

From Manuscript(s) to Print: Editorial Practices through the Ages and the Case of Konráð Gíslason's (Incomplete) Edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*

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ABSTRACT: The nineteenth-century Icelandic manuscript Lbs 220 fol. contains transcriptions of *Fóstbræðra saga* copied from Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol.) and Hauksbók (AM 544 4to), stanzas from the saga based on various manuscripts, and comments on the text. It was written by Konráð Gíslason and later used as the basis for his printed edition of the saga, published in 1852. This article explores Konráð Gíslason's criticism of Gunnlaugur Oddsson's edition and examines the methods Konráð used to produce what he considered a better edition of the text in his 1852 *Fóstbræðra saga*—taking into account that manuscript evidence, extant letters, and printed sources all indicate that the volume as it exists today was incomplete, and not what Konráð had envisioned. Yet Konráð Gíslason's edition illustrates how ideologies—editorial, philosophical, and political—influence the works of editors and publishers, from the eighteenth century to this very day.

RÉSUMÉ: Le manuscrit islandais du XIXe siècle Lbs 220, fol., contient des transcriptions de la *Fóstbræðra saga* copiées de Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol.) et de Hauksbók (AM 544 4to), des strophes de la saga basées sur divers manuscrits et des commentaires sur le texte. Il fut écrit par Konráð Gíslason et servit ensuite de base à son édition imprimée de la saga, publiée en 1852. Cet article explore la critique de Konráð Gíslason de l'édition de Gunnlaugur Oddsson et examine les méthodes utilisées par Konráð pour produire ce qu'il considérait être une meilleure édition du texte dans sa *Fóstbræðra saga* de 1852, en tenant compte du fait que les preuves manuscrites, les lettres qui subsistent et les sources imprimées indiquent toutes que le volume tel qu'il existe aujourd'hui était incomplet et non ce que Konráð avait envisagé. L'édition de Konráð Gíslason illustre toutefois la façon dont les idéologies—éditoriales, philosophiques et politiques—influencent les œuvres des rédacteurs en chef et éditeurs, du XVIIIe siècle à nos jours.

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On the Importance of Manuscript Studies and the Editorial Process

Those interested in Old Norse-Icelandic literature have at their disposal a plethora of printed editions, translations in various languages, as well as adaptations in literature and other art forms. While the basis for translations and related works are generally printed editions, these editions, in turn, rely on manuscripts, written on both parchment and paper, ranging in date from the thirteenth century to the nineteenth. The texts in these Icelandic manuscripts have been passed down for centuries; the same story sometimes being told in two significantly differing ways. None of the texts represents the archetype, and each manuscript, presumably even the oldest extant fragment, is nothing more than a copy (of a copy of a copy). Editors of the sagas are thus faced with the task of deciding how to deal with their textual sources. The type of edition—scholarly or popular, hard copy or digital—is generally dependent on the intended readership. Moreover, editors and publishers can often be driven by philosophical and political views. Thus two parties, despite sharing certain goals, can disagree greatly on the best approach.

Using Konráð Gíslason's 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, this article looks behind the curtain of nineteenth-century text editions and editorial practices, which generally—but not always—began with the medieval codices, and often produced manuscripts in their own right before the final product landed in the hands of printers, publishers, and eventually readers. The article follows Konráð Gíslason's process from studying the medieval codex, transcribing the text, collaborating with other scholars, all the way to completing, or in this case not quite completing, the desired finished product. At the same time, the scholarly, philosophical, and political environments driving publication efforts in nineteenth-century Scandinavia forward are taken into account as well, illustrating how Konráð's edition was a reaction to the *editio princeps* of *Fóstbræðra saga*. Lastly, the article goes on to demonstrate that just as every extant manuscript is in a sense a reaction to a handwritten (and sometimes printed) predecessor, so can virtually all editions be understood as reactions to a previously published work, which for one reason or another was deemed insufficient.

Old Norse-Icelandic Literature during the Nineteenth Century: The Case of Konráð Gíslason and *Det nordiske Litteratur-Samfund*

Interest in Old Norse-Icelandic literature rose in Scandinavia during the seventeenth century. Denmark's and Sweden's desire to establish their respective

nation's supremacy over the other brought the Icelandic manuscripts into the spotlight, leading to a race on both sides to collect the codices (see e.g. Malm 101). The Romantic era in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant a new wave of interest in Old Norse-Icelandic literature and culture, not only in Scandinavia but also in Germany, Britain, North America, Normandy, and even parts of Russia and Spain (Wawn 328–33). Simultaneously, Icelanders used their literary legacy to revive national consciousness in Iceland and promote their efforts for more independence from Denmark.

The so-called Fjölnismenn [men of *Fjölnir*], four Denmark-educated Icelanders who established the journal *Fjölnir* (named after a legendary king from Norse mythology and one of the names for Óðinn; published between 1835 to 1847), were on the forefront of Iceland's independence movement (see e.g. Wawn 332). One of these Fjölnismenn was Konráð Gíslason (1808–1891), who was educated at the Lærði skólinn [Learned School] at Bessastaðir in Iceland before studying law and, later, Nordic and Icelandic philology in Copenhagen.¹ In 1846, he published *Um frum-parta íslenzkrar tungu í fornöld* [On the origin of the Icelandic language in ancient times], a seminal work and the first to distinguish between Old Norse and Modern Icelandic. According to Björn M. Ólsen (66), it rang in a new age for Icelandic language studies and the publication of Old Norse-Icelandic literature. Konráð Gíslason's desire to advance knowledge and the study of Iceland's literary heritage and language was, moreover, evident in his involvement with Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund [The Scandinavian Literature Society] in Copenhagen, of which he was a founding member. The society was established in 1847 to promote and publish Scandinavia's medieval literature in Denmark. According to the initial bylaws—printed in its first publication, an edition of *Hrafnkels saga* (1847) by Konráð Gíslason—the editions produced by the society were to be prepared “paa en med Almenhedens Tarv overenstemmende Maade” [in a way that is in the best interest of the general public] (n.p.), and to be accompanied by a Danish translation as well as additional information needed to fully understand the text. As Springborg (231) points out, however, “general public” primarily referred to (male-dominated) university and scholastic circles.

Konráð Gíslason prepared numerous text editions for Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund and throughout his career approached the editing and publishing of Old-Norse Icelandic texts with precision (see e.g. Finnur Jónsson 296). Konráð followed the so-called Lachmannian method of editing, which attempts to reconstruct a work's archetype by comparing different versions and choosing the presumed most original variants, thus producing a mixed text.² As a grammarian and philologist, Konráð Gíslason's editing practices were clearly influenced by his special interests. His intention was not only to produce a readable text, but also to ensure that his editions would be useful for linguistic studies to the greatest degree possible, thus emphasizing the learned background of his intended readership. In his introduction to *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni* [Two sagas

of Gísli Súrsson 1849], Konráð Gíslason (II-III) discusses seven possibilities of how to present a text edition, such as facsimile, diplomatic, or normalized.³ Moreover, he points out which type of edition is useful for what kind of work (e.g. linguistic studies, literary studies).⁴ Konráð Gíslason (1849, III) concludes that—despite having their merits—facsimile and diplomatic editions reach a smaller readership. After going over the pros and cons of each type of edition, Konráð states that he utilizes the fifth approach for his edition of *Gísli saga*, namely to reproduce the orthography of his exemplar, a practice that he followed in all his editions for Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund (see also Gunnlaugsson 217–18), including his edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, which was published in Copenhagen in 1852.

