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Sigurðar saga fóts (The Saga of Sigurðr Foot)

A Translation¹

Alaric Hall, Haukur Þorgeirsson, Patrick Beverley, Kirsty Brooks, Ffion Twomlow, David Bishop, Lauren Brogden, Oliver Clarkson, Anna Denholm, Kathryn Denvir, Benjamin Fearn, Laura Friis, Victoria Granata Thorne, Amaris Gutierrez-Ray, Laura Holdsworth, Simon Johnson, Anouska Luboff, Elizabeth Matter, Brianna Metcalf, Louise O'Mahony, David Varley, Harriet Veale.

Introduction

After a long period in a scholarly wilderness, medieval Icelandic romances are attracting rapidly growing attention.² The energy put in over the years to producing good translations of the *Íslendingasögur* testifies to the importance of translation in promoting scholarship on medieval Scandinavian literature,³ and the study of Icelandic romance has benefited considerably from the translations in *Seven Viking Romances*, published by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards in 1985, and *Icelandic Histories and Romances*, published by Ralph O'Connor 2002; both have since been reprinted.⁴ Readers of German (or at least those with deep pockets) have, meanwhile, been able to enjoy the first volumes of the multi-volume *Isländische Märchensagas* and *Isländische Antikensagas*.⁵ However, although

¹ The translation presented here was produced collaboratively by the authors as part of an Old Icelandic course at the University of Leeds in 2008–2009. Editing of the initial collaborative version was undertaken by Beverley, Brooks, Hall, and Twomlow. The translation was finalised by Hall, who also produced the normalised text, and checked by Haukur Þorgeirsson, whose important revisions include footnote 66. The introduction was written by Hall, with the material on the dating of *Sigurðar rímur* contributed by Haukur. Any errors are Hall's responsibility.

² See for a recent survey Matthew Driscoll, 'Late Prose Fiction (*lygisögur*)', in Rory McTurk ed., *A Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature and Culture*, Blackwell: Oxford 2005, 190–204.

³ See especially *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders, Including 49 Tales*, Viðar Hreinsson et al. (eds), 5 vols, Leifur Eiríksson Publishing: Reykjavík 1997; and, on the ongoing pan-Scandinavian equivalent, Annette Lassen, 'Alle islændingesagaer i nye danske oversættelser', in Agnete Ney, Henrik Williams and Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist (eds), *Á austrvega. Saga and East Scandinavia: Preprint papers of The 14th International Saga Conference. Uppsala 9th-15th August 2009* (Institutionen för humaniora och samhällsvetenskaps skriftserie 14), 2 vols, University of Gävle: Gävle 2009, ii 576–583, accessed from <<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hig:diva-4837>>.

⁴ *Seven Viking Romances*, Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards trans., Penguin: London 1985; *Icelandic Histories and Romances*, Ralph O'Connor trans., Tempus: Stroud 2002.

⁵ *Isländische Märchensagas, Band I: Die Saga von Ali Flekk, Die Saga von Vilmund Vidutan, Die Saga von König Flores und seinen Söhnen, Die Saga von Sigurd Thögli, Die Saga von Damusti*, Jürg Glauser,

there is a good number of other translations of Icelandic romances, in English and other languages, these are often hard to obtain, while the English paraphrases provided in Agnete Loth's diplomatic editions of romance-sagas, while detailed, have only limited usefulness for readers who are not able to flesh them out with reference to the Old Icelandic.⁶ The present article is intended as a small contribution to making Icelandic romance more accessible, by translating the hitherto untranslated *Sigurðar saga fóts* (the saga of Sigurðr Foot) in an open-access forum.

The motivation for translating romances like this is not only to promote new trends within Old Norse scholarship, but to help connect this work to wider scholarly developments. The rise of interest in medieval Icelandic romance reflects the emergence across European medieval studies of important new work on what is, for want of a better critical term, known as 'popular romance' (by contrast with canonised, 'literary' romances by authors such as Marie de France, Chrétien de Troyes, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Geoffrey Chaucer and Thomas Malory).⁷ The lack of critical interest in popular romances—and the lack of critical tools for interpreting them—has been as apparent for more southerly regions of Europe as it has been for Iceland,⁸ and Icelandic romance has as yet been little integrated into wider thinking about European romance.⁹ Further translations of Icelandic romances will, we hope, help to change this.

Our introduction to the saga does not, for the most part, tackle its literary or cultural interpretation: this we prefer to leave to readers of the translation. Rather, we offer a context for reading the saga. We survey the

Gert Kreutzer and Herbet Wäckerlin eds. and trans., Diederichs: Munich 1998; *Isländische Antikensagas, Band I: Die Saga von den Trojanern, Die Saga von den britischen Königen; Die Saga von Alexander dem Grossen*, Stefanie Würth ed. and trans., Diederichs: Munich 1996.

⁶ See for a survey Marianne E. Kalinke and P. M. Mitchell, *Bibliography of Old Norse–Icelandic Romances* (Islandica 44), Cornell University Press: Ithaca 1985; *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, Agnete Loth ed. (Editiones Arnamagaeanae, series B, 20–24), 5 vols, Munksgaard: Copenhagen 1962–1965.

⁷ See for example Nicola McDonald, 'A Polemical Introduction', in Nicola McDonald ed., *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England: Essays in Popular Romance*, Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2004, 1–21, and the other essays in the same volume; Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy*, Columbia University Press: New York 2003.

⁸ See especially McDonald 2004.

⁹ For example, Scandinavian material is omitted—admittedly with explicit regret—from Roberta L. Krueger (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2000; see especially Roberta L. Krueger's 'Introduction', 1–9, at 8–9. For one of the exceptions, see Shaun F. D. Hughes, 'Klári saga as an Indigenous Romance', in Kirsten Wolf and Johanna Denzin (eds), *Romance and Love in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iceland: Essays in Honor of Marianne Kalinke* (Islandica 54), Cornell University Library: Ithaca, N.Y., 2008, 135–163, accessed from

<<http://cip.cornell.edu/DPubS?service=UI&version=1.0&verb=Display&handle=cul.isl/1242914143>>.

past work on it, and the core evidence for its literary milieu: evidence for its date; what other texts it influenced; and what texts it draws on.

Past work

Sigurðar saga fóts has received little scholarly attention, though like many Icelandic romances, it seems to have been popular throughout its history. It survives in a respectable number of manuscripts—forty-one—from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth.¹⁰ Their textual relationships and degree of variation is not yet known, but the dating distribution of those which can readily be assigned to a particular century is typical of Icelandic romances, with one manuscript from the fifteenth century, none from the sixteenth, seven from the seventeenth, ten from the eighteenth, thirteen from the nineteenth and one from the twentieth. The saga was versified as a set of *rímur* (*Sigurðar rímur fóts og Ásmundar Húnakonungs*) in the earlier fifteenth century, also gaining a half-stanza mention, probably in the sixteenth century and probably on the basis of the *rímur*, in the poem *Allra kapp kvæði*.¹¹ The first half was also versified as a Faroese ballad (*Ásmundur Aðalsson*), probably in the fifteenth or sixteenth century: this is attested in one of the earliest Faroese ballad collections, Jens Christian Svabo's, from 1781–1782, and widely thereafter.¹² The saga was the basis for three later *rímur*, composed by Gunnar Ólafsson (in 1758), Jón Hjaltalín (d. 1835), and Árni Sigurðsson (in 1827).¹³ Loth's 1963 edition of the saga in her *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*¹⁴ inspired the publication of a modernised text in the *Sunnudagsblað*, a supplement to the newspaper *Tíminn*,¹⁵ and shortly before the publication of this article the saga enjoyed the unusual distinction

¹⁰ Kalinke and Mitchell 1985, 111.

¹¹ *Rímnaqfn: Samling af de ældste islandske rimer*, Finnur Jónsson ed. (Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur, 35), 2 vols, Møller: Copenhagen 1905–1922, ii 288–325; Gustaf Cederschiöld, 'Allra kapp kvæði', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 1 (1883), 62–80, accessed from <<http://runeberg.org/anf/>>, at 63 (text, stanza 4) and 67 (date).

¹² *Føroya kvæði = Corpus carminum Færoensium*, Sv. Grundtvig and others ed. (Universitets-jubilæets danske samfunds skriftserie, 324, 332, 339, 341, 344, 347, 357, 368, 406, 420, 427, 438, 540, 559), 7 vols, Munksgaard: Copenhagen, 1941–2003, ii 47–67 (for a free-access version of the earliest text, see <<http://www.tjatsi.fo/?sprog=&side=fd91c8b4e5eb19a8e9c87f49d90672d3>>). On dating see Michael Chesnutt, 'Bevussrímur and Bevusar tættir: A Case Study of Icelandic Influence on Faroese Balladry', *Opuscula* 12 (2005) (= Bibliotheca Arnarnæana 44), 399–437, at 399–409.

¹³ Finnur Sigmundsson, *Rímnatal*, Rímnafélagið: Reykjavík, 1966, 423–24.

¹⁴ 'Sigurðar saga fóts', in Loth ed., *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, iii 231–250.

¹⁵ 'Sigurðar saga fóts', *Riddarasögur*, Bjarni Vilhjálmsson ed., 6 vols, Íslendingasagnaútgáfan: Reykjavík 1949–1951, vi 65–84; 'Sigurðar saga fóts', *Tíminn*, *Sunnudagsblað* (26 May 1968), 390–393, 406, accessed from <<http://timarit.is>>.

of giving its name to a modern “endurgerð” (“remake”) in the form of Bjarni Harðarson’s satirical novel *Sigurðar saga fóts: íslensk riddarasaga*.¹⁶

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars, when they mentioned *Sigurðar saga*, mostly commended it for being more like a *fornaldarsaga*—a legendary account of pre-Christian Scandinavia—than other Icelandic romances, then often referred to by the disparaging term *lygisögur* (“false sagas”).¹⁷ The names of the saga’s characters and its north-west European setting are more similar to the Viking world often depicted by *fornaldarsögur* than the African and eastern setting found in many romance sagas, and although the saga’s bridal quest is entirely consistent with Icelandic romance, it can also be connected with more traditional Scandinavian narratives in which two heroes fight over a bride. But this rather faint praise did not enthrall critical investigation, and the saga has generally made its way into scholarship only as a passing example of the fuzzy boundary between *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*.¹⁸

More recently, however, *Sigurðar saga* has gained a certain prominence as a case study of gendering in Icelandic romance, with detailed readings by Marianne E. Kalinke, Daniel Sävborg and Henric Bagerius.¹⁹ Like most Icelandic romances, it is a bridal-quest story; as in most Icelandic romances, the support of a fosterbrother is key to the hero winning the bride; and, as is often the case, the fosterbrothers start out as opponents before recognising, in battle, their mutual excellence and swearing fosterbrotherhood. Uniquely, however, the men who become fosterbrothers in *Sigurðar saga* begin by competing for the same bride (Signý): the eponymous Sigurðr fótr wins her only because Ásmundr, who has already won her affection and abducted her, gives him Signý in order to win her as

¹⁶ Bjarni Harðarson, *Sigurðar saga fóts: íslensk riddarasaga*, Selfoss: Sæmundur, 2010, quoting p. 4.

¹⁷ Knut Liestøl, ‘Det litterære grunnlaget for Sigurdar saga fóts ok Ásmundar húnakonung’, in *Sagn og folkeminne*, Norlis: Oslo 1941, 53–58, at 53 (repr. from *Festskrift til Halvdan Koht på sekstiårsdagen 7de juli 1933*, Aschehoug: Oslo 1933, 154–158); J. H. Jackson, ‘*Sigurthar saga fóts ok Ásmundar Húnakonungs*’, *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 46 (1931), 988–1006, at 988, with references.

¹⁸ E.g. Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ‘*Viktors saga ok Blávus*: Sources and Characteristics’, in Jónas Kristjánsson ed., *Viktors saga ok Blávus* (Riddarasögur 2), Handritastofnun Íslands: Reykjavík 1964, cix–ccix, at ccii; Kurt Schier, *Sagaliteratur* (Sammlung Metzler. Realienbücher für Germanisten. Literaturgeschichte 78), Metzler: Stuttgart 1970, 109.

¹⁹ Marianne E. Kalinke, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland* (Islandica 46), Cornell University Press: Ithaca, N.Y. 1990, 192–202; Daniel Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken: Erotik, känslor och berättarkonst i norrön litteratur* (Acta universitatis Upsalensis: historia litterarum 27), Uppsala Universitet: Uppsala 2007, 584–592; Henric Bagerius, *Mandom och mödom: Sexualitet, homosocialitet och aristokratisk identitet på det senmedeltida Island* (Avhandling från Institutionen för historiska studier), Göteborg Universitet: Göteborg 2009, accessed from <<http://hdl.handle.net/2077/20277>>.

a foster-brother.²⁰ Geraldine Barnes found this “inexplicable”, taking it as an example of “comic discrepancy in the accounts of kingly conduct”, the discrepancy lying between the wisdom explicitly ascribed to a king and the implicit folly of his actions. But as Kalinke, Sävborg and Bagerius have shown, Ásmundr’s decision can be read (instead or also) as demonstrating with unusual starkness the superior importance in much Icelandic romance of homosocial relationships over heterosexual ones.²¹ These recent discussions give *Sigurðar saga* a certain paradigmatic status, and provide a platform for future study.

