR varies between 0.8 and 2.1 (AVG: 1.1) (see Tables 10f and 11f). The DIFF cannot be determined for SÁM 33, since only one page of the codex survives. The three manuscripts from the seventeenth century are more homogeneously written, with only 0.9 to 1.0 DIFF between MIN and MAX UR. This result corresponds with the low DIFF between MIN and MAX WB%. Of the eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts, NKS 1788 4to is the most irregular with a DIFF of 2.1, corresponding with a high DIFF in  $W:H_{WB}$  and WB%. The remaining plain reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century have an average or below-average DIFF, indicating that they were designed fairly homogeneously, similar to the plain manuscripts from the seventeenth century.

The  $\#_{lines}$  of the plain reading manuscripts varies between 23 and 69 (AVG: 33) (see Tables 10g and 11g). AM 163 d fol. (17th c), which is a larger format and very tightly written (low UR), has by far the highest  $\#_{lines}$  with a MDN of 69. For the remaining plain manuscripts, the  $\#_{lines}$  varies between 23 and 36 (AVG: 29). The average is even lower for just the eighteenth-century plain manuscripts ( $\#_{lines}$  23-34, AVG: 27), likely connected to the relatively small size of the majority of eighteenth-century plain copies. The DIFF between MIN and MAX  $\#_{lines}$  varies between 3 and 14 (AVG: 7). AM 163 d fol., which has a significantly higher  $\#_{lines}$ , also has the highest DIFF (14). The  $\#_{lines}$  in AM 163 d fol. is higher toward the middle of *Njáls saga* and lower at the beginning and end. Correspondingly, UR is lowest in the middle of the saga and higher at the beginning and end. NKS 1788 4to has the second highest DIFF (11). Jón Helgason begins his manuscript with between 25 and 27 lines per column, then lowers the number of lines to 20 to 24 in the middle of the manuscript, and finally increases the number again to 26 to 31 lines. The remaining plain reading manuscripts have a DIFF between MIN and MAX  $\#_{lines}$  of 3-5 (AVG: 5), comparable with the majority of private reading manuscripts (see Table 11g).

The  $\#_{signs}$  of the plain reading manuscripts varies between 29.5 and 41.5 (see Tables 10h and 11h). The average of 34.4 is comparable with the average of all private reading manuscripts (34.7; see Table 11h) and slightly above the average of all paper manuscripts combined (33.8; see Table

10h). The plain reading manuscripts from the seventeenth century have a  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  of 33.5 (AM 465 4to), 38.7 (AM 163 d fol.), and 41.5 (AM 555 a 4to). Only one of the seventeenth-century plain copies is, therefore, written with a  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  below average. AM 555 a 4to and AM 163 d fol. have the highest  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  of the plain reading manuscripts. The  $\#_{\text{signs}}$  varies between 29.5 and 36.4. The average of 33.1 is comparably low. Only two eighteenth-century plain manuscripts, Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 36.6) and Thott 1765 4to ( $\#_{\text{signs}}$ : 36.4) have a slightly above-average  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ . The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  of the plain reading manuscripts varies between 7.0 and 13.4 (see Tables 10i and 11i). The average of 9.5 is exactly between the average for the private reading manuscripts (9.6; see Table 11i) and the average for all paper manuscripts combined (9.4; see Table 10i). The seventeenth-century plain copies have a higher average (11.9). The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  of AM 465 4to (9.4) approximates the average of the plain reading manuscripts. AM 163 d fol. ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 12.9) and AM 555 a 4to ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 13.4) have a significantly higher  $\#_{\text{words}}$ , corresponding to their higher  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ . The  $\#_{\text{words}}$  ranges from 7.0 to 9.7 for the plain reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century. Like the  $\#_{\text{signs}}$ , the  $\#_{\text{words}}$  for the eighteenth-century manuscripts is comparably low; and Thott 1765 4to ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.7) and Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar ( $\#_{\text{words}}$ : 9.7) are the only two plain copies with a slightly above average  $\#_{\text{words}}$ .

ABBR% ranges from 4.3 to 19.2 (AVG: 9.0) for the plain reading manuscripts (see Tables 10j and 11j). The manuscripts from the seventeenth century are, however, significantly more heavily abbreviated. AM 465 4to has an ABBR% of 9.7; AM 555 a 4to has 15.9; and AM 163 d fol. has 19.2. AM 163 d fol. is closely connected to *Oddabók* (possibly copied from AM 396 fol.). It is possible that the scribe copied the abbreviations of his exemplar, which in turn reproduced the abbreviations of *Oddabók* itself. The ABBR% of AM 163 d fol. (19.2) compares well with *Oddabók* (ABBR%: 18.5) and the other manuscripts closely connected to *Oddabók* (AM 396 fol., ABBR%: 18.0; GKS 1003 fol., ABBR%: 20.1; *The Lost Codex*, ABBR%: 21.6). Alternatively, particularly if the manuscript was written for personal use, the high ABBR% could simply be the

preference of the scribe.<sup>239</sup> AM 555 a 4to is closely connected to *\*Gullskinna*, and like the unknown scribe of AM 163 d fol., Páll Ketilsson may have copied the abbreviations of his exemplar (either *\*Gullskinna* itself or a close copy of it). The fact that AM 555 c 4to, which is also closely connected to *\*Gullskinna*, has a comparably high ABBR% (14.3) possibly strengthens this hypothesis. Since AM 555 a 4to is, however, quite certainly written for personal use, it is more likely that Páll Ketilsson merely abbreviated the text more heavily to preserve space, since the use of more abbreviations would not have interfered with his own comprehension of the text. In the case of AM 465 4to (ABBR%: 9.7), it is likely that the scribe abbreviated the text slightly more heavily than other scribes since the manuscript was possibly written for personal use. ABBR% varies between 4.3 and 11.2 for plain reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century. ÍB 270 4to (ABBR%: 11.2) is the only eighteenth-century manuscript with an above-average ABBR%. As in previous cases, the high ABBR% could be personal preference of the scribe, Magnús Einarsson, or of the possible commissioner, Magnús' friend Jón Sigurðsson at Urðir. While Wawn (2012) suggests that Magnús wrote the manuscript for his friend Jón (10), the relatively high ABBR%, and high and inconsistent WB% could also imply that Magnús originally wrote the manuscript for personal use and only later decided to give it to Jón. The remaining eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts have below-average ABBR%s (4.3-7.7, AVG: 6.1).

The signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the plain reading manuscripts range between 281.0 and 779.4 (see Tables 10k and 11k). The average of 443.0 is slightly higher than the average for the private reading manuscripts (433.8; see Table 11k), and significantly higher than the average of all paper manuscripts combined (368.7; see Table 10k). The three manuscripts from the seventeenth century have the three highest results for signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of the plain reading manuscripts; AM 465 4to has 439.7 signs/dm<sup>2</sup>, AM 163 d fol. has 760.0, AM 555 a 4to has 779.4. The higher results, particularly of AM 163 d fol. and AM 555 a 4to are the result of a high ABBR%, lower UR, and higher WB%. The plain reading manuscripts from the eighteenth century all have below-average signs/dm<sup>2</sup>, ranging between 281.0 and 417.8 (AVG: 350.1). ÍB 270 4to (417.8), which has the

<sup>239</sup> More research in the relationship between these manuscripts and the preciseness of copying their exemplar is necessary.

highest ABBR% of the eighteenth-century plain copies, and Thott 1765 4to (406.9), which has the lowest UR of the plain manuscripts from the eighteenth century, have the highest signs/dm<sup>2</sup> in this category. The remaining eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts have signs/dm<sup>2</sup> below 400; and two manuscripts, Kall 612 4to (281.0) and NKS 1788 4to (292.9) even have results below 300. Kall 612 4to has one of the highest UR of the plain reading manuscripts and a close to average WB%. NKS 1788 4to has the lowest WB% of the plain reading manuscripts.

A summary and conclusion of the codicological analysis of the plain reading manuscripts is presented in Chapter 5.3.3.

### 5.3.3. Paper Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*: Summary and Conclusion

Of the thirty-nine paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, seventeen date to the seventeenth century, twenty-one to the eighteenth century, and one to the nineteenth century. The paper manuscripts can be divided into two major categories: scholarly and private manuscripts. The private manuscripts are divided into four subcategories. Private-scholarly hybrids are manuscripts written for personal use that exhibit a scholarly interest by the scribe. The remaining three categories are private reading manuscripts, which were divided into three categories, largely based on the extent to which they are decorated. These private reading manuscripts have, therefore, been categorized as decorative reading manuscripts, moderate reading manuscripts, and plain reading manuscripts.

There are nine scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga*. The scholarly manuscripts, therefore, account for 23.5% of the paper manuscripts (see Figure 2). Four scholarly manuscripts date to the seventeenth and five to the eighteenth century (see Figure 3). The four private-scholarly hybrids of *Njáls saga* equal 11.8% of the paper manuscripts (see Figure 2). Two private-scholarly hybrids date to the seventeenth and two to the eighteenth century (see Figure 3). The private reading manuscripts make up the largest percentage of the paper manuscripts with the three subcategories adding up to 64.7% (see Figure 2). Of the two decorative reading manuscripts<sup>240</sup> (5.9% of all paper manuscripts; see Figure 2) one dates to the seventeenth century and one to the eighteenth (see

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<sup>240</sup> This conclusion deals only with the paper manuscripts and, therefore, excludes the two decorative post-medieval manuscripts on vellum.

Figure 3). The thirteen moderate reading manuscripts account for 41.2% (see Figure 2) of all paper manuscripts, representing the largest group. Seven moderate reading manuscripts date to the seventeenth, five to the eighteenth, and one to the nineteenth century (see Figure 3). The eleven plain reading manuscripts make up 17.6% of all paper manuscripts (see Figure 2). Three plain reading manuscripts date to the seventeenth and eight to the eighteenth century (see Figure 2).

The analysis of size (W+H), layout (W:H<sub>WB</sub>, WB%), and text density (UR, #<sub>signs</sub>, #<sub>words</sub>, ABBR%, signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) supports the claim that scholarly manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are generously and neatly designed, with wide margins and liberal spacing of lines to allow for commentary, variant readings, and possibly even translations. They show particular uniformity with regard to WB%, UR, and signs/dm<sup>2</sup>. More variation was observed regarding W+H, #<sub>words</sub>, and ABBR%. In these categories, the three manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon (AM 467 4to, KB Add 565 4to, and ÍB 421 4to) differed from the remaining scholarly copies. The three manuscripts were of much smaller size (W+H: 317-340 mm), suggesting that they were intended as portable copies. Additionally, all three manuscripts had a higher #<sub>words</sub> and significantly higher ABBR%, due to the fact that Jón Magnússon copies the abbreviations of his exemplar *Reykjabók*. This was most likely done per the request of the commissioner, Jón's brother Árni Magnússon, who was known for requesting precise copies that included the abbreviations and possible mistakes of the exemplar (see e.g., Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson 2001; Jørgensen 2007:71). The difference in codicological features of Jón Magnússon's manuscripts compared to the remaining scholarly copies of *Njáls saga* are, therefore, the result of a different intended function for the copies. Most scholarly manuscripts were made to merely preserve an exact copy of the text to be used as a (historical) source, without the need to copy the orthography and abbreviations (Jørgensen 2007:71). Árni Magnússon, however, held a much higher standard and requested an exact replica of the exemplar, which would make the scholarly copy not only useful as a source text but also for in-depth philological, orthographical, and paleographical studies.

The private-scholarly hybrids are relatively small in size and more densely written than true scholarly manuscripts. Particularly NB 313 4to, a copy of a private-scholarly hybrid (AM 464 4to), shows more similarities in the codicological features to the private reading manuscripts. It is possible that the scribe, Jón Halldórsson, who copied his own manuscript (AM 464 4to), wrote NB 313 4to fairly quickly and less precisely than his first copy of *Njáls saga*, since Árni Magnússon was waiting to receive AM 464 4to. AM 470 4to, written by Árni Magnússon's grandfather Ketill Jörundsson, is closest to the true scholarly manuscripts, but still more densely written. AM 464 4to, NB 313 4to, and NB 372 4to have higher ABBR% than the scholarly copies (with the exception of the three scholarly manuscripts written by Jón Magnússon, who copies the abbreviations of his exemplar *Reykjabók*), while AM 470 4to has an ABBR% that compares with scholarly copies written in Iceland (AM 134 fol. and AM 137 fol.). The higher ABBR% of AM 464 4to (and correspondingly of NB 313 4to and NB 372 4to) may be the result of copying many abbreviations from the exemplar (*Kálfalækjarbók*), or it is possible that Jón Halldórsson abbreviated his manuscript more heavily since he wrote it for personal use and the abbreviations did not therefore reduce the legibility of the text.<sup>241</sup> Private-scholarly hybrids often have at least one codicological characteristic in common with the scholarly copies; AM 464 4to, for example, has a low WB% comparable with the scholarly copies, whereas AM 470 4to has a high UR. The added space, either through a smaller writing block and therefore wider margins or lines that are spaced wider apart, allows room for commentary. In contrast to scholarly copies (which are very generously designed to allow for commentary but generally lack such marginal and interlinear additions), private-scholarly hybrids, though less spaciouly designed, have ample examples of marginal notes. AM 464 4to and NB 313 4to preserve variant readings in the margins, whereas AM 470 4to features such commentary in the margins and between the lines.

The decorative reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* on paper are larger in size.<sup>242</sup> NKS 1219 fol., which was likely written in Denmark for a wealthy commissioner, has many common

<sup>241</sup> No comparison between *Kálfalækjarbók* and Jón Halldórsson's copies were undertaken. Such research would, however, be desirable to gain a better understanding of how closely Jón copied his exemplar.

<sup>242</sup> See Chapter 5.4. for a comparison between post-medieval decorative reading manuscripts on paper and vellum.

codicological features with the scholarly copies, resulting in an extremely generous design. It is, however, highly decorated, in stark contrast to the undecorated scholarly copies. NKS 1220 fol. was written in Iceland. It is also quite generous in many respects and highly decorated, but closer to the moderate and plain reading manuscripts. This is possibly due to a financial difference between the seventeenth-century Icelandic commissioner, Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, and the eighteenth-century (presumably Danish) commissioner of NKS 1219 fol.

The moderate and plain reading manuscripts are less clearly defined and show a higher degree of variable codicological features. It was noticed for the moderate and the plain reading manuscripts, as well as the scholarly manuscripts, that manuscripts from the seventeenth century were overall larger compared to manuscripts from the eighteenth century. This trend corresponds well with results of similar studies of Icelandic paper manuscripts (Glauser 1994:412; Lansing 2011:73; Hufnagel 2012:165, 179). Hufnagel (2012) proposes the hypothesis that “when the manuscripts were used for entertainment, the size of the documents containing the works did not matter too much, but they had to be easy to handle, that is, not too large” (161). Since the majority of eighteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts were written for personal use, it is possible that Hufnagel’s theory is applicable here and the scribes preferred a smaller, more portable format that was easy to handle. Lbs 747 fol., the only manuscript from the nineteenth century, is the largest of the paper manuscripts. Other studies of Icelandic manuscripts observed that manuscripts from the nineteenth century were small in size (Lansing 2011:74-75; Hufnagel 2012:179). The result of Lbs 747 fol. proves that exceptions are possible. The larger size of Lbs 747 fol. compared to other manuscripts from the nineteenth century is likely connected to the desire of the scribes to produce a prestigious family heirloom.

The moderate reading manuscripts of all time periods are overall quite homogeneously designed, but more densely written than the scholarly manuscripts, private-scholarly hybrids, and decorative manuscripts. They generally exhibit a slightly above average WB% and below-average UR. The codicological analysis reveals that the scribes of some manuscripts, most notably AM 163 i fol., but also to a certain extent AM 555 c 4to and Lbs 1415 4to, wrote their manuscripts

more densely toward the end of *Njáls saga*, indicating that they were running out of material and had to preserve paper. The scribes of AM 555 c 4to and Lbs 1415 4to, however, noticed that they had taken their attempt to save paper too far and could return to a more generous layout at the very end of their manuscripts. Higher ABBR% within the seventeenth-century moderate reading manuscripts appears to be occasionally dependent on reproducing the abbreviations of a medieval manuscript (or close copy thereof), but it is likely more often based on the preference of the scribe or instructions of the commissioner. The two eighteenth-century manuscripts with higher ABBR% (ÍB 261 4to and Thott 1776 4to III) were both most likely written for personal use and the scribes were, therefore, able to abbreviate the texts more heavily to preserve paper without compromising the legibility for their own purposes. Results for text density ( $\#_{\text{signs}}, \#_{\text{words}}, \text{signs/dm}^2$ ) among the moderate reading manuscripts vary greatly. The manuscripts certainly or likely written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur as well as AM 136 fol., written by Jón Gissurarson, have a lower text density and fewer abbreviations. Of the eighteenth-century manuscripts, Lbs 1415 4to has a significantly below average text density, whereas the remaining eighteenth-century moderate reading manuscripts have a higher text density. These results differ from those of the plain reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga*, where the seventeenth-century manuscripts are more densely written, whereas the eighteenth-century copies exhibit more generosity regarding text density.

The three seventeenth-century plain reading manuscripts are overall more homogeneously designed than the ones from the eighteenth-century. The DIFF between MIN and MAX WB% is, for example, less among the seventeenth-century plain copies. They exhibit, however, a much higher ABBR% and text density. In two cases, AM 555 a 4to and AM 163 d fol., the more significant use of abbreviations is likely personal preference (particularly in the case of AM 555 a 4to). Although it cannot be ruled out that the higher ABBR% could be dependent on their close connection to medieval manuscripts and the exact reproduction of the more heavily abbreviated medieval codices. The eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts are more numerous, smaller, and overall less homogeneously designed. The codicological analysis of ÍB 322 4to and NKS 1788



4to, both written by Jón Helgason, indicate that NKS 1788 4to was slightly more homogeneously and generously designed, with a lower WB%, less DIFF between MIN and MAX WB%, and a slightly more narrow writing block (lower  $W:H_{WB}$ ). Of the two manuscripts, NKS 1788 4to was given as a gift to the merchant Sören Pens. The two manuscripts were likely written around the same time. It is possible that Jón Helgason had both copies ready at hand, and decided to gift the more generous manuscript to Pens. Alternatively, like Jón Halldórsson (AM 464 4to and NB 313 4to), he may have written ÍB 322 4to slightly later, more quickly, and therefore less precisely, in order to be able to give one manuscript to Pens.

With the exception of ÍB 270 4to, all eighteenth-century plain reading manuscripts have below-average ABBR%. And even taking all paper manuscripts into account, the eighteenth-century manuscript are less abbreviated than those from the seventeenth century, even though highly abbreviated manuscripts can be found in both time periods (ABBR%: 17th c: 0.0-19.2, AVG: 9.5; 18th c: ABBR% 0.0-22.1, AVG: 8.9). The *Njáls saga* manuscripts differ in this respect from the eighteenth-century manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka*. Lansing (2011) observes in her study of manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka* that the “percentage of abbreviations was the highest in the eighteenth century, having increased by about 21% compared to the 17th century – from 7.3 to 8.8%” (75). While an increase in abbreviations is not evident among the eighteenth-century manuscripts, it must be noted that Lansing’s ABBR% is lower than those of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts. It seems possible that *Hrólfs saga kraka*, in general, was less abbreviated than the lengthy *Njáls saga*.

Hufnagel (2012) notices a slight tendency among the private manuscripts of *Sörla saga sterka* that codices by wealthier scribes or written for affluent commissioners are more generously designed and less abbreviated than those by scribes of a lower social status (196). Since the scribes of many of the moderate and plain reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are unknown, it is difficult to determine if this assumption holds true in the case of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts. The anonymity of these manuscripts, however, may already be a sign of the lower socio-economic status of the scribes, since wealthier scribes and farmers are more likely to have their names

preserved. It was certainly observed that the manuscripts written for the wealthy Magnús Jónsson of Vigur were less abbreviated and more generously designed than many of the remaining moderate and plain copies. Hufnagel (2012) also states that the plainer “paperback manuscripts” are generally associated with impecunious scribes and that there “is a slight tendency that the prestigious manuscripts are among the older manuscripts, and the plain manuscripts among the younger” (196). The high degree of small, plain eighteenth-century reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* by unknown scribes certainly points in this direction as well, even though these manuscripts are overall less abbreviated than those dating from the seventeenth century.

#### 5.4. Vellum and Paper Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*: Comparison and Conclusion

Of the 61 manuscripts and fragments of *Njáls saga* studied for this dissertation, 22 are written on vellum, and 39 on paper. The vellum manuscripts can be divided into medieval (14th and 15th c) and post-medieval (17th c) manuscripts. Thirteen manuscripts and fragments date to the fourteenth century. Of these, two most likely belonged to the same codex, bringing the number down to twelve, which equals 21% of all *Njáls saga* manuscripts (see Figure 4). Five manuscripts and fragments date to the fifteenth century, which accounts for 9% (see Figure 4). Four manuscripts and fragments on vellum are from the early to mid-seventeenth century. Three of these belonged to the same codex, which means that in reality, only two post-medieval codices are preserved, equaling 3% of all *Njáls saga* manuscripts (see Figure 4). Of the paper manuscripts, seventeen date to the seventeenth (29%), twenty-one to the eighteenth (36%), and one to the nineteenth century (2%) (see Figure 4). The eighteenth-century manuscripts, therefore, have the highest percentage, followed by those from the seventeenth century (32% when paper and vellum are combined), fourteenth century, fifteenth century, and finally nineteenth century (see Figure 4).

The analysis of the codicological features above has shown that the paper manuscripts can be divided into several sub-types of manuscripts, based on the purpose of the manuscript. Similar to

the private reading manuscripts on paper, the medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* also show differences in prestige. They can, similarly, be divided into high-status codices with a particularly generous layout (most notably AM 132 fol., AM 133 fol., AB 162 b fol. ε, and to a certain extent AM 162 b fol. α), and more moderate and plain manuscripts with a higher text density (most notably GKS 2868 4to, GKS 2869 4to, and AM 309 4to). Like some of the moderate and plain reading manuscripts on paper, the more densely written and plainer medieval manuscripts also occasionally showed signs that the scribe ran out of material toward the end of the codex and had to write his text more densely or on a larger percentage of the page in order to preserve his writing material.

The post-medieval vellum manuscripts, *The Lost Codex* and GKS 1003 fol., are both decorative reading manuscripts, based on the unusual use of vellum during a time when paper was already readily available. The codicological analysis and comparison between the post-medieval decorative reading manuscripts written on paper (NKS 1219 fol. and NKS 1220 fol.) and those on vellum (*The Lost Codex* and GKS 1003 fol.), however, revealed great difference in the use of space and text density between the two materials used. The post-medieval decorative manuscripts on vellum were more densely written, with a higher WB%, lower UR, and higher ABBR%, likely due to the fact that vellum was a rare and expensive commodity, and thus the scribes tried to save space wherever possible. The cheaper material (paper) allowed the scribes of the decorative manuscripts on paper to use less space (low-medium WB%, medium-high UR, low signs/dm<sup>2</sup>) and, thereby, give the manuscripts a high-status look with a generous layout, similar to the medieval prestigious codices.

While the analysis of the codicological features of the vellum and paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* compares well with similar studies of Icelandic manuscripts in many respects, the *Njáls saga* manuscripts occasionally differed. Vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* were, for example, overall larger, possibly connected to the high status of *Njáls saga* as a text. *Njáls saga* is also preserved in an unusually high number of manuscripts. The mere physical presence of a text in a high number of codices is, however, not enough to prove its popularity. This can better be done by studying

how readers engaged in and interacted with the saga. The next chapter (Chapter 6) takes a closer look at the readership and reception of *Njáls saga*, based on codicological features, manuscript context, and paratextual features.

## 5.5. Figures and Tables

### 5.5.1. Vellum manuscripts

	<i>14th-17th c - vellum</i> Call number	W:H <sub>leaf</sub>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>	
		MDN	MAX	MDN
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	0.65	0.65	0.62
15th c	GKS 2869 4to	0.66	0.69	0.65
14th c	AM 162 b fol. β	0.72	0.66	0.66
17th c	Lbs fragm. 2	0.68*	0.67*	0.67*
14th c	AM 162 b fol. δ	0.69	0.68	0.66
14th c	AM 162 b fol. θ	0.80*	0.68*	0.66*
14th c	AM 468 4to	0.66	0.69	0.66
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ζ	0.73	0.72	0.66
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ξ	0.68	0.67	0.66
14th c	AM 162 b fol. η	0.67	0.69	0.68
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	0.67	0.69	0.69
17th c	AM 921 4to I	0.76	0.71	0.70
14th c	AM 133 fol.	0.69	0.72	0.71
14th c	AM 132 fol.	0.70	0.73	0.71
14th c	GKS 2868 4to	0.66	0.75	0.71
17th c	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.76*	0.75*	0.73*
15th c	AM 466 4to	0.73	0.76	0.73
15th c	AM 162 b fol. α	0.75	0.77	0.74
17th c	GKS 1003 fol.	0.77	0.77	0.74
14th c	AM 162 b fol. γ	0.78	0.77	0.76
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ε	0.75	0.79	0.76
15th c	AM 309 4to	0.79	0.82	0.79
15th c	AM 162 b fol. ι	0.73	0.80	0.80
17th c	JS fragm. 4	1.33*	1.34*	1.34*
	Average	0.71	0.73	0.70

Table 9a: Comparison of ratios W:H<sub>leaf</sub> with W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts written on vellum. Manuscripts are organized in ascending order of MDN W:H<sub>WB</sub>.

	<i>14th-17th c - vellum</i>	W+H	W:H <sub>WB</sub>
	Call number	MAX	MDN
15th c	AM 162 b fol. α	350	0.74
14th c	AM 162 b fol. θ	355*	0.66*
14th c	AM 162 b fol. η	358	0.68
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	359	0.62
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	359	0.69
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ζ	363	0.66
14th c	AM 162 b fol. κ	376	0.66
17th c	JS fragm. 4	377*	1.34*
14th c	AM 468 4to	380	0.66
15th c	GKS 2869 4to	402	0.65
14th c	AM 162 b fol. β	409	0.66
15th c	AM 466 4to	416	0.73
14th c	AM 162 b fol. δ	429	0.66
14th c	GKS 2868 4to	430	0.71
14th c	AM 162 b fol. γ	467	0.76
17th c	Lbs fragm. 2	468*	0.67*
15th c	AM 309 4to	475	0.79
15th c	AM 162 b fol. ι	477	0.80
14th c	AM 133 fol.	506	0.71
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ε	526	0.76
17th c	GKS 1003 fol.	542	0.74
14th c	AM 132 fol.	573	0.71
17th c	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	601*	0.73*
17th c	AM 921 4to I	601	0.70

Table 9b: Correlation of W+H and W:H<sub>WB</sub> of the vellum manuscripts in ascending order by W+H.

	<i>14th-17th c - vellum</i>	WB%
	Call number	MDN
14th c	AM 133 fol.	52.6
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ε	55.2
15th c	AM 162 b fol. α	57.6
15th c	AM 466 4to	58.5
14th c	AM 162 b fol. η	58.7
14th c	AM 162 b fol. γ	59.6
14th c	AM 162 b fol. β	60.2
14th c	AM 132 fol.	60.5
14th c	AM 162 b fol. δ	62.6
14th c	AM 468 4to	64.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ϰ	64.5
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	65.2
15th c	AM 162 b fol. ι	65.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ζ	66.1
17th c	GKS 1003 fol.	67.0
15th c	GKS 2869 4to	68.0
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	68.6
17th c	AM 921 4to I	70.1
15th c	AM 309 4to	70.5
14th c	GKS 2868 4to	70.8
14th c	AM 162 b fol. θ	70.9*
17th c	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	72.0*
17th c	JS fragm. 4	78.2*
17th c	Lbs fragm. 2	85.5*
	Average	63.3

Table 9c: WB% of all vellum manuscripts in ascending order.

	<i>14th-17th c - vellum</i>	UR
	Call number	MDN
15th c	GKS 2869 4to	4.3
15th c	AM 466 4to	4.6
15th c	AM 309 4to	5.0
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ζ	5.3
17th c	Lbs fragm. 2	5.4
14th c	AM 162 b fol. θ	5.5
17th c	AM 921 4to I	5.5
17th c	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	5.6*
14th c	AM 162 b fol. η	5.7
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ϰ	5.8
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	5.9
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ε	5.9
14th c	AM 162 b fol. β	6.0
14th c	AM 468 4to	6.0
14th c	GKS 2868 4to	6.0
15th c	AM 162 b fol. ι	6.0
14th c	AM 162 b fol. γ	6.1
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	6.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. δ	6.2
17th c	JS fragm. 4	6.2
17th c	GKS 1003 fol.	6.2
14th c	AM 132 fol.	6.3
15th c	AM 162 b fol. α	6.4
14th c	AM 133 fol.	8.5
	Average	5.9

Table 9d: UR of all vellum manuscripts in ascending order.



	<i>14th-17th c - vellum</i>	signs/dm <sup>2</sup>	WB%	UR
	Call number	AVG	MDN	MDN
14th c	AM 133 fol.	226.9	52.6	8.5
14th c	AM 132 fol.	303.8	60.5	6.3
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ε	317.8	55.2	5.9
15th c	AM 162 b fol. α	320.0	57.6	6.4
14th c	AM 162 b fol. δ	389.2	62.6	6.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. γ	422.1	59.6	6.1
17th c	GKS 1003 fol.	476.2	67.0	6.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. β	480.8	60.2	6.0
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S1-3)	501.6	65.2	5.9
14th c	AM 162 b fol. η	518.8	58.7	5.7
14th c	AM 468 4to	529.0	64.2	6.0
15th c	AM 162 b fol. ι	533.5	65.2	6.0
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ζ	575.7	66.1	5.3
14th c	GKS 2870 4to (S4)	585.6	68.6	6.2
14th c	AM 162 b fol. ξ	602.1	64.5	5.8
17th c	AM 921 4to I	676.2	70.1	5.5
17th c	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	677.7*	72.0*	5.6*
15th c	AM 466 4to	678.1	58.5	4.6
15th c	AM 309 4to	690.0	70.5	5.0
14th c	AM 162 b fol. θ	701.1*	70.9*	5.5
15th c	GKS 2869 4to	724.7	68.0	4.3
17th c	JS fragm. 4	809.0*	78.2*	6.2
14th c	GKS 2868 4to	810.8	70.8	6.0
17th c	Lbs fragm. 2	939.7*	85.5*	5.4
	Average	518.2	63.3	5.9

Table 9e: Correlation between signs/dm<sup>2</sup>, WB%, and UR of all vellum manuscripts in ascending order by signs/dm<sup>2</sup>.

GKS 2869 4to	WB%	UR
fol. 1r	67.4	4.8
fol. 2r	67.1	4.5
fol. 3v	63.2	5.7
fol. 4r	66.1	4.2
fol. 6r	68.8	4.0
fol. 8r	70.1	4.0
fol. 9r	69.5	4.2
fol. 11v	71.9	3.4
Average	67.6	4.3

Table 9f: Correlation between WB%, and UR of GKS 2869 4to (Sveinsbók).<sup>243</sup>

<sup>243</sup> As with all manuscripts, measurements and calculations for the various data points were not undertaken for every page, but just on randomly selected sample pages.

### 5.5.2. Paper manuscripts

#### 5.5.2.1. Paper manuscripts - overall

<i>Type of manuscript</i>	color
Scholarly Manuscript	
Private-Scholarly Hybrid	
Decorative Reading Manuscript	
Moderate Reading Manuscript	
Plain Reading Manuscript	

*Figure 1:* Color codes used in subsequent tables.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W+H MAX
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	317
18th c	IB 421 4to	330
18th c	ĪB 322 4to	333
18th c	AM 467 4to	340
18th c	IB 261 4to	346
18th c	AM Acc. 50	348
18th c	Kall 612 4to	353
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	354
18th c	NB 313 4to	359
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	359
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	360
18th c	AM 469 4to	364
17th c	AM 465 4to	365
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	365
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	365
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	368
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	368
17th c	AM 464 4to	370
18th c	ĪB 270 4to	372
18th c	NB 372 4to	373
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	375
17th c	AM 470 4to	382
18th c	SAM 33	383*
17th c	AM 137 fol.	442
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	455
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	479
17th c	AM 396 fol.	480
17th c	AM 136 fol.	481
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	485
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	490
17th c	AM 134 fol.	498
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	509
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	510
17th c	AM 135 fol.	520
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	539
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	540
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	540
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	540
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	548
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	542*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	601*
	Average	417

*Table 10a:* W+H of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed separately. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W:H <sub>WB</sub>			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	0.30	0.33	0.03	0.32
17th c	AM 134 fol.	0.54	0.58	0.04	0.56
17th c	AM 137 fol.	0.53	0.61	0.08	0.57
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.55	0.60	0.05	0.57
17th c	AM 135 fol.	0.56	0.58	0.02	0.57
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.56	0.61	0.05	0.59
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.59	0.61	0.02	0.60
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.59	0.63	0.04	0.61
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.59	0.62	0.03	0.61
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.59	0.63	0.04	0.61
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.61	0.63	0.02	0.62
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	0.61	0.63	0.02	0.62
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.59	0.65	0.06	0.62
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.60	0.64	0.04	0.63
18th c	IB 421 4to	0.63	0.69	0.06	0.65
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	0.61	0.68	0.07	0.65
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.59	0.74	0.15	0.65
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.62	0.69	0.07	0.66
18th c	AM 467 4to	0.65	0.68	0.03	0.67
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.69*	0.75*	0.06*	0.73*
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.72*	0.77*	0.05*	0.74*
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.73	0.79	0.06	0.75
18th c	NB 372 4to	0.74	0.78	0.04	0.76
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.74	0.78	0.04	0.77
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.74	0.88	0.14	0.77
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.75	0.79	0.04	0.77
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.74	0.79	0.05	0.77
18th c	IB 270 4to	0.74	0.80	0.06	0.77
18th c	SAM 33	0.77*	n/a	n/a	0.77*
17th c	AM 470 4to	0.75	0.80	0.05	0.78
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.74	0.81	0.07	0.78
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.77	0.82	0.05	0.80
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.79	0.81	0.02	0.80
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.76	0.83	0.07	0.81
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.75	0.89	0.14	0.81
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.79	0.85	0.06	0.82
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.80	0.84	0.04	0.82
18th c	NB 313 4to	0.79	0.84	0.05	0.82
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.76	0.92	0.16	0.82
17th c	AM 464 4to	0.80	0.86	0.06	0.83
18th c	IB 322 4to	0.83	0.89	0.06	0.86
	Average	0.67	0.73	0.08	0.70

Table 10b: MIN, MAX, DIFF, and MDN results for W:H<sub>WB</sub> of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of median. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W:H <sub>leaf</sub>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>	
		MDN	MAX	MDN
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	0.64	0.33	0.32
17th c	AM 134 fol.	0.68	0.58	0.56
17th c	AM 137 fol.	0.65	0.61	0.57
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.62	0.60	0.57
17th c	AM 135 fol.	0.64	0.58	0.57
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.63	0.61	0.59
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.66	0.61	0.60
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.64	0.63	0.61
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.66	0.62	0.61
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.64	0.63	0.61
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.65	0.63	0.62
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	0.63	0.63	0.62
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.63	0.65	0.62
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.67	0.64	0.63
18th c	IB 421 4to	0.81	0.69	0.65
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	0.77	0.68	0.65
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.64	0.74	0.65
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.66	0.69	0.66
18th c	AM 467 4to	0.76	0.68	0.67
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.76*	0.75*	0.73*
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.77*	0.77*	0.74*
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.82	0.79	0.75
18th c	NB 372 4to	0.78	0.78	0.76
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.80	0.78	0.77
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.84	0.88	0.77
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.79	0.79	0.77
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.79	0.79	0.77
18th c	IB 270 4to	0.77	0.80	0.77
18th c	SAM 33	0.87*	n/a	0.77*
17th c	AM 470 4to	0.78	0.80	0.78
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.78	0.81	0.78
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.79	0.82	0.80
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.78	0.81	0.80
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.78	0.83	0.81
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.82	0.89	0.81
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.80	0.85	0.82
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.79	0.84	0.82
18th c	NB 313 4to	0.78	0.84	0.82
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.79	0.92	0.82
17th c	AM 464 4to	0.83	0.86	0.83
18th c	IB 322 4to	0.79	0.89	0.86
	Average	0.73	0.73	0.70

Table 10c: Correlation between W:H<sub>leaf</sub> and W:H<sub>WB</sub> of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of MDN W:H<sub>WB</sub>. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W:H <sub>leaf</sub> MDN	W+H MAX
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	0.77	317
18th c	IB 421 4to	0.81	330
18th c	ĪB 322 4to	0.79	333
18th c	AM 467 4to	0.76	340
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.82	346
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.79	348
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.78	353
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.79	354
18th c	NB 313 4to	0.78	359
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.82	359
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.80	360
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.78	364
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.84	365
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.80	365
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.78	365
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.79	368
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.79	368
17th c	AM 464 4to	0.83	370
18th c	ĪB 270 4to	0.77	372
18th c	NB 372 4to	0.78	373
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.79	375
17th c	AM 470 4to	0.78	382
18th c	SAM 33	0.87*	383*
17th c	AM 137 fol.	0.65	442
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.67	455
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.64	479
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.64	480
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.66	481
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.66	485
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.66	490
17th c	AM 134 fol.	0.68	498
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.62	509
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.65	510
17th c	AM 135 fol.	0.64	520
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.63	539
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	0.64	540
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	0.63	540
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.64	540
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.63	548
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.77*	542*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.76*	601*
	Average	0.73	417

*Table 10d:* Correlation between W:H<sub>leaf</sub> and W+H of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of W+H. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	17th-19th c Call number	WB%			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	26.3	28.3	2.0	27.0
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	42.3	47.0	4.7	44.1
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	49.2	53.0	3.8	50.4
18th c	AM 467 4to	48.4	53.9	5.5	50.5
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	49.9	51.6	1.7	50.6
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	46.7	56.4	9.7	51.6
18th c	IB 421 4to	49.0	54.4	5.4	51.8
17th c	AM 464 4to	50.6	55.8	5.2	52.5
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	53.1	59.6	6.5	56.1
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	54.1	59.0	4.9	56.1
17th c	AM 135 fol.	54.5	58.6	4.1	56.7
17th c	AM 137 fol.	56.2	66.0	9.8	59.7
18th c	NB 372 4to	58.0	62.1	4.1	60.5
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	58.2	63.8	5.6	60.8
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	59.3	63.7	4.4	61.2
18th c	AM 469 4to	60.5	65.7	5.2	62.2
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	61.0	64.8	3.8	62.5
17th c	AM 134 fol.	60.6	66.2	5.6	62.6
17th c	AM 136 fol.	60.4	65.9	5.5	63.5
18th c	IB 322 4to	56.4	67.9	11.5	64.2
17th c	AM 465 4to	62.2	66.3	4.1	64.5
18th c	Kall 612 4to	60.9	67.4	6.5	64.7
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	60.0	69.1	9.1	64.8
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	61.3	69.3	8.0	65.2
18th c	NB 313 4to	61.4	72.6	11.2	65.7
18th c	IB 270 4to	60.5	72.7	12.2	66.8
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	63.1	75.2	12.1	67.0
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	65.0*	70.0*	5.0*	67.0*
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	64.0	70.1	6.1	67.1
17th c	AM 470 4to	65.8	68.4	2.6	67.5
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	66.6	69.3	2.7	67.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	66.5	70.5	4.0	68.7
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	67.8	77.9	10.1	70.9
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	68.7	73.9	5.2	71.1
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	69.9*	75.1*	5.2*	72.0*
18th c	IB 261 4to	69.7	75.9	6.2	73.2
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	71.5	78.2	6.7	75.4
17th c	AM 396 fol.	74.5	78.5	4.0	76.4
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	75.0	78.5	3.5	77.4
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	78.3	82.1	3.8	80.2
18th c	SAM 33	88.8*	n/a	n/a	88.8*
	Average	59.3	65.2	6.0	62.1

Table 10e: MIN, MAX, DIFF, and MDN results for WB% of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of median. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	17th-19th c Call number	UR			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	3.8	4.7	0.9	4.2
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	4.1	5.3	1.2	4.5
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	4.7	5.7	1.0	5.1
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	5.0	5.6	0.6	5.2
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	5.1	5.9	0.8	5.4
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	5.0	6.2	1.2	5.4
17th c	AM 136 fol.	4.8	6.4	1.6	5.5
17th c	AM 465 4to	5.1	6.0	0.9	5.5
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	5.3*	6.2*	0.9*	5.6*
18th c	IB 322 4to	5.3	6.3	1.0	5.8
18th c	NB 313 4to	5.5	6.2	0.7	5.9
18th c	AM Acc. 50	5.6	6.2	0.6	5.9
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	5.5	6.5	1.0	5.9
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	5.0	7.1	2.1	6.0
17th c	AM 464 4to	5.9	6.5	0.6	6.1
17th c	AM 396 fol.	5.9	6.7	0.8	6.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	5.8*	6.9*	1.1*	6.2*
18th c	IB 270 4to	5.7	6.8	1.1	6.2
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	4.4	7.2	2.8	6.4
18th c	AM 469 4to	5.9	7.1	1.2	6.4
18th c	IB 261 4to	6.1	7.9	1.8	6.9
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	6.4	7.3	0.9	6.9
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	6.8	7.3	0.5	7.0
18th c	SAM 33	7.0	7.1	0.1	7.0
18th c	NB 372 4to	6.6	7.6	1.0	7.0
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	7.0	7.4	0.4	7.3
18th c	Kall 612 4to	6.9	7.9	1.0	7.3
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.3	9.3	3.0	7.6
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	7.0	8.6	1.6	7.9
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	7.6	8.4	0.8	7.9
17th c	AM 470 4to	7.7	8.6	0.9	8.2
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	8.3	9.6	1.3	9.0
17th c	AM 135 fol.	8.8	9.4	0.6	9.1
17th c	AM 137 fol.	8.5	10.1	1.6	9.3
18th c	AM 467 4to	8.9	9.7	0.8	9.3
18th c	IB 421 4to	9.4	9.9	0.5	9.7
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	8.9	10.3	1.4	9.7
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	8.4	10.7	2.3	9.7
17th c	AM 134 fol.	9.0	10.3	1.3	9.8
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	8.9	11.1	2.2	9.8
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	9.8	10.2	0.4	10.1
	Average	6.5	7.7	1.1	7.1

Table 10f: MIN, MAX, and MDN results for UR of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of median. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.



