ILLUGA SAGA GRÍÐARFÓSTRA

THE SAGA OF ILLUGI, GRÍÐUR’S FOSTER-SON

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**INTRODUCTION**

*Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra* is a short *fornaldarsaga* whose earliest witness is a manuscript from the sixteenth century (AM 123 8vo). There are thirty-six other known manuscripts containing the Old Norse text produced between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries (see the list at the end of this introduction).\(^1\) The saga tells of Illugi, a promising young champion from Denmark, who has an adventure with a troll-woman named Gríður after the ship he is on is blown off course into the frozen north. This introduction provides an analysis of the story, its origins, its transmission and reception. For this it is necessary to go into detail about events that happen in the saga. Those who want to avoid spoilers may wish to read the saga first.

A good way to start a discussion of *Illuga saga* is with an identification of some of its superficially unusual or odd features. Davíð Erlingsson (1975) has perspicaciously used some of these as a way of assessing the origins of the saga. While it is true that confusion and ‘error’ can be a result of a complicated chain of transmission, as his analysis seeks to exemplify, the discussion below instead takes certain textual cruces as a spur to attempting more sophisticated readings. One productive approach to such problems has been provided by looking at the different manuscript versions of the saga and seeing where changes or alterations suggest that similar doubts prevailed for past readers and scribes. Their attempts at reconciling the material they worked with have provided the basis for several of the observations that follow.

Some of the major peculiarities of the saga’s narrative are as follows: (1) Illugi never fights with another man and even though the stage is set for a showdown with Björn, the evil counsellor, the chance for Illugi to test his mettle never arrives. (2) Gríður, the ogress who is actually a princess, is freed from the curse which has been placed upon her but subsequently remains behind (at least for a short time), apparently in the troll’s cave which she has been inhabiting, and soon after murders Björn. These actions seem anything but appropriate for a princess. (3) On a more general level the truth-telling contest by its very nature seems pointless. It is posited as a challenge but poses no difficulty to anybody with a pair of eyes (the simple rule ‘say what you see’ seems to suffice).

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\(^1\) This number is perhaps a simplification. Two texts of originally independent origin, AM 363 I 4to and AM 363 II 4to, which are counted separately here, are now sections bound together in the same codex, and two partial texts which originally formed a single unit, AM 157 h fol. and AM 193 d fol., are also counted separately.
Why does Gríður set it and what role does it play in the story (or any story for that matter)? It is worth mentioning that these three peculiarities work on three different levels: Gríður’s odd behaviour is odd within the narrative (or diegetically as Gerard Genette (1980) would have it), while the truth-telling contest is most strange from an outside perspective (extra-diegetically, i.e. beyond the internal logic of the text, although not according to it). The fact that Illugi does not fight another man lies somewhere in between: it is generically noteworthy, although not strange within the narrative’s closed circuit of logic or more generally. The rest of the introduction will be divided into three sections which cover these three points, both as elements within broader thematic issues and at the same time as lenses which allow us to look at the narrative from these different perspectives.

**Men and the World**

Illugi is but one of the many eponymous heroes of the thirty-one fornaldaarsögur which make up Carl Christian Rafn’s corpus-defining collection. Among those, however, he is quite exceptional in not engaging in armed combat with or testing his mettle against another male being. Inter-gender conflict is certainly not uncommon in literary representation (and there are many notable examples in the corpus of Old Norse–Icelandic literature) but conflict is certainly not uncommon in literary representation (and there are many notable examples in the corpus of Old Norse–Icelandic literature) but in certain contexts one also expects the presence of intra-gender conflict. The codes of heroism and violence associated with the saga of heroism and violence associated with the in certain contexts one also expects the presence of intra-gender conflict. The codes of heroism and violence associated with the fornaldarsögur (such as those which dictate that men gain honour from fighting against and defeating other men) must be taken into account when we assess Illuga saga as generically atypical. In doing so we will also see how this ideology and the genre so closely aligned and entwined with it are historical contracts, rather than fixed and inherent. When we trace the fluid process of genre development back, we will see how texts in the past may have been read in other ways which go against the grain of our modern taxonomies, and we may also glimpse an Illuga saga which unproblematically exemplifies other ideologies.

The saga starts typically enough with an emphasis on Illugi’s strength and excellence at sports. He is said to outperform all of Sigurður’s other playmates and when he goes raiding with Sigurður we are told that they inspire fear and win a great victory. Yet none of these typically ‘viking’ actions is presented in any finer detail; we do not see the victory in the narrative. Instead we see Illugi breaking a witch’s back against a stone and hacking up and burning several troll sisters. Yet even these gruesome deeds cannot be described as the primary conflict. The central struggle of the saga begins in Gríður’s cave, with a battle of words rather than a clash of swords, and concludes in the bedroom. In Perg. 4to nr. 22 in the Royal Library in Stockholm, dated to the middle of the sixteenth century, there is mention of an Illugi, who may be the same one whom we meet in our saga, in the poem called Allra kapta kvöði (Cederschiöld 1883). Among the descriptions of other heroes with their emphasis on martial prowess, the one referring to Illugi stands out: Illuga lofuðu eingin fljóð ‘No women praised Illugi’ (64). If this is our Illugi then he was identified early on as standing in an antagonistic role to the female sex.

Despite this identification of Illugi as inimical to females, we can see a common and learned conception of Illugi as a superlative hero operating within a masculine milieu dating from the seventeenth century onwards. At that time scholars from mainland Scandinavia were rediscovering Icelandic manuscripts and developing ways to work with them which emphasised certain national ideologies. Danish greatness or Swedish greatness, each asserted belligerently in opposition to the other depending on which side of the Øresund the scholar came from, was the order of the day. Out of this environment comes the first appearance in print of a quotation from Illuga saga. In the first chapter of Thomas Bartholin the Younger’s Antiquitatum danicarum de causis contemptae a Danis adhuc gentilibus mortis we find this appearance, appearing shortly after a description of the Jómsvíkingar in a list of examples of ancient Danes who showed no fear of death (1689, 7–8):

Similes immobiles ad minus mortis intentatas vitus pertulit Illugus Gridæ alumnus, qvi a Grida rogatus lectum cum filia ipsius ascendere, paruit, & protinœ ad blanditias versus, ab accurrente cum acuto gladio matre capillos arripitur, qvasi mox caput amissurus. Ille immotus sine metus ullo indicio mansit. Illugi, the foster-son of Gríður, endured with similar stoicism threats of death when, entreated by Gríður to get into bed with her daughter, he obeyed, and immediately upon attending to the courtship, had his hair grabbed by the mother rushing at him with a sharp sword, and almost lost his head. He remained motionless without the slightest indication of fear.

The text is used unambiguously as evidence of a greatness inherent in the ancient Danish people. A modern reader may find it hard not to see a touch of irony in Bartholin’s presentation of, for example, the hair—

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2 There are few other notable Illugis in saga literature, so the association recommends itself. Another who has an antagonism with women is Illugi Tagldarhanni (the slayer of Tögld, a troll-wife) but his saga only appears in nineteenth-century manuscripts. Illugi eðldųskgoði is the hero of a set of rimur extant in two manuscripts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but appears not to have fought against or been hated by female figures (see Björn K. Pórólfsson 1934, 443–44).
pulling, but this seems to have been far from the author’s mind. What is most influential here, although by no means an original development on Bartholin’s part, is the strong association he makes between certain character traits and a wider ethos mapped onto a specific geographical area (and thus the incipient nation state whose link to such a space was being asserted as inevitable and inextricable).

The mention of Hringur, the king in Denmark, at the start of Illuga saga seems to have earmarked the text for nationalistic appropriations by Bartholin and his Danish countrymen, and yet the first edition was produced in Uppsala in 1695 by an Icelander, Guðmundur Ólafsson, working under the auspices of a Swede, Olof Rudbeck. There is no introduction to that edition, but that provided in Guðmundur’s edition of Sturlaug’s saga starfsama the previous year explains, with reference to Rudbeck’s patronage, that

har man stor orsaak att tacka honom för sin höga nijt och benägenheet att willja befrämia det som länder till wåra gambla handlingars uplysnings och Fäderlandetz heder.

there is much reason to thank him [Rudbeck] for his great zeal and disposition in wanting to encourage that which sheds light upon our old documents and the honour of the fatherland.

If we extend the application of Guðmundur Ólafsson’s laudatory remarks to the Illuga saga edition (bearing in mind that these statements are made in the context of a proposed wider project to produce editions of saga texts), we may ask ourselves just how an edition of a text about a Danish king and a hero who is friends with that king’s son could contribute to the honour of the Swedish fatherland. A solution becomes more apparent if we look at the manuscripts which Guðmundur Ólafsson used in preparing his edition and his notes from the College of Antiquities (Antikvitetskollegiet) in Stockholm. The motivation for appropriating Illugi may have been based on Guðmundur’s familiarity with Bartholin’s work: in a summary of manuscript transcriptions carried out by the College of Antiquities and written up by Guðmundur Ólafsson the saga is said to be about a character ‘som aldrig kunne frukta eller rädas’ [who could never be fearful or become frightened], the emphasis which Bartholin promoted

in his work. The justification of the Swedish connection is made apparent in a marginal note written by Guðmundur in Uppsala Library, R 697 II (f.51r). It appears next to the comment made towards the end of the saga that Hringur ruled over Skåne, and tells us that Hringur non Rex Daniae sed Scanie ‘Hringur [was] not the king of Denmark but of Skåne’. Skåne, at the time, had fairly recently been (re-)integrated into the Swedish state and thus this identification pulls the saga out of the Danish historical ambit and into the Swedish one (the Swedish appropriation of Skåne extended to justification of Skåne’s historically being part of Sweden and not Denmark in times long past).

