

»Sandoyarbók«:

A Faroese Ballad Collection, Its Collector and the Community¹

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Johannes Clemensen's² career as a ballad collector began in 1818 when the Reverend Peder Hentze delegated to his parishioner the task of meeting a request received from Professor P. E. Müller of Copenhagen. Earlier that year, Professor Müller had learned of H.C. Lyngbye's discovery of Faroese heroic ballads treating the Sigurd legend and had written to Hentze on Sandoy, asking that Hentze send copies of whatever ballad texts he could find dealing with this legend and with other ancient themes. And so it was that Hentze set Clemensen the task of assembling as many suitable texts as he could. Clemensen, who was in ill health at the time, recorded a scant eighteen ballad texts, which were then sent to Müller in Copenhagen.

Clemensen's fame as a collector does not stem from this modest first collection, however, but rather from his second, larger one. The manuscript of this larger collection is known as »Sandoyarbók« (*The Book of Sandoy*), a name given it by the Danish folklorist Svend Grundtvig when

he purchased it in 1872 from Clemensen's heirs. Clemensen began his second collecting effort in 1821, after he had regained his health; ten years later, his manuscript collection had grown to comprise a total of ninety-three texts. Most importantly, Clemensen appended to his fair copy from 1831 an explanatory postscript and a register containing the title of each ballad in the collection, along with the name of the informant, the village in which the informant resided, and the date on which the text was recorded.

The importance of Clemensen's »Sandoyarbók« cannot be exaggerated. It comprises the most intensive collecting effort undertaken in any one Faroese district during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the information contained in the »Sandoyarbók« register sets this collection apart as the single most useful source for the study of the workings of an early nineteenth-century Faroese ballad community: with this information we can not only ascertain, at least in part, the repertoires of

individual singers, but with the use of the 1801 and 1834 census reports, along with land and parish records, we can also determine the place of birth of given informants, their place of residence as adults, their economic and social status, and the ties of blood and matrimony linking the informants to each other and to the collector. This information about the ballad community and the collector has much to tell us about the process of collecting; and the process of collecting, in turn, has much to tell us about the collection

»Sandoyarbók« and Its Collector

In his postscript to »*Sandoyarbók*«, Clemensen has traced briefly for us the circumstances that led to his interest in ballad collecting:

At jeg haver sammensamlet alle disse qvæder og indskrevet dem i denne bog, er skeedt af følgende Aarsager. (a) I aaret 1821 blev jeg anmodet af Hr. Amtsprovst Hentze at indsamle nogle Qvæder samt at afskrive dem for at udsendes til Kjøbenhavn. Ligeledes i Aaret 1822 blev jeg anmodet af Hr. J. Nolsøe om at indsamle saa mange qvæder som jeg kunde afstæd komme. Samt i aaret 1823 blev jeg anmodet af Jens Davidsen om alle de qvæder der var angaaende Siururs bedrifter og Ole Trigvesens og da jeg ved denne lejlighed havde de fleste i hænder, søgte jeg efter alle, man her omkring vidste at give navn, holdt jeg det ikke uanstændigt at jeg beholdt som en Copie igien, hvilke jeg i Hast udjagede som jeg beholdt igien og reenskrev det afsendte. (b) Samt mig og efterkommerne til fornøjelse da nu omstunder qvæderne ere næsten gange af brug, og nye viiser istæden for ungdommen brugelige, saa kunne di tilkommende unge see, hvad de forhen værende unge havde til deres Jule Danses fornøjelse³.

That I have gathered all of these ballads together and written them down in this book was brought about by the following circumstances. (a) In the

year 1821 I was requested by the Reverend Dean Hentze to collect some ballads and to make a fair copy of them to be sent to Copenhagen. Likewise, in the year 1822 I was requested by Mr. J. Nolsøe to collect as many ballads as I could manage; and again in the year 1823 I was asked by Jens Davidsen for all the ballads that had to do with the deeds of Sigurd and of Olaf Tryggvason; and since I at that time had most of them in my possession, I tried to get all of what people hereabouts knew the names of. I did not consider it improper if I forwarded a fair copy and kept what I had hurriedly hunted up as a duplicate copy. (b) For my own pleasure and that of posterity, since ballads nowadays have fallen into disuse and new songs have been picked up by young people, so that future youth might see what their predecessors had by way of entertainment at their Christmas dances. (my translation)

Clemensen's postscript shows that the years intervening between his earliest collecting efforts and the completion of the fair copy of »*Sandoyarbók*« in 1831 must have blurred his memory of events: because of the simple fact that the fair copy of Clemensen's »*Hentze Manuscript*« bears the date of 1819, we know with certainty that Hentze did not make his request to Clemensen in 1821, but in 1818 or in the early part of 1819 at the very latest.

Unfortunately, Clemensen's faulty memory of the date of Hentze's initial request calls into question the dates he has given us for Nolsøe's and Davidsen's subsequent ones, thus frustrating our efforts better to understand the circumstances that led in February of 1821 to the revival of his interest in ballad collecting. If Clemensen's memory is accurate and Nolsøe and Davidsen first approached him in 1822 and 1823 respectively, then they could have had nothing to do with his renewed efforts - indeed, the »*Sandoyarbók*« collection must be seen primarily as the result of Clemensen's own initiative. On

the other hand, if Clemensen is wrong about the specific dates but right about associating both of his collections with the promptings of important men, then we must view him as perhaps more eager to please than independently interested in the ballads he was recording.

Although it is unlikely that Clemensen's reasons for starting a new collection in 1821 will ever be known with certainty, we are not wholly ignorant of other facets of his life, thanks to the autobiography appended to his »*Visebog*« (a collection of psalms and other songs in Danish that he worked on throughout most of his life), as well as to later biographical studies by M.A. Jacobsen and Ólavur Clementsen.⁴ We learn from Clemensen himself that what education he had was informal - he learned to write chiefly by watching his father, who was at that time sheriff of Sandoy, as he kept the records required by his job. We hear also that when he was a boy he worked as a shepherd for his older brother, who had obtained one of the royal leaseholds at *í Trøðum*.⁵ Here Clemensen also got to know the neighboring royal tenant's family well, especially the nephew Simon Danielsen and cousin Hans Johannessen, both of whom later became informants for »*Sandoyarbók*«. In his autobiography Clemensen often speaks of being ill. In December of 1817 he came down with »catarrhal fever«, and he recollects that he lay seriously ill for eighteen weeks and was convalescent for the better part of three years afterwards. If his memory is reliable concerning the severity and duration of his illness, we can conclude that he had not completely recovered his health at the time of Hentze's request for ballads in 1818 or

1819; and that, moreover, he may have been just regaining his strength when he started his second collection of heroic ballads. During the following years he enjoyed good health and was very active: he not only collected ballads, but also did his share of the work on his parents' land, served as Hentze's part-time clerk, and in 1823 married and started a family. But two years after he completed his 1831 fair copy of »*Sandoyarbók*«, he was visited by illness again, becoming a semi-invalid for the rest of his life. He continued to be able to earn a modest living as unofficial town clerk and later as tithe-man; in 1838 he was given the job of assembling crews for ferry duty whenever the need arose, but his ballad collecting days were over.

