



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

Hugvísindasvið

Hungrvaka

Translation by Camilla Basset

Ritgerð til MA-prófs

Camilla Basset

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Hungrvaka

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Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to Roger Basset.

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Introduction

Hungrvaka is a history of Skálholt, the site of Iceland's first Ecclesiastical see, and pays particular attention to the first five bishops to reside there. The history covers the period from the origin of the Icelandic church until 1178. Like a number of other Icelandic texts which predate it, *Hungrvaka* is written in the vernacular. And in terms of content and style it follows the examples set by various texts, in both Latin and the vernacular, from the Middle Ages. It begins with a brief genealogy to show the origin of the occupancy of the land at Skálholt, from before it became established as church land. Henceforth, the life stories of the Icelandic bishops to have resided at Skálholt, from Ísleifr to Klængur, are presented chronologically, along with the history of the establishment of the see at Skálholt and its development. The bishops' life stories are added to with details of other notable figures such as foreign bishops visiting Iceland and the bishops of Iceland's second see at Hólar. The concluding paragraph of each bishop's life story is a list in annalistic form of notable persons who have lived and died and notable events to have happened during the lifetime of the respective bishop; persons and events from further afield than Iceland, both lay (kings and emperors) and ecclesiastical (Popes and foreign bishops). While the text's main focus then is on the Icelandic see of Skálholt and the detailed history of its bishops, the mention of other persons and events helps to contextualise the Icelandic details within a wider European framework, with the mention of foreign bishops contextualising the work within a religious content, the annalistic sections at the end of each bishop's story contextualising the work within a wider, both secular and ecclesiastical, context.

Hungrvaka is only preserved in post medieval copies, the oldest of which are from the 17th century. Information about the manuscripts may be found in Ásdís Egilsdóttir's introduction to *Biskupa sögur II*, ÍF XVI (2002), to paraphrase: The oldest manuscript is AM 110 8vo (D), written by the Reverend Jón Egilsson in 1601, probably in Skálholt, but *Hungrvaka* exists only as an abstract (written as a continuation of the overview of Jón of Skálholt's annal). The manuscripts otherwise divide into two groups, B and C. In the B-group, the most important are AM 380 4to from 1641 (B1) and AM 379 4to (B2) from 1654 (a skin manuscript in spite of its young age). Both of these manuscripts may be traced to a lost copy. Of the C-group, three manuscripts are most important: AM 205

fol. (C1), written by Jón Gizurarson (d. 1648), [VII] AM 375 4to (C2), written around 1650 and AM 378 4to (C3) written by Ketill Jörundsson (d. 1670). The manuscripts in C-group are also traced to a common copy. There may be a common exemplar of all extant *Hungrvaka* manuscripts but this is, ‘fremur ungt og mjög afbakað’ (‘rather young and much distorted’).¹

The introduction is indebted to the various scholarship already produced on the subject of *Hungrvaka*, most notably by Ásdís Egilsdóttir (2002), Hans Bekker-Nielsen (1972), Pernille Hermann (2004) et al. Yet relatively speaking, *Hungrvaka* has been relatively overlooked in medieval Icelandic literary scholarship. It has been suggested that one of the reasons for *Hungrvaka* being overlooked in the past may be because of the fact that its only extant manuscripts are post medieval. And yet it is illogical to neglect *Hungrvaka* for this reason because the same is true of *Íslendingabók*; all of its extant manuscripts are also post medieval.² In fact, one could even make a counter argument in favour of giving more credit to texts preserved in post medieval manuscripts; that whether or not there are extant medieval manuscripts is almost irrelevant to a text’s worth, what matters most is the fact that it has been *copied*.

‘If a text was good enough (and here I mean interesting or valuable enough to the audience) to stand the test, the obvious result would be that it was copied and imitated again and again. If on the other hand it was found boring, so that there was no basis for a ‘rerun,’ it is likely that it has disappeared without a trace.

It follows from this line of argument that we should treat all the literature that has survived from medieval Iceland with due respect as representative of the literary taste, and not try to classify it into first, second and third rate literature according to our own standards.’³

By this line of argument therefore, there is no reason why *Hungrvaka* could not be given as much attention as has been paid to the afore-mentioned *Íslendingabók* for example. This investigation will therefore begin by looking at what *Hungrvaka* offers its readers which makes it so special, and so worthy of more attention in the future. In

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:vi; my translation. See also Bernhard Kahle 1904.

² Cf. Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97.

³ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:95-96.

the process, we shall see how *Hungrvaka* compares and contrasts with other texts, both in Latin and in the vernacular. (As a result it will soon become clear that the theme of *Hungrvaka* having been overlooked in scholarship until fairly recently will crop up again and again.)

Part 1: A detailed look at the *Hungrvaka* text: structure, content, syntax and stylistic features

Hungrvaka opens with a prologue to the main history of Skálholt; this prologue takes up the whole of Chapter I.¹ We see here that the first point of interest, to the author as well as to us, is the title itself. The opening sentence of the prologue then, introduces the title of the text and the reasoning behind it.

‘Bækling þenna kalla ek Hungrvöku, af því at svá mun mörgum mönnum ófróðum ok þó óvitrum gefit vera, þeim er hann hafa yfir farit, at miklu myndu gørr vilja vita upprás ok ævi þeira merkismanna er hér verðr fátt frá sagt á þessi skrá.’

‘I call this little book *Hungrvaka* because many men, unlearned and unwise as well, will be so disposed towards that which it has checked that they would wish to know more fully of the origin and lifetime of those remarkable men who shall briefly be recounted here in this written work.’²

The author does not directly explain the meaning of the word *Hungrvaka* but, as shown above, he gives the reasons behind the choice of title and leaves it to the reader to make the connection between the reasoning and the word itself. The title *Hungrvaka*, or ‘Hunger-waking,’ thus implies it will awaken one’s hunger for knowledge, and what is more, not only the cleric’s thirst for information but the lay person’s as well (‘unlearned’ and ‘unwise’). This also becomes clear when we think back to the fact, previously mentioned, that the author chose to write his history in the vernacular rather than Latin - hence the language of the whole populace rather than the learned men of the

¹ The prologue only appears in full in the B- and C-groups of the manuscripts; only the end sentence is present in manuscript D; cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:vi, footnote 2.

² ÍF XVI 2002:3; *Hungrvaka* 2013:44.

church alone. The author's first objective of the text then is to entice the readers to learn the history contained therein, namely the history of Skálholt and the bishops of the Episcopal see thereof, which is linked to other key persons and events in Iceland and the wider European Christian context. But the author's second aim for the text is to encourage his readers to take up other texts written in their mother tongue, and he says so directly.

The author has begun the prologue with a statement in the first person: 'I call this little book [...]' Continuing into the rest of the prologue, the point of view is very personal, with the author still writing in the first person about his intentions for the work: 'I commit this to writing [...]', 'I shall endeavour [...]' This would suggest that the topic at hand is very close to the author's heart and that it means a great deal to him that his readers will come to respect the history of Skálholt and the important men of the see there. This is supported by the likely personal connection the author would have had with the area and the important people with connections there (more on this in *Part 2*). Once the text begins to focus on the main narrative of the bishops of Skálholt, the narration switches to a more common third person point of view.

Hungrvaka's main narrative, that is, excluding prologue and conclusion, adheres to a fixed format which Ásdís Egilsdóttir identifies as follows:

1. Ætt og uppruni biskups. (Family and origin of the bishop.)
2. Persónulýsing. (Personal description.)
3. Biskupskjör og vígslu. (Election to bishop and ordination.)
4. Heimkoma úr vígsluför. (Homecoming from the ordination-journey.)
5. Biskupstíð. Stjórn og daglegir hættir biskups, þáttur hans í að auðga og efla staðinn. (Episcopate. Governance and daily customs of the bishop, his part in enriching and strengthening the diocese.)
6. Dauði biskups. (Death of the bishop.)
7. Mikilsverðir atburðir í annálsformi. (Important events in annals-form.)¹

The story of each bishop adheres to this format unswervingly. What is more, each of these subsections relies heavily on its own set of key words and particular syntactic

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xx; my translation.

structure which feature in the story of each bishop. For example in the details concerning ordination, the fixed phrase *beðinn til utanferðar*, ‘bidden to undertake the (ordination) journey abroad,’ (slight variations accepting) consistently appears in the story of each bishop; as does a construction featuring the word *bref*, ‘brief’ or ‘letter’ along the lines of *[einhver] sendi [einhverjum] bref sitt*, ‘[the bishop, archbishop, etc] sent [to the Pope, Archbishop etc] his written deed.’ In spite of the fact that it could be taken for granted that the ordination journey of each bishop is structured and pans out in much the same way as his predecessor’s, and thus the repeated mention of the *utanferð* and the sending of the formal *bref* is not necessary, convention appears to have dictated to the author that this repetition is not only expected but admirable, it does after all give a certain consistency to the text.

Apart from the syntax being very similar from the story of one bishop to the next, many of the bishop’s characteristics are also the same from one story to the next. These characteristics are really the stereotypical expected traits and behaviours for bishops to exhibit. One of these characteristics is humility; humility of course should be a characteristic trait throughout the bishop’s life and so begin from childhood and always continue after his election to bishop, as we surely see in the case of all bishops, for indeed, we see that not one of the bishops lets the position of power corrupt him. Perhaps the most outstanding demonstration of humility though is seen when the bishop balks at his own election to bishop; this is especially striking in the story of Bishop Gizurr that is presented, in which we are told he ‘refused in many ways’ to undertake the ordination journey, even after Priest Guthormr publically withdrew himself from the selection and after the bidding of the people that Gizurr accept the selection. Another striking characteristic is showing one’s devotion to God through suffering, including self-chastisement. Bishop Klængr is, out of all the bishops, perhaps the most chastising of the body, as it says in the text; firstly during his lifetime, ‘in terms of waking and fasting and apparel,¹ and walking barefoot by night in snow and frost, and secondly at the end of his life when he takes ill and his feet begin to open up from the walks in the cold. Bishops Gizurr and Magnús also show signs of suffering to show their devotion to God in their moments of death; Gizurr by refusing to have help sent for, which might

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:70.

otherwise make his passing easier to bear (not wanting to reject ‘God’s battle’¹ if this is the fate designated him), Magnús by choosing a frightful death in a house burning rather than trying to escape. The moment of death is clearly very important and the description of the moment of death of each bishop is lingered over and described in detail; the deaths of Gizurr and Magnús are especially lingered over, given the importance of their suffering at the same time, but the other bishops’ deaths also contain interesting details. Þorlákr’s peaceful passing for instance provides an interesting and less distressing contrast to Magnús’ shocking death.

The characteristics of the bishops of *Hungrvaka* mentioned above are among those characteristics identified by Ásdís Egilsdóttir as being traceable to the *helgisögur*, or ‘saints’ lives.’² The characteristics she mentions are not universally exhibited by the bishops however. In some instances the characteristics are simply not mentioned in the text in relation to one or more of the bishops, for example, there is no mention of any signs from God at the death of Bishop Ísleifr,³ although there are at the deaths of Gizurr, Þorlákr and Magnús: after Gizurr’s death it is said the land seemed to ‘droop’ and there were terrible disasters; at the moment of Þorlákr’s death the Cantilena of Bishop Lambert could be heard from the air (purportedly from Heaven); when Magnús’ body is recovered from the house fire in which he perished, his body is found to be almost unburned. Conversely though, on occasion the characteristics and behaviours of the *Hungrvaka* bishops sometimes completely contradict the expected characteristics of the saints’ lives texts. For example, in the case of Þorlákr’s election to bishop, though he demonstrates humility in his initial response to the proposal of him becoming bishop,

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:55.

² *Helgisögur* may also be interpreted simply as ‘hagiographies.’ The complete characteristics traceable to the saints’ lives texts are these: ‘Biskup er námfús, siðlátur og bænþakinn í barnsku og æsku. Hann færir undan biskupskjöri. Honum er fagnað við heimkomu úr vígsluför. Hann heldur sama lítillæti í biskupsdómnum sem hann hafði áður. Biskup er hófsamur og guðþakinn í daglegu lífi. Biskupinn hneigist til meinlæta og jafnvel þísla. Biskup býr sig og sína nánustu undir andlát sitt og lýsing á andlátssund er ítarleg. Merki verða við andlát biskups.’ (‘A bishop is eager to learn, moral and dedicated to prayer in childhood and youth. He balks at his own election to bishop. He is celebrated at the homecoming from his ordination-journey. He maintains the same humility in his bishop’s judgements as he had before. A bishop is frugal and godly in daily life. The bishop is inclined to chastisement and even suffering. A bishop prepares himself and his closest relatives for his death, and the description of the moment of death is thorough. There will be signs [from God] at the death of the bishop.’ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xvi; my translation.)

³ However, mention is made of the miraculous acts performed by Bishop Ísleifr, such as his blessing of small beer to remove the ‘poisonous element’ in it, making it safe for consumption (*Hungrvaka* 2013:48). These miraculous acts may balance out the absence from the text of signs from God at Ísleifr’s death.

the common people and even Archbishop Qzurr are originally less than enthusiastic about the prospect of him becoming bishop; Þorlákr meanwhile is obliged to argue his own case and while there may be some humility expressed when he explains that he, ‘had concealed his faults more from men than from God,’¹ the fact that he has had to argue his own case is still a sign of his belief in his own suitability ahead of other men, and therefore perhaps not as great a sign of humility in the sense of Gizurr or Magnús and their balking at their elections to bishop. Another great contrast concerns the characteristic defined by Ásdís Egilsdóttir as, ‘biskup er hófsamur og guðrækinn í daglegu lífi,’ that is, ‘a bishop is frugal and godly in daily life.’² Klængr can certainly not be described as ‘frugal’ based on his expenditure during his episcopate:

‘Bishop Klængr invited all those men who had been at the church consecration to have their day-meal there, [...] yet it was done more out of munificence than complete foresight, [...].’

‘Bishop Klængr had the church [...] adorned with as much as he could procure until it was completely furnished.’³

Though Klængr’s expenditure is justified in the end as it having been ‘God’s will’ for the financial situation to ultimately turn out well, the author’s words still imply that Klængr’s free use of money would have been dangerously extravagant if it had not been for his ‘rescue’ with God’s help. In contrast, Bishop Þorlákr perhaps does fit the bill and his episcopacy could be described as frugal. However, it is also mentioned that the common people at the time actually considered his episcopacy ‘tight-fisted’ in terms of outlay of wealth. So even if Þorlákr fits the characteristic of frugality as exemplified by the saints’ lives, it is not necessarily viewed by all as a positive characteristic in this instance - Klængr’s extravagance, but his unquestionable generosity simultaneously, was perhaps more appreciated by the common people and therefore greater evidence of goodness of character in the circumstances.

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:58.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xvi; my translation.

³ *Hungrvaka* 2013:69-70.

Nevertheless, the appearance of many of the characteristics which stem from saints' lives texts indicates that *Hungrvaka* is closely linked with other medieval texts. As we shall see, this is only the first instance of displaying similarities with other texts.

Hungrvaka and its place among medieval literature

‘*Hungrvaka* er eitt af merkustu söguritum vorum. Höfundurinn hefir ekki stuðzt við neinar eldri ritheimildir, og er saga hans því algerlega sjálfstætt verk.’

‘*Hungrvaka* is one of our most remarkable written histories. The author has not relied on any older written sources, and his story is the core freelance work.’¹

Despite its youth in terms of extant manuscripts, the full historiography contained in *Hungrvaka* is not preserved anywhere else in (originally) medieval Icelandic writings, making the fact that this text has survived at all particularly important. Guðni Jónsson is entirely correct in his assessment of the remarkable nature of *Hungrvaka*. But his subsequent assertion that the author has composed the text himself entirely free of influence from earlier written sources is at odds with the vastness of the body of evidence to the contrary. Indeed, it can be seen very clearly that *Hungrvaka* is, ‘dependent on older models.’² The significance of this is that its derivative nature may thus have accounted for some lack of interest in the text compared with that shown to those texts from which it appears to have borrowed, been influenced or tried to emulate.

We saw above that *Hungrvaka* bears many similarities with the characteristics found frequently in saints' lives texts. It seems apparent, moreover, that *Hungrvaka* has a number of parallels in European saga writing, many of which happen to be in Latin.³ Of the literary works composed in Latin, the most important for comparison are the histories of the Episcopal sees, *gesta episcoporum*, that is, ‘Deeds of Bishops.’ The origin of these sagas may be traced to the *Liber pontificalis*, ‘Lists of Popes,’ which began to be assembled in the 9th century; from this foundation there began to be written other texts modelled on the ‘Lists of Popes,’ works about monasteries and Episcopal

¹ Guðni Jónsson 1981:xi.

² Bekker-Nielsen 1971:97.

³ Peter Foote 1977:40-43; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii, footnote 1.

sees, *gesta abbatum* or ‘Deeds of Abbots’ and the afore mentioned ‘Deeds of Bishops.’¹ The various ‘Deeds of Bishops’ and *Hungrvaka* are certainly not identical in form but there are basic characteristics which are the same, as Ásdís Egilsdóttir summarises: The simplest form of ‘Deeds of Bishops’ tells, in chronological order, of the bishops of the church in question and contains information about their episcopate, specifically on their powers of leadership. The ‘Deeds’ also tell chronologically of the buildings and additions to the see in terms of both moveable and non-moveable property; both increases in land apportioned to the church site and precious objects and artefacts.² One may continue to summarise as follows:

‘Í fyllra formi er ströng tímaröð skrárinnar rofin með ítarlegri frásögnum.’

‘Áhersla er lögð á tímatal og staðfræði. Greint er frá því hversu lengi hver biskup eða ábóti hafi ríkt og tími hans er tengdur við ríkisár annarra höfðingja, kirkjulegra jafnt sem veraldlegra, páfa, keisara eða konunga. Tímasetningin er rammi utan um aðrar frásagnir sem geta verið sagnfræðilegar, helgisögulegar eða staðfræðilegar. Mikilvægt þykir að setja biskupsstólnum tímatal frá upphafi.’

‘In fuller form, the strict chronological order of the writing is broken into detailed narratives.’

‘Emphasis is placed on the calendar and topography. It is reported how long each bishop or abbot has reigned, and his time is connected with the years of rule of other chiefs, ecclesiastical as well as secular; popes, emperors or kings. The dating is a framework for other narratives which can be historical, legendary or topographical. It seems important to set the calendar for the bishoprics from the beginning.’³

It is certainly true that *Hungrvaka* subscribes to all of the above mentioned characteristics, from the main foundation of chronological order to the secondary details. Setting the calendar is indeed important, hence the author’s efforts to prove the worthiness and holiness of the location of Skálholt from even before it was formally

¹ Duchesne 1886-1892; Sot 1981; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii, also footnote 4.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii.

³ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii; my translation.

fixed as the site of the first bishopric. The son, Gizurr inn hvíti, of the first settler of Skálholt (Teitr Ketilbjörnsson) is said to have brought Christianity to Iceland,¹ thus Skálholt has been connected with Christianity and holiness from almost the very first settlement. It is Gizurr's son Ísleifr who later becomes the first true bishop of the Episcopal see, thus it is shown how worthy he is for the role, being of such God-fearing descent. Ásdís Egilsdóttir comments further: the *Hungrvaka* text tells us that when Ísleifr was elected bishop he was then fifty years of age and Iceland had at the time not long been Christian, so the first bishop is as old as Christianity in the country.² In fact, it is so important to promote the idea of Skálholt's link with Christianity that the information in *Hungrvaka* is actually in direct contrast with the information contained in other texts concerning the establishment of the Episcopal see. *Hungrvaka* claims that it was Bishop Ísleifr who established the Episcopal see at Skálholt but according to *Íslendingabók*, until Gizurr had it laid down in law that the Episcopal see would always be at Skálholt it, 'had had no fixed location,'³ and this in fact seems to have been the case. *Hungrvaka* therefore seems to have got its information wrong concerning the establishment of the see; we may even surmise that this was a deliberate error on the part of the author to cultivate an extra holiness which in truth was not there, and so make his story, based on the idea that the holiness of the area and the line of bishops are as old as each other, that much neater and hence more attractive.

On the subject of the calendar however, it is worth noting that the calendar of *Hungrvaka* is peculiar because the birth of Christ is set seven years after the year given in the more common calendar of Abbot Dionysius.⁴ Dates in *Hungrvaka* are therefore calculated seven years lower than according to the Dionysius standard. The calendar used is variously called the Þingeyri calendar or Gerlandus' calendar: in the first instance, the same calendar is also used in *Þorláks saga*, *Jóns saga helga* (the older version), *Prestssaga Guðmundar góða* and *Sverris saga* which were written in the ways

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:46.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii; see also *Hungrvaka* 2013:46.

³ *Íslendingabók, Kristni saga* 2006: 12. See also ÍF XVI 2002:8; *Hungrvaka* 2013:47; ÍF I, 1968:22-23.

⁴ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxvi. Dionysius Exiguus was a 6th century monk who is credited with establishing the *Anno Domini* dating system, which is used in the Julian calendar and the subsequent Gregorian calendar (also 'Christian' or 'Western calendar') which is the most internationally recognised calendar still today; see also Declercq 2002.

of the monks of Þingeyri;¹ in the second instance, the calendar is named after the rímur specialist Gerlandus (alive in the 11th century) who argued that Christ had been born seven years later than Dionysius believed.²

We see that *Hungrvaka* obviously follows the ‘Deeds of Bishops’ models as concerns chronological order of the Skálholt bishops: Ísleifr, Gizurr, Þorlákr, Magnús and Klængr. It also follows the Latin models in featuring, in chronological order also, details of the reinforcements made to the Episcopal see, both in terms of land acquirements and building work and moveable chattels; from the efforts of Bishop Gizurr who had the church built ‘thirty fathoms in length’ and allotted to the church the land on which his mother had resided and which became available after her passing, to Bishop Magnús’ input which involved the expansion of the church, all the way up to the costly new building work overseen by Bishop Klængr. Likewise, details of the costly objects are mentioned, in chronological order, from Gizurr’s white chasuble made of costly stuff, to the tapestries adorning the church in the days of Magnús, up to and including Klængr’s gold chalice with gemstones, great breviaries and all other church adornments.

Finally it is also clear that *Hungrvaka* follows the style of Latin texts in its use of blocks of annalistic-style information, located at the end of the life story of each of the five bishops, and connecting the bishops in question to other noteworthy persons who have lived and died during each bishop’s lifetime.³ However, such annalistic information is also found at the end of the chapters on Bishops Ísleifr and Gizurr in *Íslendingabók*. One example of this can be seen in the annalistic block at the end of Bishop Gizurr’s story in each text:

¹ Guðni Jónsson 1981:xi; Sigurður Nordal 1933:1xiii-1xvii.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxvi.

³ Gabriel Turville-Petre has suggested however, that the annalistic details could have been added in later (1953:204); if this were so it could mean an attempt had been made in the saga’s handing down to contextualise and perhaps canonise it with the body of medieval literature in the same vein. See also Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:viii.

Íslendingabók:

‘Á því ári enu sama obiit Paschalis secundus páfi fyrr en Gizurr byskup ok Baldvini Jórsalakonungr ok Arnaldus patriarcha í Híerúsalem ok Philippus Svíakonungr, en síðarr it sama sumar Alexíus Grikkjakonungr [...].’

‘In the same year Pope Pascall II died before Bishop Gizurr, as did Baldwin king of Jerusalem and Arnulf patriarch in Jerusalem, and Philip king of the Swedes and later that same summer, Alexius king of the Greeks.’

Hungrvaka:

‘Á því ári er Gizurr byskup andaðisk þá andaðisk ok Paschalis páfi ok Baldvini Jórsalakonungr, Arnhallr pátriarchi í Jórsalaborg, Alexíus Grikkjakonungr, Philippus Frakkakonungr.’

‘In that year when Bishop Gizurr passed away, there died also Pope Paschal at that time; also Baldwin, king of Jerusalem; Arnhallr, patriarch of Jerusalem; Alexios, king of the Greeks; and Philip, king of the Franks.’¹

Note that there has not been any great effort made to alter the ordering of events and persons in these annalistic sections as they appear in *Hungrvaka*; clearly no perceived *need* to distinguish itself particularly from its source material. In some instances there is moreover not even any great effort made to greatly alter the wording of the information gathered from *Íslendingabók* to its appearance in *Hungrvaka*. This not only appears in the annalistic blocks but in the rest of the text:

Íslendingabók:

‘Þá seldu honum margir sonu sina til læringar ok létu vígja til presta. Þeir urðu síðan vígðir tveir til byskupa, Kollr, es vas í Vík austr, ok Jón at Hólum.’

‘Then many placed with him their sons for teaching, and had them ordained priests. Afterwards two of them were ordained bishop, Kollr who was east in Vík, and Jón at Hólar.’

¹ ÍF I 1968:25; *Íslendingabók, Kristni saga* 2006:13; ÍF XVI 2002:20; *Hungrvaka* 2013:56. In *Hungrvaka*, the text says ‘king of the *Franks*,’ to describe Philip (i.e. rather than ‘Swedes’). See also *Íslendingabók, Kristni saga* 2006:30, note 104.

Hungrvaka:

‘Margir menn seldu honum sonu sína til læringar, ok váru þeir síðan góðir kennimenn, en tveir urðu biskupar Kolr¹ í Vík austr í Nóregi ok Jón byskup at Hólum.’

‘Many men placed their sons with him for teaching, and after that they were good clerics, and two became bishops: Kolr in Vik, out east in Norway, and Bishop Jón at Hólar.’²

Íslendingabók also shows many signs of influence from Latin models; in short, chronological order of events, the reign or term of office of important men and the connecting of their time of leadership with other key persons and events, in much the same way as *Hungrvaka* has been structured. The difference between the two Icelandic texts is that the important men are for the most part secular heroes in *Íslendingabók*: settlers or lawspeakers or other notably wise men, although it in fact also features chapters on Bishops Ísleifr and Gizurr. Another difference is in the extra importance *Íslendingabók* shows to the fixing of the calendar, devoting a whole chapter to the task of explaining and elaborating upon this point.

This brings us back to the fact that *Hungrvaka* has not been paid as much attention overall in scholarship in comparison with *Íslendingabók* among other texts. In one way, this difference in level of interest can be explained as the result of content.

Íslendingabók contains the settlement, calendar, conversion as well as chapters on the first two bishops of Skálholt and the fixed establishment of the Episcopal see there; in contrast, *Hungrvaka*, which really only focuses on Skálholt and ecclesiastical men and matters (although there are details of figures of note from further afield than Iceland in the annalistic sections after the story of each bishop), focuses on a much narrower field of interest.

Hungrvaka therefore can be seen to be dependent on not only Latin models but on earlier writings in the vernacular.¹ In listing the numerous types or genres to be found in

¹ The name form *Kolr* is in *Hungrvaka*, *Kristni saga*, *Landnámabók H.* and *Haukdæla þáttur*, *Kollr* in *Íslendingabók* and *Landnámabók S.* It is uncertain which of the two name forms is right. Cf. Jakob Benediktsson, *ÍF. I*, 1968: 20, footnote 3.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:ix-x; my translation.

the early Icelandic corpus up to c.1220, Bekker-Nielsen has shown that *Hungrvaka* actually bears some resemblance to all of them:

‘[W]e find historical literature, epic literature with its own level of historicity such as hagiography and miracles, sermons that can also, to a certain extent, be classified as epic literature, the earliest examples of sagas of Icelanders, of bishops’ sagas, of so-called contemporary sagas, other types of literature of a perhaps less entertaining and more instructive character, and then onto the vast poetic literature.’²

Now the fact of *Hungrvaka* containing so many elements characteristic of different literary genres may have contributed to its having been relatively overlooked in scholarship, and yet the concept of distinct literary genres is a more modern invention whereby literary historians treat each genre separately, an invention with which Bekker-Nielsen claims scholars restrict themselves too much.³ It is not unlikely that this has been the case to date. Following on from this idea, it is then perhaps interesting to note that even when *Hungrvaka* does receive some much deserved attention in scholarship there is still some preoccupation with the issue of classification, for instance in Pernille

¹ Cf. Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97-98.

² Bekker-Nielsen 1972: 96-97. Bekker-Nielsen proceeds to succinctly list a number of interesting ways in which *Hungrvaka* resembles and/or borrows from other early medieval literature, both Latin and vernacular, from the more factual-based types of writing to the more fantastical types of saga and poetic material; only this time he also names specific texts. ‘The author imitates Ari and creates an ecclesiastical parallel to the secular history in *Íslendingabók*, and at the same time he tells the story of the spiritual family that had lived at Skálholt from the time of the first few bishops, Ísleifr and Gizurr, father and son – the family story again is reminiscent of the saga like the *Grænendinga saga* that has more than one hero. In its use of comparative, historical material it follows *Íslendingabók*, in the use of genealogies it follows the style set in *Landnámabók*. In the style and diction of *Hungrvaka* we find elements that are known from contemporary homilies (both in Latin and in the vernacular) such as an exquisite use of alliterations – this aspect reminds us also of possible ties with the native poetic diction. In its theme *Hungrvaka* follows the pattern set by hagiographic biographies by concentrating on saintly, or nearly saintly characters, and the author reveals his inspiration when at the end of his little book he compares St Þorlákr, *postuli Íslands*, with St Patrick, *postuli Írlands*. There are also affinities between *Hungrvaka* and early writings about the Norwegian kings, for instance when the author reminds the audience that Bishop Gizurr was regarded as both bishop and king of the country throughout his life: the author plays on the audience here to make them realize that in Iceland, the republic, there had been great men too, *merkismenn*. In the prologue the author shows himself as committed as the author of the first grammatical treatise to further education in Iceland when he exhorts young people to study *lög, eða sögur, eða mannfræði*, and in the very title of his book he demonstrates a taste for learned playfulness similar to the one in *Grýla*’ (Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97-98). Lars Lönroth has also commented on the similarity between *Hungrvaka* and two other texts, namely the bishop’s chronicle by Andreas Agnellus and the Ecclesiastical history of Orderic Vitalis on the abbots of St Evroul’s monastery (1969:86-87; see also Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xii, footnote 1).

³ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97.

Hermann's article (2004) which features some discussion as to the categorisation of *Hungrvaka* and whether it can truly be classed among the *biskupa sögur*. But Bekker-Nielsen points out that, 'all the early literature products in Old Norse were part of the same aspiration to instruct and entertain an audience which had no idea that its repertoire would be chopped up on the basis of form or content, or even worse, historicity.'¹ Debating the categorisation of *Hungrvaka* may still be interesting to some in and of itself, but Bekker-Nielsen's point means that it should not get in the way of whether or not, or how much it is studied in the first place. On the contrary, it is precisely because the text allies itself with so many genres of literature at one time or another that makes it so interesting.

'What I have tried to express here is that even a rather brief saga overlooked by many saga critics because it does not belong to any of the more popular categories may have been of importance for the education of the medieval Icelandic audience by showing it how rich a material could be found in Iceland.'²

Because *Hungrvaka* is therefore so derivative in part of many other texts in terms of style and diction especially, may have resulted in its being overlooked in scholarship. Nevertheless, there is a strong argument against holding *Hungrvaka* a grudge purely on account of its being partly derivative of various other texts. On the contrary, there is no hint on the part of the author that we as readers should consider it problematic that the text is derivative throughout. If we look again at the first chapter of *Hungrvaka*, the author states his aims for the work as being, 'to entice young men to acquaint themselves with our story, to possess and enjoy that which is written in Norse; law or stories or genealogies.'³ For the purposes of the author's aims therefore, it is helpful, even desired that his text should attempt to emulate, also replicate, the format, stylistic devices and the exact same content even (in places) of the various literature in the vernacular to which the author is attempting to direct his readers. By cultivating a sense of familiarity between the texts, the author is pushing the notion of *Hungrvaka* being as important a text as others in the same vein. Bekker-Nielsen's above-mentioned

¹ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97.

² Bekker-Nielsen 1972:98.

³ *Hungrvaka* 2013:44.

statement, on the importance of showing, ‘how rich a material could be found in Iceland,’ supports this, and one of the ways in which the reader is directed to said material is by the *Hungrvaka* author’s act of copying, borrowing and emulating, in order to breed familiarity between *Hungrvaka* and its fellow literary works. Familiarity means comfort - it is comforting to have as a reference point some information one already knows from elsewhere and so to understand where the author is coming from, and thus be able to relate to what, in addition, the author is saying - and therefore it is considered a distinct bonus, even if today some would mistakenly look down upon it as ‘too derivative,’ or close to ‘plagiarist.’¹ In order to show the variety of rich material to be found in Iceland therefore, *Hungrvaka* deliberately references the many kinds of material and should not be viewed negatively but positively. It is also important to note that in spite of being derivative of earlier texts in some sections, in other areas *Hungrvaka* also expands on its source material and/or alters it in others. For example, the episode in which the foreign bishops who have come to Iceland, during and around Ísleifr’s episcopate, is ordered differently from *Íslendingabók* to *Hungrvaka*; *Hungrvaka* also expands on the information about these figures and in some cases has rather different names for each bishop.²

Hungrvaka and syntax

So far we have really only focussed on the literary sources which have influenced the writing of *Hungrvaka*. Yet when we come to look at style in the text one soon realises that there has been more influence than simply written sources, namely that oral sources have also played a big part in the actual compositions of language. Pernille Hermann defines this state of existence as follows:

¹ It is also worth remembering that many readers of *Hungrvaka* nowadays will approach the text having already read (or at the very least, come across) the better known *Íslendingabók*, and perhaps also many other texts which have influenced *Hungrvaka* or from which *Hungrvaka* borrows, in which case *Hungrvaka* will certainly seem derivative. At the time of *Hungrvaka*’s writing, some of the author’s contemporaries may already have been familiar with the works in the vernacular, the same as many scholars/readers today, but for those people whom the author is particularly addressing when he states his aims as being to entice them to take up other works in the vernacular, *Hungrvaka* would possibly be their first introduction to the subject (in which case any issue of ‘derivativeness’ would not particularly come into question).

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:ix. Compare and contrast also the two accounts in *Íslendingabók*, *Kristni saga* 2006:10 and *Hungrvaka* 2013:50.

‘[Det] kan [...] siges, at traditionalitet signalerer, at en tekst refererer til en ikke-tekstlig kontekst, det vil sige en muntlig tradition, mens konventionalitet signalerer, at en tekst refererer til en tekstlig kontekst, det vil sige anden litteratur.’

‘*Hungrvaka* [er] et eksempel på, hvordan der kan medieres mellem mundtlig tradition og skriftlig fremstilling, og i den forbindelse vil begreberne traditionalitet og konventionalitet [...]’

‘[I]t can [...] be said that traditionality signals that a text references a non-textual context, that is to say, an oral tradition, while conventionality signals that a text references a textual context, that is to say, other literature.’

‘*Hungrvaka* [is] an example of how there can be mediation between oral tradition and written account, and in that connection, the concepts of traditionality and conventionality [...]’¹

If the elements of the text which *Hungrvaka* has borrowed from written sources represent conventionality and, therefore, a connection with European literary convention, then the elements which borrow from oral culture seem to suggest that the author of *Hungrvaka* still wishes to maintain some links with the language and culture of the lay people, so making the text not only accessible to the cleric but to the common man. The fact that the text is written in Norse rather than in Latin is the first sign of making the text accessible to all persons, lay and ecclesiastical. Following on from this, the author also uses certain turns of phrase to embellish his points, but turns of phrase which seem to have originated and been popular in spoken language rather than written language necessarily. The prologue especially contains perfect examples, one of which appears in the concluding paragraph of Chapter I; the author uses a proverb, *hús skal hjóna fá*, ‘the house needs a household.’² To modern ears the phrase seems a bit archaic - the proverb is not in common usage today at any rate - but even within the text it stands out as being slightly ‘at odds with’ the syntax used around it. Yet it represents a certain link with the past traditions and language of the lay people and perhaps adds a point of interest for the lay person to take note and listen.

¹ Hermann 2004:23; my translation.

² ÍF XVI 2002:5; *Hungrvaka* 2013:45.

Arguably the most interesting turn of phrase to appear in the prologue certainly (and one of the most interesting within the whole saga) is the passage which likens the author's written material to the act of making a horn spoon:

‘En mik varir at vitrum mǫnnum mun þykkja bæklingr þessi jafnlíkr sem hornspánar efni, af því at þat er ófímlegast meðan vangǫrt er, þó at allfagrt sé þá er tilgǫrt er. [...] En því hefi ek jafnat þessu til hornspánar at mér sýnisk forkunnar efni í vera, en ek veit at mjök þarf um at fegra, ok skal ek þaðan at um vera, meðan ek em til fœrr um at bæta.’

‘But I have a foreboding that to wise men this little book must seem very like “horn spoon” matter¹ because it is most awkward while it is underworked, although it may then be very beautiful when it is fully worked. [...] And therefore I may have likened this to a horn spoon which I think to be a remarkable matter, but I know that much is needed to make it finer, and I shall thence endeavour to improve it while I am capable of it.’²

The horn spoon metaphor is, like the ‘household’ proverb, a bit archaic perhaps, but nevertheless adds a different flavour to the text. (The use of this metaphor will be returned to and further discussed later.)