Dating

Sigurðar saga is first attested in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Perg. Fol. 7. This vellum manuscript seems to have been written between about 1450 and 1475 in Vaðlaþing, a region in northern Iceland corresponding to the modern Eyjafjarðarsýsla; according to the manuscript’s most recent editor, Christopher Sanders, the likeliest specific location is the farm most recently known as Möðruvellir fram.²² How much older than its earliest manuscript the saga may be is hard to guess. On the one hand, it is salutary that the *Bibliography of Old Norse–Icelandic Romances* by Marianne E. Kalinke and P. M. Mitchell dates *Sigurðar saga fóts* and *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* by the standard phrase “composed in Iceland, presumably in the fourteenth century”,²³ when closer inspection of the chain of literary borrowing behind *Sigrgarðs saga* shows that it is probably mid-fifteenth-century.²⁴ On the other, Stefán Karlsson has provided examples of romances being dated on typological grounds to a time after their earliest manuscript witnesses.²⁵ Henry Goddard Leach, and more recently Rudolf Simek and Hermann Pálsson, situated the saga in the fourteenth century without further comment; on the grounds that it is similar to the *fornaldarsögur*, Stefán Einarsson dated it to

²⁰ Cf. Astrid van Nahl, *Originale Riddarasögur als Teil altnordischer Sagaliteratur* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, series 1, 447), Frankfurt am Main: Lang 1981, 49.

²¹ Geraldine Barnes, ‘Romance in Icelandic’, in Margaret Clunies Ross ed., *Old Icelandic Literature and Society* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 42), Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2000, pp. 266–286, at 280, 282.

²² Located around 65.559904, -18.168378°. Christopher Sanders (ed.), *Tales of Knights: Perg. fol. nr 7 in The Royal Library, Stockholm (AM 167 VIβ 4to, NKS 1265 IIc fol.)* (Manuscripta Nordica: Early Nordic Manuscripts in Digital Facsimile 1), Reitzel: Copenhagen 2000, 35, 41–52.

²³ Kalinke and Mitchell 1985, 97, 100.

²⁴ *The Story of Jonatas in Iceland*, Peter A. Jorgensen ed. (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi 45), Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi: Reykjavík 1997, clx–clxiv.

²⁵ Stefán Karlsson, ‘The Localisation and Dating of Medieval Icelandic Manuscripts’, *Saga-Book 25* (1999), 138–158, at 138.

the first half of the fourteenth century; Jürg Glauser, apparently for similar reasons, has suggested “um oder kurz nach 1300” (“in or shortly after 1300”); and these early datings seem also to have the recent approval of Bagerius.²⁶ Similarities to *fornaldarsögur* are, as we discuss below, undoubted, but this does not demand an early date for the text, and the assumptions of Jackson that it was from the fifteenth century, or Bjarni Vilhjálmsson that it was from around 1400, are not unreasonable.²⁷ As for place of composition, Stefán Einarsson suggested Oddi as a possibility, but as far as we are aware this is no more than a guess.²⁸ Future research on the manuscript tradition of the saga may afford hints as to its place of origin, but for now we must accept uncertainty.

A potentially important source of evidence for the date of *Sigurðar saga* is its intertextual relationships with other material. Although, as the discussion below shows, these do not much change the parameters for the date of the saga, they do shift the balance of probability towards the second half of the fourteenth century. The links between *Sigurðar saga* and its sources and successors are also worth exploring, however, because they are useful for far more than dating: they provide a reading context for the saga which can help us to judge what it must have meant to its composer and audiences. The intertextual relationships which we identify below are summarised as figure 1. It is, of course, hard always to be certain precisely how, or even whether, similar texts are connected—whether by a composer or scribe reading one text more or less concurrently with writing another; through their recollection of an oral performance of a written text; or through more nebulous paths of transmission. The most economical explanation, minimising the number of stages of transmission, is usually seen as the best, but need not actually be correct. We do our best to control for this below by identifying precise verbal parallels which would tend to indicate relatively direct textual influence.

²⁶ Henry Goddard Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 6), Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA 1921, 383; Rudolf Simek and Hermann Pálsson, *Lexikon der altnordischen Literatur: Die mittelalterliche Literatur Norwegens und Islands*, 2nd rev. edn (Kröners Taschenausgabe, 490), Kröner: Stuttgart 2007, s.v. *Sigurðar saga fóts*; Stefán Einarsson, *A History of Icelandic Literature*, Johns Hopkins Press: New York 1957, 163–164; Jürg Glauser, ‘Nachwort’, in *Isländische Märchensagas, Band I*, 398–436, at 402; Bagerius 2009, 221.

²⁷ Jackson 1931, 988.

²⁸ Located at 63.766667, -20.398889°; ‘Heimili (skólar) fornaldarsagna og riddarasagna’, *Skírnir* 140 (1966), 272.

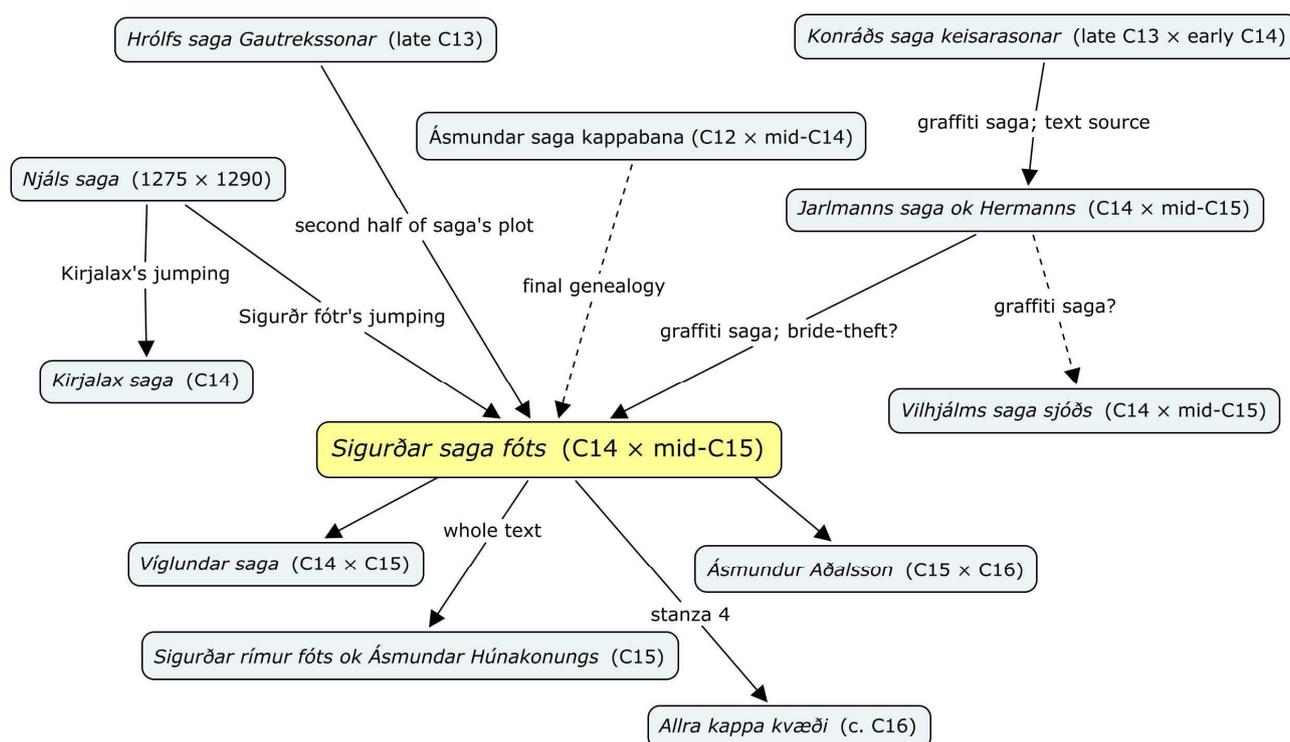


Figure 1: the intertextual connections of *Sigurðar saga* discussed in this introduction

The literary context of *Sigurðar saga fóts* (1): texts influenced by *Sigurðar saga*

As mentioned above, *Sigurðar saga* was the basis for *Sigurðar rímur fóts ok Ásmundar Húnakonungs*, which Finnur Jónsson dated to the first half of the fifteenth century: while it is theoretically possible that the saga is based on the *rímur*, the saga betrays no hints of transposition from verse, and this would in any case be surprising in a text attested this early.²⁹ Finnur did not explain his dating, but seems to have been right. The *rímur* are preserved in *Kollsbók*, dated by Ólafur Halldórsson to 1480–90.³⁰ There is reason to believe that *Sigurðar rímur* are not among the latest in the manuscript. *Ormars rímur* and *Ektors rímur* in particular have some innovative features not found in *Sigurðar rímur fóts*. The most prominent of these is full rhyme between *y*, *ý*, *ey* and, respectively, *i*, *í*, *ei*, made possible by a phonological merger which started to gain ground around 1450.³¹ The oldest preserved

²⁹ *Den oldnorske og oldislandske litteraturs historie*, 3 vols, Gad: Copenhagen 1894–1902, accessed from <<http://www.archive.org/details/denoldnorskeogo01jngoog>>, iii 54; Liestøl 1941, 53.

³⁰ *Kollsbók*, Ólafur Halldórsson ed., Reykjavík: Handritastofnun Íslands, 1968, xxxvj.

³¹ Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, *Um afkringingu á /y, ý, ey/ í íslensku*, Reykjavík: Málvísindastofnun Háskóla Íslands, 1994.

rímur are dated to the second half of the fourteenth century. There is, however, no reason to think that *Sigurðar rímur* belong to this group. They do not have the archaic feel of such works as *Sǫrla rímur* or *Friðþjófs rímur*. Furthermore, *Sigurðar rímur* show some features which are rare in the oldest *rímur*, including full-rhyme between *e* and *é* (three times). Loan-words such as *plaga* and *frygð* are also more indicative of the fifteenth than the fourteenth century. All things considered it seems that the most likely date of composition for *Sigurðar rímur fóts* is indeed the first half of the fifteenth century.

Sigurðar saga also seems to have influenced *Víglundar saga*: a striking similarity between the texts has been noted by Kalinke, Sävborg and, implicitly, Boberg.³² The connection is apparent in the most distinctive scene in *Sigurðar saga*, which falls in chapter 4. Ásmundr abducts Signý from the wedding-feast at which she is to marry Sigurðr, and this seems to have influenced chapter 6 of *Víglundar saga*.³³ In both texts, one man (Þorgrímr Eiríksson in *Víglundar saga*, Ásmundr Húnakonungr in *Sigurðar saga*) privately gains the affection of a girl, but, meanwhile, her father betrothes her to someone else (respectively, Ketill af Raumaríki and Sigurðr fótr). At the wedding feast, the first wooer arrives, and is not received very gladly; a little later, all the lights in the hall go out, and he abducts the bride. The abduction of women is frequent enough in sagas, but abduction from a wedding feast far less so, and it is more unusual again to see a sympathetic character doing the abducting, so the similarity between *Sigurðar saga* and *Víglundar saga* is significant.³⁴ There are undeniably plenty of differences between the accounts. Þorgrímr conducts his abduction alone and under his own identity whereas Ásmundr has the assistance of his right-hand man Óláfr and both are in disguise; in *Víglundar saga* there is no motivation for the failing of the lights, whereas in *Sigurðar saga* it is achieved by Óláfr whirling his enormous spear to produce a great wind. A direct connection between the texts, however, is supported by some verbal parallels. Marking

³² Marianne Kalinke, 'Víglundar saga: An Icelandic Bridal-Quest Romance', *Skáldskaparmál* 3 (1994), 119–143, at 126–127; Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, 586, n. 31; Inger M. Boberg, *Motif-Index of Early Icelandic Literature* (Bibliotheca Arnarnagana 27), Munksgaard: Copenhagen 1966, under R31 *Light extinguished and woman stolen*.

³³ *Kjalnesinga saga: Jökuls þátrr Búasonar, Víglundar saga, Króka-Refs saga, Þórðar saga hreðu, Finnþoga saga, Gunnars saga Keldugnúpsfífls*, Jóhannes Halldórsson ed. (Íslensk fornrit 24), Hið íslenska fornritafélag: Reykjavík 1959, pp. 61–116; 'Víglund's Saga', Marianne Kalinke trans., in *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, Viðar Hreinsson et al. ed., 5 vols, Leifur Eiríksson Publishing: Reykjavík, 1997, ii pp. 411–441.

