White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/42728/

**Published paper**
Nítíða saga: A Normalised Icelandic Text and Translation

Sheryl McDonald

Nítíða saga is one of the many sagas known as native or indigenous riddarasögur (‘knights’ sagas’), and which have sometimes been called lygisögur (‘lie-sagas’) for their inclusion of non-realistic, that is, obviously fictional, plots and motifs. Though interest in these types of sagas has grown in recent years, indigenous riddarasögur have not always enjoyed acceptance among scholars, despite their immense popularity in Iceland from the late Middle Ages to the early twentieth century, and there are still too few translations of Icelandic romances and especially indigenous riddarasögur. Extensive manuscript survivals testify to the popularity of many of the indigenous riddarasögur, and Nítíða saga is no exception, extant in at least sixty-five manuscripts, almost all of which are post-medieval, and the youngest of which was composed in the early twentieth century. Driscoll dates this saga to the fourteenth century; it was clearly enjoyed for hundreds of years after its original composition. Further study of Nítíða saga, which I aim to encourage with this normalised text and translation, will contribute not only to Old Norse-Icelandic studies, but also to the growing field of medieval popular romance


2 Consider, for example, the many papers on native riddarasögur delivered at the two most recent Saga Conferences: The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature and the British Isles, Preprint Papers of the Thirteenth International Saga Conference, Durham and York, 6–12 August 2006, ed. by John McKinnell, David Ashurst, and Donata Kick, 2 vols (Durham: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006) [http://www.dur.ac.uk/medieval/www/sagaconf/sagapps.htm]; Á austrvega: Saga and East Scandinavia, Preprint Papers of the Fourteenth International Saga Conference, Uppsala, 9–15 August 2009, ed. by Agneta Ney, Henrik Williams, and Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist, Papers from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, 14, 2 vols (Gävle: Gävle University Press, 2009) [http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hig:diva-4837].

3 For an overview of this see Driscoll, ‘Late Prose Fiction’, especially pp. 196–97.

4 Though Seven Viking Romances, trans. by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards (London: Penguin, 1985) and Icelandic Histories and Romances, trans. by Ralph O’Connor (Stroud: Tempus, 2002) have certainly contributed to meeting this need, many more texts are still inaccessible to non-specialists.


Nítíða saga

It is for this reason that I have chosen to present both a normalised text of the saga and a full translation—to facilitate its study by the non-specialist, or student, who knows little or no Icelandic. While it is true that Nítíða saga is available in Loth’s diplomatic edition with an English-language paraphrase, presenting the text here with a full translation should be beneficial, especially for non-specialists. For one thing, while Loth’s summary may be a fine accompaniment for the expert who can easily compare it to the accompanying un-normalised text, it is itself published in Gillian Fellows-Jensen’s translation from Loth’s Danish, and is only cursory, glossing over some parts of the story, such as direct speech.

Nítíða saga is a relatively short, yet exciting tale, which, among other themes, draws special attention to the question of gender and its relation to power. Nítíða is not queen of France, but meykóngrur (‘maiden-king’), an appellation not uncommon among young female rulers in the indigenous riddarasögur. Kalinke has examined the maiden-king phenomenon in Icelandic romance, and has argued that it can be interpreted as an echo of the historical situation in the Middle Ages arising when daughters were left as sole heirs after fathers and brothers had died. While this interpretation is valid, maiden-kings, whether consciously based on specific historical cases or not, can also be seen as a sort of late-medieval equivalent to the strong saga women of the earlier medieval Icelandic prose fiction that some might call classical. Maiden-kings, Nítíða included, are powerful, independent, wilful women, whose power lies, to some extent, in their virginity; thus the typical maiden-king resists marriage and is usually abusive to her suitors. On this point scholarship has understood Nítíða to be an exception. It is true that Nítíða is more or less civil to each of her wooers, not resorting to violence herself, but she nevertheless sanctions the slaughter of Serkland’s armies, which accompany the sons of King Soldán on their mission to win Nítíða’s hand; no character from Serkland, not even Soldán himself, makes it to the end of the saga alive. Nítíða also firmly turns down her other suitors and tricks them, causing great humiliation to Ingi of Constantinople, for example. Nítíða is certainly no saint. But it is true that unlike in other maiden-king romances (or ‘bridal-quest romances’, to use Kalinke’s terminology), such as Klári saga, Nítíða is not herself humiliated in the end, and agrees to marriage because she has found in Liforinus a man as

---


9 Loth, p. xii.


12 For example, Driscoll, ‘Nítita saga’, p. 432.

clever and resourceful as herself, rather than because she is coerced into submission.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{Nítiða saga} also shows impressive geographical awareness. It is set for the most part in France, but involves expeditions to and from Apulia, Constantinople, India, an indeterminate Serkland, and an area ‘out by the North Pole’. Nítiða also gains possession of supernatural stones that allow her to see all regions of the world; towards the saga’s end, the various countries seen in each region are listed at length.\textsuperscript{15} But \textit{Nítiða saga} does not only show familiarity with a wide variety of countries and regions — it also situates Iceland in relation to France (the location of the grand festivities that bring the story to a close) and to the rest of the world, in the form of an authorial-scribal aside right after a detailed description of the triple wedding feast near the saga’s end: ‘It is also not easily said with an unlearned tongue in the outer regions of the world, how it might be entertaining for people, what joy may be in the middle of the world when such courtiers come together’. Though obviously a modesty topos, considering that these protestations have been invalidated by the vibrant descriptions preceding them (and not to mention by the composition of the whole saga),\textsuperscript{16} this statement still may have reinforced for its readers the notion that Iceland is marginal and Europe is central, and that the Icelandic language was ‘unlearned’ or unsuitable for the task at hand and Latin (or even other European vernaculars?) would be better. However, Barnes notes that \textit{Nítiða saga} locates France at the centre of the world despite the usual medieval understanding that Jerusalem holds that honour, and argues that this reflects not only the prominent place held by Nítiða and her kingdom, but also that France’s alliance with India at the end of the saga brings that peripheral kingdom into a more prominent, central, political role. In Barnes’s words, in the saga’s ‘fantasy of geopolitical desire, the power is with the periphery, East and North’.\textsuperscript{17} And in bringing peripheral India into the centre through partnership with Nítiða, the saga also suggests that Iceland, ‘unlearned’ and ‘in the outer regions’, might also be able to seem more central, through its ever-expanding body of literature that converses, if not allies itself, with the mainstream popular literature — romance — of Scandinavia and Europe in the late Middle Ages.