These seventeenth-century uses of Illuga saga and other similar sagas feed directly into Peter Erasmus Müller’s Sagabibliothek (1819) and Carl Christian Rafn’s collection of fornaldarsögur (1829–30). Müller used many of the Swedish editions in putting together the second volume of his literary overview of saga literature, that which concerned itself with the ‘mythiske’ sagas. In his introduction to the first volume he explains that ‘den anden Deel omfatter alle mythiske Sagaer, de nemlig, der indeholde Sagn om hvad der er skeet i Norden før Islands bebyggelse’ [the second volume comprises all mythical sagas, those, that is, which include narrative material about what has happened here in the North prior to the settlement of Iceland] (xvi). The second volume of Müller’s work contains all of those sagas which were printed a decade later by Rafn, as well as a few extras, and thus seems clearly to be a source of inspiration for Rafn. In his edition, Rafn also explains, closely following Müller’s words, that it ‘innihalda skuli íslenzku sögurnar, er greina frá atburðum þeim, er orðit hafa þar að Norðrlöndum, aðr enn Island bygðist á 9du öld’ [is intended to include those Icelandic sagas which give an account of the events which have taken place here in the northern lands before the settlement of Iceland in the ninth century] (I 5). With both Müller’s and Rafn’s works the link between sagas and place, and in particular between a certain group of sagas and the non-Icelandic north (a more inclusive unity than the previous nation-specific associations with Denmark or Sweden) is firmly established.

Nevertheless, the classification of sagas on the basis of their dealing with events occurring at a particular time and place presents problems. For Bartholin, Guðmundur Ólafsson, Müller and Rafn, the use of sagas as historical source material was of primary interest. Today we view these sagas to a much greater extent as fictional constructs, and thus see the mapping of this fictional world (albeit with many elements recognisable from the historical record) onto our concept of historical Scandinavia as
more uncertain. This mapping was carried out on the basis of place names and royal dynastic reconstructions, but in Illuga saga the pitfalls of such an approach come clearly into view.

We have already seen how known geographical locations, such as Skåne, could be made use of in different ways. The rest of the geography of Illuga saga is if anything even more hazy. The saga starts in Denmark, Illugi and Sigurður raid in Orkney and Scotland, and they subsequently end up in Gandvik. If the last of these is identified as the White Sea then a realistic sea journey around the Scandinavian peninsula can be drawn, but Gandvik is just as much a conceptual space as a real one, a place isolated from civilisation, hostile to men and where magic and monstrosity gain the upper hand. The raids in Orkney and Scotland are perfectly plausible for a Viking-Age raider but in at least two Illuga saga manuscripts til Orkneyja is replaced with til Ungaria (AM 363 II 4to and AM 949 e 4to) without any sign that anyone is troubled by the geographical incongruity. Even Denmark is presented in a way which makes it hard to swallow as a historically probable location: the early test which hilldur sets Illugi, sending him up to the sel ’shieling’ or ’mountain pasture’ to fetch a páll ‘turf-spade’ seems to be drawn from an Icelandic (or Norwegian) topographical frame of reference, rather than one informed by the predominantly flat Danish landscape.

Illuga saga also presents a Danish royal chronology that places the action in an apparently historical context. Peter Frederik Suhm, in his Critit historie af Danmark (1774–81) struggles to make the information fit with that present in other sources and after a winding explication surmises that Ved at overveye alt dette er jeg nær ved at falde paa de Tanker, at Illuge og Sigurd have levet i det 6 sæculo, at en Hring haver været Sigurds Fader, men at Sagan haver blandet ham med den ældre Hring, eller rettere Ring, Far-Fader til Dan Mykillati, og at denne Hrings Fader Skjøld, og Far-Fader Dag vedkomme den ældre Hring (564).

Having considered all of this I am of a mind to accept that Illugi and Sigurður lived in the sixth century, that a certain Hringur was Sigurður’s father, but that the saga has confused him with the older Hringur, or more correctly Ringur, paternal grandfather to Dan the Splendid, and that that Hringur’s father, Skjölldur, and paternal grandfather Dagur, correspond to those of the older Hringur.

Müller also sees the problems but suggests that the difference in the genealogy of Skjölldur as presented in the saga from that found in other sources is probably due to an uninformed and dissimulating author who wished to give the appearance of an ancient tale and so may have been willing to make up a regnal list and allude to a non-existent saga (that...
wishing to trace points of cultural contact across Scandinavia in times past. Knut Liestol (1915) was of the opinion that all of the ballads came from a common source, an *ur*-ballad that was most closely represented by the Norwegian versions. He speculated that this ballad was based on a version of *Illuga saga* not far removed from that we know today, citing verbal similarities as sustaining this conclusion (see Figure 1).

Davíð Erlingsson (1975) later challenged this idea and inverted the picture. He says that the ballad (by which, for the most part, he seems to mean the Norwegian ballad) is a composite, blending two tale types. The first is the tale in which truths are requested in exchange for fire, and the second that in which a maid/princess who has been abducted is saved from her captor, usually a troll. The first tale type stems from Saxo, the second is common in ballads generally, and the fact that they share a kernel in which a hero enters a monster’s abode made it easy for them to be superimposed one upon the other.

The most novel part of Davíð Erlingsson’s argument was the claim that the saga must be based on either this composite ballad or some similarly composite oral tale which gave rise to both (see figure 2). In several cases it has been demonstrated that a saga is based upon a poetic source, but all

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4 Although these ballads have been referred to as *Illuga dans* ‘ballads of Illugi’, this implies slightly more cohesion between the versions than is actually the case.
of those involve rímur converted into prose. Davíð Erlingsson is careful to add that no definitive proof can be found which can help us determine in favour of either a ballad or oral saga source, but it seems to lean towards the former, which would make Illuga saga the first saga to be tentatively identified as based upon a ballad. His argument is twofold. First, the saga, like the ballads, shows signs of a composite piece fusing a truth-telling quest for fire and the rescuing of an abducted princess. In the saga a great deal has been added (the youthful exploits of the hero, the tale of the curse embedded within the main tale) but at the expense of the original story of the saving of the princess from a troll, which has been partially erased. Davíð Erlingsson identifies certain errors, which are said to reveal where that story has been inexpertly censored or adapted. Two examples are as follows:

In the ballads where a princess is rescued from a troll, the king travels with his selected hero and then sends him into the cave to save his daughter. In the saga, however, this has been wiped out in order that the sworn brothers can go raiding without a parental escort, since the latter could be deemed mildly humiliating. The king’s role is thus filled by the evil Björn, who sends Illugi off on the quest which ends with the princess being found, although now the stated aim is the search for fire. While originally the king used the promise of a reward as a spur to action, an act of munificence which is incongruously incorporated into Björn’s offer of a ring if Illugi succeeds, the evil advisor in the reworked saga also threatens to kill Illugi if he fails. The latter addition is more in character for Björn, but the presence of both incentive and threat is deemed atypical in such quest stories and an excess borne of the shoddy fusion of narratives.

Another, and the main, example given by Davíð Erlingsson is the fact that in the ballad it is a troll-wife (sometimes a troll) who has abducted the princess. In the saga this has been changed and Gríður is now only seemingly a troll but in reality a cursed princess with her own backstory. Nevertheless, after being freed from the curse she still acts like a troll, killing Björn and not returning with Illugi and Hildur from her cave. Davíð Erlingsson deems this to be an error, the result of the insufficient effacing of the previous fully-fledged troll-wife.

5 See Jorgensen 1990. This is a phenomenon associated with the late Middle Ages and beyond, although there are of course theories which associate the earlier genesis of all sagas with processes of prosimetric development out of skaldic and Eddic poetry.

Having identified the saga as previously being more like the ballad, which consequently represents an earlier phase of the narrative, he goes on to his second argument in favour of this chronology. The saga is not only lacking, but also has a surplus in the form of signs of poetry embedded in the prose. These remnants are incongruous duplications of words and phrases (common in ballads) as well as a high incidence of rhyming words (for example in the description of Gríður). Although none of these poetic remnants match any of the existing ballads, they do suggest that at some previous stage the saga was written down by somebody at the very least familiar with poetry and possibly consciously adapting poetic source material.

With Davíð Erlingsson’s description we come as close to any certainty about the origins of Illuga saga as we are likely to get. Moreover, precisely how the source of Illuga saga, ballad or otherwise, is related to Gesta Danorum, we may never know. There could have been an oral tale which was used by Saxo but survived independently in Iceland until it became, or influenced, the source text of Illuga saga. Or the Gesta Danorum, or its derivative Den Danske Rimkrønike, may have influenced ballad tradition in Denmark. The question need not be either/or, the story having possibly circulated in different forms which ultimately reinforced each other and reconnected at various times. This process of repeated back-and-forth contact, emphasised by Judith Jesch (1982, 128–30), need not stop even after the writing down of the saga. Such a text could continue to influence the ballads, as textual details filtered back into oral forms either from manuscripts or one of the two printed editions which had already appeared by the time the nineteenth-century ballads were collected. Thus claiming that the Norwegian ballad is the closest to the saga is a tricky assertion to make because it may only be so because it has reintegrated features from the ongoing saga tradition and thus realigned itself accordingly. An added complication which must be mentioned is the fact that the ballads (and other verse forms) seem at all times to have freely exchanged parts. To pick an example mentioned by Davíð Erlingsson (1975, 34–35), an interesting sea trip taken from one ballad could unproblematically be inserted into another ballad at an opportune moment, so that any particular forms witnessed cannot be associated exclusively with a single place or time (that is, the composite nature of such ballads means a traced chronology would be fractured and unpredictable).