Hungrvaka and style

Perhaps the most notable observation when taking the style of the whole text into account is how it flits between the more indirect way of speech of these fairly archaic phrases or platitudes and metaphors, and passages of plainer language, which does itself alternate between simple and complex clauses. The more complex syntactic structure is frequently complex to begin with because of the use of so many subordinate clauses³ but often the complex also turns into the overcomplicated and downright confusing. One of the best examples of this particularly overcomplicated syntax occurs in the

¹ The word in Icelandic, *hornspánn*, literally means a spoon made of horn. The word connotes an image of commonness and hence the author is here excusing the work to his possible critics for whom the subject matter is already too commonplace to be deemed worthy.

² ÍF 2002:4-5; *Hungrvaka* 2013:44-45.

³ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xx-xxi.

introductory chapter, appropriately enough, directly following the ‘horn spoon’ metaphor, and proceeds as follows:

‘But those men who thus take a delight in this booklet may derive pleasure using it to entertain themselves with it and also those others who humbly wish to listen, rather than taking a risk on what else is available, that which heretofore seems dull, because many a man has experience of this, if he seeks brief amusement for himself, that there comes thereafter a long anxiety about it.’¹

On the other hand, many of the passages of text occurring either side of such constructions as the above example use far simpler and hence less confusing syntax, coming swiftly to the point with the various information, and this is particularly suitable for such sections of the text as the annalistic sections which conclude the life story of each bishop. And yet simplification of syntax to such an extent as found in this text can also have its downside, in that a number of such-worded passages come across as rather dry, for instance:

‘Gizurr was not in the same country when his father passed away and he came out to Iceland the summer after, during the althingi in Rangárós, but was aboard ship for some nights and did not wish to ride to the þing while there was no-one elected bishop at the þing.’

‘Bishop Magnús came out to Iceland during the alþingi and came to Eyjafjörður and rode to the þing, and came there when the men were at court, and had not come to terms over a certain matter. But then a man came to the court and said that Bishop Magnús rode to the þing.’²

Another noteworthy feature of the text is the appearance of direct speech, but only in the section of the text devoted to Gizurr. It is interesting too that direct speech does not

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:44.

² *Hungrvaka* 2013:52, 63. What is more, when the dry style is engaged in the act of telling events of an ordinarily serious, even tragic note, the extreme ‘matter-of-factness’ of the language can end up giving rise to some blackly comic moments, such as the report on Bishop Ketill of Hólar’s visit to Skálholt at Bishop Magnús’ invitation, and Ketill’s subsequent death: ‘[O]n Friday evening, both bishops went to the hot spring in Laugarás after the evening meal. But then there happened a great event of note. There Bishop Ketill died, and the men thought that a great event of note. It was felt as a great affliction by many people there at that feast until the Bishop was buried and he was laid to rest in peace. But by the persuasion of Bishop Magnús and that excellent drink which men had there to drink, the men then put it from their minds somewhat more quickly than they otherwise would have done’ (*Hungrvaka* 2013:64).

appear in *Íslendingabók*, meaning that the author has relied on some other source of information for this particular part of the work, perhaps word-of mouth or his human sources. Gizurr's two occasions of direct speech are reported as follows:

““One shall invoke God for one thing, that my discomfort, if it is invoked, may always increase while I am able to stand it, since there is no use in it” he says, “to reject God’s battle, when my life must nearly have come to an end, and much has gone prosperously before.””

““Bury me nowhere close to my father,” he said, “because I am not worthy to lie at rest near him.””¹

It has been suggested that, ‘[b]essi orð gefa til kynna hversu mikillar virðingar Gissur hefur notið’ (‘[t]hese direct references to the words of Gizurr highlight the respect which is shown to him’).² Yet if this is the case, what does it imply about the respect shown to the other bishops, whose words are not directly referenced? In general, the author of *Hungrvaka* stays true to the same format for the reporting of each bishop’s story, as stated above. No bishop is presented especially badly in the text, certainly never as having failed in their duties; the only noticeable descriptions of unfortunate situations for the bishops concern either their dealings with troublesome men of the community or issues with money, and ultimately all bishops emerge well from their respective trying situations. It cannot therefore be the case that the other bishops are intentionally presented as so significantly less well respected than Gizurr. Nevertheless, the inclusion of direct speech in the case of only one bishop out of the main five does give an odd feel, causing perhaps a slight imbalance to the otherwise strictly observed structure of the text.

Overall, what comes across therefore is a pronounced sense of clumsiness of style.³ Indeed, the author himself appears perfectly aware of this possible shortcoming of the work in likening his text to a horn spoon in the first place, and in so doing, ‘[hann

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:55.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxi; my translation.

³ In early discussions concerning the difficulties arising as a result of trying to remain faithful to the original Old Icelandic text but simultaneously produce a work which can reasonably be described as fluent modern English, it has been mentioned by Ásdís Egilsdóttir that this task would surely always be problematic considering that the author is, to quote, ‘One of the worst stylists in the history of the Icelandic language (!).’

afsakar] stíl sinn og lýsir því yfir að efniviðinn þurfi að fága' ('he excuses his style and declares that the material needs polishing').¹ However, this is not to say that the author is not without consciousness of style. The use of metaphor (no matter that it is a metaphor for plainness or being underworked) is a stylistic device in and of itself, and therefore evidence of an awareness of style on the part of the author. It also demonstrates awareness of and appropriation of style from other types of literature. Indeed, Sverrir Tómasson (1988) compares the *Hungrvaka* author's likening of the writing of his text to the carving of horn, with other similar stylistic devices present in other texts, including Geoffrey of Vinsauf's likening of making a literary work to making a house and Archbishop John's foreword for *Nicholaus saga* (translated by Bergur Sökkason).² Sverrir Tómasson's point is this, 'afstaða höfundarins gagnvart viðfangsefni sínu [kemur greinilega í ljós]: efniviðinn þarf að fága og slípa til þess að hann sé álitinn fagur' ('the author's position towards his subject clearly comes to light: the material needs polishing and smoothing for it to be considered beautiful');³ he also notes that while such analogies are widely observed in European medieval literature, they appeared much later and less frequently in the prefaces written by medieval Icelandic authors, which may be why he is so struck by the presence of the horn spoon metaphor in *Hungrvaka*:

‘Naumast kemur fagurfræði miðalda betur fram í íslenskum bókmenntum. Fegurðin er samheiti fullkomleikans. Í kristilegum ritum, allt fram á daga Tómasar Aquinas, eru fegurðin, sannleikurinn og gæskan talin af einu og sama bergi brotin. Sú lífsskoðun birtist þó lítt í formálum íslenskra höfunda.’

‘Hardly do aesthetics appear better in medieval Icelandic literature. Beauty is synonymous with perfection. In Christian writings, until the days of Thomas Aquinas, beauty, truth and goodness are regarded as ‘broken from one and the

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xx; my translation.

² Sverrir Tómasson 1988:149. In addition to Sverrir Tómasson's work on this topic, one may also wish to note that the horn spoon metaphor also appears in the English *Shepherd's Play* and *Shrewsbury Fragments*; also Pernille Hermann's article postulates the theory that rather than one should view the metaphor as a sign of humility, pointing to the fact that in other contexts the horn spoon is a trope for a humble gift as evidence of her claim. (Hermann 2004:6 and 38, endnote 7).

³ Sverrir Tómasson 1988:149-150; my translation.

same rock' [i.e. cut from the same cloth]. That philosophy appears, however, little in the prefaces of Icelandic authors.'¹

Hungrvaka is therefore all the more special for being one of the few texts to make such a direct reference to beauty. I would also add that the allusion to beautiful workmanship and craftsmanship is moreover not at all out of place in a text which will later make multiple references to the beautiful costly artefacts which the bishops of Skálholt procure or have made for their see. The author's cunningness should be respected therefore, in likening his own production of a worthy artefact (perhaps even beautiful, if a reader will be so good as to improve it further) to the bishops' previous worthy additions to the Episcopal see.

The author is certainly capable of moments of more ornamental style then, as shown in not only the prologue with its use of metaphor and proverb, also in the main body of text at times, 'þegar höfundur þarf að leggja sérstaka áherslu á mál sitt' ('when the author needs to place particular emphasis on his case').² One's first impression of the text's clumsiness of style may obscure the fact that there are nevertheless elements of attractive language present; Ásdís Egilsdóttir cites the use of analogies and alliteration; alliteration especially appears frequently such as in the telling of Ísleifr's difficulties with some of the local populace, 'ótrú ok óhlýðni' ('disbelief and disobedience'), 'vinsælir with vándamenn' ('popular with wretched men'),³ also in the descriptions of the bishops' characters and the section on the consecrations of Bjarnvarðr:⁴ 'kirkjur ok klukkur, brúar ok brunna, vøð ok vøtn, björg ok bjöllur' ('churches and chimes, bridges and wells, fords and rivers, boulders and bells'⁵). Bekker-Nielsen even goes so far as to refer to the 'exquisite use of alliterations.'⁶ It also points, therefore, to the probable

¹ Sverrir Tómasson 1988:150; my translation. See also Sverrir Tómasson 1988:166-72 for more on the idea that the medieval text is 'in need of improvement' while it may be possible (*Hungrvaka* being just one of many others which also make the same appeal to its readers).

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xx; my translation.

³ ÍF 2002:8-9; *Hungrvaka* 2013:47.

⁴ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xx.

⁵ Some of the alliterating pairs in the translation are the same as in *Stories of the bishops of Iceland* from 1895. Sadly it has proved all but impossible to replicate all of the alliteration in translation unless it were at the expense of sacrificing the accuracy of meaning. I have decided that for the purposes of mainly students of Old Icelandic language it will be most vital to maintain accuracy of meaning in translation as opposed to adherence to stylistic features. Disney Leith's translation of the *Hungrvaka* text in this book prioritises replication of alliteration in the list of Bjarnvarðr's consecrations, but some of the English words chosen to achieve this have altered the meaning of the original words quite substantially.

⁶ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:98; emphasis added.

influence of oral poetic tradition, that is, Eddic and Skaldic alliterative tradition, on the writing; further evidence of *Hungrvaka* being an amalgam of various textual genres. There is in fact a stanza, composed in skaldic metre, present in the text. *Hungrvaka* therefore already shows a similarity with, and a likelihood of having been influenced by, such medieval Icelandic texts as the early *konungasögur*, which include, at opportune moments, verses which are purportedly composed by skalds who were contemporaries of the people and events featured in the stories, in order to back up these saga authors' history of events.

To conclude this part of the discussion therefore, yes, the style is often clumsy but that is no reason to overlook the importance of *Hungrvaka* in the wider context of medieval Icelandic literature. Rather, Bekker-Nielsen views the text as, 'an important link in the development of literary taste in Iceland.'¹ What may seem at first to be a disjointed combination of rather archaic metaphor and complicated phrasing with more modern prose and simpler sentences is evidence that *Hungrvaka* is at a halfway point in literary development between Hermann's aforementioned traditional and the conventional; the archaic oral account and the modern literary account.

It helps to explain why then, the author subscribes to convention on the one hand (as in the case of the horn spoon metaphor or in the following of a more or less fixed formula for the content and layout of each bishop's story, from youth to death) yet he is also responsible for some ways of description which are radically different from anything seen in other histories of men of the church. I am thinking specifically of his personal descriptions of each bishop. The descriptions all adhere to the same format, in the same way as the author's description of the ordination journeys, episcopate, events in annalistic form and so on all follow the same format, with similar syntax and the same key words. The interesting part is *what* the key words and syntax are. The descriptions are as follows:

‘Ísleifr was a handsome man in appearance and popular with the common people and for his whole life righteous and upright, munificent and benevolent, but never wealthy.’

¹ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:97.

‘Gizurr was a man great in stature and a stout man, bright-eyed and rather open-eyed, lordly in demeanour and most benevolent of all men, stark in bodily strength and very wise. Gizurr was perfect in all those things which a man ought to have in his character.’

‘Þorlákr was an average-sized man, long-faced and with light chestnut hair, amiable, but not called a fine man to look at by the whole people, nor very striking in the estimation of most people by far.’

‘Magnús was a beautiful man to behold and rather a tall man in stature, with fine eyes and possessing shapely limbs, affable and handsome and most magnificent of all men in his whole appearance and fine manners.’

‘Klængr Þorsteinsson was a beautiful man in appearance and of middling height, lively and imposing in appearance and fully accomplished and a good writer and the greatest scholar.’¹

One would expect to see reference made to each man’s goodly qualities, piety, munificence etc, hence proving his worthiness as a representative of God on Earth, and these qualities are usually mentioned elsewhere in the text. What may not be expected is such distinct reference to each man’s bodily beauty and masculinity (or lack thereof in Þorlákr’s case) as shown by the passages above, which subscribe to a hetero-normative model of the ‘ideal’ man and/or manliness. *Hungrvaka*’s personal descriptions of bishops differ greatly from those found commonly in, for example, Adam of Bremen’s *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*. Literary convention at the time of *Hungrvaka*’s writing would have shown that, ‘heroes ought to be larger than life to be fascinating,’ and for this reason, according to Bekker-Nielsen, ‘a saint was more interesting than a non-saint, hence the early interest in St Olaf [...].’² *Hungrvaka*’s descriptions of the bishops thus satisfies the requirements of the saintly qualities being of especial fascination, hence the inclusion of some miracle-like events in the bishops’ life stories, such as the sounding of the Cantilena through the air to coincide with Bishop Þorlákr’s ‘ascent into heaven.’ But in addition to these ‘larger than life’ qualities which mark a hero of the church, the author of *Hungrvaka* also includes the qualities

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:46, 52, 58, 62, 67.

² Bekker-Nielsen 1972:96.

expected of a lay hero. The bishops' initial descriptions thus bear much resemblance to the impressions presented of the 'Gunnars' and 'Kjartans' of the later-composed *Íslendingasögur*; that is to say, the heroes come across as exceptional but for mortal reasons nonetheless, bodily beauty, physical strength or boldness in nature, but not notably possessing of the type of otherworldly powers expected of the saint. A common cliché we see in medieval literature about lay heroes then, is that physical beauty is indicative of heroicness of character; in the case of Þorlákr meanwhile, his relative lacking in physical attractiveness seems to be one of the 'signs' to the common people that he would be unsuitable for the honour of becoming bishop (until he is able to persuade them otherwise). The physical beauty indicating heroicness of character cliché bears true in many of the *Íslendingasögur* which obviously date after the writing of *Hungrvaka* in written form, however, the basic tales of their main heroes in oral storytelling predate the writing of *Hungrvaka* by many years, so it is possible that these basic tales were yet another influence upon the *Hungrvaka* author. But the cliché of heroicness of character being inextricably linked with physical attractiveness also applies significantly in the *konungasögur* (among other genres). Scholars such as Bekker-Nielsen have previously suggested that *Hungrvaka* may owe some debt to the early sagas of kings, evidenced particularly by the comparison between Norwegian kings and their Icelandic equivalent in Bishop Gizurr, saying him to have been both 'king and bishop' over the land during his episcopate.¹ Perhaps the physical descriptions of the bishops in *Hungrvaka* are further evidence therefore of its having been influenced by other types of medieval literature, in this instance the sagas of kings.²

Hungrvaka as hagiographical or ecclesiastical work?

In light of the above-mentioned associations with the wide variety of texts in the vernacular and Latin, and in light of the elements it has been shown to follow, it may be that *Hungrvaka* may not be best described as a *purely* hagiographic or ecclesiastical text, rather as a mixture of various texts. We saw above that the bishops of Skálholt

¹ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:98; *Hungrvaka* 2013:53.

² For more on the similarities between descriptions of bishops and kings in Norse writings see Ármann Jakobsson 1997:294-96 and 2000. On the descriptions of bishops found in medieval literature outside Iceland see Wilks 1963.

show many characteristics commonly seen in the saints' lives, and thus hagiographical, texts, even including an example of the working of miracles. The miracle performed by Bishop Ísleifr in which he blesses small beer and makes it fit for consumption is also, as noted by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, reminiscent of both the first of Christ's miracles (in which, at the wedding at Cava, he turns water into wine) and other stories of the healings of Christ. This act of making a connection between the holiness of the first bishop and the miracles of Christ is therefore a magnificent example of how *Hungrvaka* shows signs of hagiographical texts.¹ Certain scholars are dubious, however, about whether this is enough to classify *Hungrvaka* as a hagiographical text, which once again, may be a reason for its having been overlooked in comparison with various 'more easily classified' medieval writings. For example, Pernille Hermann states that, '*Hungrvaka* overtager elementer fra de hagiografiske bispesagaer, uagtet at *Hungrvaka* ikke er en rendyrket hagiografisk tekst' ('*Hungrvaka* acquires elements from the hagiographic bishop's sagas, notwithstanding that *Hungrvaka* is not a pure hagiographic text').² As concerns the 'elements' referred to, *Hungrvaka* does follow the pattern of hagiographic biographies, 'by concentrating on saintly, or nearly saintly characters,'³ and, 'visse af biskopperne sættes direkte i forbindelse med mirakler og jærtegn [...]; biskopperne ikke er identiske med helgener men [...] i beskrivelsen kan [de] få helgenkarakter' ('certain bishops are placed directly in connection with miracles and omens [...]; the bishops are not identical to saints, but [...] in the description they can still obtain saintly characters').⁴ But such an assessment fails to take into account the fact that the writers of hagiographical texts will often mention only some examples to demonstrate their focal characters' saintly characters and this is considered perfectly satisfactory. The author of *Hungrvaka* follows in the manner of these writers by also hinting that the few examples he gives are evidence enough of the bishops' characters - their *saintly* characters even. Moreover, *Hungrvaka* is a shorter text than many of the saints' lives, which must account for its more modest inclusion of those details which exemplify the character of a saint.⁵ Of course, among the many reasons why *Hungrvaka* does not strictly follow the format of a 'purely hagiographical text,' there is the issue of drawing

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xvi-xvii.

² Hermann 2004:30; my translation.

³ Bekker-Nielsen 1972:98.

⁴ Hermann 2004:30; my translation.

⁵ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xv-xvi.

attention to the bishops' masculinity as in a secular-minded text, which once and for all shows that *Hungrvaka* is indeed a masterpiece at exemplifying the 'between-genres' genre (if such a thing could be said to exist), but it appears to be enough to have given some commentators in the past, those who are/were perhaps overly preoccupied with ideas of classification and genre definitions, reason enough to overlook the text, even in comparison with (other) hagiographical texts in spite of the various similarities.

Ultimately the classification of the work as hagiographic or not is not crucial or particularly important even to one's study and/or enjoyment of the text (referring to Bekker-Nielsen's above-mentioned comments on modern ideas of genre and classification); furthermore, as suggested above, attempts to categorise *Hungrvaka* within a specific genre may have resulted in an unfortunate overlooking of the text, purely because it does not neatly fit into a rigidly-defined category. And yet, apart from perceived problems concerning classification there is the issue of 'intention.' *Part 1* covered some of the author's intentions regarding the text, such as encouraging the reading of texts in the vernacular, and most of all, to present the history of Skálholt and thus ensure that it is known for the future. But what reasons had the author personally in ensuring that the history of Skálholt, above all else, would not be forgotten or overlooked? Let us therefore look in more detail at what we know about the writer of the text and his keen personal interest in having this text made in *Part 2*.