Manuscripts of *Fóstbræðra saga* and its editio princeps: A Complex Matter

Fóstbræðra saga survives in three well-known medieval manuscripts:⁵ Hauksbók (AM 544 4to, c1290-1360), Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol., c1330-1370), and Flateyjarbók (GKS 1005 fol., 1387–94). The redactions in these manuscripts “differ substantially in content, structure, and style” (Bragason 268). Both Hauksbók and Möðruvallabók only preserve parts of the saga. In Hauksbók, approximately the first third of the text is missing, while Möðruvallabók lacks roughly one third at the end. The text in the two manuscripts overlaps to some degree. Two eighteenth-century paper copies of Möðruvallabók exist—AM 566 b 4to and NKS 1149 fol.—which were made when the medieval manuscript was more complete than it is today. Editors (including Konráð Gíslason) have, therefore, used these manuscripts to supplement missing parts of Möðruvallabók. In Flateyjarbók, *Fóstbræðra saga* “is incorporated in four separate sections into the saga of King Ólafr the Saint” (Bragason 268). In the latter part of the saga, the two texts are interwoven in such a complex manner “that it is difficult to determine which sections originate from *Fóstbræðra saga*” (Bragason 268). In addition to the three major medieval codices, two eighteenth-century paper manuscripts, AM 142 fol. and AM 566 a 4to, are copies of a now lost parchment codex, referred to as Konungsbók or Membrana Regia (J. Kristjánsson 14, 18–25). For this reason, they are considered of high significance, similar to the medieval codices (Þórolfsson III).

Gunnlaugur Oddsson (1786-1835) published the first printed edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* in 1822. The basis for his edition was NKS 1176 a fol., a late-eighteenth-century manuscript prepared for the Danish collector Peter Frederik Suhm (1728-1798). Suhm was a member of the Arnarnagæan Commission (see e.g. Bratberg), which had been established in 1772 to oversee the publication of Old Norse-Icelandic texts preserved in Árni Magnússon’s manuscript collection, among other things (Malm 107). Suhm likely had NKS 1176 a fol. produced with the intention of using it as a printer’s copy to publish *Fóstbræðra saga* (Þórolfsson

XL; J. Kristjánsson 27). The manuscript is a copy of AM 141 fol., with variant readings from other manuscripts (Oddsson, *Formáli*).⁶ AM 141 fol. was written at the end of the seventeenth century, and for the most part contains the Flateyjarbók version of *Fóstbræðra saga*, but also five stanzas attributed to Þormóður kolbrúnarskáld (c998-1030) not included in Flateyjarbók. Towards the end of the manuscript, the text seems to be conflated with the text from the now-lost Konungsbók (Þórólfsson e.g. III). Björn K. Þórólfsson (XXI) points out that AM 141 fol.'s exemplar was not Flateyjarbók itself. In addition to the text of AM 141 fol., NKS 1176 a fol. also contains an extensive variant apparatus in Latin, which Gunnlaugur Oddsson translated into Icelandic for his printed edition (Þórólfsson XL).

Konráð Gíslason's Edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*: A Reaction to the *editio princeps*

In a letter to his father, dated 26 September 1850, Konráð Gíslason mentions working on a new edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*. He points out that “hún er gefin út einu sinni áður, í Kaupmannahöfn, 1822; en ekki vel gefin út, og orðin þar á ofan ófáanleg” [it has been published once before, in Copenhagen, 1822; but it is not edited well, and moreover has become unavailable] (A. Kristjánsson 150). While Konráð Gíslason does not go into detail about why he considers Gunnlaugur Oddsson's edition inferior, it may have been due to the fact that Gunnlaugur based his edition on a paper manuscript which itself did not follow a single medieval text. Moreover, Gunnlaugur's exemplar was textually primarily related to the Flateyjarbók version, which has been shown to be the furthest removed from the original (see J. Kristjánsson 27–53).

Konráð Gíslason believed that the medieval manuscripts were the foundation on which any study of Old Norse-Icelandic texts must be built and that any edition which neglects this “er óhæf og ónóg til málfræðislegra rannsókna” [is unsuitable and inadequate for the purpose of linguistic studies] (Ólsen 67). Konráð Gíslason was, thus, aware of the importance of beginning the editorial process by first consulting the medieval codices and giving preference to the presumed eldest version of the text; two things Gunnlaugur Oddsson neglected to do. Moreover, even though Konráð usually followed the Lachmannian method, he decided to print each version of *Fóstbræðra saga* separately, rather than constructing a mixed text, likely because the three textual versions are incomplete and differ significantly.

Konráð Gíslason's 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* bears the subtitle “Förste Hefte” [first volume], indicating that a two-part edition was his original intent, which was in line with the philosophy of Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund. The brief “midlertidigt forord” [preliminary introduction] to Konráð's *Fóstbræðra saga* edition mentions that the current issue contains two redactions of the saga:

Möðruvallabók and Hauksbók. Regarding the Möðruvallabók text, Konráð Gíslason's points out that "Skindbogen er naturligviis (*sic*) benytted saa langt den naar" [the parchment manuscript is obviously used as far as possible]. The pointed addition of "naturligvis" [obviously] is quite possibly a subtle criticism of Gunnlaugur Oddsson's edition. However, Konráð Gíslason notes that he uses AM 566 b 4to—which, as mentioned above, was produced when Möðruvallabók was still more complete—to supplement missing text. According to Konráð's introduction to the first volume, the rest of the edition, i.e. the second volume, was to include

sagaen efter Flateyjarbók; Anmærkninger; Forklaring over Qvadene, ved afdöde Dr. Sv. Egilsson; en dansk Oversættelse, ved Hr. Registrator S. Thorlacius; samt Titelblad og Forerindring til det Hele.

[the saga as it is preserved in Flateyjarbók; annotations; explanatory notes regarding the stanzas by the late Dr. Sveinbjörn Egilsson; a Danish translation by Mr. Registrar Skúli Thorlacius; as well as a title page and any corrigenda for the edition overall.]

Since the introduction indicates that Sveinbjörn Egilsson had passed away, the first volume must have been finalized and published after 17 August 1852, Sveinbjörn's day of death.⁷

This second volume was, however, never completed or published. Benedikt Sveinsson (III-IV) assumes that the remaining edition was dropped, since Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Carl Richard Unger were preparing a multi-volume edition of Flateyjarbók (published 1860-1868), making Konráð Gíslason's *Fóstbræðra saga* edition according to the medieval codex obsolete. Konráð may also have wanted additional time to prepare and publish the Flateyjarbók text, due to the complicated nature of *Fóstbræðra saga* being interwoven with *Óláfs saga helga* in the medieval manuscript. Financial reasons may have been contributing factors as well. Moreover, Björn M. Ólsen (74) points out that due to other projects and for personal reasons, Konráð Gíslason's publication efforts slowed down for a few years following 1852.