The Recording Process

The »*Sandoyarbók*« register shows that Clemensen began recording ballads for his new collection on 28 February 1821, when he collected »*Samsons kvæði*« (CCF 113) from Thomas Hansen, a farm hand who worked for the royal tenant farmer, Trond Pedersen, of *Trøð* in Skálavík. During the next two months, Clemensen obtained twelve ballads, among them the two extremely long cycles »*Sjúrðar kvæði*« (CCF 1) and »*Sníolvs kvæði*« (CCF 91). In 1822 he devoted much more time to his collection, working continuously except for the busy months of summer and early autumn, and by the end of December he had amassed forty-nine new texts. He continued his collecting through January, February, and March of 1823, finally laying down his pen on the first of April, after acquiring twenty-one more ballads. When he married in

December of that year and moved into the household of his father-in-law out at *Skáli undir Reynum*, he seems to have had few opportunities for collecting. In 1824 and subsequent years he recorded at most one or two texts each year before completing in 1831 the fair copy of his collection.

Thus, we can see that roughly eighty-five percent of the texts in »*Sandoyarbók*« were collected during a span of three years. During this period, Clemensen did most of his recording in the late winter months, when out-of-doors farmwork had abated and the annual dance season was in full swing. However, even though village enthusiasm for the weekly dances doubtless contributed to his wintertime interest in ballad collecting, it is unlikely that Clemensen recorded texts from their performance in the hurly-burly of the dance ring. There, the noise and press of the dancers, as well as the flexing of the wooden floor under stamping feet—all these things so desirable for a successful dance—worked against the penman struggling with his bothersome quill and inkpot. It is much more likely that Clemensen called on his informants (or they called on him) to record texts from a solo performance akin to that of the tradition of the household *kvøldseta* (evening work period).

Nowhere in »*Sandoyarbók*« does Clemensen indicate that his texts were anything but his own painstaking recording of oral performances in Sandoy parish (comprising the islands of Sandoy, Skúgvoy, and Dímun). However, it seems certain that some of his texts were copies of what other people had recorded; in fact this is probably true of all the ballads collected from people who lived outside the parish.

Indeed, these texts were provided to Clemensen by highly literate informants: »*Hábarðs kvæði*« (CCF 219), »*Ólavur Trygvason*« (CCF 215), and »*Finnboga ríma*« (CCF 47) from Jens Christian Djurhuus, a well-educated farmer of Kollafjørður and the author of the first two of them; and »*Sanda táttur*« (CCF 204) from Clemensen's second cousin Jakob Nolsøe, the bookkeeper for the government franchise store in Tórshavn. Nolsøe was probably responsible for recording all the texts collected from residents of the Tórshavn area: his own brother Poul Poulsen Nolsøe's ballad »*Fugla kvæði*« (CCF 190), as reported by another brother, Hans; »*Grímur á Aksalvølli*« (CCF 132) from Anna Maria Tamburs, the wife of an officer of the garrison;⁶ and »*Guttormur í Hattarmóti*« (CCF 58) from her mother, Maren Sybille Augustinidatter.

It seems equally certain that few of the ballads collected from residents of Sandoy parish were recorded by anyone but Clemensen himself. Few people there could write with any facility - there was no regular formal instruction in the parish during the early nineteenth century. (In confirmation classes conducted by the minister, the children were taught to read and to recite certain religious texts, but not to write).⁷ Children could receive informal instruction at home, according to the interests and abilities of their parents; and some doubtless learned to write there, just as Clemensen had done. But it must be said that the legal and church documents from Sandoy parish during the years 1810-1830 reflect only six practiced hands - those of (1) the minister Peder Hentze, (2) his son Sheriff Johan Michael Hentze, (3) Poul Jo-

Informants from outside The parish

| | Number of Ballads | Adult Residence | Place of Birth | Year of Birth |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Jens Christian Djurhuus | 3 | Kollafjørður | Nes | 1773 |
| Jakob Nolsøe | 1 | Tórshavn | Nólsoy | 1776 |
| Hans Poulsen Nolsøe | 1 | Nólsoy | Nólsoy | 1763 |
| Anna Maria Tamburs | 1 | Tórshavn | Tórshavn | 1798 |
| Maren Sybille Augustinidatter | 1 | Tórshavn | Tórshavn | 1775 |
| Joen ... | 1 | Sandur | Sørvágur | ? |

hannessen Dalsgaard of *í Soylu*, (4) Sandur's church warden Christian Clemensen of *undir Skarði*, (5) Clemensen's father, Clemen Olesen, and (6) Johannes Clemensen himself. Among these penmen, only the minister's son, Johan Michael Hentze, provided Clemensen with ballad texts for »*Sandoyarbók*«; we can probably assume that some, if not all, of the ten texts collected from him may have come to Clemensen in the form of written records rather than oral dictation.

»*Sandoyarbók*« and the Village of Sandur

»*Sandoyarbók*« reflects first and foremost the ballad tradition of Clemensen's own village of Sandur - a glance at the register shows that forty-nine percent of his informants were residents of Sandur and that singers from the six other villages in the parish are much more sparsely represented.⁸ Not only did Clemensen collect from a relatively greater number of singers in Sandur, but he also collected more ballads from each one: he acquired an average of three to four ballads from each of his fellow villagers, whereas it was unusual for him to

get more than one ballad apiece from singers from elsewhere. On the other hand, the ballads collected from out-of-towners were predominantly long ones consisting of several *tættir* (sub-ballads), precisely the sort that tend above all others to be the pride and joy of their singers. This suggests, of course, that Clemensen was quite selective when he went outside of his own village tradition - not only did he apparently not bother to collect from outsiders ballads that were also performed by residents of Sandur, but he was inclined to go after the choicest pieces.⁹

When collecting in Sandur, Clemensen obtained most of his ballads from the upper crust of village society - from royal leasehold farmers and their families. In fact, singers from as many as half of the nine royal tenant households (including parsonage farms) in Sandur are to be found listed in the »*Sandoyarbók*« register, whereas only one-sixth of the village's twenty-four freeholder and crofter households are represented there. The impression given by »*Sandoyarbók*« that the well-born people of Sandur dominated village ballad tradition is further enhanced by the fact