Turning back to Illuga saga, if it borrows liberally from a poetic tradition, in what ways can we see it as reinterpreting that tradition? In Saxo Grammaticus, Thorkillus (Þorkell Aðalfari), while on his way to the kingdom of
Utgargarthilocus, meets two horn-nosed eagle-headed monsters, curiosities but not personalities. It is they who give him fire and directions in exchange for truths. In several of the oldest Danish ballads (those identified as A–D in the collection Danmarks gamle Folkeviser 1853–1976) there is an unremarkable male troll who has abducted the princess. But in the saga (and all of the later ballads) we meet a female troll, and moreover one who fairly steals the show. In fact, the saga introduces not just Gríður but also Sunlóð and Grímhildur, all fairly memorable women who stand out much more than the comparatively dull Hringur, Sigurður and Áli. If the saga author is to be accused of having done a poor job in converting his oral and poetic material into a saga, he has at least populated the ruins with a dazzling ensemble cast, and we may remind ourselves of the fact that Illugi seems to have been identified in contrast to and as the bane of much more than the comparatively dull Hringur, Sigurður and Áli. If the saga author is to be accused of having done a poor job in converting his oral and poetic material into a saga, he has at least populated the ruins with a dazzling ensemble cast, and we may remind ourselves of the fact that Illugi seems to have been identified in contrast to and as the bane of these monstrous women.

Much has been written on the monstrous women of the fornaldrarsögur. They have been interpreted as functioning as counterparts in mythical or ritualistic reenactments along with male heroes, in a chain of correspondences whereby a hero and a troll-woman/giantess can be linked to, for example, Óðinn and Gunnlóð, as well as viewed as symbols for masculine civilisation and feminine untamed nature. These female beings have also been identified as manifestations of ethnic and gender-related anxieties, as well as the objects of desires which in normative socialised environments are not sanctioned, but which may be given free rein in the liminal spaces where such monstrous women have their abodes. Some work has also been done linking these fictional representations to social conditions of women in the medieval period. In fact, even the more literary and less historical approaches focus on the medieval timeframe and so may not be completely apt in the case of Illuga saga, which despite all similarities with earlier material first comes into view around the time of the Reformation. While the validity of a medieval/early-modern dichotomy in the Icelandic context may be questioned, it is the case that the mid-sixteenth century ushered in a time of greater restrictions upon the freedom of women. One factor contributing to this was the issuing of the Stóridómur ‘The Grand Judgement’ (a new and in points harsher Icelandic law-code) in 1564. Restrictions imposed as a result may have heightened the valency of many questions related to gender violence and conflict at the time.

Sunlóð (on the problems scribes have had with the name see the note to the text) is the first of the troublesome women to turn up in the saga. Before the main quest, Illugi is put to the test by his mother. As in Orms þáttur Stórólfssonar, the order of the day seems to be a homely agricultural feat before the monsters are brought on: a peat spade must be retrieved from the mountain pasture just as night is falling. The fetching of this necessary implement is a symbolic precursor to the quest for fire that is to come, and the object in question, presumably used to cut sods for heating purposes, is linked thematically to the later search. But the spade is a distraction and the monster appears as soon as it has been retrieved. Sunlóð is described as an öldríða, kvöldríða, galldraskessa, galldræsyra, galldrakona, seiðkona and kolbríðja in different manuscripts. This suggests disagreement and doubt among the scribes as to what exactly she is, but her actions clearly mark her out as transgressive. She rides Illugi and beats him with a stick before being cast down onto a stone and having her back broken.

The word kvöldríða ‘evening-rider’ or ‘night-hag’ (according to Cleasby–Vigfússon) is closely related to myrkríður ‘darkness-riders’, mentioned in Hárbardsljóð (von See 1997, I 200–02). It can also be linked to the mara who (at least according to folk etymology) gives her name to the modern English and Danish words ‘nightmare’ and ‘mare-rider’ respectively, a type of succubus who both seduces and stifles men in their sleep. Such a figure appears to be at large in Eyrbyggja saga ch. 16 where Gunnlaugr Þorbjarnarson goes missing on his way home and is eventually found with slashed shoulders and legs (Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson 1935, 29). A woman who has been instructing him, Geirrðr Þórófsdóttir, initially falls under suspicion but responsibility for the crime is ultimately laid upon Katla, another mature lady, who seems to have been jealous of the young man’s relationship with her rival. Whereas in Eyrbyggja saga the crime is shrouded in mystery, in Illuga saga we actually witness the riding and the sexual implications are unmistakable. Sunlóð rides Illugi in a way which reminds one of how men are accused of having been ridden in nið verses (see for example Helgakviða Hundingsbani I, v. 42 (von See 1997, IV 314–19)) and so the fact that Illugi remains disgruntled, even after dispatching her, is unsurprising. In spite of the ignominy he has been subjected to, Hilldur is pleased because he has shown himself capable of dealing with the threat posed by the
Other (remember that all of his previous successes have been in games played against young men who are his peers). Killing is the most brutal and definitive method of dealing with monstrous women and negating the threat that their gender, ethnic and sexual otherness pose to ordered society. The casting down of an individual leading to that individual’s subsequent death as a result of spinal trauma may have been considered the most appropriate way of killing off an unsavoury rider.9

Grímphildur also has her parallels, but mostly in fornaldarsögur.10 The pretty but evil stepmother with a voracious sexual appetite appears as Lúða in Hjálmtýr saga ok Ólves (Fas, IV 193–95). While Sunlöð is specifically called an ambátt ‘serving woman’, ‘slave’, Grímphildur is socially mobile and marries into the upper echelons of society. Both could be described as ‘man-eaters’, but the position of power which Grímphildur occupies means that her unbridled passions can have wider ramifications. A man disappears every fifth night and the whole kingdom is laid waste. The motif in Illuga saga is so similar to that in Hjálmtýr saga that we may suspect a direct borrowing. An attentive reading of the curse that Hilldur casts on Grímphildur, however, shows that the closest parallel (one foot in the bower, one in the hall, burnt from below and frozen from above) is to be found in Hjálmtýr rímur II, v. 47–48 (Finnur Jónsson 1913–22, II 18). Once again we are presented with tantalising suggestions of an author well-versed in poetry. But again there are key differences from the possible sources. Grímphildur, like Sunlöð, faces the ultimate consequences for her alterity, burnt to death so that order can be restored. But whereas in Hjálmtýr saga it is our male hero who restores order, in Illuga saga it is Hilldur who takes the required action. Female self-regulation outside of the patriarchal order presents itself as a possibility, if not a necessity (since the men have practically been wiped out thanks to their wars, as is the case with Eiríkur, or female depredations, in the case of Áli and the male inhabitants of the kingdom).

Sunlöð may seem like an archetypal bugbear and Grímphildur a villain of pantomime proportions but Gríður outdoes both of them in the roll-call of monstrous women in the saga. Living in a barren northern wasteland, she is presented in a way which draws upon the mythic resonances of borderland-dwelling giants who provide a challenge to the fertility and abundance of the natural world. Her broad forehead links her with stereotypes of the Sámi ethnic Other, and her immodest dress, exposing her genitals, to concepts of sexual and gender alterity. She rules the cave but has the burnt sleeves of a slave woman and in some manuscripts is described as ambáttligri ‘like a slave woman’ (in place of ámáttligri ‘terrible, loathsome’), upending the hierarchy of social classes. Her gnarled eagle-claw-like hands make her animalistic and the gale blowing out of her nose seems to refer parodically to the inhuman weather-controlling powers which have presumably drawn Illugi and Sigurður’s boat to her rocky shores.

Gríður is thus a challenge in every way, even to interpretation. Yet for a text which is so concerned with women, their monstrosity and what that could bring to a narrative, it seems problematic to ascribe the paradox that is Gríður solely to a poor synthesis of sources. Davíð Erlingsson is clear on what he considers to have been changed, and thus what led Gríður to be represented as she is in the saga (1975, 19):

Í efnisheimild fornaldarsögunnar hefur skessan ekki verið annað en tröllkessa. Því hefur höfundur breytt. Álagasögunn öll er viðbót hans og einnig vitaskuld tægja.

In the source material of the fornaldarsaga the giantess was nothing other than a troll-wife. That has been changed by the author. The whole story of the curse is his addition as is, naturally, the marriage of Signý.

He is likewise clear that the change has not been fortuitously effected and that what we are faced with is a missmíð ‘an error in construction’ or a misræmi ‘inconsistency’. That this section posed problems is clear throughout the manuscript transmission of the saga. Many scribes are not quite sure which of the names, Gríður or Signý, to use after the spell has been broken, and there is significant variation. In one manuscript an attempt has been made to explain why Gríður stays behind. The manuscript, ÍB 233 4to in the Landsbókasafn in Reykjavík, is damaged but reads as follows:


Gríður parted with them there and wished … good luck and went to visit her old stepmother. She was then … in the fire, and the slaves stoking the fire on all sides of her. She begged Gríður for mercy. But Gríður … paid no heed.