Even though the second volume was never published, personal records—such as letters and manuscripts by Konráð Gíslason and his collaborators—prove his continued efforts to finish and revise his 1852 edition. These records allow for a reconstruction of what Konráð had envisioned as the end product for his edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, which he had hoped would be a significant improvement over the only available printed rendition of the saga, Gunnlaugur Oddsson's 1822 editio princeps.

For the General Public or Educated Circles? Reconstructing Konráð Gíslason's Intended Edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*

The National Library of Iceland (Landsbókasafn Íslands) houses the manuscript Lbs 220 fol. With the exception of one small slip of paper⁸ and some annotations, the manuscript is written in Konráð Gíslason's hand. According to its catalogue description (Ólason 74), Lbs 220 fol. was used as the basis for Konráð Gíslason's 1853 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, i.e. the Icelandic reprint of his 1852 publication (see n. 7). It is far more plausible, however, that the transcriptions and additional materials in the manuscript were produced for the original Danish edition. Manuscript evidence suggests, furthermore, that Konráð still utilized Lbs 220 fol. and added notes after the Danish and Icelandic editions had been published (see below). Using Lbs 220 fol. as a starting point, and adding evidence from other manuscript sources as well as letter correspondence, it is possible to follow Konráð Gíslason's timeline for producing his 1852 edition, reconstruct his editorial process, and determine what the intended second volume may have looked like.

Lbs 220 fol. contains the two versions of *Fóstbræðra saga*, which Konráð Gíslason published in 1852. The manuscript begins with a transcription of *Fóstbræðra saga* according to Möðruvallabók on fols. 1r-22v. This transcription is semi-diplomatic (see n. 3) for the most part, i.e. Konráð indicates expanded abbreviations by underlining the supplemented letters. Konráð clearly used AM 566 b 4to to fill lacunae in Möðruvallabók, which conforms with his statement in the introduction to the 1852 edition.⁹ The *Fóstbræðra saga* text from Hauksbók—partly in semi-diplomatic, partly in normalized form (in accordance with Hauksbók's orthography)—follows on fols. 23r-39v. Konráð Gíslason also transcribes parts of the Hauksbók text in facsimile (fols. 40r-43r), imitating letterforms from his exemplar to a certain extent,¹⁰ and writing rubrics as well as decorated letters and initials in red, thus mimicking the design of the medieval codex. This facsimile transcription corresponds to folios 77r-v, 78r-v, and the top-half of fol. 79v in Hauksbók.¹¹ These folios in the medieval codex are particularly difficult to read, which may have been the reason why Konráð Gíslason copied them separately in facsimile.¹²

The methods with which Konráð transcribes the saga show great variation. He not only alternates between facsimile, diplomatic, and normalized transcriptions, but also switches from a two-column layout to long lines within his Möðruvallabók text, occasionally adds line numbers (sometimes in accordance with the line numbers in Lbs 220 fol. itself, sometimes corresponding with line numbers in the medieval codices), and at times adds folio numbers from Hauksbók. In some cases, the reasons behind these changes can be reconstructed (such as when Konráð switches from Möðruvallabók to AM 566 b 4to), but most often Konráð Gíslason's perceived inconsistencies cannot be explained. Since his printed

edition was to be normalized, it may simply not have mattered to Konráð to be consistent in his transcription. The focus was obviously on the text itself, where comparison between Möðruvallabók and Lbs 220 fol. as well as Hauksbók and Lbs 220 fol. show that he worked with great precision.¹³

In addition to the texts from Möðruvallabók and Hauksbók, Konráð Gíslason also transcribes some of the stanzas from *Fóstbræðra saga* from three different manuscripts on folios 44r-46v of Lbs 220 fol., with some marginal comments written by Sveinbjörn Egilsson.¹⁴ The final section of Lbs 220 fol. (fols. 47r-75v) consists of “Anmærkninger” [annotations].

That the transcriptions of Möðruvallabók and Hauksbók in Lbs 220 fol. were the basis for Konráð Gíslason’s *Fóstbræðra saga* edition, as its catalogue description suggests, seems certain, although there were clearly—and unsurprisingly—several steps between Konráð’s initial transcriptions and the final print, i.e. proofs to be corrected.¹⁵ The transcriptions as well as the 1852 edition also bear witness to Konráð Gíslason’s conservative and perfectionistic work as an editor and his practice to adhere closely to the language form of his exemplar. In the top-left corner on fol. 32r in Lbs 220 fol., for example, Konráð adds “enn overalt hvor Mbr. har det!” [enn everywhere where the manuscript has it!]. It can be observed that Konráð Gíslason adds a second *n* to several *en* [but] on this page (e.g. l. 1, 2, 4). An examination of the 1852 edition reveals that Konráð initially spells *en* as it would be expected with one *n*, but later uses two *n*, as the marginal note in Lbs 220 fol. suggests.¹⁶ The first instance in the printed edition occurs within the Hauksbók text (“enn þat er þeir máttu af sjá” (80, l. 23)), slightly earlier than the marginal note in Lbs 220 fol. According to Jón Sigurðsson (JS 19 fol., fol. 108r) a new scribe takes over in Hauksbók, beginning with the chapter where Konráð Gíslason begins to make the switch from *en* to *enn* (which in Hauksbók is written “Eñ”). Konráð Gíslason thus follows the orthography of his exemplar, even to the point of differentiating the spelling conventions of different scribes.¹⁷

While it is possible that the 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* does not contain any variant readings to reach a wider, more general audience, as suggested in the bylaws of Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund, the annotations preserved in Lbs 220 fol. (fols. 47r-75v) may indicate instead that Konráð Gíslason was planning on adding annotations and variant readings in footnotes in his revision of the first volume. This is a possible indication that Springborg’s (231) assumption is correct and the “general public” referred to in the bylaws of the literary society in truth primarily refers to an educated elite. In his annotations in Lbs 220 fol., Konráð Gíslason points out special features in the manuscripts, for example, the use of red ink.¹⁸ He also makes references to additions to AM 566 b 4to in the hand of Finnur Magnússon,¹⁹ who had published parts of *Fóstbræðra saga* in Volume 2 of *Grønlands historiske mindesmærker* [Greenland’s historical memorials], and explains his editorial choices, such as conjectured readings of illegible or erroneous

phrases.²⁰ The annotations in Lbs 220 fol. resemble those in other text editions by Konráð Gíslason, such as in his edition of *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*.

As was mentioned, Lbs 220 fol. also provides proof that Konráð Gíslason used the manuscript after his edition had been published. The unbound leaves of Lbs 220 fol. are, for example, wrapped in a large piece of sturdy paper. A handwritten note on this cover indicates that the contents of the manuscript were to be used “til framhalds útgáfunnar á Fóstbræðra sögu” [for the continuation of the *Fóstbræðra saga* edition]. At the bottom of the same page, Konráð adds, “Skýring Sv. Egilssonar á vísunum er hjá Skúla Thorl. (9/8 54)” [Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s explanatory notes regarding the stanzas are in Skúli Thorlacius’ possession, 9 August 1854]. The date indicates that Konráð Gíslason was still using Lbs 220 fol. and working on the second volume to his edition a year after the Icelandic reprint had been published. As noted above, Konráð mentions in his preliminary introduction to the 1852 edition that the second volume was to contain *Fóstbræðra saga* according to Flateyjarbók, explanatory notes to the stanzas by Sveinbjörn Egilsson, and a Danish translation of the text by Skúli Thorlacius.