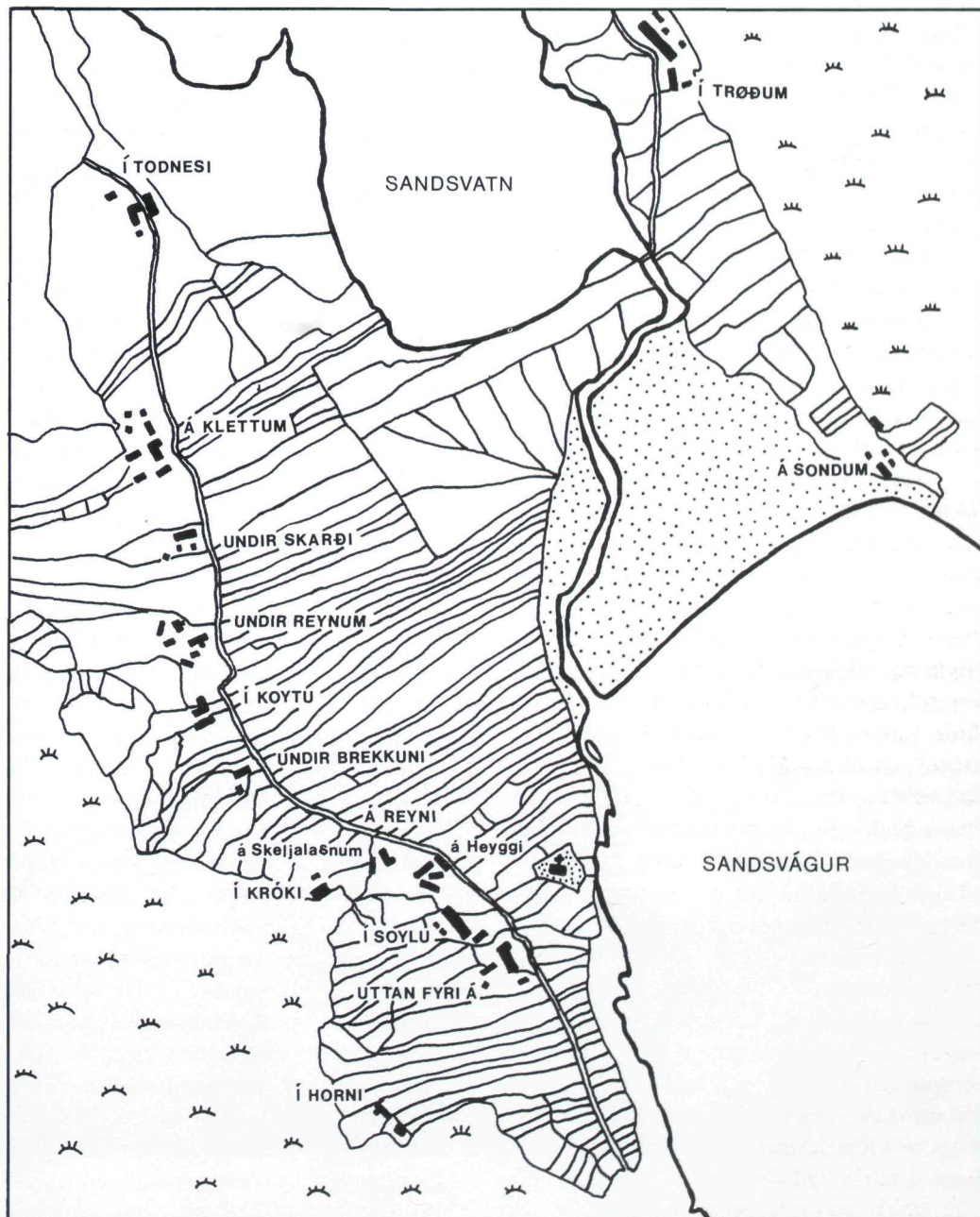
that all but one of Clemensen's best informants came from this group: Hans Johannessen (the singer of thirteen ballads), a first cousin of the royal tenant at *Miðstova í Trøðum* and raised on his cousin's farm; Johan Michael Hentze (ten ballads), the son of the minister and the royal tenant of *Uttastastova í Trøðum*; J. Michael Widerøe Mikkelsen (six ballads), the younger brother of the royal tenant at *undir Skarði*; Hans Eriksen (five ballads), the royal tenant living at *Grúkhelli undir Reynum*; Simon Danielsen (five ballads), the nephew of the royal tenant at *Miðstova í Trøðum* and raised in his household; Jens Jensen (three ballads), the cousin of the royal tenant at *undir Skarði* and raised on his stepfather's royal leasehold at *á Klettum*; and Joen Mortensen (two ballads), the royal tenant at *Miðstova í Trøðum*. The only freeholder in Sandur able to match the repertoires of any of these is Clemensen's older brother Ole (eight ballads); but, to be sure, neither Ole nor Johannes were ordinary freeholders - their father had once served as county sheriff, and from 1807 to 1814 Ole himself had held the lease to one of the larger royal farms in town. The other freeholders and crofters from Sand who contributed to »*Sandoyarbók*« - Joen Joensen of *á Heyggi*, Joen Jakobsen of *á Skeljalaðnum*, and Jakob Joensen of *uttan fyri Á* - are represented there by only one ballad apiece.

It is perhaps not surprising to find the most prominent members of the community dominating not only village economic life but the communal dance ring as well. After all, for the duration of the performance of the ballad dance it is the foresinger who holds absolute sway over his fellow

villagers; and royal tenants might well feel uncomfortable in the village ring dancing to the tune of a crofter or servant. But the relatively richer repertoires of the royal tenants in Sandur bear witness to more than a desire to exercise power and authority - they reflect as well the fact that wealthy households within the village tended to act like magnets attracting all sorts of oral traditions to themselves. These households were generally larger and more complex than those of freeholders or crofters because they often included servants imported not only from poorer homes in the village, but from other villages as well.¹⁰ Accordingly, the entertainment of their *kvøldseta* tended to be more diverse: in these homes, people were exposed to more than the traditions of just their own families. It was an ideal environment in which to assemble a repertoire.

However, a closer look at Clemensen's male informants from royal tenant households reveals a very interesting pattern within this group - it was usually *not* the royal tenant himself who provided the collector with numerous ballad texts, but rather the royal tenant's younger brother or his paternal uncle, cousin, or nephew. On the farm *Miðstova í Trøðum*, it was not the royal leaseholder who was the family *kvæðakempa* (ballad champion), but rather his cousin Hans Johannessen and his nephew Simon Danielsen; and at *undir Skarði* it was the royal tenant's younger brother J. Michael Widerøe and the tenant's cousin Jens Jensen who asserted themselves in the village dance. Thus, it would appear that all of Clemensen's best informants were men who had been raised in distinguished households, but who had

SAND



as adults come to enjoy a much less distinguished status, for in royal tenant households only the eldest son stood to inherit the bulk of the family's holdings and all other males raised in the household could expect to spend their adult lives as the poor relatives or hired hands of the royal tenant. For these younger brothers leading the village dance was to exercise symbolically the power and authority that had been denied them through primogeniture. It was indeed these men who devoted a great deal of their time and energy to learning, maintaining, and performing their repertoires of ballads.