\textit{Nítiða saga} has only been published once before, and it is accordingly this version of the saga that has been the basis for the present translation. Loth’s edition is largely diplomatic and, except for a few readings, the text is taken from two manuscripts, both now located at the Stofnun Árna Magnússonar (AM) in Reykjavík. AM 529, 4to (sixteenth-century, vellum) provides the majority of the text but ends defective; AM 537, 4to (seventeenth-century, paper) provides the remainder of the text, from where 529 breaks off, until the end. These are the two oldest manuscripts in which the saga survives and which also preserve the saga on more than 1–2 leaves (the oldest manuscript is the late-fifteenth-century vellum, Stockholm, Royal Library, MS Perg. 8:o nr 10, VII, but preserves only one leaf of \textit{Nítiða saga}). The present translation and normalised Icelandic text are thus based on a composite of two manuscript versions, which together only approximate what the saga may have looked like in its original written form; just as Loth edited from the oldest ‘best texts’, so have I translated using the
same approach. Loth’s edition has very little critical apparatus, containing notes indicating textual variants in just five other manuscripts;\textsuperscript{18} nor does the text presented here pretend to be a critical edition: I aim only to provide an easily readable, normalised version of \textit{Nítíða saga}, along with an accessible, contemporary English translation. The translation is not meant to be literal, and some liberties have been taken to provide a modern rendering, again, primarily with those in mind who know little or no Icelandic. For example, while Icelandic \textit{einn} ‘one’ often functions as an indefinite pronoun which might most accurately be rendered ‘a certain’, I have translated it simply as the indefinite article throughout. In normalising the Icelandic, I have used Modern, rather than Old, Icelandic, for that is the form of the language to which the two manuscripts seem closer. Thus, for example, Loth’s \textit{Nitída} is modernised to \textit{Nítíða}. I have kept the characters’ names consistent with those in AM 529, 4to (the earlier manuscript) to avoid confusion towards the end of the saga: when Loth’s edition switches manuscripts, the spellings of the names of some characters shift slightly. Again, I do this primarily because my motivation for this translation is to present a story, not a reproduction of every scribal idiosyncrasy. All that said, I have kept the five chapter divisions from Loth’s edition, for convenience’s sake, and in the process of normalisation I have also attempted to introduce regular punctuation to the text.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} These are AM 537, 4to; AM 567, 4to, XVIII; AM 568, 4to, 6–7; Stockholm, Royal Library, MS Papp. 4:o nr 31; and Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Institute, MS Rask 32. See also Loth’s brief preface (p. vii).

\textsuperscript{19} For their help and support in many ways before, during, and after the preparation of this article, I must thank my anonymous reviewers, Catherine Batt, Sarah Cason, Alaric Hall, John Tucker, and Stephen Werronen.
Nítíða saga

I


Ypolitus hét einn smiður í Frakklandi með meykónginum. Hann kunni allt að smíða af gulli og silfri, gléri og gímsteinum, það sem gerast mátt af manna hóndum.


Einn dag veislunnar gengur meykóngur á dagþingan við sína fóstur-móður svo talandi: ‘Mér er sagt að fyrir eyju þeirri er Visio heitir ráði jarl sá sá er Virgilius heitir; hann er vitur og fjölkunnigur. Þessi ey liggur út undan Svíþjóðhinna höldu, út undir heimsskautið, þeirra landa er menn hafa spurn af. Í þessari eyju er vatn eitt stört, en í vatninu er hölmi sá er Skóga-blómi heitir og svo er mér sagt að hvergi í heiminum megi finnast náttúrusteinar, epli, og læknis-grös fleiri en þar. Nú vil ég halda þangað einn skipa og son þinn Hléskjöldur með mér’.


Einn dag, leggjandi skipið í einn leynvog, gonga síðan upp um eyna þar til er þau finna vatnið. Þau sjá einn bát fjótarandi, taka hann og róa út í hölminn. Þar voru margar eikur með fagri fruct og ágetum eplum. Sem þau fram koma í miðjan hölman sjá þau eitt steinker með fjórum hornum. Kerið var fullt af vatni; sinn steinn var í hverju horni kersins. Meykóngur leit í steina; hún sá þá um allar hálfar veraldarinnar, þar með kóna og kóna sonu og hvað hver hafiðist að, og allar þjóðir hvers lands og margar ýmislegar skepnur og óþjóðir. Drottning

20 Emended from MS hinna sterkasti borgarveggur (Loth, p. 4).
Nítiða’s Saga

I

Young people have heard an adventure and wonderful tale about the most famous maiden-king there has ever been in the northern region of the world. She was called Nítiða the Famous, and ruled her kingdom honourably and gloriously, after her father, the Emperor Ríkon, died. This maiden-king sat on the throne of the world in the good kingdom of France, and ruled in Paris. She was both wise and fair, her face bright and rosy just as if the red rose had been mingled with a snow-white lily; her eyes were as bright as a carbuncle, and her skin as white as ivory; her hair was like gold and hung down to the ground around her. She had a gold head-dress with four pillars, and up on top of the pillars, an eagle was depicted. On top of the eagle stood a hawk made of red gold, spreading its wings forward over the pure face of the young woman so that the sun did not burn her. She was as endowed with knowledge as the wisest scholar, and, surpassing other people’s intelligence, she could make the strongest castle-wall with her own intellect, and thus outmanoeuvre others’ plans; and she knew ten answers when others knew one. She had such a beautiful voice that it made birds, fish, wild animals, and all worldly creatures sleep, so delightful was it to hear. Her kingdom enjoyed peace and prosperity.

There was a smith named Ypolitus in France with the maiden-king. He knew how to craft all things—from gold and silver, glass and gemstones—that could be made by human hands.

Now it is to be said of the maiden-king that she prepared for a journey from her home to Apulia. A queen named Egidía ruled the realm there; she had fostered the maiden-king as a child. Egidía had a son named Hléskjöldur. Queen Nítiða sailed with her nobles on a fine, favourable wind, until she arrived in Apulia. Lady Egidía and her son and all their kin went with honour and ceremony to meet the maiden-king, and held an excellent feast in the hall for the whole of the next fortnight.

One day during the feast, the maiden-king went to a meeting with her foster-mother and said, ‘I have heard that beyond the island which is called Visio rules the earl who is called Virgilius; he is wise and skilled in magic. This island lies out beyond cold Sweden, out by the North Pole, the edge of those lands of which people have had reports. On the island is a large lake, and in the lake is the islet which is called The Flower of the Woods, and I have heard that nowhere in the world might one find more supernatural stones, apples, and healing herbs than there. Now I wish to travel there in a ship and to take your son Hléskjöldur with me’.

Queen Egidía raised difficulties about the journey, and thought it dangerous, but the maiden-king nevertheless decided to go, and arranged with Hléskjöldur for their journey. They sailed with ceremony out from Apulia on a beautiful, favourable wind. I have not heard tell of their journey, nor of their journey’s length, before they reached the island of Visio.

One day, mooring the ship in a hidden cove, they walked up across the island until they found the lake. They saw a boat floating there, took it, and rowed out to the islet, where there were many oaks with beautiful fruit and fine apples. When they came to the middle of the islet they saw a stone vessel with four corners. The vessel was full of water, and there was a stone in each corner of the vessel. The maiden-king looked into the stones; then she saw all the regions of the world, including kings and princes and what each did, and all peoples, of every land, and many diverse creatures and monsters. The queen grew pleased at this sight,
gladdist nú við þessa sýn, takandi kerið og alla þessa steина, epli, og læknis-gróð, því að hún undirstóð af sinni visku hverja náttúru hver bar. Skundar nú sínum veg aftur til skips síns, sigandi burt af Visio hvað þau máttu.