Accuracy or Accessibility? Konráð Gíslason and Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s Collaboration on the *Fóstbræðra saga* stanzas

No written evidence survives of how or when Sveinbjörn Egilsson agreed to assist Konráð Gíslason with his *Fóstbræðra saga* edition, particularly the stanzas. Nonetheless, several letters and documents give insight into their collaboration. In a letter to Sveinbjörn Egilsson, dated 30 September 1850, Konráð Gíslason informs Sveinbjörn that he intends to send him the Flateyjarbók version of *Fóstbræðra saga* as well as the stanzas “með fyrstu vorskípum” [with the first spring ships] (A. Kristjánsson 152).²¹ Presumably in response to this letter, Sveinbjörn writes to Konráð Gíslason on 27 February 1851, asking him for clear instructions on how to edit the stanzas, “því mér er grunar á að hér sé nokkuð ábótavant” [because I suspect that there will be scope for improvement] (KG 32 LIII No. 416). Konráð’s communication with Sveinbjörn Egilsson in these letters indicates that he had a timeline in mind for preparing the Flateyjarbók version of *Fóstbræðra saga* for the second volume.²²

Between February 1851 and March 1852, Konráð Gíslason and Sveinbjörn Egilsson exchanged additional letters, which, however, are either not preserved or do not discuss their collaboration on the *Fóstbræðra saga* edition. The next time *Fóstbræðra saga* is mentioned in their correspondence is in a letter by Sveinbjörn Egilsson, dated to 5 March 1852. Here, Sveinbjörn says, “En um alt þetta vona eg að geta talað við yður sjálfan að sumri. Þá býst eg við, að við fáum Fóstbræðra söguna yðar” [but I hope to talk with you about all of this in person in the summer. I suspect that we will then get your *Fóstbræðra saga*] (KG 32 LIII No. 418), suggesting that Sveinbjörn was aware that the first volume was close to being printed.²³

While work on the Flateyjarbók text may have delayed the second volume, Sveinbjörn Egilsson's explanatory notes regarding the stanzas were well on their way.²⁴ In a letter dated 10 September 1850 (KG 32 LIII No. 415), Sveinbjörn writes to Konráð Gíslason regarding the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga*, admitting that some of them are highly obscure. Konráð also discusses the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga* in the aforementioned letter, dated 30 September 1850. The letter mentions that Konráð sent along proofs of twenty-four pages of his text edition as well as some stanzas “sem þjer voruð ekki búnir með” [which you (i.e. Sveinbjörn Egilsson) had not finished yet] (A. Kristjánsson 152). Konráð Gíslason apologizes for not having been able to compare the stanzas with those found in Flateyjarbók, admitting that their interpretation may be quite challenging. Sveinbjörn Egilsson replied to Konráð on 27 February 1851 (KG 32 LIII No. 416):

Eg læt nú fylgja Vísurnar úr Fóstbrs. með upplausnarmynd einhverri, sem eg bið yður vel að virða og færa til betra vegar, ef þér annars getið fundið eitthvað í þeim nýtilegt. Þær eru mér víða mjög óljósar. Eg fer nú að gerast leiður á þessháttar, og held bezt sé að sleppa öllum vísunum, og fara að eins og þeir á Hólum í Gíslasögu Súrssonar, og setja stjörnur í staðinn. Þesskonar stjörnur þurfa ekki að óprýða útgáfunar. Einginn maður, hvort heldur er, les vísurnar, og af þeim er, held eg lítið að læra nú á tíðum, þegar öll hugsun hefir tekið aðra stefnu, eins og betur fer og alténd mátti við búast að verða mundi. ætla það væri ekki viðkunnanlegast fyrir almenning og alla, að prenta sögunnar, eins og nú er talað, þar sem því verður við komið?

[I am now attaching the stanzas from *Fóstbræðra saga* including with the word order rendered in prose, which I ask you to treat with kindness and improve, if you can find anything useful in them. I find them very unclear in many places. I am getting a bit frustrated with this task now and consider it the best course of action to leave out the stanzas completely and go about it as in the Hólar edition of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*²⁵ and print asterisks instead. These kinds of asterisks do not have to deface the editions. No one reads the stanzas anyway, and I do not think one can learn much from them at this point in time where all thinking focuses on other things, and luckily so, as we could have expected. Would it not be best for the general public and everyone to print the sagas as we speak today wherever possible?]

Sveinbjörn Egilsson's phrasing of “fyrir almenning og alla” [for the general public and everyone] is interesting, quite possibly implying that—much like Konráð Gíslason and Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund—“general public” may have referred to an educated elite, whereas “everyone” may include those less educated. Since Konráð Gíslason's edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* contains all stanzas, it is clear that he rejected Sveinbjörn's proposal to drop (some of) the stanzas altogether, likely because it would have gone against Konráð's conviction to provide an edition that resembles the medieval text as closely as possible. Konráð was certainly

aware of the complicated nature of skaldic poetry, but he considered it an artform that needed to be preserved and appreciated. Konráð argued (1872, 314) that the skalds wrote for kings, earls, and other important political figures, and that the audience was expected to have the knowledge and skill to decipher even the most complicated stanzas. In short, the stanzas were not supposed to be easily understood; as Konráð Gíslason states quite pointedly, they “ere ikke for eenfoldige eller uforstandige Hørere eller Læsere” [are not meant for simple-minded or inept listeners or readers] (1872, 314). Even though the general readership may have had little interest in the complicated stanzas or understanding thereof, from a scholarly point of view, these stanzas remained important for linguistic, literary, and even historical studies. Saga writers used the stanzas—in the case of *Fóstbræðra saga* those attributed to Þormóðr kolbrúnarskáld—to give the stories the appearance of historicity, and it was not until the early twentieth century that more and more scholars doubted the reliability of the sagas as historical sources (see e.g. Cormack 13 n. 1). To Konráð Gíslason, Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s suggestion to leave out the stanzas, therefore, must have seemed entirely unreasonable and went against his own scholarly convictions. Moreover, considering Konráð’s aforementioned belief that the stanzas were not meant to be easy, the inclusion of the stanzas serves as further proof that Konráð produced his edition for an educated elite rather than the general public.