Only in the instances of Johan Michael

Hentze at *Uttastastova í Trøðum* and Hans Eriksen of *Grúkhelli* was the royal tenant himself the singer of a noteworthy repertoire. At first glance, the status of both these men seems too assured to need any such buttressing; but a closer look reveals that each of them had reason to view his situation in the village as problematical. Hentze's success in local affairs was undoubtedly the source of great resentment in Sandur, for he, as the son of the Danish minister, was an outsider and his success, which stemmed from the machinations of his influential father, was at the expense of native-born villagers. Hans Eriksen, on the other hand, held the royal lease

Informants from Sandur

| | Number of Ballads | Adult Residence | Place of Birth | Year of Birth |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Hans Johannessen | 13 | Sandur | Sandur | 1779 |
| Johan Michael Hentze | 10 | Sandur | Sandur | 1781 |
| Ole Clemensen | 8 | Sandur | Sandur | 1782 |
| J. Michael Widerøe | 6 | Sandur | Sandur | 1787 |
| Hans Eriksen | 5 | Sandur | Sandur | 1780 |
| Simon Danielsen | 5 | Sandur | Sandur | 1793 |
| Jens Jensen | 3 | Sandur | Sandur | 1786 |
| Mikkel Thomassen | 3 | Sandur | Skúgvoy | 1776 |
| Elsebet Joensdatter | 3 | Sandur | Skarvanes | 1765 |
| Joen Mortensen | 2 | Sandur | Sandur | 1778 |
| Joen Joensen | 1 | Sandur | Sandur | 1768 |
| Joen Jakobsen | 1 | Sandur | Sandur | 1769 |
| Jakob Joensen | 1 | Sandur | Sandur | 1792 |
| Morten Olesen | 1 | Sandur | Tórshavn | 1778 |
| Sussanna Olesdatter | 1 | Sandur | Dalur | 1777 |
| Birgitte Andersdatter | 1 | Sandur | Strendur | 1783 |
| Sigge Johannesdatter | 1 | Sandur | Vestmanna | 1751 |

to only one-half *mørk* of land located on the other side of the island, making him by far the least of Sandur's royal tenants.¹¹ His equivocal status is reflected in a satirical ballad which refers to him as the »Royal Leaseholder« while calling the wealthy Joen Mortensen of *í Trøðum* just plain »Farmer«.¹²

The remaining six of Clemensen's informants designated in the »*Sandoyarbók*« register as residents of Sandur were in fact out-of-towners who had come as adults to Sandur as either servants or spouses. All three of Clemensen's male out-of-towners arrived in Sandur as servants. A close look at their backgrounds reveals, however, that at least two of these informants, who ostensibly represent Sandur's lowest class, had close ties to royal tenant households. Mikkel Thomassen (three ballads) was one of the many children of the royal leaseholder of *í Stórustovu* on the island of Skúgvoy; Thomassen had first come to Sandur as a young boy to work for his older sister Malene, the widow of two of the village's royal leaseholders (those of *undir Skarði* and *á Klettum*), and later established his own household. On the other hand, Morten Olesen (two ballads sung as one), originally of Tórshavn, spent his whole life as a servant working in royal farmer households: the 1801 census shows him in the employ of Ole Johannessen, a royal farmer in the village of Dalur; and some time before 1816 he came to Sandur to work for Hans Eriksen, the royal farmer of *Grúkhelli*.¹³

It is indeed interesting to note that all four of Clemensen's female informants from Sandur were out-of-towners who had come to Sandur as young adults, either as

wives or servants: Sigge Johannesdatter, from Vestmannaahavn on Streymoy; Susanna Olesdatter, from neighboring Dalur; Elsebet Joensdatter, from the nearby village of Skarvanes; and Birgitte Andersdatter, from Strendur on Eysturoy. However, the fact that Clemensen failed to collect any texts from women who had grown up in Sandur does not necessarily mean that these women did not know any. After all, they had heard their families' ballads again and again in the household *kvöldseta*, just as their brothers had done. Although the women of Sandur doubtless knew the heroic ballads customarily sung in their homes, it was evidently their male relatives who fell heir to the in-village performance rights to these texts. Thus, the women had to be content with either passively listening or, at best, singing along. But the situation seems to have been different for the out-of-towners. Even though these women had probably also been passive participants in the ballad tradition of their native villages, they were free in Sandur, where they had no male relatives preempting them, to become the active performers of at least those of their heroic ballads that were not known in their new home.

The social background of the women who sang for Clemensen was the same as that of the men: three of four were the daughters of royal leaseholders. (The fourth was Clemensen's sister-in-law.) The repertoires of the women, however, were much more limited than those of the men: Elsebet Joensdatter provided Clemensen with as many as three ballads, whereas the others supplied him with just one apiece. On the whole, the women from Sandur listed in the »*Sandoyarbók*« register are out-

numbered by the men by three to one; and the ballads they sang, by ten to one. However, women may well have been more frequent performers of ballads than the »Sandoyarbók« register might seem to indicate. What we know about late nineteenth-century ballad tradition suggests that women were the premier performers of the shorter and more melodic Danish chivalric ballads, which had long been popular in the Faroe Islands. The collector, however, was not interested in recording these.

When informants' names in the »Sandoyarbók« register are checked against the 1801 census listing of domiciles and against a map showing the old farms and residences in the rather sprawling village of Sandur, an interesting socio-geographic pattern emerges. Whereas Clemensen's informants with close ties to the royal leaseholders of Sandur came from virtually every part of town, the state of affairs was very different for his informants who were more ordinary villagers and women - nearly all of these were Clemensen's relatives and close neighbors.

Informants closely related to royal tenants came from all over Sandur. In the neighborhood *á Reyni*, close to the collector's home at *í Króki*, lived J. Michael Widerøe Mikkelsen, the younger brother of the royal tenant at *undir Skarði*. Just to the north at *undir Brekkuni* was the residence of Jens Jensen, a cousin of the leaseholder at *undir Skarði* and stepson of the one at *á Klettum*. At *í Koytu* lived Hans Johannessén, the cousin of the wealthy leaseholder at *Miðstova í Trøðum* and Clemensen's best informant. The least of Sandur's

leaseholders, Erik Hansen, resided at *Grúkhelli* in the neighborhood *undir Reynum*, and further north at *á Klettum* resided Mikkell Thomassen, the son of a leaseholder on Skúgvoy and the brother-in-law of two of Sandur's leaseholders. On the other side of the village, at *í Trøðum*, lived Simon Danielsen and his uncle Joen Mortensen, the royal tenant at *Miðstova*, as well as Sheriff Johan Michael Hentze of *Uttastova*.