II

Hugon er kóngur nefndur; hann réð fyrir Miklagarði. Hann átti drottning og tvö börn. Son hans hét Ingi; hann var allra manna sæmilegastur og best að fyröttum búinn. Hann lá í hernaði hvert sumar og aflaði sér svo fjár og frægðar; drap ránsenn og vikinga, en lét friðmenn fara í náðum. Listalín hét döttur hans; hún var fríð sýnum og vinsæl, og hlaðin kvenlegum listum.


Blebarnius er kóngur nefndur; hann réð fyrir Indíalandi hinu mikla. Hann átti son er Liforinus hét; hann var væn að áliti, ljós og frægður í andliti snareygður sem valur, hrokkinnhæður og fagurt hárið, herðabreiður en keikur á bringuna, kurtis, sterkur og stórmannlegur. Hann kunni vel sund og sæfarar, skot og skylmingar, tafl og rúnar og bækur að lesa, og allar fyröttir er karlmann máttí prýða. Hann átti döttur er Sýjalín hét; hún var svo væn og listug að hún mundi forprís þótt hafa allra kvenna í veröldunni, ef eða hafði þvílfikut gimstein hú hjá veríð sem Nítíða hin fréga.

Liforinus lá í hernaði bæði vetur og sumar og aflaði sér fjár og frægðar, og þótti hinn mesti garpur og kappi, hvar sem hann fram kom, og hafði sigur í hverri orrustu. Hann var svo mikill til kvenna að engi hafði náðir fyrir honum, en enga kóngs döttur hafði hann mánaði lengur.
and took the vessel and all the stones, apples, and healing herbs, because she understood from her wisdom how magical each was. Then they hurriedly made their way back to their ship, and sailed away from Visio as best they could.

Now it is to be said that the earl Virgilius became aware that he had been robbed. It was possible to see many ships sailing and rowing after them, and then each saw the other. Then the maiden-king took a supernatural stone and quickly waved it over the ship and the heads of all who were on board. The earl never saw them again, and the maiden-king and Hléskjöldur held fast on their course, not stopping before they came home to Apulia.

Lady Egidía went to meet them joyfully and with great ceremony, and the maiden-king remained there for a while. Afterwards she had people prepare for her journey and ready her fleets of ships to go home to France, and asked lady Egidía that Hléskjöldur her son accompany her to strengthen her realm against attacks by raiders. Her foster-mother granted her this graciously, as with everything else that she asked for, and led her out with fine gifts of money, excellent jewels of gold and gemstones, and precious cloth. The retinues parted with great friendship. The maiden-king sailed to her kingdom with great honour and worldly strength. All the people of the land rejoiced at her ruling the kingdom so peacefully and gracefully.

II

There was a king named Hugon who ruled over Constantinople. He had a queen and two children. His son was called Ingi, and was the most honourable of all men and the most accomplished in athletic arts. He went plundering each summer and in doing so won himself wealth and fame; he killed robbers and vikings, but let peaceful people travel in peace. King Hugon’s daughter was named Listalín; she was beautiful and popular, and skilled in feminine arts.

There was a king called Soldán who ruled over Serkland. He had three sons: one was called Logi, the second Vélogi, and the third Heiðarlogi — he was the oldest of them and his hair and beard were black. He had a long chin and thin cheeks, he was crooked-toothed, and had a twitchy, crooked mouth. One of his eyes looked inwards and the other outwards. He was a very great warrior, and knew much sorcery and witchcraft. He was physically strong and won every battle. His brothers Logi and Vélogi were promising and respected men and plundered all summer.

There was a king named Blebarnius who ruled over the great kingdom of India. He had a son called Liforinus, who was handsome in appearance, his face bright and rosy; he was sharp-eyed as a hawk, had beautiful curly hair, was broad across the shoulders with a good straight back, and was courteous, strong, and magnificent. He was a good swimmer and could sail well, and he was also good at shooting, fencing, board games and runes, reading books, and all physical activities which a man should pursue. King Blebarnius also had a daughter called Sýjalín who was so beautiful and skilled that she would have been considered the most prized of all the women in the world, if there had not been such a jewel to compare her with as Nítiða the Famous.

Liforinus engaged in plundering both winter and summer and earned himself wealth and fame, and was thought the greatest hero and champion wherever he went, and was victorious in every battle he fought. He was so keen on women that none had any peace from him, and he did not stay with any princess longer than a month.

Meykóngur fagnar vel Inga kónígi, heiðrandi hann í orðum. Drottning spurði Inga kóng hvert erindi hans væri útan allt af Miklagarði og í svo fjarlæg lönd. Hann segir það er mitt erindi í þetta land að biðja yðar mér til eigin-konu, gefandi þar í móti gull og gersimar, land og þegna’.


Kónígi þurður nú ríkisaf þorði þennra með þeim, og hugars það að þau skuluð efti þeim skiljast við svo búið. Heldur hann burt af Frakklandi þegar byr þaf og herjar viða um sumarið.


Kónígi mælti ég vil gera þig fullsælan að þaf og börn þín ef þú kemur mér í hendur Nýtíða bardaga-laust’.

RFsteinn segir þýr þessu er mér ekki’.

Kónígi mælti ’gakk út á skip mín með mér og fullger það er þú hefir heitið, er hér gullhringur stór er ég vil gefa þér og tuttugu álnir rauft skarlat er þú skalt færa konu þínni’.

RFsteinn þakkar nú kónígi mikillega, býr sig og ganga á skip. Sigla nú in beinasta byr til Frakklands því að RFsteinn gaf þeim nógum býr og hagstæðan, svo að stöð á hverju reipi. Þeir koma að landi og leggja í einn leyning.


Listalín gengur í móti bróður sínum og meykónginum kærliga og öll ríkisins ráð. Er drotting nú leidd í höllina með miklum heiðri og prís. Verður nú skjótét búst við ágetra veislu og brúðlaupi og þangað boðið öllu ríkisins ráði, er dyrrast var í landinu. Nú er meykóngur settur í háseti hjá Listalín og allur kvenna-skari, sem frúna skyldi til sængur leiða, og þer voru út undir beran himin komnar. Þá nemur meykóngur staðar og mælti ‘litum í loftið; gætum að stjörnugangi; má þar af marka mikla visku um örlög manna’.
Now it is to be said about King Ingi that he prepared his splendid fleets, and sailed with a fair wind out from Constantinople, not stopping his journey before he furled his sails at the city of Paris. When the maiden-king saw Ingi’s fleets, with their sails woven with gold, she sent Hléskjöldur down to the ships to ask this king to a handsome feast, if he came in peace. Hléskjöldur carried out this task, went to the ships, greeted King Ingi, and invited him home to the hall with all his troops. One could see there many proud knights among each of the two retinues.

The maiden-king welcomed King Ingi warmly, praising him with her words. The queen asked King Ingi what his errand might be all the way out from Constantinople and in such a distant land. He said, ‘I have come to this land to ask you to be my wife; in return, I would give you gold and treasures, land and servants’.

The queen said, ‘You know, King Ingi, that you have no kingdom to compare with mine. Your lands have little to add to the good kingdom of France and the twenty kings’ realms it contains. In fact, I am not inclined to give myself up to any king now ruling, and I am well off enough regarding men, and you need not pursue this matter again’.

The king then became angry at her words, and thought that they must not part in this way. He headed out from France as soon as the wind permitted and plundered far and wide throughout the summer.