	17th-19th c Call number	#lines			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
18th c	SAM 33	29*	30*	1*	29*
18th c	IB 421 4to	16	17	1	16
18th c	AM 467 4to	16	17	1	17
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	16	17	1	16
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	24	25	1	25
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	55*	56*	1*	55*
17th c	AM 135 fol.	28	30	2	29
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	35	37	2	36
17th c	AM 464 4to	24	26	2	25
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	31	34	3	32
17th c	AM 470 4to	21	24	3	23
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	34	37	3	35
18th c	NB 313 4to	26	29	3	27
18th c	Kall 612 4to	21	24	3	23
18th c	AM Acc. 50	27	30	3	28
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	24	27	3	25
17th c	AM 134 fol.	26	30	4	27
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	28	32	4	30
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	32	36	4	34
18th c	NB 372 4to	22	26	4	25
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	23	27	4	25
17th c	AM 137 fol.	22	27	5	25
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	22	27	5	24
18th c	IB 322 4to	23	28	5	26
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	33	39	6	36
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	30	36	6	33
18th c	AM 469 4to	23	29	6	26
18th c	IB 261 4to	23	29	6	26
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	26	32	6	29
17th c	AM 465 4to	27	34	7	31
18th c	IB 270 4to	25	32	7	29
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	39*	46*	7*	42*
17th c	AM 396 fol.	39	47	8	44
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	18	27	9	23
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	43	53	10	48
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	20	31	11	26
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	33	44	11	40
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	20	31	11	25
17th c	AM 136 fol.	37	50	13	44
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	60	74	14	69
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	39	65	26	45
	Average	27	33	6	30

Table 10g: MIN, MAX, DIFF and MDN results for #lines of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of 'DIFF'. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	17th-19th c Call number	# <sub>signs</sub> MDN
17th c	AM 135 fol.	22.8
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	25.9
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	26.5
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	27.3
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	27.5
18th c	Kall 612 4to	29.5
18th c	IB 421 4to	29.7
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	29.9
18th c	AM 467 4to	30.0
17th c	AM 136 fol.	30.3
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	31.0
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	31.3
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	31.4
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	31.5
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	31.6
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	31.7
18th c	IB 322 4to	31.8
17th c	AM 137 fol.	31.9
17th c	AM 134 fol.	32.0
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	32.5
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	33.0
17th c	AM 465 4to	33.5
17th c	AM 470 4to	33.6
18th c	IB 261 4to	34.1
18th c	IB 270 4to	34.1
18th c	SAM 33	34.3
18th c	AM Acc. 50	35.2
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	35.6
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	35.7
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	36.4
18th c	NB 372 4to	37.4
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	38.7
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	39.1*
18th c	AM 469 4to	40.9
17th c	AM 464 4to	41.1
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	41.5
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	41.9
18th c	NB 313 4to	42.5
17th c	AM 396 fol.	43.0
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	43.6*
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	50.6
	Average	33.8

Table 10b: #<sub>signs</sub> of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	17th-19th c Call number	# <sub>words</sub> MDN
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	5.8
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	6.3
17th c	AM 135 fol.	6.6
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	6.7
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.8
18th c	Kall 612 4to	7.0
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	7.5
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	7.6
18th c	IB 322 4to	7.7
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	7.8
17th c	AM 137 fol.	8.0
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	8.0
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	8.0
17th c	AM 136 fol.	8.1
17th c	AM 134 fol.	8.2
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	8.2
18th c	SAM 33	8.3
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	8.4
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	8.6
17th c	AM 470 4to	9.2
17th c	AM 465 4to	9.4
18th c	AM Acc. 50	9.5
18th c	IB 270 4to	9.5
18th c	AM 469 4to	9.7
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	9.7
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	9.7
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	10.2
18th c	AM 467 4to	10.4
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	10.6
18th c	NB 372 4to	10.6
18th c	IB 421 4to	10.7
17th c	AM 464 4to	10.9
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	11.9
18th c	NB 313 4to	12.2
18th c	IB 261 4to	12.4
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	12.9
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	13.0*
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	13.4
17th c	AM 396 fol.	14.2
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	14.8
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	15.0*
	Average	9.4

Table 10i: #<sub>words</sub> of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	ABBR% MDN
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	0.0
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	0.0
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.0
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	2.1
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	2.7
18th c	Kall 612 4to	4.3
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	4.8
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	5.2
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	5.6
18th c	AM 469 4to	5.6
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	5.7
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	5.7
17th c	AM 135 fol.	5.9
18th c	IB 322 4to	6.0
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.1
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	6.2
18th c	SAM 33	7.2
17th c	AM 470 4to	7.4
17th c	AM 134 fol.	7.5
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	7.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	7.9
17th c	AM 137 fol.	8.0
17th c	AM 136 fol.	8.3
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	9.1
17th c	AM 464 4to	9.1
17th c	AM 465 4to	9.7
18th c	NB 372 4to	10.4
18th c	IB 270 4to	11.2
18th c	NB 313 4to	11.4
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	12.3
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	14.0
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	14.3
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	15.9
18th c	IB 421 4to	16.5
17th c	AM 396 fol.	18.0
18th c	AM 467 4to	18.1
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	18.2
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	19.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	20.1*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	21.6*
18th c	IB 261 4to	22.1
	Average	9.0

Table 10j: ABBR% of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	17th-19th c Call number	signs/dm <sup>2</sup> AVG
17th c	Stock. 9 fol.	26.0
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	129.9
18th c	<i>Landakotsbók</i>	159.1
17th c	AM 135 fol.	165.2
18th c	Thott 984 fol. III	166.5
18th c	ÍB 421 4to	193.1
18th c	AM 467 4to	204.3
18th c	KB Add 565 4to	212.5
17th c	AM 134 fol.	223.1
17th c	AM 137 fol.	231.1
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	256.4
18th c	Kall 612 4to	281.0
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	287.3
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	292.9
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	302.8
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	305.2
17th c	AM 470 4to	313.9
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	362.9
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	369.9
18th c	NB 372 4to	376.1
18th c	IB 322 4to	379.4
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	386.9
17th c	AM 136 fol.	398.0
17th c	AM 464 4to	399.0
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	406.9
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	409.9
18th c	ÍB 270 4to	417.8
18th c	SAM 33	420.4*
18th c	AM 469 4to	433.3
17th c	AM 465 4to	439.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	450.8
18th c	ÍB 261 4to	467.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	476.2*
18th c	NB 313 4to	498.0
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	522.3
17th c	AM 396 fol.	636.0
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	651.1
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	677.7*
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	717.0
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	760.0
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	779.4
	Average	368.7

Table 10k: signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of post-medieval paper and vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

5.5.2.2. Paper manuscripts – Private reading manuscripts

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W+H MAX
18th c	IB 322 4to	333
18th c	IB 261 4to	346
18th c	AM Acc. 50	348
18th c	Kall 612 4to	353
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	354
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	359
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	360
18th c	AM 469 4to	364
17th c	AM 465 4to	365
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	365
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	365
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	368
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	368
18th c	IB 270 4to	372
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	375
18th c	SÁM 33	383*
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	455
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	479
17th c	AM 396 fol.	480
17th c	AM 136 fol.	481
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	490
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	509
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	510
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	539
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	540
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	548
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	542*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	601*
	Average	415

Table 11a: W+H of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed separately. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	17th-19th c Call number	W:H <sub>WB</sub>			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.55	0.60	0.05	0.57
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.56	0.61	0.05	0.59
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.59	0.63	0.04	0.61
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.59	0.62	0.03	0.61
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.59	0.63	0.04	0.61
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.61	0.63	0.02	0.62
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.59	0.65	0.06	0.62
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.60	0.64	0.04	0.63
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.59	0.74	0.15	0.65
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.62	0.69	0.07	0.66
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.69*	0.75*	0.06*	0.73*
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.72*	0.77*	0.05*	0.74*
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.73	0.79	0.06	0.75
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.74	0.78	0.04	0.77
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.74	0.88	0.14	0.77
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.75	0.79	0.04	0.77
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.74	0.79	0.05	0.77
18th c	IB 270 4to	0.74	0.80	0.06	0.77
18th c	SÁM 33	0.77*	n/a	n/a	0.77*
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.74	0.81	0.07	0.78
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.77	0.82	0.05	0.80
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.79	0.81	0.02	0.80
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.76	0.83	0.07	0.81
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.75	0.89	0.14	0.81
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.79	0.85	0.06	0.82
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.80	0.84	0.04	0.82
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.76	0.92	0.16	0.82
18th c	IB 322 4to	0.83	0.89	0.06	0.86
	Average	0.70	0.76	0.09	0.72

Table 11b: W:H<sub>WB</sub> of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed separately. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	17th-19th c Call number	W:H <sub>leaf</sub>	W:H <sub>WB</sub>	
		MDN	MAX	MDN
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.62	0.60	0.57
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.63	0.61	0.59
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.64	0.63	0.61
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.66	0.62	0.61
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.64	0.63	0.61
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.65	0.63	0.62
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.63	0.65	0.62
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.67	0.64	0.63
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.64	0.74	0.65
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.66	0.69	0.66
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.76*	0.75*	0.73*
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.77*	0.77*	0.74*
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.82	0.79	0.75
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.80	0.78	0.77
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.84	0.88	0.77
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.79	0.79	0.77
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.79	0.79	0.77
18th c	IB 270 4to	0.77	0.80	0.77
18th c	SÁM 33	0.87*	n/a	0.77*
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.78	0.81	0.78
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.79	0.82	0.80
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.78	0.81	0.80
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.78	0.83	0.81
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.82	0.89	0.81
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.80	0.85	0.82
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.79	0.84	0.82
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.79	0.92	0.82
18th c	IB 322 4to	0.79	0.89	0.86
	Average	0.73	0.76	0.73

Table 11c: Correlation between W:H<sub>leaf</sub> and W:H<sub>WB</sub> of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of MDN W:H<sub>WB</sub>. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.



	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	W:H <sub>leaf</sub> MDN	W+H MAX
18th c	IB 322 4to	0.79	333
18th c	IB 261 4to	0.82	346
18th c	AM Acc. 50	0.79	348
18th c	Kall 612 4to	0.78	353
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	0.79	354
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	0.82	359
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	0.80	360
18th c	AM 469 4to	0.78	364
17th c	AM 465 4to	0.84	365
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	0.80	365
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	0.78	365
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	0.79	368
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	0.79	368
18th c	IB 270 4to	0.77	372
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	0.79	375
18th c	SAM 33	0.87*	383*
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	0.67	455
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0.64	479
17th c	AM 396 fol.	0.64	480
17th c	AM 136 fol.	0.66	481
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	0.66	490
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	0.62	509
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	0.65	510
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	0.63	539
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	0.64	540
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.63	548
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	0.77*	542*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	0.76*	601*
	Average	0.73	415

*Table 11d:* Correlation between W:H<sub>leaf</sub> and W+H of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of W+H. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	WB%			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	42.3	47.0	4.7	44.1
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	46.7	56.4	9.7	51.6
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	54.1	59.0	4.9	56.1
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	58.2	63.8	5.6	60.8
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	59.3	63.7	4.4	61.2
18th c	AM 469 4to	60.5	65.7	5.2	62.2
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	61.0	64.8	3.8	62.5
17th c	AM 136 fol.	60.4	65.9	5.5	63.5
18th c	IB 322 4to	56.4	67.9	11.5	64.2
17th c	AM 465 4to	62.2	66.3	4.1	64.5
18th c	Kall 612 4to	60.9	67.4	6.5	64.7
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	60.0	69.1	9.1	64.8
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	61.3	69.3	8.0	65.2
18th c	IB 270 4to	60.5	72.7	12.2	66.8
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	63.1	75.2	12.1	67.0
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	65.0*	70.0*	5.0*	67.0*
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	64.0	70.1	6.1	67.1
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	66.6	69.3	2.7	67.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	66.5	70.5	4.0	68.7
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	67.8	77.9	10.1	70.9
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	68.7	73.9	5.2	71.1
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	69.9*	75.1*	5.2*	72.0*
18th c	IB 261 4to	69.7	75.9	6.2	73.2
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	71.5	78.2	6.7	75.4
17th c	AM 396 fol.	74.5	78.5	4.0	76.4
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	75.0	78.5	3.5	77.4
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	78.3	82.1	3.8	80.2
18th c	SAM 33	88.8*	n/a	n/a	88.8*
	Average	62.7	68.9	6.4	65.7

*Table 11e:* MIN, MAX, DIFF, and MDN results for WB% of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of median. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	UR			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	3.8	4.7	0.9	4.2
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	4.1	5.3	1.2	4.5
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	4.7	5.7	1.0	5.1
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	5.0	5.6	0.6	5.2
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	5.1	5.9	0.8	5.4
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	5.0	6.2	1.2	5.4
17th c	AM 136 fol.	4.8	6.4	1.6	5.5
17th c	AM 465 4to	5.1	6.0	0.9	5.5
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	5.3*	6.2*	0.9*	5.6*
18th c	IB 322 4to	5.3	6.3	1.0	5.8
18th c	AM Acc. 50	5.6	6.2	0.6	5.9
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	5.5	6.5	1.0	5.9
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	5.0	7.1	2.1	6.0
17th c	AM 396 fol.	5.9	6.7	0.8	6.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	5.8*	6.9*	1.1*	6.2*
18th c	IB 270 4to	5.7	6.8	1.1	6.2
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	4.4	7.2	2.8	6.4
18th c	AM 469 4to	5.9	7.1	1.2	6.4
18th c	IB 261 4to	6.1	7.9	1.8	6.9
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	6.4	7.3	0.9	6.9
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	6.8	7.3	0.5	7.0
18th c	SAM 33	7.0	7.1	0.1	7.0
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	7.0	7.4	0.4	7.3
18th c	Kall 612 4to	6.9	7.9	1.0	7.3
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.3	9.3	3.0	7.6
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	7.0	8.6	1.6	7.9
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	7.6	8.4	0.8	7.9
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	8.4	10.7	2.3	9.7
	Average	5.7	6.9	1.2	6.3

Table 11f: MIN, MAX, and MDN results for UR of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of median. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	17th-19th c Call number	#lines			
		MIN	MAX	DIFF	MDN
18th c	SAM 33	29*	30*	1*	29*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	55*	56*	1*	55*
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	35	37	2	36
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	31	34	3	32
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	34	37	3	35
18th c	Kall 612 4to	21	24	3	23
18th c	AM Acc. 50	27	30	3	28
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	28	32	4	30
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	32	36	4	34
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	23	27	4	25
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	22	27	5	24
18th c	IB 322 4to	23	28	5	26
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	33	39	6	36
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	30	36	6	33
18th c	AM 469 4to	23	29	6	26
18th c	IB 261 4to	23	29	6	26
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	26	32	6	29
17th c	AM 465 4to	27	34	7	31
18th c	IB 270 4to	25	32	7	29
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	39*	46*	7*	42*
17th c	AM 396 fol.	39	47	8	44
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	18	27	9	23
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	43	53	10	48
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	33	44	11	40
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	20	31	11	25
17th c	AM 136 fol.	37	50	13	44
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	60	74	14	69
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	39	65	26	45
	Average	30	37	7	34

Table 11g: MIN, MAX, DIFF and MDN results for #lines of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order of 'DIFF'. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SÁM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	# <sub>signs</sub> MDN
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	25.9
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	26.5
18th c	Kall 612 4to	29.5
17th c	AM 136 fol.	30.3
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	31.0
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	31.3
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	31.4
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	31.5
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	31.6
18th c	IB 322 4to	31.8
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	32.5
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	33.0
17th c	AM 465 4to	33.5
18th c	IB 261 4to	34.1
18th c	IB 270 4to	34.1
18th c	SAM 33	34.3
18th c	AM Acc. 50	35.2
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	35.6
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	35.7
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	36.4
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	38.7
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	39.1*
18th c	AM 469 4to	40.9
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	41.5
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	41.9
17th c	AM 396 fol.	43.0
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	43.6*
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	50.6
	Average	34.7

*Table 11b:* #<sub>signs</sub> of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	# <sub>words</sub> MDN
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	6.7
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.8
18th c	Kall 612 4to	7.0
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	7.5
18th c	IB 322 4to	7.7
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	7.8
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	8.0
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	8.0
17th c	AM 136 fol.	8.1
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	8.2
18th c	SAM 33	8.3
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	8.4
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	8.6
17th c	AM 465 4to	9.4
18th c	AM Acc. 50	9.5
18th c	IB 270 4to	9.5
18th c	AM 469 4to	9.7
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	9.7
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	9.7
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	10.2
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	11.9
18th c	IB 261 4to	12.4
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	12.9
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	13.0*
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	13.4
17th c	AM 396 fol.	14.2
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	14.8
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	15.0*
	Average	9.6

Table 11i: #<sub>words</sub> of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	ABBR% MDN
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	0.0
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	2.7
18th c	Kall 612 4to	4.3
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	4.8
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	5.2
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	5.6
18th c	AM 469 4to	5.6
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	5.7
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	5.7
18th c	IB 322 4to	6.0
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	6.1
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	6.2
18th c	SAM 33	7.2
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	7.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	7.9
17th c	AM 136 fol.	8.3
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	9.1
17th c	AM 465 4to	9.7
18th c	ÍB 270 4to	11.2
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	12.3
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	14.0
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	14.3
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	15.9
17th c	AM 396 fol.	18.0
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	19.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	20.1*
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	21.6*
18th c	ÍB 261 4to	22.1
	Average	9.0

*Table 11j:* ABBR% of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously.

	<i>17th-19th c</i> Call number	signs/dm <sup>2</sup> AVG
18th c	NKS 1219 fol.	129.9
18th c	Lbs 1415 4to	256.4
18th c	Kall 612 4to	281.0
17th c	BL Add 4867 fol.	287.3
18th c	NKS 1788 4to	292.9
18th c	Lbs 437 4to	302.8
17th c	NKS 1220 fol.	305.2
19th c	Lbs 747 fol.	362.9
18th c	Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	369.9
18th c	IB 322 4to	379.4
17th c	Lbs 222 fol.	386.9
17th c	AM 136 fol.	398.0
18th c	Thott 1765 4to	406.9
17th c	Lbs 3505 4to	409.9
18th c	IB 270 4to	417.8
18th c	SAM 33	420.4*
18th c	AM 469 4to	433.3
17th c	AM 465 4to	439.7
18th c	AM Acc. 50	450.8
18th c	IB 261 4to	467.2
17th c (v)	GKS 1003 fol.	476.2*
17th c	AM 163 i fol.	522.3
17th c	AM 396 fol.	636.0
18th c	Thott 1776 4to III	651.1
17th c (v)	<i>The Lost Codex</i>	677.7*
17th c	AM 555 c 4to	717.0
17th c	AM 163 d fol.	760.0
17th c	AM 555 a 4to	779.4
	Average	433.8

Table 11k: signs/dm<sup>2</sup> of private reading manuscripts of *Njáls saga* in ascending order. For explanation of color codes see Table 15. The results from the vellum manuscripts are marked by an asterisk and not included in the calculation of the overall average, since vellum manuscripts were discussed previously. The results for SAM 33 are marked by an asterisk and not included since the manuscript is heavily fragmented.



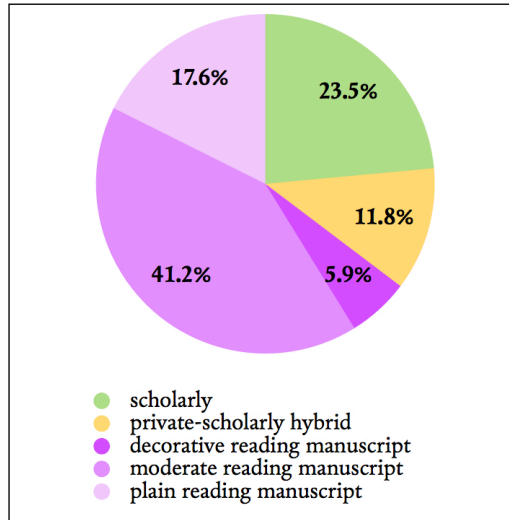


Figure 2: Percentages of different types of paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga*.

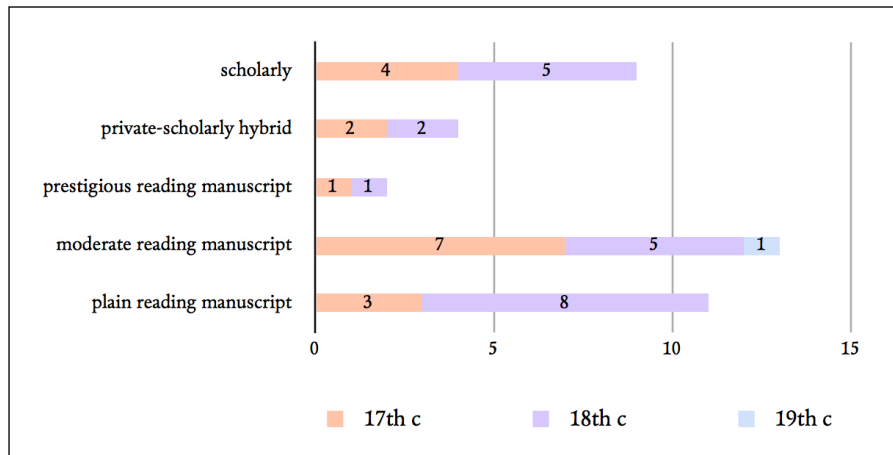


Figure 3: Distribution and number of types of paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* by century.

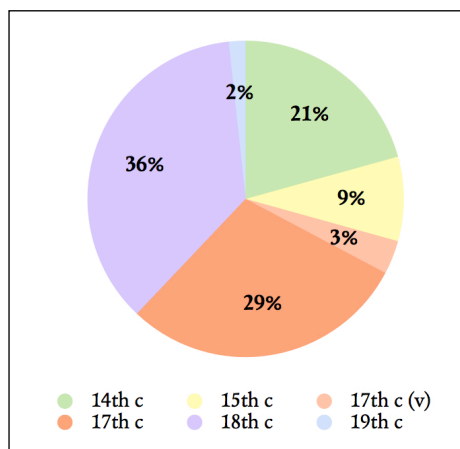


Figure 4: Percentages of manuscripts by century.

## 6. *‘Njáls saga er þetta. Loftur hefur lesið mig.’ History, Readership, and Reception of the Njáls saga manuscripts*

### 6.1. Introduction

The premise of this chapter is to offer the reader a glimpse into the history, readership, and reception of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, based on codicological and paratextual features (see below for a definition of paratextual features). Instead of only brushing the surface of all 61 manuscripts and fragments, the chapter uses a selection of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts as case studies in order to shed light on various aspects of the manuscripts’ history, ownership, readership, and reception.

The section on the history of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts shows how codicological and paratextual features can aid in reconstructing the otherwise lost history of a manuscript. The fragments belonging to *The Lost Codex* as well as *Landakotsbók* will be used as case studies (see Chapter 6.2.).

The discussion of readership focuses on how codicological and paratextual features as well as the manuscript context, that is the various texts preserved in the same codex, can be utilized to speculate about the purpose and intended audience (= readership) of a manuscript. As Lethbridge (2014) points out, a more detailed analysis of the types of texts that are preserved together with *Njáls saga* in the medieval and post-medieval manuscripts would be a desirable project, in order to gain a better understanding of the readership of *Njáls saga* (77). This goes, however, beyond the possibilities of this dissertation. AM 396 fol. will, therefore, serve as the only detailed example and case-study (see Chapter 6.3.). Some general observations about the manuscript context of *Njáls saga* can, nonetheless, be mentioned here. Of the seventeen medieval vellum manuscripts (AM 162 b fol. β and AM 162 b fol. δ are considered one codex here), six likely only contained *Njáls saga*; one (*Möðruvallabók*) contained other Icelandic Family sagas, but it has been argued that *Njáls saga* and possibly the lost *Gauks saga Trandilssonar* were not originally intended to be part of the same codex (see e.g., Jón Helgason 1959:103; Chesnutt 2010:152; Lethbridge 2014:61-64); lastly, AM 309 4to contained other Icelandic Family sagas and excerpts from *Flateyjarbók*.

AM 309 4to, is, however, also a problematic case since, based on the difference in layout, the *Njáls saga* section did – as previously noted – not originally belong to the codex (see also Lethbridge 2014:60). Nine medieval manuscripts are too fragmented to say with certainty whether they contained other texts besides *Njáls saga*.<sup>244</sup> Of the forty-one post-medieval manuscripts, two manuscripts (*The Lost Codex* and SÁM 33) are too fragmented to determine the original setup of the codex, although one might assume that *The Lost Codex* contained other texts as well (see Chapter 6.2.1.). Twenty manuscripts contain only *Njáls saga*; the majority of these (10 mss.) are scholarly or private-scholarly hybrids, six are moderate reading manuscripts, three are plain reading manuscripts, and one (NKS 1219 fol.) is a decorative reading manuscript. The remaining manuscripts preserve Icelandic Family sagas (11 mss.: 1 scholarly ms., 1 private-scholarly hybrid, 2 decorative mss., 4 moderate mss., 3 plain mss.), Chivalric sagas (6 mss.: 1 scholarly ms., 1 decorative ms., 2 moderate mss., 2 plain mss.), Legendary sagas (4 mss.: 1 decorative ms., 1 moderate ms., 2 plain mss.), and other types of literature such as Kings' sagas, Bishops' sagas, religious literature, *rímur*, chronicles, and so forth (12 mss.: 1 scholarly ms., 1 private-scholarly hybrid, 7 moderate mss., 3 plain mss.).<sup>245</sup> Overall, manuscripts that contain *Njáls saga* and other Icelandic family sagas and *þættir*, do not contain Legendary or Chivalric sagas (although they may contain other types of literature). *Vice versa*, within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, codices also preserving Legendary and/or Chivalric sagas, do not contain any Icelandic Family saga aside from *Njáls saga*. The only exception is the two-volume compilation GKS 1002-1003 fol., which contains Icelandic Family sagas, as well as Legendary and Chivalric sagas. Nonetheless, even in this case it can be observed that the Icelandic Family sagas are contained in one volume (GKS 1003 fol.), while the Legendary and Chivalric sagas are preserved in the other (GKS 1002 fol.). Lethbridge (2014) notes that the fact that *Njáls saga* was frequently preserved as a stand-alone text (particularly in medieval codices) is unusual and may highlight *Njáls saga*'s superior status among the corpus of Icelandic Family sagas (57, 77). Similarly, the

<sup>244</sup> Lethbridge (2014) offers a more detailed analysis of the medieval *Njáls saga* manuscripts and the phenomenon that they often only contain *Njáls saga* as a stand-alone text.

<sup>245</sup> For an overview of the texts preserved in each manuscript, consult the manuscripts' descriptions in Chapter 4.

observation that *Njáls saga* is often the only Icelandic Family saga in manuscripts that otherwise contain Legendary sagas, Chivalric sagas, religious literature, or miscellaneous other texts, supports the argument that *Njáls saga* held a high status and was particularly popular.

The reception of *Njáls saga* (and its characters) can partly be reconstructed through paratextual features, most notably marginal notes by scribes and later readers. Due to the high number of manuscripts and fragments, it is impossible to discuss the paratextual features of all codices in detail. Accordingly, Chapter 6.4. begins with a general, statistical overview of these features, and then moves into a more detailed discussion of selected examples.

## 6.2. Four Pieces to the Puzzle and the case of *Landakotsbók*: Reconstructing the History of Two *Njáls saga* Manuscripts.

### 6.2.1. *The Lost Codex*: Where? When? Who?

As noted in Chapter 4.2.3., the vellum fragments AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, and likely the now lost fragment Þjms. I, all originally belonged to the same codex. This can be proven based on paleographic and codicological features. The script of AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, and JS fragm. 4 is identical. Moreover, codicological features that can be calculated even for the heavily fragmented Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4, correspond well with that of AM 921 4to I. Lbs fragm. 2 has a UR of 5.3-5.6 (MDN: 5.4), almost identical with AM 921 4to I (UR: 5.4-5.6, MDN: 5.5). JS fragm. 4 has a slightly higher UR (6.2). However, this does not exclude the possibility that the fragment belonged to the same codex, since variations in text density are common (see Chapter 5). The reconstructed UR of *The Lost Codex* is between 5.3\* and 6.2\* (MDN: 5.6\*), which is a DIFF of 0.8 between MIN and MAX results. The *Njáls saga* text in the other post-medieval vellum manuscript, GKS 1003 fol., for example, has a UR of 5.8 to 6.9 (MDN: 6.2); a DIFF of 1.1 between MIN and MAX UR. All three fragments have a comparably high ABBR% (Lbs fragm. 2: 23.1; AM 921 4to I: 20.6; JS. fragm. 4: 19.4), resulting in a reconstructed ABBR% of *The Lost Codex* of 21.6\*, slightly higher but comparable to that of the presumed exemplar, *Oddabók* (ABBR%: 18.5). Similarly, the #<sub>signs</sub> and #<sub>words</sub> compare well

between the three fragments (See Table 4e). AM 921 4to I has a WB% of 69.9 to 70.4 (MDN: 70.1). Using reliable measurements of Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 and substituting fragmented measurements with those of AM 921 4to, the WB% of Lbs fragm. 2 can be estimated to have been between 70.9\* and 73.1\* (MDN: 72.0\*) and that of JS fragm. 4 between 72.9\* and 75.1\* percent (MDN: 74.0\*). The reconstructed WB% of *The Lost Codex* is 69.9\* to 75.1\* (MDN: 72.4\*), a DIFF of 5.2 between MIN and MAX result, which compares with a DIFF of 5.0 between MIN and MAX WB% of GKS 1003 fol.

Moreover, all three fragments are written in two columns and preserve the *Oddabók*-version of *Njáls saga*. The same is mentioned about the lost Þjms. I (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:712). Lbs fragm. 2 preserves Chapters 38 to 42 of *Njáls saga*; JS fragm. 4 contains Chapters 132 to 136; Þjms. I is said to begin in Chapter 136, where the fragment is almost illegible, and continues with Chapters 138 to 141 on the more legible part of the fragment (Jón Þorkelsson 1889:712-714); AM 921 4to I comprises parts of Chapter 142. JS fragm. 4, Þjms. I, and AM 921 4to I appear, therefore, to have been conjunct leaves preserving text from Chapters 132 to 142. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) states that Þjms. I has 53 lines, but that the very bottom of the writing block has been cut off (destroying one or two lines of text) (712). Its W+H can be reconstructed as 595\* mm. AM 921 4to I, which is the most complete of the fragments belonging to *The Lost Codex*, has 55-56 lines and a W+H of 601 mm, quite comparable with Þjms. I.

The fragments, which were all used as book bindings, have previously been dated to the late sixteenth or very early seventeenth century. Jón Þorkelsson (1889) dates Þjms. I to c1570 and AM 921 4to I to c1580 (773-774).<sup>246</sup> *Handrit.is* gives the date of AM 921 4to I as 1590-1610. Very few manuscripts containing family sagas exist from the period 1400-1600, likely because interest in this genre had declined by the late fourteenth century, and shifted to different genres such as Legendary and Chivalric sagas (see e.g., Hallberg 1962:142). Interest in the Icelandic Family sagas was not revived until the mid-late sixteenth century (see Chapter 1.3.). Jón Þorkelsson's dating is,

<sup>246</sup> Jón Sigurðsson even assumes that the fragment dates to the fourteenth century in a note accompanying the fragment in his hand (see also Jón Þorkelsson 1889:707).

therefore, doubtful and deserves closer examination.<sup>247</sup> Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 are dated to the first part of the seventeenth century in the printed catalogue of *Landsbókasafn* (Páll Eggert Ólason 1918-1996:2. aukabindi:1, 18), and as the discussion below demonstrates, this dating is more accurate.

A paper-copy of *Njáls saga*, preserved in the composite manuscript AM 396 fol., was written by the same scribe as the four vellum fragments. Parts of AM 396 fol. were written in 1676 and 1687 by Jón Ólafsson in the Westfjords and the manuscript shows close connections to the North, Westfjords, and Dalir-area of Iceland (see Chapter 6.3.). The *Njáls saga* part in AM 396 fol. appears to be older than Jón Ólafsson's sections, judging by a marginal note written in Jón Ólafsson's hand within *Njáls saga* (fol. 134v<sup>248</sup>). Slay (1960a) suggests that AM 396 fol. could be a direct copy of *Oddabók*, and that the script might be that of Páll Sveinsson (148), who wrote another manuscript containing *Njáls saga* in 1670 in the south of Iceland (GKS 1003 fol.). My own research, however, makes me doubt that the hands of AM 396 fol. and GKS 1003 fol. are identical. They are very similar, but differences in certain letter forms (where Páll Sveinsson shows great consistency) make me believe that AM 396 fol., and therefore also the four fragments, were not written by Páll.<sup>249</sup> Nonetheless, the similarities between the hands suggests that all stem from the same time period (mid-17th century).

Concerning the provenance of the four fragments. AM 921 4to I was used as a binding for

<sup>247</sup> Even though Jón Þorkelsson's dating of AM 921 4to I must be revised, the fact that he dates AM 921 4to I and Þjms. I to the same time period adds to the assumption that Þjms. I belonged to the same codex as AM 921 4to I, and correspondingly Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4.

<sup>248</sup> Other marginal notes in the *Njáls saga* section could also be by Jón Ólafsson, but the added verse on fol. 134v resembles Jón Ólafsson's hand in the first sections of AM 369 fol. most clearly.

<sup>249</sup> In order to get a better idea of Páll Sveinsson's hand and his consistency in certain letterforms throughout time, I consulted other manuscripts in his hand, namely AM 157 h fol., AM 143 8vo (written 1695), and AM 136 a 8vo (written 1694). The comparison revealed very little variation between his hand in 1670 (GKS 1003 fol.) and the late 1690s (AM 143 8vo, AM 136 a 8vo). Some of the most obvious differences between Páll Sveinsson's (PS) hand and the scribe of AM 396 fol. and *The Lost Codex* (S396/LC), are as follows: PS uses a capital A, whereas S396/LC uses an enlarged minuscule a; PS has a cross-stroke through his capital J, whereas S396/LC lacks the cross-stroke; PS has a slightly rounded capital M with a right descender (Ų), S396/LC capital M is similar but with the addition of a cross-stroke; PS uses an o-caudata (ø), whereas S396/LC mostly uses an accented o-caudata (ø); the descender of the tall s extends below the line in PS but sits on the line in S396/LC; Moreover, PS in GKS 1003 fol. appears to be using *ad* (for modern Icelandic að), whereas S396/LC uses the more antiquated *at*. Since scholars have pointed out the similarities between the scripts of Páll Sveinsson and Kolbeinn Hannesson (see, for example, Árni Magnússon's back-and-forth in attempting to assign certain manuscripts to one or the other, documented in Kälund 1909:72), *Njáls saga* in AM 396 fol. was also compared with manuscripts written by Kolbeinn (AM 143 fol., AM 160 fol., fols. 25r-54v) and it was determined that the scripts were not identical.

AM 270 8vo, a manuscript likely written by Páll Vídalín and Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík around 1720 at Víðidalstunga (NW-Iceland).<sup>250</sup> Páll Vídalín's father-in-law was the famous Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, for whom many manuscripts were written in the Westfjords. According to a note accompanying the fragment, Lbs fragm. 2 was part of the estate of chief justice Jón Pétursson, whose family connections (including priests and bishops) are closely tied to the north and west of Iceland (see "FamilySearch. Community Trees"). A note preserved with JS fragm. 4 mentions that the fragment was wrapped around a leaf from Hrafnagil in Eyjafjörður (N-Iceland). This suggests that the scribe of these fragments was working in the north or north-west of Iceland. Considering that AM 128 fol., a vellum manuscript with a similar layout and hand (containing Icelandic Family sagas) was supposedly written by Brynjólfur Jónsson at Efstaland (N-Iceland) for Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason of Hólar (Kålund 1889-1894:91; *Handrit.is*), an ancestor of the aforementioned chief justice Jón Pétursson, it seems probable that the vellum fragments (and AM 396 fol.) were also written in this area during the same time period.

Based on the size of the leaves, the writing block, and text density, it can be estimated that *Njáls saga* would have filled about 50 to 55 leaves of *The Lost Codex*. The size of the manuscript (W+H: 601 mm) is quite large. It seems very unlikely that a manuscript of this size would have contained only 55 leaves and one saga. Other large Icelandic manuscripts from the fourteenth to seventeenth century, such as *Möðruvallabók* (580 mm), *Flateyjarbók* (708 mm), AM 152 fol. (570 mm), and GKS 1002-1003 fol. (550 mm) consist of around 150 to over 200 leaves, preserving a variety of texts and all written in two columns. Even though it must be remembered that Lethbridge (2014) has pointed out the unusual high number of medieval codices preserving *Njáls saga* as a stand-alone text, GKS 1002-1003 fol. dates to a similar time period as the four fragments, suggesting that during the seventeenth-century, other factors may have decided whether to

<sup>250</sup> While the manuscript's description (see e.g., Kålund 1889-1894:471; *Handrit.is*) states that the manuscript contains additions by Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík, marginal notes in the manuscript (noticed during my own studies of the codex) mention that part of the manuscript is in the hand of Páll Vídalín ("ä Blade þessu er egenhónd sialfs auctoris Paals Lógmans Widalins," fol. 53r ["This leaf is in the handwriting of the author himself, lawman Páll Vídalín"]), while the other part is in Jón Ólafsson's hand ("Enn ä þessu; og öllu þwi epter kemur er mæn (Jons Olafssonar) egenn hónd," fol. 53r ["but this and all following [leaves] are in my own hand, Jón Ólafsson"]). Moreover, fol. 51r contains the date August 20, 1721 and location Víðidalstunga. Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík stayed at Víðidalstunga with Páll Vídalín from 1711 until 1720 when he began attending the university.

partner *Njáls saga* with other texts in one codex. *Njáls saga* in *The Lost Codex*, therefore, like in GKS 1003 fol., potentially belonged to a larger compilation.

While there are other examples of seventeenth-century vellum manuscripts in Iceland (such as AM 128 fol. and GKS 1002-1003 fol.), they are most certainly a rarity. Undoubtedly, vellum manuscripts during the seventeenth century, when paper was already readily available, were primarily produced as prestige objects, imitating the valuable medieval Icelandic manuscripts, the pride of the Icelandic nation. The two-column design and exceptional size of *The Lost Codex* add to the assumption that the manuscript was a high-status copy. Nonetheless, the space-saving design and high text density (see also Chapter 5.2.) suggest economic constraints by the producer or commissioner.

Moreover, it cannot be overlooked that *The Lost Codex* was disassembled and its leaves used for other purposes, e.g. as book bindings. While it is reasonable to assume that the *Njáls saga* section of *The Lost Codex* was completed, since some of the fragments preserve chapters towards the end of the saga, the codex itself may never have been finished or was considered dispensable soon after its completion (see below), which would explain why the *Njáls saga* section was eventually dissembled and recycled.

Since a paper manuscript of *Njáls saga* in the same hand as the four fragments is preserved in AM 396 fol., which might very well be younger than the vellum fragments, it is doubtful that the project was terminated due to the death of the scribe. It is, however, possible that the commissioner of the codex passed away and funding and/or the necessity to complete the compilation disappeared. If the codex was written in the same area where AM 128 fol. was written, it may have been commissioned by Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason of Hólar, who passed away in 1656 (see Gunnar Kristjánsson and Óskar Guðmundsson 2006:420). Alternatively, the laborious and expensive preparation of a vellum manuscript could have proven too costly and time-consuming. In this case, it seems plausible that the *Njáls saga* section in AM 396 fol., written on paper and in one column by the same scribe as *The Lost Codex*, was created as a cheaper alternative to the vellum codex. The commissioner may even have preferred the lighter and more



‘modern’ paper manuscripts to the – for him maybe – more ‘old-fashioned,’ heavier and thicker vellum codices. The now unneeded completed segments of the vellum manuscript could then be recycled, e.g. as bindings.

While the theories about why the project was abandoned cannot be proven, the above discussion shows how codicology and the history of ownership and provenance can work together to recreate to a certain extent a lost manuscript of the early- to mid-seventeenth century and its history, even if only four pieces of the puzzle exist.

### 6.2.2. *Landakotsbók*: Where? When? Who?

The Catholic Church of Iceland (Landakotskirkja) owns a manuscript containing *Njáls saga*, given the name ‘*Landakotsbók*’ by the participants of “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” project. The manuscript likely came into the possession of Landakotskirkja during the time (c1896-1923) of prefect Marteinn Meulenberg, who later, in 1929, became the first Catholic Bishop of Iceland after the Reformation.<sup>251</sup> Iceland had been invited to participate in a World Exhibition in the Vatican in 1925, and prefect Meulenberg took abroad valuable items he had been provided with by the Icelandic people for this occasion. The newspaper *Lögrjetta* published a brief article about the exhibition on July 8, 1925. The article states that “Það, sem sýnt var hjeðan voru bækur, fornar og nýjar, í ýmsum útgáfum, m.a. handrit af Njálu, stór og falleg bók”<sup>252</sup> (*Lögrjetta* 1925:1). It is plausible that the manuscript referred to is *Landakotsbók*.

Even though it can be determined with some likelihood when and why the Catholic Church received this manuscript, next to nothing is known about its origin. Two faint signatures of a

<sup>251</sup> As previously mentioned (see fn. 160), this information is based on a list of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, provided to me by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir. Additionally, a letter exists, dated to August 26, 2008, which confirms that the manuscript was loaned to the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in order to take pictures. The letter, signed by Father Jakob Rolland, Chancellor of the Catholic Church in Iceland (cited as Rolland 2008) gives a brief description of the manuscript and mentions that a blue stamp with the sigla of the Catholic Church “eins og var fyrir hundrað árum” [‘as it was one hundred years ago’] can be seen on the bottom of the first page of *Landakotsbók*. The rough dating of the stamp to c1908 confirms the general time frame of the acquisition (c1896-1923). – For more information on Bishop Marteinn Meulenberg, see Haraldur Hannesson (1990).