9 Curiously this method of death also seems to be associated with attacks by supernatural beings, not just attacks on them. Glám in Grettis saga, for example, who had taken to ríða husum á nætur, kills a shepherd in a similar way (Guðni Jónsson 1936, 113–15).

10 See Ralph O’Connor 2000.
to that and ordered them to strengthen the fire. . . . They were only too keen to comply and so Grímhildur ended in that place her . . . and shameful life.

While this unfinished business explains why she does not immediately accompany Illugi and Hilldur back to Denmark, and while it is certainly not unheard-of for Nordic princesses to enact gleeful vengeance, these actions still fit more readily with the woman who threatens Illugi with a knife and strings Björn up from the mast than with the grieving princess in her bower who could not speak for grief when she was cursed by her stepmother.

So the question remains, why does Gríður not return to being like a princess after the curse is broken? I would suggest that if we look at the saga allowing for humour and irony, it makes more sense. Before the curse Signý was married off to a prince, who then died. She was forced to return to her father’s house where she was then subjected to her mother’s death, her father’s remarriage and murder, and then her evil stepmother’s assault. During most of this she sat powerless in her bower, grieving and unable to respond even when attacked by Grímhildur. This pitiful, powerless state was removed when the curse was placed on her and instead of sitting in a bower she réð ‘ruled’ over a cave. The curse turns Gríður into a lewd, violent, but most of all powerful figure. Is it surprising that she does not want to give that up? Being hacked to death every night is surely something Gríður is glad to be done with, but after killing a number of brave young men with her terrifying short sword why should she all of a sudden put up with the insults of one uppity royal advisor? It is ironic that the cause of all this chaos, the deceptively beautiful Grímhildur, now stands as a role model. Just as Grímhildur abducted men in the night for unknown but dastardly purposes, so too does Gríður/Signý carry off Björn while all the other men are sleeping on the boat.

Grímhildur in fact also serves as a warning for Gríður. She is the perfect example of a monstrous woman who almost pulls it off but goes a little bit too far. She is not outwardly marked as Other and she manages to manoeuvre her way into an enviable position as queen of a country. The problem is that her high sex drive leads her to kill her husband and pride and envy lead her to get involved in the cursing duel with Signý and Hilldur. If Gríður can control these types of excessive drive, then post-curse, with her beauty restored (we assume: the saga is much more interested in grotesque descriptions than in Gríður’s reversion), maybe she can have her cake and eat it.

The sex scene in the cave is in many ways the crux of this. The ‘loathly lady’ motif, familiar from Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath’s Tale*, can serve as a standard against which to measure the special case of *Illuga saga*. This motif shows a male protagonist obliged to enter into a sexual relationship with an unattractive woman who then proves to have been cursed and is freed, becoming beautiful again. When faced with Gríður in the cave, we may expect just such a scenario: after all, this motif is familiar within the *fornaldarsögur* in, for example, *Hröðs saga kraka*, where a dishevelled elf-maiden suddenly becomes a rather attractive bed-partner (*Fas*, I 28). *Gríms saga loöinkinna* shows an even closer parallel, when the eponymous hero meets a hideous troll-woman, accompanies her to bed and then releases her from her stepmother’s evil spell (*Fas*, II 191–93). It turns out to be his own kidnapped wife, Lofthæna. The words describing Grirur’s feelings for the troll-woman prior to her conversion: *eigi þótt honum hún svo ill viðkomu sem hún var hrimugleg að sjá ‘he didn’t think she was as bad to touch as she was dingy to look at’* chime with Gríður’s own assessment of the situation in her cave: *eigi lízt þér svo illa á mig sem þú lætur ‘I don’t seem as bad to you as you make out’*.

Although such stories superficially show a man submitting to a woman, it has been argued that the ideological content is much more conservative (see for example Dinshaw 1999, 132). Sexual relations with a man (and by extension marriage) bring the excessive and monstrous female body back into the fold of polite society, and thus patriarchy. As Ármann Jakobsson has shown, *tröll* as a term, rather than designating a fixed monstrous aesthetic and skill-set, basically means ‘anti-social’ (2008, 63), and so the use of the ‘loathly lady’ motif is in essence a symbolic act of resocialisation.

But the case is otherwise with Gríður. Although clearly identified as loathly, she does not want to submit except on her own terms. Thus it is the pretty daughter who is at the receiving end of Illugi’s lust. The terms of the curse, as it is recounted to us by Signý subsequently, say nothing of the necessity for a sexual encounter, but Gríður seems to have found, along with her trollishness, a new appreciation for the subtleties of physical pleasures. The sex scene does not just bring to mind similar occurrences in many traditional tales but also acts as a significant distraction and a devious ploy. Gríður is told that she and her daughter will never be freed from the spell because all men will fear her terrifying short sword. But

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11 This may also bring to mind various *hieros gamos* scenes taken from an Old Norse context, where a god and a giant copulate. While much debated in terms of their relation to royal ideology and sacrificial kingship (see, for example, Clunies Ross 2014), the sexual liaison between a heroic (overbearing?) male and a supernatural female (e.g. Freyr and Gerðr) is a recurrent motif, although its valency in later times is hard to assess.
Illugi is so engaged in the act of coitus that he pays little or no attention to the precariousness of his situation. When he is *sem gladastur* ‘as glad as can be’ (a fairly transparent euphemism in the context) Gríður lunes and this scene is arguably played for humour. Rather than being a fatalistic hero, as Bartholin would have it, Illugi is highly aroused and consequently manipulated. The spell is thus broken, but Gríður has not relinquished her power. Moreover, by playing this little game she has put Illugi’s virility to the test. Hilldur may have been the victim of this ploy (and we should not fool ourselves into believing that we are not witnessing a rape scene; Gríður’s freedom is predicated on another’s lack of it) but it is a ploy that ensures for Hilldur a husband who is in full possession of what old King Áli lacked. This may bode well for Hilldur and Illugi’s future, since as we shall see, it is not just Gríður but also her daughter who bears more than a passing resemblance to Grímhildur, and thus may also have strong sexual urges. With Gríður’s new-found sexual acumen maybe she can also ensure that the same is the case when she comes to marry Sigurður. We are told, after all, at the end of the saga that *þeirra samfarir voru góðar* ‘their married life/sex life was a happy one’.

So there is a resounding irony, for those who wish to hear it, when Gríður states that the killing of the other brave men was not *kvønnaverk* ‘women’s work, work fitting for a woman’ and soon after does away with Björn. These are the words of a woman who one moment holds a knife to your throat and the next is laughing chummily with you. Gríður is not consistent, but a character who undergoes substantial development. This is, moreover, on her own terms, as she refuses to be yet another monstrous woman for whom the alternatives are death or resocialisation at the hands of a domineering male hero.

**Words and Truth**

Compared to the bedroom scene, the truth contest seems rather a mundane climax to Illugi’s voyage, yet it is the latter that paves the way for the former. Gríður offers Illugi not only the fire he needs so badly but also a night of pleasure with her daughter should he succeed. With such high stakes one might imagine the challenge to be greater, but instead he must tell three truths, which he does, and the task is completed. The truths seem not to be existential ones, but rather simple observations available to even the most dim-witted contender. Three approaches may help us better understand what is going on here, the first an assessment of the valency of truth and the spoken word in the rest of the saga; the second an assessment of truth-telling alongside other performative speech acts; and the third a consideration of the truth-telling motif in general and how the embedded utterances are used to establish links between the interlocutors and their social context.

Starting with the first point, words are rarely transparent in the rest of the saga. Illugi’s discussion with his mother, where she disingenuously asks him, ‘*Fannstu nokkó stúku mínua?*’ ‘Did you by any chance come across my girl?’ is a case in point. She knows full well that he has, since she has set up the confrontation between her son and the wicked maid. Moreover, Illugi’s arrival is the proof that he has been the victor (the understated *Hildur var þá blíð* ‘Hildur was then pleased’ on Illugi’s appearance is telling in this respect). If a mother can be so deceitful with her own offspring, then we must assume that dissimulation is pervasive. Seen in this light, it is unsurprising that Björn too is guilty of lying. We are told that he unfairly slanders Illugi to the king and prince because he begrudges Illugi’s close relationship with Sigurður. An instructive comparison is provided at the end of the saga when he is once again reproved for his words. On that occasion, he says that the bad weather being experienced is caused by Hildur and that Illugi has found her in a cave. She is also, he claims, the worst *tröllkona*. These words lead to his death at the hands of Gríður, a response to his accusations which in many ways seems to justify them. The subsequent change of the weather, as a fair wind breezes in after his death, is also telling.12 We, the readers, know that it is true that Illugi found Hildur in a cave, and the ambiguity of Sigurður’s response (we are told that *ekki villdi hann því trúa* ‘he did not want to believe it’, but possibly deep down he suspected the veracity of the accusation) suggests that even characters within the story have their doubts. This is understandable since we find out later that even Illugi has not been forthcoming with the truth: it is only on Gríður’s (or Signý’s) arrival in Denmark that he tells his men the whole truth and nothing but the truth (*öll deili*) about her. Taking all this into account, we can say that the saga has a very slippery approach to truth in general, with the best characters lying and the worst liars at times telling the truth. Nothing can be taken for granted and this ambiguity is not only limited to words. Appearances are not to be trusted either. Grímhildur, beautiful on the outside but the worst *tröllflagð* in reality, has already been mentioned.