One evening, when Ingi’s ships were lying near an island, he and his men saw a person walking down from the island who looked rather large and old. The king asked this person his name. He said he was called Fox-Stone. The king asked if he lived up to his name. Fox-Stone said, ‘I don’t suppose that I lack sorcery and spell-craft and wizardry compared with anyone else, whatever needs to be done’.

The king said, ‘I will make you and your children very wealthy if you get me Nítíða’s hand in marriage, without battle’.

Fox-Stone said, ‘That’s no problem for me’.

The king said, ‘Come out to my ships with me and fulfil that which you have promised; here is a large gold ring which I want to give to you, and twenty ells of red scarlet which you must bring to your wife’.

Fox-Stone then thanked the king warmly and prepared himself, and they went onto the ships. Then they sailed the straightest course to France because Fox-Stone gave them enough of a favourable wind so that it filled all the sails. They came to land and moored in a hidden cove. Then Fox-Stone went onto land, along with the king. Fox-Stone cast a black cloak over the king, and they walked until they came to the queen’s chamber. She was then at leisure with her maidens. The king realised that nobody could see him, and went to the maiden-king, cast the cloak over her, and took her to the warships. Then they hoisted the sails and sailed away, and did not furl their sails before reaching Constantinople.

Listalín, along with all of the kingdom’s council, went lovingly to meet her brother and the maiden-king, and the queen was led into the hall with great honour and ceremony. A handsome feast and a wedding were now prepared, and all those of the kingdom’s counsellors who were noblest in the land were invited to it. The maiden-king was placed in the high-seat, next to Listalín and all the women who had to lead the wife to the marriage-bed; and they had come out under the open sky. Then the maiden-king paused and said, ‘Let us gaze at the heavens and keep watch over the courses of the stars; there we can gain great insights into people’s fates’.
Nítíða saga


Líður nú af veturinn og þegar er vorar, leggur hann í hernað allt þetta sumar, og eitt-hvert sinn síð um kveld leggur hann undir eitt nes, takandi stórt strandhögg. Þeir sjá mann ganga ofan af nesinu. Kóngur spyr þenna mann að nafni. Hann segjst Slekgregur heita. Kóngur mælindi ‘ég vildi að þú væri sem þú heitir til, eða kannu nokkuð kukí!’

Slekgregur segir ‘ei kann ég minni fjölyngi en Refsteinn og ei mundi meykóngur hafa hlaupið burt úr hóndum þér ef ég hafði svo næð verði sem hann var’.

Kóngur segir ‘ef þú kemur drottningu svo í mitt vald sem hann, þá skal ég gefa þér þrjá kastal og gera þig jarl’.

Slekgregur segir ‘ég er albúinn að fylgja þér’. Þeir ganga á skip og sigla blásanda býr hinn beinasta til Frakklands.

III


And after saying this, she quickly waved a stone over her head, the one she had gotten from the island of Visio. At this, the queen glided up out of their grasp; she vanished out of both their grasp and their sight. People then ran into the hall and told the king this news. The king and all the court became very sad after this incident.

The next day, the maiden-king came home to France, walking laughing into her beautiful hall. All of France’s people became joyful for her. The news then travelled to every land, how the queen had outwitted King Ingi. King Ingi did not like this at all and planned again how to set right the disgrace and shame he got from the lady.

Now winter passed, and when it was spring he headed out plundering, and continued all summer. On one occasion, when it was late in the evening, he lay near a headland, raiding the coast extensively. He and his men saw a person walking down from the headland. The king asked this person his name. He said he was called Sly-Fox. The king said, ‘I would like it if you lived up to your name — do you know how to do any sorcery?’

Sly-Fox said, ‘I don’t know any less magic than Fox-Stone, and the maiden-king wouldn’t have escaped your hands if I had been as near as he was’.

The king said, ‘If you get the queen into my power, as he did, then I will give you three castles and make you an earl’.

Sly-Fox said, ‘I am ready to follow you’. They went onto the ship and sailed with a strong wind the straightest way to France.

III

Now it is to be said of the maiden-king that she looked into her supernatural stones every day to see throughout the world if vikings were coming to attack her kingdom. She saw where King Ingi sailed, and that, late one day, he came to France. The queen thought the matter over and summoned a pitiful bondwoman who had a husband and three children. This family kept swine in the yard. The queen then took the slave woman, who was called Íversa, and undressed her. She took a stone, and had the bondwoman see herself while bathing, with the stone already in some of the water which was there. She also washed her whole body, and gave her many supernatural apples to eat—those which she had gotten from the island. After this was done, she brought in shining, queenly clothes for her and placed her up on a golden seat. By this point, the slave-woman had just as a pure a face as the maiden-king, so that no one could tell one from the other. The apples held the supernatural property that she who ate them could not speak for the next month. The queen Nítíða then looked into another supernatural stone so that, whether she sat or stood, nobody could see her.

Now it is to be said that King Ingi and his men had landed. He and Sly-Fox went up onto land, straight to the queen’s chamber, and as they walked in they saw where the maiden-king sat with a shining face on a golden seat. The king ran in and cast a black hood over her, then immediately went out of the chamber and down to the ship. The king at once ordered his men to prepare a bed in the aftcastle, without any delay, because they now wanted to hurry the wedding so that the maiden-king would not be able to evade him. Then they both lay together the whole night, with tender embraces. King Ingi was then well satisfied with his plan, thinking to have avenged his disgrace. The sails were then unfurled and they did not stop their journey before they came to Constantinople.
Nítíðasaga


Penna sama dag kveður frú Listalín burt af skemmunni allar frúar og híðkonur, svo talandi: ‘Drottning mín, hvað veldur því er þer vilið eða megið við öngvan mann tala, eður þann beiska grát er aðreið gengur af yðrum augum, því að kóngur og allur lands lýður bíða svo sitja og standa hvern mann sem yður best líki’.


Látum Inga kóng nú hvílast um tíma, en vendum sögunni í annan stað og segjum af sonum Soldáns kóngs, Heiðarloga og Véloga, að þeir spyrja hversu Ingí kóngur er út leiðinn af meykóngi. Búa þeir öðigan her af Serklandi. Skipa þeir sínum skipastól til Frakklands.

Nú er að segja af meykóngi að hún heldur eða kyrða fyrir, því að hún lætur saman lesa smiðu22 og meistara; fyrir þeim var Ypolitus. Hún lætur gera glæmerminn með þeirri list að hann læk á hjólum og mátti fara inn yfir höfuðport borgarinnar og mátti þar þætt herfólk á standa. Hún læt og gera díki ferlega djúpt fram fyrir skemmunni og leggja því veika viðu, en þar þar var breiðt skrúð og skarlat.