Despite their disagreement regarding the inclusion or exclusion of the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga*, Konráð Gíslason relied on Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s assistance and the explanatory notes Sveinbjörn provided for his edition. In a chapter dealing with stanzas in *dróttkvæði* meter published in *Njála II* (1889), Konráð Gíslason (119) comments that he follows Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s redactions of the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga* in all instances. However, while the first eight stanzas in Konráð’s edition of *Möðruvallabók* and all of the stanzas in the *Hauksbók* section are presented in normalized form, like the main text, the remaining stanzas in *Möðruvallabók* have been left in facsimile.²⁶ It can be noted that Konráð Gíslason follows the same pattern in his transcription of *Möðruvallabók* in Lbs 220 fol., where in the first case (fol. 14r) he corrects the stanza from normalized to facsimile. The stanzas that Konráð Gíslason provides in facsimile in the *Möðruvallabók* text are also preserved in *Hauksbók*. Konráð’s reason for transcribing these stanzas in facsimile in the *Möðruvallabók* version may, therefore, have been related to the fact that both medieval codices preserve the same stanzas, with slight textual variation.²⁷

Despite Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s obvious occasional frustration, the collaboration between him and Konráð Gíslason regarding the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga* remained close and long-lasting.²⁸ As was already noted, Konráð Gíslason transcribes a small number of stanzas from three manuscripts (*Möðruvallabók*, AM 566 b 4to, and AM 153 fol.) in Lbs 220 fol. These pages contain annotations in Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s hand, indicating that Konráð must have sent them to Iceland

for Sveinbjörn to work with (as the letter correspondence cited above also implies). The same was the case with transcriptions of stanzas in Konráð Gíslason's hand preserved in Lbs 459 4to, containing documents owned by Sveinbjörn Egilsson. Here, Konráð transcribes the stanzas either in accordance with AM 566 b 4to or Hauksbók and adds variant readings from other manuscripts below each stanza.²⁹ He also makes reference to the page numbers containing these stanzas in Gunnlaugur Oddsson's 1822 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* and indicates which stanzas do not occur in the Möðruvallabók or Hauksbók versions. In addition to Konráð Gíslason's transcriptions, Lbs 459 4to also contains various transcriptions and clean copies of the stanzas in Sveinbjörn Egilsson's hand, partly already with explanatory notes added. Sveinbjörn appears to have used the various transcriptions in Lbs 459 4to to later produce a final clean copy, which he then sent to Konráð Gíslason. This copy is preserved in KG 29 I 1, and could very well be the document Sveinbjörn Egilsson refers to in his letter dated 27 February 1851.

In KG 29 I 1, Sveinbjörn Egilsson transcribes all stanzas from *Fóstbræðra saga* in normalized form, including stanzas preserved in neither Hauksbók nor Möðruvallabók. Underneath each stanza, he renders the text again, changing the word order to prose to make the stanzas more intelligible. Then he adds explanatory notes regarding the meaning of phrases, *kennings*, and *heiti* in footnotes. Sveinbjörn Egilsson also provides references to printed editions, such as the 1822 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* or Finnur Magnússon's *Grønlands historiske mindesmærker*. This section of KG 29 I 1 was likely intended as the exemplar to be used for the second volume of Konráð Gíslason's *Fóstbræðra saga* edition and is extremely similar to Sveinbjörn Egilsson's explanatory notes to the stanzas in Konráð's 1849 edition of *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni* (169–80). This corroborates that Konráð Gíslason had an edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* in mind that strongly resembled his *Gísla saga* edition, conforming to the ideas of Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund to promote the Old Scandinavian literature for the “educated public” in Denmark.

On the final pages of KG 29 I 1, Sveinbjörn Egilsson provides a Danish translation of the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga*. This, again, mirrors the set-up of Konráð Gíslason's edition of *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*, where Sveinbjörn provided a Danish translation of the stanzas (182–88). It seems likely that KG 29 I 1 was the document Konráð Gíslason refers to on the cover of Lbs 220 fol., containing explanatory notes by Sveinbjörn Egilsson about the stanzas from *Fóstbræðra saga* and in 1854 in the possession of Skúli Thorlacius. Sveinbjörn Egilsson's Danish translation of the stanzas may have been the primary reason why Skúli Thorlacius received the document. As the preliminary introduction of the 1852 *Fóstbræðra saga* edition mentions, Thorlacius was responsible for translating *Fóstbræðra saga* into Danish for the second volume. Due to the complicated nature of Icelandic stanzas, Thorlacius may have appreciated Sveinbjörn Egilsson's pre-translation

of the stanzas into Danish, or Konráð Gíslason may have asked Thorlacius to see if Egilsson's translations needed revising. However, no such translation survives and it is impossible to tell to what extent—if at all—Thorlacius had completed the task.³⁰

The Many Editions of *Fóstbræðra saga*: An (Incomplete) Summary

The editio princeps of *Fóstbræðra saga* was published by Gunnlaugur Oddsson in 1822. It is based on a conflated text preserved in a paper copy of a seventeenth-century copy of a manuscript related to, but not directly derived from, the medieval codex Flateyjarbók. In Flateyjarbók, the text of *Fóstbræðra saga* is interwoven with that of the saga of King Óláfr the Saint. This version of *Fóstbræðra saga* has been shown to be the furthest removed from the original text (see J. Kristjánsson 27–53).

Konráð Gíslason's letter to his father from the fall of 1850 demonstrates that it was Konráð's intention to improve on Gunnlaugur Oddsson's edition. Even though it is not stated explicitly, it seems plausible that Konráð Gíslason's main criticism of Gunnlaugur's edition was Gunnlaugur's choice of an exemplar several stages removed from the original text. While Gunnlaugur Oddsson's intention may have been to simply provide a readable, complete version of *Fóstbræðra saga*, Konráð Gíslason clearly had an edition in mind that appealed to a more educated audience. As the preliminary introduction to Konráð Gíslason's 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* indicates, Konráð wanted to publish the text according to Möðruvallabók, Hauksbók, and Flateyjarbók, thus providing readers with separate text editions of all major medieval manuscripts preserving the saga. Jónas Kristjánsson (28) concludes that Hauksbók and Möðruvallabók were the focal points of Konráð Gíslason's edition because they are the two eldest codices. The preliminary introduction to Konráð's edition, moreover, shows that he also wished to provide readers with a detailed analysis and explanatory notes regarding the stanzas of *Fóstbræðra saga*, as well as a translation for the Danish readership.

The various manuscripts and letters discussed in this article bear witness to Konráð Gíslason's ongoing efforts to revise and complete the *Fóstbræðra saga* edition he had envisioned. This edition was likely to resemble that of *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*. In this edition, Konráð Gíslason writes a detailed introduction of twenty-two pages, which includes, for example, a discussion of palaeographic and orthographic features (1849, IV–XIII). Some of Konráð Gíslason's notes in the last section of Lbs 220 fol. (fols. 47r–75r) suggest that Konráð had similar intentions for a revised longer introduction for his *Fóstbræðra saga* edition.³¹ The annotations preserved on folios 47r–75v in Lbs 220 fol., moreover, include in many ways topics Konráð Gíslason discusses in footnotes to *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*, suggesting that he not only had a more detailed introduction but also annotations and a

variant apparatus planned for *Fóstbræðra saga*. Like the edition of *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*, *Fóstbræðra saga* was to contain explanatory notes regarding the stanzas of the saga, as well as a Danish translation of the stanzas by Sveinbjörn Egilsson. Lastly, the preliminary introduction to the 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* mentions an intended Danish translation by Skúli Thorlacius, thus going one step further than the edition of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*.