12 If Gríður is the cause of the bad weather which brought Sigurður and his men to Gandvik then it makes sense that she should be capable of giving them a fair wind to sail back once all loose ends have been tied up. The mode of death, execution by hanging from a mast, is moreover reminiscent of Odinic sacrifice (like that in *Gautreks saga* enacted by Starkaður in order to procure a fair wind).
More problematically, despite Illugi’s ‘truthful’ assertions, things are not in reality what they seem to be in Gríður’s cave.\(^{13}\)

Moving on to the second point, it seems pertinent to invoke the concept of performative speech acts, if only on the grounds that it has proved such a productive analytical tool in relation to other verbally complex scenes in Old Norse–Icelandic literature.\(^ {14}\) What words do may be just as important as what they say, and a failure to recognise this could lead to hermeneutic oversimplification, and thus misinterpretation, of Illuga saga’s truth-telling scene. Furthermore, it should not surprise us that verbal action is central in this saga which is densely populated with women, since performative speech acts have been specifically linked to the feminine voice. This link is predicated on the grounds that otherwise socially disenfranchised sections of society, such as women in patriarchy, may resort to lamenting, whetting and cursing in order to have tangible effects on the social landscape around them. Neither lament nor whetting is the order of the day here, but cursing does play a central role in the story. It is Grímhildur’s curse which, we learn retrospectively, sets the stage for Illugi’s trial and subsequent success on his quest. Although curses in sagas are often accompanied by the carving of runes or particular symbolic actions, in this instance it seems that Grímhildur’s words, perhaps imbued with the magic implied by her role as tröllkonan or tröllflagð, are enough. Nevertheless, she is not the only character able to turn her words into weapons.

Hildur, Gríður/Signý’s daughter, stands out among the many loquacious characters in Illuga saga as, on the whole, fairly reticent. She is described on first appearing as being hljóð og fámálug ‘silent and taciturn’. We are never presented with a conversation between her and Illugi, a stark contrast to the ongoing repartee between him and her mother. In fact the only occasion upon which she speaks is within the frame story, her words transposed in a ventriloquistic manner into Gríður/Signý’s mouth. Those words are a curse and a fairly intricate one at that. This surprising outburst at a time when Signý is, by her own account, too overcome with grief to launch a comeback gives us a sense that there is more to Hildur than meets the eye. Hypothetically, if anyone could utter a curse we might imagine that the chaos that would ensue would be utterly bewildering. As with the supernaturally endowed Grímhildur, curses seem to be reserved for the select few, those who can fully realise the performative function of their speech. Signý clearly has this ability, much to the surprise of her opponent, who immediately attempts to retract what has been pronounced but is countered by Hildur’s seemingly superior injunction that both curses shall stand. While Hildur uses her power to counteract Grímhildur’s curse, her abilities at the same time align her with Grímhildur. If Grímhildur is a witch, is the young Hildur one too? Does she remain mute in the cave and beyond because her words are too powerful to be bandied about?

In Illugi’s case no such reserve is apparent, perhaps because his speech draws much more heavily on descriptive potentialities than prescriptive ones. There is a clear bawdy humour in his shamefaced insulting of his possible benefactor accompanied by his somewhat leery attitude towards his possible prize. His words do not seem to have tangible effects upon the world around him, although in many ways, as far as truth-telling contests are concerned, his is the exception rather than the rule. It is only through a consideration of the standard that this particular case is thrown into relief.

The truth contest (three truths is the norm, in good fairy-tale style) appears in various contexts in medieval literature. Inger Boberg’s motif index lists three examples of H505.1 from a Scandinavian literary ambit, those being in Illuga saga, Book VIII of Saxo Grammaticus’ Gesta Danorum, and an ævintyr entitled ‘Frá Ratepadius greifa’, based on the Gesta Romanorum but found in a manuscript, AM 624 4to, dated to 1490–1510 (i.e. shortly prior to the first appearance of Illuga saga) (1966, 153). Hugo Gering’s collection Islendzk æventyri contains detailed notes pertaining to the latter with further examples of the motif: an aesopic fable, two Old Danish church chronicles (from Roskilde and Esrum), a basque tale, a Welsh tale, the already mentioned Scandinavian Illugi ballads and a Danish folktale (1882–83, II 179–85).

‘Frá Ratepadius greifa’ is a good example of some of the key features of the truth-telling contest. In it Ratepadius, a greiđi ‘baron, earl’ in Rome, declares that any criminal can be exonerated of all charges should he state three incontrovertible truths. The hierarchical approach to veracity is crucial here, as we are told that what is required is III þing hau er sönn eru, ok svá sönn at eingi mætti móti mæla ‘three things which are true and so true that no one can contradict them’ (1882–83, I 245). Truth is relative, and it is only a truth which cannot be challenged that will stand up in this court of law. A highwayman named Plebens ends up being the one to take up the gauntlet. The truths which he states are revealing. The first is that he has always been a thief. This is contextually incontrovertible since for the court to deny his

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\(^{13}\) We may glimpse the theme of dubious appearances and physical transformations as a loose compilatory principle governing the items included in the manuscript which contains the earliest exemplar of Illuga saga (AM 123 8vo). There Tjóðels saga deals with werewolves and Jónatas ævintýr with mistaken identities owing to the disfiguring mask of leprosy.

\(^{14}\) See in particular Clover 2002.
criminality would be for it to deny its own authority in this matter. The second truth is that he was brought to this place against his will. This is also contextually hard to argue against since it is basically an assertion of the court’s superior power (and naturally panders to the egotism of those presiding). The final truth, which is the most complex, is that if he should go free from that place, he would never willingly return to that place. Whether a conditional statement can logically be called a truth is hard to say, but for the court it naturally serves (despite referring to the future and thus being unconfirmable) since what it amounts to is a promise, that is, a performative speech act, ensuring self-rehabilitation. Plebens’ task is actually quite tricky, in that most truths can be refuted, but he passes the test by proffering truths which if contradicted destabilise the validity and purpose of the context.

Most of the other truth-telling contests follow a similar pattern. That in Saxo’s *Gesta Danorum* does not have the juridical associations of Ratepadius and Plebens’ story but ends with a similar conditional phrase: *si in presentiarum recessu libere fruerer, ulterius a reditu temperandum curarem* ‘if I could freely return home at this time, I would try never to come back’ (2005, I 574). The Illugi stories and ballads are alone among the tales of this type in not containing the final ‘conditional truth’, which in nearly all other cases expresses a desire to leave and a promise not to return. Illugi’s truths also lack any sophisticated awareness of multi-layered truth or contextually necessary truths. His truths rather reveal the superficiality of his character, and it is this that the test is designed to ascertain. For him the truth is only skin-deep. He says what he sees without any awareness that his words, as well as not being beneficial, are also highly inappropriate to his situation. Moreover, the promise of a night of passion, a desire fuelled by this same visual fetishism, is enough to make him bypass the get-out clause of the last ‘conditional truth’. He has been promised a reward which appeals to his superficial nature and this moulds his response to the task.

In Old Norse–Icelandic literature (and beyond) such verbal conundrums often reveal more about the participants than they do about the supposed referents. Other verbal duels, such as flytings/senna and riddle contests, are known in the Scandinavian context, and the most famed use of the latter appears in another *fornaldarsaga*. In *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, at the end of King Heiðrekr’s lengthy exchange of riddles with a mysterious interlocutor, the final utterance, ‘What said Ódin in the ear of Balder before he was borne to the fire?’ (Tolkien 1960, 44) reveals the presence of the many-faced god, since he is the only individual capable of answering such a riddle, and the rules of the game demand that the poser of the riddle must always know the answer. This is a very concrete example of identity revelation, but more subtle and nuanced ones also exist.

The exchange between Illugi and Gríður also reveals the character of the speaker (as in the case of Óðinn’s riddles) as well as hinting at a set-up with a particular purpose. This is not pure entertainment for the participants, as is implied when Thorkillus meets the eagle-headed monsters in Book VIII of the *Gesta Danorum*. Nor is it a hard test designed to weed out the most apt from the less apt (the test in the bedroom appears to have played that function: Gríður claims that the men whom she has killed died by the sword, not by freezing to death after being denied fire). Rather it is a simple test which anyone can pass, but in doing so he will inadvertently reveal his personal insight and individual perspective. Illugi’s answers reveal his inability to navigate the sophisticated world of words and contextual truths which are normally the staple of the truth-telling contest. It may very well be that it is precisely this that Gríður’s test is designed to determine.

What follows also throws this scene into relief. Illugi ‘passes’ her test and then, after remaining unperturbed by her subsequent death-threats, is treated to her life story. This story explains that she is actually a beautiful princess who has been put under a curse. If this is really the case then *did* Illugi really pass the test? The true nature of Gríður is apparently not that of a hideous and slave-woman-like troll but that of the noble and attractive Signý (said, prior to her conversion, to be *að öllu vel að sér búin* ‘outstanding in all respects’). Illugi has not been able to perceive this owing to the changes wrought by the spell, in spite of Gríður’s seemingly unwarranted insistence that she doesn’t really seem all that bad to him. A hierarchical and polyvalent approach to truth is necessitated by the layering of enchantment over reality, but Illugi is apparently unable to negotiate within such a shifting realm. It is ironic that in Gríður’s frame tale we are told of her father, the king, who suffered from a similar lack of insight. He loved Grímhildur dearly because she was *fögur að sjá* ‘pleasing to the eye’ but ended up dying on account of his inability to see the evil threat which she represented. Illugi is like Áli in more ways than one. Both fail to see seething enchantment beneath an attractive surface and both fail to respond to threats to their well-being once caught on the hook of that beauty. For a woman with a cynical worldview, this is just the type of husband who might be considered a good catch for her fair daughter.

