Klári saga as an Indigenous Romance

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Klári saga (also known as Clári or Clarus saga) survives incomplete in two vellum manuscripts from the late fourteenth century (AM 657b, 4to and Stock. Perg. 4to no. 6) and in a fifteenth-century vellum, AM 589d 4to, as well as in numerous later manuscripts.1 The saga was edited by Gustav Cederschiöld first diplomatically in 1879 and then in a normalized version which appeared in 1907.2 Despite being long accessible, the saga has not excited much critical attention.3 Because

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1. In addition to Klári saga, AM 657a-b 4to contains a considerable collection of exempla. Also the earliest version of the Sögubók af Jóni biskups, originally catalogued as AM 764b 4to, has been restored to AM 657 4to of which it was originally a part (Kristian Kålund, Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske bøndkriftsamling, 2 vols. [Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1888–94], vol. 2, pp. 68–70, 184–5). AM 589d 4to, on the other hand, is a saga manuscript (Kålund, Katalog, vol. 1, p. 755). See Marianne Kalinke and P. M. Mitchell, Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Romances, Islandica 44 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 72–5 for the complete list of the surviving manuscripts of Klári saga, plus editions, translations, and scholarship. To the translations should be added: Dennis Ferrell Kearney, “Clárus saga: An Edition and Translation” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Mississippi, 1990).


3. The sole monograph on the saga is Alfred Jakobsen, Studier i Clarus saga: til spørgsmålet om sagens norske provenien, Arbok for Universitetet i Bergen, Humanistisk serie 1963 2 (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1964), which attempts to claim that the saga was translated from Latin into medieval Norwegian subsequently making its way to Iceland, a position which has garnered little support. See also Marianne Kalinke, “Klári saga,” in Dictionary of the Middle Ages 7 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1986), pp. 274–5 and “Table Decorum and the Quest for a Bride in
the prologue to the saga states that it is based on a Latin poem which
the author encountered in France, it has been classified as belonging
to that group of romances translated from continental models,
largely French, and as a consequence of little interest. Marianne
Kalinke in her Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland finds
Klari saga particularly important for her purposes, as it appears to
be the vehicle whereby the literary motif of the bridal quest entered
Icelandic literature where it was to flourish like nowhere else.
Because the bridal quest romance in Iceland is so closely linked
with Klari saga and because neither the saga’s putative continental
original nor anything closely approximating it has ever materialized,
the time has come to once again take a closer look at the saga. The
following examination argues that Klari saga is not translated from
a continental original, but is an indigenous Icelandic composition, in
its present form from the second quarter of the fourteenth century.
To support this hypothesis, some of the striking features of the saga’s
language will be considered followed by an examination of its narra­tive content.

Language

Klari saga is written in idiomatic Icelandic, which among other
features demonstrates a penchant for metaphors and expressions from
Icelandic legal language. The syntax is often markedly influenced by
Latin, and while the vocabulary of the saga is sprinkled with elements
which are identified as Norwegianisms, there is a much more striking
influx in the narrative of words from Middle Low German. The clue
to this linguistic mixture can be found in the person who is identified
as author in the opening sentence:

Clari saga" in At the Table: Metaphorical and Material Cultures of Food in Medi­
eval and Early Modern Europe, eds. Timothy J. Tomasik and Juliann M. Vitello, Arizona
4. Because Klari saga is considered a “translated saga,” it is unfortunately not consid­
ered where it belongs in Jurg Glauser, Isländische Märchensagas: Studien zur Prosaliteratur
im spätmittelalterlichen Island, Beiträge zur nordischen Philologie 12 (Basel: Helbing und
Lichtenhahn, 1983).
5. Marianne Kalinke, Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland, Islandica 46 (Ithaca: Cornell
Par byrjum vér upp þessa frásögn, sem sagði virðuleguð herra Jón Hallóðrsson, ágætar minningar,—en hann fann hana skrifaða með latínu í Franz í þauð form, er þir kalla rithmos,6 en vör köllum hendingum7 …

(There we begin this story which the worthy reverend Bishop Jón Hallóðrsson of blessed memory told—and he found it in France written in Latin in that form which they call rithmos but which we call “versification.”)

It is generally assumed that Jón Hallóðrsson (†1339), thirteenth Bishop of Skálholt, 1322–1339, was Norwegian in origin, because he entered the Dominican monastery in Bergen as a youth and from there went to study at the Dominican run universities in Paris and Bologna.8 However, the claim to regard Jón as a Norwegian rests on shaky grounds. Flateyjarannallr begins the entry for 1323 with: “kom vt Jonn biskup Freygerdarson” (Bishop Jon, the son of Freigerðr, arrived in Iceland”).9 The woman’s name “Freygerðr” is quite rare, being found, apart from here, only in Landnámabók and Vápnfirdinga saga, but it is distinctly Icelandic and not Norwegian.10 On the other

8. See Biskupa sögr, ed. Guðrún Ása Grimsdóttir et al., 3 vols., Íslensk fornrit 15–17 (Reykjavik: Hið Íslenzka fornritafélag, 1998–2000), vol. 1, pp. cii-iv, and Gunnar Kristjánsson, Saga biskupsstólanna (Reykjavik: Bókaútgáfan Hölar, 2006), pp. 36–37. Scholars have also assumed that Jón was Norwegian, because since the middle of the previous century the Norwegian Metropolitan had shown a preference for Norwegians as bishops in Skálholt and Hölar as part of a policy of strengthening Norwegian control over the Icelandic church. Archbishop Eilífur Arnason must have been aware of Jón Hallóðrsson’s linguistic and scholarly abilities honed during his studies on the continent, and what better candidate for the post at Skálholt than one educated in Norway and overseas and, in addition, having a thorough knowledge of Icelandic.
hand, Halldór, Jón’s father, could have been either Norwegian or Icelandic. The fact that Flateyjárnarnái identifies Jón by his mother’s name suggests that his father had died early. Jón also had a brother, Finnur, who like him was a priest in Bergen. While Klári saga may be stylistically influenced by Latin, it is still also written in highly idiomatic Icelandic. This permits the following scenario. One or possibly both of Jón’s parents are Icelandic. They travel to the bustling Hansa port of Bergen. There both parents die and their children are received in religious order as oblates.