The intended two-volume edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, as it can be reconstructed, was most certainly in line with the philosophy set forth by Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund to publish Old Norse-Icelandic literature—which played a crucial role in the wake of nineteenth-century national Romanticism in Scandinavia—in a way most suitable for university and scholastic circles. It is undeniable that for Konráð Gíslason and other scholars his 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* represented an improvement over Gunnlaugur Oddsson’s editio princeps, providing readers and scholars with precise copies of the two primary sources of the saga text. Nonetheless, the unfinished and preliminary nature of Konráð’s 1852 edition—lacking the Flateyjarbók version, an introduction, variant readings, a translation, everything that would raise its status to that of a true scholarly edition (disguised as being created for the “general public”)—meant that an edition comprising all major manuscript branches was still lacking. The text of Flateyjarbók was not printed in its entirety until the 1860s (see Vigfússon and Unger), and Björn K. Þórolfsson’s scholarly edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*, the first to incorporate almost all significant manuscripts (and as such likely a reaction to Konráð Gíslason’s incomplete edition), was not published until 1925–1927.

Konráð Gíslason’s *Fóstbræðra saga* was succeeded not only by scholarly editions. Popular editions, designed to reach a broader audience in Iceland rather than merely an educated elite (primarily in Denmark), emerged as well. In 1899, Valdimar Ásmundarson published *Fóstbræðra saga* as part of the Íslendinga sögur series established by the bookseller Sigurður Kristjánsson. Sigurður lamented that no one in Iceland truly knew the sagas since the texts were not available for the general public, only in expensive scholarly editions. He thus created the Íslendinga sögur series with the aim of producing affordable text editions for everyone (Ásmundarson 1891, III; Skúlason 5).³² Valdimar Ásmundarson (1899, I) based his *Fóstbræðra saga* edition on that of Konráð Gíslason, following *Möðruvallabók* in as far as possible and only switching to *Hauksbók* once the *Möðruvallabók* text breaks off, even though Valdimar assumes that *Hauksbók* presents the more original text. Valdimar also publishes excerpts from *Fóstbræðra saga* according to Flateyjarbók following the main part of the edition. Valdimar Ásmundarson (1891, VI) states in his initial guidelines for the Íslendinga sögur series that he intends to follow the orthography of the medieval codices (much like Konráð Gíslason had done in his editions). His *Fóstbræðra saga* as well as other editions in the series are, however, printed in the so-called standardized old spelling (*samræmd stafsetning forn*), an artificially created orthography based on

that of the oldest Icelandic manuscripts, indicating that Valdimar changed his editorial practice at some point.³³

As a reaction to Valdimar Ásmundarson's edition, Benedikt Sveinsson published the saga anew in 1925, again using the standardized old spelling. In his introduction, Benedikt Sveinsson (XIV) points out that Björn K. Þórólfsson's scholarly edition was forthcoming, but that his popular edition—which like Valdimar's was financed by Sigurður Kristjánsson—could not wait until Björn K. Þórólfsson's had been finalized, since Valdimar Ásmundarson's edition was completely sold out. Benedikt Sveinsson (XIV) goes on to say that it was necessary to compare all previous editions and correct the most obvious mistakes, suggesting that he considered Valdimar Ásmundarson's and quite possibly also Gunnlaugur Oddsson's and Konráð Gíslason's editions insufficient and lacking in quality. Unlike Konráð Gíslason and Valdimar Ásmundarson, Benedikt Sveinsson focused on Hauksbók—the oldest (though not necessarily most original) text—in those instances where Möðruvallabók and Hauksbók overlap. Like Valdimar Ásmundarson, Benedikt Sveinsson prints excerpts from Flateyjarbók at the end of his edition.

In 1943, *Fóstbræðra saga* was published in the Íslensk fornrit series, the standard scholarly editions most frequently cited today. Three years later, in 1946—and thus after Iceland had been declared an independent republic—Guðni Jónsson published a reading copy of *Fóstbræðra saga* for the general public as part of his Íslendinga sögur series 1946b. In the preface to the first volume of the series (also published in 1946), Guðni Jónsson (1946a, XXVI) explains that the books—“árgjöf til Íslendinga á morgni hins endurreista lýðveldis” [a gift to the Icelanders in light of the re-established republic]—are suitable for educational as well as entertainment purposes, and are to ensure that the Icelandic people are able to pass their literary heritage on to the next generation. The editions were meant as a way for Icelanders to learn about themselves, their history, and their place amongst the nations of this world (G. Jónsson 1946a, XXVI).³⁴

Conclusion: Every Edition is Based on Both Manuscripts and Ideology

The Old Norse-Icelandic manuscripts and sagas played an important role during the seventeenth century, when Denmark and Sweden battled for supremacy over each other and for their place amongst the world's most powerful nations. The same remained true during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Urged on by the ideas of national Romanticism, not only Denmark and Sweden but also other nations around the globe, and the Icelandic people themselves, used the sagas to justify their historical and political importance. This trend continued (and continues) during the nineteenth, twentieth, and even twenty-first centuries. Because the Old Norse-Icelandic texts were (and are) such an important source,

text editions and translations of the sagas were (and remain) in high demand during the time periods in question.

It is evident that editions of Old Norse-Icelandic texts—*Fóstbræðra saga* and other sagas alike—vary greatly, ranging from facsimile, to scholarly, to popular, from imitating the orthography of the exemplar, following an artificial old standard, to adhering to modern spelling, written in the original or reproduced in adaptations and translations. The possibilities are endless, one might say, always depending on the philosophy and often political views of those producing the printed works; and each possibility comes with its own sets of problems. Valdimar Ásmundarson, for example, laments in his preface to the first volume of the *Íslendinga sögur* series (1891, iii-iv) that publishing an edition for the general public is problematic, because, unlike scholarly editions, popular editions provide a mixed text void of variant readings and most annotations. The reader thus loses sight of the fact that manuscripts can vary greatly. At the same time, he—like his publisher Sigurður Kristjánsson—understood the need for affordable popular editions.

The debate between proponents of scholarly editions on one hand and popular editions on the other continued throughout the twentieth century. During the early 1940s, Halldór Laxness and other likeminded Icelanders proposed to publish the sagas with Modern Icelandic orthography (see Crocker in this volume), arguing that the artificial standardized old spelling “repel[led] ordinary readers” (J. K. Helgason 150).³⁵ The scholarly community, however, feared for the future of Icelandic culture, which was deeply rooted in Iceland’s literary heritage (which was traditionally published in the standardized archaic norm). In fact, as a reaction to Laxness’ proposal, the Icelandic parliament attempted—but ultimately failed—to make the artificial orthography the law and give *Hið íslenska fornritafélag* [The Icelandic Texts Society] unlimited authorization to publish Old Norse-Icelandic literature (J. K. Helgason 145).

The vehemence of this clash over the past obscures the fact that both parties appear to have had the same goal: “to preserve native traditions and establish continuity between past and future, the rural and the urban” (J. K. Helgason 145), during a time in which foreign influences and urbanization rapidly and dramatically changed Icelandic society. However, “the best way to establish such a continuity was fiercely disputed” (J. K. Helgason 145). Even today, scholars still frequently disagree on the best approach for editing and publishing the Old Norse-Icelandic texts. While some remain rooted in the traditional ways of producing standard scholarly editions with variant apparati, others explore new ways of bringing medieval literature to the public, such as interactive digital editions, allowing the reader, for example, to choose between facsimile, diplomatic, and normalized.