Women and members of households in Sandur with no close ties to royal tenants were much more likely to have served as informants for Clemensen if they were related to him or lived near him - at *á Reyni* or *á Heyggi*, for example, than if they came from further away at *á Klettum*, *í Todnesi*, *í Trøðum*, or *á Sondum*. Indeed, the most intensive collecting in this group was done in Clemensen's own home, where he obtained a total of ten ballads from three family members - his brother, Ole; his mother, Sigge Johannesdatter; and his sister-in-law, Susanna Olesdatter. From his immediate neighbors at *á Skeljalaðnum* - his second cousin Elsebet Joensdatter and her husband, Joen Jakobsen - he collected three ballads and one anomalous text (a list of cultivated acreage in the northern islands). Close by, at *á Uttara Heyggi*, Clemensen recorded a ballad from Joen Joensen, the father of a childhood playmate who had died of the catarrhal fever that raged through Sandur during the winter of 1817-1818. A few minutes' walk further down the road had lived another of Clemensen's childhood friends, his first cousin Jakob Joensen of *uttan fyri Á*, who had also died of the fever during that dismal winter: the

collector posthumously attributed his text of »*Trøllini í Hornalondum*« (CCF 28) to this cousin.¹⁴

It is unlikely to be a coincidence that nearly all the »ordinary« male and female contributors to »*Sandoyarbók*« should be precisely those with close ties to the collector.¹⁵ It is much more likely that the dissimilar collecting patterns among the elite and non-elite of Sandur reflect the two different types of performance situation in Faroese tradition and Clemensen's use of them in gathering texts for his »*Sandoyarbók*«. The relatively wide distribution of his singers with royal-tenant connections would seem to indicate that his knowledge of their repertoires stemmed from the public dances, which drew performers from all over the village. On the other hand, the more restricted distribution of those of his male informants whose background was more humble or who were female suggests that his acquaintance with the repertoires of these people was gained mainly in the more private *kvøldseta*, specifically in his own home and the homes of close neighbors, where he was a habitual and informal visitor. It was here, for example, that women, who had little to gain by asserting themselves in a dance tradition dominated by men, might freely perform the heroic ballads they knew. However, to the men of crofter and freeholder households the village dance offered an opportunity to win status among their fellow villagers, and they had thus every reason to seek to excel there. The fact that Clemensen's knowledge of their repertoires nonetheless seems to have been of the local *kvøldseta* variety rather than village-wide may bear witness to the general lack of success of

these men in the dance ring in competition against royal tenants and their brothers and cousins.

It is clear that Clemensen did his worst collecting among women and the common-folk of Sandur who had no close ties to him. His biggest lapse in this regard was probably his failure to collect any texts whatsoever from the Reverend Dean Hentze's household at *í Todnesi*. Perhaps Clemensen assumed that he would find few Faroese ballads in the parlor of the Danish minister. His mistake was, however, that he overlooked the servants' quarters, which commonly housed no fewer than twelve people - an everchanging assortment of able-bodied servants from all over the islands and of older parishioners who could no longer support themselves.¹⁶ Despite Clemensen's oversight, it is possible that some of the ballads once heard in these quarters may have been preserved in the extensive repertoire of the minister's eldest son, Johan Michael Hentze. It would be ill-advised, however, to suppose that all of Hentze's repertoire stemmed from his childhood experience of the *kvøldseta* at *í Todnesi*. It is obvious, for example, that his text of »*Risin av Leittrabergi*« (CCF 11), reported to Clemensen in 1825, was learned from H.C. Lyngbye's *Færøiske Qvæder om Sigurd Fofnersbane og hans Æt* (1822).¹⁷

More difficult to understand was Clemensen's failure to obtain any ballads whatsoever from his close neighbors at *Pállins-hús á Heyggi*. The family living there until 1822 is reported to have had in its possession the long cycle »*Ílints tættir*«, which it sold to the royal farmer at *á Trøð* in Skálavík for a slaughtered lamb. Even though

Clemensen must have known about the existence of this ballad cycle and was well acquainted with both buyer and seller, he did not succeed in obtaining a text, and it remained in private hands until recent years.¹⁸ Furthermore, *Pállinshús* was rented in 1822 to Hendrik Hansen, who does not appear anywhere on Clemensen's list of informants even though he came to be well known for his ballads.¹⁹

Although Clemensen claimed in the postscript to »*Sandoyarbók*« that he had collected all those ballads that folks thereabouts had any knowledge of, we would be mistaken to think that he systematically visited every household in Sandur. We have already seen that the collector's knowledge of the sundry *kvöldseta* traditions operating in Sandur was limited. More perplexing was his failure to include in »*Sandoyarbók*« four ballads that he had recorded in 1819 for Hentze's collection: »*Gudbrands ríma*« (CCF 80), »*Pætur Knútssons ríma*« (CCF 160), »*Fiska kvæði*« (CCF 191), and »*Leivur Øssursson*« (CCF 218). We are left wondering whether this was mere forgetfulness on his part or whether something else lay behind these omissions.

Clemensen's claim in his postscript gives no hint of the fact that he and others in Sandur censored certain of their ballads. In this regard, it is striking to note how few satirical ballads »*tættir*« were included by Clemensen in »*Sandoyarbók*«, especially considering the texts we have reason to believe were then current in Sandur. He reports only two: »*Danials táttur*« (CCF 196) and »*Sanda táttur*« (CCF 204). The first of these is a strangely fragmented text collected from Johan Michael Hentze, in which

only the first half of most quatrains has been noted. This seems to reflect the phenomenon so often encountered in later tradition - informants are reluctant to disclose texts felt to be damaging to personal acquaintances and their families.²⁰ As a result, a satirical ballad tends after its initial performance to be held secret and restricted to private *kvöldseta* tradition in the village in which it was composed, surviving, if at all, in dance tradition elsewhere.

»*Sanda táttur*« offers a fine example of a satirical ballad that was best known outside the village in which it was composed. The ballad, which scoffs at doings in Sandur in the late eighteenth century, was sent to the collector all the way from Tórshavn by Jakob Nolsøe, despite the fact that it was composed by two men from Sandur, the church warden Christian Clemensen (1749-1837), brother of the royal tenant at *undir Skarði*, and Johannes Joensen (1741-1804), brother of the royal tenant at *í Trøðum*.²¹ There were at least two men in Sandur in the 1820's who must have known »*Sanda táttur*« and who could have given it to the collector had they chosen to do so: Christian Clemensen himself, who does not appear at all as an informant in »*Sandoyarbók*«, and Hans Johannessen, the son of Johannes Joensen and a singer who had otherwise been very forthcoming with the collector.

One satirical ballad that never made it into »*Sandoyarbók*« was »*Markusar táttur*« (CCF 230), composed in Sandur around 1815. This text was also the work of Christian Clemensen, but this time in collusion with two of the collector's closest neighbors, his cousin Jakob Joensen of *uttan fyri Á* and Joen Joensen of *á Heyggi*.²² It is in-

conceivable that the collector was not as well acquainted with »*Markusar táttur*« as he was with its authors, and thus we must conclude that it was the collector himself who suppressed this text.

The Other Villages in the Parish

If Clemensen's approach to collecting within Sandur lacked rigor, it was positively haphazard when it came to ballads from elsewhere in Sandoy parish. We would indeed be mistaken if we were to envisage the collector as zealously plying the paths between his home and the other villages on Sandoy or laboring over the oars on his way out to the islands of Skúgvoy and Stóra Dímun. On the contrary, it was his informants who came to him.