Að næstu nóttildinni gengur Vélogi heim til borgarinnar með eitt þúsund manna, og er þeir koma undir höfuð-port borgarinnar lætur Hléskjöldur vinda fram yfir þá glæmerminni, og hella yfir þá biki og brennsteini. En Hléskjöldur gengur að þeim af borginni með skotvopnum

21 AM 529 is corrupt here, giving ‘er mér sagt á að vör ver sem vitbrögðum at sjá’. The emendation used here is Loth’s (p. 17). Loth’s other MSS offer quite different readings, though with similar senses.
22 I have kept this unexpected accusative plural form from the MS (Loth, p. 18).
23 Emended from MS munu (Loth, p. 19).
24 Emended from MS Vélogi (Loth, p. 19).
Lady Listalín and all the courtiers went to meet the king and queen with all strength, honour, and worldly ceremony; there was great rejoicing in Constantinople at the maiden-king’s coming. But when the next month had passed, it happened one day that Lady Listalín spoke to her brother the king and said, ‘Do you not have any suspicion regarding that woman you have brought home to this country? It seems to me her actions, and many other characteristics, are not like the maiden-king’s; it has been said to me that we may be looking at an illusion. I will inquire today about doing some kind of test, and you should stay in a hiding-place and listen’. The king then did so.

That same day, Lady Listalín ordered all the ladies and their maids in waiting to leave the chamber, and then said, ‘My queen, why is it that you do not want to — or cannot — speak with anyone? And what causes that bitter weeping which never leaves your eyes? Because the king and all the courtiers of the land ask how to sit and stand each person as pleases you best’.

She answered, ‘What causes my tears and oppressive grief is that the maiden-king has separated me from my husband and children, and I will never see them again’. Listalín asked where her husband or children might be. She then answered and told the truth about everything, and how it had happened.

King Ingi then grew very angry, came out from under the tapestry, and ordered that she should be stripped of all her clothes and queen’s apparel, and all her beauty and radiance came off with them. The king was now very discontented. This mockery and disgrace then spread to every land.

We now leave King Ingi for a while, and we turn the story to another place and tell of how King Soldán’s sons, Heiðarlogi and Vélogi, found out how King Ingí had been outwitted by the maiden-king. They prepared an invincible army from Serkland, and they readied their fleets of ships for France.

Now it is to be said of the maiden-king that she did not sit idle, because she summoned together her craftsmen and scholars: Ypolitus was in charge of them. She commanded them to use their skills to make a glass roof that could move on wheels and could go over the main gate of the castle so that many warriors could stand on it. She also commanded them to dig a monstrously deep ditch in front of her chamber, and to lay weak wood over it — and costly cloth and scarlet was spread over that.

When the king’s sons came to the land, the maiden-king called Hléskjöldur to a meeting with her, and asked him to go to the warships and told him everything about how he should proceed. Hléskjöldur then went to the ship and asked whether the kings came in peace. Heiðarlogi said, ‘If the queen wants to marry either of us brothers, then this land and kingdom will be free from our plundering; otherwise we shall destroy the land, torch and burn it, and spare nothing’.

Hléskjöldur answered, ‘The maiden-king does not think herself equipped to wage war against Serkland’s army and such excellent princes as you. I want to tell you, Vélogi, the maiden-king’s promise: she wants each of you to speak with her, and to test your wisdom and eloquence. She wants you to go early to meet her before your brother gets up, because I know that she chooses you as husband’. They then pledged this to each other.

At the end of the next night Vélogi went up to the castle with a thousand men, and when they came under the main castle gate Hléskjöldur commanded his men to winch the glass roof down over them, and to pour pitch and sulphur over them. And Hléskjöldur attacked them
Nítíðasaga
og stórum höggum. Fellur þar Vélogi og hver maður er með honum var. Er nú rudd borgin og hreinsuð af dauðum mónnum.


IV

Kóngur segir: ‘Marti í þær af sagt og ef þú vilt fylgja mér til Frakklands og vera mér hollur svo að með þínu kynstri og kukli mætti þeg fá meykónginn mer til eigninn púsu þá skyldi þeg gera þig fulsælan og börn þín’.

Dvergur mælti: ‘Pá mun ég upp taka að fylgja þér, heldur en missa steininn, því að ég veit að þú er tæt á meykóngur’.

Lifarínus gaf honum gull-hring stóran ‘ok tak af hjörð minni naut og sauði, svín og geitur, sem þeir þarfast’.


Dvergurinn talar þá til hans: ‘Hér er eitt gull er ég vil gefa þér; drag þáð á þinn fingur. Læg þína hónd með gullinu upp á beran háls meykóngs. þá mun gullit fast við hennar ljósa líkam. Fanga hana síðan, en ég skal gera rán fyrir að engi eftirfyr sé veitt’.

25 Emended from Loth’s expansion of MS kongss to ‘kongss(on)’ (Loth, p. 21).
from the castle with projectiles and great blows. Vélogi fell there, and every man who was with him. The castle was then cleared and cleansed of the dead.

Then Hléskjöldur went down to the warships and said this to Heiðarlogi: ‘The maiden-king asks you to come meet with her, because she wants to speak with both of you brothers and test the wisdom of you both. Vélogi came up a good while ago, and is now sitting in the hall drinking. I didn’t want him to speak with her; I know that she chooses you to defend her kingdom and not him, because of your physical strength and prowess. It seemed to us that she should marry so that people would no longer remain in conflict and unrest’.

Heiðarlogi thanked him for his good faith and his visit. He prepared himself then with two thousand men and went to the castle straight away. But then Hléskjöldur said, ‘Now they must go to the queen’s chamber, and I shall visit your brother Vélogi and delay him because I want you to speak with the queen first’.

Heiðarlogi turned towards the chamber, and as they went across the cloth, the wood collapsed, and they tumbled into the ditch. At this Hléskjöldur charged out of the castle with an invincible army and they threw stones and projectiles down onto their heads, and killed every man who accompanied Heiðarlogi. Then Hléskjöldur led the invincible French army from Paris and ordered them into battle, and the Serks saw they could not defend themselves without a leader against France’s whole army, so they headed home to Serkland. The maiden-king’s new fame and glory spread to every land.

IV

Now it is to be said about the famous King Liforinus, who was mentioned before, that he rode out into the woods one day to amuse himself. He saw in a forest-clearing a standing stone, and near it a dwarf. The prince then ran between the stone and the dwarf, and cursed him to be out of the stone. The dwarf said, ‘You would gain greater fame by outwitting the maiden-king in France than preventing my entry — or have you not heard of the fame which has spread throughout all the world concerning her strength, that she outwits all kings with her foresight and wisdom?’

The king said, ‘I have heard much said of this, and if you will accompany me to France and be loyal to me so that, through your magical arts and sorcery, I can get the maiden-king as my wife, then I shall make you and your children very wealthy’.

The dwarf said, ‘I will agree to accompany you, rather than lose the stone, because I know that you are an excellent king’.

Liforinus gave him a large gold ring — ‘And take cattle, sheep, pigs and goats from my herds, as you need them’.

The king then had a fleet of ornamented ships readied to leave his land, manned with noble courtiers, and he did not lower his sail before they came into the harbour which lay outside Paris. The maiden-king foresaw the arrival of King Liforinus because she kept all of her supernatural stones with her. Hléskjöldur walked down to the ship and invited the king home to a magnificent feast, according to the maiden-king’s instructions. The king then went on land with all his courtiers.

Then the dwarf said to him, ‘Here is a gold ring which I want to give to you; draw it onto your finger. Lay the hand with the ring on the bare neck of the maiden-king, and then the gold will be stuck to her radiant body. Seize her then, and I shall make sure that no chase will be made’.