<sup>252</sup> Translation: ‘What was shown from here were books, old and new, in various editions, amongst others a manuscript of *Njáls saga*, a large and beautiful book.’

Jóhann Árnason (page 1<sup>253</sup>) and an Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir (page 478), both likely from the nineteenth century, can be found in the margins, but these people cannot be identified with absolute certainty.<sup>254</sup> Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir also writes a geographical location, ending in ‘stöðum,’ next to her name, but the place name cannot be deciphered with certainty.<sup>255</sup> According to *Íslendingabók*<sup>256</sup> (1997), one Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir was born 1779 and passed away August 1, 1812, but nothing else is mentioned about her. The censuses of 1840, 1845, 1850, 1855, 1860, 1880, and 1890 all list only one Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir (occasionally listed as Ása Ásbjarnardóttir or Ása Ásbjarnard.; see “Manntalsvefur Þjóðskjalasafns Íslands”). According to *Íslendingabók* (1997) she was born October 5, 1830 and died August 6 1911. She lived with her parents, Ásbjörn Ásbjörnsson and Hallný Helgasdóttir, at Fell (Norður-Múlar-district, NE-Iceland) when the 1840 and 1845 censuses were taken. In the censuses of 1850 and 1855 she is listed as an unmarried *vinnukona* at Gunnarsstaðir in Þistilfjörður (NE-Iceland). According to *Íslendingabók* (1997), she was *húsfreyja* at Skógargerði (Suður-Þingey-district, N-Iceland). She is widowed in the 1880 census and listed as a *húsmóðir* at Syðri-Tunga (Suður-Þingey-district). In 1890 she lives by doing manual labor at Hóll (Suður-Þingey-district). Lastly, she is listed at Oddi (Suður-Þingey-district) as *aðkomandi* and at Hóll as *leigiandi* in the census of 1901. It is clear that this Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir, who is the most likely candidate, lived the majority of her life in the northeast and north of Iceland.<sup>257</sup> The name Jóhann Árnason is too common to come to a definite conclusion, particularly since the name Jóhannes is occasionally spelled merely Jóhann, which adds to the list of possible candidates. It can, however, be mentioned that according to the 1890 census, an infant Jóhann Árnason lived at Gunnarsstaðir in Þistilfjörður with his parents Árni Davíðsson and Arnbjörg

<sup>253</sup> See fn. 161.

<sup>254</sup> As previously mentioned (see Chapter 4.3.3.), the bottom half of the final page (page 479) has been cut away, presumably destroying additional marginal notes or possibly – quite unfortunately – a colophon.

<sup>255</sup> While quite a few scholars, upon my request, have tried to decipher the place name from a photo I took of the page in the manuscript, no one has come to a clear conclusion. Gunnarsstaðir has been a suggestion, which, if true, would help identify Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir with certainty.

<sup>256</sup> As previously noted, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir kindly provided me with information from the Icelandic *Íslendingabók.is* website.

<sup>257</sup> The census of 1901 lists a seven-year-old Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir, the daughter of the widow Kristín Jónsdóttir, *húsmóðir* at Kollafoss (Húnavatn-district, N-Iceland). According to *Íslendingabók* (1997), however, she died at a young age in 1903, and is, therefore, unlikely the person who wrote her name in *Landakotsbók*.

Jóhannesardóttir.<sup>258</sup> He is still listed at Gunnarsstaðir in the 1910 census the *ráðsmaður* for his father, and as the *húsbóndi* at the farm in 1920. As noted, a definite identification of the two signatures is at this point not possible. Even if these people and location are identified, the notes were later additions and may not aid in determining the date and provenance of the manuscript.

Based on layout, text density and WB%, it was established that *Landakotsbók* is a scholarly copy (see Chapter 5.3.1.), which opens up the possibility to determine its history based on these codicological characteristics. Furthering the argument that *Landakotsbók* is a scholarly copy is the existence of Latin comments in the manuscript that replace passages in the exemplar that were difficult to read, missing, or added later. These comments correspond exactly with sections that are difficult to read, added, or missing in the fourteenth-century *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to). On page 28 of *Landakotsbók*, the scribe writes “Hic scriptura unius folii in Codice, qvod ordine 7um est, vetustate exesa, legi non potest. id tamen ipsum folium diversa et multo recentiore manu exaratum est.”<sup>259</sup> Fol. 7 in *Reykjabók* was added in the seventeenth century to fill a lacuna. Jón Helgason (1962) points out that “both the ink and the writing are of very poor quality” on fol. 7 (V); and the description of *Reykjabók* on *Handrit.is* states that the script on fol. 7 is “so indistinct and blurred that it can only be partially read.” A second note in *Landakotsbók* on page 83 mentions “hic dimidium paginæ in Membrana legi neqvīt.”<sup>260</sup> The missing passage corresponds to a section in *Reykjabók* on fol. 19r, where the ink is indeed very worn off and difficult to decipher. Lastly, the scribe of *Landakotsbók* notes on page 478 “hic sedecim versus in Membrana vetustate delete legi neqveunt.”<sup>261</sup> This, again, corresponds with a worn and dark passage on fol. 92v in *Reykjabók*.

Due to the preciseness of these comments in *Landakotsbók* and the fact that they do not appear in any other manuscript or early print editions of *Njáls saga*, it is quite certain that *Landakotsbók* is a direct copy of *Reykjabók* or a very precise reproduction of a direct copy. While the paleography of *Landakotsbók* at first glance suggested that the manuscript may date to the

<sup>258</sup> According to Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication), this Jóhann Árnason (1890-1971) is listed as ‘Jóhannes’ in the online database *Íslendingabók* (1997) and lived at Gunnarsstaðir his entire life.

<sup>259</sup> Translation: ‘Here the script of one leaf in the codex, the seventh, faded by age, cannot be read. The leaf, however, is written in a different and much more recent hand.’

<sup>260</sup> Translation: ‘Here, half a page in the manuscript cannot be read.’

<sup>261</sup> Translation: ‘Here, sixteen lines in the manuscript, faded by age, cannot be read.’

nineteenth century, further research has shown that the defining criteria (the existence of Modern Icelandic accent marks and *ð*) already show up in earlier manuscripts from the mid- to late-eighteenth century, particularly in scholarly copies, such as those written by Magnús Ioensen (NKS 1689 4to) and Th. M. Isfjord (NKS 1144 fol.). Additionally, other scholarly manuscripts from the same time period contain similar Latin comments about their exemplar, such as NKS 40 fol., written by Guðmundur Helgason Ísfold.

Considering the fact that *Landakotsbók* appears to be a direct copy, which preserves the text of fol. 34 of *Reykjabók* – a leaf that was lost presumably between 1780 and 1809 (Helgason 1962:XIX) – the manuscript must have been written before 1780, likely between 1760-1770, when the aforementioned scribes of scholarly copies and others were most active. Moreover, since *Reykjabók* was in Copenhagen since the early eighteenth century, *Landakotsbók* must have been copied there.<sup>262</sup> The watermarks in the paper of the manuscript support the dating. Two watermarks were detected: “C & I Honig” and a so-called “Pro Patria” watermark. Churchill (1985) lists the durations of major Dutch watermarks and offers a time-span from 1683 to 1799 for the Pro Patria watermarks ([28]). The online *Thomas L. Gravell Watermark Archive* (Mosser and Sullivan II 1996) includes Pro Patria watermarks in documents dated between 1733 and the 1820s, including an example (PRO.009.1) with a countermark “J. Honig & Zoonen” (WORD.063.1) which was used for a letter by Thomas Jefferson in 1788. Most Pro Patria watermarks in Heawood’s catalogue (1950) date between the 1720s to 1790, with the majority of examples in documents dating between the 1750s and 1760s; one Pro Patria example dated to 1724-26 has a “Honig” countermark (but without the initials C & I) (Heawood 1950:Pl. 491:Nr. 3697).<sup>263</sup> The inclusion of the initials to the renowned Dutch papermaker’s mark appears to be a

<sup>262</sup> *Reykjabók* was first taken abroad 1652 by Þorkell Arngrímsson, who gave it to Jacob Golius. After Árni Magnússon acquired the manuscript from Niels Foss in 1707, he had it brought back to Iceland, where his brother Jón copied the text (see KB Add. 565 4to, AM 467 4to, ÍB 241 4to), and likely kept the manuscript until 1722 when it was returned to Denmark (see e.g. *Handrit.is*; Kålund 1909:31-32; Jón Helgason 1962:XVI).

<sup>263</sup> Pro Patria watermarks were also produced in papermills in Norway and Denmark (Fiskaa and Nordstrand 1978:270-277, 409; Voorn 1959:16, Nr. X.2), but their appearance is far more rudimentary compared to the Pro Patria mark in *Landakotsbók* and comparable watermarks produced in the Netherlands.

later addition. Voorn (1960) points out that the name “C & I Honig” was used from the mid-eighteenth century onward (176, 135).<sup>264</sup>

A comparison of the script in *Landakotsbók* with the handwriting of known scribes, including the aforementioned Magnús Ioensen, Guðmundur Helgason Ísfold, and Th. M. Ísfjord, did not lead to the identification of the scribe of *Landakotsbók*. Some scripts, particularly that of Guðmundur Helgason Ísfold, are very similar, strengthening the argument for the dating of the manuscript, but none are identical. The closest resemblance was found in a section in Thott 984 fol. (see Chapter 4.3.3.) preserving *Hrafn saga Sveinbjarnarsonar* (fols. 1295-1333), with a similar pagination, script, method to begin chapters, and possibly watermark, but the scribe of this section of the manuscript was also unknown, although it was likely also produced in Copenhagen, since Jón Þorkelsson (1889) states that the entire collection was written for Otto Thott (746).

Even though the scribe cannot be identified, it is very likely that the manuscript was produced in Copenhagen in the mid- to late-eighteenth century. Possible commissioners may have been the aforementioned Otto Thott, manuscript collector Peter Frederick Suhm, or the Lutheran Bishop Hannes Finnsson, who also had an extended manuscript collection. Suhm commissioned the first Latin translation of *Njáls saga* in the 1770s, based on the first printed edition, which was based on *Reykjabók* (see Chapter 3). The manuscripts written by some of the aforementioned scribes (NKS 1689 4to, NKS 40 fol., and NKS 1144 fol.) were originally preserved in his collection, and he may, therefore, have had an interest in and the means to acquire a copy of *Reykjabók*. ÍBR 78 4to, a register of the manuscripts of the deceased Bishop Hannes Finnsson lists a *Njáls saga* (in Quarto; fol. 7v). None of the existing manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are said to have belonged to Bishop Hannes Finnsson, which makes it possible that *Landakotsbók* could be the manuscript referred to in the register. Hannes had studied in Copenhagen, and then moved back to Iceland upon his father’s request in 1767. He returned to Copenhagen from 1770 until 1777, where he collaborated amongst others with Suhm, and was involved in the publication of several Old Norse-Icelandic

<sup>264</sup> A scribble in the top margin of page 472 in *Landakotsbók*, could potentially be the number/year 1777, although the lines look like mere pen trials at first glance.

texts (see Gunnar Kristjánsson and Óskar Guðmundsson 2006:65-66). If Hannes Finnsson was involved in the production of *Landakotsbók*, it would be possible that he brought the manuscript to Iceland in 1777. If the identification of Ása Ásbjörnsdóttir and corresponding north or northeastern location of the manuscript during the nineteenth century is correct, however, it is unclear what the exact connection between Hannes and this area of Iceland is.

While a lot of *Landakotsbók*'s history remains speculation, its codicological features, particularly layout and text density, in combination with textual and paleographic analysis, nonetheless, allow a placement of it in time and space and a determination of its purpose: A scholarly copy.

### 6.3. AM 396 fol.: The Intended Readership of an Eighteenth-Century Patchwork Manuscript

Chapter 5 has illustrated that codicological features allow us to distinguish various types of vellum and paper manuscripts (scholarly, private-scholarly hybrids, decorative, moderate, and plain reading manuscripts). These types are dependent on the purpose and the intended readership of the manuscripts in question.

The title page (fol. 2r) of AM 396 fol.<sup>265</sup> identifies the codex as a “THESAURUS HISTORICUS Edur Fröðleiks-rikkur Sagna Fiesiödur,”<sup>266</sup> alluding to the fact that the manuscript was compiled not only for entertainment but also educational purposes. It also mentions that the codex was compiled and bound in 1731. AM 396 fol. is a so-called composite manuscript, a manuscript put together from various parts written by different scribes and potentially from different time periods that were bound to form a single unit. I generally refer to it as a patchwork manuscript. Codicology, paratextual features, and manuscript context (the various texts preserved together in one codex) can be used not only to establish the history of this

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<sup>265</sup> The title page is unusual in that someone cut out a picture-framed piece of the original title page and then replaced it with presumably the (almost) exact same text. The reason behind this is unclear. If someone wanted to replace maybe an older title page it would have seemed more logical to either use a completely new leaf or to cut out a frame that would take away the entire original title, rather than leave parts of the text behind.

<sup>266</sup> Translation: ‘Thesaurus historicus or historical treasure, rich in knowledge.’

manuscript, but also to shed light on its purpose and readership, particularly as it relates to the political and intellectual trends during the time it was put together.

That AM 396 fol. is a patchwork manuscript is supported by the existence of two, slightly disagreeing, tables of contents: one on fol. 1r and another (glued onto a leaf) towards the middle of the manuscript on fol. 99r. Neither gives a completely accurate picture of the texts preserved in the manuscript or their order.<sup>267</sup> The table on fol. 1r lists the contents as follows: I. *Hungurvaka med Nockrumm Ættartøllum*, II. *Frásögn af Jóni Biskupe Ara Syne, hans Sonum Ara og Sera Byrne, og umm þeirra Afgang*, III. *Saga af Jone Øgmunds Syne Hola Biskups*, IV. *Vatnsdæla*, V. *Níala L [sic!]*, VI. *Laxdæla*, and VII. *Eyrbyggja. Frásögn af Jóni biskupi Arasyni, hans sonum Ara og Birni, og um þeirra afgang*, likely refers to a section in AM 396 fol., which actually follows *Jóns saga helga* (Nr. III) in the manuscript. The table of contents on fol. 99r is identical to the one on fol. 1r, except that *Vatnsdæla saga* is listed as the last text. The differences between the two tables and the order of contents in the manuscript shows that parts of this manuscript were flexible units. They were potentially bound together in an order different from what the compiler had intended right from the beginning, or put together in a different sequence when the manuscript was later rebound (see below).

Codicological features (including layout and text density, see e.g., Table 12<sup>268</sup>), a difference in paper (illustrated in part by the presence of different water marks in different sections), and paleographic evidence suggest that most likely six individual manuscripts or parts of manuscripts ('codicological units' = CU) were bound together in 1731 to create AM 396 fol. CU1 was, according to a colophon on fol. 65v written in 1676 by Jón Ólafsson at Melanes in the Westfjords. It contains *Hungrvaka* (fols. 3r-10v), *Þorláks saga helga* (fols. 10v-20r), *Páls saga biskups* ("Frásögn hin sérlegasta af Páli Jónssyni Skálholtsbiskupi, og fleirum öðrum biskupum") (fols. 20r-27v, continued on fols. 34r-49v), *Jóns saga helga* (fols. 50r-65v), and *kvæði* (66r-69r). CU2 was written by an unknown scribe during the eighteenth century, possibly in the Dalir-district (see below). It contains *Biskupaannálar Jóns Egilssonar* (fols. 27v-34r). The younger leaves have been

<sup>267</sup> See Chapter 4.3.2. for the contents of AM 396 fol.

<sup>268</sup> The table is located immediately following section 6.3..

inserted within CU1, occasionally utilizing free space in Jón Ólafsson's section. CU3 contains *Um Jón Arason biskup* (fols. 66r-75v) in the same hand as CU2. The scribe of CU4 (fols. 76r-99r), containing *Vatnsdæla saga*, is also unknown and the dating of this section is unclear (late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth century). *Njáls saga* (fols. 100r-145v) is CU5 of AM 396 fol.. The scribe of this section is unknown, but the script is, as mentioned, identical to that of *The Lost Codex* and most likely also a marginal note on fol. 51v in *Oddabók* (see also Chapter 6.2.1.). Lastly, CU6, containing *Laxdæla saga* (fols. 146r-180v) and *Eyrbyggja saga* (fols. 181r-201v) is again written by Jón Ólafsson, this time in 1687 at Lambavatn (Westfjords) according to the colophons on fols. 180v and 201v. However, he uses a different script than in CU1.

The texts preserved in AM 396 fol. comprise ecclesiastical literature, particularly texts about the Icelandic bishops, followed by four Icelandic family sagas (*Vatnsdæla saga*, *Njáls saga*, *Laxdæla saga*, and *Eyrbyggja saga*). The two units written by Jón Ólafsson are the only sections of the manuscript that can be dated with certainty and whose scribe is known. It is obvious that some parts (CU2 and CU3), were added later (presumably in the eighteenth century). This is supported by the fact that one chapter title on fol. 33r states “Fätt eitt umm Biskup Ögmund, sem epterfylgiande Historia umm hann, itrekar eckj So greinelega,”<sup>269</sup> referring to *Um Biskup Ögmund* (fols. 34v-35v) copied by Jón Ólafsson. It seems probable that CU2 and CU3 were written in the Dalir-district (W-Iceland), since the manuscript seems to have been there during the early-mid eighteenth century (see below), and the script of these units may be identical to that of the table of contents on fol. 1r and the title page (fol. 2r).

The scribe of the *Njáls saga* section is, as mentioned, unknown. The text is clearly related to *Oddabók*. Slay (1960a) suggests that AM 396 fol. may be a direct copy of *Oddabók*, and that the script may be that of Páll Sveinsson, who wrote GKS 1003 fol. (148). As noted above (see Chapter 6.2.1.), Slay's identification of the scribe is erroneous. The similarities between the hands suggest, however, that both are from the same time period (mid-late seventeenth century). Additionally, as previously noted, the three vellum fragments of *The Lost Codex*, are written in the same hand as

<sup>269</sup> Translation: ‘A little something about Bishop Ögmundur that the following story about him does not describe very clearly.’



AM 396 fol. and there are indications that these fragments stem from the north or north-west of Iceland, with a possible connection to the bishopric at Hólar (see Chapter 6.2.1.).

A (partly damaged) marginal note containing a verse about Kári Sölmundarson on fol. 134v in the *Njáls saga* part of AM 396 fol. appears to be in Jón Ólafsson's hand. This indicates that this unit is likely older or about the same age as the units written by Jón Ólafsson; and it suggests that CU5 was physically in the Westfjords of Iceland when Jón Ólafsson wrote his parts of AM 396 fol..

It seems, therefore, that *Njáls saga* (CU5) is the oldest part of AM 396 fol., written during the early-mid seventeenth century, presumably in the north or northwest of Iceland. This text was then brought to the Westfjords, where Jón Ólafsson wrote CU1 and CU6 during the mid-late seventeenth century. *Vatnsdæla saga* (CU4) could be from the same time period or slightly younger, but the exact dating or provenance of this unit have not been established. Several slips of paper, which were preserved as part of the manuscript's binding, accompany the manuscript today. These include remains of letters that mention several personal and place names as well as dates, such as Breiðabólstaður (6. Septembris Anno 1734), Víghólsstaðir (9. Novembris Anno 1755), Steinunn Benediktsdóttir (died 1699), Litli Galtardalur, Hvammur (7. Aprilis 176[?]), and Skarð with the name Mons. Magnús Thorvallsson. Based on these names and dates it can be determined that the manuscript was in the west of Iceland (Dalir-district) during that time and presumably bound there in 1731. The units written by Jón Ólafsson and the *Njáls saga* part (maybe also the *Vatnsdæla* part) therefore likely reached the west of Iceland (Dalir-area) during the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, where CU2 and CU3 were presumably added around 1730 when AM 396 fol. was compiled. Sometime during the eighteenth or nineteenth century, the manuscript was likely rebound or the binding repaired in the same region, since it contains remains of letters that are younger than 1731. The presumably original binding from 1731 is still preserved separately today, even though the codex has been rebound twice in modern times. It can be observed that one of the wooden boards broke in half lengthwise and paper slips had been glued over the damage in an attempt to repair the binding. While these paper slips were

later removed, some paper remains are still visible along the crack, particularly toward the top of the board (see Figure 5<sup>270</sup>).

Jón Þorkelsson (1889) suggests that AM 396 fol. had come into the possession of the farmer Jón Egilsson (1724-1807) at Vatnshorn in Haukadalur (Dalir-district) during the eighteenth century (734-735). It is, however, doubtful that Jón Egilsson was responsible for the compilation of AM 396 fol., since he would have been seven years old in 1731. It seems more reasonable to suggest that the manuscript belonged to Jón's family, which had strong ties to the Dalir-district, the Westfjords, and the north of Iceland. Jón's mother was Helga Jónsdóttir, daughter of Jón Hákonarson and Halldóra Arnórsdóttir ("FamilySearch. Community Trees"). Helga was, therefore, a descendant of the influential Svalbarð-family.<sup>271</sup>

The eighteenth century was a time of great hardship and poverty in Iceland. From 1703, when the first census of Iceland was taken, to the end of the eighteenth century, Iceland's population diminished from around 50,000 to about 38,000 due to a series of epidemics, natural disasters and famines. Furthermore, Iceland was under Danish rule, which held a strict trade monopoly, further limiting the country's ability for economic growth.<sup>272</sup> Nonetheless, during the eighteenth century, manuscript production thrived, particularly in the north and west of Iceland,<sup>273</sup> which was one of the richest areas of the country. Rich farmers wrote, collected, or commissioned the writing and compilation of manuscripts. Studies by Driscoll (2009:77-78) and Glauser (1994:383) imply that interest in and copying of the more entertaining Legendary and Chivalric sagas increased from the seventeenth to the eighteenth and even nineteenth century. In her study of manuscripts containing *Hrólfs saga kraka*, however, Lansing (2011) shows that *Hrólfs saga kraka*, a Legendary saga which "was regarded as historical material" similar to the Icelandic Family sagas, appears to have had its "heyday during the Icelandic 17th-century humanistic medieval renaissance" (57). Forty-nine percent of the *Hrólfs saga kraka* manuscripts analyzed by Lansing (2011) are from the

<sup>270</sup> The figure is located immediately following section 6.3..

<sup>271</sup> For more information on the Svalbarð-family see, for example, Arthur (2012a).

<sup>272</sup> For detailed overviews of the history of Iceland, see e.g. Gunnar Karlsson (2000) and Helgi Þorláksson (2007).

<sup>273</sup> See e.g. Lansing (2011:63-65); Hall and Parsons (2013:Figure 3, Figure 4, §71, Figure 16); see also Chapter 4.3.3. for an overview of the eighteenth-century *Njáls saga* manuscripts and their provenances.

seventeenth century, whereas 33% are from the eighteenth century (52). In contrast, 32% of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts date to the seventeenth and 36% to the eighteenth century (see Figure 4), which insinuates that interest in the most popular Icelandic Family saga, may have continued uninterruptedly from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century.<sup>274</sup> Where provenance can be determined, most of the eighteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga* with origin in Iceland stem from the north of Iceland, the Westfjords, or the Dalir-area. AM 396 fol. is interesting in that most of the texts it preserves were copied during the seventeenth, but the manuscript itself was compiled in the eighteenth century.

The title page (fol. 2r) of AM 396 fol. reveals the answer to the question as to why the commissioner of the manuscript, a representative of eighteenth-century Icelandic readership, wanted to combine ecclesiastical literature about the Icelandic bishops with four of the most famous Icelandic Family sagas in one codex. According to the title page, the manuscript contains:

“THESAURUS HISTORICUS Edur Frödleiks-rikkur Sagna Fiesiödur af Wppfæde, loflegu framferde og fräbærum Frægdarverkum Velmargra Biskupa, sem þetta land prydt hafa með sýnum hrössverdum lifnade, furdulegum kraptagiörðum og chritelegri ummýndun og äminningum; Sydann þad, fyrer forkostulega ummbyggju framfareнна Konga, ummwendtest frä þeirre villu og Heidinglegum lifnade, Sem þess Innbyggjarar voru, firer þeckingarleise Chritelegrar truar, i vafder; Ásamt nockra firrmeindra Biskupa og annara landzmannna ättarrökum og afgang; Sömmuleides af nockra þessa kallda lands Formanna frægdarverkum, hugfullu ärade, hreistelegum Atburdum og Hrösverdre stjörnan i Lagasetningum, og aüdrum athugaverdum ummýndunum og erfide, af hverjum þetta, nu umm vora tyd |: firer manndömsleise |: mjög úr sier geingna Land, þä audgarest af ävexte og Irkingu, so sem liösar menjar gefa enn nú ad þeckja oss sem athuga girnunst.”<sup>275</sup>

The statement alludes to a certain criticism of Icelandic society at the time, which in the eyes of the author of the title page seems to have strayed away from the greatness that its inhabitants

<sup>274</sup> It is, however, important to bear in mind that many Icelandic manuscripts were lost, making it impossible to determine to what extent chronological distribution patterns of existing texts reflect historically accurate patterns of popularity.

<sup>275</sup> Translation: ‘Thesaurus historicus or historical treasure, rich in knowledge about the upbringing, praiseworthy conduct and exemplary deeds of a good many bishops, who have graced this country with their laudable living, extraordinary miracles and Christian chastisement and admonitions, since it [i.e. the country], on account of the most splendid care of kings past, turned from the heresy and pagan ways in which its inhabitants – ignorant of the Christian faith – were trapped; along with the genealogies and obituaries of some of the aforementioned bishops and other men of this country; also, about the exemplary deeds of some of the leaders of this cold land, their valiant courage, brave events and laudable government through legislation, and other notable admonitions and endeavors, through which this, in our times – because of the lack of valor – very defunct land then prospered in growth and nurture, as clear evidence still allows us, who so desire, to appreciate.’

demonstrated during the saga age. This sentiment is reminiscent of Eggert Ólafsson's critique of his fellow countrymen. In his poem "Island" [Iceland], this eighteenth-century naturalist and poet traces Iceland's history in an allegorical way from the settlement period to his own time (Eggert Ólafsson 1832:9-29). While he highlights the glory of Iceland's Golden Age, he simultaneously criticizes many characteristics of his own day, like "poor management, dishonesty, lack of manners, and uneconomical trade with foreign countries" (Neijmann 2007:232). As, for example, Guðmundur Hálfðanarson (2001) points out, the Icelandic medieval literature was used "as a source of pride and encouragement" from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries (3).<sup>276</sup> However, unlike the Icelandic nationalists of the nineteenth century, who blamed Iceland's demise on Denmark's foreign rule, the educated elite of the eighteenth century, influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment and Enlightened absolutism, "perceived the Danish king as harbinger of enlightenment in the periphery, or the agent most likely to awaken their countrymen from their apparent slumber" (Guðmundur Hálfðanarson 2001:4). Accordingly, they considered the Icelanders themselves responsible for their current detrimental state and pondered "the question why their country had declined so spectacularly in the centuries from its first settlement" (Guðmundur Hálfðanarson 2001:3).

It is, therefore, not surprising that the commissioner of AM 396 fol., an obviously well-educated eighteenth-century Icelander who was seemingly disillusioned by and disappointed in Icelandic society, asked to combine texts in his manuscript that highlight Iceland's Golden Age and influential personalities, such as the bishops and saga heroes. *Vatnsdæla saga*, *Laxdæla saga*, and *Eyrbyggja saga*, three of the Icelandic family sagas in AM 396 fol., take place in the north and west of Iceland, which may again be indicative of the fact that the manuscript has its origin in this region. The compiler may have chosen these sagas to emphasize local pride and this regions' dominance over other parts of the country reaching back to the Saga Age. *Njáls saga* is an exception, as most of its action takes place in the south of Iceland. However, since it is the most

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<sup>276</sup> For more about the importance of the Icelandic sagas for Icelandic Nationalism (particularly the nineteenth-century movement), see e.g., Gunnar Karlsson (1980); Byock (1992); Wawn (1994); Byock (1994); Gunnar Karlsson (1995); Gunnar Karlsson (2000); Guðmundur Hálfðanarson (2001); Neijmann (2007).

famous and, judging by the number of manuscripts preserving the text, most popular saga, it is not surprising that it would be included in this manuscript as well, especially because it describes the deep knowledge of Iceland's legislative processes that the author of the title page would like to highlight as one of the positive, and now seemingly lost, characteristics of Iceland's population. Moreover, *Njáls saga* is closely linked to the Dalir-district and *Laxdæla saga* through Hrútr's and Hallgerðr's families. AM 396 fol., may have been seen by its commissioner as a tool to motivate and bring hope to himself and other readers in the eighteenth century. It was unimportant that the manuscript was patched together, and that layouts, hands, and the type of paper used for different units were mismatched. While its outer appearance reflects the struggles and hardships of eighteenth-century Icelandic society, the manuscript's contents were what mattered. The message to the reader is that even though bravery, power, and greatness may be lacking now, these traits can be found in Iceland's glorious past, and that this greatness can be revived through the study of these sagas, which – as the author of the title page states – can be appreciated by the motivated reader.

<i>AM 396 fol.</i>	<b>WB%</b>	<b>UR</b>
<b>CU1</b>	76.9	8.6
<b>CU2</b>	77.1	4.9
<b>CU3</b>	79.0	5.2
<b>CU4</b>	72.3	7.0
<b>CU5</b>	76.4	6.1
<b>CU6</b>	77.9	6.3

*Table 12:* Comparison of WB% and UR in various codicological units (CU) in AM 396 fol.



Figure 5: Inside view of the presumed original binding of AM 396 fol. (Photo used with permission of photographer Jóhanna G. Ólafsdóttir of the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies.)

#### 6.4. *‘Og lúkum vér þar Brennu-Njáls sögu ... loksins.’* The Reception of *Njáls saga* and its Characters:

##### Overview and Selected Examples

##### 6.4.1. The History of Readership and Reception: Research History

Very few books – unless brand new maybe – have survived time without being marked, stained, written in, doodled in or damaged by readers. And just as modern readers leave comments and unintentional disfigurations in books, so did users of books and manuscripts in the Middle Ages and early modern times. Scholars will agree that during the writing process of any major work or article, its margins will be filled with comments. Of course, in the final stage the annotations in the margins will be erased. Most of them, such as comments by editors or proof-readers, are generally done electronically today, inserted with help of the writing program of the computer and just as easily deleted, when a correction has been made or a section has been completed or

changed. To erase annotations was not as easy in the Middle Ages, or even just before the 'Computer Age.' What has been written in the margin of a manuscript or printed book, stays there. Sherman (2003) points out that collectors and booksellers have occasionally tried to erase or wash out the marginalia of earlier readers and owners in order to "improve the condition of the books" (478), and erased marginalia can also be found in medieval and post-medieval manuscripts; nevertheless, it is usually apparent that there was, at one point, a comment, a drawing, or a marginal note of some kind.

Marginalia and paratextual features in medieval and post-medieval codices may provide information about the dating of a manuscript, its scribes or provenance, and scholars have valued marginal notes mainly for this reason. Nonetheless, readers' notes and even unintentional disfigurations may also provide information about how a manuscript was used by different readers, who the readers were, and how the text of a codex was received by specific readers. Schipper (2007) points out that marginal notes are an important part of the history of a manuscript, for "margins are the place where dialogue between readers and text takes place" (43). Furthermore, they offer the reader the possibility to "take part in, and to some extent, interplay with the text already written" (Camille 1996:259). In other words: "Reading notes – as they appear in archives, in notebooks, letters, diaries, or in the margins of books – can tell us more than anything else about the book a person was reading as well as about the person reading the book" (van Hulle and van Mierlo 2004a:2).

Despite the obvious potential of marginal notes, a detailed analysis of marginalia in manuscripts and books was for the longest time and still is to a certain extent an underdeveloped and frequently ignored field of study (Jackson 2001:4; Kerby-Fulton 2001:7). One possible reason for the lack of research in the field of marginalia may be that marginal notes are often considered unimportant. Scholars have pointed out that when manuscripts were catalogued and described, the marginal elements were deemed inessential and often not included (Camille 1992:31; van Hulle and van Mierlo 2004a:2). Another explanation may be that scholars apparently disagree as to whether annotations in books have the right to exist or not. Sherman (2003) argues that today

“writing in ... margins is considered antisocial behaviour, certainly a breach of decorum and possibly a breach of the law” (474). He specifically refers to books in public libraries,<sup>277</sup> but suggests that “the aversion to writing in books has been extended ... to privately owned books” and criticizes the tendency of some scholars to project this aversion of modern readers back onto pre-modern readers (Sherman 2003:476). Jackson (2001) distinguishes between two groups of people: the lovers of marginalia and their enemies, or “Annotator” and “Bibliophile” (237). Sherman (2003) provides an interesting example to illustrate the distinction between the two (271). He cites two descriptions of the same copy of a sixteenth-century book, one from a sale catalogue from 1952 and another from an exhibition catalogue from 1953. While the author of the sale catalogue – seemingly a bibliophile – describes the volume as “rather soiled by use,” the exhibition catalogue depicts the marginal notes in a positive light, noting that they “bring to life an early and earnest owner” (qtd. in Sherman 2003:271). Annotators, such as Jackson (2001), argue that “reader’s notes are and always have been part of the landscape, and we might as well get to know them” (6). Traister (2000) admits that reader’s comments and the possibility of learning something from these notes are precisely what excites him about studying older books (66).

Since the late 1980s, an increasing number of scholars have shifted their focus toward the History of Reading, often infected by the “marginalia bug” (Sherman 2008:xii), and scholarly research attempts to give readers’ comments the credit they deserve and to bring what is written, painted, scribbled, and doodled in the margins to the center of attention.<sup>278</sup> Although marginalia offer a wide variety of research possibilities, scholars have pointed to a number of difficulties, which should not be overlooked. One of the major problems is that scholars on occasion make modern assumptions about reading and writing habits of pre-modern readers (see e.g., Sherman

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<sup>277</sup> Sherman (2008) cites an example from a copy of David Bevington’s *From Mankind to Marlowe* which illustrates – ironically through a marginalia – the aversion that some bibliophiles feel towards marginal notes: “The persons who marked up this copy for their private use, especially the one using blue marker, are piggish assholes. They’ve made this book almost unreadable. May they burn in plagiarists’s hell.” (qtd. in Sherman 2008:156). He also refers to an online virtual exhibition of the Cambridge University Library entitled “Marginalia and Other Crimes” which shows examples of books that have been damaged by library readers, as well as animals (Sherman 2008:157). The exhibition was accessible at <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/marginalia/> but the link is now unfortunately broken.

<sup>278</sup> See, for example, Darnton (1986); Jardine and Grafton (1990); Barney (1991); Camille (1992); Tribble (1993); Greetham (1997); Bray, Handley, and Henry (2000); Jackson (2001); van Hulle and van Mierlo (2004b); Jackson (2005a); Myers, Harris, and Mandelbrote (2005); Larratt Keefer and Bremmer (2007); Sherman (2008).



2008:xiii). They assume, for example, that reading was always private and silent, as it tends to be today, when in the Middle Ages, reading was in fact a public affair, and every reader was – consciously or subconsciously – aware of the fact that his notes would likely be read by others (Jackson 2005a:196, 305). Camille (1996) notes that “the transformation of reading practices from being predominantly oral and aural modes of monastic performances in the earlier Middle Ages to their being held in the hands of individuals and read by them alone ... coincides with the appearance of Gothic marginal art” (255). And Gísli Sigurðsson (2004b) points out that the habit of telling stories or reading stories aloud from books was common custom in medieval Iceland, and that this custom continued well into the eighteenth century, when sagas were still read aloud as a form of leisure in the evenings (8). Driscoll (2013) even mentions that this so-called “kvöldvaka or ‘evening wake’” survived “in some places at least, until the beginning of the 20th century” (54).

Jackson (2005a) has brought up the problematic “holy grail of the historian of reading, the mental experience of the individual reader” (251), and concludes that while scholars can on occasion, especially in the cases of individual annotators, reconstruct the mental processes of the reader, most often it is only possible to get a faint idea of these processes (304). There is not only a difference between modern and pre-modern reader, but also a difference between readers from different pre-modern periods, such as Romanticism or Renaissance (Sherman 2008:xiii). More importantly, as Jackson (2005a) points out, any two readers, regardless of background, will differ; even an individual reader can address books differently depending on mood, or on the circumstances under which he or she reads, such as for studying, for pleasure, at home, in a library, and so forth (249, 255). Jackson (2005a) argues that if attempts are made to understand the circumstances under which specific readers read, then their mental processes can in fact be evaluated (255). Even seemingly nondescript marginalia, such as underlined passages, show which parts of a text engaged the reader mentally – in that he or she felt compelled to make a marginal note – and which sections were of less interest (Jackson 2005a:254). Jackson (2005a) concludes that the history of reading is not restricted to the reconstruction of mental processes (304).

Scholars of marginalia and paratextual features also warn of the dangers of generalization, since, as noted above, readers are not all the same. As Jackson (2005a) asks in her discussion of Romantic readers in Britain between 1790 and 1830: “How can any meaningful generalization be made that would be equally valid for a weaver in Belfast in 1792 and a schoolmistress in Bath in 1830?” (249). Sherman (2008) points out that ‘reading’ was often synonymous with ‘using’ and that as such there were so many different ways of ‘reading’ that “Elizabethans evidently had as many words for ‘reading’ as the proverbial Eskimo has for ‘snow’” (xv). Because reading habits and, by extension, the habit of writing marginalia, show such a variety, it is difficult to draw general conclusions from the analysis of individual marginal notes. Sherman (2008) maintains that marginalia provide examples and counterexamples rather than general patterns of use (xvi).

Another reason why generalizations are problematic is that not all readers left notes, and that the ones who did, did not do so in every book they owned. Jackson (2005a) suggests that every reader on occasion left notes in some books, but at the same time annotators left some of their books untouched (251). Nevertheless, Jackson (2005a) argues that marginalia “bring us about as close as we can reasonably expect ever to get to the reader's processes of thought,” since it is doubtful that the mental processes of readers differed radically whether they annotated a text or not (297-298). She suggests that even though marginal notes may “not meet a statistician’s standards of range and inclusivity, ... they are real,” and because individuals of a certain time period operate “within the confines of common social, educational, and literary customs,” research of these readers’ marginalia may reveal certain “patterns of use and ways of thinking” (Jackson 2005a:250). Marginalia can, therefore, be used to get a glimpse of past readers and their habits. The limitations merely provoke scholars to be more cautious of generalization and to regard marginal notes as individual samples rather than broad patterns.

Despite the potential and growing interest in the study of marginal notes and paratextual features, research on marginalia in Icelandic manuscripts has been limited. One usually finds discussions of marginalia in facsimile editions of Icelandic manuscripts, but the editors tend to be selective and to restrict their discussion to personal names, place names or dates, which may

provide information about the provenance of the manuscript or its users (see e.g., Driscoll 2004:23).<sup>279</sup> Driscoll (2004) gives an overview of different types of marginalia in Icelandic manuscripts with a number of specific examples. His article, a good basis for further study, is, however, to my knowledge, the only detailed discussion of marginalia in Iceland. Sverrir Tómasson (2002) notes that even though Árni Magnússon recorded where, when and from whom he received his codices, usually no information about the history of the manuscripts exists before Árni obtained them (799). The study of marginalia and paratextual features in Icelandic manuscripts may be able to reconstruct some of this lost history as well as the history of readership and reception in Iceland. The following sections offer a glimpse at the potential of such a study with regard to *Njáls saga*.

#### 6.4.2. Paratextual features: Definition

Genette (1997a) definition of paratext in printed books focuses mainly on features outside the main text of the book that, nonetheless, are part of the printed edition, such as “an author’s name, a title, a preface, illustrations,” which “surround [the text] and extend it ... in order to present it” (1).<sup>280</sup> However, he also discusses notes as paratextual features, which he defines “as a statement of variable length (one word is enough) connected to a more or less definite segment of text and either places opposite or keyed to this segment” (Genette 1997a:319). Genette (1997a) divides notes into “original” (327), “later” (329), and “delayed” (330) notes by the author of a book as well as “allographic” (337) notes by third parties, which Genette (1997a) defines as “external commentary (most often posthumous) that in no way involves the responsibility of the author” (337).

The definition of paratextual features for this dissertation (see below) diverges from Genette’s definition and focuses more heavily on marginal notes, non-verbal notes (such as underlined and highlighted passages), and features outside the main text (such as colophons and signatures) that

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<sup>279</sup> Facsimile editions include for example Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi (CCI) and Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile.

<sup>280</sup> For Genette’s definitions of intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality, and architextuality, see also Genette (1982:8-12); Genette (1997b:1-7); or for a brief English summary: Macksey (1997:xviii-xix).

allude to the provenance, ownership, readership, and reception of the manuscripts and of *Njáls saga* in particular.

Scholarly research distinguishes between a number of different types of readers and reading notes. The first major distinction is between “extractors” and “marginalists” (Ferrer 2004:7). The “extractors” – as the name suggests – extract information from a text and dismember it in order to store their excerpts in a different medium, such as a notebook (Ferrer 2004:7). Dirk van Hulle (2004) divides the “extractors” even further, distinguishing between “notesnatchers,” who “gather their ‘verbal booty’ of concrete information and/or odd expressions, ready to be processed and recycled in the drafts at any moment,” and “abstractors,” who “abstract generally more extensive reading notes or excerpts from source texts, not necessarily with any direct purpose” (333). For the study of true marginalia, which are preserved in the margins of manuscripts and books, the extractors seem less important. The example of Emily Dickinson, however, who – literally – cut passages out of the Bible (Smith 2004:282), illustrates that even the extractors leave marginal comments, if one considers the cutting-away of material a sort of comment on the text. The literally cut-out marginalia can on occasion reveal which passages were important enough to the extractor to be cut out and stored elsewhere, or they can imply quite the opposite, i.e., which part or page of a manuscript or book was considered dispensable or inappropriate to a certain reader, who then decided to eliminate the text in question with the aid of a knife, scissors, or bare hands.<sup>281</sup>

According to Ferrer (2004), the “marginalists,” who – in contrast to the “extractors” – preserve the text’s contextual integrity, “brand it with idiosyncratic marks, adorn it with commentaries of all kinds, embrace it with their own writing (a lover’s embrace or a bear’s hug)” (8). Marginalists, as well as their marginal notes, can be distinguished further. Van Hulle and van Mierlo (2004a) point out that while “reading writers” use their notes to produce a new text, “writing readers” usually do not (3). The analysis of ‘reading writers’ requires that the marginalist

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<sup>281</sup> The aforementioned online exhibition by the Cambridge University Library (see fn. 277) showed, for example a book, in which a reader cut out the picture of a nude woman with a razorblade. It is in this case difficult to determine whether he wanted to save others from looking at such obscenity or if he kept the picture as a souvenir. If the book contained multiple pictures of nude women and he only cut out one, we may assume the latter.

can undoubtedly be identified as a writer, which is usually only possible if the individual has a certain amount of fame. In this context, annotations and reading notes by, for example, Coleridge, J.H. Leopold, T. Sturge Moore, or Franz Kafka, have been researched.<sup>282</sup> Besides analyzing readers' notes by individual readers (see e.g. Jardine and Grafton 1990) or reading writers, scholars have also studied notes by various readers in multiple copies of the same text (for examples see Sherman 2008:xi).<sup>283</sup>

Marginal notes can be divided into two major categories: comments that relate in some way to the main text of the manuscript or book and those that do not.<sup>284</sup> Both categories can be remnants of the scribe or author of the primary text or additions by later readers, editors, or publishers. Marginalia with connections to the main text are studied in more detail today to determine the "history of reading" (see e.g., Darnton 1986; Grafton 1997; Jackson 2005b:148) and the "history of the book" (Sambrook 2005:189), possibly because, as Jackson (2001:8) puts it, "the climate was finally right for the full-scale acceptance of what used to be considered a negligible form of writing" (8).