Residents of Sandoy parish had numerous reasons to visit the village where Clemensen lived. Sandur was a religious and administrative center, with both parish priest and county sheriff located there: people who wanted to report births, deaths, or betrothals (or thefts, smuggling, or runaway servants) had to go to Sandur to do it. As the largest village on Sandoy, Sandur, also attracted its share of visits by relatives of villagers on various family errands, and it is interesting to note that Clemensen did his first collecting from two such visitors - Gregers Gregersen of *við Á* in Húsavík and Thomas Hansen, a servant at *á Trøð* in Skálavík. Both of these men were typical of all of Clemensen's out-of-town informants: they were each and every one of them not only visiting in Sandur when they performed their texts for Clemensen, but they were visiting one of his close neighbors and/or in-

formants or even the collector himself. (Gregersen's sister-in-law/fostermother was originally from *í Soylu*, near Clemensen's home at *í Króki*, and Hansen's mother was from even closer - *Janusarstova á Reyni*.)

During the autumn of 1820, just a few months before he began collecting again, Clemensen had a matchless opportunity to hear ballads performed by singers from all over Sandoy without having himself to set foot outside the village. During that season six weddings were celebrated in Sandur, a remarkable number for a village of around two hundred souls:

- 21/9 Rasmus Joensen of *uttan fyri Á* marries Christiane Hentze of *í Todnesi*.
- 2/11 Mikkel Thomassen of *í Stertinum (á Klettum)* marries Elisabeth Pedersdatter of Streymnes on Streymoy.
- 9/11 Daniel Thomassen of *í Klingruni (á Klettum)* marries Anna Maria Pedersdatter of *Glinsiniborg (undir Reynum)*.
- 15/11 Poul Johannessen Dalsgaard of Skálavík marries Anna Poulsdatter of *í Soylu*.
- 22/11 Hans Eriksen of *Grúkhelli (undir Reynum)* marries Elsebet Mikkelsdatter of *eystari Endi á Gumpinum (undir Reynum)*.
- 28/11 Rasmus Davidsen of *í Horni* marries Sunnevad Joensdatter of *á Heyggi*.

These often three-day wedding celebrations were premier occasions for the ballad dance, drawing family and friends of the bride and groom from far and wide and inspiring those of the guests who were *kvæðakempur* to put forth their best. It is easy to imagine that community excite-

ment over the weddings and the entertainment they brought the village may well have had a key role to play in rekindling Clemensen's interest in ballad collecting. However, he recorded nothing that eventful autumn, preferring to wait until singers were back in town on some sort of errand and with sufficient spare time to dictate their texts to him.

All four of Clemensen's informants from Húsavík were his third cousins by descent from Clemen Laugesen Follerup, and two of them - Gregers Gregersen and his niece

Anna Pedersdatter - may well have attended their second cousin Anna Poulsdatter's November wedding at *í Soylu*. The collector's other two cousins from Húsavík, Joen Lukassen and his brother Peder (who had grown up with his maternal grandparents in Skálavík) were well acquainted with their family in Sandur: in 1803, Peder was accused of stealing and as a result had extensive dealings with the county sheriff, Clemensen's father, who apparently did what he could to help his unfortunate relative.

None of Clemensen's three informants

Informants from Skúgvoy and Húsavík

| | Number of Ballads | Adult Residence | Place of Birth | Year of Birth |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Daniel Joensen | 1 | Skúgvoy | Skúgvoy | 1780 |
| Joen Eriksen, senior | 1 | Skúgvoy | Skúgvoy | 1751 |
| Sara Thomasdatter | 1 | Sandur and Skúgvoy | Skúgvoy | 1753 |
| Gregers Gregersen | 1 | Húsavík | Húsavík | 1748 |
| Joen Lukassen | 1 | Húsavík | Húsavík | 1776 |
| Anna Pedersdatter | 1 | Húsavík | Húsavík | 1766 |

from Skúgvoy were related to him, but they all had family members in Sandur who were among his informants. Moreover, it is likely that all of these singers were in Sandur in November of 1820 attending the wedding of close relatives - Sara Thomasdatter was no doubt invited to the wedding of her nephew - and Clemensen's informant - Mikkel Thomassen; and the well-known *kvæðakempa* Daniel Joensen, along with his father Joen Eriksen, was probably at the celebration of the marriage

of Joensen's brother-in-law, Hans Eriksen of *Grúkhelli*. Another of Clemensen's informants. There are no clues as to what specific errands might have brought Joensen and Eriksen back to Sandur on those occasions when Clemensen collected ballads from them; however, once in Sandur on ferry duty or tending to some business with the minister or sheriff, they would have been sure to stop in at *Grúkhelli*, where Clemensen was a visitor and would have an opportunity to record »*Sjúrðar*

kvæði» (CCF 1) and »*Grips kvæði*» (CCF 57) from their solo song. Sara Thomasdatter, on the other hand, was a familiar face in Sandur, and Clemensen probably knew her well from the time when she had lived at *undir Brekkuni*. On the day he collected »*Hermundur illi*» (CCF 66) from her, she was evidently visiting her grandnephew Jens Jensen, who had moved into her house at *undir Brekkuni*: that day Clemensen also picked up a text from Jensen's wife, Birgitte Andersdatter, and one from his cousin J. Michael Widerøe.

Clemensen collected nine ballads from five singers from Skálavík, more than from any other village on Sandoy, with the sole exception of Sandur itself. He was acquainted with three of the singers - Thomas Hansen, Poul Pedersen, and Hans Jakobsen - in much the same way as he was to his informants from Húsavík and Skúgvoy. As we have learned, Hansen was the grandson of Clemensen's near neighbors; and Poul Pedersen, the younger brother of the royal tenant at *á Trøð*, was related to Clemensen and his neighbors, too, many times over by marriage: in 1807 Pedersen had married Clemensen's first cousin Kristin Simonsdatter of Skálavík, and two years later his elder brother Trond married another, Elsebet Joensdatter of *uttan fyrri Á* in Sandur. In 1809, more than a decade after his first wife's death, Poul Pedersen married again, this time Sunnevad Thomasdatter of *í Kirkjugerði*, whose paternal aunts Maren and Malene Blasiusdatter had each married close neighbors of Clemensen's, the brothers Poul and Joen Joensen of *á Heyggi*. Sunnevad's maternal aunt, moreover, was Clemensen's second cousin Elsebet Joensdatter, married to his neigh-

bor Joen Jakobsen of *á Skeljalaðnum*. Judging from the fact that Clemensen recorded Pedersen's text of »*Koralds kvæði*» (CCF 111) on the same day that he picked up a text from Joen Jakobsen, we may reasonably assume that Pedersen was in Sandur at the time on a visit to his wife's maternal aunt. The second ballad collected from Pedersen, »*Frúgvín Olrína*» (CCF 81), is said originally to have been his wife's, given to her by her father as a *vøggugáva* (cradle gift).²³