Nú er að segja að kóngs dóttir, Sýjalín, gengur í móti sínum bróður og meykóngi, og allur Indíalands her með allri mekt. Þá voru hörpur og gigjur og allra handa strenfæri. Óll stræti eru þar þökt með skarlat og dýra väfi, en kórónaðir kóngrar leiddu meykóng til skemmu drotningar Sýjalín. Er nú búst við virðulegr viðslu og boðið til öllum Indíalands hofuðingjum. Og það var einn dag að drotning var gengin fram undir einn lund plantaðan er stóð undir skemmunni. Þá var meykóngur allkát; þá hafði þá í hendi þann náttúrusteinn er hún hafði úr eynni Visio. Hún brá í steininum upp yfir hófuð þeim báðum. Því næst líða þær báðar í loft upp svo að þær voru skjót upp augsýn. Fara nú jungfriar, og allt folk það er við var á völlum hjá lundinum hlaupa inn og sagðu kónungum þenna atburðar og varð hann mjög ögladur við.

Nú er þær að segja að drottnings koma heim í Páris, tekr meykóngur Sýjalín kóngs dóttur, og setur hana í hásseti hjá sér drekkandi af einu keri báðar og skilur hvorki svefn né mat við hana. Tók hvör að unna annari sem sinni móður.

V

Nú er að segja af Soldáni kóngi að hann fréttir lát sona sína; hann fyllist upp ferlegri reiði. Lætur ganga her ör um öll sín ríki og safnar að sér blámönnum og bannsettum hetjum og alls kyns öfjóð og ill þyði. Ætlar nú að halda þessum her til Frakklands brenna og bæla landið nema meykóngur vili giftast honum.

Það var einn dag að þær frúinnar lita í sína náttúrusteina og þær sjá hvað Soldán kóngr hefste að. Lætur meykóngur kalla Hléskjöld, svo talandi til hans: ‘Þú skalt látá ganga herörr um allt landið og öll mín kónga ríki og stefnar hverjum manni til, þeim er skildi geti valdið. Hald þessum her á móti Soldán kónghi, því að ég vil ekki hann komi í mitt ríki’.

Hléskjöldur gerir svo, og þegar herlið hans var búið, heldur hann burt af ríkinu. Sigla nú þessir skipastólir hvoriasis móti öðrum, og finnast undir ey einni er Kartagia heitir. Þar var víkinga bæli mikið. Þar þurfti ekki að sökum að spyrja. Taka þeir þegar að berjast er vígljóst var. Gengur Soldán kóngr hefjur hans og blámen í gegnum liðið Franseisa svo að ekki stóð við, er þá ei meira eftir en hálft það er Hléskildi fylgdi.

The king then went to the hall and the queen stood up to meet him and seated him in the high-seat beside her, with good words and a loving countenance. Liforinus then placed his right hand with the gold ring up onto the queen’s neck: the hand was then stuck by the ring. The king gripped under the backs of her knees with his left hand and sprang off over the table with the lady. The maiden-king called to her men for help. Hléskjöldur and all the French courtiers tried to jump up, but he and all the maiden-king’s men were stuck fast in their seats. Liforinus then went to his men without any delay, and his whole army hoisted their sails, speeding his voyage. The dwarf gave them a fair wind home to India.

Now it is to be said that Princess Sýjalín went to meet her brother and the maiden-king with India’s whole army and all ceremony. There were harps and fiddles and every kind of stringed instrument. All the streets there were covered with scarlet and precious woven cloths, and crowned kings led the maiden-king to the chamber of Princess Sýjalín. Then a magnificent feast was prepared and all of India’s nobles were sent for.

It happened one day that princess Sýjalín had gone down to a well-tended grove that stood below the chamber. The maiden-king was very happy then: she had in her hand the supernatural stone that she had from the island of Visio. She quickly waved the stone over the heads of them both; immediately, they both glided up into the sky so that they were quickly out of sight. The young ladies went their way, and all the people who were in the fields near the grove ran in and told the king this news, and he became very downcast.

Now it is to be said that the queens came home to Paris, and the maiden-king took Princess Sýjalín and set her in the high-seat next to herself, both of them drinking from one cup, and she parted from her neither in sleep nor during meals. Each came to love the other like her own mother.

V

Now it is to be said about King Soldán that he heard about the death of his sons and was filled with terrible rage. He ordered a swift army to go throughout all his kingdom, and recruited black men and exiles and all kinds of wild and evil people. He then planned to bring this army to France to burn and ravage the land unless the maiden-king wanted to marry him.

It happened one day that the women looked into Nítiða’s supernatural stones and they saw what King Soldán was beginning to do. The maiden-king called to Hléskjöldur and said to him, ‘You must order an army to go throughout all the land and all my kings’ kingdoms, and summon every man who can bear arms. Lead this army to meet King Soldán, because I do not want him to come into my kingdom’.

Hléskjöldur did so, and as soon as his troop was ready, he travelled away from the kingdom. Each fleet then sailed against the other, and they met at an island called Kartagia, where there was a huge lair of pirates. There was no need to discuss anything; they began fighting as soon as it was light enough for battle. King Soldán went with his warriors and black men through the French ranks so that nothing withstood him; after, no more than half the army which Hléskjöldur led was left.

Early the second day a new battle began, and by the evening of the second day, no more than fifteen hundred members of his army were still standing. People held up a peace-shield, and each bound their men’s wounds. Then people noticed a great and ornamented dragon-ship approaching with an enormous number of other ships, which sailed from the sea and


Tekur Liforinus þar nú mikluð herfang og verður frægur af þessi orrustu viða um lönd. Sigla nú heim til Indíalands með foðrum sigri. Svo er sagt að kónur sjálfur sat yfir og grætti Hléskaðjöld þar til er hann ver heill. En þegar vor kom var það einn dag að kónur gekk til sjófar og Hléskaðjöld með honum. Hann mælti þá: ‘Annað mun meykóngi hentilegra og hennar ríki en ég haldi þér hér lengur. Hér eru í höfn minni nú í tíu skip er ég vil gefa þér með mönnunum og herförum; skauti ekki éðað fara sem forumaður’.


Þetta sumar heldur Liforinus kónur í hernað og kemur sínum skipum við Smáland. Þar ríkti sú drottning er Alduria hét; hún var móðir systir Liforini kóngs. Drottning tók við honum báðum hónundum og situr hann þar í ágetri veiði.

Einn dag talar drottning við sinn frænda ‘hvað veldur ógleði þinni, hvort þreyr þú á meykónginn er nú er frægust í heiminum’.

Liforinus mælti þú eft kölluð vitur kona og klók. Legg til ráð að ég mætti meykóng útleika og 26 ást hennar ná’.

Drottning mælti þar vilda ég allt til gefa þú næðir þún yndi eftir þínun vilja. Nú er það mitt ráð, að þú siglir þetta sumar til Frakklands og nefnist Eskilvarður, sonur kóngs af Mundia, og haf þar vetursetu. Þegar vist þarf það er þig skal eitt þegar, þegar þú situr þar allan þann betur, þá er undur, ef þú fær ekki fang á henni’.