15 This is implicit in the Old Norse and Latin but explicitly stated in the Middle English original, MS Harley 7333, f.167. There the onlookers at the court say that they cannot contradict what Plebeus (our Plebens) says because: ‘yf he had bee noo trespassoure, he had no be I-browte her’ (Heritage 1879, 102). The precise source of the Old Norse version is unknown.
It remains to be said that many of these readings could be either emphasised or mitigated within a performance context. While a dearth of sources on private reading practices should not be taken as proof of their absence, the general assumption, supported by eighteenth-century accounts such as that of Eggert Ólafsson, is that at least some sagas were read aloud in farmsteads to the inhabitants of that place during their evening work (Hermann Pálsson 1962, 17). With the interposition of a live narrator between the text and the audience, additional ambiguities could arise (or be made to arise), allowing more than one reading to jostle for a hearing. There are possibilities for the merging of voices and overlaying of contexts, and one could imagine a bold narrator at a public reading taking full advantage of this fact. This is the case, for example, when on Illugi’s arrival in the cave, we are told by the narrator that honum pótti . . . ‘it seemed to him . . .,’ followed by a description of the grotesque Gríður. This is followed by Illugi’s first-person description of her physical repulsiveness, and thus a convergence between the two voices, the narrator’s and Illugi’s, is enacted. Moreover when the narrator asks Hver vill kalla hana fríða? ‘Who will call her beautiful?’ the reader/audience is also drawn into the discussion. The mode of reading could also have added doubt to Gríður’s entire back-story. Putting aside the one manuscript already mentioned where Gríður and Grímhildur come face to face, the only source we have for the tale of the evil stepmother queen who bewitched a princess is Gríður’s own. Can we actually trust her as a reliable narrator? A sardonic tone or wry smile could be introduced by a narrator and change everything. As the foregoing analysis details, I would not read the saga in such a way, but if a narrator and scribe who was based at Villingaholt in Iceland and worked in close partnership with Brynjólfur Sveinsson (1605–75), Bishop of Skálholt. A fair amount is known about Jón Erlendsson’s life (see, for example, Helgi Ívarsson 2007 and Íe). While his hand is easily identifiable, no study has been carried out of its development throughout his career. Thus manuscripts written by him, in the absence of additional clues, are generally dated between 1628/29 (the year of his ordination as a priest; the year of his birth is unknown) and 1672 (the year that he died). In the case of AM 203 fol. contains seven texts, all of them fornaldarsögur (including two copies of Gautreks saga), and was written by Jón Erlendsson, a priest and scribe who was based at Villingaholt in Iceland and worked in close partnership with Brynjólfur Sveinsson (1605–75), Bishop of Skálholt. A fair amount is known about Jón Erlendsson’s life (see, for example, Helgi Ívarsson 2007 and Íe). While his hand is easily identifiable, no study has been carried out of its development throughout his career. Thus manuscripts written by him, in the absence of additional clues, are generally dated between 1628/29 (the year of his ordination as a priest; the year of his birth is unknown) and 1672 (the year that he died). In the case of AM 203 fol. additional clues to dating are present: the accompanying text of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks is provided with a textual apparatus in the form of the commentary of Björn Þorláksson (1574–1655). That commentary is dated to 1641 (Jón Helgason 1924, xiii). Thus we can restrict somewhat the period in which AM 203 fol. could have been written to approximately 30 years in the mid-seventeenth century.
The text selected for an edition has traditionally been the oldest. AM 203 fol. is, however, certainly not the oldest witness to *Illuga saga*. That honour is awarded to AM 123 8vo, from the start of the sixteenth century. AM 123 8vo was the basis for the text of *Illuga saga in Fornaldar sögur Nordlanna*, but a large lacuna had to be supplied from AM 203 fol. Here, a complete text from a single manuscript has been deemed preferable to the presentation of a composite text. AM 203 fol., moreover, has certain features which make it an interesting object of study in its own right. Peter Springborg has highlighted Jón Erlendsson’s role in the seventeenth-century renaissance (1977, 70–71), and many of the manuscripts copied at that time represent a key stage in the transmission from medieval to modern. There are signs in the copying activity being carried out then that attempts were made to preserve ancient forms, as in Jón’s famous transcriptions of *Íslendingabók* (see Jakob Benediktsson 1968, xliv–xlv; Springborg 1977, 70), while at the same time a willingness to modify and reinterpret texts can be noticed (the already mentioned *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* seems to be an intentional composite of different textual traditions; Tolkien 1960, xxx). Further study of the self-conscious textual work of this period should reveal more about how these two approaches interacted and could function side by side.

**Regularisation**

Since the text presented here is from the mid-seventeenth century, the earliest manuscript of *Illuga saga* is from the sixteenth century, and the largest concentration of additional texts is from the end of the seventeenth and start of the eighteenth century, it would be misleading to normalise the text to Old Norse, a standard based on common phonological and orthographical features of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Yet there are differences between sixteenth- to eighteenth-century phonology and orthography and those of Modern Icelandic. For that reason I avoid these two standards and present a text regularised to seventeenth-century Icelandic. As Stefán Karlsson makes clear when he explains that ‘the present-day written language is in many respects closer to Old Icelandic than to the Icelandic found in most printed books published between 1540 and 1800’ (2004, 66), seventeenth-century Icelandic (both printed and handwritten) was not just a midway point in the development from Old Norse to Modern Icelandic, but also included a number of forms which are not found at either end of the surrounding spectrum (and thus may unflatteringly be termed linguistic dead-ends).

Since the edition produced here is not meant to be diplomatic, the regularisation applied does not accurately reproduce all of the palaeographic features of the manuscript, nor every quirk of Jón Erlendsson’s spelling. One example of a feature not represented is the use of *e* in final positions and unstressed final syllables (*Illuge, fyrer*). While that spelling is predominant, it is not consistently used (both *Illugi* and *Illuge* appear, for example, on f.141r) and so the more familiar form is retained in this edition. Thus the aim has been to produce an internally consistent text (by removing variation within the spelling of individual words) which retains many of the typical features of seventeenth-century orthography. These typical features are not the only ones with a claim to correctness, but they do appear with most frequency in the seventeenth-century manuscripts which have served as the basis for this study. It should be borne in mind that the orthography did not necessarily accurately represent the phonological features of the language at the time and a certain conservatism, perhaps even intentional antiquarianism, may have inspired the continued usage of written forms long since detached from the spoken forms of the day. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the result is not too burdensome for someone familiar with either Old Norse or Modern Icelandic to read.

The *-r* ending of masculine nouns and adjectives in the nominative singular came to be represented as *-ur* regularly from the second half of the sixteenth century. This reflected an earlier phonological shift where an epenthetic vowel, sometimes called Svarabakhth intrusion, appeared in these endings (Schulte 2005, 1089). The *-ur* ending is used here and is also the common form in Modern Icelandic.

A syllable-final *-k* (with relatively little stress) came to be pronounced as a fricative from the thirteenth century onwards and this is represented orthographically from the sixteenth century on as *-g* (Stefán Karlsson 2004, 19). Thus Old Norse *ok, ek, mik* and *mjok* were commonly being written as *og, ég, mig* and *míog* in the seventeenth century, and these spellings have survived until the present. They are thus the forms used here.

Some time between 1400 and 1550 the forms *ø* and *ø* disappeared to a great extent and were replaced by a number of new alternatives (Stefán Karlsson 2004, 49). The phonological changes underlying this orthographical development are quite complex (see, for example, Sveinn Bergsvinsson 1955). The seventeenth century shows a great deal of variation in replacement orthographical forms, all of which are represented by *ó* in Modern Icelandic. In AM 203 fol. the forms *au* (e.g. *Skjöldr > Skjaulldur*) and *ó* (e.g. *Björn > Bjöörn*) appear. To avoid confusion and to highlight the phonological coalescence of the two older sounds, *ó* is used here.

Yet another result of this vocalic development and subsequent orthographical experimentation is the form *gjóra*, which is transmitted throughout
all the finite forms, for older *gera/gora* (Björn K. Pórólfsson 1925, 63) and is thus the form used here. The Modern Icelandic form is *gera*.

There were two types of *l* in Old Norse and with time one of them, the dental *l*, which occurred before the letters *t* and *d*, came to be represented orthographically as *ll* giving -*lld* and -*lt* (Stefán Karlssson 2004, 45), for example in words such as *mæliti* and *helldur*. Although Modern Icelandic has reverted to the single *l* spellings, the *ll* forms are used here.

In the fourteenth century a phonological shift led to the merging of the sounds represented by *rl* and *ll* (Stefán Karlssson 2004, 46). This shows itself in new spellings for words such as *karl*, *kelting* and *varla*: they become *kall*, *kelling* and *valla*. These forms are used here.