In their search for Norwegian and Latin elements in Klári saga, scholars have tended to overlook how rammislenk (strictly Icelandic) the saga is—and this apart from the fact that the long hundred is used and the text is sprinkled with collocations such as makt og manér (honor and conduct), kukl og klókskapur (sorcery and cunning), med heili ok holdnu (with body and soul in one piece), fuss og jeginn (ready and fain), volk og vandræði (turmoils and tribulations) and that it also uses proverbs such as hinn rikari verbur rab ab segja (the powerful are the ones to give counsel) and eigi ver einn eîður...
alia

(alia oath does not cover all oaths). Another striking example of Icelandic cultural influence occurs when the princess Serena wakes up after having spent the night in the arms of Klárus disguised as Eskelvarð, son of the king of Bláland. She discovers that she is no longer in her palace, and in fact everything familiar to her has vanished. Instead of the elegant bed with embroidered linen sheets in which she went to sleep, she is now lying on the ground covered in a “skarpur skinnstakkur” (coarse leather smock). No longer gazing out over the magnificent griffin-pavilion, she sees instead that:

Raftar eru þar niður lagðir á sléttum velli og við bundnir staurar með skörpum álum, sem fæhrðar eru vanir að búast um.

(Long cross-pieces are laid down on the level field and bound to posts with coarse leather straps such as shepherds are accustomed to set up.)

This is nothing more nor less than the humble færíkvi, or portable sheep pen, which was a ubiquitous sight in the Icelandic countryside from the Middle Ages until well into the nineteenth century. And while such devices may also have existed in Norway and on the European mainland, Bishop Jón was a scholar, not a farmer, and seems to have spent his time in urban centers, not the countryside. Besides, when the sheep were at home from October to May, he could hardly have stepped out from the cathedral church at Skálholt without one or more of these structures impinging themselves upon his sight. The man sleeping beside Serena is also described in ways that share similarities with depictions in subsequent centuries of Icelandic farm laborers, especially by writers who wish to distance themselves socially and intellectually from the working poor.

Another specifically Icelandic feature of the saga is the metaphorical

17. *Riddarasögur* vol. 5, p. 35. This proverb is quite widespread being found in addition to other places in *Bjarnar saga Húsidlaótt* chap. 11 (*Islendinga sögur* og *hættir*, ed. Bragi Haldórsson et al., 3rd ed., 3 vols [Reykjavik: Mál og menning, 1998], vol. 1, p. 88) and *Njáls saga*, chap. 13 (*Islendinga sögur*, vol. 1, p. 142).

18. This garment is used both as a bed-covering and as her husband’s wearing apparel.

use of language that is drawn from the specialized idiom of Icelandic legal vocabulary. Bishop Jón had studied in Bologna, which was famous for its legal school. And while he was bishop of Skálholt, he was clearly involved in legal issues at the Alþingi. In 1326 he was responsible for having the Bannsakabréf (a document listing the causes for excommunication, 24 in all) added to the law. And from 1326–1328 he was involved in the so-called “Möðruvallamál,” the struggle he had with Lárentius Kalfsson (1267–1330), Bishop of Hólar, in an effort to enforce the Archbishop’s edict that the monastery at Möðruvellir be re-established against the wishes of Bishop Lárentius, who had confiscated the lands and income of the monastery after the drunken monks had burned the coister to the ground in 1316.20 At the Alþingi the legal debates were conducted in Icelandic and Bishop Jón would have had plenty of opportunity to absorb the specialized vocabulary subsequently found reflected in the saga.

The first example to be encountered of this legal idiom is the description of Tecla, daughter of the king of Scots, and maiden-in-waiting to Princess Serena:

Bæði var hún listug og fógur med heiðurlegri málsnilld og myndi þykja hið kurtésasta konungsbarn, ef eigi hefði þvílikur gimstein legið í annað skaut sem var Serena konungsdóttir.21

(He was both refined and beautiful with noble eloquence and would have seemed the most courteous king’s child if such a jewel had not lain in another lap of a garment, namely Serena the king’s daughter.)

The term að leggja í skaut is a legal term referring to the casting lots which were marked and placed in the lap or fold (skaut) of a garment from which they would be drawn by some third person as is explained in Grágás: “Hver maður skal merkja hlut sinn og bera alla saman í skaut” (Each man must mark his piece [in the drawing

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The term is used here metaphorically to indicate that it was not to fall to Tecla’s lot to be drawn for the honor of being considered the most elegant and accomplished young woman in the realm, that being reserved for the Princess Serena. Later on in the same chapter Serena listens to the “framburð” of Tecla to treat Klárus respectfully. Here the word can only be used in its legal sense of “a plea presented in a law court” as in Grágás: “Ef maður hefir þa sók að sækja er vottorð fylgir og á hann að beida rétingar að og framburðar” (If a man has a case to prosecute which requires sworn evidence, also he has to request the proper wording and the plea-making). When Serena scolds Klárus for spilling soft-boiled egg on his tunic, she does so, in the phrasing of the narrator, “með svo fóllnum ordum” (with the words as follows). The use of fallinn in this sense had developed also as a legal idiom in the fourteenth century. Fallinn is used in the same sense later in the saga when Tecla reports Serena’s message to Eskelvarð: “er það svo fallið” (and it is as follows). When Serena promises the hideous creature she believes is her husband, that she will love him with all her strength and see to it that he becomes king of Frakkland, she introduces her pledge by saying: “og eg vil borga þér upp á mínat trú” (and I shall pledge on my troth). The verb she uses, að borga, is used in the legal sense “to go bail for.” Finally there is the use of collocations with legal overtones such as land og lög (land and sea) (twice) and að

22. Grágás: Lagasafn íslenska þróðveldisins, ed. Gunnar Karlsson et al. (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 2001), p. 383 (see also p. 401); “þá leggja þer hluti í skaut” (then they placed their lots in the lap of a garment), Vatnskeils saga, chap. 42 (Islendinga sögur, vol. 3, p. 1896. While this latter example does not take place in a legal setting, the action is equally formal and binding. Furthermore, even though a new law code (Jónsbók) had been adopted in 1281, that does not mean traditional legal vocabulary and expressions disappeared overnight, especially since the text of Jónsbók was subject of various amendments (rettarbætur) and not stabilized until the middle of the fourteenth century. See Jónsbók. Lögboð Islendinga hver samþykkt var á alþingi árð 1281 . . . , ed. Már Jónsson (Reykjavík: Haskólaútgáfan, 2002), pp. 16-24.