³⁴ Cf. Boberg 1966, under K1371 *Bride-stealing*, K1371.4 *Lover in disguise abducts beloved*. Perhaps the best parallel for heroes abducting a bride comes in 'Saulus saga ok Nikanors', in Loth ed., *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, ii 1–91, chs. 21–22, at 51–55, with English paraphrase.

passages closely paralleled in *Víglundar saga* with **bold type**, *Sigurðar saga* reads:

Þá hljóðnuðu allir þeir, at inni váru, ok urðu ókátir, nema brúðrin brosti lítinn. **Svá var bjart í hallinni, at hvergi bar skugga á.** Sigurðr fótr bað skenkjarann renna í rós eina ok gefa komumönnum at drekka. Sá maðrinn, at fyrri kom í hallina, tók tveim hǫndum vigrina ok veifir svá hart ok tíðum, at þar af stóð svá mikill vindr, **at ǫll slokknuðu login, er í váru hallinni.** Var þá yfrit myrkt með ǫllu. Kǫlluðu konungarnir þá, at kveikja skyldi ljósin sem skjótast, segja nú, at brǫgð nokkur muni í vera. **Var þá fram hrundit borðunum ok upp hlaupit á báða bekkina.** Urðu þá hrundingar heldr harðar, svá at allt var í einni andrjá. **En er ljósin váru tendruð, sásk hvárgi komumaðrinn, en brúðrin var ǫll í burtu.**

Then everyone who was inside fell silent and their spirits fell, except that the bride smiled a little. **It was so bright in the hall that no shadows fell anywhere.** Sigurðr Foot asked the cupbearer to pour out a goblet and give it to the newcomers to drink. The man who had come first to the hall took his spear in both hands and swung it so much, and so hard, that it produced a great wind **so that all the flames** in the hall **died**, and everything was in total darkness. Then the kings called out for the lights to be lit as quickly as possible, saying that some sort of trick must be in train. **Then the tables were shoved forward and people leapt up on both sides of the hall.** Then rather violent blows began to fall on them, so that everything was in uproar. **And when the lights were relit, there was no visitor to be seen, and the bride had vanished.**

Víglundar saga gives “Svá váru mǫrg ljós í stofunni, at hvergi bar skugga á. Allir menn þekktu Þorgrím ok var hann þó mǫrgum enginn aufúsugestr” (“There were so many lights in the room that no shadows fell anywhere. Everyone recognised Þorgrím, and to many he was not a welcome guest”), which is followed by a passage of dialogue between Víglundr and Ketill, the groom. Then the saga says “Ok sem þeir hǫfðu þetta at tala bar svá við at öll ljósin slokknuðu í stofunni; var þá upphlaup mikit ok hrundningar. En er ljósit kom, var brúðrin horfin ok svá Þorgrím” (“and as they conducted this conversation, it happened that all the lights in the hall died; then there was a great uproar, and blows. And when the light returned, the bride had

disappeared, and likewise Þorgrímr").³⁵ Individually these parallels are not particularly striking—and *hvergi bar skugga á* is a fairly common phrase—but together they surely indicate direct influence of one text on another. Both sagas borrowed heavily from a range of other sagas,³⁶ but it would be surprising for the originator of the motif of the failing lights to neglect to provide a motivation, so it is likely that it is *Víglundar saga* which did the borrowing. Dating this saga is, unfortunately, also difficult: its earliest manuscript, Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, AM 551a 4^{to}, is from the end of the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth.³⁷

The parallels between *Sigurðar saga* and *Víglundar saga* are more striking than the ones they share with a scene in *Reykðæla saga* which Liestøl adduced as a parallel: here one Steinfinnr engineers the abduction of a bride when she is on her way from her bower to her wedding by first bringing down a magical darkness and then blowing her to her abductor with a gust of wind.³⁸ I have detected no close verbal parallels between *Reykðæla saga* and either *Sigurðar saga* or *Víglundar saga* and although intertextual influence is possible, it is not assured.³⁹

The literary context of *Sigurðar saga fóts* (2): texts drawn on by *Sigurðar saga*

The intertextual connection which provides the clearest *terminus post quem* for *Sigurðar saga* arises from its eponymous hero's epithet: Sigurðr fótr "var svá snarr ok fóthvatr, at hann hljóp eigi seinna né lægra í lopt upp ok á bak aftr á ǫðrum foeti en hinir fræknustu menn á báðum fótum framlangt". This is probably the hardest sentence in the saga to translate. It is possible that *seinna né lægra*, literally 'slower nor lower', is actually to be understood as a tautologous doublet simply meaning 'lower'. *Framlangr* only occurs a few times in Old Norse; neither Zoega nor Cleasby and Vigfusson cite it, while Fritzner guessed that it meant "helt igjennem" ("right through")—but here it

³⁵ *Kjalnesinga saga*, ed. Jóhannes Halldórsson, 73.

³⁶ *Kjalnesinga saga*, ed. Jóhannes Halldórsson, xxv–xxxii; cf. Kalinke 1994, 120 n. 7.

³⁷ *Kjalnesinga saga*, ed. Jóhannes Halldórsson, xxxi–xxxii; *Handrit.is*, at <http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0551a>.

³⁸ Liestøl 1941, 57.

³⁹ Under R31 *Light extinguished and woman stolen*, Boberg (1966) also listed *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar* ch. 25 as containing the motif, citing *Fornaldar Sögur Norðrlanda*, C. C. Rafn ed., Copenhagen: n. pub., 1829–1830 (available at <http://books.google.com/books?id=BmkJAAAAQAAJ>), ii 457, but we cannot find it.

surely means ‘forwards’.⁴⁰ And it is hard to guess quite what is meant by *á bak aftr*—*á bak* basically means ‘backwards’; the rare collocation *bak aftr* can mean the same, but we should perhaps understand ‘backwards again’.⁴¹ Is Sigurðr envisaged to be doing a backflip, or turning to face the other direction, or something else? The translation we offer below—probably with less ambiguity than it deserves—says that he “was so quick and nimble-footed that he neither leapt up more slowly nor lower into the air, landing backwards on only one foot, than the most valiant people on both feet forwards”. Whatever the correct understanding, however, the image is distinctive, and, given its prominence, suspiciously irrelevant to the action of the saga—the latter point emphasised by the omission of the explanation, albeit not the epithet, from both the medieval *rímur* and the Faroese ballads. It seems likely to have been inspired by another text, therefore. Kalinke suggested the portrait of Gunnarr Hámundarson in chapter 19 of *Njáls saga* as the source.⁴² Including in square brackets a relevant reading from MS O from Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s textual apparatus: “hann hljóp meir en hæð sína [í loft upp] með öllum herklæðum, ok eigi skemmra aptr en fram fyrir sik” (“he jumped higher than his own height [into the air], in all his wargear, and no less distance backwards than forwards”).⁴³ *Kirjalax saga* also borrowed this phrase from *Njáls saga*, saying of the eponymous hero that “hann hljóp tólf álna áfram ok eigi skemra á bak aftr” (“he jumped twelve ells forward, and no less distance backwards”), but the phrasing in *Sigurðar saga* seems to be closer to *Njáls saga*.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the line in *Njáls saga* does not much

⁴⁰ Johan Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog*, 4 vols, Den norske forlagsforening: Kristiania; Universitetsforlaget: Oslo, 1886–1972, accessed from <http://www.edd.uio.no/perl/search/search.cgi?appid=86&tabid=1275>, s.v. *framlangt*; Geir T. Zoëga, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910, accessed from <http://norse.ulver.com/dct/zoega/>; Richard Cleasby and Gudbrand Vigfusson, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, 2nd edn William A. Craigie, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957; cf. the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* citations at <http://dataonp.hum.ku.dk/>, s.v. *framlangr*.

⁴¹ *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose/Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog*, [Arnarnagnæan Commission/Arnarnagnæanske kommission], Copenhagen, 1983–, accessed from <http://dataonp.hum.ku.dk/>, s.v. *bak*.

⁴² Kalinke 1990, 193 n. 43.

⁴³ *Brennu-Njáls saga*, Einar Ól. Sveinsson ed. (Íslenzk fornrit 12), Hið íslenzka fornritafélag: Reykjavík 1954, 53; for one of the many translations see ‘Njal’s Saga’, Robert Cook trans., in *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, Viðar Hreinsson et al. (eds), 5 vols, Leifur Eiríksson Publishing: Reykjavík, 1997, iii 1–220.

⁴⁴ Normalised from *Kirjalax saga*, Kr. Kålund ed. (Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur 43), Møller: Copenhagen 1917, 14 (linked with *Njáls saga* in n. 1). For the connection with *Njáls saga*, cf. Robert Cook, ‘*Kirjalax saga*: A Bookish Romance’, in Régis Boyer ed. *Les Sagas de Chevaliers (Riddarasögur): Actes de la V^e Conférence Internationale sur les Sagas présentés par Régis Boyer (Toulon. Juillet 1982)* (Série civilisations 10), Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne: Toulon 1985, 303–326, at 307). The saga has been translated by Alenka Divjak, *Studies in the Traditions of Kirjalax saga*, Institut Novije revije, zavod za humanistiko: Ljubljana, 2009, 297–352.

elucidate the precise meaning of its reflex in *Sigurðar saga*, but *Njáls saga* can at least be dated. It seems to have been composed between about 1275 and 1290, and *Sigurðar saga* would therefore post-date this.⁴⁵

A later *terminus post quem*, however, is made probable by the opening of *Sigurðar saga*: “þat er upphaf einnar lítillar sögu, þeiri er skrifuð fannsk á steinveggnum í Kolni, at Knútr hefir konungr heitit, sá er réð fyrir Sjólfundum” (“it is the beginning of a certain short saga, which was found written on the stone wall in Cologne, that there was a king called Knútr who ruled over Zeeland”). This places it among what Barnes termed the “graffiti sagas”, which claim to have been found written on “steinvegginum” (‘the stone wall’): *Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns* (the stone wall in Lisbon, localised by the saga to France) and *Vilhjálmss saga sjóðs* (the stone wall in Babylon); alongside, more ambiguously, *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, which was allegedly found “skrifaða á einu stræti”, “written in (or conceivably on) a street”.⁴⁶ It is worth noting that the sagas which talk about walls specify *the* stone wall rather than *a* stone wall, so presumably we are to understand this to mean the city wall. *Konráðs saga* has the securest claim to an early date, being attested already in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Perg. 7 4^{to}, from the first half—probably the first quarter—of the fourteenth century (as well as in Perg. fol. 7, the earliest manuscript of *Sigurðar saga*).⁴⁷ *Jarlmanns saga* looks from its plot to be a response to *Konráðs saga*.⁴⁸ It is first attested in AM 556 b 4^{to}, from the last quarter of the fifteenth century.⁴⁹ A different redaction, first attested in the sixteenth-century AM 529 4^{to} and AM 167 fol., styles the characters of *Jarlmanns saga* as the ancestors of those in *Konráðs saga*. Previous commentators have taken this as evidence that *Jarlmanns saga* drew originally on *Konráðs saga*, but the AM 529 redaction seems likely to be the later one (it makes no mention of the saga being found on a wall, for example), so the mention of Konráðr seems to be a later addition—indeed,

⁴⁵ *Brennu-Njáls saga*, Einar Ól. Sveinsson ed., lxxv–lxxxiv.

⁴⁶ Barnes, ‘Romance in Icelandic’, 271; cf. Geraldine Barnes, ‘Travel and *translatio studii* in the Icelandic Riddarasögur’, in Vera Johanterwage and Stephanie Würth eds., *Übersetzen im skandinavischen Mittelalter* (Studia medievalia septentrionalia, 14), Fassbaender: Vienna 2007, pp. 123–139, at 127–30. For the texts themselves, see ‘Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns’, in Loth ed., *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, iii 1–66 at 3; ‘Vilhjálmss saga sjóðs’ in the same edition, iv 1–136 at 3; *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, Otto J. Zitzelsberger ed. (American University Studies, Series 1, Germanic Languages and Literature 63) Lang: New York, 1987, 123.

⁴⁷ *Handrit.is*, at <<http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/da/AM04-0580>>.

⁴⁸ Kalinke 1990, 169–177; Nahl, *Originale Riddarasögur*, 26, 137–38; Paul Bibire, ‘From Riddarasaga to Lygisaga: The Norse Response to Romance’, in Boyer ed. *Les Sagas de Chevaliers*, 55–74, at 68.

⁴⁹ ‘Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns’, Loth (ed.), and, on AM 556a/b 4^{to} itself, *Harðar saga*, Sture Hast ed. (Editiones Arnamagæanæ, series A, 6), Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1960, 15–88; cf. *Handrit.is*, at <<http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0556b>>; cf. the entry for AM 556a 4^{to}, of which it was originally a part: <<http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0556a>>.