In the first half of the fourteenth century *vá* became *vo*, a change that is reflected regularly in the spelling found in manuscripts from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards (Stefán Karlssson 2004, 14, 54). Thus earlier *svá* is written *svo* here, as it still is in Modern Icelandic.

By 1300 the effect of -*ng* after a vowel was leading to certain changes in the vowel quality. The *e* in *eng* came to be a diphthong, *eing*, which was represented orthographically as such from 1400 onwards (Stefán Karlssson 2004, 14, 47). This change affected, for example, *enginn* ‘nobody’, a masculine nominative form with its origins in the indeclinable Old Norse *engi* (originally ‘anybody’; see Björn K. Pórólfsson 1925, 50). The Modern Icelandic form is *engin*, but *einginn* is the form used here.

*Hellir* is an example of a ja-stem masculine noun which underwent alteration in its oblique forms from around 1600 onwards (see Björn K. Pórólfsson 1925, 78). While previously the acc. and dat. sg. had been *hell*, they then became *hellir*, with the -*r* treated as radical. The same occurred in the nom. and acc. pl. where older *hellar* and *hella* became *hellir*/*hellir* and *hellira/*hellra* respectively. These forms survived until the nineteenth century, when language purism encouraged a shift back to the older forms, which are now the accepted ones (see Stefán Karlssson 2004, 24). The intermediate forms with the radical -*r* are used here.

*Komustum* is given as the first-person plural middle voice of the strong verb *komr*. It does not appear in AM 203 fol. (see the note on the substitution) but is by far the most common form in other manuscript witnesses of *Iljuga saga*, e.g. AM 193 d fol., AM 582 4to, Papp. 4to nr 21, AM 363 I & II 4to. The Old Norse form is *komunk*, and the accepted form in Modern Icelandic is *komumst*. The -*ustum* forms were short-lived: they appeared first in the seventeenth century and language purists made a concerted effort to remove them from the language from the eighteenth century onwards (Kjartan G. Ottósson 1992, 219–27).

Certain forms of the Old Norse demonstrative pronoun/adjective *sjá/pessi* changed gradually in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Stefán Karlssson, 28–29), thus the older forms *penna* (masc. acc. sg.), *pessi* (fem. dat. sg.) and *pessar* (fem. gen. sg.) became *pennan*, *pessari* and *pessalar*, the forms used in this edition.

Another pronoun/adjective which changed was Modern Icelandic *nokkur*, which had previously been represented orthographically in various ways. *Nakkvarr* and *nokkurr* were common in the earliest period of Old Norse but gradually came to be replaced by the -*o*- forms. This had taken place by the seventeenth century, as had the dropping of the medial -*u*- in forms such as *nokkr* (fem. acc. sg. from *nökkrur*) and *nokbru* (neut. dat. sg. from *nokkuru*) (Stefán Karlssson 2004, 29).

The manuscripts of *Iljuga saga* from the period in question predominantly show the form *konur*, used here in the text, which is an intermediate orthographic representation of the changing phonemic state between Old Norse *konungur* and Modern Icelandic *köngr*.

**Manuscripts Containing the Text of Iljuga saga**

The shelfmarks of most manuscripts give a lot of information to the initiated. Some, but not all, contain information on the size of the manuscript, usually as fol., 4to or 8vo (in decreasing size order), and other letters give information on the location. Manuscripts which form part of the Arnamagnæan Collection, housed in two institutes, one in Copenhagen and one in Reykjavik, generally have a shelfmark beginning with AM (which is derived from Arni Magnusson, the original collector). In the list below, the location of these manuscripts is signalled by a (C) or an (R) after the shelfmark, since it is not otherwise immediately apparent. Some later additions to the Arnamagnæan Collection have shelfmarks which do not begin with AM. In this list there are a couple of examples which were bequeathed by the Danish philologist Rasmus Rask—they begin with his surname—and one which was acquired by the Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, the Icelandic manuscript institute, after its formation and has a shelfmark which is derived from Árni Magnusson, the original collector. In the list below, manifold shelfmarks beginning with Lbs, but later collections acquired from Jón Sigurðarson and Hið Íslenzka Bókmenntafélag have shelfmarks beginning with, respectively, JS and IB. British Library manuscripts have shelfmarks beginning with BL and followed by Add. (which stands for ‘Additional’, the designation given to all manuscripts donated to or purchased by the library after 1756). Manuscripts listed below which come
from other collections have the name of the institutions in which they are housed written in parentheses after the shelfmarks.

The dates given are, where possible, those of the text of *Illuga saga* contained within the manuscript (many manuscripts were written over a period of years and the texts within can be individually dated). When a precise year is given, it is usually because it has been supplied in a colophon at the end of the saga. In other cases an interval of years is given on the basis of scribal identification, the scribe’s death providing a *terminus ante quem*. Relationship to other manuscripts and the date of arrival in collections can also help with dating. In the absence of any other information, dating is made on the basis of palaeographical and orthographical features. For further justification of the dating of individual manuscripts, reference can be made to my doctoral thesis (Lavender 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM 123 8vo (R)</td>
<td>1500–1550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM 157 h fol. (R)</td>
<td>1665–1685, just the beginning of the saga, previously formed a unit with AM 193 d fol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM 169 d fol. (R)</td>
<td>1640–1672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM 193 d fol. (R)</td>
<td>1665–1685. The beginning has been added by a later hand, previously formed a unit with AM 157 h fol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM 203 fol. (C)</td>
<td>1640–1672</td>
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<tr>
<td>AM 298 I–III 4to (R)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>BL Add. 11159</td>
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ONP = Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog 1-. 1995–. (word list: http://dataonp.ad.sc.ku.dk/wordlist_d.html)


ILLUGA SAGA GRÍÐARFÓSTRA

THE SAGA OF ILLUGI, GRÍÐUR’S FOSTER-SON


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1 Since a horn is a ‘corner’ or ‘nook’, a landshorn is, according to Cleasby-Vigfusson (279), ‘the outskirts of a country’ while a garðshorn is a ‘yard-nook’ or ‘cottage’ (191). Frítze wonders whether garðshorn could mean ‘hjörne af en indhegning’ [corner of an enclosure], I 563). In the present context, where the residence is said to be a short way from the kingdom, the latter interpretation is not viable and we must assume that the garðshorn is considered, perhaps mistakenly, to be merely a farm or residence lying in a peripheral position relative to that kingdom.

2 In other manuscripts of Illuga saga, such as AM 123 8vo, Illugi’s father is said to be named Svíði (hinn) sókndjarfi (‘battle-bold’). Svíði hin sókndjarfi is a character who turns up in several other sagas, most notably as a companion of Hálfdan Eysteinsson in that hero’s eponymous saga, as the son of Bógu-Bósi in Bósa saga ok Herranóts, and as the father of Vilmundur in Vilmundar saga víðuta (which would make Vilmundur and Illugi at the very least half-brothers).
En kongur sagði Björn skyldi fylgja honum, ‘hví hann er hverjum kamma
meiri og bilar allðrei í striði. Hann mun þér vera hollur og trúð, sem hann
hefur mér verið,’ sagði kongur, og skilja þér nú tal sitt.

Eptir þetta gengur kongsson til Sviði og segir Hilldi tal þeirra feðga.
Hún segir son sinn ungan vera og eigi í hernað fara mega. ‘Er hann og
ekki reynndur,’ segir hún. ‘Villda ég og ekki helldur að Björn brygði honum
þvíat hann þyrði ekki að berjast með þér í orrustu.’

Lykur Hilldur svo máli. En kongsson fer heim til hallar og er mjög
óglæður.

Ambátt sú var hjá Hilldi er Sunlóð hét.3 Hún var fjölkunnug og hín mesta
kvöldrida.4 Hún hafði margan manna illa leikiz. Hilldur kemur að máli
við Illuga og biður hann sækkja þál í sel er Sviði lét eptir. Hann játar því.

Pað var síðags er Illugi gekk heiman. Hann für hart og kom til seljanna
og fann þar pállin. Það var myrt af nött, og fer þró frá selinu. Og er hann
var skammt kominn, var hlaupið á bak honum svo hart að hælarnir komu
framan á bringuna. Þetta kvikindi hafði vönd í hendi og barði Illuga með.

Hér var nú komin sunlöð. Illugi5 gengur ekki að síður og bar flagð þetta
langa leið, þar til hann kemur að einum stórum steini. Hann keyrir flagðið
niður við steininn svo hart að hryggurinn brotnar, og lét hún svo líf sitt.
Létti hann eigi sinni ferð fyrð enn hann kemur heim. Hilldur, móður hans,
var úti er hann kom heim. Illugi var þá ófrýnn. Hilldur var þá blið.

‘Hafa nokkur nýttíndi gjórist í þinni ferð, son minn,’ sagði hún. ‘Fannstu
pállinn sem ég vísaði þér á?’

‘Já,’ segir Illugi.

Hún mælti: ‘Fannstu nokkuð stúlku mínna, er ég sendi að afla mér
elldiviðar?’

Illugi sagði: ‘Valla ætla ég verri stúlka finniss þvíat hún reið mér, en
ég banaði henni með þeim hætti að ég braut í henni hrygginni við stein.’

Hilldur kvað hann mega vera í sendiferðunum, ‘og vil ég,’ segir hún,
‘að þú þjónir Sigurði kongssyni og fylgir honum í víkingu.’