Sperl (1995) suggests dividing marginalia that refer in some way to the main text into "sprechende" ["telling"<sup>285</sup>] and "stumme" ["mute"] marginal notes (145). 'Telling' notes include words or signs – i.e., question marks or exclamation marks – which can be interpreted as a positive or negative reaction by the reader, whereas 'mute' notes, such as underlined passages, uninterpretative marks or mnemonic signs, remain silent about the reader's thoughts, but, nonetheless, indicates that the marked passage engaged the reader (Sperl 1995:145-150). A commonly used mute note between the twelfth and eighteenth centuries is the "manicule," a pointing hand, which often was drawn and later even printed to mark noteworthy passages in manuscripts and printed books (Sherman 2005:19).

<sup>282</sup> See, for example, Mays (2004); van Vliet (2004); van Mierlo (2004); Plachta (2004); [all published in van Hulle and van Mierlo (2004b)].

<sup>283</sup> The latter is the premise of this chapter (Chapter 6.4.).

<sup>284</sup> See, for example, Grindley (2001); Driscoll (2004); Schipper (2007).

<sup>285</sup> The English terms are taken from Nutt-Kofoth (2004), who also gives a summary of Sperl's discussion (296-297).

Further examples of marginalia that relate to the main text are comments on the text, glosses, and translations of sections of the text, *nota bene* marks, index words, notes that indicate how a book should be used, or additional material that extends the primary text (see e.g., Grindley 2001:77; Driscoll 2004:23; Schipper 2007:25). It is also possible that scribes or readers copied words or phrases from their main text into the margin for writing practice, pen trials, or no apparent reason (Driscoll 2004:25).

Less research has been done on marginalia that do not bear on the context of the text of the manuscript or book, despite the fact that some scholars, including Driscoll (2004:23) and Jackson (2005a:253), argue that all marginalia have the potential to provide information about how books and manuscripts were used. Such marginalia comprise ownership marks and signatures, alphabets, doodles, pen trials, invocations, and out-of-context phrases, which may be copied from other texts, such as law texts, poems, proverbs, curses, preambles to letters, and other formulae (Driscoll 2004:23-36, Schipper 2007:26). Medieval scribes also frequently leave comments about working conditions, their exemplar, the weather, and other aspects of their lives (Driscoll 2004:28-30). Probably one of the oldest studies of marginalia, by Plummer (1926), gives many examples of these scribal comments left in the colophons and marginalia of Irish scribes. Driscoll (2004) concludes in his analysis of marginalia in Icelandic manuscripts that manuscript production can often be reconstructed with the help of scribal comments, while readers' comments are valuable sources for the reception of texts and manuscript consumption (33).<sup>286</sup> The following sections take a look at both paratextual features outside of the main text, as well as scribal remarks and readers' notes that address the text.

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<sup>286</sup> Non-textual features, such as stains, scratches, or remains of bodily fluids (spit, sweat, etc.), which Camille (1996) mentions in connection with depictions of the human body and its secretions, might be considered marginalia as well. These signs of use may inform us about certain aspects of the history of a manuscript or book, such as whether it was handled with care, used frequently, studied or just read. Golick (2004) highlights the importance of these non-textual features – in her case “stained and dog-eared pages” – in her analysis of marginalia in cookbooks, since these may inevitably point towards the most used and favorite recipes (107). As mentioned, even the cutting-away or destruction of pages by extractors, such as Emily Dickinson, can be considered marginal notes, a comment by a user that this manuscript, or at least a certain part or page of the manuscript in question was either dispensable or else so valuable to the reader that he decided to extract it. These kinds of marginal notes can on occasion be found in reference to the marginalia themselves, which have sometimes been smudged or erased, apparently by someone who considered the marginal notes dispensable or maybe even inappropriate: a comment on a comment, so to speak.

While paratextual features can be defined as anything outside the main text(s) of a manuscript or book, the number of paratextual features has been limited for the purpose of this chapter. Signs of usage, such as smudges, stains, trimmed or damaged pages, have been excluded, even though it can be argued that they, too, are part of the manuscript's history and illustrate how the manuscript has been handled. Naturally, it can be said that virtually any manuscript shows at least some of these signs of handling. Also excluded are (modern) notes written in the manuscript or attached on separate sheets of paper stemming from librarians, scholars, or other workers at the collections housing the manuscripts. These notes include, for example, the manuscript's call number, foliation/pagination (which was excluded in any case, independent of age), and notes about restoration efforts. Corrections to the text by the main scribe were also excluded, since virtually every manuscript exhibits such corrections.

The paratextual features that were studied for the general statistical analysis of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts can be divided into two major categories:

- I. Paratextual features not related to the main text(s);
- II. Paratextual features related to the main text(s)

The first category has the following subdivisions:

- I. A. Ownership marks, colophons, place names, personal names, dates;
- I. B. Pen trials, illegible scribbles, drawings, words, and phrases that are not related to the main text(s)

For Category I, the entire manuscript was considered. In cases where larger codices had been disassembled into smaller units (generally around the time when Árni Magnússon received them), only the unit (manuscript with *one* call number) containing *Njáls saga* was examined for marginal and paratextual features. This is because the separated units may have received marginal notes after the disassembling. Additionally, it cannot always be determined with certainty which manuscripts originally belonged to one codex.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Manuscripts that were originally part of a larger compilation are AM 136 fol., AM 555 c 4to, AM 134 fol., AM 163 d fol., AM 465 4to, and NKS 1220 fol..

With regard to paratextual features related to the main text(s) (Category II), only *Njáls saga* was studied, even if the manuscript contained multiple texts. Since *Njáls saga* is the focus of this dissertation, this limitation is justified.

Paratextual features related to the main text (= *Njáls saga*) have been divided into two large subcategories:

- II.A. Verbal paratextual features
- II.B. Non-Verbal paratextual features

Verbal paratextual features (II.A.) can be divided further into:

- II.A.1. Verbal commentary on the main text. This includes mention of the saga's title in the margin (excluding as running heads), the repetition of words/phrases from the main text in the margin (e.g., as pen trials), summaries of text passages (including rubrics and chapter titles), comments or added verses about the text or its characters, historical or geographical information (e.g., the year when Christianity came to Iceland), sometimes with references to other texts (e.g., *Landnáma*) or other passages within *Njáls saga*;
- II.A.2. Signs of manuscript transmission. This includes comments on the exemplar/manuscript (e.g., missing pages, illegible passages), corrections or additions to the text by later scribes and readers (including variant readings), and added verses in the margins that in other manuscripts are part of the saga's text

Non-verbal paratextual features (II.B.) can be further divided into:

- II.B.1. Marked verses (e.g., marginal markings, change in layout, change in script);
- II.B.2. Non-verbal commentary, such as highlighted passages (e.g., underlined passages, *nota bene* signs, manicules, change in script, marginal markings);
- II.B.3. Drawings depicting scenes/characters from the saga.



Each manuscript and fragment was examined for marginal and paratextual features separately, even in cases where two fragments originally belonged to the same codex.<sup>288</sup> This is because these fragments had a history of their own, so to speak, after having been removed from the original manuscript. Unless they are written in the hand of the main scribe, it is impossible to tell whether certain paratextual features were added to a fragment before or after it had been removed.

The discussion of paratextual features below begins with a brief general introduction, followed by an examination of the various sub-categories with specific examples from the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts.

### 6.4.3. Paratextual features: Statistical overview

#### 6.4.3.1. General overview

All but two of the 61 manuscripts and fragments containing *Njáls saga* show signs of at least one of the above-mentioned paratextual features. Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 are the only examples that do not have any paratextual features aside from notes about the manuscripts' custodial history by librarians of the modern era. Both manuscripts consist, however, of only one severely fragmented leaf. Additionally, both were used as bindings rendering one side of the leaves worn, dark, and illegible, which makes it even more difficult to detect any possible paratextual features. It can be noted that Lbs fragm. 2 shows that the scribe left empty spaces for chapter titles in the form of rubrics, indicating an intent to add a paratextual feature (category II.A.) later on.

Since the manuscripts NB 313 4to and NB 372 4to could not be studied in person or viewed as a whole, they are not included in the statistical analysis of paratextual features. Based on the catalogue description of the two manuscripts (Jónas Kristjánsson 1967:76-77, 83) and photographs of selected pages provided by Björg Dale Spørck (pers. communication), it can be stated that NB 313 4to, like its exemplar AM 464 4to, has variant reading from various manuscripts in the margin. Furthermore, the manuscript contains a colophon. NB 372 4to does not copy the variant readings of its exemplar NB 313 4to (Björg Dale Spørck, pers.

<sup>288</sup> The fragments that likely belonged to one codex are AM 162 b fol. β and AM 162 b fol. δ on the one hand, and AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4 on the other hand.

communication), but contains a colophon as well (Jónas Kristjánsson 1976:83). It is, therefore, certain that both manuscripts exhibit paratextual features, and NB 313 4to with certainty features relating to the main text.

#### 6.4.3.2. Paratextual features not related to the main text (Category I)

Of the 59 manuscripts and fragments included in the statistical analysis, 50 contain paratextual features not concerning the main text (category I), while nine lack such features (see Tables 13a, 13b, 13c). The nine manuscripts not showing such signs are, in chronological order, AM 162 b fol. β (14th c), AM 162 b fol. κ (14th c), Lbs fragm. 2 (17th c, vellum), JS fragm. 4 (17th c, vellum), AM 555 a 4to (17th c), SÁM 33 (18th c), AM 467 4to (18th c), KB Add 565 4to (18th c), and NKS 1219 fol. (18th c). Of these, AM 162 b fol. β, AM 162 b fol. κ, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, and SÁM 33 are highly fragmented (1-2 preserved leaves). AM 555 a 4to is a plain private reading manuscript written by Páll Ketilsson. The lack of paratextual features not concerning the main text could be due to the very narrow margins that do not offer much space for additional scribbles. Moreover, the manuscript was most likely originally written for the sole private use of Páll Ketilsson and later given to Árni Magnússon via Peder Syv and Frederik Rostgaard, which limits the number of people who could have written in the manuscript. AM 467 4to and KB Add 565 4to are scholarly manuscripts. This category of manuscripts is characterized by a neat look and overall fewer marginal notes. NKS 1219 fol. is a highly decorative reading manuscript, which shares many of the codicological features of the scholarly copies, including an extremely neat appearance and a lack of marginal annotations.

With regard to subcategories I.A. and I.B., of the 50 manuscripts that have paratextual features not concerning the main text, 35 manuscripts have features from both categories, 7 have only features from category I.A., while 8 have only features from I.B (see Tables 13a, 13b, 13c). It is important to note at this point that the statistics given here do not take into account how many paratextual features from each category a manuscript contains. A manuscript with only one marginal note from a certain category is valued equal to a manuscript that has multiple notes in

the same category. This difference in frequency of marginal notes in various manuscripts will be discussed in more detail below.

Tables 13b and 13c give a more detailed overview of the number of manuscripts with features in each category by century.

#### 6.4.3.2.1. Category I.A.

Forty-two manuscripts contain personal names, place names, and dates (I.A.). These features mainly appear in the form of colophons, identifying the time and place of writing and occasionally the scribe and commissioner. Manuscripts may also contain personal names in the form of signatures, which can be pen trials or signs of ownership (particularly when they appear with phrases such as “[personal name] owns this”). In some cases only the first name is written making an identification impossible. Even in cases where the full name is preserved, it is not always possible to determine the identity of the person in question. Dates, place names, and particularly the clear identification of a scribe, commissioner, owner, or reader aid in reconstructing the history of a manuscript and fragment.

The manuscripts that only show features from category I.A. are, in chronological order: AM 921 4to I (17th c, vellum), BL Add 4867 fol. (17th c), AM 464 4to (17th c), Lbs 3505 4to (17th c), AM 469 4to (18th c), Thott 984 fol. III (18th c), and AM Acc. 50 (18th c). AM 921 4to I has a faint signature (Halldór Einarsson or Eiríksson) on fol. 1r. The person cannot be identified with certainty. Since the fragment consists of only one leaf, one side of which is very darkened, it is not surprising that it contains very few marginal notes. BL Add 4867 fol. is a commissioned copy. While it contains many paratextual features from category II, it is otherwise very clean. All paratextual features from category I in BL Add 4867 fol. stem from colophons, which identify the scribe and mention the dates on which texts were completed. AM 464 4to, a private-scholarly hybrid, was written for personal use and has a very clean appearance void of marginal notes that do not pertain to the main text. The I.A. paratextual features stem from the colophon. Lbs 3505 4to only contains paratextual features from category I.A. on the heavily decorated title page,

which mentions a date and possibly has the initials of a later user inscribed. The manuscript is otherwise very neat and lacks Category I paratextual features, strengthening the assumption that the manuscript was a commissioned reading manuscript with a certain prestigious status. AM 469 4to was also likely commissioned and lacks paratextual features from category I with the exception of the colophon. Thott 984 fol. III is a problematic case since changes in layout suggest that some of the textual units in the large three-volume codex were not originally part of the collection and none of the units are bound together. The *Njáls saga* section contains no Category I paratextual features, but another section contains a date in an initial (category I.A.). Since the majority of the units were written by the same scribe for the same commissioner, Thott 984 fol. was considered as one manuscript and the date is counted as a I.A. feature. AM Acc. 50 has one paratextual feature from category I.A. in the form of a colophon which identifies the scribe as well as place and time of writing. Another manuscript containing features from both I.A. and I.B. is AM 137 fol.. The manuscript preserves the names of previous owners (in their own handwriting) on a separate leaf that has been glued onto a flyleaf. Kålund (1889-1894) suggests that this leaf may have been cut from an older flyleaf within the original codex (before it was rebound) (99), which makes the names a category I.A. paratextual feature, even though separately preserved leaves are generally not included in the statistical overview (see above). AM 309 4to is somewhat problematic since its different parts, though written by the same scribe, likely did not originally belong to the same codex since some sections are written in two columns, while *Njáls saga* is written in long lines. The first section contains an ownership mark, whereas the *Njáls saga* section has features only from category I.B. Similarly, AM 396 fol., which is patched together from different units dating to different time periods, has no I.A. features in the *Njáls saga* section, but shows such features in other parts, mainly in the form of colophons.

Tables 13d, 13e, and 13f give an indication of the frequency of I.A. features. The tables give the total number of pages (not folios) for each manuscript or fragment as well as the number of

pages containing features from categories I.A. and I.B..<sup>289</sup> Using these numbers it is calculated how many percent of the pages have features of a certain category.

In the fourteenth-century manuscript paratextual features from category I.A. appear on average on 3.71% of the pages. The number might be slightly distorted, since some of the manuscripts are highly fragmented, so that, for example, two signatures (I.A.) in a fragment of five folios (= 10 pages) would equal 20.00%, whereas two signatures in a manuscript consisting of 121 folios (=242 pages) would equal only 0.83%. Nonetheless, the percentage is still quite high (4.01%) in the non- or less-fragmented manuscripts from the fourteenth century, namely GKS 2870 4to, AM 468 4to, AM 133 fol., AM 132 fol., and GKS 2868 4to. *Kálfalækjarbók* (AM 133 fol.) has I.A. features on 14 of its 190 pages, resulting in the highest percentage (7.37%) among the fourteenth-century manuscripts that are not heavily fragmented. GKS 2868 4to has the second highest percentage (6.67%) with I.A. features on 6 of its 90 pages.

The fifteenth-century manuscripts show a higher percentage of I.A. features (6.97%). The two very small fragments from the fifteenth century, AM 162 b fol. ι and AM 162 b fol. α, both have no I.A. features. As mentioned above, AM 309 4to has one ownership mark, resulting in a percentage of 1.04%, but the ownership mark does not appear in the *Njáls saga* section. GKS 2869 4to (22 pages) and AM 466 4to (114 pages) have significantly higher percentages. GKS 2869 has three signatures (I.A.) on its 22 pages, resulting in a percentage of 13.64%. *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to), which is the most complete of the fifteenth-century manuscripts, has features from category I.A. on 13 of its 114 pages (11.40%), including ownership marks, but also a note that appears to be scolding a school-boy (“jllur dreingur er[t] þú, Einar,”<sup>290</sup> fol. 2r) and a rather amusing comment by the scribe criticizing his relative, ‘Dóri,’ for never giving him enough fish (“illa giorer þu vit mik dore minn þu gefr mer alldri fiskinn nogann,”<sup>291</sup> fol. 26r). The phrase is actually written twice on the page, both times in the same hand. The second marginalia reads slightly differently: “jlla

<sup>289</sup> It was not taken into consideration if one page contained multiple features from one category, meaning a page containing two pen trials (I.B.) on a page was counted as one page. If the manuscript contained flyleaves or letters (as part of a binding) with category I.A. or I.B. features these pages were included in the total page count.

<sup>290</sup> Translation: ‘You are a bad boy, Einar.’

<sup>291</sup> Translation: ‘You treat me badly, my Dóri; you never give me enough fish.’

giorer þu uid *mik* dore þu gefr *mier* alldri fiskin nogan frændi min.”<sup>292</sup> The examples are also mentioned by Driscoll (2004), who points out that it is impossible to tell which note was written first and who the scribe or his relative Dóri<sup>293</sup> are (28-29).

The post-medieval vellum manuscripts have I.A. features on 0.68% of the pages. Two fragments, Lbs fragm. 2 and JS fragm. 4, lack paratextual features, while AM 921 4to I preserves a very faint signature. GKS 1003 fol. has personal and place names as well as the date of writing on the (now-erased) title page, resulting in a percentage of I.A. features on 0.35% of its 288 pages.

Taking all vellum manuscripts into consideration, features from category I.A. appear on 64 of 1750 pages, a percentage of 3.66%. The average is higher if only the medieval manuscripts are considered with 62 of 1456 pages showing I.A. features, a frequency of 4.26%. In contrast to many of the paper manuscripts, the vellum manuscripts generally lack colophons. They contain I.A. features mainly in the form of occasional ownership marks, signatures (which sometimes can only be partially read), or in some cases only first names as part of comments (such as the aforementioned ‘Dóri’). Ownership marks sometimes clearly identify the owner, such as the well known “Magnus Biornnsson Med eigin h[ende] Anno 1628 a krossmesu sialfa wm vorid huor ed var saa 3 Maij Manadar J storu Badstofunne aa Modruvollum”<sup>294</sup> (*Möðruvallabók*, fol. 18v) or “Þorleifur Jónsson aa Níálu þessa Anno 1645”<sup>295</sup> (*Oddabók*, fol. 46r). Occasionally, however, the owners or readers only give their first names, making an identification impossible. Examples for these are “nialz saga er þetta. loftur hefur lesid mig”<sup>296</sup> (*Kálfalækjarbók*, fol. 46v) or “Petur a þessa bok”<sup>297</sup> (AM 162 b fol. ε, fol. 5r).<sup>298</sup>

<sup>292</sup> Translation: ‘You treat me badly, Dóri; you never give me enough fish, my kinsman.’

<sup>293</sup> Driscoll (2004) assumes that Dóri is a nickname for Halldór (28). While this is certainly a possibility, I believe that it could also derive from Steindór.

<sup>294</sup> Translation: “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” (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1933b:22).

<sup>295</sup> Translation: ‘Þorleifur Jónsson owns this *Njála* in the year 1645.’

<sup>296</sup> Translation: ‘This is *Njáls saga*. Loftur has read me.’

<sup>297</sup> Translation: ‘Pétur owns this book.’

<sup>298</sup> Bjarni Gunnar Ásgeirsson (2013) assumes that the marginalia in AM 163 b fol. ε, is the oldest in the fragment (47). While it is impossible to determine the identity of ‘Petur’ with certainty, it is interesting that *Kálfalækjarbók* (fol. 37r), which may have been produced in the north or west of Iceland (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.) contains a marginal note of likely similar age, identifying a “pietur pälsson” (see fn. 74). Árni Magnússon received both AM 163 b fol. ε and *Kálfalækjarbók* from Þórður Jónsson (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.), and though it cannot be proven, it is possible that both also originally stemmed from northern or western Iceland, and that “Petur” and “pietur pälsson” are identical and were once in the possession of both manuscripts.

Paper manuscripts, on the other hand, more frequently contain I.A. features in the form of colophons, which identify the scribe, date and place of writing, and possibly the commissioner. In some cases, colophons are the only I.A. features some paper manuscripts contain. Other paper manuscripts may also contain ownership marks or signatures that could be pen trials.

Among the seventeenth-century paper manuscripts on average 0.87% of the pages show paratextual features from category I.A. Five manuscripts have no I.A. features, three have I.A. features only in the colophon (Stock 9 fol., AM 464 4to, NKS 1220 fol.), two contain ownership marks on one page each (AM 137 fol., AM 135 fol.), and AM 470 4to contains an only partially legible signature on fol. 88v. Only five manuscripts have a percentage of more than 1%. These are AM 465 4to (3.38% = 9 of 266 pages), AM 163 i fol. (1.67% = 2 of 120 pages), AM 396 fol. (1.24% = 5 of 402 pages), BL Add 4867 fol. (1.48% = 8 of 540 pages), and Lbs 222 fol. (3.03% = 21 of 694 pages). AM 465 4to has the highest percentage. Its I.A. features mainly consist of signatures, some of which can only be partially read. The manuscript has been categorized as a plain reading manuscript. The two I.A. features in AM 163 i fol., a moderate reading manuscript, include a colophon. Most I.A. features in AM 396 fol. are in the form of colophons. The *Njáls saga* section, as previously mentioned, has no I.A. features. The manuscript is accompanied today with a number of small paper strips that were part of an earlier binding. These strips contain some names, place names, and dates, but were not included here in the page count, since it cannot be reconstructed exactly of how many pages the strips originally consisted. AM 396 fol. is a moderate reading manuscript. BL Add 4867 fol. contains I.A. features only in the form of colophons. The manuscript has been categorized as a moderate reading manuscript, but it borders on being a decorative reading manuscript (see Chapter 5.3.2.). Lbs 222 fol., which has the second highest percentage, was written by the same scribe as BL Add 4867 fol., but is of slightly lesser status than BL Add 4867 fol. and a definite moderate reading manuscript. It contains I.A. features in colophons as well as a younger title page, but also preserves several signatures by later users. These signatures often appear on the final page of texts preserved in the codex. The readers possibly signed their name at the end of the text to indicate that they had finished reading the

section, or simply because there was more empty space available. The *Njáls saga* section in Lbs 222 fol. has three paratextual features from category I.A..

On average, the eighteenth-century manuscripts of *Njáls saga* have I.A. paratextual features on 0.37% of the pages. Five manuscripts do not contain I.A. features, two contain I.A. features only in a colophon (AM 469 4to, AM Acc. 50), Thott 984 fol. III contains a date integrated in the decoration of an initial (but not in the *Njáls saga* section), and two manuscripts have only partially legible signatures on a single page (ÍB 322 4to, ÍB 270 4to). All eighteenth-century manuscripts have I.A. features on less than 2% of the pages. The manuscripts with a percentage over 1% are ÍB 421 4to (1.06% = 7 of 658 pages), ÍB 261 4to (1.81% = 5 of 276 pages), Thott 1765 4to (1.43% = 4 of 280 pages), and Lbs 1415 4to (1.25% = 6 of 480 pages). ÍB 421 4to is a scholarly copy, which, however, based on paratextual features, was likely later used in a private reading environment. The I.A. paratextual features in ÍB 421 4to come in the form of ownership marks as well as names mentioned in letters that are preserved as part of the binding. ÍB 261 4to, which has the highest percentage, is a moderate reading manuscript. Its I.A. features consist of ownership marks as well as personal and place names and dates on the accompanying materials, namely debt and credit statements that were part of the cover. Thott 1765 4to is a plain reading manuscript whose I.A. paratextual features include names and dates mentioned in letters that are part of the binding. Lbs 1415 4to is a moderate reading manuscript, which preserves I.A. features in the form of ownership marks and signatures.

Lbs 747 fol., the only *Njáls saga* manuscript from the nineteenth century, contains I.A. features on fifteen of its 758 pages, which equals 1.98% of the pages. The I.A. features consist mainly of colophons, but also occasional signatures of the scribes in the margins. The manuscript has been classified as a moderate reading manuscript.

Taking all paper manuscripts into consideration, I.A. paratextual features appear on 112 of 18654 pages, which equals 0.60% of the pages. Private reading manuscripts had overall a higher



frequency (I.A.%: 0.77<sup>299</sup>) compared to scholarly manuscripts (I.A.%: 0.29%) and private-scholarly hybrids (I.A.%: 0.31%). Decorative reading manuscripts had the lowest I.A.% (0.16%) if AM 921 4to I is excluded (see fn. 299). Higher frequencies were only observed in plain (I.A.%: 2.54%) and moderate (I.A.%: 1.03%) reading manuscripts, as well as one scholarly copy, which was likely later used in a private setting. The I.A. features within the plain reading manuscripts were often pen trials and signatures, whereas moderate reading manuscripts more frequently had I.A. features as part of colophons. During the eighteenth century, most manuscripts with higher frequencies preserve I.A. features in letters that were part of the binding. It must be remembered that these manuscripts are preserved in their original binding, while many others (particularly in the collection of the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies) were rebound and material that was incorporated in the binding was not always preserved. The percentage of I.A. features of the paper manuscripts is significantly lower than that of the vellum manuscripts. The higher percentage among the vellum manuscripts does, however, not come as a complete surprise. These manuscripts are generally one to two hundred years older than the paper manuscripts. They are, therefore, more heavily used. Additionally, some of them became dispensable at later times with the increased use of paper and print. They were disassembled and the fragments were used for different purposes, resulting in more signs of usage, including more frequent I.A. and I.B. paratextual features.

#### 6.4.3.2.2. Category I.B.

Forty-three manuscripts show pen trials, illegible scribbles, drawings, words, and phrases that are not related to the main text(s) (category I.B.). Of these eight show only features from category I.B., lacking features from I.A. These manuscripts are in chronological order: AM 162 b fol.  $\gamma$  (14th c), AM 162 b fol.  $\iota$  (15th c), AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  (15th c), AM 555 c 4to (17th c), AM 136 fol. (17th c), AM 134 fol. (17th c), AM 163 d fol. (17th c), and Thott 1776 4to III (18th c). Of these, AM 162 b fol.  $\gamma$ , AM 162 b fol.  $\iota$ , and AM 162 b fol.  $\alpha$  are fragmentary, consisting of between

<sup>299</sup> This number excludes AM 921 4to I, which has one I.A. feature, but only consists of one folio (I.A.%: 50.00%), artificially inflating the I.A. percentage.

two and five leaves. Fragments indicate that the original codex has been deemed dispensable and ready for disassembling. Even heavily fragmented manuscripts are, therefore, likely to contain random scribbles and pen trials (I.B.). While AM 555 c 4to does not contain any paratextual features from category I.A., AM 614 b 4to, which is written by the same scribe and, according to *Handrit.is*, was bound in the same codex as AM 555 c 4to, contains the year 1656 in a colophon. The manuscript is, therefore, a problematic case. As previously noted, in cases of disassembled manuscripts, only the unit containing *Njáls saga* was used to determine paratextual features. AM 136 fol. was written by Jón Gissurarson, likely for personal use, making a colophon (category I.A.) unnecessary. While the manuscript contains some paratextual features from category I.B., they are very few (see Table 13f). The presumably limited number of users explains why the manuscript is almost void of paratextual features not pertaining to the main text. AM 134 fol. was written by Jón Erlendsson for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson but does not contain a colophon. The manuscript is very neat and contains only a very small number of scribbles not pertaining to the main text. AM 163 d fol. also only shows very few paratextual features from category I.B.. While it does not contain I.A. features, AM 125 fol., which was originally bound in the same codex, contains some names in a crossed-out family tree (see Arthur 2012a:220-221, 227 Figure 4, 228 Figure 5). These names are likely somewhat connected to the family who owned the manuscript. They could be considered a I.A. paratextual feature, but may also be thought of as a ‘main text’ in the manuscript, which, however, was crossed out at a later point. Thott 1776 4to III is a very neat manuscript written by an unknown scribe. It does not contain any colophon or other paratextual features from category I.A.. At the end of *Njáls saga* the scribe drew an intricate decoration, similar to a Celtic knot, which has been counted as a I.B. paratextual feature. The manuscript was written on large, uncut sheets (see Chapter 4.3.3.) and was presumably never used, which explains the lack of paratextual features from category I.

Tables 13d, 13e, and 13f give an indication of the frequency of I.B. features. The tables give the total number of pages (again, not folios) for each manuscript or fragment as well as the

number of pages containing features from categories I.A. and I.B..<sup>300</sup> Using these numbers, it is calculated how many percent of the pages have features of a certain category.

The fourteenth-century manuscripts show I.B. features on on average 18.98% of the pages. As with category I.A., it must be taken into consideration that some manuscripts are heavily fragmented, which may slightly distort the average. For the complete and less fragmented fourteenth-century manuscripts (GKS 2870 4to, AM 468 4to, AM 133 fol., AM 132 fol., GKS 2868 4to) I.B. features appear on 19.82% of the pages. Of these codices, GKS 2870 4to has the lowest percentage with 4.55% (11 of 242 pages), while AM 133 fol. has the highest with 32.63% (62 of 190 pages). By far the highest percentage of pages with I.B features was calculated for AM 162 b fol. ε, which exhibits such features on 13 of its 16 pages, equaling 81.25%.

The fifteenth-century manuscripts have an even higher number of I.B. features with an average of 32.38%. The two heavily fragmented AM 162 b fol. ι (8 pages) and AM 162 b fol. α (4 pages) have I.B. features on 1-2 pages. The slightly less fragmented GKS 1869 4to shows I.B. features on 8 of its 22 pages, a percentage of 36.36%. AM 309 4to has the lowest percentage of 5.21% (5 of 96 pages, three within *Njáls saga*). *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to) is the most complete of the fifteenth-century manuscripts. It contains I.B. features on 63 of its 114 pages, a percentage of 55.25%, the highest among the fifteenth-century manuscripts.

The post-medieval vellum fragments AM 921 4to I, JS fragm. 4, and Lbs fragm. 2 do not contain paratextual features from category I.B.. GKS 1003 fol. has a pen trial on one of its 288 pages; a percentage of 0.35%.

Taking all vellum manuscripts into consideration, I.B. paratextual features were found on 310 of 1750 pages, equaling 17.71% of all pages.

As with I.A. features, I.B. features are less frequent in paper manuscripts. The paper manuscripts from the seventeenth century have I.B. features on on average 1.62% of the pages. AM 555 a 4to, AM 464 4to, and Lbs 3505 4to do not show any paratextual features from category I.B. AM 555 a 4to is a plain reading manuscript most likely originally written for the personal use

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<sup>300</sup> See fn. 289.

of the scribe, Páll Ketilsson. It has no paratextual features from category I, likely due to a limited number of users as well as limited space due to the very narrow margins. AM 464 4to is a private-scholarly hybrid, presumably written by the scribe, Jón Halldórsson, for personal use. While it contains many paratextual features from category II, it is otherwise a very clean manuscript, lacking heavy signs of usage. Lbs 3505 4to is a moderate reading manuscript, which was likely commissioned, possibly for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur. The slightly more prestigious status as a commissioned manuscript may have helped to keep the manuscript clean and free from pen trials and scribbles (category I.B.). The majority of seventeenth-century manuscripts with I.B. features exhibit such features on less than 2% of the pages. Manuscripts with close to and above 2% are AM 134 fol. (2.70% = 8 of 296 pages), AM 163 d fol. (5.41% = 4 of 74), AM 465 4to (2.63% = 7 of 266 pages), AM 163 i fol. (3.33% = 4 of 120 pages), AM 396 fol. (1.99% = 8 of 402 pages, 4 within *Njáls saga*), and Lbs 222 fol. (7.64% = 53 of 694 pages). AM 134 fol. is a scholarly manuscript; AM 163 d fol. and AM 465 4to are plain reading manuscripts; AM 163 i fol., AM 396 fol., and Lbs 222 fol. are moderate reading manuscripts. AM 465 4to has I.B. features on 7 pages, including a flyleaf following *Njáls saga* which is filled with pen trials, signatures, and random words. Lbs 222 fol. has the highest percentage. Six of its 53 I.B. features are found within *Njáls saga*.

The manuscripts from the eighteenth century show I.B. features on on average 0.62% of the pages. Seven manuscripts show no I.B. features at all. These are SÁM 33, AM 469 4to, AM 467 4to, KB Add 565 4to, Thott 984 4to, NKS 1219 fol., and AM Acc. 50. SÁM 33 is heavily fragmented. AM 467 4to and KB Add 565 5to are scholarly copies that completely lack paratextual features from category I. Similarly, NKS 1219 fol., a decorative reading manuscript, that does not contain any features from category I. Thott 984 4to is a scholarly manuscript, which only has one I.A. feature in the form of a date (not within *Njáls saga*), but is otherwise void of paratextual features from category I. AM 469 4to and AM Acc. 50 are moderate reading manuscripts whose only paratextual features from category I come in the form of a colophon (I.A.). The vast majority of eighteenth-century manuscripts that contain paratextual features from

category I.B. preserve such features on less than 2% of the pages. The manuscripts with a higher percentage are ÍB 261 4to (5.43% = 15 of 276 pages), Thott 1765 4to (5.71% = 16 of 280 pages), and ÍB 322 4to (2.34% = 6 of 256 pages). ÍB 261 4to is a moderate reading manuscript, while Thott 1765 4to and ÍB 322 4to are plain reading manuscripts.

Lbs 747 fol., from the nineteenth century has I.B. paratextual features on 5 of its 758 pages, a percentage of 0.66%.

Taking all paper manuscripts into consideration, I.B. features appear on 177 of 18654 pages, a percentage of 0.95%, significantly lower than that of the vellum manuscripts. As with the paratextual features from category I.A., it is, however, this higher percentage is not surprising, due to the higher age and heavier usage of the vellum codices and fragments. Private reading manuscripts have a higher I.B.% (1.51%) compared to scholarly manuscripts (I.B.%: 0.56%) and private-scholarly hybrids (I.B.%: 0.78%<sup>301</sup>). Decorative reading manuscripts have the lowest I.B.% (0.21%); moderate reading manuscripts (I.B.%: 1.81%) and plain reading manuscripts (I.B.%: 1.85%) have the highest frequency of I.B. features.

#### 6.4.3.2.3. Conclusion: Correlation between I.A. and I.B.

I.B. features are overall more frequent than I.A. features. It can, furthermore, be observed that manuscripts that have a higher frequency of I.A. features are more likely to also contain a higher number of I.B. features. In the medieval vellum manuscripts, I.A. features appear on on average 4.26% of the pages, while I.B. features occur on 21.22% of the pages. The difference is less significant among the paper manuscripts, but I.B. features still exceed I.A. features, with I.A. features occurring on 0.60% of the pages, but I.B. on 0.95% of the pages. Similarly, though less pronounced than in the vellum manuscripts, paper manuscripts with a higher frequency of I.A. features, particularly features outside the realm of colophons, also often have a higher number of I.B. features. This is most apparent in AM 465 4to (I.A.: 3.38%, I.B.: 2.63%), Lbs 222 fol. (I.A.: 3.03%, I.B.: 7.64%), ÍB 261 4to (I.A.: 1.81%, I.B.: 5.43%), Thott 1765 4to (I.A.: 1.43%, I.B.: 5.71%),

<sup>301</sup> Of the two private-scholarly hybrids, AM 464 4to has an I.B.% of 0.00%, while AM 470 4to has an I.B.% of 1.56%.

which show the heaviest usage among the paper manuscripts of *Njáls saga* based on paratextual features from category I.

#### 6.4.3.3. Paratextual features relating to the main text (Category II)

All paper manuscripts and seventeen of the vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* have paratextual feature(s) relating to the main text (category II.). The manuscripts without such features are all small fragments (1-2 leaves). They are, in chronological order: AM 162 b fol. θ (14th c), AM 162 b fol. α (15th c), and the three one-leaf fragments of *The Lost Codex* (AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4, 17th c). AM 162 b fol. θ, AM 162 b fol. α, and Lbs fragm. 2 leave empty spaces for rubrics, indicating an intent by the scribe to add a paratextual feature (category II.A.) later on. Moreover, AM 921 4to I shows the name of the saga (*Njála*) written as a running head. While running heads were not counted in the statistical analysis, they can technically be considered a paratextual feature as well (see Genette 1997:316-318).

Tables 14a, 14b, and 14c give an overview of paratextual features from category II. The tables do not take frequency into account; a manuscript with only one paratextual feature in a certain category is valued the same as a manuscript with multiple features in the same category. Fifty manuscripts exhibit features from category II.A.1., making it the most common paratextual feature relating to the main text; the second most common feature is marked verses (category II.B.1.) with forty-three manuscripts,<sup>302</sup> followed by category II.B.2. (41 manuscripts), and category II.A.2. (36 manuscripts). Far less common are paratextual features from categories II.B.3. (5 manuscripts). The various categories will be discussed in more detail below.

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<sup>302</sup> It must be noted, however, that fifteen manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are so fragmented that they do not contain sections of the text that contain verses. It seems very likely, but cannot be proven, that all or most of these fragments marked verses within the text in one of the modes described in section 6.4.3.3.2.1.

#### 6.4.3.3.1. Verbal paratextual features (Category II.A.)

##### 6.4.3.3.1.1. Verbal commentary on the text (Category II.A.1.)

Category II.A.1. consists of verbal commentary on the main text. This includes mention of the saga's title in the margin (excluding running heads) and the repetition of words/phrases from the main text in the margin (e.g., as pen trials), summaries of text passages (including rubrics and chapter titles), comments or added verses about the text or its characters, historical or geographical information (e.g., the year when Christianity came to Iceland), sometimes with references to other texts (e.g., *Landnáma*) or other passages within *Njáls saga* (See Tables 15a, 15b, 15c). Since this category is fairly broadly defined, it is not surprising that the majority of manuscripts (50) contain at least one of these features.

Aside from the above-mentioned fragments that do not contain any paratextual features from category II (AM 162 b fol. θ, AM 162 b fol. α, AM 921 4to I, Lbs fragm. 2, JS fragm. 4), only AM 555 a 4to (17th c), Lbs 3505 4to (17th c), ÍB 421 4to (18th c), and Thott 984 fol. (18th c) contain no verbal commentary on the main text of any kind. Of these, ÍB 421 4to and Thott 984 fol. are scholarly copies. AM 555 a 4to is a particularly plain reading manuscript with very narrow margins, offering limited space for commentary. Lbs 3505 4to is a moderate reading manuscript containing few paratextual features overall.

Seventeen of the twenty-two vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* contain features from category II.A.1.; twelve from the fourteenth century, four from the fifteenth century, and one post-medieval manuscript. Fifteenth manuscripts from the seventeenth century and seventeen from the eighteenth century, as well as Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century, contain II.A.1. features as well.

Two very basic kinds of II.A.1. features are the mere mention of the saga's title (e.g. *Njála*) and characters (Njáll/Kári), or the repetition of words from the main text to the margin. Mention of the saga's title or characters is found in thirteen manuscripts (see Tables 15a, 15b, 15c): seven vellum codices, two seventeenth-century manuscripts, and four eighteenth-century manuscripts. These most often appear to be mere pen trials, but are occasionally part of an ownership mark, as

in AM 466 4to (“Þorleifur Jónsson aa Niálu þessa Anno 1645,”<sup>303</sup> fol. 46r) or AM 133 fol. (“ieg ion eiolf(s) son hefr þetta skrifad a þessa bok niallu,”<sup>304</sup> fol. 44r; “nialz saga er þetta. loftur hefur lesid mig,”<sup>305</sup> fol. 46v). In Lbs 1415 4to a reader penned the phrases “Endir hier Njala” and “Endar hier Njala,”<sup>306</sup> immediately following the saga on fol. 239v. In ÍB 322 4to (18th c) a later user adds the title of the saga in the top margins of some pages, similar to a running head. While running heads that are part of the original design of the manuscript were not included in the statistical analysis of paratextual features, the occasional running heads in ÍB 322 4to differ. Not only are the six running heads younger additions, but they also show some diversity. Rather than always using the same title, the user offers five variations: “Sagan um Njals Brennu” (fols. 20v-21r), “Nialsbrennu saga” (fols. 88v-89r), “Sagan af Nials brennu” (fols. 89v-90r and fols. 113v-114r), “Sagan af Niali Þorgeirs syni” (fols. 112v-113r), and “Njala” (fol. 118v). Whether the appearances of the saga’s title in Lbs 1415 4to and ÍB 322 4to were pen trials or served a different purpose is unclear. Both manuscripts also contain the title *Njála* as more definite faint pen trials (Lbs 1415 4to, fol. 171r, written upside down; ÍB 322 4to, fol. 45r).