Konráðs saga follows *Jarlmanns saga* in AM 529 4^{to}.⁵⁰ Still, *Jarlmanns saga*'s dependence on *Konráðs saga* nevertheless seems likely, its version of the wall-as-source appearing as:

<M>Eistare Uirgilius hefer samansett marga fræde til skemtanar maunnum j bok þeirre er Saxafræde heiter. Enn sǫgu þæ sem nu munu uær byria fann hann skrifada æ steinuegginum borgar þeirrar er Licibon heiter j Franz

Master Virgilius has composed many learned texts for people's enjoyment in that book which is called *Saxafræði*. But the saga which we will now begin, he found written on the stone wall in that city which is called *Licibon*, in France.

The wall-as-source motif in *Vilhjálms saga* is too similar to that in *Jarlmanns saga* to be an independent reflex of *Konráðs saga*:

SAGA þessi hefzt fyst j Englandi og fer sidan ut til Saxlandz og þa til Gri<ck>landz og þui næst uestur j Affrika allt ut under solarsetRit og þadan j sudrhalfu heimsins til hinnar miklu borgar Ninive. og þadan ut at heims enda til hinna miklu fialla Kakausi. þessi saga var tekin af steinuegginum j Babbilon hjnni miklu. og meistari Humerus hefer samsett hana

This saga begins initially in England, and proceeds thereafter to Germany; and then to Byzantium; and then west to Africa, right out under the setting sun; and from there into the southern part of the world, to the great city of Ninive; and from there to the end of the world, to the great mountains of the Caucasus. This saga was taken from the stone wall in Babylon the Great, and Master Homer has composed it.

Given the other hints at a direct connection between *Konráðs saga* and *Jarlmanns saga*, it is most economical to assume that *Vilhjálms saga*, first

⁵⁰ *Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns i yngre handskrifters redaktion*, Hugo Rydberg ed., Møller: Copenhagen 1917, i-11 (MS dates) and 44 (text); *Handrit.is*, at <<http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0529>>.

attested in AM 343a 4^{to} (third quarter of the fifteenth century), is dependent on *Jarlmanns saga*—as I have assumed in figure 1.⁵¹

As this analysis implies, *Sigurðar saga* is unlikely to be at the head of the ‘graffiti saga’ tradition; it would in any case be unlikely for the originator of the motif to have dropped such an outlandish claim as baldly into his text as did the writer behind *Sigurðar saga*. The ostentatiously learned and arcane—and, in the case of *Vilhjálmss saga*, self-confessedly implausible—openings of *Jarlmanns saga* and *Vilhjálmss saga* accommodate it much more comfortably. For the motif as it appears in *Sigurðar saga* to have been viable, it must already have been familiar from one of these two sagas. In opting for Cologne as the place of origin for the saga, *Sigurðar saga* chooses a city consonant with its setting, which is Ireland and ‘the North Sea coast from Denmark to Brittany’, though the choice also chimes with the genuine Low German affiliations of a number of Icelandic sagas (no Icelandic sagas, by contrast, are likely to have been based on texts from Lisbon or Babylon).⁵² Of *Jarlmanns saga* and *Vilhjálmss saga*, *Jarlmanns saga* is the more similar to *Sigurðar saga* in theme, and it contains some details which are reminiscent of the first half of *Sigurðar saga*. Both sagas open their initial bridal quests with a hero’s right-hand man explaining that all the hero’s honour lacks is a suitable wife (*Jarlmanns saga* ch. 2 pp. 6–7; *Sigurðar saga* ch 2). This is admittedly not a very distinctive motif—indeed it also appears near the start of *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar* (ch. 6), on which *Sigurðar saga* definitely drew—but *Jarlmanns saga* also involves a magical abduction from a bridal feast.⁵³ The episode is undeniably quite different from Ásmundr’s abduction of Signý in *Sigurðar saga*: the abductors are indubitably villains, sent by King Rudent of Pampilonia to abduct Princess Ríkilát from her wedding to the

⁵¹ This would fit well with Einar Ól. Sveinsson’s view that *Vilhjálmss saga* borrowed one of the characters’ names, *Fulgida*, from *Viktors saga ok Blávus*, which by Jorgensen’s reckoning was composed around 1440—though, as Jorgensen pointed out, the borrowing could have gone the other way. Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1964, clvi; *The Story of Jónatas*, Jorgensen ed., clx, clxiii–clxv. Admittedly the E-text of *Konráðs saga* (first attested in the early fifteenth-century Stockholm, Royal Library, Perg. 6 4to) mentions Babylon (as the source of a treasured elephant-leg which, at the end of the saga, Konráðr has engraved), which could suggest that *Konráðs saga* was a direct source for *Vilhjálmss saga*; but conversely the E-text does not mention the saga being found ‘á einu stræti’: *Konráðs saga*, Zitzelsberger ed., 173. For dating of the earliest manuscript of *Vilhjálmss saga*, see *Handrit.is*, at <http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0343>.

⁵² Jackson 1931, 95–97 at 97; on Low German affiliations see for example Hughes 2008, 144–146; cf. Marianne Kalinke, ‘Clári saga: A Case of Low German Infiltration’, *Scripta Islandica: Isländska sällskapets årbok* 59 (2008), 5–25.

⁵³ ‘Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar’, in *Fornaldarsögur norðurlanda*, Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds., 3 vols, Bókaútgáfan Forni: Reykjavík 1943–44, iii 45–151, at 58–59; *Hrolf Gautreksson: A Viking Romance*, Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards trans, Southside: Edinburgh 1972.

hero King Hermann.⁵⁴ The villains build the hall for the wedding and provide the drink so that everyone gets drunk—or, in the phrasing of AM 529 4^{to}, “at af taufrum þeirra fellur huer madur nidur sofinn i sinu rumi” (“so that, through their magic, each person fell down asleep in their place”).⁵⁵ When everyone wakes up the next day, the bride is gone and the hall-floor has broken apart, leaving a coal-black pool in its place.⁵⁶ Still, although similar only in outline, this abduction of a bride from a feast by magical means might have been an inspiration for the abduction of Signý by Ásmundr and Óláfr in *Sigurðar saga*.⁵⁷ It seems most likely, then, that *Sigurðar saga* drew material from *Jarlmanns saga*; in terms of dating, this would hint at a *terminus post quem* for *Sigurðar saga* around the mid-fourteenth century—late enough for *Konráðs saga* and then *Jarlmanns saga* to have been composed.

Dating *Sigurðar saga* after the beginning of the fourteenth century fits with some other hints. In 1931 Jackson compared the saga with a broad sweep of Germanic-language texts about bridal quests and the abduction of women, but Knut Liestøl proceeded in 1933 to identify two specific sources: *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar* and *Ásmundar saga kappabana*.⁵⁸ A connection of some kind with *Ásmundar saga* is demonstrated by the genealogical conclusion of *Sigurðar saga*.⁵⁹ In *Sigurðar saga*, Ásmundr Húnakappi has a son Hrólfr, who begets the sons Ásmundr and Hildibrandr Húnakappi (ch. 9). In *Ásmundar saga*, King Hildibrandr of Húnaþing has a son called Helgi, who in turn has a son, Hildibrandr Húnakappi, by Hildir, daughter of the king of the Swedes (ch. 2). In a subsequent marriage, she then has a son

⁵⁴ It may have a textual connection with the ‘master builder’ tale attested in *Snorra Edda, Eyrbyggja saga* and *Heiðarvíga saga*: Kalinke 1990, 166–79.

⁵⁵ *Jarlmanns saga*, Rydberg ed., 26; cf. ‘*Jarlmanns saga*’, Loth ed., 38.

⁵⁶ ‘*Jarlmanns saga*’, Loth ed., 39.

⁵⁷ It is perhaps suggestive that, in a passage of the shorter text edited by Rydberg which is not paralleled in Loth’s edition, the messengers who seek the hand of Hermann’s sister for their king Ermánus (Romanus in Loth’s edition), the people of Svíþjóð hin kalda are said to be ‘suo fliott-fætir, at þeir sigra mio-hunda raas’ (‘so fleet-footed that they won against greyhounds in a race’; *Jarlmanns saga*, Rydberg ed., ch. 9, 11). This recalls Sigurðr’s own fleet-footedness and if it existed in a version known to the author of *Sigurðar saga*, it might have encouraged the adoption of the portrayal of Gunnar’s athleticism from *Njáls saga*.

⁵⁸ ‘Det litterære grunnlaget’; cf. Kalinke 1990, 197–98; Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, 592. Liestøl identified numerous other parallels for specific aspects of the saga, particularly the characters’ names, but he offered, and I have found, no strong evidence for direct influence of these on *Sigurðar saga*.

⁵⁹ *Fornaldarsögur norðurlanda*, Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds., 3 vols, Bókauþgáfan Forni: Reykjavík 1943–1944, ii 287–308; I am not aware of an English translation, but a German translation is available: ‘Die Saga von Asmund Kappabani’, in Ulrike Strerath-Bolz ed. and trans. *Isländische Vorzeitsagas, Band I: Die Saga von Asmund Kappabani, Die Saga von den Völsungen, Die Saga von Ragnar Lodbrok, Die Saga von König Half und seinen Männern, Die Saga von Örvar-Odd, Die Saga von An Bogsveigir*, Diederichs: Munich 1997, 17–35.

called *Ásmundr kappabani* (ch. 3). Both sagas, therefore, tell of (half-)brothers called *Ásmundr* and *Hildibrandr Húnakappi*. It does not seem to be the case that *Sigurðar saga* is trying to claim actually to be a prequel to *Ásmundar saga* (as the AM 529 4^{to} version of *Jarlmanns saga* claims to be a prequel to *Konráðs saga*), because the stated dynasties do not match; but given the rarity of the name *Hildibrandr*, and the distinctiveness of the epithet *Húnakappi*, it seems unlikely that two brothers would be identical to those of *Ásmundar saga* by coincidence. *Ásmundar saga* draws, however tenuously, on rather ancient narrative material, most famously attested in the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*, but also well paralleled by Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* from the early thirteenth century and the Faroese *Sniolvs kvæði*, first attested in the eighteenth but possibly representing an independent branch of the tradition.⁶⁰ As Liestøl implied, this makes it possible to argue, that the mention of *Hildibrandr* and *Ásmundr* in *Sigurðar saga* derives from oral traditions rather than directly from *Ásmundar saga*. But if a textual connection is involved, *Ásmundar saga* must be the lender, not the borrower, given that it is more clearly rooted in early traditions. Liestøl saw the connections between the sagas running deeper, essentially because both tell a story of two suitors competing for the same bride, but the similarities he adduced are not particularly striking. Still, *Ásmundar saga* provides one clear point of comparison for the very different bridal quest in *Sigurðar saga*. The earliest of the two surviving manuscripts of *Ásmundar saga* is Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Perg. 7 4^{to}, from the first half of the fourteenth century, but the saga could of course be older.⁶¹

Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar is also first attested in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Perg. 7 4^{to}; it was probably composed in the late thirteenth century, and its links with *Sigurðar saga* clearly do run deep. As Kalinke put it, "it turns out that the considerable creativity of the author of *Sigurðar saga* is limited to the first half of the narrative, for the second part is an adaptation of the fourth bridal quest in *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*".⁶² This part of *Hrólfs saga* was obviously appealing, since it is also this which was

⁶⁰ E. F. Halvorsen, *On the Sources of the Ásmundarsaga kappabana* (Studia Norvegica, 5) no pub.: Oslo 1951; Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir-Yershova, 'Hildibrandr húnakappi and Ásmundr kappabani in Icelandic sagas and Faroese ballads', in Agneta Ney, Henrik Williams and Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist (eds), 'Á austrvega'. *Saga and East Scandinavia: Preprint Papers of The 14th International Saga Conference. Uppsala 9th–15th August 2009* (Institutionen för humaniora och samhällsvetenskaps skriftserie/Papers from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences 14) 2 vols, University of Gävle: Gävle, 2009, ii 1064–71, at <<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hig:diva-4837>>.

⁶¹ Halvorsen 1951, 3–4.