Leið nú veturinn af, að vori býst hann til ferðar. Nokkurn dag áður en hann var albúinn, talar meykóngur við hann því þó Eskilvarður hefur jafnán skemmt okkur frú Sýjalfín í vetur, með þínun hljóðfærum, og foðrum frásögum, nú vil ég að þú gangir í dag með okkur: skulum við nú skemmta þér’.

26 The text of AM 529 ends here. As noted by Loth, ‘after this word there is a lacuna (the rest of the saga = 2 ½ folios) in the MS; the [rest of the] text is taken from [AM] 537, 6r–8v’ (Loth, p. 28). Of course, the edition continues sometimes to take readings from the other manuscripts mentioned in the introduction (pp. 121–22 above).

27 Here until the end, the name is Livorius in the MS. As mentioned in the introduction, I have chosen to keep the names used in the previous manuscript; this applies to the following two notes as well.
steered with their sails along one side of the island. A man left the dragon-ship, and all the troops went up on land with an assembled force. This man was stout, and so tall that his head was above the whole army. He had his gold-woven banner raised against King Soldán, and Hléskjöldur went against Logi. Then they started in on the third and hardest of their battles.

The kings Liforinus and Soldán began their single combat, with great blows and violent combat. This went on until night. At the end of their exchange Liforinus thrust a spear into King Soldán’s breast so that it came out through the shoulders, and he fell down dead. Liforinus then searched for Hléskjöldur, who lay in a valley, wounded to the point of death. Logi lay dead next to him. Liforinus picked up Hléskjöldur and carried him down to the ships. The king then ordered a search for the slain. A truce was given to those who asked for it, and anyone else was killed.

Liforinus then took great booty there and became famous far and wide on account of this battle. Then they sailed home to India with a noble victory. It is said that the king himself tended and healed Hléskjöldur until he was well. And one day, when spring came, the king went on a sea-voyage with Hléskjöldur. Then he said, ‘It would be more befitting to the maiden-king and her kingdom for me to do otherwise than to keep you here any longer. Here in my harbour are ten ships, which I will give to you with men and war-gear; you shall not journey from here as a vagrant’.

Hléskjöldur then praised him, thanking the king for his hospitality and great gifts. He sailed home to France, and the maiden-king was very glad at his coming. That summer King Liforinus went plundering and arrived with his ships at Småland. The queen who ruled there was called Alduria; she was King Liforinus’s aunt. The queen took him by both hands and he sat down to a handsome feast.

One day the queen said to her kinsman, ‘Why are you unhappy? Do you long for the maiden-king who now is the most famous in the world?’

Liforinus said, ‘You are considered a wise and cunning woman. Give me advice so that I can outwit the maiden-king and gain her love’.

The queen said, ‘I want to give you everything you need to attain joy in accordance with your wish. My suggestion for you now is that you sail this summer to France and call yourself Eskilvarður, son of the king of Mundia, and stay there over the winter. I will give you a gold ring so that nobody will know you, neither the maiden-king nor your sister. If you remain there for the whole winter, it will be a wonder if you do not get a hold on her’.

Liforinus accepted this counsel and prepared his fifteen ships, sailed from that place, and came to France in the autumn. The maiden-king then had him asked into the hall to speak with her — and she judged him a wise man. The queen asked Eskilvarður to remain there throughout the winter with his retinue. King Eskilvarður accepted, and frequently came to the queen because he was good at playing the harp and all musical instruments, and he was able to say something about every country. The queen took the greatest delight in his company.

Now winter passed, and in spring he prepared himself for a journey. One day, before he was ready, the maiden-king said to him, ‘You, Eskilvarður, have always entertained me and Lady Sýjalín during the winter with your music-making and wonderful stories. Now I want you to come with us today: we shall now entertain you’.
Níuíða saga


Eskilvarður sagði ‘hann er fjarlægur þessum lóndum’.


Hléskjöldur mælti ‘ef þér viljið mér nokkra þjónustu lengur gefa, þá vil ég að þér taki Liforinus kóng yður til herra, skal ég og ekki önnur laun þíggja, og lengur í yðar ríki vera’.


Nú er að segja af Íngra kóní, að hann spyr þessi tíðindi; verður hann reiður og kveðst öngva konu skyldi eiga útan meykóng ella líggja dauður. Lætur nú ganga herór um allt sitt ríki, og safnar saman múga og margmenni, skyldi þar koma hvor sá er skildi geti valdið. Verður þetta
Eskilværður accepted the invitation readily, and went with them into their chamber. The maiden-king took up a stone and asked him to look into it. He then saw over all of France, Provence, Ravenna, Spain, Hallitia, Frisia, Flanders, Normandy, Scotland, Greece, and all the people living there. The maiden-king said, ‘King Liforinus is not sailing in these parts of the world; might he be at home instead?’

Another day the queen asked Eskilværður to the chamber: ‘You have always entertained us during the winter’. The queen then asked Eskilværður to look into the stone, and they saw all the northern regions: Norway, Iceland, the Faroes, the Hebrides, Orkney, Sweden, Denmark, England, Ireland, and many other lands which he could not distinguish. The queen said, ‘Will King Liforinus the Famous not sail into these lands?’

Eskilværður said, ‘He is far from these lands’.

The queen raised up yet another stone and then they saw the eastern regions of the world: India, Palestine, Asia, Serkland, and all the other lands of the world, and even around the burning-belt, which is uninhabited. The queen said, ‘There are now great battles in Serkland, and King Ingi is sitting at home in Constantinople and is not out raiding, but where must Liforinus the Famous be? I do not see him at home in India, and he is not in Småland with his kinswoman. Now everything is visible, from the oceans to the shoals and hidden coves; neither is he there nor is he anywhere in the whole world, unless he is standing here beside me’. Then the maiden-king said, ‘King Liforinus, remove your cloak of disguise. I knew you the first day you came. Take off Alduria’s ring, because it will do you no good to continue in this way any longer’.

King Liforinus then obeyed the queen’s words and removed from himself both gold ring and name, and took up his noble clothing. Lady Sýjalín then went to her brother, and there was the most joyful reunion between them. The maiden-king sat King Liforinus in the high-seat beside her, and there was an excellent feast. It is said that the maiden-king had sent word to all parts of her country, to the twenty kings who served under her rule. King Liforinus then began his marriage proposal to the maiden-king with an eloquent speech and excellent judgement. All the kings and nobles at this council supported his speech, agreeing that this proposal should be taken. The maiden-king answered their words: ‘I have heard that the nobles of the land are growing tired of war and unrest in the kingdom. The most likely way to forestall that is to accept the king who seems to you to be of great promise’.

Hléskjöldur said, ‘If you want me to offer my service any longer, then I want you to take King Liforinus as your lord; indeed I shall not accept any other repayment, or remain any longer in your kingdom’.

The maiden-king said, ‘I have great honour to repay you, for the many dangers and trials which you have had for my sake. It is most fitting that I should take this up, especially since it is the counsel and desire of all the nobles, for I do not know a nobler king ruling than King Liforinus’.

King Liforinus was delighted at this. This was now firmly arranged, and agreed with all the kingdom’s councillors; the wedding was to be in autumn. The maiden-king then said to Liforinus and other men: ‘I do not want you to journey away at once from my presence, because I think that we will not be able to remain at peace for very long’.