Instances of single words being copied from the main text to the margin by later users are also occasionally pen trials. Such repetitions occur in one vellum and four seventeenth-century manuscripts (see Tables 15a, 15b, 15c). The fragment AM 163 d fol. η is the only vellum manuscript that repeats a word from the main text (*kvenskap* [‘a woman’s disposition’], fol. 1r) in the margin, quite possible a pen trial by a later user. In AM 555 c 4to, such repetitions occur in a number of places (fols. 15r, 21v, 57v, 69v), once with an added *nota bene* sign (fol. 15r). The addition of the *nota bene* sign suggests that the copying of words in the margin was not a mere pen trial but a way of highlighting a certain passage in the manuscript. Similarly, Goðaland and Iceland (‘Island’) are written in the margins of AM 163 d fol. (see also below), drawing attention to passages that mention these place names. The reader of the manuscript possibly had connections to Goðaland and certainly Iceland. On fol. 23v in AM 163 d fol., a younger hand

<sup>303</sup> Translation: ‘Þorleifur Jónsson owns this *Njála* in the year 1645.’

<sup>304</sup> Translation: ‘I, Jón Eyjólfsson have written this on this book of *Njála*.’

<sup>305</sup> Translation: ‘This is *Njáls saga*. Loftur has read me.’

<sup>306</sup> Translation: ‘Here ends *Njála*.’



repeats the first line of the page in the bottom margin (indicating that it is the first line). It is unclear why the line was copied, although it cannot be ruled out that it was part of a writing practice. The cases of AM 163 i fol. and BL Add 4867 fol. are less clear. In AM 163 i fol. (fol. 33r) the scribe Henrik Magnússon writes names in the margins (Sveinn/Eiríkur) that appear in the text. The marginal notes are, however, partly cut off, and it is unclear whether they are mere repetitions of the names or possible corrections to or comments on the text. In BL Add 4867 fol. (fols. 56r-v), the scribe Jón Þórðarson writes “Godgäinn” [‘the blasphemy’] and “(godgaana)” next to passages that mention “goð geyja” (“Goð Geyia,” fol. 56r; “God Geyia” fol. 56v) when Hjalti Skeggjason insults Freyja and is later trialed for blasphemy (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:264, 269). Rather than being a pure copy of the phrase “goð geyja” from the main text, his annotations can be understood as either an alternate reading, an explanation of the phrase “goð geyja,” or as a summary and signpost of the passage.

The two most common II.A.1. features, occurring in twenty-two manuscripts each, are rubrics or chapter titles on the one hand, and summaries of text passages (in the margins) and comments on the text on the other hand (see Tables 15a, 15b, 15c).

Among the medieval vellum manuscripts, rubrics (see Table 15b) are the most common and are evident in fourteen codices. The medieval manuscripts that do not have rubrics either leave empty spaces where rubrics could have been added later or are so heavily fragmented that it cannot be determined whether the original manuscript contained rubrics. While rubrics do not appear in paper manuscripts, eight paper manuscripts, two from the seventeenth century, five from the eighteenth, and Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century, contain chapter titles, which serve the same function as the medieval rubrics. In Lbs 747 fol., this is the only II.A.1. feature. The chapter titles in Lbs 747 fol. are taken from the 1772 edition of *Njáls saga*, of which the manuscript is a copy. Most rubrics and chapter titles offer neutral descriptions of the chapters to which they belong. Some, however, indicate a positive or negative judgment by the scribe. In Thott 1776 4to III, for example, the chapter describing the death of Gunnarr of Hlíðarendi is

introduced with the title “ägiæt vorn og fall Gunnars”<sup>307</sup> (fol. 39r), indicating the admiration for Gunnarr’s heroic last stand by the scribe. The chapter titles in Lbs 437 4to are later additions, for the most part taken from Olavus Olavius’ 1772 edition of *Njáls saga* (see Zeevaert et al. 2015:8). However, when Flosi and the *brennumenn* ride to Bergþórshváll, the chapter title in the manuscript states that “Fjandmenn koma til Berg þors Hvols”<sup>308</sup> (fol. 182v), a more judgmental statement than the neutral “Heimsókn til Bergþórshvols”<sup>309</sup> in the 1772 edition (Olavius 1772:197). Some manuscripts, particularly those taking titles from the 1772 edition, have titles for each chapter, while the remaining manuscripts only add titles for some of the chapters. In some cases, such as the scholarly copies Stock 9. fol. and *Landakotsbók* or the private-scholarly hybrid AM 464 4to, the reason why only some of the chapters contain titles may be dependent upon the exemplars, which themselves may not contain rubrics for all chapters or may have rubrics that have become illegible due to fading red ink. In other cases, scribes may only have added chapter titles to chapters that they consider particularly important for the plot. These include, for example, the introductions of Gunnarr and Njáll, Gunnarr’s death, the Christianization of Iceland, the burning at Bergþórshváll, and Flosi’s dream sequence.<sup>310</sup>

Comments on the text and summaries of text passages as signposts (see Tables 15a, 15b, 15c), similar to rubrics and chapter titles but written in the margins, not usually at the beginning of a chapter, and often not in the same hand as the main text, occur in five vellum manuscripts (14th c: 3; 15th c: 1; 17th c: 1) as well as seventeen paper manuscripts (17th c: 9; 18th c: 8). These summaries and comments allude to sections that were of particular interest to scribes and readers. Occasionally, they also allow for an interpretation of how certain scenes or characters were perceived by the scribe or later readers.

<sup>307</sup> Translation: ‘Gunnarr’s excellent defense and his defeat.’

<sup>308</sup> Translation: ‘The enemies arrive at Bergþórshváll.’

<sup>309</sup> Translation: ‘Visit to Bergþórshváll.’

<sup>310</sup> Lönnroth (1975) offers an analysis of structural divisions of *Njáls saga*, based on the study of initials and rubrics in the medieval manuscripts.

Some of the summaries, similar to most rubrics and chapter titles, are neutral descriptions of happenings within the main text, such as, for example, “fra kara ok nialfsonum”<sup>311</sup> (GKS 2870 4to, fol. 58v), “draum fl(osa)”<sup>312</sup> (AM 163 b fol. 7, fol. 3r), “Hier er fyrft getid viga G(unnars) fem hann vo a Islande”<sup>313</sup> (AM 466 4to, fol. 18r), or “vög Glüms,”<sup>314</sup> “vög þiöstölfs,”<sup>315</sup> and “Vög þörðar fostra Nialssona”<sup>316</sup> (GKS 1003 fol., fols. 69v and 75v), “fundur gunnarz og hallgierdar”<sup>317</sup> (AM 555 c 4to, fol. 15v), “Sida skipte i norege”<sup>318</sup> (AM 136 fol., fol. 53r), “hallgerdur giffit þorvalldi”<sup>319</sup> (AM 163 d fol., 9v), “fæddur Høs[k(uldur)] Hvytaness [G]odi”<sup>320</sup> and “draumur G(unnars)”<sup>321</sup> (BL Add 4867 fol., fols. 35r and 36r), and “Draumur” [‘Dream’] (AM 469 4to, fol. 19r; referring to the dream of Høskuldr Dala-Kollsson, cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:64). In Thott 1776 4to III, these neutral text summaries come in the form of a detailed alphabetized register following the saga on fols. 82v-85v.

Some summaries, though neutral in wording, nonetheless indicate how the scribe or reader interpreted a scene or what he considered significant. The scribe of AM 163 d fol., who highlights proverbs (see category II.B.2.) and frequently adds summaries in the margins, appears to have had a particular interest in Hallgerðr’s role in the death of two of her husbands. On fol. 9v, the scribe writes: “þiostolfur drepur þorv(alld). Bonda hallgerdar at henar æggian.”<sup>322</sup> Later, during Gunnarr’s last stand, he writes: “hallg(erdur) vil[l] ei haarit liá. Hier Deý G(unnar) aa hlýðarenda”<sup>323</sup> (fol. 19r). The scribe implies in both cases that Hallgerðr is to blame for her husbands’ deaths. Two manuscripts highlight the section in which Hrútr’s premonition that Hallgerðr has the eyes of a thief becomes a reality: in AM 465 4to, two marginal notes on fol. 32v

<sup>311</sup> Translation: ‘About Kári and the sons of Njáll.’

<sup>312</sup> Translation: ‘Flosi’s dream.’

<sup>313</sup> Translation: ‘Here, firstly, are mentioned those of Gunnarr’s killings which he committed in Iceland.’

<sup>314</sup> Translation: ‘Glúmr’s death.’

<sup>315</sup> Translation: ‘Þjóstólfr’s death.’

<sup>316</sup> Translation: ‘Death of Þórðr, foster-father of Njáll’s sons.’

<sup>317</sup> Translation: ‘Gunnarr’s and Hallgerðr’s meeting.’

<sup>318</sup> Translation: ‘Change of faith in Norway.’

<sup>319</sup> Translation: ‘Hallgerðr marries Þorvalldr.’

<sup>320</sup> Translation: ‘Born Høskuldr Hvítanessgoði.’

<sup>321</sup> Translation: ‘Gunnarr’s dream.’

<sup>322</sup> Translation: ‘Þjóstólfr kills Þorvalldr, Hallgerðr’s husband, at her urging.’

<sup>323</sup> Translation: ‘Hallgerðr does not want to loan the hair. Here dies Gunnar of Hlíðarenda.’

read “hier sannast vel ræða Rüüts”<sup>324</sup> and “þiofur er hallgerður”<sup>325</sup> and in AM 396 fol. (fol. 112r) a later reader adds “Hallgerður verður þiofr”<sup>326</sup> While fairly neutral in their description and true in their statements, the fact that both readers specifically call Hallgerður a thief draws attention to Hrútr’s prediction and Hallgerður’s imperfect character.

Jón Þórðarson, who wrote BL Add 4867 fol. for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur, also adds several neutral summaries in the margins. When Skarphéðinn and Kári separate during the burning at Bergþórshváll, Jón writes “Skilur ä mille feigs og ófeigs”<sup>327</sup> (fol. 69v), indicating an interest in the idea of ‘feigr’ and ‘ófeigr,’ the one doomed to die (Skarphéðinn) and the one fated to live (Kári).<sup>328</sup> A more historical interest is evident in the only II.A.1. feature, which was detected in NKS 1219 fol.: on fol. 140v the scribe changes the text of the chapter containing the death of Valgarður inn grái in the following way (**changes indicated in bold**): “Valgardur braut krossa fyrer Merde og óll heilög takn, litlu sydar doo Valgardur úr Soott og var hann heigdur **ep̃ter heideñna manna Sid.**”<sup>329</sup> Although it cannot be ruled out that he merely copied his exemplar, the phrase does not appear in any of the other extant *Njáls saga* manuscripts.<sup>330</sup>

Other summaries and comments show positive or negative judgments of a scene or character or even of the saga as a whole. In AM 466 4to, a marginalia on fol. 51v, in the hand of the unknown scribe of *The Lost Codex* and AM 396 fol.,<sup>331</sup> complains about the length of *Njáls saga* by writing “fä þü omak fo driüg fem þü ertt þad mun þeim þikia sem ep̃ter þier klorar,” which Driscoll (2004) translates as “be damned, great long thing you are; that’s what those think who

<sup>324</sup> Translation: ‘Here Hrútr’s words are well proven.’ [= Here Hrútr’s words prove to be entirely true.]

<sup>325</sup> Translation: ‘Hallgerður is a thief.’

<sup>326</sup> Translation: ‘Hallgerður becomes a thief.’

<sup>327</sup> Translation: ‘Parting of the one doomed to die and the one fated to live.’

<sup>328</sup> A very similar phrase is listed in Cleasby and Vigfússon (1957:149). The phrase appears in *Páls biskups saga* (“skildi þar þá feigan ok úfeigan,” *Biskupa Sögur* 1858-1878:I:139) when a group of people attempts to cross a river and their boat capsizes; some die while others live. Additionally, the phrase shows up in *Hemings þáttur Áslákssonar* in *Flateyjarbók* (“kongur m(ælltti) þá skildi hier nv feigan ok ofeigan,” Fellows Jensen 1962:25) after Heming has skied down a hill by command of King Harald *harðráði*. According to Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication), the phrase is a fixed idiom, still used in Iceland today.

<sup>329</sup> Translation: ‘Valgarður broke Mörður’s crosses and all holy objects; a little later, Valgarður died of a sickness and was buried in a mound **according to the tradition of heathen men.**’

<sup>330</sup> Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (2014) has also detected signs of interest in religious matters in NKS 1219 fol. A more detailed analysis of this codex may reveal even more insights into the interests of the scribe or commissioner.

<sup>331</sup> Slay (1960a:148) wrongfully assumes that the marginalia was likely written by Páll Sveinsson, scribe of GKS 1003 fol.. Driscoll (2004:29) repeats Slay’s assumption. See Chapter 6.2.1., particularly fn. 249, for my argument against this conclusion.

make a copy of you” (29). Einar Eiríksson, the scribe of AM 469 4to, similarly, but more subtly, hints at the tediousness of copying the lengthy *Njáls saga*. Einar ends his manuscript in a carefully designed tip (fol. 149r), stating:

og Lukum vier þar Brennu  
niälssogu Loksins skrifud  
ä fagurey i helgafells  
sueijt frä 13 Marci  
og til 19 Aprilis –  
Anno 1705<sup>332</sup>

The centered and prominently positioned *Loksins* [‘Finally’] – which from a textual point of view is superfluous – cannot be a mere coincidence and must be interpreted as a sigh of relief by Einar, whose work is over at last.<sup>333</sup>

A positive comment on Gunnarr occurs in GKS 2870 4to: “Hier deyr gunnar hamundars(on) med heidur”<sup>334</sup> (fol. 49r). Kålund (1900) dates this marginalia to c1500 (56). In AM 555 c 4to, the scribe Halldór Guðmundsson refers to several verses in the saga as *velkvedin* [‘composed well’] (see e.g. fols. 4v, 11v, 12v, 34r). Moreover, Halldór, who frequently highlights proverbs and other quotes by writing *málsháttur* [‘proverb’] or *orðtak* [‘idiom’] in the margin (see category II.B.2.), identifies one idiom, the famous “Gud hialpe mier enn fyrirgefe þier”<sup>335</sup> (fol. 46r) spoken by Höskuldr Hvítanessgoði as “gott ordtak” [‘a good idiom’].<sup>336</sup>

Most positive comments (and some negative), however, occur in the form of added verses about the saga and its characters. GKS 2868 4to is the only medieval manuscript that undoubtedly

<sup>332</sup> Translation: ‘And here we end Brennu-Njáls saga, finally, written at Fagurey in Helgafellssveit from March 13 and until April 19 – in the year 1705’

<sup>333</sup> The two comments in AM 466 4to and AM 469 4to are both closely related to category II.A.2. Since they comment directly on the saga, however, they have been included in this section.

<sup>334</sup> Translation: ‘Here dies Gunnarr Hámundarson with honor.’

<sup>335</sup> Translation: ‘May God help me, and forgive you.’

<sup>336</sup> See also Stefán Karlsson (1970b), who mentions some of Halldór Guðmundsson’s marginal notes in AM 555 c 4to (84).

preserves a verse about one of the saga's characters, Grímr Njálsson (fol. 26v).<sup>337</sup> Jón Helgason (1962) transcribes a partially illegible verse on fol. 50v in *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to), which dates to the fifteenth century and appears to include the name Hallgerðr, although Jón is unsure of the reading of the name (XIV). The verse seems to suggest that someone (addressed as þú ['you'] in the second person) is longing for a woman called Hallgerðr. While this could be a reference to Hallgerðr in *Njáls saga* and one of her husbands, it is also possible that the verse is not related to the saga. This view is possibly strengthened by a second verse on fol. 93v, which Jón Helgason (1962) summarizes as "a call to women of good figure and beauty to make a full show of these advantages, 'better too much than too little'" (XIV). The verse in *Reykjabók* is, therefore, problematic. Verses about the saga heroes are more frequent in the paper manuscripts and occur in ten codices (17th c: 4; 18th c: 6). AM 470 4to preserves a poem about Kári on fol. 160r, which a later reader tried to cross out, rendering it partially illegible.<sup>338</sup> AM 465 4to contains five verses on folios 132v and 133r; the first ("Áttmælt") mentions Gunnarr, Skarphéðinn, Helgi, Grímr, and Kári; two verses imply that Sæmundur fróði composed *Njáls saga*; whereas the remaining two are fragmented, but likely contained the name of the scribe and/or poet (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:737). AM 163 i fol. adds verses by a Björn S.S. a. Sk.a. either within the text or in the margins on fols. 29v, 44r, 47v, 50r, 56v, and 57v. While it is tempting to assume that the scribe Henrik Magnússon refers to Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá, the abbreviated patronymic undoubtedly reads S.S., making an identification of the poet problematic. The verses deal with Gunnarr, Skarphéðinn, Kári (same verse twice), and Þorgeirr Skorargeir. The verse on fol. 44r is partially cut off, and its content cannot be reconstructed entirely. It occurs next to the passage in which Skarphéðinn throws a pair of dark trousers at Flosi as an insult (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:314),

<sup>337</sup> The verse reads "Linna brime og lærdoms prime luckist grimi, sorgar stími hann sig fra limi, enn sigur og timi aldri suijme." – See also Jón Þorkelsson (1889:695). Since Icelandic verses are generally difficult to translate due to their use of so-called *kennings* and *heiti* as well as poetic language, I will refrain from attempting to provide a translation.

<sup>338</sup> This is an example of 'a comment on a comment,' which was briefly described in fn. 286. Kristján Eiríksson from the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies has helped me in reconstructing the poem as well as possible. The poem likely reads: "Kǣre hefur vered mætür Mann; mitt þad ä lit er Umm hann; [Hetjan] [sk]á[?]d hallda vann; hladed mun hafa heima [r]ann; Brennu þ[ræ]la fü[s]lega fann; feinged gat þeim æfe Bann; Hu[n] er [h]ýn þá Segginn þann; er so [au]g[l]ýse kiærleik kann; [J]eg sǣ seýd med fullann [s]ann; frida h[æ]d[ra] höfdjngiann; [Kem] K[risne] Sinne æS Kiænt Ann; [h]raskins s[k]ý[st] þ[e]ße B[r]ann." – The script is remarkably similar to that of a verse on fol. 86v in AM 469 4to (see below), most likely written by the scribe Einar Eiríksson. It is, therefore, possible that Einar, at some point, had AM 470 4to at his disposal.

and appears to be a comment on the scene. Lbs 222 fol. preserves thirty-one stanzas that were added to the manuscript on fols. 345v-347r in 1746. The verses are about the saga in general and about some of its characters more specifically: Njáll, Skarphéðinn (8 stanzas), Helgi and Grímr, Kári, Gunnarr, Kolskeggr, Hrútr, Hǫskuldr Dala-Kollsson, Þráinn Sigfússon, Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði, Flosi, Þorhallr Ásgrímsson, Þorgeirr Skorargeir, Valgarðr inn grái, Mǫrðr Valgarðsson, Skammkell, Hallgerðr, her foster-father Þjóstólfr, Sigmundur Lambason, Melkólfr, and Hrappr Örgumleiðason.<sup>339</sup> The list illustrates that the poet comments both on the saga's heroes as well as the villains, and that he was particularly interested in Skarphéðinn. AM 469 4to contains a verse about Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði in the margin of fol. 86v<sup>340</sup> and five verses, about Gunnarr, Kári, Njáll, Skarphéðinn, and Flosi following the saga on fol. 149r.<sup>341</sup> All verses are in the hand of the scribe Einar Eiríksson, although he utilizes a more cursive script for the verse on 86v.<sup>342</sup> As Arthur (2014) has pointed out, the verses about Gunnarr, Njáll, and Skarphéðinn are only partially positive, but also critical of the characters (35), which may seem surprising to admirers of these saga heroes. KB Add 565 4to contains the same verse about Njáll as AM 469 4to on fol. 332v, seemingly added by a later user, who nonetheless imitates Jón Magnússon's archaic script. It is unclear whether the verse was copied directly from AM 469 4to, although it is possible. ÍB 261 4to features 4 poems in the hand of a later scribe on fols. 135r-136r, although Jón Þorkelsson (1889) believes that they were composed by the scribe of the main text (752). The verses are entitled "Sextánmælt" (mentioning Njáll, Gunnarr, Mǫrðr, Skarphéðinn, and Flosi), "Langlokur" (mentioning Unnr, Hrútr, Hallgerðr, Bergþóra, and Flosi), "Kimblabönd" (mentioning Njáll, Gunnarr, Kári, and the *brennumenn*), and "Tröllaslagur" (mentioning Njáll, Gunnarr, Unnr, Hrútr, Sigmundur, Skarphéðinn, Þráinn, Kári, Móðólfr, Grani, Gunnarr, Lambi, Glúmr, Kolr, and Flosi). Moreover, a verse on fol. 136r in ÍB 261 4to reveals the date 1740 and the

<sup>339</sup> The verses are not reproduced here, but digital images of the manuscript are available at *Handrit.is*.

<sup>340</sup> The verse reads: "hóskulldur var heidre filldur huorskinz Sæmd og pride; af öllu godu ör og milldur, alldre stigde lyde." – It has been reproduced here since, unlike the remaining verses, it was not printed by Jón Þorkelsson (1889).

<sup>341</sup> For a transcription of the verses see Jón Þorkelsson (1889:737-738), and for an interpretation Arthur (2014).

<sup>342</sup> Einar uses the same cursive script for his catchwords, which makes it possible to determine that he wrote the verse on fol. 86v. Moreover, the ink appears to be the same.

name of the scribe Jón J[óns]s[on] (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:751-752).<sup>343</sup> Kall 612 4to preserves six verses written by the main scribe on fols. 214r-v (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:748-749). These verses mention Kári, Njáll, Mörðr, Hǫskuldr, Skarphéðinn, Flosi, Björn, Gunnarr, “Þjóf-Hǫllku” (=Hallgerðr), Gissurr, and “Gerða” (=Hallgerðr). The scribe of AM Acc. 50, Jakob Sigurðsson adds a poem of four verses following the saga on fol. 140r, focusing first on Njáll, but also mentioning Gunnarr, Kári, and commenting on the saga as a whole. Since no digital images at *Handrit.is* are available of AM Acc. 50 at this point and the verses have not been published elsewhere, a transcription is provided here

“Lýtelvæg Liooda Vitnan Yfer Søguna

Niaala ber nafn af Niale, Nial vil eg þann Ûtmäla  
Nialu vid Nauda Deilr, Nial einginn Vann i Mälummm  
Nialu J nög er talad, Nialssona ummm vög med Stälummm  
Niaale med mórg Mannvólen, Mäl Sögu prýða i Nialu.

(Niaal vil eg týtmm tala, Tal Eckiert var med Niale)

Diüpvitur Dýgda giæter. Dædummm prýddur sem Næde,  
Lóg þreyta þeirra Daga, þiettust med frægd og Riette,  
Vinummm gaf ræd i raunummm Ranginda Kiæfde Slængr,  
Boolstad a Bergþörs hvole, Bioodur Loonz hafde Gloodar.

Niaal vil eg týtmm Tala, Tal Ecckiert var med Niaale  
Gunnar var mestur manna, munnsanner Leifdu Gunnar,  
Kaare nam Seggi særa, Sær var i Hefndummm Kaare,  
Brennu ür randa runnur, Rennande, Hefnde Brennu.

Lagaflækiur Of frekar, finnast hier Lýka Inne,  
Vitskann med Vareigd Hoska, Veýter Oss Dæmenn Neýtu  
Trýgdina, Tal, og frægder, talar ummm Saga Valenn  
og Hefnder i Hiarta Geýmdar, Hær Ellda bifarz Kaara.

Þad Vitnar JSigurds Son m:E:h.” (AM Acc. 50, fol. 140r)

Lastly, ÍB 270 4to contains eleven verses on fols. 149v-150v; the scribe and poet mainly talks about the saga’s characters (e.g., Njáll, Gunnarr, Skarphéðinn, Kári, Þorgeirr skorargeirr, Flosi, Grímr and Helgi, Ásgrímur, Guðmundr ríki, Skafti, Hallr of Síða, Eyjólf, and Snorri goði) but also addresses his audience in the final two verses, suggesting that they can quench their thirst for

<sup>343</sup> The verses are transcribed in Jón Þorkelsson (1889:751-753).



reading and knowledge because *Njáls saga* is an extensive work (fol. 150v) (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:754-578). The added verses in the above-mentioned manuscripts indicate which characters particularly engaged the scribes and readers of *Njáls saga*, most notably Njáll, Gunnarr, Njáll's sons (particularly Skarphéðinn, but also Grímr and Helgi), Kári, Flosi, and Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði, but also some of the saga's antagonists, such as Hallgerðr and Mǫrðr.

Not taking the above-mentioned verses into consideration and focusing solely on other commentary, it can be observed that negative comments, particularly on the actions of Hallgerðr, Valgarðr inn grái<sup>344</sup> and Mǫrðr Valgarðsson as well as the *brennumenn* are more frequent than positive comments. Negative comments referring to Valgarðr and Mǫrðr occur, for example in *Oddabók* (AM 466 4to), AM 396 fol., AM 163 d fol., and GKS 1003 fol., which are all textually related. When Mǫrðr, who appears to have accepted the Christian faith with the rest of the country in 1000 A.D., asks his father to convert, Valgarðr refuses and asks his son to renounce Christianity instead (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:275). Mǫrðr, however, stays true to the new faith. An infuriated Valgarðr destroys all of Mǫrðr's crosses and holy objects. Shortly thereafter, Valgarðr falls ill and dies, a sign of God's supremacy, according to Lönnroth (1976:129). The composer of *Njáls saga* concludes Valgarðr's story by stating that “Þá tók Valgarðr sótt ok andaðisk, ok var hann heygðr”<sup>345</sup> (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:275). Most of the extant manuscripts of *Njáls saga* let Valgarðr's life end with these words. Following the usual conclusion of this chapter, however, the scribe of *Oddabók* adds “ok fari bannsettr” (fol. 38r). Sverrir Tómasson (2008) very colloquially translates the phrase as “fuck him” (53), though a more literal translation would be ‘and may he be damned.’ *Oddabók* contains other such variants. Gunnarr's enemies are called *skækjusynir* [‘sons of whores’] (fol. 25v) when they gather to attack Gunnarr (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1953:18), and Mǫrðr is referred to as a “þurs<sup>346</sup> (?) ærulaus” [‘dishonorable numskull’] (fol. 39r; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1953:18-19; Einar Ól. Sveinsson, 1954:281, fn. 2).

<sup>344</sup> For details on the reception of Valgarðr inn grái based on scribal remarks and readers' comments, see Arthur (2012b).

<sup>345</sup> Translation: “Then Valgard fell sick and died and was buried in a mound.” (Cook 2001:184)

<sup>346</sup> The word is almost illegible in the manuscript today, which explains why Einar Ól. Sveinsson relates his doubts about his reading by adding the question mark.

Jón Karl Helgason (1999) considers these variants in *Oddabók* “a belated literary revenge for the death of individual saga characters,” arguing that “they testify more generally to the tendency of the Icelandic audience to think about the saga-plot in terms of heroes and villains” (23). Sverrir Tómasson (2008) maintains that “additional variants or comments are part of the work’s reception” (53).

AM 396 fol. and AM 163 d fol. are clearly related to *Oddabók*. Both manuscripts omit the *skækjusynir*-variant found in *Oddabók* (AM 396 fol., fol. 118r; AM 163 d fol., fol. 19r), but – like AM 466 4to – refer to Mǫrðr as *ærulaus* [‘dishonorable’] (AM 396 fol., fol. 127v; AM 163 d fol., fol. 25r). The fact that neither manuscript preserves the noun preceding *ærulaus* is presumably due to the fact that it had become illegible (see fn. 346). They show a clear connection to *Oddabók* in the section where Valgarðr dies. Both manuscripts end the chapter with “ok var hann þar heigðr hundheiðinn ok þrifist hann alldrei. Bannsettur!”<sup>347</sup> (AM 396 fol., fol. 127r; AM 163 d fol., fol. 24v).

Similar sentiments are found in GKS 1003 fol. written by Páll Sveinsson. Páll also lets Valgarðr die with the words “og var þar heigdr hundheidinn og þrýfist hann alldrei” (fol. 92r), but omits *bannsettur*, possibly because the manuscript was written as a prestige object for the farmer Jón Eyjólfsson of Múli and other pious men in the Rangárvellir-district of southern Iceland (see Slay 1960a:144-145). Páll Sveinsson may have regarded such profane language inappropriate for the intended readership of GKS 1003 fol.

A more poetic way of sending Valgarðr to hell is found in BL Add. 4867 and Lbs 222 fol., written by Jón Þórðarson. After the mention of Valgarðr’s burial, Jón writes the verse: “En sálin fór í sælu þrot, af sannri trú hafði alldrei not”<sup>348</sup> (BL Add. 4867, fol. 58r; Lbs 222 fol., fol. 303r).

The wording of the unknown scribe of Kall 612 4to is more straightforward. He simply notes that Valgarðr “var heigdur og för til skrattanns”<sup>349</sup> (fol. 127r). In a similar fashion, Jakob

<sup>347</sup> Translation: ‘and then he was buried in a mound, the despicable heathen, and he will never thrive. Damned one!’ – Since the two manuscripts contain the same textual passage, I present the quotation in normalized spelling.

<sup>348</sup> Translation: ‘But the soul went to a place lacking salvation (=hell), never having used the true faith.’ – Since the two manuscripts contain the same textual passage, I present the quotation in normalized spelling.

<sup>349</sup> Translation: ‘was buried in a mound and went to the devil.’

Sigurðsson, scribe of AM Acc. 50 concludes that Valgarðr “doo |:þar tók skrattinn við Eign sinne:| og var hann heigdur”<sup>350</sup> (fol. 82r).

Mǫrðr’s and Valgarðr’s malevolent characters and behavior appear to have particularly enraged and engaged the scribes and readers of *Njáls saga*, likely due to their involvement – direct or indirect – in the killing of Gunnarr, Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði, Njáll and his family. When Valgarðr inn grái is first mentioned in Chapter 25 and his son Mǫrðr is born, Páll Sveinsson adds in the margin: “Jllur vættur kemur hier við sögu”<sup>351</sup> (GKS 1003 fol., fol. 71r). The marginal note likely refers to Mǫrðr, but also implies Mǫrðr’s devilish upbringing by Valgarðr. At the same point in the story, the scribe of AM 163 d fol., fol. 11v, adds in the margin “[Hi]er Kiemur Lyga [M]ordur fáj hann [s]kamm.”<sup>352</sup> Jón Þórðarson, also gives Mǫrðr negative bynames, calling him “falsarinn Maurdur” [‘phony Mǫrðr’] (Lbs 222 fol., fol. 303v; BL Add 4867 fol., fol. 58v) and “svika Mǫrðr” [‘traitor Mǫrðr’] (BL Add 4867 fol., fol. 40r, 59r; Lbs 222 fol., 304r).<sup>353</sup> Moreover, when people want to seize the farms of the *brennumenn* after the burning at Begrþórshvoll and Mǫrðr advises against it with the words “ef Bv þeirra standa kyrr, þa munu þeir skiött vitia þeirra, og qvinna sinna, Og mun þar þa mega veida þa er stunder Lyda. Skulud þier nu eckj efa ydur ad eg sie Kara Trur J øllum rædum þviat eg a fyrer sialfann mig ad svara” (fol. 71v),<sup>354</sup> Jón Þórðarson adds the marginal note “Marger kunna mardarlega ad Lata, ei sydur enn Mærdarlega.” The meaning of the comment is not entirely clear. It is certain that *marðarlega* [‘like Mǫrðr’] refers to Mǫrðr, although a word play on ‘marten-like’ cannot be ruled out. Based on Jón Þórðarson’s evident dislike of Mǫrðr, the word likely conveys deceitfulness. *Mærdarlegur* is related to ‘*mærð*’ [‘verbosity’ / ‘flattery’]. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (pers. communication) suggests that the comment

<sup>350</sup> Translation: ‘died |:then the devil took what was his:| and he was buried in a mound.’

<sup>351</sup> Translation: ‘An evil supernatural being comes here into the story.’

<sup>352</sup> Translation: ‘Here appears Mǫrðr the Liar. Shame on him.’

<sup>353</sup> He also refers to Skammkell as “skielmurinn Vonde” [‘evil rogue’] (only in Lbs 222 fol., fol. 274r). These additions were particularly noticeable in Lbs 222 fol., where a later user of the manuscript appears to have underlined phrases that do not usually appear in the *Njáls saga* text.

<sup>354</sup> Translation: “If their farms are untouched, they will come to visit them and their women, and they can be hunted down in due course. Have no doubt that I will be loyal to Kari in every way, for I must look out for myself.” (Cook 2001:228). – As Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954:341 fn. 5) and Cook (2001:334) explain, Mǫrðr is forced to side with Kári due to his involvement in the killing of Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði, which makes him an enemy of the Sigfússons.

implies that many (implied: Mǫrðr) have evil on their mind when they speak verbosely and say one thing while thinking something entirely different.

The judgment of Mǫrðr's and Valgarðr's characters is also supported by the fact that three manuscripts, AM 396 fol., AM 163 d fol., and GKS 1003 fol., add or copy another comment. After Valgarðr and Mǫrðr agree to goad Njáll's sons into killing Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði and, thereby, eventually cause Njáll's and his sons' deaths, the three manuscripts add in parentheses "fái þeir skamm báðir"<sup>355</sup> (AM 396 fol., 127r; AM 163 d fol., 24v; GKS 1003 fol., fol. 92r). The eighteenth-century scribe Jakob Sigurðsson directly tells Valgarðr "[:Bölvadur vertu fyrer Raaden:]"<sup>356</sup> (AM Acc. 50, fol. 82r), after Valgarðr orders Mǫrðr: "Vil ek nú, at þú launir þeim því, at þeim dragi öllum til bana"<sup>357</sup> (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:275). Moreover, rubrics in *Kálfalækjarbók* and corresponding chapter titles in its copy AM 464 4to, written by Jón Halldórsson, such as "frá sviksamligum slægðum Marðar" (AM 133 fol., fol. 62v; AM 464 4to, fol. 93r) and "frá lygi Marðar Valgarðssonar"<sup>358</sup> (AM 133 fol., fol. 63r; AM 464 4to, fol. 93v) also imply a dislike for Mǫrðr, due to his instigation of Hǫskuldr's death.

That the killing of Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði was considered by some readers cruel and senseless is exemplified by another marginal annotation by Jón Þórðarson in BL Add 4867 fol., who writes "Drepinn Hósk(uldur) Hvytan(es) Godi. Illt verk"<sup>359</sup> (fol. 59v). In AM 555 c 4to, the scribe refers to the torturous killing of Bróðir, who had slain King Brian, as "illur daude" ['a bad death'] (fol. 73v).

While the previous examples serve as obvious commentary on some of the sagas characters, an addition in parenthesis within the saga text, written by Henrik Magnússon, scribe of AM 163 i fol., is far more obscure. When the saga states that Mǫrðr Valgarðsson was "slægur og Illgiærn" ['cunning and malicious'], Henrik adds "(so sem einh(ver) er J D)."<sup>360</sup> The phrase 'í D.' ['in D.']

<sup>355</sup> Translation: 'Shame on both of them.' – Since the three manuscripts contain the same textual passage, I present the quotation in normalized spelling.

<sup>356</sup> Translation: 'Be cursed for your advice.'

<sup>357</sup> Translation: "Now I want you to repay them in a way that will drag them all to their deaths" (Cook 2001:183).

<sup>358</sup> Translations: 'about Mǫrðr's deceitful craftiness' and 'about the lie of Mǫrðr Valgarðsson.' – Since the two manuscripts contain the same textual passage, I present the quotation in normalized spelling.

<sup>359</sup> Translation: 'Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði is killed. An evil deed.'

<sup>360</sup> Translation: 'just as someone in D.'

likely refers to a location, and the addition may have been an inside joke, only understood by Henrik and the manuscript's commissioner Daði Jónsson, but it is impossible to ascertain to whom or what location Henrik refers.<sup>361</sup>

While some of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts show a certain form of censorship in the form of erased or crossed-out marginal notes, such as the crossed-out verse in AM 470 4to (see above), two manuscripts, NKS 1220 fol. and BL Add 4867 fol., include examples of censorship to the text. The catchword on fol. 6r and first word on fol. 6v (which are identical) in NKS 1220 fol. are written in code, a secret alphabet resembling runes, which can be interpreted as a verbal commentary (II.A.1.). The passage describes the two boys pretending to recapture the conflict between Mǫrðr Gígja and Hrútr at the thing after Unnr has divorced Hrútr for not being able to have sexual intercourse with her (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:29). The censored word is “sorðið,” which Cleasby and Vigfússon (1957) expurgate by providing only a Latin translation (*stuprare*) (523). Cook (2001) uses ‘to screw’ in his English translation of *Njáls saga* (18), while a more modern, yet very colloquial, phrase might be ‘to fuck.’ Jón Þorkelsson (1889) points out that Jón Þórðarson uses Greek signs for his own name and for profanities in Skarphéðinn’s insult to Þorkell hákr in BL Add 4867 fol. (762). The Greek letters on fol. 64r in BL Add 4867 fol. replace the word *razgarnarendann* [‘arse’], part of the phrase “Er þér ok skyldara at stanga ór tǫnnum þér razgarnarendann merarinnar, er þú ázt”<sup>362</sup> (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:305). Both instances of censorship appear in manuscripts written for Magnús Jónsson of Vigur. It is entirely possible that this was done per his request. Interestingly, Jón Þórðarson does not censor the same phrase in Lbs 222 fol. (fol. 309r), which he wrote eight years after he copied BL Add 4867 fol.. This implies that Magnús Jónsson either changed his specifications, or that Lbs 222 fol. was written for a different commissioner. While the above-described paratextual features and marginalia focus on the saga text and its characters, other marginal notes draw connections between the saga and its characters and Icelandic and Scandinavian history, occasionally with references to other literature.

<sup>361</sup> Possibilities include the Dalir-district or Denmark.

<sup>362</sup> Translation: “You really ought to pick from your teeth the pieces from the mare’s arse you ate” (Cook 2001:204).

Historical, biographical, or geographical information added in the margins is found in three medieval manuscripts (14th c: 2; 15th c: 1), twelve manuscripts from the seventeenth century, and one manuscript from the eighteenth century. Nine paper manuscripts (17th c: 6; 18th c: 3) included cross-references within *Njáls saga* or references to other texts, generally to confirm or contradict historical or biographical information, but occasionally without any additional commentary.

On fol. 14r in GKS 2870 4to (*Gráskinna*), the scribe adds a slightly different genealogy for Haraldr hilditǫnn in the margin (“hnauguan bauga, halfdanars(onar), Frodas(onar) hrærekss(sonar)”). Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954) explains that in *Landnáma* and most manuscripts, Haraldr hilditǫnn is named as the son of Hrærekr slöngvanbaugi (69 fn. 1). The scribe of *Gráskinna*, however, gives an alternative genealogy, tracing Haraldr’s lineage back to “Hrærekr hnöggvanbauga, Hálfðanarsonar, Fróðasonar, Hrærekssonar slöngvanbauga” (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:69 fn. 1). AM 468 4to (*Reykjabók*) contains chronological and genealogical information in a seventeenth-century hand about the saga’s main protagonists on the flyleaf fol. 1ar (see Jón Þorkelsson 1889:654-655; Jón Helgason 1962:XIV-XV). AM 466 4to (*Oddabók*) contains a marginal note in a younger hand explaining the location of Hvítanes (S-Iceland). On fol. 53v, a later reader underlined the phrase “hvita ness” (as part of the phrase “vig skarph(edins) skyldi jafnt vigi hoskollss hvita ness g(oda)”<sup>363</sup>) and then adds in the margin “[A] milli freisteins hollts og Þyngskála ness wt undan vykingz Læk og J wt sudur af þyngskála nese.”<sup>364</sup> This marginal note has been copied in three paper manuscripts. The quote appears in the same spot in the saga, but as part of the main text in AM 396 fol. (141r)<sup>365</sup> and AM 163 d fol. (fol. 34v).<sup>366</sup> Additionally, in AM 163 d fol., the place name Hvítanes is repeated in the margin. In NKS 1220 fol. (fol. 59r),

<sup>363</sup> Translation: “The slaying of Skarphedin was weighed equally against the slaying of Hoskuld the Godi of Hvitanes” (Cook 2001:276).

<sup>364</sup> Translation: ‘Between Freysteinholt and Þingskálanes, due west of Víkingslækur and southwest of Þingskálanes.’  
<sup>365</sup> “vög skarphiedinz skilde vera jafnt ok vög hoskulldar hvýtanez goda: (hvytanes er a millum freysteinzholtz ok þyngskalaness wt undan vökýngzlæk ok wtsudur af þyngskalanese) tvennum manngiolldum”

<sup>366</sup> “vög Skarph(eðins) skilddi vera jafnt ok vög hosk(ulds) hvytanez goda: (hvytanez er aa millum Freýsteinzholtz og þingskalaness: vt undan vykingzlæk: ok utsudur aaf þingskalaneez) Tuonum manngiolldum”

however, the same quote is added in the margin to a completely different text passage, namely after Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði received his byname.<sup>367</sup>

Aside from Hvítanes, the place name Goðaland (S-Iceland) is mentioned in three places in AM 163 d fol. in the margins on fols. 29r, 34v, and 35v, and Iceland (“Ízland”) in a similar fashion on fol. 37v. In each instance the word in the margin draws attention to a passage where these place names appear in the saga. In Stock. 9 fol., a marginal note reads “forte Øland” [‘perhaps Øland’], presumably attempting to identify the placename “Eysíslu” within the main text (fol. 66v). These were the only verbal comments illustrating an interest in specific geographical locations detected in the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, although place names are occasionally highlighted by different means (see, e.g., category II.B.2.).