⁶² Kalinke 1990, 197–196.

versified as *Hrólfs rímur Gautrekssonar*.⁶³ The shared episodes come after the eponymous hero has already married. In each case, the hero's foster-brother Ásmundr decides to marry the daughter of King Hrólfr of Ireland, who is noted for his magical powers (*Sigurðar saga* ch. 7; *Hrólfs saga* ch. 21)—though the magical powers are only relevant to the story in *Hrólfs saga*, where they enable Hrólfr of Ireland to foresee Ásmundr's arrival and to make his army appear smaller than it is (ch. 29), which is one of several hints that *Hrólfs saga* is the basis for *Sigurðar saga* rather than the other way around. In both stories, the wooer is defeated and thrown into a dungeon (*Sigurðar saga* ch. 8; *Hrólfs saga* chs 29–30). Meanwhile, the wife of the saga's eponymous hero realises what must be going on through prophetic dreaming (*Sigurðar saga* ch. 8; *Hrólfs saga* ch. 28) and sends a rescue party. In *Hrólfs saga*, Hrólfr Gautreksson himself was part of the wooing party, and the rescue party comprises his wife and other (foster-)brothers (chs 28, 31); in *Sigurðar saga*, Sigurðr was not part of the wooing party and comes to the rescue himself (ch. 8). The main party of rescuers arrive the day after the wooer was imprisoned, by which time the daughter of the Irish king has rescued the wooer and is enjoying his company in her bower (*Sigurðar saga* ch. 8; *Hrólfs saga* chs 32–33). The rescuers defeat the Irish king, but spare his life for his daughter's sake, and she marries Ásmundr (*Sigurðar saga* ch. 9; *Hrólfs saga* chs 33–35). As this exposition shows, Kalinke's inference of a textual connection is surely correct. Her implicit criticism of the lack of originality in *Sigurðar saga* is valid. The prophetic dream and its exposition in chapter 8, for example, are spectacularly prosaic; characterisation and motivation are more fully depicted in *Hrólfs saga*, supported by the rather deft use of delaying devices to build suspense. Nor need these criticisms be dismissed merely as modern ones: it is perhaps telling that the Faroese ballad *Ásmundur Aðalsson* adapts *Sigurðar saga* only as far as Sigurðr's marriage to Signý. Even so, *Sigurðar saga* gives us a valuable view of what one Icelander made of *Hrólfs saga*, and how he chose to maintain or change the material he found.

The text and translation

Sigurðar saga fóts was first edited by J. H. Jackson in 1931, in a diplomatic form from the earliest manuscript, Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Perg.

⁶³ For this and the dating see Hans-Peter Naumann, 'Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar', in Philip Pulsiano ed., *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*, Garland: New York 1993, s.v.

fol. 7; another edition on similar principles but with reference to the very similar AM 510 4^{to} was published by Agnete Loth in 1963, with a detailed English paraphrase.⁶⁴ Jackson's text, with a few alternative readings from the similar text in Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands, ÍB 110 4^{to}, was the basis of a version in modernised spelling by Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, and Loth's of the modernised text in the *Sunnudagsblað* mentioned above.⁶⁵ To maximise the usefulness of our translation, we have presented it facing a normalised version of the text from Stockholm Perg. fol. 7. This is derived from Bjarni Vilhjálmsson's normalisation to modern Icelandic, and uses the spelling which he adopted. However, the readings of Stockholm Perg. fol. 7 have consistently been restored, through collation with Loth's edition and the *Sunnudagsblað* modernisation of that, making the normalised text given here essentially a best-text edition of Stockholm Perg. fol. 7, in Bjarni Vilhjálmsson's spelling system. In keeping with conventions in English-language scholarship, however, all quotations in this introduction, and name-forms in the translation, have been given in normalised Old Icelandic spelling.

The translation itself aims to be close enough to the original for ready comparison with the facing Old Icelandic text, while maintaining a reasonable degree of fluency and echoing some of the stylistic features of the original, such as its occasional barrages of alliterating adjectival doublets. Tense has, accordingly, been rendered according to English narrative conventions, avoiding the tense-switching of the original.

Conclusion

Sigurðar saga fóts, then, was probably composed between around the mid-fourteenth century (but possibly earlier in the century) and the mid-fifteenth. It responded to a number of texts, and could be read as engaging in a dialogue with them; a key part of its response was to explore the nature of foster-brotherhood by developing unusually extreme circumstances for the start of the foster-brothers' relationship. There is the prospect that the text is parodic—but also that it was meant to be taken 'straight'. We hope that the translation that follows will allow readers to judge for themselves.

⁶⁴ Jackson 1931; 'Sigurðar saga fóts', Loth (ed.).

⁶⁵ 'Sigurðar saga fóts', *Riddarasögur*, Bjarni Vilhjálmsson ed., 6 vols, Íslendingasagnaútgáfan: Reykjavík 1949–1951, vi 65–84; 'Sigurðar saga fóts', *Tíminn*, *Sunnudagsblað* (26 May 1968), 390–393, 406, accessed from <<http://timarit.is>>.

Text and translation

<p>Sigurðar saga fóts</p> <p>1. Það er upphaf einnar lítillar sögu, þeirrar er skrifuð fannst á steinveggnum í Kolni, að Knútur hefir konungur heitið, sá er réð fyrir Sjólöndum. Hann var ágætur konungur að vænleik og mannfjölda, heiðri og höfðingskap, hreysti og harðdrægni og að öllum þeim höfðingskap, sem fríða mátti einn heiðarlegan herra, og hniginn nokkuð í aldur þann tíma, er þessi ævintýr byrjast.</p>	<p>The Saga of Sigurður Foot</p> <p>1. It is the beginning of a certain short saga, which was found written on the stone wall in Cologne, that there was a king called Knútr who ruled over Zeeland. He was a noble king in looks and leadership, glory and governance, spirit and steadiness, and in all those chiefly accomplishments which can adorn an honourable lord, and he was somewhat advanced in years at the time that this adventure began.</p>
<p>Hann átti ágæta drottningu, dóttur konungsins af Flæmingjalandi, og átti við henni eina dóttur barna, hver er Signý hét. Hún var báði vitur og ráðvönd, fögur og fríð, kvint og kurteis, stolt og stillt vel, blíð og lítillát. Hún kunni og allar þær listir, sem kvenmanni til heyrði, svo að það var alsagt bæði í fornum sögum og nýjum, að engi kvenmaður hefir fegri fæðzt í norðurhálfunni heimsins og betur að sér um alla hluti og vel flesta mennt. Ágæt skemma var henni reist með miklum hagleik og fékostnaði. Voru þar margar vænar meyjar henni til þjónustu fengnar.</p>	<p>He had a noble queen, a daughter of the king of Flanders, and had with her one daughter, who was named Signý. She was both wise and honest, fair and fine, kind and courteous, proud and well composed, mild and modest. She knew, also, all the arts that a woman should, so that it was universally agreed, both in ancient stories and new, that no woman was ever born fairer in the northern region of the world, or wiser in all respects, or in more numerous accomplishments. An excellent bower was erected for her, with great skill and expense. Many beautiful girls were appointed to wait on her there.</p>
<p>Það var vani Knúts konungs að leggja í hernað hvert sumar og afla sér bæði fjár og frægðar, en sitja heima á vetrum með mikilli rausn og</p>	<p>It was King Knútr's custom to go raiding each summer and earn himself both fortune and fame, but to sit at home during the winters in great</p>

<p>fjölmenni. Bar enn og svo til eitt sumar, að Knútur konungur hélt í hernað með fjórtán skip og dreka hið fimtánda. Fór hann þá enn sem oftar vel í hernaði sínum.</p>	<p>splendour, with a large company. And so it also was a certain summer, when King Knútr went raiding with fourteen ships—and with a dragon-ship as the fifteenth. As often before, his raiding went well.</p>
<p>2. Ásmundur er konungur nefndur; hann réð fyrir Húnalandi, ungur og ókvæntur, ör og ágætur, vitur og vopndjarfur, ríkur og ráðvandur, frækn um allt og fullhugi hinn mesti. Hann hélt mikla hirð og merkilega.</p>	<p>2. There was a king named Ásmundr; he ruled over the land of the Huns. He was young and unmarried, just and generous, wise and bold in battle, princely and powerful, valiant in all things and the greatest of heroes. He maintained a large and impressive following.</p>
<p>Ólafur hét sá maður, er næstur gekk konunginum; hann kallaði Ásmundur skósvein sinn; hann var hraustur maður og harður til vopns, traustur og trúlyndur, hægur og hversdagsgæfur, dyggur og drenglundaður, ör og einarður og hollur í öllu sínum höfðingja.</p>	<p>There was a man called Óláfr who was second only to the king; Ásmundr declared him his chamberlain. He was a strong man and steady in battle, firm and faithful, gentle and generally quiet, trustworthy and brave-minded, ready and resolute, and loyal in all things to his lord.</p>
<p>Það var einn tíma, að Ásmundur konungur sat við drykkju og var allkátur, að hirðmenn töluðu um, að það skorti Ásmund konung mjög á sína sæmd, að hann hafði eigi fengið þá drottningu, er honum sómdi.</p>	<p>It happened one time, when King Ásmundr sat drinking and was very merry, that his men were discussing how it was much to the detriment of King Ásmundr's honour that he had not yet taken a queen befitting his status.</p>
<p>Konungur spurði, hvar þeir sæi honum þá konu, að hans sómi yxi við. Þá varð öllum staður á nema Ólafi einum. Hann mælti þá: 'Veit eg þá konu, að þinn heiður vex við, ef þú fær hana, en þverr í öngan stað.'</p> <p>'Hver er sú?' sagði Ásmundur. 'Hún heitir Signý,' sagði Ólafur,</p>	<p>The king asked where they might envisage finding him a wife through whom his honour might grow. Then everyone hesitated, except for Óláfr. He declared: 'I know the woman with whom your honour will increase, if you gain her, and in no way diminish.'</p> <p>'Who is she?' said Ásmundr. 'She is called Signý', said Óláfr,</p>

<p>‘og er dóttir Knúts konungs af Sjólöndum. Hana veit eg nú kvenkost beztan á Norðurlöndum.’</p> <p>Konungur mælti: ‘Þá skal þegar við búast og skipum fram hrinda.’</p>	<p>‘and she is the daughter of King Knútr of Zeeland. I know that she is the best choice out of any woman in the northern lands.’</p> <p>The king said, ‘Then let everything be prepared and the ships launched without delay.’</p>
<p>Þetta var gert innan lítils tíma. Stígur Ásmundur á skip með fríðu föruneyti, og sigla burt af Húnalandi, lægjandi sín segl eigi fyrr en í þeim höfnum, er lágu fyrir þeim höfuðstað, sem Knútur konungur hafði aðsetu í, kastandi akkerum, en skjótandi bryggjum, ganga síðan á land með fjóra menn og tuttugu og upp í staðinn og inn í þá skemmu, er konungsdóttir sat í. Og sem Ásmundur kom inn, heilsaði Signý honum hæversklega og öllum hans mönnum. Sezt Ásmundur niður hjá drotningu, og talast þau við lengi, og þar kemur, að Ásmundur hefir uppi orð sín og biður Signýjar sér til handa. En hún svarar svo: ‘Það er svo háttað, að Knútur konungur, faðir minn, er ekki heima í sínu landi, en eg vil hans ráðum fylgja. En það má vera, að hann gifti mig í þessi ferð, og vil eg eigi gera það til rógs við hann og þig, enda á faðir minn að ráða minni giftingu.’</p> <p>‘Viltu þá,’ sagði Ásmundur, ‘vísa mér frá með öllu?’</p> <p>‘Ekki hef eg þar ákveðin orð um’, segir hún, ‘því að eg sé, að mér er fullkostur í þér, en eg vil þó, að faðir minn ráði mínum hlut.’</p>	<p>This was done in a short time. Ásmundr embarked on the ship with a fine company, and they sailed away from the land of the Huns, not lowering their sails before they entered the harbours outside the capital city, where King Knútr had his residence; then, casting anchor and pushing out the gangplanks, they disembarked with twenty-four men, and proceeded up into the town and into the bower where the king’s daughter sat. And when Ásmundr came in, Signý greeted him and all his men courteously. Ásmundr sat down beside the princess, and they talked together for a long time, and in due course Ásmundr stated his case and requested the hand of Signý in marriage. But she answered thus: ‘It happens that King Knútr, my father, is not here in his kingdom, but I want to follow his wishes; and it might be that he will give me in marriage while on this journey. I do not want to cause trouble between him and you, since my father is entitled to decide on my marriage.’</p> <p>‘Do you want, then,’ said Ásmundr, ‘to reject me outright?’</p> <p>‘I have no decisive words about</p>