27. Riddarasögur, vol. 5, p. 45. The phrase is not common in early Icelandic, but frequently encountered in Old Norwegian and may be best regarded here as a Norwegianism.
hlýða bodi og banni (to heed command and prohibition). The first is a legal formula found in Grágás (p. 283) and while the second is something of a commonplace, it too is legal in origin.

While it must remain a matter of speculation whether or not Bishop Jón’s first language may have been Icelandic, there is less ambiguity concerning his knowledge of Latin. In the summer of 1327, Bishop Jón visited Hálar in pursuit of a settlement of the “Móðruvallamál” already mentioned. The southerners had brought with them many books of canon law and Bishop Jón began the proceedings in Latin. When his turn to reply came, Bishop Lárentíus did so in the vernacular (á norrænu): “Vita menn þat, herra Jón, at yðr er svo mjúkt latinu at tala sem móður-tungu yóra, en þó skilir þat ekki allhýða.” (People know that, reverend Jón, that Latin is as easy for you to speak as your mother tongue, but on the other hand the ordinary people do not understand it).

That the syntax of Klári saga is indeed influenced by Latin is hardly a revelation as this aspect of the saga was studied in detail by Alfred Jakobsen in his Studier i Clarus saga. These Latinisms manifest themselves, for example, in the form of participial phrases (“styrkjandi hans ráð og ríki með öllum mætti og megni” [strengthening his rule and realm with all might and main]), tags such as “og hvað meira” (and what more [to say]) reflecting Latin “quis multa”; ablative absolute constructions (“og að skipunum búnnum og öllum hlutum vel til fengnum” [And the ships being ready and matters well taken care of]); and puns (“og betur má hún nú kallast Severa en Serena” [and it would be better to call her ‘Stern’ rather than ‘Serene’]). Furthermore, Latinate names are inflected after prepositions and in oblique cases

30. Biskupa sögur, vol. 1, pp. 405-6 (Lárentíus saga biskups, chapter 55). Lárentíus saga also remarks that Bishops Jón and Lárentíus were considered the two most skilled practitioners of Latin in the country (Biskupa sögur, vol. 1, p. 383).
31. See also Clári saga, pp. xx-xxiv.
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after verbs, but in accordance with Latin, not Icelandic grammar (“til Teclam,” [to Tecla] rather than “til Teclae” reflecting the Latin “ad Teclam”) (see also “með ráðum Teclae” [with the advice of Teclal]). Latin vocabulary is also inserted into the text: “er þær kalla rithmos (< Latin rhythmus “poem”); “i Paradisum”; “hann velur ... bissum ... og cicladem (he chooses fine linen [< bissus] and rich gold-embroidered fabric (< cyclas, -dis); “af þeim carbunculo” (< carbunculus, a bright red stone such as a ruby or red garnet); “þar til sem honum gerist signum” (until is given to him a signum [hand signal]); “upp í það solarium” (up in the upper room < solarium); and “og í durum þess tjalds settur hann ein limitem; það köllum vær þresköld” (and in the doorway of this tent he places a limes; we call that a threshold). This latter presents a small problem because limitem is the accusative singular of limes “a boundary,” not of limen “a threshold” whose accusative singular is liminem. Since limitem is the lectio difficilior, there is a strong argument that it is the original reading and not a later corruption, and that the Latin word is used here to indicate that Pérús places a marker at the door of the tent to distinguish the boundary between the space where Tecla walks freely from the space where she will be constrained to reveal the truth. At some subsequent point in the text’s transmission, however, it was felt necessary to gloss limitem and because the text says shortly afterwards that Tecla “kemur inn um þresköldinn” (crosses over the threshold), a redactor with a less than adequate memory of his Latin grammar, makes an elementary mistake, because it is not possible to believe that Bishop Jón, even on a bad day, would be capable of such a schoolboy’s blunder.

The pervasive influence of Latin on the text is furthermore not a priori evidence that the saga was translated from Latin, for these Latinisms are just as likely to have been second nature to someone as well versed in Latin as Bishop Jón. In addition, these Latinisms are no more than a reflection of what Mattias Tveitane has identified as aspects of a learned style which he discusses in terms of translated prose, but which again is likely to have been equally a feature of the prose style

of a man like Bishop Jón whose skill in Latin was remarkable enough for his contemporaries to comment upon it.

But if this is not sufficient to argue against a supposed Latin original as being the source text for Klári saga, then there is the third notable linguistic feature of the saga which can be called “the German connection.” Whereas the Latinity of the saga is no more than might be expected given who its author is, what is striking about the text is the large amount of vocabulary derived from Middle Low German. This is not the place to investigate this evidence in detail, so it will suffice just to list some of these words used in the text:35 alpingis (absolutely < MLG aldine); angst (misery); espinger (ship’s boat); fordrifast (to exclude); frygð (sensuousness); fyrirstanda (to understand); heimullig (private); höf (banquet) junkeri (young man); (?) klódp (blow with the hand);36 klóskapur (cunningness); krankur (sick); kukl (sorcery, a Scandinavian back-formation from Middle Low German kókeler [kökeler], juggler, trickster); kvitta (to acquit); kyndugskapur (wiliness); lista (a streak, i.e., interpreting the smear from the soft-boiled egg as yet another decoration on Klárus’ richly ormnamented garment < MLG listen, a strip of material forming a border); lykt (smell); pláz (place); mekt (pomp); skari (company); skerfur (penny); spázéra (to walk); spegill (mirror);37 spiza (to provide); stolz (proud); týftunarmeistari (task-master, cf. Modern German Zuchtmeister); æra (privilege); and ævintyr (matter, i.e., something written or reported < MLG eventür < OFr aventure [adventure]).38 Some of these words were already

35. While Otto Höfler, Altnordische Lehnwortstudien (Lund: Häkon Ohlsson, 1931) has some information on Old Norse loans from Middle Low German, a great deal more is found in Christian Westergård-Nielsen, Låneordene i det 16. århundredes trykte islandske litteratur, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 6 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1946), although his corpus is restricted to Post-Reformation printed texts, and Veturlóð Óskarsson, Middelnedertyske låneord i islandsk diplomsprog frem til år 1500, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 43 (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 2002).