Hans Jakobsen's connection with Sandur was also very close: his mother and her two sisters had all spent a part of their childhood in the household of their maternal aunt and uncle at *í Koytu*, and one sister married into the farm there.²⁴ In 1821, this sister's daughter, Maren Jensdatter, married J. Michael Widerøe of *undir Skarði*, and the couple set up housekeeping at *á Reyni*, not far from Clemensen's home at *í Króki*. The collector may well have first heard Jakobsen perform »*Ívint Herintsson*» (CCF 108) at the Jensdatter/Widerøe wedding in November of 1821 and then found an opportunity to record the text the following summer, when Jakobsen was in and out of Sandur conferring with the sheriff about family matters.²⁵

Clemensen was acquainted with his remaining informants from Skálavík, as well as his lone informant from Dalur, through his wife's family, who had resided in Skálavík until 1818, when they moved to Sandur to live at *Skáli undir Reynum*. In 1823, just prior to his marriage, Clemensen obtained two ballads from Lauridz Olesen of Dalur, the husband of the aunt of Clemensen's fiancée. The collector probably met Joen Danielsen of Skálavík at his own wedding:

Informants from Skálavík and Dalur

| | Number of Ballads | Adult Residence | Place of Birth | Year of Birth |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Thomas Hansen | 4 | Skálavík | Skálavík | 1782 |
| Poul Pedersen | 2 | Skálavík | Skálavík | 1781 |
| Hans Jakobsen | 1 | Skálavík | Skálavík | 1787 |
| Joen Danielsen | 1 | Skálavík | Skálavík | 1758 |
| Susanna Jensdatter | 1 | Skálavík | Skálavík | 1790 |
| Sunnevad Joensdatter | 1 | Skarvanes | Skálavík | 1796 |
| Lauridz Olesen | 2 | Dalur | Dalur | 1779 |

he managed to collect »*Tormaður skald*« (CCF 27) from Danielsen less than three months afterward. Several years later, Clemensen recorded texts from Danielsens's niece by marriage, Susanna Jensdatter, and from his daughter, Sunnevad Joensdatter, who had by this time married and moved to Skarvanes.²⁶

When collecting from out-of-towners, Clemensen went after texts that would supplement those familiar to him from his own village. Thus, »*Sandoyarbók*« must be a very fragmentary record of the ballad traditions of other communities in the parish. An idea of just how fragmentary this record is can be gained from some notations in the journal of a Danish natural scientist J.G. Forchhammer, who passed through Skálavík in the summer of 1821. Forchhammer, probably inspired by the example of Lyngbye, wished not only to collect data about Faroese nature, but also to record information about the islands' ballad tradition. When he asked people in Skálavík whether they knew any songs about the legendary Sigurd or other ancient heroes,

they served him up Joen Danielsen as their local expert in these matters. Danielsen proceeded to perform for Forchhammer the first section of »*Sjúrðar kvæði*« and the entire text of »*Grímur á Bretlandi*« (CCF 53), as well as listing the titles of eighteen other ballads that he knew.²⁷ We know all but one of these texts from »*Sandoyarbók*«, where they for the most part were collected from residents of Sandur. We also know Joen Danielsen from »*Sandoyarbók*«, but as the singer of »*Tormaður skald*« (CCF 27), a ballad for some reason not listed by the singer for Forchhammer on that July day in 1821.

Conclusion

Church and government records from the early nineteenth century have much to tell us about »*Sandoyarbók*«; its collector, Johannes Clemensen; and the community from which he collected. Although Clemensen names in his postscript to the collection several Faroese officials as the mo-

tivating forces behind his work, we have learned that he must also have been affected by the excitement in his village over the six weddings celebrated there during the fall of 1820. To be sure, the first texts he collected that winter were not from fellow villagers, but from out-of-towners closely related to one or another of the wedded couples and to people close to the collector as well. In fact, all of Clemensen's out-of-town informants had one thing in common - close ties to the collector or to people close to him. This was also true of Clemensen's informants from Sandur who were women or crofters or freeholders unrelated to the royal tenant households of the village. Only those of Clemensen's informants from Sandur who were closely related to royal tenants were neither Clemensen's relatives nor his close neighbors. Interestingly, these men were by far Clemensen's best informants, but only two of them were themselves royal tenants - the majority were their younger brothers, much less well placed in village society and interested in bolstering their status.

Although Clemensen claimed in his postscript that he had collected all the ballads known to him and his fellow villagers, it is certain that he did not. Most importantly, there seems to have been a general reluctance to make satirical ballads about village affairs available for inclusion in the collection. Clemensen also failed to obtain at least one heroic ballad, possibly because its owner feared someone else might learn it and perform it. Further reason to doubt the completeness of »Sandoyarbók« is the fact that Clemensen seems only to have had access to the household *kvöldseta* tradition of his friends and neighbors. There

were, moreover, two singers known to have been active in village ballad tradition from whom Clemensen collected nothing.

Notes

1. This article would not have been written were it not for the expertise of Ólavur Clementsen of the Land Registry Office, the late Eyðun Winther, and the late Mortan Nolsøe, of the Faroese Academy.
2. For practical reasons I have chosen to use the Danicized forms of Faroese names as they are found in the written sources of eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
3. Johannes Clemensen, »Sandoyarbók«, DFS 68, Dansk Folkemindesamling, Copenhagen, p. 845.
4. Johannes Clemensen, »Visebog«, Føroya Landsbókasavn, Tórshavn, pp. 476–549; M. A. Jacobsen, »Jóannes Klæmintsson í Króki«, *Varðin* 9 (1929): 2–19; and Ólavur Clementsen, »Jóannes í Króki«, in *Søga og skemt av Sandi*, (Tórshavn, 1981), pp. 80–87. Information about Clemensen and Sandur can also be found in Edward Hjalt, *Sands søga* (Tórshavn, 1953).
5. Royal tenant farmers (*kongsbøndur*) work land that the crown gained from the church during the Reformation. These farmers pay a small annual rent and have the right to pass the lease on to their eldest sons. Since crown land is impartible, the royal tenants have traditionally been rich men in the Faroes.
6. Since both Jakob Nolsøe and Maren Sybille Augustinidatter's husband were employed in the service of the government franchise and were furthermore of the same age, it seems probable that they and their families knew each other.
7. The »Syðströmøe Præstegjelds Kaldsbog 1845-1922« (South Streymoy Parish Recordbook 1845-1922), Føroya Landsskjalasavn, Tórshavn (p. 98), mentions as late as 1851 that it was still customary for village children of the parish to be instructed only in religion and reading, but not writing. The corresponding set of records for Sandoy is not informative concerning this matter, but Reverend Hentze is known to have opposed the introduction of formal instruction on Sandoy.
8. Of the thirty-seven informants for »Sandoyarbók«, eighteen of them, or 49%, resided in Sandur (pop. 168); six, or 16%, in Skálavík (pop. 107); three, or