<p>Ásmundur stóð þá upp og mælti: 'Ekki mun þér duga dráttur sjá lengur við mig.'</p> <p>Gengur hann þar að, sem hún situr, og tekur í hönd Signýju og fastnar hana, en hún gerir hvorki að neita né játa. Ásmundur mælti þá: 'Nú skulu það allir mega fréttu, að eg skal þig með bardaga verja, hver sem þig vill fá, því að mig þykir sá sýnt vilja óvingast við mig. Ætla eg að sækja hingað brúðkaup að hausti.'</p> <p>Síðan gekk Ásmundur til skipa og sigldi heim til Húnalands.</p>	<p>that,' she said, 'because I see that you are an excellent match for me, but I nevertheless desire that my father should decide my dealings.'</p> <p>Then Ásmundur stood up and said 'This delaying won't do you any good any longer'.</p> <p>Then he went up to where she sat, and took Signý by the hand and betrothed her, and she did nothing either to refuse or to accept. Then Ásmundur said 'Now let everyone hear the news that I will protect you in pitched battle from whoever wants to get you, because that man would seem to me clearly to want me for his enemy. I intend to come here for the wedding in the autumn.'</p> <p>Afterwards, Ásmundur went to his ships and sailed home to the land of the Huns.</p>
<p>3. Sigurður hefir konungur heitið, sá er stýrði Vallandi. Hann var ungur maður og ókvæntur og hafði nýtekið við föðurleifð sinni eftir Hring konung föður sinn. Sigurður var ör konungur og ágætur, harður og hermaður mikill og svo frækinn maður til vopns, að fáir eða öngvir stóðust honum í bardögum eða einvígjum.</p>	<p>3. There was a king called Sigurður, who ruled France. He was a young and unmarried man and he had newly taken up his patrimony after his father King Hringr. Sigurður was a generous and noble king, stern and a great warrior, and a man so valiant with arms that few, or none, could stand against him either in battle or in single combat.</p>
<p>Þetta sama sumar, er nú var frá sagt, hélt Sigurður konungur í hernað. Stukku allir víkingar undan honum, þeir sem til hans fréttu, því að hann var harðla frægur af hernaði sínum og riddaraskap, því að það var sannsagt af Sigurði, að hann var</p>	<p>That same summer which was just mentioned, King Sigurður went out raiding. Any pirates who heard about him fled before him, because he was extremely famous for his raiding and his chivalry—for it was said truly of Sigurður that he was a man of greater</p>

<p>meiri íþróttamaður en nokkur annar honum samtíða. Hann var svo snar og fóthvatur, að hann hljóp eigi seinna né lægra í loft upp og á bak aftur á öðrum fæti en hinir fræknustu menn á báðum fótum framlengt. Af því var hann Sigurður fótur kallaður.</p>	<p>skill than any other at that time. He was so quick and nimble-footed that he neither leapt up more slowly nor lower into the air, landing backwards on only one foot, than the most valiant people on both feet forwards. Because of this he was called Sigurður Foot.</p>
<p>Það var einn góðan veðurdag, að Sigurður konungur sigldi að eyju nokkurri hálfum þriðja tug skipa. Þar lá fyrir Knútur konungur af Sjólöndum. Og er þeir fundust, voru þar blíðar kveðjur. Og er þeir höfðu spurzt almæltra tíðinda, hafði Sigurður uppi orð sín og bað Signýjar sér til handa. En Knútur svarar svo: 'Eigi sé eg, að hún megi fá rösklegra mann að öllu.' En hversu langt sem hér var um talað, þá var það ráðum ráðið, að Knútur konungur fastnaði Signýju dóttur sína Sigurði fót. Skyldi hann sækja brullaupið að hausti heim í Sjóland. Skildu þeir síðan með hinni mestu vináttu.</p>	<p>One fine day, King Sigurður sailed twenty-five ships towards a certain island. Knútr, King of Zeeland, was there. And when they met, they exchanged happy greetings, and when they had asked each other what news there was, Sigurður spoke up and requested Signý's hand in marriage. And Knútr replied thus: 'I see no way that she could get a braver husband.' And however long this was discussed, the decision was made that King Knútr should betrothe his daughter Signý to Sigurður Foot. He was to arrive for the wedding towards autumn, back in Zeeland. Afterwards, they parted with the greatest friendship. And when King Knútr came back to his kingdom, Signý welcomed him in a courtly manner, and told him what had happened there, and what had gone on between her and King Ásmundr. King Knútr said that he had given her to a much more valiant man. She asked who he might be. He said that it was King Sigurður Foot of France.</p>
<p>Og er Knútur konungur kom heim í ríki sitt, fagnaði Signý honum kurteislega og sagði honum, hvað þar hafði til borið og hversu farið hafði með þeim Ásmundi konungi. Knútur konungur sagðist hafa gift hana miklu röskvara manni. Hún spurði hver sá væri. Hann kvað það vera Sigurð konung fót af Vallandi.</p> <p>Signý svarar: 'Ágætur maður mun Sigurður konungur vera, en þó hefi eg ætlað að eiga Ásmund.'</p>	<p>Signý replied, 'King Sigurður is no doubt a noble man, but I have decided to marry Ásmundr.'</p>

<p>Pá reiddist konungur og mælti svo: 'Þóttú unnir Ásmundi af öllu hjarta, þá skal hann þó aldri þín njóta né þú hans.'</p> <p>Signý svarar þá: 'Þú munt ráða, faðir minn, orðum þínum, en auðna mun ráða, hvern mann eg á.'</p>	<p>Then the king grew angry and said 'Even if you love Ásmundr with all your heart, he will never get to enjoy you, nor you him.'</p> <p>Then Signý replied, 'You will control your words, father, but fate will control which man I marry.'</p>
<p>Skildu þau þá tal sitt. Líður sumarið framan til þess tíma, er Knútur konungur hafði ákveðið, að brullaupið skyldi vera. Kemur Sigurður fótur þá að nefndum degi, og var þegar búizt við virðulegri veizlu og brúðurin á bekk sett, og þó var það þvert í móti hennar vilja. Varð þó faðir hennar að ráða. Settust menn í sæti og tóku til drykkju og voru hinir kátustu.</p>	<p>With that they finished their conversation. The summer went on, until the time when Knútr had decided that the wedding should take place. Then Sigurðr Foot came, on the appointed day, and immediately an excellent feast was prepared and the bride placed on a bench, even though it was against her will—but her father was in charge. People sat down in their seats and began to drink, and were extremely cheerful.</p>
<p>Spurzt hafði þetta allt saman til Húnalands, og bjóst Ásmundur heiman við fjórða mann og tuttuga á einu skipi. Þar var Ólafur í ferð, og héldu til Sjólands og lendu í einn leynivog. Gengu þeir tveir á land, Ásmundur og Ólafur, og höfðu dularkufla yfir klæðum sínum. Ólafur hafði eina stóra vigur í hendi. Ekki er sagt af vopnum þeirra meira.</p>	<p>News of this had been heard all the way to the land of the Huns, and Ásmundr set out from home with twenty-three men in one ship; Óláfr was there on the journey, and they headed towards Zeeland and landed in a hidden creek. Ásmundr and Óláfr went up on land, and they had cloaks of disguise over their clothes. Óláfr had a great spear in his hand. Nothing more is said of their weapons.</p>
<p>4. Nú er þar til að taka, að Sigurður fótur var inni sitjandi með öllum sínum skara, en Knútur konungur sat á annan bekk með sinn skara. En brúðirnar voru á pallinn upp sitjandi hálfur fjórði tugur. Og er menn voru sem kátastir, lukust upp dyr hallarinnar, og gekk þar inn maður</p>	<p>4. The next thing to relate is that Sigurðr Foot was sitting indoors with his whole retinue, and King Knútr sat on the opposite bench with his retinue; but the maidens—thirty-five in all—were sitting up on the dais. And when everyone was at their merriest, the doors of the hall opened, and in</p>

furðulega stór og hafði mikla vigur í hendi. Öllum fannst mikið um vöxt þessa manns. Litlu síðar kom inn annar maður, og var sá sýnu meiri. Þá hljóðnuðu allir þeir, að inni voru, og urðu ókátir, nema brúðurin brosti lítinn. Svo var bjart í hallinni, að hvergi bar skugga á. Sigurður fótur bað skenkjarann renna í rós eina og gefa komumönnunum að drekka. Sá maðurinn, að fyrri kom í hallina, tók tveim höndum vigrina og veifaði svo hart og tíðum, að þar af stóð svo mikill vindur, að öll slokknuðu login, er í voru hallinni. Var þá yfrið myrkt með öllu. Kölluðu konungarnir þá, að kveikja skyldi ljósinn sem skjótast. Segja nú, að brögð nokkur muni í vera. Var þá fram hrundið borðunum og upp hlaupið á báða bekkina. Urðu þá hrundingar heldur harðar, svo að allt var í einni andrá. En er ljósinn voru tendruð, sást hvorgi komumaðurinn, en brúðurin var öll í burtu. Hvarvetna var spillt og brotið, það er borðbúnaði heyrði til. Var nú upp hlaupið og að brúðinni leitað millum fjalls og fjöru nær og fjarri, og fannst hún eigi því heldur. Þóttist brúðguminn nú heldur sakna vinar í stað, og varð þó svo búíð að vera. Vildi hann þar ekki lengur vera og sigldi þegar heim til Vallands og undi þó lítt við sína ferð.

walked an enormous man. He had a big spear in his hand. The size of this man seemed remarkable to everyone. A little later another man came in, and he was much bigger. Then everyone who was inside fell silent and their spirits fell, except that the bride smiled a little. It was so bright in the hall that no shadows fell anywhere. Sigurður Foot asked the cupbearer to pour out a goblet and give it to the newcomers to drink. The man who had come first to the hall took his spear in both hands and swung it so fast, and so hard, that it produced a great wind so that all the flames in the hall died, and everything was in total darkness. Then the kings called out for the lights to be lit as quickly as possible, saying that some sort of trick must be in train. Then the tables were shoved forward and people leapt up on both sides of the hall. Then rather violent blows began to fall on them, so that everything was in uproar. And when the lights were relit, neither visitor was to be seen, and the bride had vanished. Every part of the dinner service was smashed and broken. Then everyone jumped up and began searching for the bride far and wide, from crags to coast; but she was nowhere to be found. The bridegroom seemed now rather bereft, but that was how it ended up. He chose not to remain any longer, and sailed home to France straight away – and felt little satisfaction at his journey.

<p>5. En af Ásmundi og Ólafi er það að segja, að þeir koma heim til Húnalands með Signýju konungsdóttur og létu vel yfir sinni ferð. Litlu síðar sendir Ásmundur Ólaf skósvein sinn til Vallands með friðu föruneysi og svofelldum erindum, að hann skyldi bjóða Sigurði konungi fót Ásmundar vegna, sættir, í svo máta, að Ásmundur mundi unna Sigurði svo mikils fjár í gulli og brenndu silfri sem sjálfur hann vildi haft hafa, en Ásmundur ætti Signýju. En ef hann vildi eigi þenna kost, þá skyldi Sigurður eignast allt Húnaland, en Ásmundur þó Signýju sem áður. Vildi hann hvorigan þenna, þá skyldi Sigurður konungur gefa allt Valland, en eiga Signýju.</p> <p>Með þessum erindum fór Ólafur og kom fram í Vallandi, gangandi fyrir Sigurð konung og kvaddi hann kurteislega, með snjöllu máli fram flytjandi öll áðursögð erindi Ásmundar konungs, hverjum að Sigurður konungur tók þverlega svo talandi:</p>	<p>5. As for Ásmundr and Óláfr, they came home to the land of the Huns with Princess Signý and were pleased with their expedition. A little later, Ásmundr sent his chamberlain Óláfr to France with a fine company and these instructions: that he should offer peace to King Sigurðr Foot on Ásmundr's behalf on these terms: that Ásmundr would give Sigurðr as much wealth in gold and pure silver as he himself wanted to have, but that Ásmundr would marry Signý. And if he did not want this option, then Sigurðr could have the whole of the land of the Huns, but Ásmundr would, however, have Signý as before. Should he desire neither of these, then King Sigurðr would have to give up all of France to marry Signý.</p> <p>Óláfr went with these messages and arrived in France. He went before King Sigurðr and greeted him courteously with an eloquent speech setting out the entire aforementioned message from King Ásmundr—to which King Sigurðr responded uncompromisingly, speaking thus:</p>
<p>‘Engin þessi kostaboð Ásmundar vil eg þiggja. Er hann annars maklegur frá mér en sætta nokkurra.’</p> <p>‘Skulu og engar sættir fást,’ segir Ólafur, ‘þá talaði Ásmundur það, að hann mundi eigi gera brullaup til Signýjar, fyrr en þið þreyttuð með ykkur bardaga, hvor konunni skyldi ráða.’</p> <p>Sigurður konungur svarar: ‘Hvað</p>	<p>‘I do not wish to accept any of these kind offers from Ásmundr. He deserves something other than peace from me.’</p> <p>‘Should none of the settlements be accepted,’ said Óláfr, ‘then Ásmundr said that he would not hold a wedding to Signý before you fought a battle between you for who will have the woman.’</p>