36. This word occurs only in Klári saga and in the exemplum: “Af rómverska dáranum,” Islensk æventyri #83 line 51 (vol. 1, p. 241), a text attributed to Bishop Jón Jakobsen, Studier i Clarus saga, p. 98, considers it possible that Jón himself made up the word, but it is just as likely to be based on a slang form otherwise unrecorded.

37. The late fourteenth-century AM 657b 4to uses the indigenous word gler (a glass) instead of spegill (Clári saga [1907], p. 34).

38. At one point in the saga ævintyr it is used in the sense “chance,” a usage also found in Low German, see: Pekka Katara, Das französische Lehngut in mittelniederdeutschen Denkmälern von 1300 bis 1500, Mémoires de la Société Neophilologique de Helsinki 30 (Helsinki: Société Neophilologique, 1966), pp. 24–5 under “aventur(e).” Old French aventur(e) is frequently encountered in this meaning.
established in the Icelandic and the Norwegian of the time. Others are used here for the first and only time. There also seems to be a significant overlap between the Low German derived vocabulary of Klári saga and that found in Stjórn I but the significance of this has been long disputed. But if it can be agreed that the surviving version of Stjórn I was composed at Skálholt in the first half of the fourteenth century, then it would be possible to conclude that the Low German colored vocabulary of Stjórn I and Klári saga represent the fashionable Icelandic of the elite circles in the bishopric during this period which took as its model the Icelandic spoken by the Bishop.

As was mentioned earlier, Bishop Jón grew up in a Dominican monastery in Bergen and lived there for approximately two decades after his return from his studies in Paris and Bologna. This is sufficient to explain why his Icelandic is so colored with Middle Low German vocabulary since Bergen was a Hansa port and the Low German of the Hansa merchants a prestige language. Furthermore, in the case of Bishop Jón, since the possibility has been raised that he was bilingual in Icelandic and Norwegian before he came to Iceland, the Low German vocabulary he used was available for utilization in both languages, and so the question of whether or not they were borrowed first into

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39. In the Sagan af Klarusi keisarasyni, ed. Bjarni Bjarnason (Reykjavik: Isafold, 1884), a version of Klári saga taken from a later paper manuscript, much of this vocabulary has vanished or been replaced with more familiar Icelandic words.

40. The main points of view are summarized in Reidar Astas, An Old Norse Biblical Compilation: Studies in Stjórn, American University studies 7: Theology and Religion 109 (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 9–11. Jakobsen, for example, proposed in Studier i Clarus saga, pp. 109–111, that Bishop Jón Halldórsson was the compiler of Stjórn I, a position rejected by Tveitane, Den lærde stil, pp. 26–34.

41. There are five documents dated between 1310–1320 from Bergen in which he is mentioned (Islandsk äventyri, vol. 2, p. viii).

42. See Olav Brattegard, Die mittelniederdeutsche Geschäftssprache des hansischen Kaufmanns zu Bergen, 2 vols., Skrifter fra norges Handelshøyskole i rekken språklige avhandlinger 2–3 (Bergen: John Grieg, 1945–46). The first volume gives a description of this language based on written materials from 1365–1535. Even though Hansa merchants had first legally established themselves in Bergen in 1186 and increased their presence in the following century (vol. 1, pp. 12–3), there are no documents in German surviving from this early period, but: “Bergen war im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert der Stapelplatz für den größten Teil der norwegischen Westküste und für die Zinsländer Island, Shetland, Færøyane und Orkneyskýjum” (vol. 1, p. 105). For a recent study which stresses the sociolinguistic aspects of the language contact (stressing also that Low German was itself a mix of dialects), see Agnete Nesse, Språkkontakt mellom norsk og tysk i hansatidens Bergen, Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi II: Hist.-Filos. Klasse Skrifter og avhandlinger 2 (Oslo: Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi, 2002).
Norwegian and then into Icelandic becomes moot—especially if he also
had in addition a working knowledge of Hansa German. As Veturliði Óskarsson has demonstrated in *Middelnedertyske låneord i islandsk
diplomsprog*, Low German vocabulary entered Icelandic much earlier
and in much greater quantities than has generally been considered the
case. While one such venue for this vocabulary was certainly through
Norwegian language contact or from Norwegian speakers living in
Iceland, more recognition needs to be given to the existence through
the centuries of a not inconsiderable number of Icelanders who were
fluent in Low German in their own right, and who adopted vocabulary
directly from the manuscripts in Low German which circulated in
Iceland as well as from books which entered the country after the
beginning of printing in that language.43

But Bishop Jón absorbed more than linguistic influences from
Icelandic, Latin and Low German; he also absorbed from all three
language traditions narrative elements, which he proceeded to reword
in the striking and original way they appear in *Klári saga*.

Narrative structure

The redactor of *Klári saga* states that Bishop Jón “found [the story]
in France written in Latin” verse. Finnur Jónsson says with respect
to this:

Denne oplysning er visnok rigtig. Her siges der inter om, at Jon selv
skulde have nedskrevet den. Det er med den som med æventyrene;
han har fortalt den, andre har så nedskrevet den.44

43 Marianne Kalinke, *The Book of Reykjaholar: The Last of the Great Medieval
Legendaries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) has shown how numerous of
the saints’ lives in the early sixteenth-century *Reykjahólarbók* have Middle Low German
sources printed and otherwise. In MS Icel. 15 in the Houghton Library, Harvard University,
written in the winter of 1582, Ólafur Sveinsson á Purkey (c. 1762–1845) writes that he had
access to “Já gømlu Lybsku grasa bók” (150r), a Low German version of the “Smaller” or
“German Ortus” attributed to Johannes de Cuba (fl. 1484–1503), *Dit is de genochlike garde
der suntheit to latine Ortulus sanitatis, edder herbarius genomet: dar me ynne vindet alle
arvh, nature vð egghenscho òr frudere, vnde der eddelen sten ...* (Lübeck: Steffen Arndes,
1520). This copy used by Ólafur had been brought to Iceland by Magnús prjöði Jónsson
(c. 1525–91) when he returned to Iceland after his studies in Germany in the middle of the
sixteenth century.