Part 2: Author and intent

Relatively little is known about the author of *Hungrvaka*, for instance there is no conclusive proof anywhere of his name, only suggestions of his identity. What little we do 'know' is based on deductions made from the text itself. In *Part 1*, we saw to some extent how the work relates to other medieval texts of around the same period, and how the vernacular text of *Hungrvaka* would have played a role in encouraging men to take up more texts written in the same vein. Yet what is clear is that the most important reason for writing this particular story (as the author could theoretically have written on any other topic if his aim was only to encourage reading of Norse texts) was an inherent respect of and devotion to Skálholt itself. This comes across without a doubt in this

crucial passage from Chapter I, where we see, in the author's own words, the most important reasons he gives for writing this history in the first place:

‘Therefore I commit this to writing (rather than other knowledge, that which is already committed to writing) which seems to me to be most urgent for my children and other young men to know or enquire about: how or in what manner Christianity has increased in power here and Episcopal sees have been established here in Iceland, and then to know what noteworthy men they have been, the bishops who have been here, and I intend to relate that now.’

‘And that obliges me to write how the Episcopal see at Skálholt has grown strong and increased in power, and about the counsels of those men who have held it, since with God's grace, I have received all the good luck of this world from them.’¹

The author of *Hungrvaka* and his main interests

The author shows great interest in reporting on the financial situation of the Episcopal see, indicating that he has a deep personal and emotional investment in seeing that the see not only survives but prospers, hence his respect for Ísleifr's management as bishop, despite him never having been wealthy and always having had an inconvenient farm in terms of money. Like Ari in *Íslendingabók*, the *Hungrvaka* author makes clear just how important he considers the tithe to have been for the strengthening of the Episcopal see. Þorlákr's episcopate may have been less generous than hoped for by the common people but the see itself did not suffer during this time, rather the author is keen to assure his audience that during his episcopate, money was never spared, ‘for all useful things.’² Magnús and Klængr on the other hand were generous in outlay of money to the common people, yet the Episcopal see simultaneously prospered in terms of buildings and valuable additions to the Episcopal see, despite generosity turning to extravagance in Klængr's case. This kind of preoccupation with money and finances may indicate that the author himself may have had financial control of Skálholt. This

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:44. The manner in which the author has composed this passage of text again seems to indicate the influence of the Latin ‘Deeds of Bishops’ (Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002: xiii).

² *Hungrvaka* 2013:59.

idea is supported by Einar Ólafur Sveinsson in his work on *Páls saga biskups*, the story of the seventh bishop of Skálholt. It is possible that the same author was responsible for the creation of both *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga biskups* (more on this topic to follow) meaning that if the author of the latter had financial control of Skálholt then so would the author of *Hungrvaka*. It says in *Páls saga biskups* that a priest named Þórir had financial control in Skálholt and Einar Ólafur Sveinsson considers him the likely author of both texts.¹ It is neither proven that the priest Þórir authored *Páls saga biskups* nor that the author of both *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga biskups* is the same, so it therefore is unproven whether or not the author of *Hungrvaka* was this same Þórir with financial control of the area, but at the very least, the suggestion that the author of *Hungrvaka* would have had financial control of the area is a pleasing one. In further support of this idea, based on Dorothy M Owen's observations in *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire*, Ásdís Egilsdóttir says that, '[i]n Lincoln, þar sem Þorlákur helgi og Páll voru við nám, tíðkaðist að sami maður gegndi hlutverki bókavarðar og ráðsmanns og hefði umsjón með skólahaldi. Höfundur Hungurvöku gæti hafa haft svipað hlutverk.' ('In Lincoln, where Þorlákur helgi and Páll were studying, it used to be that the same man served the role of librarian and steward and would oversee the holding of school. The author of *Hungrvaka* could have had a similar role.')²

The mention of librarian also fits with what else we know of the *Hungrvaka* author. He has clearly had access to a number of written sources in both Latin and the vernacular, as shown in *Part 1*. As librarian also, his priority duty would have been the preservation of knowledge; this idea of the author having had this role at some point fits extremely well with his obvious enthusiasm for learning and teaching which comes across in the text. Looking back to the passage of text featured at the beginning of *Part 2*, the reference made by the author to the 'children and other young men' may not (only) refer to biological children but his students. Furthermore, the author shows not only enthusiastic concern for the future students, possibly his own, but also great respect for the teachers who have come before him, firstly the bishops themselves. For instance, there is great reference to the impressive learning of all the bishops and their role as teachers, especially in the case of Ísleifr and Þorlákur, whose many students become

¹ Einar Ólafur Sveinsson, *Páls saga biskups* 1954:13. See also Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxiii.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxiii; my translation. See also Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxiii, footnote 2.

‘good clerics.’ There is also certainly respect felt by the author for his main human sources whom he mentions by name, priest Árni Björnsson, Runólfr Ketilsson and most importantly, Gizurr Hallsson. The author must also be referring to people he has truly known personally and from whom he has received information first hand, rather than having received his information by word of mouth, because, for example, he explicitly states that he personally has heard his information from Gizurr:

‘Hefi ek af því þenna bækling saman settan, at eigi falli mér með öllu ór minni þat er ek heyrði af þessu máli segja inn fróða mann Gizur Hallsson.’

‘Therefore I have set this little book together, so that it may not completely drop out of my memory; that which I heard the learned man Gizurr Hallsson to say on this subject.’¹

But Gizurr had more involvement in the affairs of Skálholt than simply teaching. Towards the end of the history of Bishop Klængr, two men are referred to as his two greatest friends, Gizurr Hallsson and Jón Loptsson. But Gizurr and Jón also happened to have been the heads of the Haukadalur and Oddi families respectfully, which according to Ármann Jakobsson, held great sway over almost all of the elections to bishop mentioned in *Hungrvaka*. Ármann Jakobsson’s work puts forth the idea that the selection of the first three bishops was largely counselled by the men of Haukadalur,² despite some wording in *Hungrvaka* which apparently refutes this... ..at first glance. The text claims that Ísleifr was chosen to become bishop, ‘af allri alþýðu á Íslandi,’ that is, ‘by the whole people of Iceland’³ but as the grandson of the first settler and son of the man who, ‘brought Christianity to Iceland,’ it is unlikely that the common people would have influenced the decision to elect Ísleifr bishop when the Haukadalur men’s interest in this outcome was already so strong. The particular wording in these sections which imply that the bishop was chosen by the common people rather than a select group with power and influence over the Church and see, acts then to secularise the ecclesiastical event that is the election of a priest to bishop. It may (simply) be a sign that the text has here been influenced by a largely secular-minded (textual) source such as Ari’s *Íslendingabók*, rather than a Latin ecclesiastical text. Nevertheless, the wording

¹ ÍF XVI 2002:3; *Hungrvaka* 2013:44. See also Guðni Jónsson 1981:x.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxiv, footnotes 3 and 4.

³ ÍF XVI 2002:7; *Hungrvaka* 2013:46.

still promotes the idea that the act of an election to bishop is much more an event of importance to the laymen as well as to clerics, in much the same way as writing the history in the vernacular serves to present the history as though as interesting and important to lay people as it is to those with connections to the Church. The text also claims that Þorlákr Runólfsson had been personally selected by Bishop Gizurr Ísleifsson; there is no reason to suggest that this was not true, but the interesting thing is that the former also happened to be of the family of the Haukadalur people, which suggests that Bishop Gizurr may also have been consciously trying to keep the role within the family when he made his selection.

Bias in *Hungrvaka*?

Perhaps most telling of all when it comes to the author's loyalty to Skálholt is the overriding impression given of each bishop. No bishop comes across overwhelmingly badly and despite certain problems faced by some, each bishop's episcopate appears as having ultimately turned out as it has for good. It is with these reasons then that certain accusations of bias may be directed at the text. The history of Skálholt and its bishops must have been influenced to some extent by the most powerful families at the time of Oddi and Haukadalur and the respective heads of the families, Jón Loptsson and Gizurr Hallsson; by Gizurr Hallsson's side in particular.¹ The author though clearly appears loathe to miss out certain criticisms of the bishops, perhaps because they must have been a prominent part of the bishops' life stories and even the author, with his probable personal connection to these men and their families, cannot bring himself to omit such details from his work as a dedicated historian, never mind for the sake of his audience. This is true particularly of the decision to suggest in the text that the whole people were in support of the election to Bishop of Ísleifr - and the mention of his many problems with disobedient men later in the story suggests that he was not literally the choice of the 'whole' people - rather than what was perhaps nearer the truth, namely that Ísleifr was more the representative of a select group which held most of the power over the area. It is even truer in the case of Þorlákr: it is said that the people received him

¹ For more on the domination of the early Icelandic church by the men of Haukadalur see Orri Vésteinsson 2000:19-24.

joyfully upon his return from his ordination journey, ‘as was due,’ and this particular wording points to the reception having an obligatory nature rather than sincere on the part of some of the common people; it also cannot come close to balancing out the former statement which is by far the most insulting impression held by the people for any of the bishops here told of:

‘[W]hen [Þorlákr] went abroad, so it was then said that there must be very little choice of men in the country, and to [the common people] he seemed unfit to be sent to such honour.’¹

Similarly, despite the author’s assertions that in Þorlákr’s time as bishop there was generous outlay of money to help the poorest folk and for all useful things, it does not entirely draw the reader’s attention from the fact that in the same sentence it is mentioned that the common people still used the term ‘tight-fisted’ to describe the see’s outlay of money at the time; though the author may try to show that the bishop’s qualities outweigh his faults, it is obvious that many of the common people did not feel this way. And the negative quality of Klængur, that he was at times extravagant rather than simply generous, has already been discussed above. The amount of bias in the texts is therefore not as high as it might have been in the circumstances; there is somewhat of a conflict of interests between the author’s strive for presenting a realistic portrait of the area and its main players for the purpose of successful future learning, and his loyalty to personal connections with Skálholt and the important men ‘behind the scenes’ as it were. Nevertheless, in spite of the mentions of many problems faced by the bishops, or their own personal flaws, the author quickly sweeps past these or turns many of them on their head and into a positive, showing how the bishop was thus able to overcome such difficulties or flaws. The picture presented overall is thus still somewhat tailored to fit the main image which best suits the region’s powerful families and their representatives as bishops, which is to show their connection to the area and hence legitimize their holding of power in the area, while at the same time making it appear that their power hold is and always has been desired by the common people as well.² However, there

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:58.

² For further evidence to support this suggestion, a comparison could be made with the case of Snorri Sturluson and his writings. Snorri is famous as a chieftain, landowner and politician, but also an accomplished poet and writer on subjects of poetry, history and mythography. He is often credited as having composed Egils saga, the story of his ancestor Egill Skalla-Grímsson. Assuming this to be the

still is one point worth considering as far as bias is concerned. The point is this: even if the above-mentioned families had such control, the writing still presents a certain kind of history; rather it also serves to remind us that bias is also an interesting, and often inescapable, part of the history in itself.

Date of *Hungrvaka*'s composition

Following on from the above discussion of Gizurr Hallsson as chief informant to the author of *Hungrvaka*, most scholars therefore agree that *Hungrvaka* was written shortly after the turn of the 13th century, around 1206-11, with Guðbrandur Vigfússon, Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson among others opting for this dating. Some such as Finnur Jónsson meanwhile prefer the idea that *Hungrvaka* was written c. 1200, before the death of Gizurr. Based on some particular language in *Hungrvaka* Chapter VII however, one would surely have to put the date of composition after 1200, as here reference is made to the passing of the ‘*holy* Bishop Jón’ (emphasis added) of Hólar during the lifetime of Bishop Þorlákr;¹ assuming the term ‘*holy*’ to refer to Jón Ögmundarson having been officially taken into the count of saints (by the Icelanders), the text has to date after 1200, when this recognition took place. Looking again to the saga’s wording for clues, the final paragraph of the saga refers to Bishop Klængur’s successor, Þorlákr helgi, and here the latter is described as ‘undoubtedly a saint.’ If the wording here is anything to go by, the text presumably means that he was indeed properly recognised as a saint by the Icelanders by this point, so the text would surely have to have been composed after 1200, and probably closer to 1206 or afterwards.² However, there is some dispute as to whether this part of the text is in fact, ‘anything to go by,’ as not all are agreed that the author of the main body of the *Hungrvaka* text composed this section himself (more on this to follow). Nevertheless, the first observation about the wording in connection with Bishop Jón still holds true as good evidence for the slightly later date of composition as

case, it has been suggested that rather than writing for entertainment purposes alone, Snorri wrote the saga for personal gain; by demonstrating Egill’s links with the area of Borg in the west of Iceland, Snorri, as a descendant of Egill, also demonstrated his own claim to the area in his own time and so demonstrated his ‘rightful’ political power and influence that came with ownership of the region. See also Tulinius 2002.

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxvii.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxvii.

proposed by Guðbrandur Vigfússon. The reasoning behind his suggestion for the earliest likely date of composition as 1206, which obviously dates it after Gizurr's death, is that the laudatory nature of the wording in the part of the prologue which praises Gizurr¹ befits the type of praise given in memory of somebody already deceased, so suggesting that Gizurr's death came before the time of writing. Guðbrandur Vigfússon's reasoning behind the dating of the text is perhaps preferable to Finnur Jónsson's therefore; there is also no evidence to suggest that the author of *Hungrvaka* could not have learned all of the information required to compose the text from Gizurr before the latter's death, so there is no reason why the text necessarily had to have been *finished* during Gizurr's lifetime. Guðbrandur Vigfússon's later estimation of 1211 for date of composition, meanwhile, takes into account the idea that it would have been composed before the death of Bishop Páll (also in 1211), a factor which Guðni Jónsson agrees with.²

Hungrvaka's connection with other sagas of the bishops of Skálholt

The dates of each bishop's episcopate are as follows:

Ísleifr Gizurarsson	1056-1080
Gizurr Ísleifsson	1082-1118
Þorlákr Runólfsson	1118-1133
Magnús Einarsson	1134-1148
Klængur Þorsteinsson	1152-1176
Þorlákr Þórhallsson inn helgi	1178-1193
Páll Jónsson	1195-1211 ³

In the extant manuscripts, all three sagas, *Hungrvaka*, *Þorláks saga*¹ and *Páls saga biskups*, are included together, so forming a complete, chronological history of Skálholt

¹ Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1858-1878:xxxiii; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxv.

² Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxv; Guðni Jónsson 1981:x.

³ Guðni Jónsson 1981:x.

and its first seven bishops. In fact, there is much dispute about how closely the texts are linked together; one of the reasons being that *Hungrvaka* may not be the author's only extant work. There are a number of scholars who consider the author of *Hungrvaka* and the author of *Páls saga biskups* to be one and the same - it being generally considered that *Páls saga biskups* was written just shortly after his death in 1211, so around the same time as *Hungrvaka* - and this is now widely assumed to have been conclusively proven.² In evidence, Guðni Jónsson points to the atmosphere and handling of content in *Páls saga biskups* being very reminiscent of *Hungrvaka*.³ But it has also been argued that all three of the Skálholt sagas grouped together in the manuscript had the same author. Þorláks saga has been copied and altered many times throughout its handing down up to the extant versions we have today, so its composition is perhaps trickier to link to the same time frame as that of *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga biskups*, but there are nevertheless arguments to support the idea that this could have been the case. The main proponent of this idea is Guðbrandur Vigfússon, but following on from this work, Hannes Þorsteinsson makes his own significant arguments in support of the idea as well. The priest Þórir has been mentioned above as a contender for having been the author of *Hungrvaka*, but another name that appears as a likely contender is that of Ketill Hermundarson - a priest who served Bishop Páll - and in both Guðbrandur Vigfússon's and Hannes Þorsteinsson's work, this man comes across as most likely of all the contenders to have been the author.⁴ One piece of evidence in favour of this idea is that two of Ketill's relatives appear by name in *Hungrvaka*: one is Guðmundur Koðránsson, Ketill's uncle, the second, the above-mentioned Runólfr Ketilsson, who is no less than Ketill's maternal grandfather. It was in fact Runólfr Ketilsson who composed the one stanza which appears in *Hungrvaka*.⁵ Ketill also qualifies for having had a close personal connection with the area and having recognised the importance of the history of Skálholt; as mentioned above, the author may well have had some role in

¹ There are a number of sagas about Bishop Þorlákr helgi and ÍF XVI contains more than one, under the heading of *Þorláks sögur helga* (that is, 'sagas' - plural). This introduction refers more to the concept of a saga having been written about Bishop Þorlákr helgi which happens to follow *Hungrvaka* in chronological order in *Hungrvaka*'s extant manuscripts, rather than to any version in particular, so to avoid confusion I refer simply to *Þorláks saga*, using it as a general term for any and all variants of the story about this particular bishop, in the rest of this introduction.

² Guðni Jónsson 1981:xiii.

³ Guðni Jónsson 1981:xiii.

⁴ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxvii-xxviii.

⁵ *Hungrvaka* 2013:68.

the stewardship of the area to have shown such concern for the financial situation of the Episcopal see, so the fact that, ‘Ketill hafði staðarforráð í Skálholti eftir andlát Páls [...] þar til Magnús Gissurarson tók við [...] 1213’ (‘Ketill had been the guardian in Skálholt after the death of Páll [...] until Magnús Gizurarson took over in [...] 1213’),¹ qualifies him as contender for this reason.

To return to the possible links between the texts themselves, Guðbrandur Vigfússon highlights the wording similarities as evidence; the similarities here may be more obvious between *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga biskups* rather than *Þorláks saga* and the others² but there is nevertheless some evidence that some rare words or phrases appear in all three, such as the word *auðræði*, ‘wealth.’³ Guðbrandur Vigfússon also suggests that the concluding words of *Hungrvaka* point to the same author having composed *Þorláks saga*, but it is also fair to say that the language has a slightly different feel to it, from the main body of the *Hungrvaka* text to the saga’s concluding paragraph.⁴

The conclusion of *Hungrvaka* has attracted much attention, for the part it has in linking it with the chronologically subsequent *Þorláks saga* (that is to say, chronologically in terms of the consecutive order of the episcopates of the bishops of Skálholt, not in terms of the writing of the sagas). Some scholars have suggested that from the outset, *Hungrvaka* was specifically written with the intention of introducing (a pre-existent) *Þorláks saga*, among them Pernille Hermann who says that, ‘slutningen af *Hungrvaka* [...] og biografiernes hagiografiske tone vidner om, at *Hungrvaka* kan have fungeret som *praefiguratio* for *Þorláks saga*’ (‘the conclusion of *Hungrvaka* [...] and the biographies’ hagiographic tone show that *Hungrvaka* may have functioned as a prologue for *Þorláks saga*’).⁵ However, Ásdís Egilsdóttir notes that as the manuscripts are relatively all so young, it has been disputed whether this conclusion had originally appeared in the work.⁶ The wording is perhaps highly significant then, when the final paragraph of the saga begins, ‘Now it has come to that account which shall tell of the

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxviii; my translation.

² Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1858-1878:xxxi-xxxiv; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxviii, footnote 3.

³ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxviii.

⁴ Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1858-1878:xxxi-xxxiv; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002: xxvii.

⁵ Hermann 2004:30-31; my translation.

⁶ Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxv.

blessed Bishop Þorlákr.’¹ One possibility suggested by some scholars is that the scribes of one of *Hungrvaka*’s copies, made sometime between its original writing and extant copies we have, invented this conclusion entirely. In fact, Pernille Hermann has also previously questioned, ‘om dette sidste afsnit, der indeholder troper, den metaforiske beskrivelse af Þorlákr som lysstråle og ædelsten samt sammenligningen med Skt. Patrick, overhovedet har tilhørt den originale del af *Hungrvaka*, eller om denne slutning er en skrivers forsøg på at arrangere og kombinere mere end en tekst i et håndskrift’ (‘whether the last section which contains tropes, the metaphorical description of Þorlákr as a ray of light and precious stone together with the comparison with Saint Patrick, on the whole has belonged to the original part of *Hungrvaka*, or whether this conclusion is a scribe’s attempt to arrange and combine more than one text in one manuscript’).² Guðni Jónsson is certain of this having been the case:

‘Þess skal getið, að niðurlagsorð Hungrvöku, þar sem talað er um, að nú sé komið að því að segja frá Þorláki biskupi, munu ekki vera eftir höfundinn sjálfan, heldur eftir ritara, sem skrifaði báðar sögurnar í eitt og sama handritið og tengir þær saman með þessum ummælum.’

‘It should be noted that the concluding words of *Hungrvaka*, where it is discussed that now is the time to tell of Bishop Þorlákr, will not be by the author himself, but by the scribe, who wrote two stories in one and the same manuscript and links them together with this comment.’³

In addition to arguments along these lines, one might also wish to suggest that the concluding words of the penultimate paragraph may have been originally intended as the conclusion to the saga.

‘Now it may seem to us, for many reasons, as though there may not have been such an outstanding man in Iceland as Bishop Klængur was. We wish and intend that his magnificence shall live on in memory while Iceland is inhabited.’⁴

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:73.

² Hermann 2004:30. See also Finnur Jónsson 1923:566; Sigurður Nordal 1953:213.

³ Guðni Jónsson 1981:x-xi; my translation.

⁴ *Hungrvaka* 2013:72-73.

It is perhaps worth noting that each of the five stories of the bishops of Skálholt ends with an annalistic list of other great men of worth who passed away, and events of note which took place, during the said bishop's episcopate. It is only the annalistic list at the end of Bishop Klœngr's story which has these additional 'final thoughts,' an extra two sentences summing up the memory of this man who has been bishop. The grandness that first comes across in the wording of the latter of these two sentences, '*We wish and intend ... magnificence ... live on in memory,*' thus perhaps 'has some of the wind knocked out of it' by the beginning of a new paragraph at a point which may otherwise have felt like the end. In comparison, the impression left by the final sentence of the final paragraph appears rather less grand for a conclusion than that of the penultimate paragraph:

'He [Þorlákr] may in truth be called the Apostle of Iceland, just as the holy Bishop Patrick is called the Apostle of Ireland, since they furthered the work of the apostles themselves in their teaching and patience with both disobedient and unrighteous men.'¹

It seems odd for a concluding statement to introduce three new concepts in the knowledge that there is no room for discussion here, but rather leaves it until the next saga; firstly the comparison with Bishop Patrick of Ireland, next their furthering of the work of the apostles, and thirdly their dealings with, 'disobedient and unrighteous men.' Granted, these concepts may well be discussed in *Þorláks saga* proper, but to conclude *Hungrvaka* in his way leaves this saga with a final sense of 'interrupted-ness.' One can thus see how, as mentioned previously, the grandness of the previous paragraph seemed greater; it is perhaps rather peculiar and even disappointing to conclude an entire saga about the lives and deeds of saintly-natured men with the concept of unworthy men. Yet the points mentioned here in no way prove definitively that the final paragraph of *Hungrvaka* is a later addition by a scribe rather than the product of the 'original' author. On the contrary, as far as the linking of *Hungrvaka* to *Þorláks saga* is concerned, there is also the second possibility that the author of *Hungrvaka* did indeed write the conclusion himself in order to link *Hungrvaka* to an already existent version of *Þorláks saga* and hence to hope to canonise his own work by association.

¹ *Hungrvaka* 2013:73.

But there is another alternative, also dependent on the starting premise of the original author of *Hungrvaka* having composed the *current* concluding paragraph to the saga. This theory is that this paragraph would have lead directly into another version of *Þorláks saga*, one which the author had written or intended to write himself, and that the concluding paragraph was therefore intended to lead directly into this from the beginning. A scenario along these lines has been put forth as a possibility by Árni Magnússon¹ who has suggested that the *Hungrvaka* author did in fact compose more towards this text, namely a full section on Bishop Þorlákr helgi and, assuming that this composition did at one time exist, this section is now lost. Following on from that line of reasoning, it is therefore possible that between the time of writing of the theoretical Þorláks saga, and the production of the extant manuscripts, the scribes who have copied *Hungrvaka* chose to omit the author's own story of Þorlákr in favour of the version they preferred, that is, the extant version(s) today, in order to create their own constant, carefully edited, ideal history of the first seven bishops of Skálholt (*Páls saga biskups* being the story of the seventh in chronological order), and one cannot deny that *Þorláks saga* itself has been copied and altered many times in its handing down.

Conclusion

Throughout this introduction two overwhelming observations have cropped up again and again - firstly that *Hungrvaka* cannot be easily categorised, whether in terms of classification or how it connects with other texts, especially the other sagas of Skálholt's bishops, and secondly that this may therefore have contributed to its having been relatively overlooked. But now I want to note one final observation, which also happens to be my reason for producing this new translation into English, and that is the relative lack heretofore of available translations of *Hungrvaka*, specifically into English. There exists a version from 1895, but this is now very rare and is also let down by some rudimentary mistakes in the translation. It is to be hoped therefore that this new translation may play a part in a new interest being taken in *Hungrvaka*.

¹ Árni Magnússons *Levned og Skrifter* II 1930; Sverrir Tómasson 1988:147; Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2002:xxx.

Notes on the translation

This translation of *Hungrvaka* is based on the edition in *ÍF XVI*, Biskupa sögur II.

The aim throughout has been to remain faithful to the original Old Icelandic text while simultaneously producing a fluent, readable work of English. Accuracy of definition has therefore often taken priority over some of the stylistic traits such as alliterative constructions, for example ‘bridges and wells’ for Old Icelandic *brúar ok brunna*.

There are a number of rules I have used with regard to handling personal names. The rule for dealing with names of native Icelanders is straightforward - these names appear in their nominative singular form, with Old Icelandic orthography. For example, I use the form *Gizurr*, complete with the nominative inflectional ending *-r*, rather than using the Modernised Icelandic spelling *Gissur*; also I use the form *Ísleifr* with nominative singular inflectional ending *-r*, rather than the Modernised Icelandic spelling *Ísleifur* (with nominative inflectional ending *-ur*).

The rules for dealing with names of non-native Icelanders are slightly more complicated. In the original Old Icelandic text, *ÍF XVI*, personal names of non-Icelanders often appear either in their Old Icelandic form or in Latin. In the case of the Latin forms, I have occasionally used a commonly accepted anglicised form in my text wherever this will be appropriate (i.e. better known or helps the smooth flow of the text), for example *Leo*, rather than *Leonem* which appears in *ÍF XVI*.

When the names of non-native Icelanders appear in *ÍF XVI* in an Old Icelandic form, I have handled these in one of two ways in the translation. In some instances, the name with Old Icelandic orthography is equally well known as, or better known than, the anglicised equivalent. For the most part then, these names are left in their Old Icelandic form. This is especially appropriate when the names of non-native Icelanders also happen to follow the patronymic naming system (as in Iceland), for example the names of Norwegian kings such as *Haraldr Sigurðarson harðráði*. (Though *Haraldr Sigurðarson harðráði* is also known by the anglicised forms *Harald Hardrada* or *Harald ‘Hard-ruler’* I prefer the Old Icelandic form to help the text flow and to retain a link with, and hence some more faithfulness to, the *ÍF XVI* text.) I have also kept many of the names of foreign bishops and foreign emperors in Old Icelandic form to help the

text flow and simultaneously retain a link with the ÍF XVI text, especially if the names are accompanied by a patronymic and so already have an Icelandic ‘feel’ to them (though where there is also a widely accepted anglicised form, for example ‘*John*’ for *Jón* [the Irishman], I have included this in a footnote).

If however, the person in question is exceptionally well known by the anglicised form of the name (especially in the case of people from England, such as William I) then I have instead used the common anglicised form in the text.

I have also anglicised most of the names of saints and Feast Days from their Icelandic variants as these names have a relevance in a wider Christian world than Iceland alone. Latin names of saints or Popes (etc.) which appear in ÍF XVI may or may not have been anglicised for this translation, depending on whichever form works best in the context of the text (i.e. striking a balance between the most common form to use in English, link with tradition, flow of the language in translation, etc).

Nicknames of Icelanders have all been left in Old Icelandic, nominative form, as I consider them an important part of these people’s recognised names, but wherever possible, a translation has been provided in the footnotes.

All personal names which feature in this text may be found alphabetically in the *Index of personal names*, located towards the end of this work. Each name entry appears under the name form used in the text, but in the instances where this is an anglicised form, I have also included the Old Icelandic/Latin form which appears in the ÍF XVI text in parenthesis beside its respective name entry. (Note that nicknames do not receive a separate entry - they are included with the proper name of the person in question.)

A few names of places in Iceland have been anglicised, such as the ‘West Fjords’ (*Vestfirðir*), and the ‘Westman Islands’ (*Vestmannaeyjar*) because the English name is perhaps better known in these select instances, and the anglicised forms help the flow of the text. All other Icelandic place names appear in their nominative singular form. However, I have decided to use Modern Icelandic spelling wherever possible. My reason for using Modern Icelandic morphology for place names, but Old Icelandic for personal names, is this: the personal names are all names of long deceased people, so I believe their names are best left ‘fixed’ in their Old Icelandic form (if I were to use

Modern Icelandic orthography for these names, as some texts do, I believe this would just be modernising for the sake of modernising, so not really worthwhile); the names of places however are often places still known today and with a relevance to the modern world, which is why I have used the Modern Icelandic orthography here. The names of non-Icelandic places and names of other countries have either been anglicised or, if the standard name according to the country in question is perfectly well known, I have used this form. For example, I use the Swedish form *Skåne* to refer to this particular area of Sweden, rather than the anglicised form *Skania* (as the anglicised form would contribute nothing in particular to our understanding of the text).

Finally, I have elected to use the terms *þing* and *alþingi* rather than their Anglicised spellings, 'thing' and 'Althing' or the closest English alternative words, 'assembly' and 'parliament.' Firstly, I believe that the original Icelandic words are familiar enough terms for the reader to manage. Secondly, as with many of the personal names, I prefer to use the Old Icelandic form to help the text flow and simultaneously retain a link with, and faithfulness to, the ÍF XVI text.

HUNGRVAKA

Chapter I

I call this little book *Hungrvaka* because many men, unlearned and unwise as well, will be so disposed towards that which it has checked that they would wish to know more fully of the origin and lifetime of those remarkable men who shall briefly be recounted here in this written work. And yet I may have expressed nearly everything in writing; that which I have fixed in my memory. Therefore I have set this little book together, so that it may not completely drop out of my memory; that which I heard the learned man Gizurr Hallsson to say on this subject and which a number of other distinguished men besides have conveyed in narratives. There is also another reason which applies to this literary work: to entice young men to acquaint themselves with our story, to possess and enjoy that which is written in Norse; law or stories or genealogies. Therefore I commit this to writing (rather than other knowledge, that which is already committed to writing) which seems to me to be most urgent for my children and other young men to know or enquire about: how or in what manner Christianity has increased in power here and Episcopal sees have been established here in Iceland, and then to know what noteworthy men they have been, the bishops who have been here, and I intend to relate that now.

And that obliges me to write how the Episcopal see at Skálholt has grown strong and increased in power, and about the counsels of those men who have held it, since with God's grace, I have received all the good luck of this world from them. But I have a foreboding that to wise men this little book must seem very like 'horn spoon' matter because it is most awkward while it is underworked, although it may then be very beautiful when it is fully worked. But those men who thus take a delight in this booklet may derive pleasure using it to entertain themselves with it and also those others who humbly wish to listen, rather than taking a risk on what else is available, that which heretofore seems dull, because many a man has experience of this, if he seeks brief amusement for himself, that there comes thereafter a long anxiety about it.¹ It seems advisable to me that one may take from this poor information, which is written here, that which best suits one and he takes such a delight in, and afterwards preserve that

¹ In both *ÍF* XVI (2002) and Jón Helgason's (1938) editions of *Hungrvaka*, the comma appears before the word *þá*: *at hætta til hvat annat leggsk fyrir, þá er áðr þykkir daufligt [...]*. This is rather peculiar, and it would rather seem preferable to have the comma after *þá* to make for a more pleasant translation of this section: *at hætta til hvat annat leggsk fyrir þá, er áðr þykkir daufligt [...]*, hence 'to take a risk on what else is available to them, which heretofore seems dull [...].'

which may be to one's own liking, but may that with which he is not pleased fall from his memory. But to me, it seems to befit them best that they wish to improve upon that which previously seems to be unremarkably told here and know something else to be truer, rather than that they convey or turn this into ridicule, but will not, or have not the means to, improve it. And therefore I may have likened this to a horn spoon which I think to be a remarkable matter, but I know that much is needed to make it finer, and I shall thence endeavour to improve it while I am capable of it. It follows from that, that I will also be bound to it that it will be owing to my doing and negligence if there is something in this account which proves to be wrong, that which is written, and not to those men to whom I consider myself indebted for this knowledge. But there is an ancient proverb: 'the house needs a household'. Therefore I say first how the farm has been built at Skálholt, and then of those who have kept the church establishment.

Chapter II

Ketilbjörn inn gamli¹ lived at Mosfell and had many children. A son of Ketilbjörn was named Teitr. He was that lucky a man that he built first that farm which is called Skálholt, which is now absolutely the noblest farm in all Iceland. It was another good fortune of his that he had for a son Gizurr inn hvíti² who brought Christianity to Iceland and lived in Skálholt after Teitr, his father. Gizurr inn hvíti had three wives. First he was married to Halldóra, daughter of Hrólfr of Geitland;³ their daughter was Vilborg to whom Hjalti Skeggjason was married. After that, Gizurr was married to a woman from the Orkneys, who was named Þórdís, and their son was Ketill who was married to Þorkatla Skaptadóttir. Last of all, Gizurr was married to Þórdís, daughter of Þóroddr goði⁴ at Hjalli in Ölfus, and they had many children. Their son was Ísleifr; Gizurr accompanied him out from Iceland and placed him to be taught by an abbess in that town which is called Herford.⁵ Thus Ísleifr returned to Iceland a priest and well learned. He took himself a wife and got the hand of Dalla Þorvaldsdóttir from Ási. They had three sons. Gizurr was the name of their son who, after a time, was bishop; the second was Teitr, who later lived in Haukadalur; the third was named Þorvaldr, who lived in Hraungerði, a great chief. Gizurr inn hvíti had the first church built in Skálholt and was buried there in that church, and Ísleifr lived in Skálholt after his father. Ísleifr was a handsome man in appearance and popular with the common people and for his whole life righteous and upright, munificent and benevolent, but never wealthy.

But when Ísleifr was fifty years of age and Iceland had not long been Christian, then he was bidden to undertake a journey abroad⁶ and chosen to become bishop by the whole people of Iceland. Then he went abroad and south to Saxony and sought Emperor Heinrekr Konráðsson at his home, and gave him a polar bear which had come from Greenland, and that beast was the greatest treasure. And the emperor gave Ísleifr his

¹ Ketilbjörn ‘the old.’

² Gizurr ‘the white.’

³ Geitland in Borgarfjörður.

⁴ Þóroddr ‘the chief’: A *goði* (pl. *goðar*) originally meant a ‘priest’ of the heathen religion, but the term became synonymous with *hofðingi* ‘chief.’ The *goðorð* was the domain controlled by an individual *goði*. When Iceland was Christianized, the heathen religious connection disappeared but the name stayed the same. *Goðar* were an important part of Medieval Iceland’s political system; they composed the *lögretta* ‘legislative’ (comprising forty-eight members) in the *alþing*.

⁵ Herford: in Westphalia (German: *Westfalen*).

⁶ A ‘journey abroad,’ that is, the journey required to become ordained. Whenever the phrase ‘journey abroad’ appears in this book, it may be assumed that it refers again to a bishop’s ordination-journey.

brief with the seal of his whole kingdom. Then he went to an audience with Pope Leo.¹ And the Pope sent his brief to Archbishop Aðalbert of Bremen, that he should give Ísleifr the consecration of a bishop on Whit Sunday,² and the Pope said he would hope for it, with God's grace, that the greatest honour would then come to that bishopric if the first bishop for Iceland were ordained on that day when God adorned all the world with the Gift of the Holy Spirit; and then Ísleifr was ordained bishop on that day, at the Pope's bidding, by Archbishop Aðalbert of Bremen, fourteen nights before the Feast of Saint Columba,³ and the Archbishop gave him all that outfit which he needed to have with the rank of bishop, according to that which the Pope sent word to do, also the emperor.

Then Bishop Ísleifr went back to Iceland that same summer and established his Episcopal see at Skálholt. In many ways, he had great distress in his bishopric on account of non-compliant men. This may therefore indicate something as to what kind of difficulty he has been in for the sake of disbelief and disobedience and bad customs of his subordinates: that the lawspeaker was married to both a mother and daughter, and then some men set out upon viking raids and harrying, and men took to many other unheard of and shameful things, those which would seem unprecedented if suchlike were to befall men now.

In the days of Bishop Ísleifr, bishops from other lands came out to Iceland and they offered much that was more lenient than did Bishop Ísleifr. From that, they became popular with wretched men, until Archbishop Aðalbert sent his brief out to Iceland and forbade the men to accept all services from them and then said some of the foreign bishops to be excommunicated and all to have gone without his leave.