<p>mundi ragur maður og huglaus þurfa að bjóða mér bardaga, því að eg veit Ásmund öngva karlmennsku sýnt hafa.'</p> <p>Ólafur svarar þá: 'Eigi þurfið þér að tala hér svo mikið um, Sigurður konungur, því að sönn raun verður hér á, að skammt flýr Ásmundur undan þér einum, þó að þið reynið með ykkur.'</p> <p>'Einarðlega flytur þú þitt mál,' sagði Sigurður konungur, 'og skal ekki gefa þér skuld á orðum þínum, en þetta mun reynt verða með okkur Ásmundi.'</p>	<p>King Sigurður answered: 'What would a pathetic coward want inviting me to a battle? I know Ásmundr has shown no manliness.'</p> <p>Then Óláfr replied: 'You don't have to talk so much about this, King Sigurður, because the true test will be in this: that Ásmundr won't flee far from you on your own, if you and he test each other out.'</p> <p>'You deliver your speech boldly,' said King Sigurður, 'and no punishment will come for your words, but this will be tested between me and Ásmundr.'</p>
<p>En er Ólafur sá, að hann orkaði öngu á við Sigurð konung, þá fór hann til skips og fór heim til Húnalands. Spurði Ásmundur hann að erindum eða hversu gengið hefði. Ólafur svarar: 'Það er þér skjótast að segja, að sætt varð engi og Sigurður konungur vildi konuna ekki missa fyrir þér. Mátti það og á finna í orðum hans, að hann þóttist mundu betur fær til bardaga en þú og svo betur búinn að öllum riddarlegum listum.'</p> <p>'Það mun eg,' segir Ásmundur, 'vera, þó við prófum það seinna.'</p>	<p>And when Óláfr saw that he was achieving nothing with King Sigurður, he went to the ship and travelled home to the land of the Huns. Ásmundr asked him about the mission and how it had gone. Óláfr replied: 'It's quick to tell you that: no settlement came about, and King Sigurður did not want to go without the lady because of you. It was also clear from his words that he thought he would prove superior to you in battle, and likewise was better versed in all chivalric arts'.</p> <p>'I think,' said Ásmundr, 'that would be me, though the two of us will prove it later.'</p>
<p>6. Litlu síðar safnar Sigurður fótur mönnum og heldur til Húnalands og í þær hafnir, sem lágu hið beinsta frammi fyrir konungshöllinni. En er Ásmundur verður vís, að Sigurður konungur er þar við land kominn</p>	<p>6. A little later Sigurður Foot gathered men and headed for the land of the Huns and into those harbours which lay the shortest distance from the king's hall. But when Ásmundr became aware that King Sigurður had</p>

<p>gengur hann til skipa með alla hirð sína, bjóðandi Sigurði fót öll hinu sömu boð, hverjum er Sigurður neitaði og ekki annað vildi en að berjast. En Ásmundur svarar:</p> <p>‘Þú skalt ráða því’, sagði hann, ‘enda þykir mér ráð,’ sagði hann, ‘að við berjumst tveir og gjaldi ekki aðrir saka minna eða ofurkapps okkars.’</p>	<p>landed there, he proceeded to the ships with all his retainers, making all the same offers to Sigurður Foot, each of which Sigurður refused, wanting nothing other than to fight; and Ásmundr replied, ‘You must decide that—although to me it seems a good idea,’ he said, ‘that only the two of us fight and that other men should not pay for my deeds or for our stubbornness.’</p>
<p>Sigurður kveðst þess og búinn. Gekk hann síðan á land, og tóku þeir til að berjast heldur harðlega. Var það langan tíma, að ekki mátti í millum sjá. Skárust nú mjög herklæði þeirra, þar til að þeir stóðu hlífarlausir upp. Tóku þá líkhamirnir við höggunum, og bárust sár á hvortveggja þeirra, þar til að Sigurður beiddi hvíldar, og það veitti Ásmundur honum og bauð honum þá enn sættir og fóstbræðralag, því að hann kveðst sjá, að blódrás mundi skjótt mæða hann.</p>	<p>Sigurður said that he was ready for it. Then he disembarked, and they began to fight rather fiercely. For a long time, it was impossible to tell who was doing better. Their armour grew very hacked up, until they were left standing unprotected. Then their bodies took the blows, and each of them bore wounds, until Sigurður asked for a rest and Ásmundr granted it to him, and once more offered him peace and foster-brotherhood, saying he could see that loss of blood would weary him quickly.</p>
<p>Sigurður kvað sín sár eigi meir blæða en hans, kveðst og öngvar sættir við hann gera vilja. Ásmundur bað hann þá upp standa og verja sig. ‘Hef eg leikið við þig í allan dag,’ sagði hann; ‘skal eg nú ekki lengur hlífa þér.’</p> <p>Sigurður sprettur þá upp og gerir svo harða hríð, að Ásmundur má ekki annað gera en verja langa stund. Þar kemur enn, að hann mæðist. Veitir Ásmundur honum þá harða atgöngu, svo að Sigurður konungur</p>	<p>Sigurður said that his own wounds were not bleeding any more than the Ásmundr’s, and he did not want to make any settlements with him. Then Ásmundr asked him to stand up and defend himself. ‘I have played with you the whole day’, he said; ‘I shall now no longer spare you.’</p> <p>Sigurður sprang up then and attacked so hard that Ásmundr could do nothing but defend for a long time. Then it happened again that Sigurður became tired. Ásmundr then attacked</p>

<p>féll af mæði og sárum. Sneri Ásmundur honum á sárin, svo að eigi skyldi inn blæða, en Ásmundur gekk sjálfur burt af vígvelli. Lét hann og taka Sigurð og færa heim í borgina og fá til lækna að græða hann. Svo voru og læknar til fengnir að græða Ásmund, og greru þeir báðir að heilu. Vildi Sigurður þá sigla heim til Vallands, en Ásmundur bauð honum hinar sömu sættir og fyrr, en Sigurður kvað ekki mundu af sættum verða. ‘En sé eg, að mér stendur eigi héðan af að berjast við þig og launa þér svo lífgjöfina, en veit eg sakir ónáttúru minnar, að eg mun þér aldri trúr verða, því að eg fyrirman öllum mönnum að njóta Signýjar nema mér einum.’</p> <p>‘Það má og vel verða,’ sagði Ásmundur, ‘því að enn er Signý óspillt af mér. Vil eg nú ok gefa þér Signýju, ef það er hennar vilji.’</p> <p>Sigurður varð þá glaður við og mælti: ‘Þetta er svo mikill drengskapur, að þú sýnir mér, að aldri mun fyrnast, meðan Húnaland er byggt.’</p>	<p>him fiercely, so that King Sigurðr fell from exhaustion and wounds. Ásmundr turned him wounds-downwards, so that he should not bleed inwards,⁶⁶ and walked unassisted from the battlefield. He also had people take Sigurðr and bring him back into the town, and bring healers to look after him. Healers were also brought to see to Ásmundr, and both men returned to health. Then Sigurðr wanted to sail home to France; Ásmundr offered him the same settlements as before, but Sigurðr said that they would not come to terms. ‘I see, however, that it won’t do me any good to fight against you any more, and that I should repay you for granting me my life; but I know that, because of my contrary nature, I will never prove true to you, because I take it badly that anyone should have the enjoyment of Signý, except me alone.’</p> <p>‘In fact, that is possible too,’ said Ásmundr, ‘because Signý is still unspoiled by me. I also wish now to give Signý to you, if that is her wish.’</p> <p>With that Sigurðr became glad, and said, ‘The great magnanimity that you show me never shall be forgotten while the land of the Huns is</p>
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⁶⁶ Although the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* gives only ‘bleed inwards (into the body)’ for *blæða inn* (s.v. *blóða*), citing this passage and *Vilmundar saga viðutan* (in Loth ed., *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, iv 137–201, at 148), the idea seems to be that inward bleeding is mortally dangerous. This is perhaps most memorably expressed in *Finnboga saga*, *Finnboga ríma* and *Vilmundar rímur* where a bear is killed by stabbing it and then holding its skin together to make sure that it bleeds in rather than out; for references and discussion see Ólafur Halldórsson, ‘Rímur af Finnboga ramma’, in *Grettisfærsla: Safn ritgerða eftir Ólaf Halldórsson, gefið út á sjötugsafmæli hans 18. apríl 1990* (Rit 38), Stofnun Árna Magnússonar: Reykjavík, 1990, 275–280 (repr. from *Gripla* 1 (1975)). Other occurrences of *blæða inn* are found in chapter 17 of *Njáls saga* (*Brennu-Njáls saga*, Einar Ól. Sveinsson ed., 50); and *Geðraunir* (*Rímnasafn*, Finnur Jónsson ed., ii 224).

<p>Fóru þeir þá og töluðu við Signýju, en hún svarar svo, að Ásmundur skal ráða, en ekki hefði hún ætlað að eiga annan en hann. Þetta fór og fram, að Ásmundur fastnaði Sigurði Signýju, og var þegar brullaup sett, og gekk það út vel og sköruglega. Sórust þeir í fóstbræðralag að þeirri veizlu, Ásmundur og Sigurður. Eftir það sigldi Sigurður konungur fótur með Signýju drottningu sína heim til Vallands, og skildust þeir Ásmundur með mikilli vináttu og kærleikum.</p>	<p>inhabited.’</p> <p>Then they went and talked to Signý, and she answered that Ásmundur should decide, but that she had not considered marrying any other but him. And this followed: that Ásmundur betrothed Signý to Sigurður, and straight away a wedding feast was arranged, and it went well, and was magnificent. Ásmundur and Sigurður swore fosterbrotherhood at the feast. After that King Sigurður Foot sailed home to France with Queen Signý, and his parting with Ásmundur was one of great friendship and affection.</p>
<p>7. Hrólfur er konungur nefndur; hann réð fyrir Írlandi; hann var ríkur konungur og metnaðargjarn, grimmur og harður og eigi allur þar sem hann var sénn. Hann átti þá dóttur, er Elína hét, allra kvenna kurteisust og vænst, þegar að Signýju leið. Þangað til Írlands fer Ásmundur bónorðsför og hefir tíu skip vel skipuð að vopnum og mönnum. En er hann ber þetta sitt erindi fram fyrir Hrólfr konung, tekur hann þunglega hans máli og segir ekki smákonungum gera að biðja dóttur sinnar. Vísar hann honum þá frá með hæðilegum orðum. Verður Ásmundur þá mjög reiður, svo að hann býður konungi til bardaga, en konungur kveðst þess búinn. Lætur hann þá verða safnað múg og margmenni og fær svo mikið ógrynni hers á þriggja náttu fresti, því að Ásmundur vildi gefa honum</p>	<p>7. There was a king named Hrólfr who ruled over Ireland. He was a powerful and ambitious king, fierce and stern, and he was not all that he seemed to be. He had a daughter called Elína, the most courtly and beautiful of all women with the exception of Signý. Ásmundur went there, to Ireland, to seek an engagement, taking with him ten ships equipped well with weapons and men. But when he brought his suit before King Hrólfr, the king took it badly and said it wouldn't do for minor kings to request his daughter. Then he sent him on his way with mocking words. Ásmundur then became very angry and invited the king to battle, and the king said that he was ready for it. He then commanded a host and multitude to be gathered and got hold of an incredibly huge army by the end of three nights, because this was the</p>

<p>svo löng frest til liðsafnaðar. Voru þá vel þrír um einn Ásmundar manna. Og að búnu liðinu fóru þeir til bardaga. Gekk Ásmundur harðla vel fram, svo að hann gekk átta sinnum í gegnum lið Írakonungs og ruddi svo breiða götu sem sverðið tók lengst frá honum, og svo margan mann drap hann, að seint er þeirra nöfn að skrá. Ólafur gekk og harðla vel fram og varð mörgum manni að skaða, svo að hann gekk fjórum sinnum í gegnum fylkingar landsmanna. En þó að margt félli af liði Hrólfs, þá komu þrír af landi ofan í staðinn, þar einn var drepinn, en sakir þessa mannfjölda og ofurliðs þá féll svo gersamlega allt lið af Ásmundi konungi, að þeir stóðu tveir einir upp. Voru þá bornir að þeim skildir og handteknir, og var Ásmundur áður einn saman tíu manna bani, en Ólafur fimm. Síðan var þeim kastað í djúpa og fúla dýflizu.</p>	<p>delay Ásmundr had wanted to give him for the gathering of troops. Then there were easily three men to every one of Ásmundr's. And when the army was ready they went to battle. Ásmundr attacked very well: he went right through the army of the Irish king eight times and cleared a path as broad as his sword-point reached, and he killed so many people that it would be a long job to list their names. Óláfr also attacked very well and harmed many a man: he went through the Irish army four times. But although many men of Hrólfr's army fell, whenever one was killed, three of his countrymen came in his place, and because of these superior numbers and overwhelming force, all of King Ásmundr's force was utterly destroyed, until only he and Óláfr were still standing. Then shields were borne against them and they were captured, but not before Ásmundr became, alone, the slayer of ten men, and Óláfr five. Afterwards they were thrown into a deep and horrible dungeon.</p>
<p>8. Nú er þar til að taka, að Sigurður fótur situr í Vallandi með mikilli mekt og virðingu og Signý hans kæra drottning. Unir hann harðla vel sínu ráði. Það var eina nátt, að drottning lét mjög lítt í svefni, svo að nálega brauzt hún um bæði á hnakka og hæli, svo konungurinn hafði í ráði að vekja hana, en þó fórst það fyrir, og þar kemur, að hún vaknar sjálf.</p>	<p>8. The next thing to tell is that Sigurður Foot and Signý his beloved queen lived in France with great power and honour. He was very contented with his lot. But one night, the queen was very restless in her sleep, so that she was writhing almost from head to toe. So the king thought about waking her, but nothing came of it; but afterwards she woke of her own accord. She was</p>

Var hún þá sveitt og móð og harðla rjóð að sjá í andliti. Konungurinn spurði, hvað hana hefði dreymt. En hún svarar svo:

‘Eg þóttumst sjá Ásmund Húnakonung sigla til Írlands. En er hann kom þangað, sýndist mér hlaupa í mót honum og hans liði einn ógurlegur apli með svo miklum vargaflokki, að eg sá hvergi út yfir, og sóttu allir að Ásmundi og hans liði, og með því þótti mér lyktast þessi ófriður, að vargarnir rifu til dauðs alla menn Ásmundar nema þá Ólaf tvo eina. En það sá eg seinast til þeirra, að þeir voru í valdi hans mikla aplans, og þá vaknaði eg.’