In the seventeenth-century manuscripts, historical and biographical additions are the most common II.A.1. feature, occurring in twelve codices. References to other texts are found in four seventeenth-century, and two eighteenth-century codices.<sup>368</sup> The most-referenced work is *Landnáma*, which is generally used to confirm or contradict genealogies. *Landnáma* is referenced in AM 555 c 4to (fol. 46v), AM 470 4to (fol. 20r), BL Add 4867 fol. (fols. 41v, 42r), AM 464 4to (fols. 2r, 22r, 40r, 52r, with exact mention of the part and chapter of *Landnáma*), NKS 1788 4to (fol. 64r, “Landn 5 part Cap 11 pag. 168”), and ÍB 270 4to (fol. 95v). In AM 470 4to, for example, Ketill Jörundsson argues on fol. 20r that Njáll, in accordance with *Landnáma*, was more likely Ásgerðr’s grandson even though she is called his mother in the text.<sup>369</sup> The other texts referenced are *Snorra Edda* (AM 465 4to, fol. 130v<sup>370</sup>), *Eyrbyggja saga* (BL Add 4867 fol., fol. 41v<sup>371</sup> and

<sup>367</sup> The main text reads: “var hann því sýðan kallaðr Haskullþr Hvítarness goði” [‘he was, therefore, since called Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði’] while the marginal note is added with the referencing †-sign as follows: “†enn Hvítarness [er æ] miðlom Freys[teinz] Holttz, ok þýng[skæ]laness, wt un[dan] Vþkingzlæ[k ut]supr af Þýn[gs]kæla Nese.”

<sup>368</sup> AM 396 fol. contains references to other literature in other parts of the manuscript, but not within *Njáls saga*.

<sup>369</sup> “NB Þorgeir gollner helld eg, epter land-namu, son Ófeigs, og Ásgjerdar, og föstr son Þörólfs, mödr bróðr síns, því hann ölst upp hjá honum í Þörólfs felle. þá hefr Njáll verit Sonar son Ásgjerdar. þö hun nefnizt hjer möder hans.” [‘NB I believe, Þorgeirr gollnir, according to Landnáma, is the son of Ófeig and Ásgerðr, and the fosterson of Þörólfr, his maternal uncle, because he grew up with him at Þörólfsfell. Then Njáll was Ásgerðr’s grandson, though she is called his mother here.’]

<sup>370</sup> The marginalia reads “les Eddu Snora, Valkirjur sem odenn sender til Valz kiosa feigda Menn” [‘Read Snorra Edda; valkyries which Odin sends to choose, choose the men doomed to die.’] and occurs next to *Darraqarljóð*.

<sup>371</sup> The marginalia reads “Landnama segir at Asgrimur ellidagrimss(on) hefde med verit i atfór þessarr. Og hafe þeir verit allz 30. enn i Eyrbyggju segir 80.” [‘Landnáma reports that Ásgrímur Ellidagrimsson was part of this attack. And they were all together 30 men. But in Eyrbyggja it says 80.’] (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:184, fn. 1 and fn. 3).

89r<sup>372</sup>), and *Grettis saga* (BL Add 4867 fol., fol. 89r<sup>373</sup>).<sup>374</sup> In some cases, scribes do not specifically mention their source, but the reference can be reconstructed with high probability. Jón Þórðarson, for example, adds historical commentary regarding ancient Icelandic law and heathen practices in the margins of BL Add 4867 fol.. On fol. 53r, he states “Fornt Lögmäl Islendinga” [‘Ancient Icelandic law’] next to the passage where Njáll suggests the establishment of the Fifth Court, but Skapti Þóroddsson initially questions whether a Fifth Court can be established “when the Quarter Courts were set up on the basis of the traditional number of *godis*, thirty-six from each Quarter” (Cook 2001:165; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:243). Regarding the *féránsdómr*-practice (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:395), Jón writes in the margin of fol. 84r: “Ferans dom sk[al] hefia heyia xiiij [nó]ttum efter vopnat[ak] þat er, efter þat menn Rid[u] heim af þingi.”<sup>375</sup> This information is most likely based on *Grágás*,<sup>376</sup> although the practice is described very similarly in *Hrafnkels saga*.<sup>377</sup> Likewise, when Jón writes on fol. 80v “Heidnir menn unnu Eyd ad Stalla bauge. eða tvjeiring. hialpe mier so freir og niórdur og hinn Almatke as, sogdu þeir sem ec skal so þessa sök,, Etc,”<sup>378</sup> he likely knew about the heathen practice of swearing an oath from *Landnáma* (cf. Eiríkur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson 1892-1896:96), *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* (cf. Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Unger 1860:249), or *Þórðar saga hreðu* (cf. Jóhannes Halldórsson 1959:231-232).

In some manuscripts, the scribes or later readers add cross-references in the margins to point out connections or inconsistencies among different sections of *Njáls saga*. In AM 470 4to, Ketill

<sup>372</sup> The marginalia reads “Vide Eyrbyggju Cap. 47” [‘see Chapter 47 in *Eyrbyggja*’], and occurs next to the underlined passage “ad vega ei ad Liggjandi mœnnum. Og wega skiemdar wyg” [‘not to attack sleeping men and kill them shamefully.’] (Cook 2001:279)] (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:417).

<sup>373</sup> The marginalia reads “Vide Grettis s. Cap. 50” [‘see Chapter 50 in *Grettis saga*’], and occurs next to the underlined passage “Reidde Þorgeyr øxina Rymegygiu, og Rak i hófud honum øxar hamarinn er adt Bake honum stod, suo ad Hausinn Brotnadi i smá mola” [‘Thorgeir swung [the axe] Battle-hag ... [and] the hammer of the axe hit the head of the man behind him and smashed his skull into small pieces’] (Cook 2001:279)] (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:417).

<sup>374</sup> Jón Helgason (1962) points out that a marginalia in AM 468 4to (fol. 60r) says “gretter ortti vÿsu þessa’ (Grettir made this stanza),” but since there is no verse on the page, the marginalia does not appear to stand in connection to the saga text (XIV). It is, therefore, not counted as a II.A.1. feature.

<sup>375</sup> Translation: ‘The confiscation court shall be held 14 nights after the taking of the weapons, i.e., after men have ridden home from the thing.’

<sup>376</sup> See, e.g., “Ferans domr skal vera eptir hvern man þeirra er secr er orðin þa er xiiii. nætr ero liðnar fra því þingi er hann varð secr á.” (Finsen 1852:83).

<sup>377</sup> “Eigi er maðrinn alsekr, meðan eigi er háðr féránsdómr, ok hlýtr þat at hans heimili at gera. Þat skal vera fjórtán nóttum eptir vápnatak.’ En þat heitir vápnatak, er alþýða riðr af þingi.” (Jón Jóhannesson 1950:118). [‘No man is a full outlaw as long as the confiscation court has not been held, and that has to take place at his home. It must be done fourteen days after Weapon Taking.’ Weapon Taking is when a Thing is dismissed and the people all ride home again.” (Gunnell 1997:272)].

<sup>378</sup> Translation: ‘Heathens swore an oath on the altar-ring or two-ounce-ring (?): So help me Freyr and Njörðr and the almighty Áss, they said, as I shall [make/defend/witness] this charge,, Etc.’



Jörundsson writes next to the genealogy of Starkaðr Barkarson in Chapter 51 (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:146) “les, og ber saman, *Capitulum* 88. seirna”<sup>379</sup> (fol. 56r). Later, on within Chapter 88, containing the genealogy of Flosi Þórðarson, (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:237-238), he notes “vide *supra* cap. 51” [‘see Chapter 51 above’] (fol. 84v). His intention to compare the two chapters becomes clear on fol. 98v, where he writes a note regarding “Unnr dötter Eivindar karpa” [‘Unnr the daughter of Eyvindr karfa’] (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:292). The marginalia reads: “hün er nefnd Audr, cap. 51 og Udr, cap. 88” [‘She is called Auðr in Chapter 51, and Uðr in Chapter 88’]. In AM 137 fol., a cross reference “Conf. *supra*” [‘Compare above’] on fol. 109v, corresponding with the same section as fol. 98v in AM 470 4to, also implies that the different names used for Unnr Eyvindardóttir were noticed. Ketill Jörundsson also points out another apparent inconsistency on fol. 116r in AM 470 4to, where it is described that Þórðr Leysingjason died in the burning at Bergþórshváll. Ketill notes “Þórðr leysingjason var veiginn af Sigmundr Lamba sine, löngu fyrer brennuna. cap. 38.”<sup>380</sup> Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954) points out that the text in *Gráskinna* says “Þórðr, son Þórðar leysingja” (334 fn. 3). He suggests, therefore, that even in manuscripts that merely preserve “Þórðr leysingi,” this person must be considered Þórðr, the son of Þórðr Leysingjason and not Þórðr Leysingjason himself, who was killed long before the burning (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:334 fn. 3).<sup>381</sup>

Most scribes and readers add genealogies or historical information without referring to a source. Marginal additions in the form of dates are a common feature. Sometimes dates are added without any further commentary, such as in AM 135 fol. (fol. 28v, 29v, 30r, 32r, and so forth). Other scribes and readers try to keep track of the saga’s timeline by mentioning when certain people were born, died, or had held a specific office. Marginal notes in AM 465 4to, for example, mention “hrafnn Hængsson firstur logmadur a Jslandi hann tok log sogú 930”<sup>382</sup> (fol. 10v), “Anno

<sup>379</sup> Translation: ‘Read and compare with Chapter 88 later.’

<sup>380</sup> Translation: ‘Þórðr Leysingjason was killed by Sigmundr Lambason, long before the burning. Chapter 38.’

<sup>381</sup> A cross-reference in AM 467 4to (fol. 300r) serves a different purpose, more in line with II.A.2. features. It occurs next to verses which Árni Magnússon adds at the end of the manuscript (see category II.A.2.) and indicates where they belong within the text. Árni writes “vide hujus Codicis pag. 142” [‘See page 142 of this codex’]. Page 142 in AM 467 4to is fol. 71v, which contains in fact the passage where the verses belong.

<sup>382</sup> Translation: ‘Hrafn Hængsson, first lawman in Iceland; he became lawspeaker in 930.’

994” (fol. 52r; referring to Gunnar’s death), “995 tok Olafur triguason kongdom”<sup>383</sup> (fol. 70r), “Þorgeyr tok log sogú Anno 985”<sup>384</sup> (fol. 73v), “1009” (fol. 76v; referring to the death of Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði), or “Snorri godi fæddur 961, deide Snorri Anno 1031”<sup>385</sup> (fol. 78v). In BL Add 4867 fol., Jón Þórðarson adds, for example, “Þorarin dr[epinn] 950”<sup>386</sup> (fol. 10r) and “um þenan tǫma hefur Logmadur vered Þorkiell mäne edur Þorgeirr Liosvell(in)g(ur)”<sup>387</sup> (fol. 33v). And in NKS 1220 fol., marginal notes read, for example, “Anno 929 Fæddur Har[al]ldur Gräfe[lldur]”<sup>388</sup> (fol. 2r), “Anno 951 Tök Þoraren[n] Ragabröder log[sqgo]”<sup>389</sup> (fol. 9r), or “Anno 985 Tök Þorgeir log[sq]gu”<sup>390</sup> (fol. 63r).<sup>391</sup>

Scribes and readers also often provide the dates (although maybe not always historically accurate) of important events, such as Gunnar’s death, the Christianization, and obviously the burning at Bergþórshváll. Aside from biographical dates, AM 465 4to, for example, provides the years for the Christianization (“Anno 1000” fol. 73v), the burning at Bergþórshváll (“Þa var ártal ed Brent var 1010;”<sup>392</sup> fol. 92r), and the battle at Clontarf (“Brianis bardagi Anno 1014;”<sup>393</sup> fol. 129v). The scribe of NKS 1220 fol. adds the year in which Þangbrandr arrived in Iceland (“[Anno] 998. [k]oma Þangbr[ands] Prests;”<sup>394</sup> fol. 60v) as well as the date for the Christianization (“Anno 1000 Kristne lqgteken[n] [a] Islande;”<sup>395</sup> fol. 63v). The most detailed attempt to reconstruct the exact date of the burning can be found in AM 163 d fol., where the scribe adds in the margin on fol. 28v: “Niallz Brenna stod 1011 þann 21. Avguſt a mannudagz qvold af þuj Atta Vikur lifdu fumarz þann Sunnudag fem flofi Reid heimann fra til Brennumnar. Sem Sagann vottar.”<sup>396</sup>

<sup>383</sup> Translation: ‘Óláfr Tryggvason became king in 995.’

<sup>384</sup> Translation: ‘Þorgeirr became lawspeaker in the year 985.’

<sup>385</sup> Translation: ‘Snorri goði was born 961; Snorri died in the year 1031.’

<sup>386</sup> Translation: ‘Þorarin killed in 950.’

<sup>387</sup> Translation: ‘At this time Þorkell máni or Þorgeirr Ljósvellingur would have been lawspeaker.’

<sup>388</sup> Translation: ‘Haraldur gráfeldur was born in the year 929.’

<sup>389</sup> Translation: ‘Þorarin ragabróðir became lawspeaker in the year 951.’

<sup>390</sup> Translation: ‘Þorgeirr became lawspeaker in the year 985.’

<sup>391</sup> These are just a few selected examples from these manuscripts.

<sup>392</sup> Translation: ‘Then the year of the burning was 1010.’

<sup>393</sup> Translation: ‘Brján’s battle in the year 1014.’

<sup>394</sup> Translation: ‘In the year 998: Arrival of the priest Þangbrandr.’

<sup>395</sup> Translation: ‘In the year 1000: Christian faith lawfully accepted in Iceland.’

<sup>396</sup> Translation: ‘The burning of Njáll happened on August 21, 1011 on a Monday evening, because eight weeks of summer had passed on the Sunday that Flosi rode away from home to the burning; as the saga attests.’

While some scribes and readers are quite detailed, adding historical and biographical information about many occurrences, others are rather selective. In AM 137 fol, for example, a later user of the manuscript only adds two dates on fols. 102v and 103r. The first refers to the Christianization (year: 1000), and the second identifies the year in which Ámundi blindi regained his sight long enough to avenge his father's death (year: 1003). In AM Acc. 50, the only eighteenth-century manuscript with a historical addition, the scribe, Jakob Sigurðsson, identifies the year of the burning at Bergþórshváll (year: 1010) and also the year in which the manuscript was written (1770). Jakob writes in the margin on fol. 97r: "Þetta skiedi *Anno* Xj 1010. eru nü Sýðann 760 aar."<sup>397</sup>

In AM 163 i fol., the scribe, Henrik Magnússon, adds an anecdote about Eiríkr Hákonarson in the margin on fol. 30v, which appears to be the only biographical comment that is not meant to aid with the timeline of the story. The marginal note was partially cut off when the margins of the manuscript were trimmed, but it can be reconstructed to the extent that it recounts that Eiríkr won the ship *Ormrinn langi* in the battle of Svöld when he defeated Óláfr Tryggvason.

As the analysis of II.A.1. features demonstrates, verbal paratextual features that are related to the main text are occasionally mere pen trials. Moreoften, however, they convey a definite interaction between the users of the manuscripts (i.e., either scribe and/or reader) and the saga. The scribes and readers will comment on the text, attempt to organize it, clarify it, understand it, or even correct it. Some verbal paratextual features allow for an interpretation of the educational and literary background of a scribe or reader.

#### 6.4.3.3.1.2. Signs of manuscript transmission (Category II.A.2.)

Category II.A.2. consists of signs of manuscript transmission, such as comments on the manuscript itself or its exemplar (e.g., missing pages and illegible passages), corrections or

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<sup>397</sup> Translation: "This happened in the year 1010 A.D.. Now it has been 760 years since then."

additions to the text by later scribes and readers (including variant readings), and added verses in the margins that in other manuscripts have become part of the saga's text.<sup>398</sup>

Eight of the vellum manuscripts (14th c: 7; 15th c: 1) contain paratextual features from category II.A.2. Some manuscripts, such as GKS 2870 4to (fols. 2v, 6v) and AM 133 fol. (fols. 15v, 56v, 60v, 86v, 90v, 91v, 95v), contain very late notes (nineteenth-twentieth centuries) mentioning that the manuscript is defective (e.g. “Hér vantar 1 blað” [‘Here one leaf is missing’]), or younger readers provide chapter numbers, such as in AM 132 fol.. Most medieval manuscripts with II.A.2. features have passages or even entire leaves added by a younger hand (16th-17th c) to replace missing text, or contain minor corrections to the text in a younger hand. The only II.A.2. comment that is different is found in GKS 2868 4to, where a marginal note in on 10v states that “Sveinn Ormsson hefur skrifat bókina.”<sup>399</sup> Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953) reckons that *skrifat* must be translated as ‘copied’ in this context (11).

Among the paper manuscripts, twenty-eight contain II.A.2. features (17th c: 14; 18th c: 14).<sup>400</sup> As in the vellum codices, many paper manuscripts contain smaller corrections or additions to the text by later users, including the provision or substitution of chapter numbers and chapter titles. Defective passages are also occasionally replaced by a younger hand, most notably in Lbs 222 fol. (fols. 240r-242r), ÍB 261 4to (fols. 3r-7v, 134v-135r), Thott 1765 4to (fols. 113r-138v), and Lbs 1415 4to (fols. 225r-226v).

As previously noted, chapter titles and a renumbering of the chapters by a later user, based on the 1772 edition of *Njáls saga*, are evident in Lbs 437 4to. In AM 134 fol. and AM 137 fol., a later user provides the text of marginal notes which were damaged during the trimming of the manuscript. Additionally, chapter numbers have occasionally been changed by a later reader in AM 137 fol., and the manuscript possibly contains also a reference to another text or manuscript, although the meaning of the marginal note “4)–142 4) 71/1” (fol 67r) is unclear and might be

<sup>398</sup> As previously mentioned, additions and corrections by the main scribe are not included in the discussion of paratextual features, since they occur in all of the manuscripts. The only exceptions are verses added in the margins by the scribe.

<sup>399</sup> Translation: ‘Sveinn Ormsson has copied the book.’

<sup>400</sup> Included are here, BL Add 4867 fol. and Lbs 222 fol. The two-part division of the saga in these two manuscripts could possibly be interpreted as a II.A.2. paratextual feature, although its categorization is quite difficult.

unrelated to the text.<sup>401</sup> In AM 555 a 4to (fol. 5v) and AM 135 fol. (fol. 10v), the chapter number 8 is added in the margin by a younger hand (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:26), although both notes do not appear to be in the same hand.<sup>402</sup> Moreover, in AM 135 fol., the scribe Ásgrímur Jónsson adds a few ellipses marks on fol. 101 in the passage describing the establishment of new *goðorð* (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:246), possibly indicating difficult-to-read-passages in his exemplar. In AM 163 d fol (fol. 11r), a much younger hand adds “[22c]” next to the passage in which Njáll gives Gunnarr instructions about how to successfully reclaim Unnr’s property from Hrútr. While this passage occurs in the middle of Chapter 16 in the manuscript, it corresponds with Chapter 22 in other codices and editions (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:59). A marginal note on fol. 386v in Stock. 9 fol. states “Error paragr. 141” [‘Mistake; Chapter 141’] next to a chapter in the manuscript, which the scribe has indeed numbered incorrectly “CLXI” (= 161) instead of “CXLI” (=141); this results in the wrongful numbering of the remaining chapters as well. In ÍB 421 4to (fols. 22r-23v), AM 467 4to (fols. 19v-22v), and KB Add 565 4to (fols. 22r-25r), Jón Magnússon, the scribe, leaves empty space for a large lacuna in his exemplar *Reykjabók*. In ÍB 421 4to and KB Add 565 4to, the missing text was later added by other scribes. Moreover, in ÍB 421 4to, chapter numbers were provided in red by a later user of the manuscript, and the incipit and explicit of fol. 34 of *Reykjabók* are marked in blue, indicating that this particular feature was added after fol. 34 of *Reykjabók* had been lost, i.e. after c1780-1809 (see Jón Helgason 1962:XIX). In KB Add 565 4to, a later reader provides chapter numbers in certain cases (fols. 20v, 59v, 74v, 97v) and adds Latin commentary next to some marginal verses in *Reykjabók* (see below), such as, for example “Hic Rythmus alienâ manu scribitur in margine membranæ”<sup>403</sup> (fol. 83v).<sup>404</sup>

In Thott 1765 4to (fol. 53v), the scribe leaves an empty line, possibly indicating a defect in his exemplar. The manuscript text reads as follows with the missing text added in square parentheses from Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s edition (1954:189): “þá hliöp Asbrandur broder hans, G(unnar) leggur

<sup>401</sup> The note appears next to beginning of Chapter 58 in the manuscript, which corresponds with Chapter 64 in Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954:160)

<sup>402</sup> In AM 135 fol., chapter number 36 on fol. 38r is also provided by the same younger reader (cf. Chapter 37 in Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:96).

<sup>403</sup> Translation: ‘This verse is written in the margin of the manuscript by a different hand.’

<sup>404</sup> These Latin comments appear on fols. 83v, 85v, 101r, 109v, 115r, 129r, 129v, 132v, 138v, 142v, 167v, and 184r.

til hans Atgeirinn og kom hann skýllde fyrir sig, atg(eirinn) rendi í giegnum skjöldinn og í medal handleggin, G(unnar) snaradi þá atgeirinn so skjölddirinn klofnadj, [en brotnuðu handleggirnir, ok fell hann út af þekjunni] adur hafði G(unnar) sært [átta] menn enn veigid þá tuo.”<sup>405</sup>

In *Landakotsbók*, as described in more detail above, the scribe adds Latin comments (fols. 14v, 42r, 239v) and empty spaces (fols. 24r, 79r, 240r) for difficult or missing passages in his exemplar, *Reykjabók*. He also provides additions to the text in square brackets (e.g. fols. 34v, 52r), and adds a single correction on fol. 100r, where the text reads “austr” [‘east’] and the scribe adds in the margin “corr. suðr” [‘correction: south’]. Similarly, Jón Halldórsson adds Latin commentary, such as “membranæ defectus” [‘vellum defect’] (fol. 19r) or “incipit ceterum membrane” [‘beginning of the rest of the vellum’] (fol. 29r), commenting on his exemplar, *Kálfalækjarbók*. *The Younger Flateyjarbók* also references its exemplar, though less specifically, as the title page mentions that the texts were written “Eptir Gömlum Handritum” [‘after old manuscripts’].

Eleven paper manuscripts contain variant readings, often indicated through ‘al./aliis’ in the margins or occasionally within the text in parenthesis (e.g. sometimes in *The Younger Flateyjarbók*<sup>406</sup>). These are AM 470 4to, AM 134 fol., BL Add 4867 fol., AM 135 fol., Lbs 222 fol., AM 464 4to, NKS 1220 fol., Lbs 3505 4to, NKS 1788 4to, *The Younger Flateyjarbók*, and Lbs 1415 fol. Some specify which manuscripts the variants are taken from, such as AM 134 fol., which contains variant readings from *Gráskinna*, *\*Gullskinna*, and “adrar Niálur” [‘other *Njáls sagas*’] (e.g. fol. 86r). While most manuscripts with variant readings preserve these in many places in the manuscripts, others appear to only indicate a very small number of variants. In AM 135 fol., for example, “aliud exempl.” [‘another example/exemplar’] (with an accompanying variant reading) is written once in the margin on fol. 142r; Lbs 222 fol. contains one ‘al’ on fol. 281r. On fol. 3v, in BL Add 4867 fol., Jón Þórðarson adds in the margin “Eptir membr. Assess. AMagn s dro ek yfir

<sup>405</sup> Translation: “Then Asbrand, [his] brother, leaped up; Gunnar thrust at him with the halberd, and Asbrand brought his shield to meet it. The halberd went through the shield and between the upper arm and forearm. Gunnar twisted the halberd so that the shield split [and both his arm-bones broke, and Asbrand fell off the roof.] By this time Gunnar had wounded [eight] men and killed two.” (Cook 2001:127).

<sup>406</sup> Hufnagel (2012) observed the addition of variants in parenthesis in one of the manuscripts containing *Sörla saga sterka*, and concludes that this suggests an awareness by the scribe “of introducing changes to a text and is a further indication of a scholarly background” (103). A scholarly background can certainly also be assumed for Markús Snæbjörnsson, scribe of *The Younger Flateyjarbók*.

OG sem hér a ei ad standa”<sup>407</sup> and correspondingly crosses out the word *og* [‘and’] in the phrase “Rwtur Gaf hennj Hundrad älner Hafnar Vadmälz ~~og~~ xij varar felled”<sup>408</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:15). Jón Helgason (1962) suggests that the vellum manuscript to which Jón Þórðarson refers is AM 468 4to (*Reykjabók*) (XVII). The passage in *Reykjabók* (fol. 3r) reads: “Rvtr gaf henni 100 alna hafnarvadar og 12 varar felldi.” It is not entirely clear why the ‘og’ was considered erroneous by Jón Þórðarson, although it is possible that he misread the passage ‘og 12’ (spelled “z12”), as “XIJ” (= 12).

Verses that are added in the margin, which in other manuscripts are part or have become part of the saga’s main text, can be interpreted as another type of sign of manuscript transmission (category II.A.2.). The vellum manuscripts AM 468 4to and AM 309 4to contain such verses. Unlike Jón Þorkelsson (1889), who assumes that the marginal verses in *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to) were written in the same hand as the main text (650), Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953) concludes that they were written by a contemporary of the main scribe (6). Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954) prints these verses of *Reykjabók* in a separate section of his edition of *Njáls saga* (465-480), basing his decision (CLIV) on Finnur Jónsson’s (1904) research, which determined that the verses are younger than the original saga text and were added at a later point (93). Jón Helgason (1962) agrees with Finnur Jónsson’s conclusion that twenty-nine verses, which occur in only some of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts were “composed after the saga existed in a finished form, and often in such a manner that a remark in prose in the saga was used as a basis or starting point” (XI). Some of these twenty-nine verses are the marginal verses in *Reykjabók*. In *Bæjarbók* (AM 309 4to), the scribe adds one of these presumed younger verses (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:195 fn. 8, 478) in the margin on fol. 44v.

<sup>407</sup> Translation: ‘In accordance with the vellum manuscript of assessor Árni Magnússon, I crossed out OG which should not be here.’

<sup>408</sup> Translation: “Hrútr gave her a hundred ells of woven cloth and twelve homespun cloaks” (Cook 2001:9).

Additionally, some of these verses have been added in the margins or on separate pages of AM 470 4to (fols. 40r, 42v, 43v, 44r, 45r, 53v; by Ketill Jörundsson), BL Add 4867 fol. (fol. 40v, 42v, 44r, 50v; by later user<sup>409</sup>), and AM 467 4to (fols. 300r-301r; by Árni Magnússon).

Verses in the margin that in other manuscripts are already part of the main text, but not from the group of the presumed younger verses, can be found in AM 396 fol., AM 464 4to, as well as NKS 1788 4to. In AM 396 fol. (fol. 134v), a younger hand, presumably that of Jón Ólafsson, adds a verse by Kári in the margin, which the main scribe does not include (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:354). Jón Halldórsson, scribe of AM 464 4to, adds detailed variant readings to some verses in the margins (fols. 89r, 89v) with introductions such as “Aliud vero MS sic” [‘Thus indeed in another manuscript’<sup>410</sup>] (fol. 89r) or “þa fyrri vösu Steinvarar hefe eg sied i öðrum stad með þessu moti”<sup>411</sup> (fol. 89v). And Jón Helgason adds the second half of a verse by Móðólfr Ketilsson in the margin on fol. 149r in NKS 1788 4to (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:335-336), possibly because he did not leave enough space in the text to add the entire verse, and also adds a verse, presumably spoken by the dead or dying Skarphéðinn (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:336), in the margin on fol. 149v, with the addition “al:” suggesting that it is a variant reading.

In most cases, it is possible that the scribes or later readers were aware that the verses may not have originally belonged to the saga, but desired to include them nonetheless. Guðrún Nordal (2005, 2008) has demonstrated how the narrative of *Njáls saga* changes depending on the inclusion or exclusion of the many verses, and her research should be consulted for a more comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon.

One of the maybe most unusual II.A.2. features is found on fol. 115v in Kall 612 4to, where the scribe follows the saga with the words “Þeir hafa þóck sem skrifudu enn hiner öngvar er ej

<sup>409</sup> Jón Helgason (1962) notes in his brief discussion of BL Add 4867 fol. in the facsimile edition of *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to) that the additions in Jón Þórðarson’s manuscript are “clearly from 468, and were undoubtedly made in the years 1707-22 when 468 was in Iceland,” i.e. when Jón Magnússon made his three copies of the manuscript, since BL Add 4867 4to “has never been in Copenhagen” (XVII).

<sup>410</sup> According to Jón Halldórsson’s key to his signs and abbreviations on fol. 154v, *MS* stands for ‘handwritten books.’

<sup>411</sup> Translation: ‘I have seen the first verse by Steinvör elsewhere in this way.’



Riett Läsu.”<sup>412</sup> While it is difficult to clearly categorize this ‘thank-you note’ (or lack thereof), it seems to fit the category of ‘manuscript transmission’ associated with category II.A.2.<sup>413</sup>

#### 6.4.3.3.2. Non-verbal paratextual features (Category II.B.)

##### 6.4.3.3.2.1. Marked verses (Category II.B.1.)

Category II.B.1. refers to how verses within the saga text have been marked or highlighted, often by the scribes themselves, but occasionally by later readers. Tables 16a, 16b, and 16c give an overview of the different ways of marking verses. Fourteen fragments do not contain passages with verses, making it impossible to determine how verses may have been marked.<sup>414</sup> Of the remaining forty-five manuscripts, only two, GKS 2868 4to (14th c) and ÍB 261 4to (18th c), do not mark their verses by any means.

The most common form of marking verses is the addition of a marginal *v* or *w*, occasionally spelled out as *vísa/výsa/wýsa* or other forms of marginal markings, such as vertical lines or brackets. In twenty-one of the forty-three manuscripts with highlighted verses, this is the only way of marking the poems; and in the vellum manuscripts a marginal *v/w* it is the only manner utilized.

Seven of the paper manuscripts (17th c: 1; 18th c: 6) highlight verses solely via layout changes or changes in script (only Kall 612 4to). In the case of layout changes, verses are presented in a more modern layout with each line written on a separate line instead of writing the text of the verses continuously. Additionally, the verses are often slightly indented or centered within the text.

<sup>412</sup> Translation: ‘Thanks to those who copied, but none to those who didn’t read right.’

<sup>413</sup> Similarly, the aforementioned scribal remarks in AM 466 4to and AM 469 4to could fall in this category as well.

<sup>414</sup> A possible exception is AM 162 b fol. β. While this fragment does not contain any verses, AM 162 b fol. δ, which likely belonged to the same codex (see Chapter 4.2.2.1.), shows verses marked by a marginal *v*. A more problematic case is the *Njáls saga* part of AM 309 4to. It preserves only one passage containing a verse, but this verse has been added in the margin (fol. 44v). It was observed, however, that verses in other sections of AM 309 4to are marked with a marginal *v*. Since these sections were written by the same scribe, it is likely that the scribe marked verses in *Njáls saga* by the same means (even though the different parts of AM 309 4to may not originally have belonged to the same codex). Since this can, however, not be proven with certainty, AM 309 4to was treated as a manuscript not preserving text passages with verses as a precaution.

In Stock. 9 fol., the verses are underlined. It is unclear if the many underlined passages in the manuscript were added by the scribe or a later reader.

Fourteen manuscripts (17th c: 2; 18th c: 11, 19th c: 1) use two or more ways of marking the verses. AM 469 4to is slightly borderline, since the scribe generally only marks verses with a marginal *v/w*, but occasionally slightly indents the verses to mark their beginning. The two seventeenth-century manuscripts (NKS 1220 fol. and Lbs 3505 4to) mark verses by adding a *v/w* in the margin and changing the script, although the scribe of Lbs 3505 4to provides the marginal *w* only for some of the verses. The same method (marginal *v/w* and script change) is utilized in Thott 1776 4to III, SÁM 33, and AM Acc. 50 (*w* not always present). In addition to his usual way of highlighting verses, the scribe of Thott 1776 4to III also numbers the stanzas of *Darraðarljóð*. The manuscripts NKS 1219 fol., NKS 1788 4to, ÍB 322 4to, *The Younger Flayeyjarbók*, ÍB 270 4to, and Lbs 747 fol. highlight verses by a change in both layout and script. The same holds true for Lbs 1415 4to, although the scribe once also adds a marginal *vjsa* (fol. 95r). Similarly, the scribe of Lbs 437 4to generally changes both script and layout for the saga's verses, although he changes only the script for one verse on fol. 73r and only the layout for another on the same folio.

While most verses are highlighted by the scribes of the manuscript, later users occasionally add markings (see also category II.B.2.), generally where the main scribe did not do so.

#### 6.4.3.3.2.2. Highlighted passages (Category II.B.2.)

Category II.B.2. consists of non-verbal commentary in which the scribe or reader highlights a passage or phrase in the saga. Five sub-categories have been established. Passages can be highlighted by means of *nota bene* signs, manicules, underlining or other marginal or inter-textual markings (such as vertical lines, brackets, crosses, *x*, =, or the numbering of verses), changes in script, or the specific marking of proverbs and idioms through the marginal addition of *m/málsháttur* or *orðtak* (see Tables 17a, 17b, 17c).

Eight vellum manuscripts contain paratextual features from category II.B.2.: five from the fourteenth century, two from the fifteenth century, and one post-medieval vellum manuscript.

Moreover, all seventeen paper manuscripts from the seventeenth century, fifteen from the eighteenth century, and Lbs 747 fol. from the nineteenth century show signs of II.B.2. features.

Unlike some of the examples of verbal commentary mentioned above, non-verbal markings indicate that a reader was engaged in a certain passage without necessarily revealing whether the reaction to the passage is positive or negative. Nonetheless, certain patterns of interest can be observed in some cases (see below).

Among the vellum manuscripts, the most common non-verbal commentary is highlighted passages by means of underlining or highlighting the beginning and end of a passage with brackets. This occurs in five manuscripts. In GKS 2870 4to, a later user has added square brackets on fols. 89v and 96v to highlight a passage that is repeated twice. The repetition is due to part of the text being a younger addition to the manuscript in a sixteenth-century hand. In AM 468 4to, the entire passage of Flosi's dream sequence (fols. 69v-70v; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:346-348) has been underlined by scratching. Similarly, in GKS 2868 4to (fol. 11r) part of the passage in which Njáll advises Gunnarr how to reclaim Unnr's property from Hrutr after her divorce (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:59-63) has been underlined by scratching. In AM 466 4to, fol. 39v the phrases "*hann sat yfer virðing[u] allra hofdinga fyrer nordann*"<sup>415</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:285), referring to Guðmundr ríki, as well as "*þora dóttir olafs*," referring to the grandmother of Snorri goði (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:287), are underlined. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the place name Hvítanes is underlined on fol. 53r in AM 466 4to and the location described in more detail in a marginal note (see Chapter 6.4.3.3.1.). In GKS 1003 fol., verses on fol. 91r, which are part of the attempted conversion of Iceland by Þangbrandr (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:264-265), are marked with a red pen and a curly bracket. Since verses in this manuscript are generally marked by a *W* in the margin (see category II.B.1.), this other way of highlighting must be mentioned separately. Overall, however, few underlined passages appear in the vellum manuscripts.

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<sup>415</sup> Translation: "He oppressed the other chieftains north of [Oxnadal heath]" (Cook 2001:191).

In the paper manuscripts (17th c: 14; 18th c: 10; 19th c: 1) passages are highlighted through underlining or marginal and inter-textual markings, such as brackets, crosses, vertical lines, or the numbering of verses.

Some paper codices have underlined and marked passages throughout the entire saga. These are, for example, AM 555 c 4to (17th c), AM 134 fol. (17th c), AM 137 fol. (17th c), Stock. 9 fol. (17th c), BL Add 4867 fol. (17th c), AM 135 fol. (17th c), ÍB 421 4to (18th c), Thott 1765 4to (18th c), *The Younger Flateyjarbók* (18th c), and Lbs 747 fol. (19th c). In most cases, it is impossible to tell if these markings are by the scribe or a later user of the respective manuscript, although the latter appears more likely in most cases. In cases where more than one type of marking occurs, it is impossible to determine if all markings were made by the same reader or different users. Since these underlined passages are so frequent, it goes beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyze all of them. This work will be saved for a future project. In this chapter, only very general trends are discussed.

In AM 555 c 4to, a seemingly later reader has underlined several passages, including, for example, law procedures, geographical locations, offices held (e.g., lawspeakers), clothing, and weapons. In AM 134 fol, underlined passages and vertical lines are found. Some of the underlined phrases indicate single words (such as “Og skulu við helldur bæð greiða Gunnare feið bæð samann”<sup>416</sup> fol. 23r; “Rvitur suarar þui man ek suara þier wmm þetta sem satt er”<sup>417</sup> fol. 29v). In the former example, the marking indicates a mistake by the scribe, while the meaning behind highlighting þetta in the latter example is unclear. Vertical lines, some very fine or scratched, mark important passages in the text. On fol. 43r, for example, the reader marks the passage in which Hallgerðr orders Melkólfr to steal food from Kirkjubær (Chapter 48). On fol. 121r, scratched vertical lines highlight certain law passages in the prosecution of the burning at Bergþórshváll in Chapter 141 (“Tel eg þig Flose eiga að verða wmm sok þa mann sekann skogarmann Oalanda oferianda oradanda om Biargrandum” / “Tel eg hann eiga að verða wmm sok þa mann sekann

<sup>416</sup> Translation: ‘And we should rather both pay Gunnarr the money, the two of us together.’ (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:67).

<sup>417</sup> Translation: “Hrut [says], ‘I’ll answer this with the truth’ (Cook 2001:53; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:86).

Skogarmann Oalanda oferianda orädanda om biargrandum”<sup>418</sup>). In AM 137 fol. proverbs and idioms are frequently underlined in red, such as, for example, “Illt er þeim a vlund er alinn”<sup>419</sup> (fol. 7v; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:20), “enn þat verður hvur ad vinna sem ætlad er”<sup>420</sup> (fol. 8r; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:20), “Illa gefast illrædz leifar”<sup>421</sup> (fol. 15v, cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:37), “Naed er broder Nef Augunumm”<sup>422</sup> (fol. 16v; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:39), “med Logumm skal lannd vort byggia, enn med ologumm eyða”<sup>423</sup> (fol. 71v; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:172), or “eru kaulld kvenna ræd”<sup>424</sup> (fol. 109v, cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:292). Additionally, on fol. 152r, three verses spoken by Kári (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:409-411) are numbered, and on fol. 164v a verse (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:443) is marked with a large bracket. The underlined and marked passages in Stock. 9 fol. show an interest in place names, particularly Swedish ones, clothing, jewelry, and weapons as well as verses, proverbs, and idioms. In BL Add 4867 4to most markings are in the form of underlining, often in red, although other marginal markings in red also occur. Here proverbs and idioms are most commonly marked. Also, occasionally highlighted are words or phrases that have been wrongfully written, such as on fol. 42v, where the phrase *vindum Riæfred af skælanum* [‘pull the roof frame of the hall’] has been put in brackets as part of the sentence “Mørdur mællti tøkum vær streyngina og (vindum) Riæfred af skælanum), berum vmm Asendana, Enn festum adur vmm stejnaog snuvmm J vindasa, og vindum Riæfred af skælanumm”<sup>425</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:188). It is clear that Jón Þórðarson wrote the phrase *vindum Riæfred af skælanum* too early, noticed his mistake and added the brackets around the erraneous passage. Moreover, on fols. 84v-85r, the numbers 1-10 (with either 4 or 5 missing) appear in the margin, indicating the individual summons put forth by “the

<sup>418</sup> Translation: “I declare that you, Flosi, deserve full outlawry for this offence, not to be fed, nor helped on your way, nor given any kind of assistance.” and “I declare that he deserves the sentence of full outlawry for this offence, not to be fed, nor helped on his way, nor given any kind of assistance.” (Cook 2001:253).

<sup>419</sup> Translation: ‘It is difficult for those who harp on about their grumpiness.’ – The reading ‘vlund’ (normalized: *ólund* [‘grumpiness’]) is a rather curious variant. The text generally reads ‘óland,’ giving the phrase an entirely different meaning [Translation: “it’s difficult to dwell in a distant land,” (Cook 2001:12)]. AM 134 fol., written by the same scribe as AM 137 fol., also reads ‘olund’ (fol. 6r).

<sup>420</sup> Translation: “but a man must do what is set out for him” (Cook 2001:12).

<sup>421</sup> Translation: “Evil designs have evil results,” (Cook 2001:24).

<sup>422</sup> Translation: “The nose, brother, is near to the eyes.”

<sup>423</sup> Translation: “with law our land shall rise, but it will perish with lawlessness,” (Cook 2001:117).

<sup>424</sup> Translation: “Cold are the counsels of women,” (Cook 2001:195).

<sup>425</sup> Translation: “Mord said, ‘Let’s tie these ropes around the ends of the roof beams and tie the other ends to the boulders, and then twist the ropes with poles and pull the whole roof frame of the hall.’” (Cook 2001:127).

man in whose presence the suits had been presented” (Cook 2001:268; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:399-400). In AM 135 fol., passages are underlined, often accompanied by a small marginal red *x*, or vertical lines are placed in the margin or within the text. Occasionally, small crosses appear in the margins. Here, particular attention seems to be paid to names as well as the chronology of events (e.g., by marking seasonal indicators like *sumar* [‘summer’], or phrases indicating how much time has passed between two events). Quite a few passages are underlined in red in ÍB 421 4to. Additionally, blue markings on fols 116r and 119v indicate the incipit and explicit of fol. 34 in *Reykjabók*, of which the manuscript is a copy. Since this folio was lost presumably between 1780 and 1809 (see Jón Helgason 1962:XIX), the marking is younger. Thott 1765 4to also contains frequently underlined passages and passages marked by little + or = signs. Occasionally, red lines appear in the margin (such as on fols 47v and 48v). Underlined phrases in *The Younger Flateyjarbók* are usually accompanied by marginal corrections or notes to the text by a later user, which, unfortunately, are often partly cut off due to trimmed margins. On fol. 178v, for example, the reader underlines several names in the genealogies of Starkaðr Barkarson and Eigill Kólfsson (Chapters 57 and 58) and corrects them in the margin. In Lbs 747 fol., names and place names are occasionally highlighted in color or through circles (such as the name Ormhildr on fol. 31v). The incipit of chapters introducing characters, such as Gunnarr (fol. 9r), Njáll (fol. 9v), Valgarðr inn grái (fol. 12r), Ásgrímr Elliða-Grímsson (fol. 12v), to name just a few, are particularly decorated with color. Moreover, passages appear to be written in a different color twice. On fol. 30v, the phrase “en lata mikít. Saudamadr fór ok sagdi Gunnari”<sup>426</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:171) is written in a slightly different color, although it is difficult to say if this was done on purpose, considering that the change in color appears in the middle of a sentence. The introduction of Guðmundr ríki on fol. 49v (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:283), however, is presumably written in blue to highlight the character’s first appearance.