In the days of Bishop Ísleifr, that bishop who was named Kolr came out to Iceland and he died out here. He was buried in Skálholt, and that was the first church here in Iceland to be adorned with the burial of a noble man, which may rightly be called the spiritual mother of all other consecrated houses in Iceland.

¹ Pope Leo IX.

² Feast of Whitsun or Pentecost: observed 7 weeks after Easter, i.e. the 50th day after the Easter Festival.

³ Feast Day of Saint Columba: 9th June.

Bishop Ísleifr always had an inconvenient farm in terms of money; his means were small but the seeking of hospitality was great, and for that reason it was a difficult farm for him. Many men placed their sons with him for teaching, and after that they were good clerics and two became bishops: Kolr in Vik, to the east in Norway, and Bishop Jón at Hólar.

But when Ísleifr had been bishop for twenty-four winters he then took ill at the alþingi during the mass, so swiftly and suddenly that at once he had to remove his vestments, and then priest Guthormr Finnólfsson of Laugardalur put on the vestments at the behest of the bishop and there took up the mass whence the bishop left off and finished the mass. Then the bishop was brought home to Skálholt and his bed was made up in the church. Men then sought after wise counsel from him, both about the election of the next bishop and those other things which they thought they should need to talk about, and he proposed these counsels, that they should bid priest Guthormr to go on the journey abroad, and considered him best suited of the men of their country at that time,¹ but said nevertheless that the bishop would not be very forthcoming to them in Iceland if they would not promise to be more becoming with the one who would come next than they had been with him.

The latter part of the lifetime of Bishop Ísleifr brought him many things to hand, those which most revealed his goodness to those men who knew how to perceive it, because many mad men were brought to his hands who departed healed from meeting with him. He blessed small beer, that which the poisonous element was in, and thenceforth it was fit for drinking, and much else like this was borne to him to hand, although I may not at this moment expound so completely that which he did, and which, thought the wisest men, the greatest power seemed to accompany.

Ísleifr was ordained bishop when he was fifty years of age. At that time, Haraldr Sigurðarson was king of Norway. Bishop Ísleifr passed away on the Lord's Day² in the church at Skálholt, in the middle of the day, three nights before the Feast Day of the men of Selja. He had then been bishop for four and twenty winters, and he was buried

¹ The word used in the original Icelandic is *samlendir*, which could either be referring to men who hailed from the same country (i.e. Iceland), or men who were in the land at that time.

² 'Lord's Day': i.e. Sunday.

beside the grave of Bishop Kolr. There had then passed one thousand and seventy-three winters since the birth of Christ.¹

¹ See the section on the calendar in *Part I* of the *Introduction* to this work which explains how the dating is seven years out, because of the use of the Gerlandus calendar; a different calendar from the Anno Domini dating system.

Chapter III

It is said that bishops came out hither to Iceland in the days of Bishop Ísleifr, but Friðrekr alone came out before, the one whom the stories may have told about. But these men have come out thus far, about whom men have knowledge most assuredly: Bishop Jón the Irishman,¹ and some men believe it to be the truth that he then went to Wendland and there turned many men to God, and was then taken captive and beaten and had both hands and feet chopped off and lastly the head, and with that martyrdom went to God. The third bishop who came to Iceland was Bjarnvarðr Vilráðsson, who was called the ‘book-wise’, and some men say that he was from England and had followed Óláfr inn helgi² and on his advice had then gone to Iceland. The fourth was Bishop Rúðólfr,³ whom some say was called Úlfr and was descended from people who hailed from Rouen in England.⁴ He was in Iceland for nineteen winters and lived in Bær in Borgarfjörður. The fifth, Bishop Heinrekr,⁵ came to Iceland and was in Iceland for two winters. The sixth was Bishop Bjarnvarðr⁶ the Saxon, and he was with King Magnús inn góði,⁷ son of Óláfr, and then went to Iceland and was in Iceland for twenty winters. He had two abodes in Vatnsdalur: at Giljá and Steinsstaðir.⁸ He consecrated many things at that time, where many signs have occurred, churches and chimes, bridges and wells, fords and rivers, boulders and bells,⁹ and these things are thought to have brightened to affirm his honour and goodness. Bjarnvarðr was in Iceland while King Haraldr Sigurðarson, was in Norway, since they were not of one accord. Then he went out from Iceland and into the hands of King Óláfr kyrri,¹⁰ son of Haraldr, and then he went to Rome at the request of the king and made peace for the souls of the dead. And when the bishop came back the king then arranged for him to be bishop in Selja, but

¹ Bishop *Jón* the Irishman: anglicised name form *John*.

² Óláfr ‘the holy.’

³ Bishop *Rúðólfr*: anglicised form *Rudolf*.

⁴ After 1066, England and Normandy were considered part of the same kingdom, hence Rouen was part of England at the time.

⁵ Bishop *Heinrekr*: anglicised form *Henry*.

⁶ Bishop *Bjarnvarðr*: anglicised form *Bernhard*.

⁷ Magnús ‘the good.’

⁸ No place named Steinsstaðir is known of in Vatnsdalur; cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:12, footnote 3.

⁹ Some of the alliterating pairs are as in *Stories of the bishops of Iceland* 1895:44.

¹⁰ Óláfr ‘the calm.’

then he went to Bergen¹ and died there, and it is said by all that he has been the greatest man of mark.

In the days of Bishop Ísleifr there occurred many great events. At that time there was the fall of King Óláfr inn helgi in Norway. Then there was also the death of King Magnús inn góði, son of King Óláfr, and he died in Denmark, but his corpse was conveyed north to Trondheim, to Nidaros. They both died before Ísleifr was bishop. But then when he was bishop, King Haraldr Sigurðarson fell in England, and somewhat later Harold Godwinson.² Then King Magnús, son of Haraldr Sigurðarson, died, also Sveinn Úlfsson, king of the Danes, and Þorkell Eyjólfsson, Gellir Bólverksson, Þorsteinn Kuggason, Snorri goði and other men of great importance.

¹ The diocese in Modern Norway is still commonly spelled Bjørgvin (with almost identical orthography to the Old Icelandic Björgvin therefore) but the cathedral city for the diocese is *Bergen*, which is why I use the modern name of the city, *Bergen*, in this text.

² Haraldr Sigurðarson harðráði (Harald Hardrada) lost in battle to Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Stamford Bridge; Harold Godwinson lost in Battle to William the Conqueror (William I of England) at the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

Chapter IV

Gizurr, son of Bishop Ísleifr, was born in Skálholt, but he was taught in Saxony and ordained priest when quite young. But then when he came out to Iceland he married and got the hand of Steinunn Þorgrímsdóttir, to whom Þórir Broddason had previously been married, and they lived first at Hof in Vopnafjörður. Gizurr was a man great in stature and a stout man, bright-eyed and rather open-eyed, lordly in demeanour and most benevolent of all men, stark in bodily strength and very wise. Gizurr was perfect in all those things which a man ought to have in his character. He was a great sea-faring man for the early part of his lifetime while Ísleifr lived, and was thought highly of wherever he went, and then communicated with high-born men when he was abroad. King Haraldr Sigurðarson was the king in Norway at the time, and he spoke these words with Gizurr, that he said it to seem thus to him, that he [Gizurr] was best suited to bear whichever high title he might get. Both Gizurr and his wife went to Rome before they went back to Iceland.

Gizurr was not in the same country when his father passed away and he came out to Iceland the summer after, during the alþingi in Rangárós, but was aboard ship for some nights and did not wish to ride to the þing while there was no-one elected bishop at the þing. But the chiefs bade Guthormr the priest to undertake the journey abroad, according to that which they thought Bishop Ísleifr had particularly made arrangements for and it came about at last that he agreed to that, if another choice were not felt to be better.

But when Gizurr learned that Guthormr the priest was selected to go on the journey abroad he then rode to the þing. And when Gizurr came to the þing, Guthormr the priest then walked onto the courtyard before the church and proclaimed there before the whole people, that there would be no question of him making the journey abroad since there was the option of Gizurr. Then the people turned to Gizurr and bade him undergo the journey abroad, but he refused in many ways. But nevertheless, it came about at last that he consented to undertake that responsibility, and all the chiefs promised to yield homage to all of God's commandments, those which he might request, if the ordination of a bishop were granted to him. Then he went out from Iceland that same summer. But

when he came to Saxony, all office was then taken from Archbishop Liemar.¹ Then he went to an audience with Pope Gregory² and told him all about the state of the case with regard to his journey and difficulties such as those which seemed to be at every turn. But the Pope then sent Gizurr into the hands of Archbishop Harðvíg³ in Magdeburg in Saxony and bade that he should give him the consecration of a bishop, and he received him with great honour and respect and ordained him bishop four nights before the Latter Feast of Saint Mary.⁴ He was then forty years of age, and the archbishop gave him all that which he needed at once of necessity.

After that, Bishop Gizurr went out to Iceland and all the people received him joyfully. He found such great honour and respect when early in his episcopate and thus would each man sit or stand as he bade, young and old, rich and poor, women and men; and it was right to say that he was both a king and bishop over the land while he lived. He did not have all the land at Skálholt for tenancy for some time at the beginning of his episcopate because Dalla, his mother, wished to live on her part of the land while she lived. But when she was dead and the bishop got all the land he then assigned it all for that church which is in Skálholt and he himself had had built, thirty fathoms in length and dedicated to Saint Peter the Apostle; and many other gifts did Bishop Gizurr assign to that church, both in lands and moveable wealth, and said afterwards that in this place there should always be an Episcopal see while Iceland may be inhabited and Christianity may endure. Bishop Gizurr gave to the church in Skálholt a white chasuble of costly stuff, which has been the best there for a long time since, and many other treasures.

These men were contemporary with Bishop Gizurr: Sæmundr the priest at Oddi, who was both very wise and most learned of all men; another, Markús Skeggjason the lawspeaker, who was the greatest sage and skald. They consulted together and urged for consent from the chiefs that it would be accepted as law that men would give a tithe of their property every year and all legal interest of their wealth, as is the custom in other

¹ Liemar was archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen from 1072-1101. He stood with Henry IV in his dealings with the Pope, was excommunicated in 1075 and from 1081-83 was beside Henry in piracy; cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:15, footnote 2.

² Gregory VII: pope from 1073-1085 (d.1085).

³ Archbishop *Harðvíg*: anglicised form *Hardwig*.

⁴ The Latter Feast of Saint Mary, also known as the Feast of the Nativity of the (Blessed) Virgin Mary: 8th September.

countries where Christian men dwell. And with their sagacity and wise persuasions the conclusion of the matter was that men undertook the payment of tithes; and it should afterwards divide into four parts, one part into the hands of the bishop, the second to the church, the clerics should have the third part and the paupers the fourth part, and there has not been another foundation of means and relief for the sick and poor such as the tithe payment, that which was furnished then, thanks to the popularity and generosity of Bishop Gizurr.

Steinunn Þorgrímsdóttir had management of the household affairs at Skálholt within doors while Bishop Gizurr ruled over the see; but Dalla, while Bishop Ísleifr lived.

But when Bishop Gizurr had been bishop for twenty winters or close to that, the people of the northern region then beseeched him that they should get to have a bishop to themselves alone and establish a second bishopric in the Northlanders' quarter and keep all their own revenue, and there would be two Episcopal sees in Iceland, and they expressed the hope that it would be expected that seldom or never, one or the other, would the country be without a bishop if there were two Episcopal sees; and Bishop Gizurr granted that request under God to the Northlanders, and after that Jón Qgmundarson the priest was chosen by God and by the good people to become bishop, and he went out from Iceland with the brief of Bishop Gizurr and thereafter sought an audience with Pope Paschal,¹ and he was ordained bishop by Archbishop Qzurr of Lund in Skåne, two nights before the Festival of Saints Philip and Jacob.² Afterwards, Jón went to Iceland and established his Episcopal see at Hólar in Hjaltadalur in Skagafjörður.

Bishop Gizurr had had the landowners in Iceland counted, those who had to pay the fee for travelling to the þing, and they were seven hundred in number in the people of the East Fjords' quarter, but ten hundred in the Southlanders' quarter, nine hundred in the people of the West Fjords' quarter, but in the Northlanders' quarter twelve hundred, and that was the wealthiest quarter based on a fair census.³

¹ Pope Paschal II was Pope from 1099-1118.

² Festival of Saints Philip and Jacob: 1st May (May Day).

³ Assuming the 'hundred' to mean the long hundred, there would have been not 38x100 men altogether, rather 38x120 men, i.e. 4560 men altogether.

Chapter V

But when Bishop Gizurr had reached seventy-five years of age, a sickness then took him, so great that he did not rise from his bed and he was not able to go to the þing. He then sent word to his friends and all the chieftains at the alþingi that the men should bid the priest Þórlákr Runólfsson to undertake the journey abroad. But he refused, both for the sake of his youth and many other things. And yet that matter concluded thus, that he agreed to undertake that obligation if it were the bishop's counsel. Then Bishop Gizurr had preparations made for his journey until he was well prepared in everything, and gave him his brief to go to an audience with Archbishop Qzurr. But the sickness plaguing Bishop Gizurr became worse and became severe and hardy and painful, and great sores broke out upon his skin, all over his legs, and there followed great discomfort from the pain.

But when the sickness took hold of him very much and the people thought themselves to hear that his bones rattled from any kind of motion, Steinunn, the mistress of the house, then went to the bed and asked what should a man's condition [of health] come to be before one should pray for the man.¹ But the bishop answers: "One shall invoke God for one thing, that my discomfort, if it is invoked, may always increase while I am able to stand it, since there is no use in it" he says, "to reject God's battle, when my life must nearly have come to an end, and much has gone prosperously before."

He was then also inquired where he wished to have himself buried, and he answered with compunction and great humility: "Bury me nowhere close to my father," he said, "because I am not worthy to lie at rest near him."

After that he arranged all things after that way in which he wished them to be before he passed away. His sons had all predeceased him except for Bøðvarr. Gróa, his daughter, lived on after him and was given in marriage to Ketill Þorsteinsson. Gizurr was ordained bishop when he was forty years of age. At that time, Óláfr kyrri,² son of Haraldr Sigurðarson, was king in Norway. Bishop Gizurr passed away on the third day

¹ That is to say, 'how bad should he allow his health to get before he would have people pray for his relief from the strain?'

² Óláfr 'the calm.'

of the week, twelve nights before the Feast of Saint Columba.¹ He had then been bishop for thirty-five winters. He was buried beside his father. Eleven hundred and eleven years had then passed since the birth of Christ. The death of Bishop Gizurr so greatly affected many people that it never left the thoughts of the men while they lived. And all men agreed that they never thought themselves to get recompense of him. It has also been the verdict of all wise men that by the charitable deeds of God and his own accomplishments he has been the noblest man in Iceland, of both the learned men and lay people.

In that year when Bishop Gizurr passed away, there died also Pope Paschal at that time; also Baldwin, king of Jerusalem;² Arnhallr, patriarch of Jerusalem; Alexios, king of the Greeks;³ and Philip, king of the Franks.⁴ There was also a very bad state of the weather at that time. There was such a storm then for the three days before Easter that the clerics could not give divine service in church in the north of the country on Good Friday; and at that time, below Eyjafjöll, a trading ship was lifted up by the wind and it turned aloft and came down overturned, and only a small section of the men were able to attend the Corpus Domini service on Easter-day but some were lost. Another storm came when men rode to the þing, and killed the livestock of the men in the northern part of the land, then also destroyed the church at Þingvellir for which King Haraldr Sigurðarson had procured timber. That summer thirty-five ships came to Iceland, but eight came to Norway during the autumn after Michaelmas.⁵ With that there grew such a great multitude in Iceland that there was a great increase of discomfort for many districts. So was it thought by the wisest men that Iceland seemed to droop so after the death of Bishop Gizurr, just as the Roman Empire had done after the death of Pope Gregory.⁶ But the death of Bishop Gizurr foreboded a generation of all discomfort in Iceland, from the distress, both in shipwrecks and loss of life, and loss of money which followed, and war and lawlessness after that, and thereafter such a high level of mortality all across the land that the like has not been experienced since the land was settled. Two winters after

¹ Feast Day of Saint Columba: 9th June.

² Baldwin I of Jerusalem: d. 1118.

³ Alexios I Komnenos (Latin form: Alexius I Comnenus): Emperor of the Byzantine Empire, d. 1118.

⁴ Philip I, king of the Franks: d. 1108.

⁵ Michaelmas, or the Feast Day of Saint Michael the Archangel (also the Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael): currently 29th September (Old Michaelmas Day: 11th or 10th October).

⁶ Pope Gregory I (Gregory the Great): c. 540-604, pope from 590 until his death in 604.

the death of Bishop Gizurr, Hafliði Másson became wounded at the alþingi and the case did not reach a verdict that summer.

Böðvarr alone lived of the sons of Bishop Gizurr when he passed away, but his other sons passed away before: Teitr, Ásgeirr, Þórðr and Jón. Gróa also lived for a long time afterwards and became a nun and passed away in Skálholt in the days of Bishop Klængr. During the episcopate of Bishop Gizurr, many events of great note took place: the death of the holy King Knútr in Funen and of Benedikt, his brother¹ and of William, king of England;² the death of King Óláfr kyrri³ and Hákon Magnússon in Norway;⁴ the fall of King Magnús berbeinn⁵ west in Ireland at Ulster; the translation of the Holy Bishop Nicholas to Bari;⁶ the passing of King Óláfr Magnússon in Norway;⁷ the death of Earl Magnús inn helgi;⁸ the passing of the lawspeakers, Markús and Úlfheðinn,⁹ and of Teitr Ísleifsson and the other sons of Bishop Ísleifr;¹⁰ of the eruption in Mount Hekla,¹¹ and many other events of great note, though they are not laid out here.

¹ Knútr Sveinsson (Canute IV, Canute the Saint): d. 1086; Benedikt: d. 1086.

² William I of England: d. 1086.

³ Óláfr 'the calm': d. 1093.

⁴ Hákon Magnússon, grandson of Haraldr Sigurðarson harðráði: d. 1094.

⁵ Magnús 'bare-legged': d. 1103.

⁶ Saint Nicholas: Fourth-century bishop from Myra in Asia Minor (now Turkey). In 1087, his relics were translated and enshrined in Bari, which then became a pilgrimage site.

⁷ King Óláfr Magnússon: d.1115.

⁸ Earl Magnús 'the holy': d. 1116.

⁹ Markús: d. 1107; Úlfheðinn: d. 1116/17.

¹⁰ Teitr Ísleifsson: d. 1110/11.

¹¹ Hekla erupted in 1104.