What has been revealed throughout this article’s discussion is that no edition (and no manuscript for that matter) can ever be considered perfect, and

some—such as Konráð Gíslason's 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga*—remain incomplete or even unpublished. Perhaps it is best to think along the lines of Sigfús Sigurhjártarson, one of the founders and Deputy Chairman of Iceland's Socialist Party, who on 13 April 1943 held a passionate speech in front of the lower chamber of the Icelandic Althing in light of the criticism of other members of parliament against Halldór Laxness' proposed Modern Icelandic edition of *Njáls saga*. Sigfús Sigurhjártarson (46) defended Halldór's endeavour, arguing that the best way to honour the Icelandic sagas is to publish academic editions with detailed introductions and variant apparati for the scholarly community, quality editions in Modern Icelandic for the general public, as well as summaries and excerpts for children.³⁶

As Sigfús Sigurhjártarson implies, each edition, each adaptation, and translation has merit. And no matter their motifs or philosophies, the work of editors, translators, and adaptors alike is—at its core—based on the Icelandic manuscripts, both medieval and post-medieval, which—much like the printed works—can be seen as reactions to, and sometimes criticisms of, a previously established text and/or milieu.

NOTES

1. For more on Konráð Gíslason's life and legacy, see, for example, Björn M. Ólsen 1891 and Finnur Jónsson 1891.
2. In contrast, the second major approach to editing a text, according to Bediér, focuses on choosing the text of one manuscript as the best text rather than producing a mixed text (for more general information on Lachmann and Bediér, see, for example, Trovato).
3. A facsimile edition is a more or less exact reproduction of the manuscript exemplar, including letter shapes, abbreviation signs, headings, rubrics, and so forth. In a diplomatic edition, the text of the manuscript is followed closely, but abbreviations have generally been expanded and expanded letters highlighted, usually through italicization. Normalized editions reproduce the text in a standardized form, such as, for example, in accordance with the orthography of the manuscript, a pre-defined standard of Old Norse, or in Modern Icelandic. For more information, see, e.g. Guðvarður M. Gunnlaugsson; Haugen 112–13, 115.
4. Konráð Gíslason discusses the same topic in *Um frum-parta íslenzkrar túngu í fornöld* (1846).
5. It would go beyond the premise of this article to provide a detailed account of the manuscript transmission of *Fóstbræðra saga*. Only those manuscripts relevant to printed editions discussed in this article will be mentioned. For a detailed discussion of manuscripts containing *Fóstbræðra saga* and their relationships, see, for example, Björn K. Þórólfsson III–XL and Jónas Kristjánsson 13–96.
6. The variants are taken from Möðruvallabók, AM 142 fol., AM 566 a 4to, AM 566 b 4to, and AM 566 c 4to. According to Björn K. Þórólfsson (XXVIII), AM 566 c 4to (written 1705) is related to Stockh. papp. fol. 4, 4to, a close relative of the Flateyjarbók text.

Jónas Kristjánsson (15) suggests with regard to Stockh. papp. fol. 4, 4to (=Hólmsbók) that the first part of the manuscript is derived from Möðruvallabók, whereas the second part is related to but not a direct copy of Flateyjarbók.

7. In 1853, Konráð Gíslason released his 1852 edition with an Icelandic title page and introduction, leaving the text editions of Möðruvallabók and Hauksbók unchanged. The Icelandic introduction is slightly abbreviated, but still mentions that the Flateyjarbók version will be printed separately.
8. A small slip of paper, foliated as fol. 45 bis, preserves a stanza from *Gísla saga Súrssonar*. The stanza is written in Sveinbjörn Egilsson's hand and it seems likely that Konráð Gíslason—or another person handling Konráð's manuscripts and notes—accidentally added the leaf to Lbs 220 fol. Konráð Gíslason published two versions of *Gísla saga* for Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund in 1849, and the title page to the edition indicates that Sveinbjörn Egilsson was involved in the project.
9. Comparison between Möðruvallabók, AM 566 b 4to, and Lbs 220 fol. suggests that Konráð Gíslason indeed copied the text available in Möðruvallabók from Möðruvallabók itself where possible and only used AM 566 b 4to when a lacuna occurred in the medieval codex. Abbreviations in Möðruvallabók and AM 566 b 4to do not always coincide and where they differ, Konráð Gíslason utilizes the same abbreviations as in Möðruvallabók.
10. Konráð Gíslason preserves, for example, tall s (ŀ), insular f (ƿ), uncial d (ḁ), ð, v (including in places where it is used for u), r rotunda (ꝛ), and small capital r (ꝛ) in accordance with Hauksbók.
11. The folio numbers given correspond with the folio numbers in Jón Helgason's 1960 facsimile edition of Hauksbók. In the medieval codex itself, three sets of folio numbers have been written at the top of each recto page (see Jón Helgason 1960, XXIX-XXX for details).
12. See, for example, Jón Helgason (1960, XXV), who mentions that during the late 1830s, Jón Sigurðsson applied "a tincture of gall" to certain passages in Hauksbók—including the three folios in *Fóstbræðra saga*—to enhance the legibility of faded text while transcribing the manuscript.
13. For the purpose of this article, the comparison between the various manuscripts and text editions had to be restricted to only a few pages in each manuscript. The only inconsistencies noticeable are instances where Konráð Gíslason forgets to underline letters, which in the parchment codices are abbreviated, and very rarely instances where he underlines something that is not actually abbreviated in the medieval manuscripts.
14. The stanzas in question are stanzas 3 to 7 according to Möðruvallabók, 2 to 9 according to AM 153 fol., and 2, 8, 9, and 10 according to AM 566 b 4to. The stanza numbers given here correspond with those in the Íslenzk Fornrit edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* (see Þórólfsson and Jónsson).
15. Naturally, the publishing process would have required various stages of proofs. Manuscript evidence in Lbs 220 fol. and letter correspondence with Sveinbjörn Egilsson confirm this. On fol. 47r in Lbs 220 fol., for example, Konráð Gíslason mentions in his annotations regarding a passage in Möðruvallabók (fol. 198r, l. 28) that "efter det første kallaði synes til at mangle, hvis þó ikke er glemmt foran at, saa staaer dette for þó at" [til

seems to be missing after the first *kallaði*; if *þó* has not been accidentally left out before *at*, then this (i.e. *at*) stands for *þó at*]. Konráð Gíslason later crosses out this comment and writes instead “har jeg tilfóiet til og þó” [I have added *til* and *þó*], which corresponds with what he prints in the 1852 edition (cf. Konráð Gíslason 1852, 3). A marginal note on fol. 9v of Lbs 220 fol. (seemingly not written by Konráð) states “Dette Blad bedes tilbage med Correcturen” [Please return this sheet with the proofs]. Other markings in Lbs 220 fol. and occasional references to page numbers that match or almost match the printed edition also suggest that at some point Konráð Gíslason and his collaborators used Lbs 220 fol. in combination with printed proofs. In letter correspondence between Konráð Gíslason and Sveinbjörn Egilsson, who assisted Konráð with the stanzas in *Fóstbræðra saga*, both scholars make references to specific page and occasionally line numbers that match the printed edition. Since Sveinbjörn Egilsson died before the 1852 edition was published, it is certain that Konráð Gíslason and Sveinbjörn are referring to printed proofs in these cases.