The remaining paper manuscripts show only a limited number of marked passages, generally later users marking verses or potential mistakes by the main scribe. In AM 470 4to, three verses

<sup>426</sup> Translation: “and lose much.’ The shepherd went off and told Gunnar” (Cook 2001:115-116).

spoken by Kári on fols. 140r-v (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:409-411) have been numbered, seemingly by a later user. In AM 163 i fol., the same three verses are numbered (on the inside margin) by the scribe Henrik Magnússon (fol. 57r) and a later user adds a large bracket in black ink on the outside margin to highlight the stanzas as well. In the same manuscript, someone adds marginal markings in the form of vertical lines, occasionally accompanied by *nota bene* signs, where Henrik adds something to the text, such as the previously noted “so sem einh(ver) er J D” (fol. 18v) or some of the added verses by Björn S.S. a. Sk.a. (see e.g. fols 56v and 57v). By the same method, scenes and sentences of the saga have been highlighted, presumably considered of particular significance to the plot. These include, for example, Hallbjörn’s reaction when Otkell sends Skamkell to ask for advice from Gissurr hvíti and Geirr goði,<sup>427</sup> as well as the assumption by Gissurr hvíti and Geirr goði that even though Skammkell has recounted their advice for Otkell correctly, they are unsure whether he will actually convey the message truthfully, since they have seen him to be “Illmannlegastann mann” [“the most wicked man” (Cook 2001:86)] (fol. 21r; Chapter 50). Henrik Magnússon himself occasionally highlights phrases by putting them in brackets within the text, such as his comment about ‘someone in D.’ (see above, fol. 18v) or the quote “troll hafe þína vine”<sup>428</sup> (fol. 14r) spoken by Hallgerðr (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:92). In AM 163 d fol., the above-mentioned three verses by Kári as well as the immediately following stanza spoken by Snorri goði have been highlighted by a later user with a vertical black ink line on fol. 34r. Moreover, as mentioned, the verbal repetitions of the place names Goðaland and Iceland (‘Izland’) on fols. 34r and 35v are also marked by underlining the repeated word in the main text and by highlighting the passage with a vertical line in the margin. Verses are also marked through vertical marginal lines by a later reader on fols. 6r and 94v in AM 465 4to, where the scribe forgot

<sup>427</sup> “Illt er að eiga þræl fyrir einka vin. og munum vier þessa Jafnan Jdrast er þu hefur aptur horfit, og er vndarlegt bragd að Senda hinn lýgnasta mann þess erendiz er So mun meigja kalla að lif manz ligge vid. hræddur munder þu vera ef Gunnar hefdi angeirinn [*sic!*] a loptj er þu ertt So nu. ei veit þa hvor hræddastr er, enn þat muntu eiga til að Segja, að Gunnar mun ei leinge minda arngeirin ef hann er reidur.” – This paragraph on fol. 21r is highlighted by a *note bene* sign and two small vertical lines next to each line. Translation: “It’s bad to have a scoundrel for a best friend, and we will always be sorry that you turned back – it’s not a clever move to send the worst of liars on an errand on which, it may be said, men’s lives depend.’ ‘You’d be terrified if Gunnar raised his halberd,’ said Otkel, ‘since you’re this way now.’ ‘I don’t know who would be most terrified then,’ said Hallbjörn, ‘but some day you will say that Gunnar is not slow to aim his halberd, once he is angry.’ (Cook 2001:85; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:128).

<sup>428</sup> Translation: “The trolls take your friends” (Cook 2001:58).

to mark the verses himself. The same or a different reader also underlines the words *á greina* [‘to disagree’] on fol. 26v (“þad hef eg ætlad ad lata Ockur eckj Agreyna, enn þo mun eg eckj giora hann ad þræli;”<sup>429</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:101-102), and *vönd* on fol. 27v. With the latter, he also adds a marginal *note bene* sign and a bracket ] within the text: “er hier og vönd vistinn ] og villde eg Rada Jdur Rad frændum mýnum, ad þier hlýpid ej upp *vid* Aeggiann hallgerdar konu mjnnar, þviad hun tekur þad margt upp er fiærri er mýnum vilja”<sup>430</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:106). Marginal markings and a *nota bene* sign also appear on fol. 131r, where the same person adds corrections to the text. In AM 555 a 4to, verses on fols. 29v, 47v, 49r, 50r, 59v, and 64v have been marked by brackets. The only other marking (II.B.2.) in this manuscript is a thin vertical black line within the text on fol. 5r (“helldr mun hann bidia að aller giemi | þin sem best;”<sup>431</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:25). Its meaning is unclear, and it is possible that the line is unintentional. Similarly, it is unclear whether small *x*-signs in AM 396 fol., for example on fols. 126v, 127v, 128r, were done deliberately to mark a passage in the manuscript or unintentionally.<sup>432</sup>

A younger reader, possibly Jón Ólafsson, occasionally underlines phrases in AM 396 fol. when he makes marginal corrections to the text. In Lbs 222 fol., a later user marks phrases within the text that he determines did not originally belong to the saga, such as, for example, the aforementioned “skielmurinn Vonde” (fol. 274r) about Skammkell, “Enn Sælin för j Sælu þrot, af sanurre tru hafde Alldrej nöth” (fol. 303r) regarding the death of Valgarðr inn grái, or “falsarinn Maurdur” (fol. 303v) about Mqrðr Valgarðsson. In Lbs 3505 4to, underlined words on fol. 97r (“enn ellegar mun eg óngvann kost ä giðra. Njáll mællti: þä Vil eg þetta mäl Läta býda umm þriä Vetur og iij sumur”<sup>433</sup>) quite possibly indicate variant readings, of which the manuscript has others as well (see category II.A.2.). According to Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954) the addition of “ok þrjú sumur” only occurs in the Y-class of *Njáls saga* manuscripts (i.e., *Möðruvallabók*, cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson

<sup>429</sup> Translation: [I] “have tried to prevent disagreement between us, but I cannot value Atli as a slave” (Cook 2001:65).

<sup>430</sup> Translation: “living here can lead to problems. My advice to you and all my kinsmen is that you don’t spring into action at the prompting of my wife Hallgerd, for she undertakes many things that are far from my will” (Cook 2001:68).

<sup>431</sup> Translation: “in fact he will ask everybody to do their best in caring for you” (Cook 2001:16).

<sup>432</sup> These markings will, hopefully, be revisited at a later point, to determine their possible function.

<sup>433</sup> Translation: ‘But otherwise I won’t consider it.’ Njáll said: ‘Then I’d like to let this matter wait for three winters and three summers’ (cf. Cook 2001:164-165).



1954:CLVII) and in *Gráskinna* (241 fn. 4).<sup>434</sup> The only other marginal marking in Lbs 3505 4to occurs on fols. 156v-157r, where the scribe adds the numbers one through ten in the margin next to the same passage where numbers occur in BL Add 4867 fol. (see above), for each summon in the law prosecution following the burning at Bergþórshváll. This may indicate a connection between the two manuscripts. In Thott 1776 4to III, which only contains paratextual features by the main scribe, the verses of *Darraðarljóð* (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:454-458) have been numbered. Einar Eiríksson, scribe of AM 469 4to, puts the beginning of Gunnarr's famous quote "Fógur er nu hlydinn" ["Lovely is the hillside" (Cook 2001:123)] in parentheses. Moreover, small vertical lines in the margin occasionally mark certain passages, such as the names of the arbitrators chosen by Flosi and Njáll during the prosecution of Hǫskuldr's death (fol. 96r; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:310), and a few lines during the battle at the Alþing following the presecution of the burning (fols. 127v-128r; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:402-403). In ÍB 261 4to, two underlines passages were noticed. On fol. 13r, the phrase "þat mon mīer sýst i Tauma ganga"<sup>435</sup> spoken by Hǫskuldr after Hallgerðr tells him of the killing of her first husband Þorvaldr (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:36), is underlined in red; on fol. 16v the phrase "Än er illt Geinge, nema heiman hafe"<sup>436</sup> spoken by Glúmr about Þjóstólfr (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:49) is underlined in black. Red crosses in the margins were noted in ÍB 322 4to on fols. 11v ("Snauder menn kvamo til Hliþar Enda;"<sup>437</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:93), 12v ("Eg em akurgiordar madr;"<sup>438</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:95), 20v ("at farande konur kvamo til hlydarenda fra Bergþorshvali;"<sup>439</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:112), and in the bottom corner on fol. 78r (two crosses), where Þorgeirr proclaims that Iceland should accept Christianity (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:272). Jakob Sigurðsson occasionally adds parentheses or other markings to phrases within his text in AM Acc. 50, presumably to mark additions to the text by himself. He

<sup>434</sup> For a description of the manuscript classes according to Einar Ól. Sveinsson, see Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1954:CLII-CLVII).

<sup>435</sup> Translation: 'that will finally prove true for me.'

<sup>436</sup> Translation: "The only bad company comes from home" (Cook 2001:32).

<sup>437</sup> Translation: "Some poor men came to Hlidarendi" (Cook 2001:58).

<sup>438</sup> Translation: "I do field work" (Cook 2001:60).

<sup>439</sup> Translation: "that some itinerant women came to Hlidarendi from Berthorshvol" (Cook 2001:730).

marks his additions during the scene describing Valgarðr's death (see above) with a vertical line and colon (: ... :|), and on fol. 81r, immediately following Þorgeirr's speech about accepting Christianity and which heathen practices could be continued in secret, Jakob adds "(enn því öllu kom af Sydann Olafr Kongr Haralldz Son)." <sup>440</sup> In Lbs 1415 4to, a small *x* marks an alternate reading on fol. 123r. And the user, who added the chapter titles from the 1772 edition to Lbs 437 4to, occasionally adds small *x*-signs to indicate where certain chapters start in the printed edition. Additionally, on fol. 73r, someone added small numbers above the words in a verse.

Aside from the above described very general markings (underlined passages, marginal lines, crosses, and so forth), some manuscripts contain *nota bene* signs and manicules. The former is found in four vellum manuscripts (AM 468 4to, AM 133 fol., AM 132 fol., AM 466 4to), fourteen seventeenth-century manuscripts, and six eighteenth-century codices. The latter appears in two vellum manuscripts (GKS 2870 4to, AM 309 4to), two seventeenth-century manuscripts (AM 136 fol., AM 470 4to), and one eighteenth-century manuscript (NKS 1788 4to). As mentioned above, *nota bene* signs were occasionally utilized to highlight words or phrases in the main text that a later reader recognized as not actually belonging to the saga, such as mistakes or additions by the scribe, such as in Thott 1765 4to. Like other marginal markings, *nota bene* signs have also been used to highlight important phrases and passages. In AM 466 4to *nota bene* signs occur, for example, when Hallgerðr sends Melkólfr to Kirkjubær to steal food (fol. 16r), next to Njáll's famous quote "*þviat með logum skal land vort byggia en ei með ologum eiýda*" <sup>441</sup> (fol. 23v), or at the beginning of the Conversion episode (fol. 36r). <sup>442</sup> In AM 469 4to, *nota bene* signs mark the genealogy of Valgarðr inn grái (fol. 20v), and two passages containing the word "gíningarfífl" ['a fool/a puppet'] (fols. 81v "NB+++" and 114v "NB-"; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:263, 367). The only *nota bene* sign in AM 467 4to occurs next to a quote by Bergþóra ("Reiðiz G(unnar) fyrir yðra hond .segir hon. ok þikkir hann skapgoðr. ok ef þer rekkit eigi þessa

<sup>440</sup> Translation: 'but all of this was then abolished by King Óláfr Haraldsson.'

<sup>441</sup> The addition of 'ei' [not] occurs also in *Gráskinna* and AM 162 b fol. 8 (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:172-173 fn. 6). – Translation: 'because with law our land shall rise, but it will perish with lawlessness.'

<sup>442</sup> The following is a complete list of folios containing *nota bene* signs in AM 466 4to: fols. 10v (uncertain), 14r, 14v, 15r, 16r (very large, across at least six lines of text), 23v, 31r, 32r, 36r, 38r, 49v (twice), 50r, 50v, 51r, and 51v.

rettar þa munv þer ongrar skamma reka;<sup>443</sup> fol. 72r; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:114) in which the word ‘rekkit’ is underlined. The significance of the word ‘rekkit’ (normalized: rekið) is unclear, although it cannot be ruled out that the *nota bene* sign refers to the entire quote. Three *nota bene* signs occur in *The Younger Flateyjarbók*, two of which are in the *Njáls saga* section. On fol. 182v the phrase “eda land annad at Loglegri Virdingo”<sup>444</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:168) is underlined and a marginal *nota bene* is added; the same occurs on fol. 183v, where a *nota bene* sign is added in the margin next to the underlined passage “Ecki er þat sattrof þó hvor hafi log Vid annan,”<sup>445</sup> which is immediately followed by Njáll’s famous quote “með lögum skal land vårt byggja, en með ólögum eyða.” (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:172). A single *nota bene* sign as well as a manicule were noticed in NKS 1788 4to on the inside margin on fol. 65v, next to the genealogy of Starkaðr Barkarson, more specifically the mention of his children (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:146).<sup>446</sup>

Aside from NKS 1788 4to, manicules were also found in GKS 2870 4to, AM 309 4to, AM 136 fol., and AM 470 4to. Unlike *nota bene* signs, which can be in the hand of the scribe, but were more frequently added by later users, the manicules detected in the *Njáls saga* manuscripts are all drawn by the main scribe. The function of the pointing hands in GKS 2870 4to (fol. 68v) and AM 309 4to (fol. 44v), appears to be different from the general purpose of a manicule. In GKS 2870 4to, a hand is drawn around a catchword (“Barðastranda;” Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:267). The manicule could be a mere decoration or way to highlight the place name Barðaströnd (Westfjords). In AM 309 4to, the scribe uses a pointing hand, as well as a verbal note (“þar a inn visan sem krossenn er og haundín er;”<sup>447</sup> see Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson 1875:377) to indicate that a missing verse (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:478, 26. aukavísa) should be added at a certain point in the main writing block. Four manicules appear in AM 136 fol., all highlighting significant

<sup>443</sup> Translation: “Gunnar became furious on your behalf’ she said, ‘and he is said to be gentle. If you don’t avenge this, you’ll never avenge any shame.” (Cook 2001:75).

<sup>444</sup> Translation: “or another piece of land, at a legally determined value” (Cook 2001:114).

<sup>445</sup> Translation: “It’s not breaking a settlement ... if a man deals lawfully with another” (Cook 2001:117).

<sup>446</sup> Since the manuscript is very tightly bound and cannot be opened wide enough to clearly reveal all marginal markings and notes written on the inside margins, it is possible that the manuscript contained additional *nota bene* signs or manicules that could not be detected.

<sup>447</sup> Translation: ‘the verse belongs where the cross and the hand are.’

passages in the saga text. The manicule on fol. 39r appears next to Njáll's previously mentioned quote. Another important idiom, part of the Conversion episode, is also highlighted with a manicule on fol. 55r ("þad er upphaff laga vorra ad menn skulu aller christner vera hier ä Lande...;"<sup>448</sup> cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:272). On fol. 58r, a manicule appears next to the proverb "ad Jllu korni er säd enda mä Jllt aff gröa"<sup>449</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:288). Lastly, the scribe, Jón Gissurarson, adds a manicule on fol. 61r next to Skarphéðinn's insult of Þorkell: "er þier nær ad stanga ur tönnum þier Raßgarnarendann merarennar er þu ätst ädur enn þu reyðst til þings"<sup>450</sup> (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:305). In AM 470 4to, the scribe, Ketill Jörundsson, adds manicules on fols. 21v ("hann mun spirja hvort þar sjeu allmarger ägjætismenn? ærinn hafa þeir klækenskap skalltu seigja."<sup>451</sup>), 34r ("þä gjeck Þörhalla ad pallinum, ok Bergþöra med henne, ok mællte Bergþöra til Hallgierdar..."<sup>452</sup>), 124r ("Bjarne mællte. nü fer hvorutveggjum ickar vel, eru menn nu hier til vel fallner ad vera vottarner, þar sem vid Hallbjörn erum ad þü taker vid mälinu."<sup>453</sup>), 125v ("Skapte mællte: vier erum <menn> öskapliker..."<sup>454</sup>), 131r ("og sagde þeim, þeir skilldu ecki trúa þvi, þött lögwillur væru giördar fyrir þeim, þvi vitringinum Eiölfe hefr ifer siest."<sup>455</sup>), 132v ("Skulu öviner vorer af ödru hafa metnad [interlinear correction: metord], enn þvi, ad vier höfum hier mikid rängt i giört..."<sup>456</sup>), 134r ("Sidan ljet hann bera framm vætte öll þau er vörninne ättu ad

<sup>448</sup> Translation: "This will be the foundation of our law ... that all men in this land are to be Christians" (Cook 2001:181).

<sup>449</sup> Translation: "But when evil seed has been sown, evil will grow" (Cook 2001:192).

<sup>450</sup> Translation: "You really ought to pick from your teeth the pieces from the mare's arse you ate before riding to the Thing" (Cook 2001:204).

<sup>451</sup> Translation: "He will ask whether there are many excellent men up there. 'They do a lot of nasty things'" (Cook 2001:38; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:61).

<sup>452</sup> Translation: "Bergthora went up to the cross-bench, together with Thorhalla, and spoke to Hallgerd" (Cook 2001:57; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:91).

<sup>453</sup> Translation: "Bjarni said, 'Now you're both doing very well. And there are other men here, namely Hallbjorn and myself, who are qualified to witness that you're taking over the case.'" (Cook 2001:247; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:368)

<sup>454</sup> Translation: 'We are men with different temperaments' (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:371).

<sup>455</sup> Translation: "tell them not to believe that it will, in spite of the trickery against them, for that great sage Eyjolf has overlooked something" (Cook 2001:259; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:385).

<sup>456</sup> Translation: "our enemies will have to build their reputation on something other than that we made a big mistake" (Cook 2001:262; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:389).

filgia...”<sup>457</sup>), and 145r (“eg vil og ecke eiga ad heimta ad sjerhvorjum þeirra, eg vil ad Flose ejrn varde vid mig, enn hann heimta ad Sveitüngum...”<sup>458</sup>).

As demonstrated above, scribes and readers show a particular interest in proverbs, idioms, and other significant quotations. Aside from the previously described ways of highlighting these phrases, two manuscripts, AM 163 d fol. and AM 555 c 4to, mark proverbs and idioms in the margins through the addition of a marginal *málsháttur/m* [‘proverb’] (both manuscripts) or a marginal *orðtak* [‘idiom’] (only AM 555 c 4to). Additionally, a significant number of scribes (17th c: 7; 18th c: 12; 19th c: 1) highlight these phrases, as well as personal names, bynames and place names, through a change in script.<sup>459</sup> It goes beyond the scope of this dissertation to list all proverbs and idioms highlighted in the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, although such a study is desirable and will be saved for a later research project. Accordingly, only a few examples will be mentioned.

Jón Gissurarson, scribe of AM 136 fol., generally utilizes other means of highlighting important phrases (see above). Nonetheless, on fol. 89v, the final page of the manuscript, he writes the phrase “sættust þeir þä heylum sättum”<sup>460</sup> referring to Flosi and Kári, in a different script. In NKS 1220 fol., Magnús Ketilsson writes several proverbs and phrases in a noticeably larger script, such as “Jlla geefast ills raþs leifar”<sup>461</sup> (fol. 8r), spoken by Ósvífr after the death of Þorvaldr, “At þu laater þeer annarz výtte at varnaþe verða”<sup>462</sup> (fol. 9r), spoken by Þórarinn to his brother Glúmr, “ok mano Nials hafa bitiþt raþinn”<sup>463</sup> (fol. 14r), spoken by Høskuldr, “At iafnan orkar tvýmailiz þö hefnt see”<sup>464</sup> (fol. 27r), spoken by Njáll, “at skamastunþ verþr hainþ haugge

<sup>457</sup> Translation: “Then he had all the testimony brought forth which pertained to the defence...” (Cook 2001:264; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:393).

<sup>458</sup> Translation: “And I don’t want to have to collect the compensation money from each of [them] separately; I want ... Flosi [alone] to be responsible for collecting the money from [his] followers” (Cook 2001:283; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:423).

<sup>459</sup> Only manuscripts from the eighteenth and nineteenth century highlight place names, personal names, and bynames through a change in script. These manuscripts are: Thott 1776 4to III, Kall 612 4to, AM Acc. 50, Lbs 437 4to, ÍB 270 4to, and Lbs 747 fol.

<sup>460</sup> Translation: “They made a full reconciliation” (Cook 2001:310; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:463).

<sup>461</sup> Translation: “Evil designs have evil results” (Cook 2001:24; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:37).

<sup>462</sup> Translation: “Then you’re not letting another man’s woe be your warning” (Cook 2001:27; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954: 42).

<sup>463</sup> Translation: “Njal must have planned it all” (Cook 2001:41; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:65).

<sup>464</sup> Translation: “that the effect is two-sided, even after vengeance has been taken” (Cook 2001:75; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:114).

feiginn<sup>465</sup> (fol. 60r), spoken by Hóskuldr Hvítanessgoði, or “og ero iafnan kaullþ kvenna ræð<sup>466</sup>” (fol. 68r), spoken by Flosi. Many of the same phrases as well as others also appear in a slightly different script in NKS 1219 fol., such as on fols. 19r-v (“Illar gefast ills raads Leifar og sie eg nu allt efter hvornenn<sup>467</sup>”), 20r (“naed er nefed augunum”), 21v (“ad þu later þier annars vyte ad varnade verda”), 50r (“þad ättu efter sem ervidast er, og þad er ad deya<sup>468</sup>”), 58r (“Skamma stund verdur Hónd Hógge feiginn”), 65r (“Vondur hefe eg vered, enn alldrei hefe eg þiofur vered<sup>469</sup>”), 95v (“Føgur er nu Hlydenn, so mier hefur hun alldrei jafn føgur sýnst, og mun eg aptur hverfa og fara hvörge<sup>470</sup>”), or the names of Skarphéðinn (fol. 36r) and Kári (fol. 106) when the characters are introduced for the first time.<sup>471</sup> Markús Snæbjörnsson, scribe of *The Younger Flateyjarbók*, writes the name of King Óláfr Tryggvason in a different script (fol. 197v), and other phrases, such as “at ecke fellr tre vit fyrsta högg<sup>472</sup>” (fol. 199r). In AM Acc. 50, the scribe, Jakob Sigurðsson, occasionally uses a different script for personal names, place names, and significant phrases. He highlights several phrases and paragraphs relating to the burning at Bergþórshváll in this way. On fol. 95r, for example, he changes the script for the quote “(Ugger mig ad Arfa Sata. Illa mune hün Brenna)<sup>473</sup>” spoken by Sæunn after Skarphéðinn refuses to remove the chickweed pile that was used to start the fire. The quote, which is followed by “Enn eýnginn gaf gaum ad þeðu<sup>474</sup>” does not appear in the main text or in the variant apparatus in Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s edition of *Njáls saga* (1954:320), nor in AM 136 fol., a presumed direct copy of the lost *\*Gullskinna*. Jakob also changes the script in several lines, corresponding to parts of Chapter 125 in Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s edition (1954:320) and adds the marginal note “Undur fyrrer Nials Brennu” [‘Miracles before the burning of Njáll’]. Moreover, to name just a few more examples, he changes the script on fol. 96r,

<sup>465</sup> Translation: “the hand’s joy in the blow is brief” (Cook 2001:171; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:253).

<sup>466</sup> Translation: “And cold are [usually] the counsels of women” (Cook 2001:195; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:292).

<sup>467</sup> Translation: “Evil designs have evil results, and now I see how it has gone” (Cook 2001:24).

<sup>468</sup> Translation: “You still have the toughest task of all [and that is to die]” (Cook 2001:62; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:97, 97 fn.5).

<sup>469</sup> Translation: “I’ve been bad, but I’ve never been a thief” (Cook 2001:81; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:123).

<sup>470</sup> Translation: “Lovely is the hillside – never has it seemed so lovely to me as now ... and I will ride back home and not leave” (Cook 2001:123, cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:182).

<sup>471</sup> Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (2014) also points out some of these highlighted proverbs and phrases in NKS 1219 fol.

<sup>472</sup> Translation: “a tree doesn’t fall at the first blow” (Cook 2001:179; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:269).

<sup>473</sup> Translation: ‘I fear the chickweed. It will burn badly.’

<sup>474</sup> Translation: ‘But nobody paid attention to this.’

when Njáll has a vision of the impending burning (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:324), when Skarphéðinn warns his father that the integrity of their adversaries cannot be trusted and that they will resort to fire (fol. 96v; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:326), and when Flosi gives his remorseful speech just before the fire is set “Og er það mikill abyrgdar Hlute fyrir Gude, Er vier Erummm Sialfer Menn Christner. Enn þoo munummm vier það til Bragds Taka verda”<sup>475</sup> (fol. 97r). Proverbs are also occasionally written in a different script in Lbs 1415 4to, such as “Ei fellur trie vid fyrsta högg” (fol. 127v), and very subtly in Lbs 437 4to (e.g. “Illa gefast ills rads leifar” fol. 79r). A change in script for proverbs and other important quotations was also observed in ÍB 270 4to, such as in a conversation between Hrútr and Gunnhildr on fol. 21v (“að illt er þeim a Ölande er alinn,” “enn það verdur qvor ad vinna sem Ætlad er” and “Marga goda gjøf hefe eg af þier þeiged”<sup>476</sup>), in a phrase by Þjóstólfr on fol. 25r (“giør þú þier gott i skape”<sup>477</sup>), or a quote by Hallgerðr on fol. 28v (“hve mjög þier hafid mællt mälinu”<sup>478</sup>). Lastly, Guðlaugur Magnússon, scribe of Lbs 747 fol., highlights, for example, Gunnarr’s famous exclamation “Fögr er hlidin svo af mier hefr hún aldrei jafn fögr synst bleikir akrar en sleginn tún”<sup>479</sup> (fol. 33r), Flosi’s entire dream sequence in Chapter 133 (fol. 63r), and several passages of the law procedures following the burning in Chapter 142 (fols. 71r-73r) by using a different script.

As the above examples demonstrate, scribes and readers of *Njáls saga* showed great interest in proverbs, idioms, and significant passages in the saga. Some highlight quite a few of these phrases, while others are more limited. While Njáll’s “með lögum skal land vårt byggja, en með ólögum eyða” (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:172) and Gunnarr’s “Fögur er hlíðin...” (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:182) are very popular among the post-medieval scribes and readers, two other quotations were seemingly considered significant based on the number of times they were highlighted. When Þorgeirr Tjörvason announces that all of Iceland should accept the Christian faith and

<sup>475</sup> Translation: “and that’s a great responsibility before God, for we’re Christian men. Still, that is the course we must take” (Cook 2001:219; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:328).

<sup>476</sup> Translations: “it’s difficult to dwell in a distant land,” “but a man must do what is set out for him,” “Many good gifts have I had from you” (Cook 2001:12-13; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:20).

<sup>477</sup> Translation: “Pick up your spirits” (Cook 2001:20; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:31).

<sup>478</sup> Translation: “how far you have come in deciding things” (Cook 2001:28; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:44).

<sup>479</sup> Translation: “Lovely is the hillside – never has it seemed so lovely to me as now, with its pale fields and mown meadows” (Cook 2001:123; cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:182).

everyone should believe “á einn guð, fǫður ok son ok anda helgan”<sup>480</sup> (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:272), fourteen of thirty-seven post-medieval manuscripts that contain the passage, highlight this phrase, particularly the nouns, either through a change of script or by writing the words larger,<sup>481</sup> while two manuscripts highlight the passage by other means (AM 136 fol., fol. 55r: manicure; Stock. 9 fol., fol. 227v: underlining). Accordingly, 43% of the complete post-medieval manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (vellum and paper) highlight the invocation of the Trinity. Moreover, the scribes of seventeen of the thirty-seven manuscripts in question (46%) highlight Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði’s exclamation at his death, “Guð hjálpi mér, en fyrirgefi yðr!”<sup>482</sup> (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:281), through a change or enlargement of the script.<sup>483</sup> Ten manuscripts (GKS 1003 fol., AM 134 fol., Lbs 3505 4to, AM 469 4to, NKS 1219 fol., NKS 1788 4to, ÍB 322 4to, Lbs 437 4to, ÍB 270 4to, and Lbs 747 fol.) highlight both phrases, while the remaining highlight one or the other. Most of the manuscripts that highlight both phrases are not necessarily textually closely related; GKS 1003 fol. is related to *Oddabók*, AM 134 fol. possibly to *Bæjarbók* with variant readings from *\*Gullskinna*, Lbs 3505 4to is related to a version of *\*Gullskinna* that is possibly conflated with *Oddabók*, AM 469 4to, NKS 1219 fol., NKS 1788 4to, ÍB 322 4to, and ÍB 270 4to are all related to *\*Gullskinna* but for the most part appear to belong to different branches (although this assumption is only based on the analysis of Chapter 86 of *Njáls saga*); and Lbs 747 fol. was copied from the 1772 edition of *Njáls saga*.<sup>484</sup> It would seem, therefore, that the scribes of these manuscripts, as well as the manuscripts that only highlight one or the other of these two quotations, for the most part do not simply copy something they have noticed in their exemplar,

<sup>480</sup> Translation: “in one God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (Cook 2001:181)

<sup>481</sup> These manuscripts are: GKS 1003 fol., 91v; AM 134 fol., fol. 89r (but surprisingly not AM 137 fol., fol. 102v, written by the same scribe); AM 163 d fol., 24v; AM 396 fol., fol. 126v; Lbs 3505 4to, fol. 105v (very subtly); AM 469 4to, fol. 83v (very large); ÍB 261 4to, 78r (capital letters); NKS 1219 fol., 138v; NKS 1788 4to, fol. 118r-v (Þorgeirr’s entire speech); ÍB 322 4to, 78r (Þorgeirr’s entire speech, but more subtly); *The Younger Flateyjarbók*, 199v; Lbs 437: 164v (Þorgeirr’s entire speech); ÍB 270 4to, 92r; and Lbs 747 fol. 47r.

<sup>482</sup> Translation: “May God help me and forgive you” (Cook 2001:188).

<sup>483</sup> These manuscripts are: GKS 1003 fol., 93v; AM 134 fol., fol. 92r (quite subtly, but again not in AM 137 fol., fol. 106r, written by the same scribe); BL Add 4867 fol., fol. 59v; Lbs 222 fol., fol. 304r (but more subtly than in BL Add 4867 fol., written by the same scribe); NKS 1220 fol., 65v; Lbs 3505 4to, fol. 109r; AM 469 4to, 87r (written larger and in a separate line); Thott 1765 4to, fol. 82v; NKS 1219 fol., 143v; Kall 612 4to, 130r (subtly); AM Acc. 50, fol. 84r; Lbs 1415 4to 134r; Lbs 437 4to, 167v (subtly); ÍB 270 4to, 94v; and Lbs 747 fol., 49r (larger and highlighted with color). Someone less certain are NKS 1788 4to, 123r and ÍB 322 4to, 81v, although the text seems to be written slightly larger.

<sup>484</sup> See Zeevaert et al. (2015), particularly their preliminary stemma at [http://alarichall.org.uk/njala\\_sandpit/njala\\_stemma.php](http://alarichall.org.uk/njala_sandpit/njala_stemma.php)



but emphasize these phrases themselves, due to their significance or possibly per request of their commissioner. It is not surprising that the invocation of God in a medieval text, one of the texts that preserves the story of the Conversion of Iceland, would have been considered particularly important to a Christian and presumably pious post-medieval scribe or commissioner.<sup>485</sup>

As the discussion in this section shows, highlighted passages reveal an interest by scribes and readers in geography (e.g. Stock. 9 fol.), clothing and weapons (e.g. Stock. 9 fol.), law procedures (e.g. AM 136 fol., AM 163 d fol., AM 470 4to, AM 134 fol., Lbs 3505 4to), proverbs (e.g., AM 163 d fol., AM 136 fol., AM 137 fol., BL Add. 4867, NKS 1220 fol., NKS 1219 fol., Stock. Papp. 9 fol.), and idioms or certain significant passages within the saga, such as Gunnarr's death (e.g. AM 163 d fol., BL Add. 4867), Hǫskuldr's death (see fn. 483), the Christianization (see fn. 481), the burning at Bergþórshváll (e.g., AM 163 d fol.), or Flosi's dream sequence (e.g. BL Add. 4867, *Reykjabók*, AM 163 d fol.).

#### 6.4.3.3.2.3. Depictions (Category II.B.3.)

Category II.B.3. refers to marginal drawings depicting events or characters from the saga. Decorated initials are not included here since the stylized faces cannot usually be identified as a definite reference to the text.<sup>486</sup> Three medieval vellum manuscripts contain drawings that potentially refer to characters in the saga. On fol. 37v in GKS 2870 4to, the scribe adds two human figures facing each other in the margin next to a passage in Chapter 58 that introduces the two *austmenn* Þórir and Þorgrímur (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:147). It is likely that the two men represent the two characters. In AM 132 fol., immediately following *Njáls saga*, there is an amateurish sketch of a man with a halberd or axe. It is possible that a reader of the manuscript added a depiction of, for example, Skarphéðinn or Gunnarr, although a definite identification is

<sup>485</sup> None of the medieval manuscripts that preserve these two sections highlight the two phrases.

<sup>486</sup> The curious initial of a potential bearded Njáll in AM 469 4to has briefly been discussed in Arthur (2014). Moreover, it can be noted that Lönnroth (1975) describes the highly decorated initial at the beginning of the chapter introducing Njáll's character in *Kálfalækjarbók* (fol. 14v) with the words "Picture ... of an angelic cleanshaven man (Njáll?) fighting a dragon with a sword" (57) implying that the figure could be Njáll. Lönnroth (1975) also discusses the remaining decorated initials in *Kálfalækjarbók* briefly, arguing that the depictions are all related to the content of the saga, although he admits that "pictures in Icelandic manuscript initials may well have had a purely decorative and ornamental function" (70).

not possible. The scribe of *Oddabók* has a drawing of a man with a pointed helmet, halberd, or axe and a shield with a stylized animal on it in the margin on fol. 44r. The figure has a rather serious or sad facial expression. The man's feet appear to be surrounded by stylized flames. The drawing is next to a text passage in Chapter 130 of *Njáls saga* depicting the final moments of Skarphéðinn during the burning at Bergþórshváll (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:333). The passage in *Oddabók* is slightly different from the text printed in the Íslenzk Fornrit edition and reads “skarph(eðinn) gekk þa til enda hússins; ok keyrði oxina <i gafladit> svo at gekk upp aa fetan. þa vard brestr mickill.”<sup>487</sup> It is possible that the drawing is a depiction of Skarphéðinn at the moment of his death. Alternatively, but somewhat less likely, the drawing could be of Kári Sölmundarson, who escapes the fire with severe burns. In Chapter 92 of *Njáls saga* (cf. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954:231), Kári is described as wearing a gilded helmet and a shield with a lion on it. The scribe of *Oddabók* may have remembered the earlier description of Kári. However, Kári had already escaped the burning farm at the point of the saga where the drawing occurs.

Two paper manuscripts contain drawings related to the saga and its characters. The drawing of Njáll, presumably by Hjalti Þorsteinsson from Vatnsfjörður (Westfjords), preserved in Lbs 3505 4to is a somewhat problematic case, since it likely did not originally belong to this codex but rather to NKS 1220 fol (see Chapter 4.3.2.). Lbs 747 fol., from the nineteenth century, contains various depictions of characters and scenes from the saga.<sup>488</sup>

None of the drawings in the *Njáls saga* manuscripts render a historically accurate depiction of eleventh-century Icelanders. The artists adopt clothing (and weapons) from their own time periods, which is most evident in Lbs 747 fol., where the saga characters wear pinstriped suits. Aðalsteinn Ingólfsson (2004) argues that there are two reasons why artists did not attempt to draw characters historically accurate. First, the artists simply did not know or could not know what an eleventh-century Viking would have looked like. Secondly, and more importantly, the people who drew these depictions in the manuscripts did not feel the need for being accurate.

<sup>487</sup> Translation: ‘Skarphedin then went on to the end of the house, and drove his axe into the gable so that the blade sunk; then there was a loud crash.’

<sup>488</sup> For a detailed discussion of Lbs 747 fol. and its drawings see Þorsteinn Árnason Surmeli (2013).

They considered their drawings an extension and interpretation of the saga, not an accurate reflection (Aðalsteinn Ingólfsson 2004:162).

#### 6.4.3.3.3. Conclusion: Category II

The most common II.A.1. paratextual features in the medieval vellum manuscripts are rubrics (produced at the same time as the main text and possibly by the same scribe) and the mere mention of the saga title, often as pen trials by later users. The latter is comparable to paratextual features of category I.B., since – unlike other features from category II – they do not necessarily interplay with the saga itself. Summaries of text passages are very limited in the medieval manuscripts and were all added by later readers, presumably almost two hundred years after the manuscripts were produced. The only true comment on the text in the medieval manuscripts comes in the form of the scribal remarks on Valgarðr inn grái, Mǫrðr Valgarðsson, and the *brennumenn* in *Oddabók*. II.A.2. features in the medieval manuscripts are generally either corrections to the text or later additions to the manuscript to repair lacunae. II.B.2. features are also quite sparse. Only two manuscripts have *nota bene* signs added, three contain underlined passages, and the two manuscripts that contain manicules, use them with a different purpose (see above). Although the medieval vellum manuscripts showed ample signs of use (see category I), they contain comparably few paratextual features showing interaction between reader and text or reader and manuscript.

The medieval manuscripts were used for reading and entertainment purposes, but the act of reading with pen in hand, of marking, commenting on, and studying the text, is far more evident in the post-medieval era. Sherman (2008) notes that “Renaissance readers were not only *allowed* to write notes in and on their books, they were *taught* to so in school” (3). Jackson (2001) proposes that “the unified empire of marginalia could ... be divided into distinct kingdoms,” and suggests three such kingdoms between about 1700 and 1820 for her research area, the English-speaking world: “the Kingdom of Competition, the Kingdom of Sociability, the Kingdom of Subjectivity” (44). Jackson (2001) points out that the tradition of adding marginalia expanded from a mainly

scholarly field into the secular sphere, and that the practice was “exercised by a wider and wider range of readers” (44-45). In Iceland and mainland-Scandinavia interest in medieval Icelandic manuscripts and literature began during the sixteenth century and continued during the seventeenth century due to an increased interest by humanists in the sagas as historical sources and historical literature (see also Chapter 1.3.). Additionally, the ideas of Enlightenment reached Iceland during the eighteenth century, reviving an interest in the sagas. As Sherman’s and Jackson’s quotes (see above) indicate, the practice of annotating texts was common during both time periods. This explains why paratextual features concerning the main text (category II) are far more common in the corpus of paper manuscripts, and why the few paratextual features from this category in the medieval vellum manuscripts generally stem from post-medieval users.

In the paper manuscripts, it can be observed that paratextual features from category II differ among types of manuscripts (scholarly, private-scholarly hybrid, private) and manuscripts from different time periods.

Concerning category II.A.1., seven of nine scholarly manuscripts contain such features. Four scholarly copies (AM 134 fol., AM 137 fol., Stock. 9 fol., AM 135 fol.), all from the seventeenth century include biographical, historical, or geographical information in the margins. Stock. 9 fol. (17th c) and *Landakotsbók* (18th c) contain chapter titles. AM 137 fol. (17th c) and AM 467 4to (18th c) contain cross-references. KB Add 565 4to (fol. 332v) preserves a verse about Njáll, possibly taken from AM 469 4to (see above) and the title “*Njáls saga*” can faintly be read on a flyleaf in AM 135 fol. The only two private-scholarly hybrids (AM 470 4to and AM 464 4to) included in the analysis of the paratextual features both contain historical information with reference to *Landnáma*, but have otherwise limited II.A.1. features, i.e., a crossed-out poem about Kári and cross-references within *Njáls saga* in AM 470 4to and chapter titles copied from the exemplar *Kálfalækjarbók* in AM 464 4to. The II.A.1. features in the scholarly and private-scholarly hybrid manuscripts, therefore, differ from those in the private reading manuscripts. While some private reading manuscripts contain dates and other historical information, this type of manuscript also preserves summaries of text passages, comments on the text, references to

other texts, censorship (NKS 1220 fol., decorative reading manuscript; BL Add 4867 fol., moderate-decorative reading manuscript), and added verses about the saga (moderate reading manuscripts). Particularly the moderate reading manuscripts are rich in II.A.1. features, such as comments or added verses, while plain reading manuscripts, in contrast, contain mainly summaries of text passages or chapter titles, which both serve a similar purpose. The only manuscripts with references to other specific texts are the two aforementioned private-scholarly hybrids (AM 470 4to, AM 464 4to), two moderate reading manuscripts (AM 555 c 4to, BL Add 4867 fol.), and three plain reading manuscripts (AM 465 4to, NKS 1788 4to, ÍB 270 4to).

Variant readings (II.A.2.) are found in all types of manuscripts. However, while one might expect scholarly copies to be particularly rich in variant readings, only one scholarly copy, AM 134 fol. (17th c), has a detailed variant apparatus, while another (AM 135 fol.) includes a single variant reading. The private-scholarly hybrids, on the other hand, contain variant readings on practically every page. It is possible that the private scholars, such as Ketil Jörundsson and Jón Halldórsson, were interested in comparing the variance within the saga text in one manuscript (intended for personal use), whereas the scholars who commissioned the true scholarly copies were likely more interested in preserving the text of one particular medieval manuscript as true to the original as possible (see e.g., Jørgensen 2007:71). Like the private-scholarly hybrids, some of the private reading manuscripts, mainly moderate reading copies, also contain variant readings, although overall far less systematically.