Chapter VI

Þorlákr, the son of Runólfr, who was son of Þorlákr, son of Þórarinn, son of Þorkell skotakollr,¹ and the son of Hallfríðr, daughter of Snorri, who was son of ‘Karlsefni,’² was raised with his father in early childhood, but he was educated in Haukadalur. Early on, he was sagacious and well-mannered and endeared to every good man. He was then already a very religious man at a young age and quick in understanding and devoted to the priesthood. He was agreeable and humble and un-meddlesome, giving of good counsel, and sincere with all those who were near him, meek and merciful with those for whom it was necessary, attached to his kinsmen and foresighted in most things, both on his own behalf and that of others. Þorlákr was at that time two winters into his fourth decade³ when he was elected bishop, and one may infer from this what sort of man he was when the man who was wisest and noblest and best known to him chose him to undertake the greatest of obligations, and that man was Bishop Gizurr.

Þorlákr was an average-sized man, long-faced and with light chestnut hair, amiable, but not called a fine man to look at by the whole people, nor very striking in the estimation of most people by far. And when he went abroad, so was it then said that there must be very little choice of men in the country, and to them he seemed unfit to be sent to such honour. But he himself answered that it would not come to that, and declared it most important that he had concealed his faults more from men than from God, and from this reply the men thought themselves to know that he would be well suited for such honour. And when he came to an audience with Archbishop Qzurr he then soon saw what sort of man Þorlákr was and received him with honour and esteem, but had a certain reluctance about his ordination, and declared himself not to know how to set head upon head.⁴ But nevertheless, at the sending of word from Bishop Gizurr, he then promised him ordination but would not ordain him to a see at which there was another bishop before him, and bade him choose for himself the see to which he might be ordained, but nevertheless permitted that he might be at Skálholt if Bishop Gizurr had allowed him that, if he were alive when Bishop Þorlákr would return. Þorlákr was ordained bishop

¹ Þorkell ‘Scot-head.’

² The name ‘*Karlsefni*’ actually refers to Þorfinnr Þórðarson *karlsefni*.

³ Two winters into his fourth decade: i.e. thirty-two years of age.

⁴ To ‘set head upon head’: part of the ordination ceremony.

three nights before the Festival of Saints Philip and Jacob, and he was ordained to the Episcopal see of Reykholt in Borgarfjörður. But he was ordained in Denmark thirty days before Bishop Gizurr passed away in Skálholt.

Bishop Þorlákr went to Iceland the same summer as he was ordained, and the people received him joyfully, as was due. He retained the same humility in his episcopate as he had had before, and he let all his virtues increase, and none diminish while he lived. He took on many men for instruction, and they afterwards became good clerics, and he reinforced Christianity in Iceland in many respects.

Then when Bishop Þorlákr had been bishop in Skálholt for three winters, Bishop Jón Qgmundarson of Hólar passed away, and then Ketill Þorsteinsson was chosen in his stead; and he went out from Iceland and south to Denmark and was there ordained bishop ten nights after Candlemas and came to Iceland the summer that followed. In his day, Bishop Þorlákr cleared the way for it that a section of Christian law was set down in writing at that time, in accordance with the foresight of the wisest men in the country and the deliberations of Archbishop Qzurr; and they were both present to oversee, Bishop Þorlákr and Bishop Ketill, and there was much more which they set out and arranged in their day concerning the reformation of religion for the country's inhabitants. Bishop Þorlákr offered to Hallr Teitsson of Haukadalur that he foster one of his children, and then Gizurr, Hallr's son, went to Skálholt, and the bishop was so affectionate with him as if he were his own son, and foretold of him that which later came to pass, that such a distinguished person as he was would scarcely be found in Iceland, and that was afterwards proved by experience.

The same priest always served Þorlákr while he lived and he was bishop, who was named Tjörvi and was the son of Bqðvarr, a most glorious man, and he had been with Bishop Gizurr before, and one could see from this and his other magnificent daily conducts how even-tempered he was for good during his life. Each day he sang a third of the Psalter, slowly and rationally, and more than otherwise he taught and wrote or read over the Holy Writ or healed the condition of those men who were in need of it and came to meet him. Never was he idle. He was open-handed with the wretches, but called tight-fisted by the common people, and yet never spared money necessary for all useful things.

But when Bishop Þorlákr was three winters short of fifty years of age he then took ill after that and lay in the sleeping-room in which he was wont to sleep; his clerics also. And when the sickness began to worsen he then had a book read over him, the one which is named *Cura pastoralis*. Pope Gregory¹ has made that book and it recounts distinctly how that man, who shall be a leader to other men, shall conduct himself in everything. And it seemed to the men that he felt better then about the prospect of his own death than he did before the book was read. He then prepared himself for his death as he himself chose, but the common people did not know what took place in terms of the sickness, right up until his death.

Þorlákr was ordained bishop in the days of Pope Gelasius;² he was then thirty-three years of age. At that time, Eysteinn and Sigurðr Jórsalafari³ were kings in Norway. He passed away the day before the Feast of Saint Brigid;⁴ he had then been bishop for fifteen winters, and was buried beside the previous bishops. Eleven hundred and twenty-six winters had then passed since the birth of Christ.

¹ Pope Gregory I (Gregory the Great): his book *Cura pastoralis* is a handbook for bishops and monks; cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:26, footnote 2.

² Pope Gelasius II: d. 1119.

³ Sigurður 'Jerusalem-farer.'

⁴ Feast Day of Saint Brigid: 1st February.

Chapter VII

This event happened in the north of the country on the same day that Bishop Þorlákr passed away, that at the same moment the learned and worshipful priest, who was named Árni, the son of Björn Karlsefnisson,¹ went on his way. He heard a beautiful song up in heaven above him, and there was sung this cantilena² of Bishop Lambert:

Sic animam claris cælorum reddidit astris.³

And it was then understood, that which was later proved true, that no man had been there in proximity. Thereafter, many people thought much about this event to be of great importance and they did not let this disappear from their minds.

There is much that is remarkable and good to tell about Bishop Þorlákr Runólfsson. These events happened during his episcopate, namely that at that time, the holy Bishop Jón of Hólar passed away, also King Eysteinn and Sigurður Jórsalafari. Priest Sæmundr inn fróði⁴ passed away the very next spring after Bishop Þorlákr had passed away during the preceding winter. There was also the killing of Þorsteinn Hallvarðsson and of Þórir Símunarson. Then Bergþórr the lawspeaker passed away. At that time, there was the lawsuit of Hafliði Mátsson and Þorgils Oddason, also their reconciliation. Many chieftains were not on good terms with Bishop Þorlákr on account of their unwillingness to yield homage, and some for improbity and breaches of the law, but he handled everything as his means best allowed.

¹ Though the text gives Árni's father's name as Björn Karlsefnisson, he is otherwise known as Björn Þorfinnsson karlsefni (i.e. Björn son of Þorfinnr Þórðarson karlsefni).

² A cantilena: a song.

³ The cantilena continues as follows: *quam sacer angelicus/ deduxit ad aethera*. The complete passage roughly translates as: In this way, he gave his soul to (or 'hid his soul with') the stars of the heavens, where the holy crowd of angels led to the heavens (cf. *Analecta hymnica medii aevi* xxvi 1886-1922:232. See also Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:27, footnote 2). Lambert was bishop in Maastricht (d. 705).

⁴ Sæmundr 'the learned.'

Chapter VIII

Magnús was the son of Einarr, son of Magnús, son of Þorsteinn, son of Hallr of Síða, and of Þuríðr, daughter of Gils, son of Hafr, son of Svertingr, son of Hafr-Björn, son of Molda-Gnúpr. Magnús was raised with Einarr, his father, and Oddný, his stepmother, the daughter of priest Magnús Þórðarson of Reykholt. They said themselves to have loved him most of all their children. Magnús was educated for the priesthood and consecrated with full orders before he was a priest. Magnús was a beautiful man to behold and rather a tall man in stature, with fine eyes and possessing shapely limbs, affable and handsome and most magnificent of all men in his whole appearance and fine manners. He was gentle and humble with all, and steadfast of mind, more than a match for his obligations, attached to his kinsmen, greatly learned and eloquent. He also proved to be well-versed in each of two things: household management and voyages and was always reconciler to all men wherever he was present at the men's suits, and spared neither his words nor wealth to that end.

But when Bishop Þorlákr had passed away during the winter before, Magnús was then elected bishop in the following summer, and he intended to go on the journey out from Iceland that summer but was driven back by the weather in Blönduós and was then in Skálholt during the winter and went out from Iceland to Norway in the next summer after. The summer he went out from Iceland was when Magnús Sigurðarson and his men and Haraldr gilli¹ fought each other at Fyrileiv,² and Haraldr then fled south to Denmark. Magnús, the bishop elect, also went south to Denmark the same autumn, and gave gifts to King Haraldr, and then began their great friendship. Magnús went to an audience with Archbishop Qzurr and he received him honourably and ordained him bishop on the Feast of Saint Simon.³ The winter that followed, Bishop Magnús was in Sarpsborg until King Haraldr was residing in his country; then he went to him and the king received him joyfully and with the greatest honour and esteem, and he was with him until he went back out to Iceland and then received splendid gifts from the king: a

¹ Haraldr gilli: Harald IV of Norway, d. 1136. His byname, *gilli*, possibly comes from *gilla Crist/ Gilla Christ*, 'servant of Christ.'

² The battle in Fyrileiv in Bohuslän (9th August 1134) is also told of in *Heimskringla*, *Morkinskinna* and *Fagrskinna* (as far as Old Icelandic texts are concerned).

³ The Feast of Saint Simon (and Saint Jude): 28th October.

cup used at table which weighed eight marks and was thereafter made into a chalice, and many other gifts, since the king was open-handed and generous with his friends.

Bishop Magnús came out to Iceland during the alþingi and came to Eyjafjörður and rode to the þing, and came there when the men were at court, and had not come to terms over a certain matter. But then a man came to the court and said that Bishop Magnús rode to the þing. And the men rejoiced so much at this statement that at once all the men went home. But after that the Bishop walked out on the courtyard before the church and said to all the men at the same time those tidings which had taken place in Norway while he was abroad, and all the men thought very highly of his oratory and manliness. Then it was quickly proved what an excellent man he was in his magnanimity and foresight, both for his own sake and others, because he never spared money while he was bishop in order to reconcile those who were previously were in disagreement, and always proffered his own money towards this end when monetary dispute came between them, and as a result there were soon no quarrels between people while Magnús was bishop. He retained the same humility he had had before towards the common people, though he was bishop, and as a result he was more popular than most other men and had thereby accomplished many great things to that end.

Bishop Magnús had the church in Skálholt expanded greatly and afterwards consecrated, and the church-day was set on the Feast Day of the Seljamenn, but it had previously been the Feast of the Cross in spring, at that time when Bishop Gizurr had consecrated it.¹ Bishop Magnús had the church hung with all those tapestries which he had brought out to Iceland and they were the greatest treasures. He also brought out that pallium out of which was made that chasuble which is called an ‘escariment’.² Bishop Magnús also strengthened the see so much with many endowments, and both the Episcopal see and those who have later taken care of it have, for a long time, benefitted from that. He bought Árnes and Sandártunga and nearly all the Westman Islands for the see at Skálholt before he passed away and intended to establish a monastery there, but his life did not come to an end with that accomplished.

¹ The Feast Day of the Seljumenn, i.e. the people of Selja (Icelandic: ‘Seljumannamessa’): 8th July; the Feast Day of the Cross (‘Cross Mass’) in spring: 3rd May.

² *Escarimant* is an Old French word which I have substituted for Old Icelandic *skarmendingr* (called *skarbindingr* in C- group and D manuscripts), and means mass vestments. Cf. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989; also Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:30, footnote 2).

But then as Bishop Ketill had now become well over seventy years of age, he then went to the *alþingi* and commended himself to the prayers of all the learned men at the conference of priests, and then Bishop Magnús invited him home with him to Skálholt to the consecration day of his church and the wedding which would be there at that time. That feast was so very elaborate that the like are hardly ever exemplified in Iceland; a great mead was blended and there were all other provisions, the best there could be. And on Friday evening, both bishops went to the hot spring in Laugarás after the evening meal. But then there happened a great event of note. There Bishop Ketill died, and the men thought that a great event of note. It was felt as a great affliction by many people there at that feast until the Bishop was buried and he was laid to rest in peace. But by the persuasion of Bishop Magnús and that excellent drink which men had there to drink, the men then put it from their minds somewhat more quickly than they otherwise would have done.

But after that Björn Gilsson was elected bishop of Hólar and he went out from Iceland with the brief of Bishop Magnús to Archbishop Áskell,¹ and Björn was ordained bishop the next day after the Feast of the Cross in spring, and went out hither [to Iceland] the summer of that same year and was Bishop at Hólar for fifteen winters.

But then when fifteen winters had passed from the death of Bishop Þorlákr Runólfsson, and Magnús had been bishop for fourteen winters, then that misfortune struck in Iceland, compared to which there has not been another such great loss in a person's death. At that time, Bishop Magnús had travelled over the West Fjords and was in Hítardalur at Michaelmas, but the next day after the Feast Day a fire then started there in the house around around 9 o' clock in the evening, and the bishop did not become aware of it sooner than he thought it was not safe to get out, and it was as though he did not wish to do both: to flee from the threat of death which he then saw approaching, but had always before begged Almighty God that He should spare him that death in which he felt his suffering would be long. Bishop Magnús lost his life there in the house-fire and with him were two and eighty men. There died priest Tjörvi Bøðvarsson, who had always served him during his episcopate. Seven other priests died there and all worshipful. The bodies of the bishop and Tjörvi were nearly unburnt and were both

¹ Archbishop *Áskell*: anglicised name form *Askel*.

removed to Skálholt, and then the rational men, the priest Páll Sölvason from Reykholt and Guðmundr Koðránsón, were sent to Fljótshlíð to tell these tidings to Hallr Teitsson and Eyjólfur Sæmundarson and the other chiefs who were with him at the feast. They immediately went to Skálholt. But from the west, with the bodies of the bishop and Tjörvi, there came the priest Guðmundr Brandsson and Snorri Svertingsson and more worthy men to Skálholt by the Feast of Saint Dionysius.¹ And on the Feast of Saint Gereon² the bodies were buried beside the grave of the previous bishops, and during no other winter has there come about more of an unhappy nature than at that time, when men were doomed to part, whereby nearly each man had to part from his dear friend in Hítardalur.

Bishop Magnús was ordained Bishop by Archbishop Qzurr in the days of Pope Anacletus³ and in the days of King Haraldr gilli and Magnús Sigurðarson, kings of Norway. He was then more than thirty-five in winters. But he died in the house-burning in Hítardalur on the fifth day of the week, one night after Michaelmas. Eleven hundred and forty-one winters had then passed since the birth of Christ. He had then been bishop for fourteen winters. At that time, while Magnús was bishop, the townspeople⁴ betrayed Haraldr gilli, and then fell King Magnús Sigurðarson⁵ and Sigurðr slembidjárn.⁶ There was then the killing of Þórir Steinmóðsson and the death of Archbishop Qzurr and Hrafn Úlfheðinsson the lawspeaker and Finnur the lawspeaker, and Henry, king of England,⁷ and much else by way of great tidings took place in his day.

After the death of Bishop Magnús, the next summer, a man had to be chosen as bishop, and Hallr Teitsson went out from Iceland, and in every place he came to at that time he spoke their tongue as though he had always been a native of that place. Hallr died in Utrecht when they went back⁸ and was not ordained bishop. But then when the news of

¹ Feast Day of Saint Dionysius (also commonly known as Saint Denis, also as Dennis or Denys): 9th October.

² Feast Day of Saint Gereon: 10th October.

³ Antipope Anacletus II: d. 1138.

⁴ Townspeople: i.e. of Norway.

⁵ Haraldr gilli was murdered in his sleep. Magnús Sigurðarson: d. 1139.

⁶ Sigurðr 'sham deacon,' or 'noisy deacon.'

⁷ Þórir Steinmóðsson: d. 1136; Archbishop Qzurr: d. 1137; Hrafn Úlfheðinsson: d. 1139; Finnur Hallsson the lawspeaker: d. 1145; Henry I of England: d. 1st December 1135.

⁸ Note that Hallr was not simply ordained in Lund as the other bishops were, so it is implied that Hallr needed to go to Rome itself first to receive ordination from the Pope of the right branch of Christianity,

the death of Hallr Teitsson reached Iceland and men learned that they then would still need to elect a bishop, it was then the choice of all the men who had to decide, with help from the foresight of Bishop Björn at Hólar, that the men elected as bishop a man from the north of Iceland, the one who was named Klængr, and was son of Þorsteinn and of Halldóra Eyjólfsdóttir.

though it is not clear in this text whether the Pope rejected him or if he had planned to go afterwards to Lund. Cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:34, footnote 2.

Chapter IX

Klængr Þorsteinsson was a beautiful man in appearance and of middling height, lively and imposing in appearance and fully accomplished and a good writer and the greatest scholar. He was eloquent and steadfast in friendship and the greatest skald. He had been with Bishop Ketill and he possessed his good conduct in many respects. Klængr went out from Iceland the same summer as he was elected bishop, with the brief of Bishop Björn, to an audience with Archbishop Áskell, and he ordained Klængr bishop twelve nights after the Feast of Saint Mary¹ in spring. And in the summer that followed he went out to Iceland. And there had then come from the south, from Rome, and all the way out from Bari, Gizurr Hallsson; and he went back with him, and then the men were able to rejoice in the two greatest paragons in Iceland at the same time. Great timbers came out in two ships, those timbers which Bishop Klængr had had hewn in Norway for that church which he had built in Skálholt, in which everything was far more elaborate than in every other house, all those which were made in Iceland, both in wood and in workmanship.²

And when the bishop came to the see in Skálholt he then at once became so popular with the common people that those people who had at first set themselves against him in their minds then loved him equally well with all their hearts when he had resided at the see for only a short while. It is not extraordinary that it should have turned out thus since he was magnanimous and munificent with his friends and open-handed and charitable to poor men. He was mild and humble with all, he was cheerful and witty and an even-tempered man with his friends, so that one could turn thither for resolution for every matter while he was there at the see, whatever kind was needed.

He had the construction of the church begun as soon as he had been bishop for one winter. To the other men, the contributions to the making of the church appeared to be so great each year, both in terms of the acquisition of timbers and buying of carpentry work and that manpower which followed, that to the wise men it seemed thus, as if all the moveable property would need to be allotted to it, that which came to the see in tithes and other contributions. In the second place, the estate stood in such need of great

¹ Feast Day of Saint Mary: 25th March.