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(This information is certainly correct. It does not say here that Jón himself is said to have written it down. It is the same with fairy-tales; he has narrated the story, but someone else has written it down.)

Most scholars appear to agree with this position. But Jan de Vries is having none of it. He rejects the saga's claim that it originated with Jón Halldórsson: “Die Bemerkung der Saga über die Autorschaft des Jón Halldórsson betrachte ich als reine Erfindung; nachdem er die Ævintýri nach Island gebracht hatte, konnte er ja leicht auch als Impor- teur anderer abenteuerlicher Geschichten ausgegeben werden.” And further: “Es ist reine Phantasie, wenn Cedersciöld annimmt daß dieser Norweger in Paris das lateinische Gedicht übersetzt habe, und wenn er darauf eine Datierung um 1290 gründet.”45 Torfi H. Tulinius in the new Icelandic literary history straddles the fence by reporting the saga's opening sentence and speculating that the lost poem may have been one like Galterus de Castellione’s Alexandreis, but then adding with respect to authorship: “en þó kann vera að þessi klausa sé einvörðungu ríktlif, að sögumaðurinn viti til frægra manna til að frásögn hans fái aukið vægi” (but on the other hand it may be that this clause is merely a topos, that the author makes reference to a famous person so that his narrative should gain by it increased importance.)46

There seems no particular reason to doubt the claim that Jón Halldórsson is the author of Klári saga. But on the other hand there is no reason to believe that he based the story on a Latin poem found in France. France after all was the country which produced the best romances, a number of which had already been translated into Old Norse with great success. It is easy, for example, to find passages in which an author makes the claim that the work being presented is translated from French when all the available evidence suggests otherwise. The Middle High German Ogier von Dänemark is clearly translated from a Middle Dutch original.47 Yet the text is replete with

phrases such as: “Uß dem welsche von wort zu wort” (From the French word for word) (line 19) and “Das ich uß welscher sprache / Dis bûch wolte in tütsch machen” (That I from the French language wished to translate this book into German) (lines 4215–16). An even clearer set of examples is found in the Middle Dutch Roman van Heinric en Margriete van Limborch. There is general agreement that the work is an original Dutch composition, yet the poet insists in Book I, line 2542, and on numerous other occasions: “Dat Welsche sade, dar icht en las” (The French in which I read this said). Therefore Jón Halldórsson had every reason to claim that the story he was presenting originated in France. That the supposed poem from which the narrative was translated should be in Latin was also in keeping with his reputation as a Latin scholar. In fact elements of the story may have had their inspiration in Latin texts, but they were texts in prose, not in verse.

The opening chapter of the Sögufáttur af Jóni biskupi states: “En hverr man greina mega hverr hans gödvili var at gleeja næverandis menn við fáheyrðum dæmisögum er hann haðti tekí í úttöllum, þaði með letrum ok eigin raun” (And everyone is able to determine what


48. See similar sentiments in lines 1132, 4162–63, 6038, 6745, 9764, 9869–70, 11941, 12037, 12181, 12309, 13860–61, 13267, 14687, 17196, 19635, and 20095.

49. Examples are taken from the edition of MS Brussels, Koninklijke bibliotheek, No. 18231, dated first half of the fifteenth century, Roman van Heinric en Margriete van Limborch: Uitgeven volgens het Brussels Handschrift, ed. Robertus Meesters, Two parts (Amsterdam: Stichting “Onze Oude Letteren,” 1951), pp. li-lvii. Meesters states “we moeten wel aannemen dat het werk ± 1300 geschreven is” (we can easily accept that the work is written around 1300”) (p. xvi). It is sometimes attributed to Hein van Aken, the translator into Middle Dutch of the Roman de la rose, pp. xli-xlii.

50. “Alle kenners ... houden de Limborch voor oorspronkelijk, in die zin, dat ze de roman niet zien als de vertaling van een kant en klaar Frans voorbeeld en ook niet als de vrije bewerking van een Frans origineel” (“All scholars ... consider the Limborch to be original in the sense that the romance is not seen as the translation of a ready-made French model, and also not as the free adaptation of a French original”) (Roman van Heinric en Margriete van Limborch, p. xli). This is based on the lack of a French exemplum and the fact that the subject matter is one that would neither interest nor benefit a French poet.

kind his benevolence was to entertain people within hearing with rarely
heard exempla\textsuperscript{52} which he had picked up in foreign countries both in
written form and as the result of his own experience).\textsuperscript{53} Numerous
large collections of exempla were compiled in the Middle Ages both
for entertainment and as aids for the clergy when composing their
sermons, the Disciplina clericis of Petrus Alfonsi (1062–1110) and the Gesta Romanorum (c. 1300) being among the best known. A number of the exempla attributed to Bishop Jón have been preserved
and edited in Íslendzk avenýri, several of them being translations of
stories from the Disciplina clericis,\textsuperscript{54} but exactly what role Jón Hall­
dórsson may have had in the narratives collected in Íslendzk avenýri
remains a matter of contention and the issues will not be rehearsed
here. Bishop Jón was a Dominican and one of the largest collections
of exempla was that collected by the Dominican Stephen of Bourbon
(Stephanus de Borbone) (c. 1180–1261)\textsuperscript{55} under the title Tractatus de

\textsuperscript{52}. Medieval Latin exemplum means a moral anecdote. It was originally translated into
Old Norse as demisaga, “fable,” “parable,” “a tale with a moral.” The loan-word avenýr
/ avenýri meant “tale,” “adventure” and later “(international-) fairy tale.” The fifteenth-
century manuscripts containing the Icelandic exempla confuses the matter by only occasionally referring to them as demisögur, preferring instead avenýri, a usage followed by modern scholars. On the other hand, in the cophon to Klári saga, the narrator, presumably Bishop Jón, states that the saga has served as a “ljós dæmi” (clear example) of how women
should behave (Riddarasögur, vol. 5, p. 61).