‘Hvað ætlar þú,’ sagði Sigurður konungur, ‘að draumur þessi hafi að þýða?’

‘Það vil eg segja þér,’ sagði Signý, ‘að Hrólfrur heitir konungur og ræður fyrir Írlandi. Hann á dóttur, er Elína heitir, kvenna kurteisust og best að sér um alla hluti, og er þar misskipt með þeim feðginum, því að konungur er bæði grimmur og fjölkunnugur, ódyggur og undirförufull. Það ætla eg, að Ásmundur hafi farið þangað bónorðsför, en Hrólfrur hafi synjað honum með hæðilegum orðum, en Ásmundur hafi það eigi þolað og hafi boðið konungi til bardaga, en hafi haft engan liðskost móti landsmúgnum og hafi svo verið fellt af honum allt lið hans, en hann sjálfur fangaður og Ólafur skósveinn hans. Nú vil eg, að þú bregðir við

then sweating and worn out and very red in the face. The king asked what she had dreamt. And she replied: ‘I thought I saw King Ásmundr of Húnaland, sailing to Ireland. But when he arrived, I thought I saw a terrible bull charge against him and his men, with such a huge pack of wolves that I couldn’t see beyond them, and they all attacked Ásmundr and his men. And it seemed to me that the fight ended with the wolves tearing all Ásmundr’s men to death, except for him and Óláfr alone. And the last I saw of them, they were in the power of that huge bull, and then I woke up.’

‘What do you suppose,’ said King Sigurðr, ‘that this dream would mean?’

‘I’d like to tell you,’ said Signý. ‘There is a king called Hrólfr who rules over Ireland. He has a daughter called Elína, the most courtly of women and best in all things, and in this there is a mismatch between her and her father, because the king is both fierce and cunning in witchcraft, and untrustworthy and underhanded. I think that Ásmundr has travelled there to ask for her hand, but Hrólfr denied him with mocking words, and that Ásmundr would not put up with this and challenged the king to battle. But he had no army compared with the natives, and therefore all his men have been slain around him, and he himself captured along with his chamberlain Óláfr. Now I want you to

<p>skjótt og safnir liði og farir til Írlands og nár út Ásmundi og veitir honum það lið, sem þú mátt mest og honum þykir sér bezt þarfast. Ertu skyldur að gera það allt, er þú mátt, Ásmundi til bata. Þykir mér þú nú muna eiga, hversu hann hefir við þig gert alla hluti, og dvel nú ekki.'</p>	<p>act swiftly—gather men and go to Ireland, release Ásmundr, and offer him all the assistance you can, and that seems most needed to him. You owe it to Ásmundr to do everything you can to save him. You ought to remember how he has done everything for you, and now don't delay!</p>
<p>Sigurður konungur kvað svo vera skyldu. Lætur hann verða safnað múg og margmenni og hrinda skipum á sjó og síðan bryggjum kippa og grunnfæri upp draga og á reipum halda og segl við hún setja og eigi fyrr lægja en í þeim sömum höfnum, sem hið beinasta lágu fyrir höfuðborginni þeirri sömu, er sjálfur Hrólfr konungur sat í. Sigurður konungur hafði hálfan fjórða tug skipa, allvel búin að vopnum og mönnum. Lætur Sigurður konungur þegar verða á land gengið og Hrólfi konungi til bardaga boðið án allra fresta. Og er þeir voru á land gengnir, sáu þeir þar val mikinn, mjög nýfallinn. Hvergi fundu þeir þó lík Ásmundar né Ólafs. Við þetta varð Sigurður bæði óður og æfur.</p>	<p>King Sigurður said that it would be done. He commanded a host and multitude to be gathered, and to launch ships to sea, and afterwards draw quickly from the jetties and weigh anchor and hold onto the rigging and hoist the sails, and not to lower them before they were in the same havens which lay nearest to that same capital where King Hrólfr himself reigned. King Sigurður had thirty-five ships, very well equipped with weapons and men. King Sigurður immediately commanded them to disembark and challenge King Hrólfr to battle without any delay. And when they had disembarked, they saw a huge number of corpses, very recently fallen. But nowhere did they find the body either of Ásmundr or Óláfr. At this, Sigurður grew both furious and enraged.</p>
<p>Ekki hafði Ásmundur verið í dýflizunni og þeir Ólafur meir en eina nótt. Hafði Elína konungsdóttir látið taka þá burt úr dýflizunni, og var Ásmundur í skemmunni hjá Elínu, og skemmtu þau sér að sögum og kvæðum, töflum og hljóðfærum.</p>	<p>Ásmundr and Óláfr had not been in the dungeon more than one night. Princess Elína had commanded them to be taken out of the dungeon, and Ásmundr was in the bower with Elína, and they entertained each other with stories and songs, board-games and</p>

<p>Vissi Sigurður konungur ekki af því, og býst hann nú til bardaga, en Hrólfr konungur í mót. Fékk hann lið lítið, með því að engi voru bardagafrest, en þeir voru lítt færir, sem í hinum fyrra bardaganum höfðu verið. Hafði Ásmundur ekki sparað að veita þeim stór högg og mikil sár og þeir Ólafur báðir. Voru þeir ekki grónir sakir stökkust tíma.</p>	<p>musical instruments. King Sigurður didn't know about this, and King Hrólfr now prepared himself for battle against him. He gathered only a small army, because there was no respite before the battle, and those who had been in the previous battle weren't in very good shape. Neither Ásmundr nor Óláfr had stinted in delivering them great blows and huge wounds. They had not recovered because of the lack of time.</p>
<p>9. Þenna sama morgin harðla árla, sem sólin skein í heiði, tóku þeir til bardaga, Sigurður konungur fótur og Hrólfr Írakonungur. Var þessi orrusta bæði mikil og mannskæð. Var Sigurður konungur harðla óður og ákafur, svo að hann sparði ekki vætta það er fyrir varð, svo að hann gekk í gegnum lið Írakonungs og felldi hvern á fætur öðrum, og þetta gekk allt til kvelds. Þá brast flótti í liði landsmanna. Í því varð Hrólfr konungur fangaður og handtekinn og geymdur heldur harðlega um náttina, en um daginn eftir var Hrólfr konungur settur bundinn niður á hallargólf. Talaði Sigurður konungur um, hvern dauða honum skyldi velja. Urðu á það allir samþykkir, að hann hefði hinn leiðilegasta dauða, er til væri.</p>	<p>9. Very early that same morning, as the sun began to shine in a clear sky, King Sigurður Foot and King Hrólfr of Ireland began the battle. This fight was both big and bloody. King Sigurður was very frenzied and fierce, so that he spared nothing that got in his way, such that he marched through the army of the Irish king and slew one man on top of another. This went on right until evening. Then a rout broke out in the army of the Irish, at which point King Hrólfr was caught and taken hold of and looked after rather harshly during the night. And the day after, King Hrólfr was set down, bound, on the hall floor. King Sigurður discussed what sort of death should be chosen for him. They all came to agreement that he should have the most hideous death in existence.</p>
<p>En svo sem Elína konungsdóttir verður vís, hver umskipti orðið höfðu með þeim Sigurði konungi og föður hennar, þá gengur hún fyrir Ásmund konung svo talandi:</p>	<p>But when the princess Elína became aware of what had happened between King Sigurður and her father, she went before King Ásmundr speaking thus: 'If you, Ásmundr, have some</p>

<p>‘Ef þú, Ásmundur, þykist nokkurn beinleika eiga að launa mér, þá gakk þú nú svo að, að faðir minn haldi lífi sínu, en þú ráðir öllum öðrum kostum.’</p> <p>Ásmundur sagði hana skyldi þiggja sína bæn, kvað hana þess maklega fyrir sína velgerna. Gengur hann þá inn í höllina og þeir Ólafur báðir. En er Sigurður sér þá, stendur hann upp í mót Ásmundi, og verður þar mikill fagnafundur með þeim. Segir þá hvor öðrum af sínum framferðum. Eftir það spyr Ásmundur, hversu að Sigurður ætlar að skipa við Hrólfr konung, en Sigurður konungur svarar svo: ‘Líf Hrólfs konungs og Elína dóttir hans, Írland allt og Valland er nú í þínu valdi og vilja og allt það, að mér ber til, og mun eg aldri geta launað þér, eftir því sem þú værir maklegur, þína velgerna við mig.’</p> <p>Ásmundur þakkaði honum öll sín orð og þar allir út í frá. ‘En þess vil eg spyrja Hrólfr konung,’ segir Ásmundur, ‘hvort hann vill nú gifta mér Elínu dóttur sína.’</p> <p>Hrólfrur konungur svarar þá: ‘Það vil eg að vísu og vinna það til lífs mér.’</p> <p>Parf eigi hér langt um að hafa, að það verður ráðum ráðið, að Ásmundur fær Elínu, og er þegar að brullaupi snúið. Og að veizlunni afliðinni sigldu konungarnir burt, Sigurður og Ásmundur. Leysti Hrólfrur konungur út mund dóttur sinnar sæmilega í gulli og</p>	<p>hospitable treatment for which to repay me, then arrange it now that my father should retain his life; but you should decide about all other terms.’</p> <p>Ásmundur said that she would receive her request, saying that she deserved it for her good deeds. Then he walked into the hall, along with Ólafur and when Sigurður saw them, he stood up to meet Ásmundur, and a very happy meeting took place between them there. Each then told the other about his doings. After that, Ásmundur asked how Sigurður intended to deal with King Hrólfr, and King Sigurður replied: ‘The life of King Hrólfr and Elína his daughter, all Ireland, and France, are now in your power and at your disposal, along with everything which pertains to me, and I will never be able to repay you in a way which you would deserve, for your beneficence to me’.</p> <p>Ásmundur thanked him for all his words, as did everyone else; ‘and I want to ask King Hrólfr this’, said Ásmundur, ‘whether he wishes to marry his daughter Elína to me now.’</p> <p>Then King Hrólfr replied, ‘I most certainly want that and will do so in order to win my life.’</p> <p>It’s not necessary to make a long tale of this: it was decided that Ásmundur would marry Elína, and the wedding was immediately prepared. And at the conclusion of the feast, the kings Sigurður and Ásmundur sailed away. King Hrólfr paid his own daughter’s bride-price in a noble</p>
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<p>dýrgripum. Skildu þeir nú með vináttu.</p> <p>Settist Ásmundur konungur að Húnalandi og þótti hinn mesti höfðingi. Hann átti ágætan son við Elínu drottningu sinni, er Hrólfr hét. Hann varð konungur að Húnalandi. Hans synir voru þeir Ásmundur og Hildibrandur Húnakappi.</p> <p>Sigurður fótur sat að Vallandi og þótti hinn ágætasti maður. Unnust þau Signý vel og sæmilega. Þykjast menn varla vitað hafa aðra fóstbræður betur hafa unnizt í neyti en þessa ok drengilega dugað hvor öðrum.</p> <p>Og lýkur þar sögu Sigurðar fóts og Ásmundar Húnakonungs.</p>	<p>fashion, with gold and precious things. They parted now with friendship. King Ásmundr settled down in the land of the Huns and was considered the greatest ruler. He had a noble son by Elína his queen who was called Hrólfr. He became the king of the Huns. His sons were Ásmundur and Hildibrandr Champion of the Huns.</p> <p>Sigurðr Foot ruled in France and was considered a most noble person. He and Signý loved each other well and honourably. People seem hardly to have known any other foster-brothers to have loved each other better in need than these, or to have served each other more generously.</p> <p>And there ends the saga of Sigurðr Foot and Ásmundr King of the Huns.</p>
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Alaric Hall, PhD
 School of English
 University of Leeds
 a.t.p.hall[at]leeds.ac.uk

Haukur Þorgeirsson, MS, BA
 Icelandic Studies
 University of Iceland

et alii
 School of English
 University of Leeds.