Now it is to be said of King Ingi, that he learned of these tidings and became angry and said that he would marry no woman except the maiden-king, and would otherwise lie dead. He summoned all his kingdom to war, and collected together a crowd and mob; everyone had
Nítíða saga

ótal lið, svo að sjór þótti svartar fyrir herskipum. Heldur Ingi kóngur öllum þessum skipastól í Frakkland með ákrefð og reiði, því hann vildi koma aður brullaupið væri drukkið.


Í þrjá daga gengur þessi aðgangur, og árla hinn fjörð daginn kallar Liforinus kóngur hárrí röðtu til Ingja kóngs: ‘Þetta er öviturlægt bragð að berjast svo, því vit láttum hér þá vildustu frendur, vini, og höfðingja. Er það betra ráð að við berjumst tveir, eigi sá meykóng er herra hlut ber af okkr viðskiptum’.

Ingi kóngur játar þessu blóðlega, og hefja þeir sitt einvígi með stórum höggum og sterkum aðgangir, bresta hlífar hvorutvegginga, berast og sár á báða, en þó fleiri að Ingia kóng. Lúktist svo þeirra einvígi að Ingi kóngur fell til jarðar af meði og blóðrás, því hann flakti allur sundur af sárum. Liforinus kóngur lætur leggja Inga kóng í veglega sæng, en hann leggst í aðra og taka þeir nú að smyrja þeirra sár með dýrum smyrslum.


Kóngurinn talar þá til Ingja kóngs: ‘vilkir þú gifta Hléskildi mínun göða vin og fóstbroður Listalín, þá skulu þessi ráð takast: stendir hann eínn til af áf og rékis út á Puli eftir móður sínna Egidíam; þar til vil ég gefa þeim þröðjung Indíals, og er hann þó betra verður’.

Nú gengur meykóngrur og allir ríkkjana höfðingjar með þessum erindum, og með þeirra bæn og fagurlega frambrúði; fullgerðust þessi kaup hvorutveggu. Era nu orð send eftir frú Listalín; kemur hún þar eftir lóðinn tfma til Frakklands með dýrlegu fóruneyti. Hefjast nú þessi þrú brúðkaup í upphafi augusti mánaðar og yfir stendir allan þann mánuð með miklum veraldar-prís og blóma. Þar var fallega étíð og fagurlega drukkið með allskyns matbúnaði og dýrstu drykkjum. Þar var allskyns skemmtun frammum í burtreiðum og hljóðfæraslætti, en þar sem kóngarnir gengu var niðurbreitd pell og purpuri og heðurlag klæði. Er og eða auðsigt með öfröðri tungu í tölugum veraldarinnar, svo mónum verði skemmtilegt, hvor fognuður vera mundi í miðjum heiminun af sílku hofvölfik samankomnu. Stendir nú svo hófið í mikilli þessa heimslgleið með dýrlegum tíföngum. Og nú með því að öll þessa heims dýr kann skjót
to come there who could bear arms. Countless troops arrived, so that the sea seemed black with warships. King Ingi eagerly and angrily directed all these fleets to France, because he wanted to arrive before the wedding was over.

When King Ingi had reached land, he commanded that tents be pitched. King Liforinus rode at once down to the ships and offered King Ingi honour and a settlement on behalf of the maiden-king, which, however, King Ingi did not desire: he wanted nothing other than to fight. Then armies descended on one another. King Liforinus raised his banner against King Ingi, and then a hard battle began, with enormous noise and loss of life. King Ingi went through the army of the French killing two men with each blow. King Liforinus did the same, but, wherever he went, more casualties appeared in the army of the Byzantine Emperor Ingi. There was great loss to each of the two armies, and all the fields were covered with the corpses of the dead.

This assault went on for three days, and early on the fourth day King Liforinus called with a loud voice to King Ingi, ‘It is an unwise move to fight like this, because we are losing our dearest kinsmen, friends, and nobles here. It is better counsel that the two of us fight each other: let the one who gains the upper hand in our exchange win the maiden-king’.

King Ingi agreed to this gladly, and they began their single combat with great blows and strong assaults. They broke each other’s shields; both also were wounded, though King Ingi was more so. Their single combat ended with King Ingi falling to the ground from exhaustion and bleeding, for he was coming to pieces from his wounds. King Liforinus made King Ingi lie in a magnificent bed, and he lay in another, and they began to anoint their wounds with precious salves.

Liforinus asked his sister to lay her gentle hands on King Ingi’s wounds. She did her brother’s bidding, because she was the most excellent doctor and she knew even more about this than the maiden-king. The king’s wounds then began to heal, and King Ingi saw that Sýjalfín surpassed other women throughout all the northern lands, excepting the maiden-king. He quickly yielded to her loving eyes, and soon made his marriage proposal to the princess. The maiden-king and all of the land’s courtiers agreed that this proposal should be accepted, so that the whole kingdom should receive peace and harmony, and King Ingi was seated beside King Liforinus.

The king said then to King Ingi, ‘Should you want to marry Listalín to Hléskjöldur, my good friend and foster-brother, then this proposal would be accepted: his mother Egidía means that he is outstanding in his hereditary rights and the power of his realm, out in Apulia; and in addition I will give them a third of India — though he is worthy of more’.

Then the maiden-king and all the kingdoms’ nobles went with these messages, and with their request and fine proposal; they succeeded fully in both these things. Word was sent to Lady Listalín; after a little while she came to France with a splendid entourage. Then they held these three weddings at the beginning of the month of August and they lasted the whole month, with great worldly ceremony and glory. There was excellent dining and exquisite drinking, with all kinds of dishes, and the most expensive drinks. There were all kinds of entertainment, such as jousts and musical concerts, and costly fabrics, and purple, and magnificent cloths wherever the kings walked. Indeed, it was so entertaining for everyone that it is not easily said with an unlearned tongue in the outer regions of the world what joy there may be in the middle of the world when such courtiers come together. So the celebration continued in this great worldly gladness, with costly provisions. And because all of this world’s splendour can
Nítíða saga

að líða, þá voru brúðkaupinn útdrukkinn, og höfðingjarnir útleiddir með fögrum fégjöfum í
gulli og gimsteinum og góðum vefjum. Skildist þar hoflyðar með fógrum friði og kærleika
hvor við annan.

Siglir nú Ingi kóngur og hans frú til Miklagarðs, en Hlóskjöldur og Listalín út á Pul,
stýrandi þar ríki til dauðadags. Liforinus og meykóngur stýrðu Frakklandi. Áttu þau ágæt
börn, son er Ríkon hét eftir sínum móður föður er síðan stýrði Frakklandi með heiður og
sóma eftir þeirra dag. Og lýkur svo þessu ævintýri af hinni frægu Nítíða og Liforio kóni.
quickly pass away, the wedding then was over, and the nobles were led out with wonderful gifts in gold and gemstones and good woven cloth. There each of the courtiers parted peacefully and lovingly.

King Ingi and his lady sailed to Constantinople, and Hléskjöldur and Listalín out to Apulia, ruling the kingdom there until they died. Liforinus and the maiden-king ruled France. They had handsome children, including a son who was called Ríkon after his mother’s father, who, after their day, later ruled France with honour and glory. And so ends the adventure of Nítíða the Famous and King Liforinus.