\textsuperscript{53}. Biskupa sögur, vol. 1, p. 445. The sentence continues: “ok til vitnis þar um þarla
smát ok lítt man setzå í þenna bækling af því stóra efni, því at samsettu hans frásgimir sér til gleði ok öðrum” (and as an example of this, some small and
insignificant examples will be placed in this little treatise from that large body of material,
because some people in Iceland gathered his narratives together both for their own entertain­
ment and that of others).

\textsuperscript{54}. In addition to the exempla collected in Íslendzk avenýri see those edited by Jonna
Louis-Jensen, “Nogle Avenýr,” Opuscula 5, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 31 (Copen­
ævintýrum,” Gripla 18 (2007): 23–46. Exempla translated from English into Icelandic are
sonar á Íslandi, 1976). They are discussed by Jørgensen in “The Icelandic Translations
from Middle English,” Studies for Einar Haugen, ed. Evelyn Scherabon Firchow et al. (The
Gesta Romanorum is edited by Jørgensen as The Story of Jonatas in Iceland (Reykjavik:
Stofnum Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1997).

\textsuperscript{55}. Stephen is the inquisitor featured in Jean-Claude Schmitt, The Holy Greyhound:
Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century, trans. Martin Thom, Cambridge
diversis materiis predicabilibus, designed as a compilation illustrating the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Only the sections on Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Fortitude and the beginning of Counsel were completed before Stephen died. The Tractatus is a text that Bishop Jón could have encountered in Paris in particular, and at least one of the narratives in Islendzk aventýri is translated from this work (although it is not identified in the manuscript as one of the exempla by Bishop Jón), and perhaps additional examples will come to light when the complete edition is available. Bishop Jón’s demonstrated fondness for exempla is important because Klári saga can be seen as the combination of exempla grafted on to an older narrative structure.

As is mentioned above, Klári saga is the earliest surviving bridal quest romance in Icelandic. There is no reason to suppose that it had any predecessors and a case can be made that the popularity of the genre in the subsequent Icelandic literary scene may owe a not inconsiderable debt to the authority that Klári saga gave to it. Claudia Bornholdt has demonstrated that the medieval bridal quest narrative is a specifically German phenomenon with its roots in Merovingian historical accounts, and Bishop Jón was probably exposed to such stories during his time in Bergen. Even so, Klári saga is not a typical bridal-quest romance as it lacks many of the narrative elements characteristic of the genre. Its closest analogue is found in a passage in the Old English poem Beowulf. In determining the appropriateness of her own behavior, Hygd, the wife of Hygelac, “Mð Fry sów ... firen’ ondrysne” (weighed the pride of Fry ... the terrible wickedness).
Like Serena in Klári saga, Prýð is not a meykóngur or maiden queen, but a princess who lets no one look at her except her “sinfrea” (great-lord) on pain of death. The poet continues with sentiments that are also applicable to Serena:

Ne bið swyle cwēlic þēaw
ideº tō efanne, þēah þē hio ænlicu sē,
þæte freóðuwebbe þeore onsacce
after ligetorne lœofne mannan.62

(Nor is suchlike a queenly custom for a woman to carry out even though she may be peerless, that a peace-weaver should deprive a dear man of life for an imagined insult.)

However, for reasons unexplained, Prýð is given in marriage on her father’s counsel (“be fæder láre,” line 1950) to Offa, king of the Continental Angles. After this happens, people begin to tell quite different stories about her. She now becomes a model queen, to her own credit and the greater glory of her husband. While only the

University Press, 1959), pp. 31-40. The connection of this episode with Tale Type 900, “King Thrushbeard,” was noted by Ernst Philippson, Der Märchentypus von König Drosselbart, FF Communications 50 (Greifswald: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1923), pp. 93-4, but not linked specifically to Klári saga, while Frederick Amory, “Things Greek and the Riddarasogur,” Les Sagas de Chevaliers (Riddarasogur), ed. Régis Boyer, Civilizations 10 (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 1985), pp. 417–30 at p. 422, and Speculum 59 (1984), pp. 509–23, at p. 517, links the story of Prýð to the concept of the meykóngur in general (the form meykonungur is sometimes found in normalized texts but “this form is nonexistent in medieval or modern Icelandic” (Amory, “Things Greek,” Speculum 59 [1984], p. 517). See also Kalinke, Bridal-Quest Romance, pp. 36, 103.


61. Beowulf, line 1954. While some editors interpret sinfrea to mean “husband,” it seems more appropriate that at this stage in the narrative it refer to Prýð’s father.

broad outlines of the story are sketched out in Beowulf, this is exactly
the same plot structure that Bishop Jón uses for his saga. To flesh
out the details he used narratives that have long been familiar to
folklorists and are classified by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson as
Tale Types 900 “King Thrushbeard” (corresponding to Klári saga,
chapters 1–15) and 901 “Taming of the Shrew” under the heading
“The Shrewish wife is Reformed” (now “The Obstinate Wife Learns
to Obey”)63 (corresponding to Klári saga, chapters 16–19), although
the behavior of Serena in the second half of the saga in the face of the
overweening cruelty of her husband is more reminiscent of Tale Type
887, “Griselda.”64

Ernest Philippson in his study of Tale Type 900 identifies the Middle
High German verse Märe (“folktale”), “Die halbe Birne,” attributed
to Konrad von Würzburg (d. 1287),65 as the earliest surviving version
of the story while the next in chronological order is Klári saga.66
Marianne Kalinke has recently investigated the breaches of table
decorum which allow the women in “Die halbe Birne” and Klári
saga to reject their (subsequently successful) suitors and relates these
episodes to a body of literature in Middle High German and Latin

63. Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, Types of the Folktales: A Classification and
310–2. Now revised by Hans-Jörg Uther, The Types of International Folktales: A Classifica-
tion and Bibliography. Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, 3 vols., FF
Einar Ol. Sveinsson, Verzeichnis Isländischer Märchenvarianten, FF Communications 85
(Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1929) classifies Icelandic folktales according to the
Aarne-Thompson system.