16. In all these cases *en* refers to the conjunction “but” rather than to the adverbial *enn* [again/still].
17. Similarly, it can be observed that while Konráð Gíslason transcribes *fyrir* [for] with a *y* in his transcriptions of *Möðruvallabók* and *Hauksbók* in Lbs 220 fol., the printed edition spells the word *firir* in the *Möðruvallabók* text and *fyr* in the *Hauksbók* text instead, once again differentiating the orthography of the two medieval codices in accordance with Konráð Gíslason’s editorial practices. The spelling *fyrir* sneaks into the 1852 edition of *Fóstbræðra saga* only four times, on pages 17 (line 21) and 33 (line 26) within the *Möðruvallabók* text, and on pages 100 (line 29) and 108 (line 23), preserving parts of the *Hauksbók* text. Lastly, the verb form *sé* is, for example, spelled both *sè* and *sje* in Konráð Gíslason’s edition, which—upon closer examination—is due to the fact that the word is sometimes spelled out in the medieval codices, but abbreviated in other instances. Konráð Gíslason used the spelling according to the manuscripts where words are unabbreviated, but expanded abbreviations according to a clearly defined system in all other cases.
18. See, for example, Lbs 220 fol., fol. 58v “Capitlets Begyndelsesbogstav er rödt” [The initial to the chapter is red].
19. References to Finnur Magnússon occur, for example, several times on fol. 51r of Lbs 220 fol.
20. See, for example, Lbs 220 fol., fol. 52r “þeim Gising for Hskrs hm” [þeim conjecture for hm in the manuscript].
21. The original letter is preserved in Lbs 135 fol., a collection of private documents owned by Sveinbjörn Egilsson and letters he received.
22. Since not all of Konráð Gíslason’s letters to Sveinbjörn Egilsson are preserved, it is impossible to infer whether he sent Sveinbjörn a transcription of the stanzas (and quite possibly text) from *Flateyjarbók* as he had originally intended. No transcription of the *Flateyjarbók* text in Konráð Gíslason’s hand is extant (though that does not necessarily mean that he had not begun such a task), nor is there evidence that he possessed a transcription of *Flateyjarbók*.

23. Since Sveinbjörn Egilsson died before Konráð Gíslason's edition was published, it seems likely that the personal meeting that Sveinbjörn had hoped to have with Konráð never happened.
24. Finnur Jónsson (296) points out that Sveinbjörn Egilsson was often consulted for his expertise regarding stanzas.
25. Sveinbjörn Egilsson refers to the 1756 edition of *Gísla saga* by Björn Markússon (see *Ágætar fornmannna sögur*). Here, asterisks occasionally replace stanzas, for example, on pages 157 and 170.
26. These are the stanzas on pages 39-40, 42, 45, 47, 52, 53, 55-59 of Konráð Gíslason's 1852 edition. The corresponding stanzas in Lbs 220 fol. appear on fols. 14r-16r, 17r, 18v, 19r, 20r-21r.
27. In his edition of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, Konráð Gíslason takes the same approach. He normalizes the stanzas in the so-called *Saga Gísla Súrssonar (hinn minni)* [The shorter version of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*], but leaves the same stanzas in *Saga Gísla Súrssonar (hinn meiri)* [The longer version of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*] in facsimile, with three exceptions. He does not provide an explanation in his introduction to the edition.
28. The working relationship between Konráð Gíslason and Sveinbjörn Egilsson (as well as other scholars) may not always have been unproblematic. Björn M. Ólsen (80-81) gives several examples in his short biography of Konráð Gíslason of heated written discourses between Konráð and other scholars, including Sveinbjörn Egilsson's son, Benedikt Gröndal, who in 1866 angrily replied to Konráð Gíslason's implied criticism of Sveinbjörn's work as an interpreter of stanzas (see also Gíslason 1866; Gröndal).
29. The variants stem from Möðruvallabók, AM 153 fol., AM 163 e fol., AM 142 fol., AM 566 a 4to, AM 566 c 4to. According to Björn K. Þórólfsson (XXVIII), AM 163 e fol. is related to Stockh. papp. fol. 4, 4to (see n. 6).
30. Letters preserved in Thorlacius' hand and written to Konráð Gíslason (KG 32 L) are generally personal in content and do not mention his professional collaboration with Konráð Gíslason. Since both lived in Denmark, they may have discussed most of their work-related matters in person rather than in writing.
31. In the introduction to *Tvær sögur af Gísla Súrssyni*, Konráð Gíslason (IV-V) discusses, for example, which letters are used in the exemplar (e.g. *é, éé, ee*) to represent Modern Icelandic *é*, which Konráð renders *è* (the norm during the nineteenth century). In Lbs 220 fol. (fol. 74r) Konráð Gíslason adds a comment, indicating that in the *Fóstbræðra saga* edition *è* will be printed everywhere with the exception of *íe*, which should be printed *je*. This suggests that Konráð Gíslason may have intended to discuss the matter in a revised introduction to his *Fóstbræðra saga* edition.
32. The volumes of the *Íslendinga sögur* series cost eighty-five *aurar* (100 *aurar* = 1 Icelandic *króna*). Sigurður Kristjánsson admits in an interview that many considered it ludicrous from a business point of view to sell the books this cheaply, but that he saw it as the only way to ensure that knowledge of Iceland's medieval literary heritage would not be lost (Skúlason 5).
33. This standardized old spelling had been developed by Icelandic and foreign scholars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (J. K. Helgason 146).

34. In 1960, Agnete Loth reconstructed the medieval text of the lost *Konungsbók* (*Membrana Regia*), thus filling a scholarly gap in *Fóstbræðra saga* research. The first time *Fóstbræðra saga* was published with Modern Icelandic spelling was in 1970, in volume four of *Íslendinga sögur*, edited by Grímur M. Helgason and Vésteinn Ólason in the *Íslenzkar fornsögur* series. In 1996, the saga appeared as an audio book on cassette tapes (read by Erlingur Gíslason), which later was reproduced on CD; and in 1997, *Netútgáfan* [the online edition]—hosted by Snerpa.is and seeking to make Icelandic literature and other writings available online—made *Fóstbræðra saga* available in digital form with Modern Icelandic spelling. Another audiobook was produced in 2010, read by Ingólfur B. Kristjánsson, and available on Hlusta.is. Various other printed editions of the saga have been published or reprinted, but it would go beyond the scope of this article to list them all.
35. Jón Helgason (1958, 23–24)—like Laxness earlier—criticized the standardized old spelling as well, arguing that ever since the Old Norse-Icelandic sagas had been written down, scribes copied the texts in the orthography and language with which they and their readers were most familiar. To Jón Helgason, printing the sagas in Modern Icelandic spelling, thus, was really just a return to old traditions.
36. Sigfús Sigurhjartarson (47–48) also strongly criticizes the argument put forth by Halldór's opponents that an edition of *Njáls saga* in Modern Icelandic spelling were to drag the saga's good name into the dirt. He points out that no one would argue the same if a painter create a painting inspired by the sagas, and goes on to say that it is important that the medieval stories inspire artists in literary as well as other art forms.

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AM 163 e fol.

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AM 566 a 4to.

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AM 566 c 4to.

GKS 1005 fol.

JS 19 fol.

KG 29 I 1.

KG 32 L.

KG 32 LIII.

Lbs 135 fol.

Lbs 220 fol.

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