- 8%, in Húsavík (pop. 54); there, or 8%, in Skúgvoy (pop. 57); one, or 3%, in Dalur (pop. 49); one, or 3%, in Skarvanes (pop. 18); and none on Stóra Dímun (pop. 13). These population figures are from the 1801 census.
9. This is especially true of his earlier collecting, when in addition to obtaining »Sjúrdar kvæði« (456 st.) and »Sniolv kvæði« (606 st.) from out-of-towners, he also picked up »Ívint Herintsson« (352 st.), »Óluvu kvæði« (206 st.), »Arngríms synir« (170 st.), and »Mirmans kvæði« (170 st.).
 10. In 1801, for example, the royal tenant at *undir Skarði* had three servants: Joen Magnussen, 33 years of age, from Stóra Dímun; Anna Simonsdatter, 70, from Skarvanes; and Katrina Pedersdatter, 21, from somewhere outside the parish.
 11. For detailed information concerning the Royal leaseholdings in the Faroes, see Anton Degn, *Færøske Kongsbønder 1584–1884* (Tórshavn, 1945).
 12. For informative commentary and a text of this ballad, »Markusartáttur« (CCF 230, from ca. 1815), see Clementsen, *Søga og skemt av Sandi*, pp. 175–186.
 13. On Sandoy the churchbooks contain no records concerning the arrival and departure of village residents until after 1816.
 14. It may well be that Clemensen was in possession of a written text of this ballad, but it seems even more likely that he knew it by heart and had perhaps even helped his cousin to perform it in the dance, as is so commonly done in Faroese tradition, especially when the foresinger is young or has a weak voice.
 15. The only exceptions to this pattern are Birgitte Andersdatter, whose home at *undir Brekkuni* was not in the immediate neighborhood of *í Króki*, and the servant Morten Olesen, who lived at *undir Reynum*.
 16. The censuses of 1801 and 1834 show that the complement of non-family members at *í Todnesi* on these occasions was twelve or more.
 17. This is the earliest evidence of the impact of Lyngbye's edition of the ballads about Sigurd the Dragon-Slayer in oral tradition in the Faroes.
 18. This ballad has been collected by Mortan Nolsøe and deposited in the archives of the Fróðskaparsetur Føroya. For a summary of the ballad action, see *The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad*, edited by Bengt R. Jonsson, Svale Solheim, and Eva Danielsen (Oslo, Bergen, and Tromsø, 1978), p. 253.
 19. Clementsen, *Søga og skemt av Sandi*, pp. 186–187.
 20. In *Skóran* 3, no. 1 (1985), the editor made the following comment about the previous year's *táttur*-collecting competition sponsored by the Fróðskaparsetur Føroya: »Many *táttir* have been recorded and preserved, but not all. Some have been considered too personal or malicious, so that it was not always possible to perform them in the dance or to write them down.« (p. 7, my translation).
 21. Clementsen, *Søga og skemt av Sandi*, p. 170.
 22. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
 23. In an interview with Mortan Nolsøe in April of 1970 (FMD BS 347 in the archives of the Tjóðlívsnevndin in Tórshavn), Leifur Tróndarson of *á Trøð* in Skálavík discussed what he had been told about »Frúgvín Olrina« by his father, Tróndur Pedersen (born 1846), who was the grandnephew of Poul Pedersen, Clemensen's informant. The only other example of a *vøggugáva* is also from Skálavík tradition (see Mortan Nolsøe, »Ein rímnaflakur í føroyskari tungulist«? *Fróðskaparrit* 24 (1976): 48.).
 24. Hjalt, *Sands søga*, p. 119.
 25. According to the police protocol for Sandoy County, Jacobsen's younger brother was charged in April of 1822 with having begotten an illegitimate child on another servant at Dalsgarður in Skálavík. The lists of departures and arrivals in the Sandoy churchbook tells us that this same brother ran away from service at Dalsgarður two months later and took refuge in Sandur with the royal tenant Joen Mortensen of *í Trøðum*.
 26. Clemensens mistakenly lists Sunnevad Joensdatter in the »Sandoyarbók« register as a resident of Skálavík.
 27. J.G. Forchhammer, *Rejse til Færøerne. Dagbog 28. April til 21. August 1821*, edited by Ad. Clément (Copenhagen, 1927), pp. 47–8.

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Úrtak

Kirkjubøkur og almenn skjøl úr fyrra helmingi av 19. øld hava nógv at siga okkum um Sandoyarbók, tann ið skrivaði hana, Jóannes Klæmintsson í Króki, og samfelagið, sum hann savnaði kvæðini í. Tó at Jóannes í eftirmælinum at bókini nevnr fleiri embætismenn í Føroyum, sum hava eggjað honum til at savna kvæði, vita vit, at hann má eisini hava verið ávirkaður av teimum seks brúðleypunum, ið hildin vórðu á Sandi heystið 1820. Víst er, at tey fyrstu kvæðini, hann skrivaði upp tann veturin, fekk hann ikki frá bygðarmonnum, men frá avbygðarmonnum, ið vóru nær skyldir við annað av brúðarhjúnunum ella skyldir við hann sjálvan. Royndur lutur er, at øll avbygðarheimildarfólk hansara høvdu eitt í felag: nær í ætt við savnaran sjálvan ella næstu skyldfólk hansara. Sama er um heimildarfólk Jóannesar á Sandi, sum vóru konufólk, smámenn ella ognarmenn óskyldir við kongsbóndafólk í bygdini. Bert teir heimildarmenn á Sandi, ið vóru nær skyldir

kongsbóndum, vóru hvørki skyldmenn Jóannesar ella næstu grannar. Forvitnisligt er, at hesir menn vóru uttan samanburð bestu heimildarmenn Jóannesar, men bert tveir teirra vóru kongsbøndur sjálvir, teir flestu vóru yngri bóndabrøður, ikki so hátt settir í bygðarsamfelagnum og tí hugaðir fyri at bøta um støðu sína.

Tó at Jóannes sigur í eftirmælinum, at hann hevði savnað øll kvæði, ið hann kendi til, er tað vist, at hann ikki gjørði tað. Fyrst og fremst tykjast fólk yvirhøvur – og savnarin við – at hava verið treyð at lata tættir um hendingar í bygdini koma upp í savnið. Síðan er at nevna, at Jóannesi miseydnaðist at fáa fatur á minst einum kappakvæði, helst tí at hann, ið átti tað, stúrði fyri at onkur annar kundi nema tað og skipa tað í dansi. Onnur grund til at ivast í, at Sandoyarbók er fullfíggað, er tann, at Jóannes tykist bert hava verið á kvøldsetum hjá vinum sínum og gronnum. Vit vita um tveir dúgligar kvæðarar í bygdini, sum Jóannes einki fekk frá.