64. Aarne-Thompson, Types of the Folktales, pp. 302–3; Uther, The Types of Interna-

Märendichtung, ed. Klaus Grubmüller (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag,
Karin Lichtblau, Christa Tuczay et al. for the Austrian Academy of Sciences, ed., Motif-
Index of German Secular Narratives from the Beginning to 1400, 7 vols. (Berlin: de Gruyter,

66. Philippson, Der Märchentypus von König Drosselbart, pp. 3–5. See also Klári saga,
pp. xvi–xxi; Johannes Bolte and Georg Polivka, Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Haus-
saga, the tale type is found in Icelandic only in the folktales “Meykóngurinn,” collected from
Guðrúnur Eyjólfsson (c. 1811–78) from Ákvrórn on Fljótsdalsheiði, and written down in 1865
(Einar Ol. Sveinsson, Verzeichnis Isländischer Märchenvarianten, p. 136) and published in
Jón Árnason, Islenskar hjóðsögur og ævintýr, new ed., ed. Árni Böðvarsson and Bjarni
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which was concerned with improving the table manners of those in elite society. Thus while Tale Type 900 is not found in the exempla collections analyzed by Frederic Tubach, a parallel may yet surface when a more thorough analysis of medieval exempla is completed, because the story has a sufficient moral dimension to have made it attractive to those who put such collections of stories together. To the narrative of the princess who humiliates her suitors until she finds herself married, a narrative structure going back at least as far as Beowulf, as has already been suggested, Bishop Jón added elements that he is likely to have encountered in medieval German romances. For example, when Tiburcius, the emperor of Saxland, wants a tutor for his son Klárus, who had already mastered the seven liberal arts and was considered the most learned scholar in Europe, he learns of a superior meistari out in Arabia, named Pétrus, and engages him to be the boy’s tutor. This figure of Pétrus has much in common with the court magicians who are a feature of the medieval German romances. Of particular interest is the magician Gansguoter in Heinrich von dem Türlin’s Diu Crône, a sprawling Gawain-romance dated to the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Gansguoter

69. The origin of the name is obscure, but it may be a variant of Porus, the king of India, who was one of the main opponents of Alexander the Great (and it is perhaps not irrelevant that in Klári saga the king of the French is named Alexander). See Galterus de Castellione, Alexandrijs það er Alexanders saga, book 9, pp. 158–76. Klári saga states that there are many adventures (eðiþýr) told involving Pétrus and, indeed, three (rather unremarkable) stories about him survive, Islandzk eðiþýr #81: “Af meistara Pero ok hans leikum” vol. 1, pp. 217–31. The third story is similar in outline to “De lo que contesió a un Dean de Santiago cor Don Illán, el grand Maestro de Toledo” (What happened to a Dean of Santiago with Don Illán, the grand master of Toledo), El conde Lucanor, pp. 84–91. See footnote 80 below. See also Tubach, Index Exemplorum, pp. 245–46, #3137.
70. On these magicians see Stephan Maksymiuk, The Court Magician in Medieval German Romance, Mikrokosmos 44 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996).
is very much an engineer, responsible for the design and construction of three remarkable castles which are full of mechanical tricks and wonders.72 Pérus also turns out to be an engineer and uses the entire resources of Saxland to build three magnificent land-tents or pavilions, each of which is drawn to land by a splendid mechanical creature. The creature chosen for the first pavilion is a brown bear, a totemic animal in the northern regions, while the creature chosen for the second pavilion is a lion, a totemic animal in the southern regions. The creature chosen for the third pavilion is called a gammur, which has been translated as “vulture,”73 although to have a vulture for the third and most magnificent pavilion is hardly appropriate. However, it has been pointed out that gammur can also refer to an entirely apposite creature, the griffin, with its head and wings of an eagle and body of a lion.74 As an heraldic figure, the griffin here may be meant to signify the imperial rank of the disguised Klárus.75 While these creatures Pérus has constructed are not strictly automata (in that they require human muscle-power to work them), the three animals have

72. Christine Zach, Die Erzählmotive der Crone Heinrichs von dem Turlin und ihre altfranzösischen Quellen, Passauer Schriften zu Sprache und Literatur 5 (Passau: Wissenschaftsverlag Richard Rothe, 1990), pp. 130–9, examines the sources for these mechanical devices and constructions, but there is nothing in Die Crone at all like the mechanical marvels in Klári saga. Marianne Kalinke also draws attention to a mechanical ship in the early thirteenth-century Moritz van Craon (Helmut Birkhan et al., ed., Motif-Index of German Secular Narratives, vol. 4, pp. 326–9), but that is built by the hero himself not by a court attendant (“Table Decorum,” p. 69).


75. The three animals may also have Christian symbolism: the bear who licks its cubs into shape as the symbol of Christianity “which reforms and regenerates heathen peoples (George Ferguson, Signs and Symbols in Christian Art [1959, rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961], p. 12); the lion is the symbol of the evangelist Mark who “proclaims with great emphasis the royal dignity of Christ” (Ferguson, Signs and Symbols, p. 21); the Griffin in its positive aspect represents Christ (Ferguson, Signs and Symbols, p. 20). Thus Klárus disguised as Eskelvárð, son of the king of Bláland (Ethiopia, or Africa in general) and ostensibly a pagan, thereby symbolically affirms his Christian faith. In Johannes von Würzburg’s Willhelm von Österreich written in 1314, there is a sorceress, Parklise, who rides around on a griffin and who advises the hero Wilhlem how to deal with the wicked magician Merlin who has defended himself with two fire-spewing iron dragons. The romance also features other mechanical creatures as well as a magnificent pavilion which shares some superficial features with those constructed by Pérus (for a detailed summary see Helmut Birkhan et al., ed. Motif-Index of German Secular Narratives, vol. 3, pp. 87–101).
much in common with the mechanical marvels that feature frequently in medieval romances. 76 Nevertheless, the creatures in Klári saga have no precise literary models, and it is possible that Bishop Jón may have got the idea for them from one of the elaborate festivals or processions with their mechanical figures whose movements were a source of delight to the crowds of onlookers that he might have encountered in Paris or Bologna. 77 It is also from these urban experiences that he would have been exposed to the world of elegant clothing and costly fabrics, something in which he must have taken an interest, as the saga is remarkable for the extensive and detailed vocabulary relating to this topic.