² Alliteration is the same as in *Stories of the bishops of Iceland* 1895:61.

contributions every year for the sake of the great number of people and hospitality and other expenses that it seemed as though it would require all the chattels which the Episcopal see owned. In the third place, he gave such crowded feasts and such large gifts of money to his friends, which were both numerous and noble, that almost a bottomless source of wealth to lay out was needed there. But Almighty God, who gives from himself all goodness, let none of the share of the wealth which was needed be found lacking, both for the building of the church and those other expenses which the bishop wished to lay out while he lived. These were the chief smiths of the church in Skálholt: Árni, who was called ‘chief builder’ and Björn inn hagi¹ Þorvaldsson. Illugi Leifsson also carved the timbers. And then when the church was fully finished, Runólfur biskupsson² composed this stanza:

Strong is the hall,
she whom the mighty leader³ had built
for gentle of mind Christ -
good is the cause under such action.
Good luck it was,
when Íugtanni⁴ made God’s great house.
Peter⁵ has come to possess
the glorious structure of Árni and Björn.⁶

¹ Björn ‘the handy,’ or ‘the skilful.’

² Runólfur ‘bishop’s son’: son of Ketill Þorsteinsson and Gróa Gizurardóttir.

³ ‘Mighty leader’: i.e. Bishop Klængur.

⁴ Íugtanni: ‘Fierce-tooth,’ a kenning for a bear, *björn* in Old Icelandic, so referring to Björn, the church smith.

⁵ The cathedral in Skálholt was hallowed to Saint Peter. (Feast Day of Saint Peter and Paul the Apostles: 29th June.)

⁶ Disney Leith presents the following interpretation of the stanza, focussing less on literal meaning than on achieving end-rhyme: ‘Strong the Temple that is fashioned, Unto Christ the merciful; Firmly founded by the counsel, Of the ruler bountiful. Happy fate that Igultanni, Here the House of God should build; Holy Peter owns with favour, Bjorn and Arni, workmen skilled.’ (*Stories of the bishops of Iceland* 1895:62.)

Chapter X

Bishop Klœngr was such a great taker up of lawsuits, if he was sought for assistance, that he was a great leader on account of both wisdom and oratory. The law of the land was also better known by him than almost anyone else. For that reason, those chieftains were always successful in their lawsuits with whom the bishop was in agreement. There was also not an arbitration in great suits in which Bishop Klœngr would not be involved. They who were the most worthy men in Iceland, Jón Loptsson and Gizurr Hallsson, were also his most trusted friends. Bishop Klœngr also made an exchange of gifts with the most important leaders in other lands, those which were in proximity; and for such things he became blessed with friends, both out of the country and within.

And then when the church was finished in Skálholt, so that to the bishop it seemed ready for consecration, the bishop then held a great and glorious feast for his friends and invited thither Bishop Björn and Abbot Nikulás¹ and many chiefs, and there was the greatest multitude of guests. They both consecrated the church in Skálholt, Klœngr and Björn, one inside and the other outside, and both hallowed it to Saint Peter the Apostle, just it had been before, but Abbot Nikulás had the [role of the] saying of the preamble. That was on the Feast of Saint Vitus the martyr.² But after the divine service, Bishop Klœngr invited all those men who had been at the church consecration to have their day-meal there, those men who thought it would suit them better, and yet it was done more out of munificence than complete foresight, because it always turns out in one way to rely on [the judgement of] many foolish men when one wise man may well conduct himself with temperance,³ and this was very much the case here because no fewer than seven hundred man had a day-meal there, and it became difficult with provisions before the day was done. That feast was absolutely splendid, so it seemed to all those men who were invited thither; and all those who were men of rank were sent away with great gifts.

¹ Nikulás Bergsson: d. 1159, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Þverá (now known as Munka-Þverá) in Eyjafjörður. The name *Nicholaus* (Latin) appears in ÍF XVI 2002:38. I have decided to change the orthography to standard Icelandic orthography, Nikulás, to agree with the patronymic Bergsson and to reflect that Nikulás was an Icelander, rather than leave it in the Latin form.

² Feast Day of Saint Vitus: 15th June.

³ The author is saying, in other words, that when one guest alone is invited to a meal he may be more sensible or restrained and not over-eat, while a large group of men invited to a meal may be foolish and greedy and help themselves to more than is fair or right.

Bishop Klœngr had the church, the one he had made at Skálholt, adorned with as much as he could procure until it was completely furnished. He had a gold chalice made, and set with gemstones, and gave it to the church. He also had great breviaries written, much better than they were before. It occupied all of his time to teach theological students preparing for orders; he also wrote and sang the Psalter and nevertheless told everything that was necessary. In many ways he was more chastising of the body than other bishops had been in terms of waking and fasting and apparel. He often walked barefoot by night in snow and frost.

Then when Bishop Klœngr had been bishop for ten winters, Bishop Björn of Hólar passed away, two nights after the Feast of Saint Luke,¹ when he had been bishop for fifteen winters. But during the following summer, the priest Brandr Sæmundarson was chosen, and he brought with him, out from Iceland, the brief of Bishop Klœngr to the audience with Archbishop Eysteinn, and he was ordained bishop on the Latter Feast of Mary, and was in Bergen during the winter, and so was Jón Loptsson. But later the bishop went out to Iceland during the following summer and established himself in the Episcopal see at Hólar, to which he was ordained.

¹ Feast Day of Saint Luke: 18th October.

Chapter XI

Bishop Klængr retained his glory and popularity well into old age, so that all those who were the worthiest honoured him much. But when he began to grow old, a great illness then took hold of him, and at first his feet began to open up from the cold and self-chastisement and those discomforts which he had had. But when he began to suffer from both old age and failing health, he then sent his brief out from Iceland to Archbishop Eysteinn and begged his permission that he should be allowed to relinquish the important business of his episcopate and to choose another bishop in his place, following the example of Bishop Gizurr. And this message came back from the archbishop, that with his leave should he choose the bishop and send him out from Iceland, but he should uphold divine service and teaching while he might be capable of it, although he might not be able to make the passage over the country.

Bishop Klængr went to the alþingi and then besought the chiefs that a man should be elected bishop, and it was the counsel of all men that he should choose whomever he wished. And he chose Þorlákr Þórhallsson, who was at that time abbot in Þykkvabær, and it was the great good fortune of Bishop Klængr that he chose that man to follow him who is now undoubtedly a saint, and all may know that never before has any man in Iceland proved to be more so than the holy Bishop Þorlákr, who was then elected bishop. But nevertheless, Bishop Klængr had the administration of the Episcopal see that year and yet it was uneasy to rule it since at the time no gifts belonged to the Episcopal see, but in no way did the outlay become less. Bishop Klængr himself gave up the administration of the see and gave it into the hands of Abbot Þorlákr and those men whom he chose to be with him. But in the last half-year which Bishop Klængr lived he almost never rose from his bed and after that he prepared himself for his own death, which each wise man would most willingly choose for oneself after a long period of ill health.

Klængr was ordained bishop by Archbishop Áskell in the days of Pope Eugene¹ and in the days of Eysteinn and Sigurðr, kings of Norway. He was then forty-seven years old and he was bishop for twenty-four winters. He passed away three nights after the Feast

¹ Pope Blessed Eugene III: d. 1153.

of Saint Matthias,¹ and the anniversary of his death is commemorated then, but four nights after if it is not a leap year; at the time it was the ‘wash-day’² in the Ember days³ in Lent. There had then passed from the birth of Christ, in the count of years, one winter fewer than seventy into the twelfth hundred⁴ and he was buried beside the previous bishops. But Abbot Þorlákr stood over him, over both his burial and over the moment of his last breath and it befell him auspiciously in many ways that such a man should stand over him, both in the passing of life and in death, as the blessed bishop Þorlákr now proves to be before God.

Many great tidings happened of note while Klængr was bishop, although I do not mention many here. At that time, the first thing was the death of the brothers Gillason, kings of Norway, first Sigurðr and then Eysteinn and last Ingi;⁵ also the death of Archbishop Jón⁶ and the fall of Hákon herðibreiðr⁷ and the death of Bishop Björn of Hólar. In the days of Bishop Klængr, the holy Archbishop Thomas in England was murdered,⁸ and in his day fire came up in Hekluþjall another time.⁹ At that time there was also that earthquake in which there was great loss of life.¹⁰ These Icelandic men died while Klængr was bishop: Jón Sigmundarson and Abbot Hreinn, Páll Þórðarson and Guðmundr Ketilsson, Bjarnheðinn Sigurðarson the priest, and Beinir, his brother. There was the killing of Helgi Skaptason, and then Nikulás Sigurðarson¹¹ was slain in Trondheim. Now it may seem to us, for many reasons, as though there may not have

¹ Feast Day of Saint Matthias: 24th February, or 25th February in leap years.

² ‘Wash-day’: i.e. Saturday.

³ Ember days: four sets of three days within the same week, i.e. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, roughly evenly spaced throughout the year. The days were formally set aside for prayer and fasting and considered especially suitable for the ordination of clergy. Latin: *quattuor anni tempora*, ‘four seasons of the year’ or *jeinia quattuor temporum* (formal) ‘fasts of the four seasons’. *Imbrudagr* most likely derives from a loan word from England, but some Old Norse texts mistakenly trace the word back to Latin *imber*, or even to an old woman called *Imbra* because the etymology was lost; cf. Cleasby/Guðbrandur Vigfússon *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* 1874.

⁴ One winter fewer than seventy into the twelfth hundred: i.e. 1169.

⁵ Sigurðr Gillason: d. 1155; Eysteinn Gillason: d. 1157; Ingi Gillason: d. 1161. The brothers’ real patronymic is *Haraldsson* (Sigurðr Haraldsson gilla, i.e. Sigurðr, son of Haraldr gilli) though the *Hungrvaka* text uses ‘Gillason.’

⁶ Archbishop Jón Birgisson: d. 1157.

⁷ Hákon ‘broad-shouldered’: d. 1162.

⁸ Archbishop Thomas Becket was made archbishop of Canterbury by Henry II of England, d. 1170.

⁹ Mount Hekla erupted in 1158.

¹⁰ The earthquake happened in Grímsnes in 1164.

¹¹ The name *Nicholaus* (Latin) appears in ÍF XVI 2002:41. I have decided to change the orthography to standard Icelandic orthography, Nikulás, to agree with the patronymic Sigurðarson and to reflect that Nikulás was an Icelander, rather than leave it in the Latin form.

been such an outstanding man in Iceland as Bishop Kloengr was. We wish and intend that his magnificence shall live on in memory while Iceland is inhabited.

Now it has come to that account which shall tell of the blessed Bishop Þorlákr,¹ and this saga is here composed for entertainment, to tell to good men, like those other sagas which heretofore are written. But as well as the account may tell about each of them, there is nevertheless no example more beautiful in every respect than the one to tell about this glorious friend of God, Bishop Þorlákr, who may rightly be called ray or gemstone most holy, both in this land and likewise anywhere else in the world. He may in truth be called the Apostle of Iceland, just as the holy Bishop Patrick is called the Apostle of Ireland,² since they furthered the work of the apostles themselves in their teaching and patience with both disobedient and unrighteous men.³

¹ Ásdís Egilsdóttir suggests that with this line, it is *implied* that *Hungrvaka* was always intended as a prologue to Þorláks saga (Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ÍF XVI 2002:42, footnote 2), however, she has also made clear that she herself is not necessarily saying that the line was an original part of the text, or that in *reality* *Hungrvaka* was always intended as a prologue. The line in question may, for example, have been added by a post medieval scribe engaged in copying the text, and added this line himself to cultivate this idea that the texts were always linked.

² That is to say, Þorlákr and Patrick are the patron saints of Iceland and Ireland, respectively.

³ On 14th January 1984, Bishop Þorlákr was officially canonised by Pope John Paul II and has since been officially recognised (without Iceland as well as within) as the patron saint of Iceland.

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Index of personal names (including names of saints and Feast Days)

Please note: numbers in parenthesis - (1) - directly after a name are used to distinguish between persons when there is more than one person with the same name in the text, or when there is more than one Feast Day dedicated to the same person.

Also, given names with no patronymics are listed before names with patronymics. Nicknames have not been taken into account as far as the alphabetising of given names is concerned, unless there are otherwise no distinguishing naming features, e.g. Magnús Ólafsson *berbeinn* has been listed before Magnús Ólafsson *inn góði*.

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Hrafn Úlfheðinsson, lawspeaker (d. 1139): 65.

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Hrólfur Úlfsson, of Geitland; father of Halldóra: 46.

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Ingi Gillason (otherwise known as Ingi Haraldsson gilla), king of Norway (d. 1161): 72.

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Ketill (2) Þorsteinsson, bishop of Hólar; husband of Gróa Gizuradóttir: 55, 59, 64, 67.

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Knútr Sveinsson (Canute IV, Canute the Saint), (d. 1086): 57.

Kolr (1), bishop who came to Iceland from abroad, buried in Skálholt: 47, 49.

Kolr (2) Þorkelsson Víkverjabiskup, bishop in Vik in Norway (d. c.1120), student of Ísleifr Gizurarson: 48.

Lambert (Lambertus), cantilena of Bishop Lambert: 61.

Leo (Leonem) IX, Pope: 47.

Liemar (Liemarus), Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen from 1072-1101. He stood with Henry IV in his dealings with the Pope, was excommunicated in 1075 and from 1081-1083 was beside Henry in piracy: 53.

Luke (Lúkas), Feast Day of Saint Luke (Lúkasmessa, 18th October): 70.

Magnús (1) Einarsson, bishop of Skálholt (1134-1148): 62-65.

Magnús (2) Erlendsson inn helgi, earl (d. 1116): 57.

Magnús (3) Haraldsson, king of Norway (1066-1069), son of Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson and brother of Óláfr kyrri: 51.

Magnús (4) Ólafsson berbeinn, king of Norway alongside Hákon Magnússon and afterwards (d. 1103): 57.

Magnús (5) Ólafsson inn góði (d. 1047), son of King Óláfr inn helgi, king of Denmark (after Hǫrðaknútr Knútsson, d. 1042): 50-51.

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Magnús (7) Þorsteinsson, paternal grandfather of Bishop Magnús: 62.

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Matthias (Matthías), Feast Day of Saint Matthias (Matthíasmessu, 24th February or 25th February in leap years): 72.

Michael, Feast Day of Saint Michael the Archangel (Michaelismessu), known as Michaelmas (currently 29th September; Old Michaelmas Day: 11th of 10th October): 56, 64-65.

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Molda-Gnúpr Hrólfsson, father of Hafr-Björn: 62.

Nicholas (Nicholaus), known as Holy Bishop Nicholas or Saint Nicholas, a fourth-century bishop from Myra in Asia Minor (now Turkey); in 1087, his relics were translated and enshrined in Bari, which then became a pilgrimage site: 57.

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Nikulás (2, Nicholaus) Sigurðarson (d. 1176): 72.

Oddný Magnúsdóttir, daughter of priest Magnús Þórðarson of Reykholt and stepmother of Bishop Magnús: 62.

Óláfr (1) Haraldsson inn helgi, i.e. Óláfr II, king of Norway (d. 1030): 50-51.

Óláfr (2) Haraldsson kyrri, king of Norway (d. 1093), son of Haraldr harðráði and brother of Magnús Haraldsson: 50, 55, 57.

Óláfr (3) Magnússon, king of Norway (d. 1115): 57.

Paschal (Paschalis) II, Pope from 1099-1118 (d. 1118): 54, 56.

Patrick (Patrekr), bishop: 73.

Peter (Pétr), Saint Peter the Apostle; the cathedral in Skálholt was hallowed to Saint Peter. Feast Day of Saint Peter and Paul the Apostles (29th June): 53, 68-69.

Philip (1, Philippus), Festival of Saints Philip and Jacob (1st May, 'May Day'): 54, 59.

Philip (2, Philippus), king of the Franks (d. 1108): 56.

Páll (1) Sólvason, priest from Reykholt: 65.

Páll (2) Þórðarson, priest in Vatnsfjörður: 72.

Runólfr biskupsson: see **Runólfr** Ketilsson.

Runólfr (1) Ketilsson (also known as Runólfr biskupsson), son of Ketill Þorsteinsson and Gróa Gizurardóttir: 68.

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Rúðólfr, known also as Úlfr, foreign bishop: 50.

Seljamenn (people of Selja), Feast Day of the Seljamenn (*Seljamannamesa*, 8th July): 63.

Sigurðr (1) Gillason (otherwise known as Sigurðr Haraldsson gilla), king of Norway (d. 1155): 71-72.

Sigurðr (2) Magnússon Jórsalafari, the ‘Jerusalem-farer,’ king of Norway: 60-61.

Sigurðr (3) Magnússon(?) slembidjárn: 65.

Simon (Simo), Feast of Saint Simon and Saint Jude (*Simonismessa*, 28th October): 62.

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Snorri (2) Svertingsson: 65.

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Sveinn Úlfsson, king of the Danes: 51.

Svertingr Hafr-Bjarnarson, father of Hafr: 62.

Sæmundr Sigfússon inn fróði, priest at Oddi (d.1133): 53, 61.

Teitr (1) Gizurarson, son of Bishop Gizurr of Skálholt: 57.

Teitr (2) Ísleifsson, son of Ísleifr Gizurarson and brother of Gizurr Ísleifsson: 46, 57.

Teitr (3) Ketilbjarnarson, first inhabitant of Skálholt, father of Gizurr inn hvíti: 46.

Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (d.1170): 72.

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Úlfheðinn Gunnarsson, lawspeaker (d. 1116/17): 57.

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Vilborg Gizurardóttir, daughter of Gizurr inn hvíti and Halldóra; wife of Hjalti Skeggjason: 46.

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William (Vilhjálmr) I, king of England (d. 1086): 57.

Þorfinnr Þórðarson karlsefni (referred to in *Hungrvaka* simply as ‘Karlsefni’), father of Snorri and Björn: 58, 61.

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Þorlákr (2) Þórarinsson, paternal grandfather of Þorlákr Runólfsson: 58.

Þorlákr (3) Þórhallsson inn helgi, abbot in Þykkvabær and bishop of Skálholt (1178-1193): 71-73.

Þorsteinn (1) Arnórsson, father of Klængur, Bishop of Skálholt: 66.

Þorsteinn (2) Hallsson, paternal great-grandfather of Bishop Magnús: 62.

Þorsteinn (3) Hallvarðsson: 61.

Þorsteinn (4) Kuggason: 51.

Þorvaldr Ísleifsson, son of Ísleifr Gizurarson and brother of Gizurr Ísleifsson: 46.

Þórarinn Þorkelsson skotakolls, paternal great-grandfather of Þorlákr Runólfsson: 58.

Þórdís (1), from the Orkneys, second wife of Gizurr inn hvíti: 46.

Þórdís (2) Þóroddsdóttir, daughter of Þóroddr goði; mother of Ísleifr Gizurarson: 46.

Þórðr Gizurarson, son of Gizurr Ísleifsson: 57.

Þórir (1) Broddason, former husband of Steinunn Þorgrímsdóttir: 52.

Þórir (2) Símunarson: 61.

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Þóroddr Eyvindarson goði, maternal grandfather of Ísleifr Gizurarson: 46.

Þuríðr Gilsdóttir, mother of Magnús Einarsson: 62.

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