Aside from variant readings, II.A.2. features among the private reading manuscripts are only found in the moderate and plain reading manuscripts, generally in the form of minor corrections, additions of chapter titles by later users, or the addition of entire pages of the saga to repair damaged manuscripts. Two scholarly manuscripts (AM 134 fol., AM 137 fol.) contain ‘repaired’ marginal notes, where a later user rewrote marginalia that had been cut off during the trimming of the pages. Five scholarly copies (AM 137 fol., Stock. 9 fol., AM 135 fol., ÍB 421 4to, AM 467 4to) contain the addition of certain chapter numbers or corrections to the numbering of chapters. Only one seventeenth-century and some of the eighteenth-century scholarly manuscripts (AM

135 fol., ÍB 421 4to, AM 467 4to, KB Add 565 4to, *Landakotsbók*) and the two private-scholarly hybrids from the seventeenth century (AM 470 4to, AM 464 4to) contain indications of or specific mention of defects to their exemplar. Ásgeir Jónsson adds an ellipsis in AM 135 fol., possibly to indicate a defect passage in his exemplar.<sup>489</sup> Jón Magnússon, scribe of AM 467 4to, ÍB 421 4to, and KB Add 565 4to, leaves empty space for a lacuna in his exemplar *Reykjabók*; and a later user of ÍB 421 4to marks the passage in the manuscript that corresponds with folio 34 in *Reykjabók*, which was lost at a later point. In KB Add 565 4to, a later user notes that some of the verses in the manuscripts are written in a different hand in the margin of the exemplar (*Reykjabók*). The scribe of *Landakotsbók* adds ellipses or adds Latin comments to show missing or difficult passages in his exemplar *Reykjabók*. Ketill Jörundsson, scribe of AM 470 4to, leaves empty space on fol. 137r, possibly indicating that he thought something was missing in his exemplar. And Jón Halldórsson, scribe of AM 464 4to, adds also comments about his exemplar (*Kálfalækjarbók*) such as “Membranæ defectus” (fol. 19r). These II.A.2. features in the scholarly and private-scholarly hybrid manuscripts demonstrate that the scribes and users had more of an interest in exact manuscript transmission than those of the private reading manuscripts, who seem more focused on the text itself.

One scholarly manuscript (AM 467 4to), both private-scholarly hybrids (AM 470 4to, AM 464 4to), two moderate reading manuscripts (AM 396 fol., BL Add 4867 fol.), and one plain reading manuscript (NKS 1788 4to) contain verses that in other manuscripts are part of the main text (category II.A.2.).

The way of marking verses (II.B.1.) differs by time period. As noted (see above), a marginal *v/w* was the only method utilized in the medieval manuscripts, and this practice continued for most of the seventeenth-century. The two late-seventeenth-century codices with two ways of marking the verses (NKS 1220 fol., decorative reading manuscript; Lbs 3505 4to, moderate reading manuscript) use a marginal *v* as well as a change in script, a practice that appears to be continued in the private reading manuscripts during the early-mid eighteenth century (Thott 1776

<sup>489</sup> The manuscript is partly copied after *Gráskinna*, but likely conflated. (see Chapter 4.3.2.)

4to III, SÁM 33, AM 469 4to). During the late eighteenth- and nineteenth century, scribes of private reading manuscripts dropped the marginal *v* and instead changed the script and wrote verses in a different layout. With the exception of *The Younger Flateyjarbók* (plain reading manuscript), the paper manuscripts that only use a change in layout to mark the verses are all scholarly copies (AM 135 fol., ÍB 421 4to, AM 467 4to, KB Add 565 4to, Thott 984 fol. III, *Landakotsbók*). One private manuscript (Kall 612 4to) changes the script for the verses, and Stock. 9 fol. (scholarly copy) only underlines the verses, possibly by a later user. It can, therefore, be concluded that all manuscripts that have two ways of marking verses are private reading manuscripts. The only manuscript containing verses and not marking these is the moderate reading manuscript ÍB 261 4to.

The frequency and type of non-verbal paratextual features from category II.B.2. also differs among the different types of manuscripts and manuscripts from different periods. Among the scholarly manuscripts, the seventeenth-century copies, as with II.A.1. features, are marked more heavily, containing underlined passages and *nota bene* signs. Likewise, ÍB 421 4to from the eighteenth century preserves many underlined passages. AM 467 4to only has one underlined word with an added *nota bene* (see above), while the remaining scholarly copies have no II.B.2. features. The two private-scholarly hybrids both contain *nota bene* signs. The decorative reading manuscripts are relatively unmarked. In two decorative reading manuscripts (NKS 1220 fol. and NKS 1219 fol.), the only II.B.2. feature are in the form of proverbs written in a different script or larger within the text. These features were, therefore, part of the writing process and not a sign of readership. In GKS 1003 fol., one verse is highlighted in red, presumably by a later user. The moderate reading manuscripts show the highest frequency of II.B.2. features, preserving underlined and marked passages by later readers as well as occasionally proverbs and quotes written in a different script by the scribe. While some plain reading manuscripts contain changes in script as well as marked passages by later users, these features are less extensive than in the moderate reading manuscripts.

Two moderate reading manuscripts contain drawings related to the saga text (II.B.3.), although the picture of Njáll preserved in Lbs 3505 4to probably did not originally belong to this manuscript, and more likely to NKS 1220 fol. (decorative reading manuscript).

Generally, it can be observed that the moderate reading manuscripts, followed by the plain reading manuscripts, contain the most paratextual features from categories II.A.1. and II.B.2.; the categories that show the most direct interaction between user (scribe/reader) and text. Moreover, the private-scholarly hybrids exhibit greater evidence of the detailed study of the saga and its transmission than the scholarly manuscripts.

While it is important to bear in mind that the analysis of paratextual features can only determine the reaction of one particular reader or scribe to one particular section of the text, it is impossible not to notice certain general tendencies. As the discussion of paratextual features demonstrates, highlighted passages and commentary reveal an interest by scribes and readers of *Njáls saga* in geography and place names, clothing and weapons, law procedures, history, chronology, and genealogies, proverbs, idioms or certain significant passages within the saga, such as Gunnarr's death, Hǫskuldr's death, the Christianization, the burning at Bergþórshváll, or Flosi's dream sequence. Ferrer (2004) points out that every reader chooses him- or herself to annotate one passage over another, and that often the reason behind an annotated section is that we either "particularly love it-or, very often, because it irritates us particularly" (12). This phenomenon can also be observed within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts. Comments added in the margins or integrated into the saga text as well as verses about the saga and its characters, indicate that, unsurprisingly, Gunnarr, Njáll, Hǫskuldr Hvítanessgoði, Kári, Flosi, and Skarphéðinn, are among the favorites of scribes and readers, whereas Hallgerðr, Mörðr, and Valgarðr are considered villains.



## 6.4.4. Paratextual Features: Tables

## 6.4.4.1. Category I

Vellum	Category I		I.A. and I.B.		I.A.		I.B.	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
14th c	11	2	10	3	1	2	0	3
15th c	5	0	3	2	2	0	0	2
17th c	2	2	1	3	0	3	1	2
Total vellum	18	4	14	8	3	5	1	7
Paper	Category I		I.A. and I.B.		I.A.		I.B.	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
17th c	16	1	9	8	4	4	3	5
18th c	15	4	11	8	1	6	3	5
19th c	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total paper	32	5	21	16	5	10	6	10
Total	50	9	35	24	8	15	7	17

Table 13a: Category I: Overall

Call number Vellum	Category I		I.A. and I.B.		I.A.		I.B.	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
GKS 2870 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. β	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
AM 162 b fol. δ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 468 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. γ	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 162 b fol. θ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 132 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 133 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. κ	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
AM 162 b fol. η	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ε	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 2868 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total 14th c	11	2	10	3	1	2	0	3
AM 162 b fol. α	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
GKS 2869 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ι	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 466 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 309 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total 15th c	5	0	3	2	2	0	0	2
AM 921 4to I	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Lbs fragm. 2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
JS fragm. 4	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
GKS 1003 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total 17th c	2	2	1	3	0	3	1	2
Total vellum	18	4	14	8	3	5	1	7

Table 13b: Category I: Vellum

Call number <i>Paper</i>	Category I		I.A. and I.B.		I.A.		I.B.	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
AM 396 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 136 fol.	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 555 c 4to	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 134 fol.	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 470 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 137 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 163 d fol.	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
AM 465 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 555 a 4to	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
AM 163 i fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Stock. 9 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
BL Add 4867 fol.	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
AM 135 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 464 4to	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Lbs 222 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
NKS 1220 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lbs 3505 4to	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Total 17th c	16	1	9	8	4	4	3	5
SAM 33	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
AM 469 4to	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
KBAdd 565 4to	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
IB 421 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 467 4to	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
IB 261 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Thott 1776 4to III	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Thott 984 fol. III	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Thott 1765 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kall 612 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
IB 322 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
NKS 1788 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Landakotsbók	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
NKS 1219 fol.	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM Acc. 50	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Lbs 1415 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
IB 270 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lbs 437 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total 18th c	15	4	11	8	1	6	3	5
19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total paper	32	5	21	16	5	10	6	10

Table 13c: Category I: Paper<sup>490</sup><sup>490</sup> For an explanation of color codes used, see Figure 1.

<i>Vellum</i>	#pages	#pages w/ I.A.	I.A. %	#pages w/ I.B.	I.B. %
14th c	1212	45	3.71	230	18.98
15th c	244	17	6.97	79	32.38
17th c	294	2	0.68	1	0.34
<b>Total vellum</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>17.71</b>
<i>Paper</i>	#pages	#pages w/ I.A.	I.A. %	#pages w/ I.B.	I.B. %
17th c	6112	53	0.87	99	1.62
18th c	11784	44	0.37	73	0.62
19th c	758	15	1.98	5	0.66
<b>Total paper</b>	<b>18654</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20404</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>2.39</b>

Table 13d: Category I: Frequency overall

Call number	#pages	#pages w/ I.A.	I.A. %	#pages w/ I.B.	I.B. %
GKS 2870 4to	242	2	0.83	11	4.55
AM 162 b fol. β	2	0	0.00	0	0.00
AM 162 b fol. δ	48	1	2.08	6	12.50
AM 468 4to	188	6	3.19	34	18.09
AM 162 b fol. ζ	10	2	20.00	4	40.00
AM 162 b fol. γ	10	0	0.00	3	30.00
AM 162 b fol. θ	4	1	25.00	1	25.00
AM 132 fol.	402	8	1.99	69	17.16
AM 133 fol.	190	14	7.37	62	32.63
AM 162 b fol. ξ	4	0	0.00	0	0.00
AM 162 b fol. η	6	1	16.67	3	50.00
AM 162 b fol. ε	16	4	25.00	13	81.25
GKS 2868 4to	90	6	6.67	24	26.67
<b>Total 14th c</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>18.98</b>
AM 162 b fol. α	4	0	0.00	2	50.00
GKS 2869 4to	22	3	13.64	8	36.36
AM 162 b fol. ι	8	0	0.00	1	12.50
AM 466 4to	114	13	11.40	63	55.26
AM 309 4to	96	1	1.04	5	5.21
<b>Total 15th c</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6.97</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>32.38</b>
AM 921 4to I	2	1	50.00	0	0.00
Lbs fragm. 2	2	0	0.00	0	0.00
JS fragm. 4	2	0	0.00	0	0.00
GKS 1003 fol.	288	1	0.35	1	0.35
<b>Total 17th c</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.34</b>
<b>Total vellum</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>17.71</b>

Table 13e: Category I: Frequency vellum

Call number	#pages	#pages w/ I.A.	I.A. %	#pages w/ I.B.	I.B. %
AM 396 fol.	402	5	1.24	8	1.99
AM 136 fol.	178	0	0.00	2	1.12
AM 555 c 4to	150	0	0.00	2	1.33
AM 134 fol.	296	0	0.00	8	2.70
AM 470 4to	320	1	0.31	5	1.56
AM 137 fol.	340	1	0.29	2	0.59
AM 163 d fol.	74	0	0.00	4	5.41
AM 465 4to	266	9	3.38	7	2.63
AM 555 a 4to	130	0	0.00	0	0.00
AM 163 i fol.	120	2	1.67	4	3.33
Stock. 9 fol.	918	1	0.11	1	0.11
BL Add 4867 fol.	540	8	1.48	0	0.00
AM 135 fol.	376	1	0.27	1	0.27
AM 464 4to	324	1	0.31	0	0.00
Lbs 222 fol.	694	21	3.03	53	7.64
NKS 1220 fol.	216	1	0.46	2	0.93
Lbs 3505 4to	768	2	0.26	0	0.00
<b>Total 17th c</b>	<b>6112</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1.62</b>
SAM 33	2	0	0.00	0	0.00
AM 469 4to	300	1	0.33	0	0.00
KBAdd 565 4to	666	0	0.00	0	0.00
IB 421 4to	658	7	1.06	5	0.76
AM 467 4to	616	0	0.00	0	0.00
IB 261 4to	276	5	1.81	15	5.43
Thott 1776 4to III	172	0	0.00	1	0.58
Thott 984 fol. III	4436	1	0.02	0	0.00
Thott 1765 4to	280	4	1.43	16	5.71
Kall 612 4to	630	4	0.63	7	1.11
IB 322 4to	256	1	0.39	6	2.34
NKS 1788 4to	418	4	0.96	5	1.20
Landakotsbók	480	4	0.83	3	0.63
NKS 1219 fol.	486	0	0.00	0	0.00
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	468	3	0.64	3	0.64
AM Acc. 50	280	1	0.36	0	0.00
Lbs 1415 4to	480	6	1.25	7	1.46
IB 270 4to	300	1	0.33	3	1.00
Lbs 437 4to	580	2	0.34	2	0.34
<b>Total 18th c</b>	<b>11784</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>0.62</b>
<b>19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.66</b>
<b>Total paper</b>	<b>18654</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>0.95</b>

Table 13f: Category I: Frequency paper

6.4.4.2. Category II

<i>Vellum</i>	Category II		II.A.1.	II.A.2.	II.B.1.	II.B.2.	II.B.3.
	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
14th c	12	1	12	7	5	5	2
15th c	4	1	4	1	1	2	1
17th c	1	3	1	0	1	1	0
Total vellum	17	5	17	8	7	8	3
<i>Paper</i>	Category II		II.A.1.	II.A.2.	II.B.1.	II.B.2.	II.B.3.
	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
17th c	17	0	15	14	17	17	1
18th c	19	0	17	14	18	15	0
19th c	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Total paper	37	0	33	28	36	33	2
Total	54	5	50	36	43	41	5

Table 14a: Category II - Overall

Call number <i>Vellum</i>	Category II		II.A.1.	II.A.2.	II.B.1.	II.B.2.	II.B.3.
	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GKS 2870 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
AM 162 b fol. β	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. δ	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
AM 468 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. γ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. θ	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
AM 132 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
AM 133 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 162 b fol. ξ	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. η	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ε	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
GKS 2868 4to	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
Total 14th c	12	1	12	7	5	5	2
AM 162 b fol. α	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 2869 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ι	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 466 4to	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
AM 309 4to	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
Total 15th c	4	1	4	1	1	2	1
AM 921 4to I	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lbs. fragm. 2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
JS fragm. 4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 1003 fol.	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Total 17th c	1	3	1	0	1	1	0
Total vellum	17	5	17	8	7	8	3

Table 14b: Category II: Vellum

Call number <i>Paper</i>	Category II		II.A.1.	II.A.2.	II.B.1.	II.B.2.	II.B.3.
	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AM 396 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 136 fol.	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
AM 555 c 4to	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
AM 134 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 470 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 137 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 163 d fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 465 4to	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
AM 555 a 4to	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
AM 163 i fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Stock. 9 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
BL Add 4867 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 135 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM 464 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Lbs 222 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
NKS 1220 fol.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Lbs 3505 4to	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Total 17th c	17	0	15	14	17	17	1
SAM 33	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
AM 469 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
KBAdd 565 4to	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
IB 421 4to	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
AM 467 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
IB 261 4to	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
Thott 1776 4to III	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Thott 984 fol. III	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Thott 1765 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Kall 612 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
IB 322 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
NKS 1788 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Landakotsbók	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
NKS 1219 fol.	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
AM Acc. 50	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Lbs 1415 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
IB 270 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Lbs 437 4to	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Total 18th c	19	0	17	14	18	15	0
19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Total paper	37	0	33	28	36	33	2

Table 14c: Category II: Paper

6.4.4.3. Category II.A.1.

<i>Vellum</i>	titles/ names	repetition of words	Rubrics/ Chapter titles	Summaries/ comments	Verses	Hist./geogr. info	References
14th c	6	1	11	3	2	2	0
15th c	1	0	3	1	0	1	0
17th c	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total vellum</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Paper</i>	titles/ names	repetition of words	Rubrics/ Chapter titles	Summaries/ comments	Verses	Hist./geogr. info	References
17th c	2	4	2	9	4	12	6
18th c	4	0	5	8	6	1	3
19th c	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total paper</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>

Table 15a: Category II.A.1.: Overall

Call number	titles/ names	repetition of words	Rubrics/ Chapter titles	Summaries/ comments	Verses	Hist./geogr. info	References
<i>Vellum</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GKS 2870 4to	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
AM 162 b fol. β	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. δ	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 468 4to	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. γ	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. θ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AM 132 fol.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 133 fol.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. κ	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. η	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ε	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
GKS 2868 4to	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
<b>Total 14th c</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
AM 162 b fol. α	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 2869 4to	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ι	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM 466 4to	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
AM 309 4to	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total 15th c</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
AM 921 4to I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lbs. fragm. 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JS fragm. 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 1003 fol.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total 17th c</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total vellum</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 15b: Category II.A.1.: Vellum

Call number	titles/ names	repetition of words	Rubrics/ Chapter titles	Summaries/ comments	Verses	Hist./geogr. info	References
<i>Paper</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AM 396 fol.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
AM 136 fol.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
AM 555 c 4to	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
AM 134 fol.	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
AM 470 4to	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
AM 137 fol.	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
AM 163 d fol.	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
AM 465 4to	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
AM 555 a 4to	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AM 163 i fol.	0	1	0	1	1	1	0
Stock. 9 fol.	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
BL Add 4867 fol.	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
AM 135 fol.	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
AM 464 4to	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Lbs 222 fol.	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
NKS 1220 fol.	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Lbs 3505 4to	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total 17th c	2	4	2	9	4	12	6
SAM 33	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
AM 469 4to	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
KBAdd 565 4to	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
IB 421 4to	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AM 467 4to	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
IB 261 4to	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Thott 1776 4to III	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Thott 984 fol. III	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thott 1765 4to	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Kall 612 4to	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
IB 322 4to	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
NKS 1788 4to	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Landakotsbók	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NKS 1219 fol.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AM Acc. 50	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Lbs 1415 4to	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
IB 270 4to	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Lbs 437 4to	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Total 18th c	4	0	5	8	6	1	3
19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total paper	6	4	8	17	10	13	9

Table 15c: Category II.A.1.: Paper



6.4.4.4. Category II.B.1.

<i>Vellum</i>	Marked verses				
	marginal mark	layout/script	underl.	two or more	N
14th c	5	0	0	0	1
15th c	1	0	0	0	0
17th c	1	0	0	0	0
Total vellum	7	0	0	0	1
<i>Paper</i>	Marked verses				
	marginal mark	layout/script	underl.	two or more	N
17th c	13	1	1	2	0
18th c	1	6	0	11	1
19th c	0	0	0	1	0
Total paper	14	7	1	14	1
Total	21	7	1	14	2

Table 16a: Category II.B.1.: Overall

Call number	Marked verses				
	marginal mark	layout/script	underl.	two or more	N
<i>Vellum</i>					
GKS 2870 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. β	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. δ	1	0	0	0	0
AM 468 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. γ	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. θ	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 132 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 133 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. κ	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. η	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. ε	0	0	0	0	n/a
GKS 2868 4to	0	0	0	0	1
Total 14th c	5	0	0	0	1
AM 162 b fol. α	0	0	0	0	n/a
GKS 2869 4to	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 162 b fol. ι	0	0	0	0	n/a
AM 466 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 309 4to	0	0	0	0	n/a
Total 15th c	1	0	0	0	0
AM 921 4to I	0	0	0	0	n/a
Lbs. fragm. 2	0	0	0	0	n/a
JS fragm. 4	0	0	0	0	n/a
GKS 1003 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
Total 17th c	1	0	0	0	0
Total vellum	7	0	0	0	1

Table 16b: Category II.B.1.: Vellum

Call number <i>Paper</i>	Marked verses				
	marginal mark	layout/script	underl.	two or more	N
AM 396 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 136 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 555 c 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 134 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 470 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 137 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 163 d fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 465 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 555 a 4to	1	0	0	0	0
AM 163 i fol.	1	0	0	0	0
Stock. 9 fol.	0	0	1	0	0
BL Add 4867 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
AM 135 fol.	0	1	0	0	0
AM 464 4to	1	0	0	0	0
Lbs 222 fol.	1	0	0	0	0
NKS 1220 fol.	0	0	0	1	0
Lbs 3505 4to	0	0	0	1	0
Total 17th c	13	1	1	2	0
SAM 33	0	0	0	1	0
AM 469 4to	0	0	0	1	0
KBAdd 565 4to	0	1	0	0	0
IB 421 4to	0	1	0	0	0
AM 467 4to	0	1	0	0	0
IB 261 4to	0	0	0	0	1
Thott 1776 4to III	0	0	0	1	0
Thott 984 fol. III	0	1	0	0	0
Thott 1765 4to	1	0	0	0	0
Kall 612 4to	0	1	0	0	0
IB 322 4to	0	0	0	1	0
NKS 1788 4to	0	0	0	1	0
Landakotsbók	0	1	0	0	0
NKS 1219 fol.	0	0	0	1	0
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0	0	0	1	0
AM Acc. 50	0	0	0	1	0
Lbs 1415 4to	0	0	0	1	0
IB 270 4to	0	0	0	1	0
Lbs 437 4to	0	0	0	1	0
Total 18th c	1	6	0	11	1
19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)	0	0	0	1	0
Total paper	14	7	1	14	1

Table 16c: Category II.B.1.: Paper

6.4.4.5. Category II.B.2.

<i>Vellum</i>	manicule	NB	marked	script change	Málsháttur
14th c	1	3	3	0	0
15th c	1	1	1	0	0
17th c	0	0	1	1	0
Total vellum	2	4	5	1	0
<i>Paper</i>	manicule	NB	marked	script change	Málsháttur
17th c	2	14	14	6	2
18th c	1	6	10	12	0
19th c	0	0	1	1	0
Total paper	3	20	25	19	2
Total	5	24	30	20	2

Table 17a: Category II.B.2.: Overall

Call number	manicule	NB	marked	script change	Málsháttur
<i>Vellum</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GKS 2870 4to	1	0	1	0	0
AM 162 b fol. β	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. δ	0	0	0	0	0
AM 468 4to	0	1	1	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ζ	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. γ	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. θ	0	0	0	0	0
AM 132 fol.	0	1	0	0	0
AM 133 fol.	0	1	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. κ	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. η	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ε	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 2868 4to	0	0	1	0	0
Total 14th c	1	3	3	0	0
AM 162 b fol. α	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 2869 4to	0	0	0	0	0
AM 162 b fol. ι	0	0	0	0	0
AM 466 4to	0	1	1	0	0
AM 309 4to	1	0	0	0	0
Total 15th c	1	1	1	0	0
AM 921 4to I	0	0	0	0	0
Lbs. fragm. 2	0	0	0	0	0
JS fragm. 4	0	0	0	0	0
GKS 1003 fol.	0	0	1	1	0
Total 17th c	0	0	1	1	0
Total vellum	2	4	5	1	0

Table 17b: Category II.B.2.: Vellum

Call number <i>Paper</i>	manicule Y	NB Y	marked Y	script change Y	Málsháttur Y
AM 396 fol.	0	1	1	1	0
AM 136 fol.	1	1	0	1	0
AM 555 c 4to	0	1	1	0	1
AM 134 fol.	0	1	1	0	0
AM 470 4to	1	1	1	0	0
AM 137 fol.	0	0	1	0	0
AM 163 d fol.	0	1	1	0	1
AM 465 4to	0	1	1	0	0
AM 555 a 4to	0	0	1	0	0
AM 163 i fol.	0	1	1	0	0
Stock. 9 fol.	0	1	1	0	0
BL Add 4867 fol.	0	1	1	1	0
AM 135 fol.	0	1	1	0	0
AM 464 4to	0	1	0	0	0
Lbs 222 fol.	0	1	1	1	0
NKS 1220 fol.	0	0	0	1	0
Lbs 3505 4to	0	1	1	1	0
Total 17th c	2	14	14	6	2
SAM 33	0	0	0	0	0
AM 469 4to	0	1	1	1	0
KBAdd 565 4to	0	0	0	0	0
IB 421 4to	0	0	1	0	0
AM 467 4to	0	1	0	0	0
IB 261 4to	0	1	1	0	0
Thott 1776 4to III	0	0	1	1	0
Thott 984 fol. III	0	0	0	0	0
Thott 1765 4to	0	1	1	1	0
Kall 612 4to	0	0	0	1	0
IB 322 4to	0	0	1	1	0
NKS 1788 4to	1	1	0	1	0
Landakotsbók	0	0	0	0	0
NKS 1219 fol.	0	0	0	1	0
Hdr. Jóns Samsonars.	0	1	1	1	0
AM Acc. 50	0	0	1	1	0
Lbs 1415 4to	0	0	1	1	0
IB 270 4to	0	0	0	1	0
Lbs 437 4to	0	0	1	1	0
Total 18th c	1	6	10	12	0
19th c (Lbs 747 fol.)	0	0	1	1	0
Total paper	3	20	25	19	2

Table 17c: Category II.B.2.: Paper

## 7. Summary and Possibilities for Future Research

The ideas of New Philology and other developments in textual criticism and manuscript studies allow scholars to see individual manuscripts as products of their time and social surroundings and thus appreciate and study their textual and material variance. While the search for the original text has its merits, the study of changes and the reasons behind them in later copies is equally valuable. Texts and manuscripts should, ideally, be studied as a unit, which means that differences in the physical makeup of manuscripts and the reasons for them should be analyzed as well. While most participants in “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” project have focused on the textual variance within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, this dissertation examines the material variance. The current study demonstrates how the study of codicological and paratextual features allows for the reconstruction of the history of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts, their intended purpose, as well as the reading interests of their scribes and readers.

The analysis of the codicological setup (size, layout, text density) of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries shows certain trends and changes in manuscript production over time as well as with regard to the purpose of the manuscripts in question (see Chapters 4 and 5). Some of the vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* are clearly highly prestigious codices, intended as symbols of status. These are mainly codices written during the fourteenth century, the heyday of medieval Icelandic manuscript production. Moreover, most of the prestigious codices are written in two columns, although *Kálfalækjarbók*, which is of equally high rank, is written in long lines. Two post-medieval vellum manuscripts can also be categorized as prestigious objects, based not only on their size and codicological setup, but also on the fact that they were written on vellum during a time when paper had become the norm. In contrast to the prestigious codices, other vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (14th-15th c) are smaller and plain in appearance. These were likely designed as more portable copies, possibly for personal use. It is also evident that the size and quality of manuscripts declined from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century.

Most of the above mentioned observations are not unique to the corpus of *Njáls saga*

manuscripts, but follow general trends. In some codicological categories, however, *Njáls saga* manuscripts appear to diverge from the norm. Compared to other Icelandic manuscripts (see Már Jónsson 2003), the medieval vellum manuscripts of *Njáls saga* (one and two columns) were on average larger. This indicates that these codices held a high status. At the same time, however, the scribes of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts use more of the available space on each leaf (higher WB%) compared to other medieval Icelandic manuscripts. The larger size and higher WB% may, therefore, be dependent on the length of the saga. Due to the high costs of vellum production, scribes may have felt the need to write *Njáls saga*, the longest of the Icelandic Family Sagas, on as little space as possible. Some of the most prestigious codices, however, are large in size, yet written with comparably small writing blocks, ensuring an overall generous layout. These are in particular: *Möðruvallabók*, *Kálfalækjarbók*, and AM 162 b fol. ε.

A difference in the codicological setup and the degree to which manuscripts are decorated can also be observed among the paper manuscripts, resulting in the establishment of five categories of post-medieval codices: scholarly copies, private-scholarly hybrids, decorative reading manuscripts, moderate reading manuscripts, and plain reading manuscripts. Similar categories were also established in other studies of Icelandic manuscripts (such as Lansing 2011 and Hufnagel 2012).

Codicological features in the post-medieval paper manuscripts show not only changes over time but also the intended purpose of the manuscript (e.g., scholarly vs. private). Manuscripts dating to the seventeenth century are overall larger and narrower, while the eighteenth-century codices are smaller and wider. Commissioned manuscripts, such as scholarly manuscripts, decorative reading manuscripts, and some moderate reading manuscripts, are more generously and homogeneously designed.

Decorative post-medieval manuscripts exist both on vellum and paper. In this case it is evident that the scribes writing on paper designed their manuscripts more generously, whereas the scribes writing on vellum had to preserve space, likely to keep production costs for the expensive vellum low. These post-medieval vellum manuscripts, therefore achieve their prestigious status primarily through the use of an unusual material rather than an exceedingly

generous layout.

Manuscripts intended for personal use by the scribe, particularly as pure reading copies, are sometimes designed less carefully. It can be observed, for example, that some scribes increase the size of the writing block or number of lines, particularly toward the end of the codex. This may be a sign that the scribe was running out of material and had to preserve space by writing more text on each page. These variations within a single manuscript were more evident in manuscripts likely written for personal use (both on vellum and paper). Personal copies are occasionally also more highly abbreviated, since the scribes themselves did not lose comprehension of the text by abbreviating it more heavily for personal use.

The physical appearance of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts (codicology) is, as shown, closely connected to the intended purpose of the codices in question. Combining a codicological analysis with other aspects of manuscript studies, makes it possible to gain an even deeper understanding of the manuscripts and their individual purposes. The manuscripts *The Lost Codex*, *Landakotsbók*, and AM 396 fol. illustrate – as case studies – how codicology, paratextual features, and manuscript context (the various texts preserved together in one codex) can be used not only to establish the history of a manuscript, but also to throw light on its purpose and readership, particularly as it relates to the political and intellectual trends during the time it was put together (see Chapters 6.2. and 6.3.).

The large number of *Njáls saga* manuscripts makes it necessary to restrict such detailed analyses to a small number of codices. Nonetheless, a general description and interpretation of paratextual features sheds light on the usage, readership, and reception of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts (see Chapter 6.4.).

Two major categories of paratextual features have been established for the purpose of this dissertation: features unrelated to *Njáls saga* (Category I), and features related to the text (Category II). The more general analysis of paratextual features within the corpus of *Njáls saga* manuscripts reveals that medieval vellum codices contain more signs of use (i.e., paratextual features unrelated to the text = Category I), but comparably few paratextual features showing

interaction between reader and text (Category II). Features related to the text in medieval codices most commonly stem from post-medieval users. This is unsurprising, since the interaction between scribe/reader and text (reading with pen in hand) is a post-medieval phenomenon.

In the paper manuscripts, features unrelated to the text are more common among the moderate and plain reading manuscripts, whereas scholarly manuscripts, private-scholarly hybrids, and decorative reading manuscripts lack paratextual features from Category I, suggesting that they were treated more carefully and/or used by fewer readers.

While paratextual features related to the text (Category II) can on occasion be pen trials, they more often convey a definite interaction between the users of the manuscripts (i.e., either scribe and/or reader) and the saga. The scribes and readers will comment on the text, attempt to organize it, clarify it, understand it, or even correct it. Some verbal paratextual features allow for an interpretation of the educational and literary background of a scribe or reader, particularly in cases where the reader makes specific reference to his sources in a comment. Verbal commentary and highlighted passages (which do not necessarily reveal whether the reader has a positive or negative reaction to the text) can be used to detect certain general interests, such as in geography, clothing and weapons, law procedures, proverbs, and idioms or certain significant passages within the saga. While neutral summaries of text passages (such as rubrics, chapter titles, and marginal sign posts) are most common, many positive and negative comments are also visible, demonstrating which characters and passages of the saga particularly engaged or enraged the reader.

It can also be observed that paratextual features from Category II in the paper manuscripts differ among various types of manuscripts (scholarly, private-scholarly hybrid, private) and manuscripts from different time periods. Private reading manuscripts, particularly some moderate copies, are more likely to contain commentary on the text, whereas manuscripts intended for a more scholarly audience (especially private-scholarly hybrids) preserve more historical information and variant readings. Plain reading manuscripts, in contrast, contain mainly summaries of text passages or chapter titles, which both serve a similar purpose. Decorative



reading manuscripts and scholarly manuscripts generally show few paratextual features. The analysis of paratextual features also suggests that the scribes and users of scholarly manuscripts and private-scholarly hybrids had more of an interest in exact manuscript transmission than those of the private reading manuscripts, who seem more focused on the text itself.

Non-verbal paratextual features also differ among manuscripts from different time periods and among different types of manuscripts. Scholarly manuscripts from the seventeenth century are marked more extensively than those from the eighteenth century. Decorative reading manuscripts lack non-verbal features for the most part, with the exception of passages being written in a different script by the scribe. The moderate reading manuscripts show the highest frequency of non-verbal paratextual features. While some plain reading manuscripts contain changes in script as well as marked passages by later users, these features are less extensive than in the moderate reading manuscripts.

Generally, it can be observed that the moderate reading manuscripts, followed by the plain reading manuscripts, contain the most paratextual features from Category II. Moreover, the private-scholarly hybrids exhibit greater evidence of the detailed study of the saga and its transmission than the scholarly manuscripts.

This dissertation offers a detailed first look at the codicology of Iceland's most famous saga and its readership and reception. Nonetheless, *Njáls saga* and the manuscripts that preserve it offer a plethora of possible future research topics. As the following overview illustrates, research projects related to the codicology, textual transmission, and readership and reception of *Njáls saga* are feasible.

Even though descriptions of most of the *Njáls saga* manuscripts exist in catalogues and online databases (such as *Handrit.is*), the compilation of more detailed descriptions of manuscripts, whose codicology has not been discussed in these sources (such as *Handrit úr safni Jón Samsonarsonar*, *Landakotsbók*, *The Lost Codex*, AM Acc. 50, or Thott 1776 4to III), is desirable. Moreover, existing entries in *Handrit.is* should ideally be standardized, a task which the newly established research project "Gullskinna. Postmedieval transmission and reception of a lost

medieval parchment-codex” (see below for details) aims to complete.

The study of *Kálfalækjarbók* and *Skafinskinna* in this dissertation has shown that more research on the history of these two medieval codices is necessary. *Kálfalækjarbók* contains several names in its margins which may allow for a more precise reconstruction of the manuscript’s origin. With regard to *Skafinskinna*, it should be attempted to determine with certainty whether the codex is a palimpsest.

Since its conclusion, four researchers from “The Variance of *Njáls saga*” project, namely Ludger Zeevaert, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Margrét Eggertsdóttir, and Alaric Timothy Hall, have received additional funding from RANNÍS to continue their work on the *Njáls saga* manuscripts. Their project “Gullskinna. Postmedieval transmission and reception of a lost medieval parchment-codex” [henceforth referred to as *\*Gullskinna*-project] focuses on manuscripts preserving the so-called *\*Gullskinna* variant of the *Njáls saga* text. This textual branch has previously been neglected, since – though based on a (lost) medieval manuscript – it is preserved exclusively in post-medieval paper manuscripts. Since the *\*Gullskinna*-version of *Njáls saga* appears to be distinctly different from other versions of *Njáls saga*, further research on this textual branch is highly desirable. I, myself, intend to study how verses differ within the *\*Gullskinna*-branch, as well as compared to other branches of *Njáls saga*. Textual variations in the verses can aid with the stemmatological work of the *\*Gullskinna*-project. Secondly, I wish to study how differences in chapter divisions between the *\*Gullskinna*-branch and other branches impact the narrative.

Another project related to the *\*Gullskinna*-branch is the transcription and edition of two *Njáls saga* manuscripts, NKS 1220 fol. and Lbs 3505 4to. Both were written in 1698, likely for the Icelandic manuscript collector Magnús Jónsson at Vigur. A preliminary investigation of these two manuscripts has shown that the text is highly innovative. It is related to the *\*Gullskinna*-branch, but likely conflated with other texts, possibly reorganized and abbreviated. The aim is to establish the extent to which the story line of *Njáls saga* was changed (chapter divisions, verses, re-organization or abbreviation of the text) and to discuss possible reasons behind the changes.

More research on the relationship between manuscripts and their presumed exemplar is another desirable project, to establish, for example, to what extent scribes copied abbreviations of their exemplar. In this regard a comparison of *Oddabók* and its possible copies (most notably AM 396 fol.), as well as *Kálfalakjarbók* and Jón Halldórsson's copy, AM 464 4to, could be used as case studies.

Considering the relatively early date of the first printed edition of the saga (1772), it is interesting that seemingly only two *Njáls saga* manuscripts, Lbs 437 fol. and Lbs 747 fol., show an interaction between print and script culture. More research in that regard would be desirable.

Regarding the history of readership and reception of *Njáls saga*, a more detailed analysis of the manuscript context, that is the various texts preserved in the same codex with *Njáls saga* in the medieval and post-medieval manuscripts would be another project, although Lethbridge (2014) has already taken a first step in that direction.

Moreover, in my analysis of paratextual features, particularly underlined and highlighted passages as well as highlighted proverbs and idioms, I was able to merely scratch the surface and detect very general interests by scribes and readers. The sheer volume of paratextual features did not allow for a more detailed study. Accordingly, I plan to revisit a small selection of *Njáls saga* manuscripts, which show extensive highlighted passages, and study these codices in more detail to offer an in-depth analysis of the reading interests of these manuscripts.

*Njáls saga* is undoubtedly one of Iceland's most famous sagas. It has enjoyed and continues to enjoy great popularity. It survives in an unusually large number of medieval codices, greater number of post-medieval manuscripts, and an even greater number of early-modern and modern editions, adaptations, and translations. While the importance of *Njáls saga* as a piece of literature practically mandates a thorough investigation of its textual development from medieval to post-medieval to modern times, this task is too extensive to be accomplished by a single scholar. Collaborative research projects, such as "The Variance of *Njáls saga*" and its successor "Gullskinna. Postmedieval transmission and reception of a lost medieval parchment-codex," offer the necessary platforms for scholars to collaborate and achieve this ambitious goal as a team. This

dissertation, which focuses on how *Njáls saga* was written, read, and utilized through the analysis of codicological and paratextual features, is only one piece in the puzzle, but it brings us closer to a comprehensive understanding of *Njáls saga*, its transmission, history, and readership.

## 8. Bibliography

### Manuscripts

*Note: Manuscripts are listed under the collections where they are housed. Collections have been organized in alphabetical order by city. Multiple collections in the same city have been alphabetized. Manuscripts within the collections are listed in alphabetical order, but manuscripts of larger size (folio) precede those of smaller sizes (4to, 8vo).*

#### *Den arnamagnæanske håndskriftsamling, Copenhagen*

AM 202 g fol.  
 AM 226 fol.  
 AM 282 4to  
 AM 309 4to  
 AM 468 4to  
 AM 555 b 4to  
 AM 666 b 4to  
 AM 779 c IV 4to  
 AM Acc. 50.

#### *Det kongelige bibliotek, Copenhagen*

GKS 1021 fol.  
 GKS 2868 4to  
 GKS 2869 4to  
 Kall 611 4to  
 Kall 612 4to  
 NKS 40 fol.  
 NKS 1144 fol.  
 NKS 1219 fol.  
 NKS 1220 fol.  
 NKS 1221 fol.  
 NKS 1689 4to  
 NKS 1788 4to  
 Thott 984 fol. I-III  
 Thott 1765 4to  
 Thott 1776 4to  
 Thott 1776 4to III

#### *The British Library, London*

BL Add 4867 fol.

#### *Nationalbiblioteket, Oslo*

NB 313 4to (formerly UB 313 4to)  
 NB 372 4to (formerly UB 372 4to)

#### *Handritasafn Landsbókasafns Íslands, Reykjavík*

ÍB 261 4to

ÍB 270 4to  
 ÍB 299 4to  
 ÍB 322 4to  
 ÍB 421 4to  
 ÍBR 78 4to  
 JS fragm. 4  
 Lbs 222 fol.  
 Lbs 356 fol.  
 Lbs 747 fol.  
 Lbs 748 fol.  
 Lbs 437 4to  
 Lbs 781 4to  
 Lbs 1415 4to  
 Lbs 3505 4to  
 Lbs fragm. 2

*Landakotskirkja, Reykjavík*  
 Handrit í eigu Landakotskirkju (*Landakotsbók*)

*Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Reykjavík*

AM 110 fol.  
 AM 113 a fol.  
 AM 122 b fol.  
 AM 125 fol.  
 AM 126 fol.  
 AM 128 fol.  
 AM 132 fol.  
 AM 133 fol.  
 AM 134 fol.  
 AM 135 fol.  
 AM 136 fol.  
 AM 137 fol.  
 AM 138 fol.  
 AM 143 fol.  
 AM 148 fol.  
 AM 157 h fol.  
 AM 160 fol.  
 AM 162 b fol. α  
 AM 162 b fol. β  
 AM 162 b fol. γ  
 AM 162 b fol. δ  
 AM 162 b fol. ε  
 AM 162 b fol. ζ  
 AM 162 b fol. η  
 AM 162 b fol. θ  
 AM 162 b fol. ι

AM 162 b fol.  $\kappa$   
 AM 163 a fol.  
 AM 163 b fol.  
 AM 163 c fol.  
 AM 163 d fol.  
 AM 163 i fol.  
 AM 165 f I fol.  
 AM 165 m fol.  
 AM 182 fol.  
 AM 350 fol.  
 AM 396 fol.  
 AM 426 fol.  
 AM 445 c I 4to  
 AM 464 4to  
 AM 465 4to  
 AM 466 4to  
 AM 467 4to  
 AM 469 4to  
 AM 470 4to  
 AM 555 a 4to  
 AM 555 c 4to  
 AM 575 b 4to  
 AM 576 a 4to  
 AM 614 a 4to  
 AM 614 b 4to  
 AM 614 c 4to  
 AM 614 d 4to  
 AM 614 e 4to  
 AM 614 f 4to  
 AM 921 4to I  
 AM 136 a 8vo  
 AM 143 8vo  
 AM 270 8vo  
 GKS 1002 fol.  
 GKS 1003 fol.  
 GKS 1005 fol.  
 GKS 2870 4to  
 Handrit úr safni Jóns Samsonarsonar (*The Younger Flateyjarbók*)  
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 SÁM 2,  
 SÁM 33  
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