It has also been observed that Klári saga is a version of the "Taming of the Shrew" story. 78 This is apparently based on the latter part of the story where Serena and the ugly churl whom she believes to be her husband travel from Frakkland to Saxland and during which time Serena is bullied and humiliated, a situation bearing some very superficial resemblance to Act 4, scene 6 of Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew. The play has no printed source and Jan Brunvand concludes that Shakespeare composed it out of folklore elements with which he was familiar. 79 The oldest surviving version of the story is found in the Spanish collection of exempla, El Conde Lucanor (Count Lucanor) compiled by Juan Manuel (1282–1348), regent of Castille 1321–1325, and founder of the Dominican convent at Peñafiel. 80 But there is little
if any connection between Tale Type 901 and chapters 16–19 of Klári saga, because at this point in the saga Serena is no longer a “shrew.” She is totally obedient and humble no matter what outrage the churl visits upon her, and there is no indication at all of her having to be “tamed” as in the other variants of the story. Rather, she has more in common with the extraordinarily patient wife found in Tale Type 887, “Griselda,” a tale medieval in origin, being first recorded in Boccaccio’s Decameron (1352), day 10, tale 10. While the narrative details of the “Griselda” tale (which is well known in Iceland, although all surviving versions belong to the early modern period) differ from those in Klári saga, in both versions the patience of the wife remains constant and unwavering. Towards the end of the fourteenth century, Chaucer in the Canterbury Tales put a version of the Griselda story in the mouth of the Clerk (“scholar”) from Oxford. The episode is introduced with the host commenting on the Clerk’s silence thus far during the pilgrimage as if he were studying a sophism, that is, a fallacious argument. He then asks the Clerk to tell a tale unadorned by the colors of rhetoric. The tale the Clerk tells may well be based on a sophism, namely the so-called fallacy “wives are patient,” and this certainly appears to be the surface reading of the story to judge by the comments in the Clerk’s envoi to his tale. But it is also possible that the Clerk is denying the moral consequences of his own tale and this interpretation has proven attractive to modern audiences. However, there is no such interpretive leeway in Klári saga, as the epilogue to the saga makes abundantly clear.


81. The principal texts have been studied in detail and published by Halldórr Hermannsson in The Story of Griselda in Iceland, Islandica 7 (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 1914).


En hún [Serena] þoldi allan þenna tíma angist og armæðu fyrir ekki vætta utan fyrir sig sínas cinlega dyggð og einfaldleik ... Og þetta allt lagði hún að baki sér og þar með föður, frændur og vini og allan heimsins metnæð, upp takandi viljanlegt fátekt með þessum hinum herfilegan stafkarli, gefandi svo á sér ljós dæmi hversu öðrum gólum konum byrjar að halda dyggð við sínas eigenbændur eða unnasta. Fór þáð og efir verðugu að síðustu, að hún fékk þáð, er hún var makleg fyrir sín fálheyrða staðfestu, að ... varð hún yfrdrotting alls Saxlands ... 84

(But she [Serena] endured all the time the misery and distress for no other reason than her singular probity and simplicity ... And absolutely everything she put behind her, including father, kin and friends and all the world’s honor, taking up poverty willingly with this miserable beggar, giving so by her behavior a clear example, how it befits other good women to maintain their probity with their husbands or betrothed ones. That also turned out in due course as it was deserved, that she received that which was fitting for her because of her unheard of steadfastness, that ... she became sovereign queen of all Saxland ...)

It is clear from the epilogue to Klári saga, that Bishop Jón is using the romance genre as an elaborate exemplum to promote his uncompromising views on the responsible behaviors of wives towards their husbands. 85 Tale Type 887, however, is not one about which an audience remains neutral. Marianne Kalinke points out that although later authors quickly followed Klári saga with their own versions of bridal quest romances, they “chose to ignore a most important part of Clári saga, its exemplary character, residing in its Christian view of marriage.” 86 A modern audience can “rescue” the “Clerk’s Tale” by “reading it against the grain” to give it a meaning more in line

85. When the Jesuits came to New France in the early seventeenth century to convert the Native Americans, their comments in the “Jesuit Relations” reveal their attitudes to women and their place in society and marriage are very close to the views espoused by Bishop Jón at the conclusion of Klári saga. See Karen Anderson, Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France (New York: Routledge, 1991), esp. pp. 67–100. It is possible that the missionaries were able to enforce a stricter morality among the Huron and Montagnais than they would have been allowed to get away with in France.
with contemporary sensibilities. Not having such an option available, imitators of Klári saga just omitted this aspect of their source while those who copied the saga down through the centuries appear also to have considered this aspect of the saga expendable.  

Conclusions

Klári saga was composed by Bishop Jón Halldórsson of Skálholt, who grew up in the Dominican house in Bergen and whose mother and possibly father were Icelandic. He studied in Dominican run universities on the continent, and there he became familiar with a rich exempla tradition, in the promoting and disseminating of which the Dominicans played a prominent role. Examples of this tradition he brought back with him to Norway and later on to Iceland. The opening statement of Klári saga, which claims that it is based on a Latin poem encountered in France, is a modesty topos: Latin is the prestige language, and France is the home of the romance. The idiomatic nature of the Icelandic suggests that it was composed after Bishop Jón had been some time in that country. After 1320 is as good a guess as any. The strong influence from Middle Low German in the language of the saga as well as numerous narrative elements that are indebted to medieval German romances reflect the time Bishop Jón lived in the Hansa port of Bergen.  

Like Heinrich von dem Türlin’s Diu Crone, Klári saga is a pastiche of romance and fairy tale, elements effectively woven together by a skilled story teller. There is no single source for the saga, rather the author has adapted exempla to a bridal quest narrative framework very similar to the one sketched out in the Breði episode in Beowulf.

If these conclusions are accepted, then the saga can no longer be considered as a translated romance, but should rightfully take its place among the Icelandic riddarasögur to whose development it has so significantly contributed.

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87. In the nineteenth-century Sagan af Klarusi keisarasyni, the explanations and moralizing at the end of Bishop Jón’s version of the text are reduced to: “Síðan er frú Serina upp hafna í drottingar són, hafandi dyrd og heidur með Klarusi Keisarasyni” (Afterwards Lady Serina is raised up to the queen’s throne, having glory and honor with Klarus the Emperor’s son) (28).

88. The role of Bergen and the Hansa in the dissemination of Medieval German literature in Scandinavia is the focus of the articles in Susanne Kramarz-Bein, Hansische Literaturbeziehungen, Ergänzungsbande zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde 14 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996).
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