3 In the various manuscripts there is a great deal of confusion about the name
of Hilldur’s servant woman. In AM 203 fol. alone her name is written ‘Sunlóð/
Silmalúð’ and ‘Silmalúð’ (the former has been used consistently in this edition).
More extreme versions, such as ‘Sundand’, ‘Snulund’ and ‘Snúlant’ are found in
later manuscripts. The name was clearly unfamiliar to many (unlike Hilldur and
Grímsálfir, no similar names for women are found in any other fornaldarsögur).

4 Sunlóð’s supernatural qualities seem to have caused just as many problems
for copyists as her name. The term auldrida (i.e. öldrida) appears in AM 203
fol. See the discussion in the introduction.

5 ‘The name ‘Ingjalldur’ appears here in the manuscript in place of ‘Illugi’ (like-
wise on two other occasions further on in the text: Björn og Ingjalldur skilliðu fara
báðir og Eptir þetta fylgði Sigýr þeim Ingjalldi og Hilldi til básins), but in both
AM 203 fol. and copies attempts have been made to remedy the scribal oversight.

But the king said Björn should accompany him, ‘because he is better
than any other warrior and never wavers in battle. He will be faithful and
tru to you, just as he has been to me,’ said the king and they now end
their conversation.

After this the prince goes to Sviði and tells Hilldur about his conversa-
tion with his father. She says that her son is young and cannot go raiding.
‘He is also untried,’ she says. ‘Nor would I wish for Björn to reproach him
on account of him not daring to fight alongside you in battle.’

With this Hilldur ends their conversation. The prince goes home to the
hall and is very unhappy.

There was a slave living with Hilldur whose name was Sunlóð. She
was adept in the magical arts and often rode rooftops at night. She had done
many a man an ill turn. Hilldur comes to speak with Illugi and asks him to
fetch the turf spade up at the mountain pasture which Sviði had left behind.
He agrees to that. It was late in the day when Illugi left home. He set a
good pace and came to the mountain pasture and found the peat spade there.
It was dark at that time, night having fallen, and yet he sets off from the
mountain pasture. And when he had gone a short way, he felt something
jump on his back so forcefully that the heels came round onto his chest.
This creature had a stick in its hand and beat Illugi with it. Sunlóð had
arrived. Illugi walks on nevertheless and carried that hag a long way until
he comes to a big stone. He flings the hag down against the stone so hard
that her spine snaps, and in this way she dies. He did not dawdle on the way
until he reaches home. Illugi was then quite surly. Hilldur was friendly.

‘Is there any news from your trip, my son?’ she said. ‘Did you find the
peat spade which I sent you after?’

‘Yes,’ says Illugi.

She said: ‘Did you come across my girl, whom I sent to gather fire-
wood for me?’

Illugi said: ‘I very much doubt that a worse girl exists because she
rode me, and I killed her in such a manner that I broke her spine against
a stone.’

Hilldur said that he was allowed to go on the mission, ‘and I would
like,’ she says, ‘for you to serve Prince Sigurður and accompany him on
his raids.’
Illugi játar því blöðiga og gladdist við þetta og gengur inn með móður sinni og svaf af um nöttina.


Sagði Björn svo: ‘Pú, Illugi,’ segir hann, ‘skallt róa yfir fjöðr þennan og leita að elldi og ef þú finnur eigi, skal ég ræða fyrir höfði þínu. En ef þú finnur hann, skalltu eiga hring þennan er ég helld á.’

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6 A reef on a sail (the English word is derived from Old Norse rif) is a section which, in case of strong winds, can be tied up, thus reducing the surface area of the sail and tension. This action is called ‘reefing’. Presumably the winds are so strong here that owing to the inclement weather it is impossible even to carry out such a manoeuvre.

7 Gandvík has been interpreted as referring to two locations in the Nordic world, both the Baltic Sea/Gulf of Bothnia and the White Sea. In Fundinn Noregur the location of Gandvík is given with reference to another gulf, of which it is said þat köllum vör Helsingjaboð (i.e. the Gulf of Bothnia) (Fas, II 88). This makes Gandvík’s identification as the Gulf of Bothnia impossible and as the White Sea more probable.

Illugi agrees gladly and became very happy on hearing that and goes inside with his mother and slept through the night.

In the morning Illugi prepares to go to the king’s hall. While the king is eating his breakfast, he goes before the king and greets him. The king receives him courteously, but when Sigurður sees him, he greets him most warmly and invites him to sit beside him. Illugi now does just that. Everything proceeds in this way for several days, with Sigurður staying at home with his father, and Illugi too.

3. Now the time arrives when Sigurður’s ships were ready. They set sail, and that had then been agreed that both Björn and Illugi should go along. They now sail to the Orkney Islands and Scotland and made daring attacks on both places and win a great victory over the Scots and get a large amount of wealth. There is not a place that they make land where they do not have the victory. All people were scared of them.

In the autumn Sigurður wants to head home, and then a great storm brews. The ship begins to be carried along quite fast, and they are driven north in the sea. The sails are pulled taut so that they strain at the reefs. All of the ropes begin to snap now. Land is nowhere to be seen. The sea starts to get rough so that it rushes in on both sides of the ship, but all of those who were on that ship were so brave that not one spoke a cowardly word. The ship now begins to leak a great deal, and they all stand in bilge water for 8 days. They are then driven a long way north in the sea into that bay which is called Gandvík. At this point they tie up the sails with sturdy knots and are hit by great waves. They were on the verge of being wrecked. Most of them were exhausted. Then they see land. It looked most like rocky crags. Then the ship is driven up into an inlet with many islands. The ship and its crew were all intact. The prince says that they should wait there for a good wind. Most of his men were completely drained from the exertion. It was also so cold that they thought it would be the death of them because they had no fire on the ship. Prince Sigurður bore himself well, but they would have been glad to obtain fire, though none was for the taking. Björn then began to get very cold, as did Sigurður’s other men.

So Björn spoke up: ‘You, Illugi,’ he says, ‘must row over that fjord and search for fire and if you do not find it, then your fate will be in my hands. But if you find it, you shall own this ring which I hold in my hand.’

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Gandvík’s identification as the Gulf of Bothnia impossible and as the White Sea more probable.
Illugi sagði: ‘Víst skal ég eigi veðja höfði mínu við þig, Björn, en gjarnan skal ég að elldi leita ef vorum mönnum kann gagn að verða.’

Rær hann nú einnsuman frá sínum mönnum.


Eigj lengra enn á lendar á bakið, en allt á tær í fyrir. Augu hennar voru græn, enni helblátt. Eyrun féllu um vangana. Hver vill kalla hana fríða?

8 Perhaps there is a certain ironic ambiguity here: does Illugi want to accept the offer which has been made to him, or does he want Björn to freeze to death?

9 Most manuscripts contain ámáttligri ‘more terrible/loathsome’, but in either case the assertion is far from complimentary.

A pun on two meanings of lýsing may be intended. The first is ‘illumination’ and by extension ‘daybreak’, the second ‘marriage banns’, that is, the public notice of an impending marriage. Since Illugi has arrived at the cave in the evening, wait until morning for the marriage banns.’

Gríður says that there is no need to wait for daybreak (and/or the granting of official permission) to claim his reward.
Illugi said that that is how it would be. He goes to the bed and throws off his clothes, and the old woman assists her daughter, and then they both end up in one bed. Illugi turns towards her and starts to have fun, but she shows no sign of enjoying herself. Then Gríður grabs him by the hair and pulls him forward onto the side of the bed, and with the other hand she drew a glinting and extremely sharp short-sword and aimed it at his head, but Illugi lay still and did not flinch.

Gríður then spoke angrily: ‘Listen to me, you wicked spawn of Satan! Did you think I would put up with you shaming my daughter? No!’ she said, ‘you’ll get death as a recompense instead.’

Illugi spoke: ‘My heart has never yet been afraid, and thus I came to this place because fate intended that it should be so. Nobody dies more than once, and I am not frightened by your threats.’

At this Gríður hurled him back into the bed-closet. He then turns back to his bride and had a great time. And when he was as affectionate as he could be with her, Gríður winds his hair around her hand and drags him forward onto the edge of the bed and swings the short-sword right up close against his head.

‘You are bold,’ she says, ‘to shame my daughter and you will get death as a recompense instead.’

Illugi said: ‘I do not fear my death.’

She then spoke while cackling malevolently: ‘I have not met such a man who does not fear his own death. And it is now time to get some rest, so sleep tight!’

Illugi turns to his wife and is now beyond tender with her. Gríður leaps then at the bed and drags him forward onto the edge of it. She lifts her short-sword very high and she is not then a pretty sight to behold. Everything went as before with Illugi not being afraid and lying still.

Gríður spoke: ‘You aren’t like other men. Your veins never quiver. Now you shall be granted your life, and I give to you my daughter, who is called Hilldur, and I will never be able to repay the good deed you have done because you have delivered me from a terrible curse, since in this manner I have killed many a man, and they were all scared of my fearsome short-sword. I have killed 16 brave fellows with this short-sword, and such is not a woman’s work. Now I’ll tell you my life story.'

5. ‘A king named Áli ruled over Álfheimar. His queen was called Álffrún. She had one daughter, and that girl was called Signý and she was outstanding in all respects. And I am that same Signý. And when she had come of age and finished her education, she was married to a king

11 Ælfheimar or Álfheimar can be interpreted as the hazily-located world of the elves, along the same lines as Jötunheimar/Jötunheimar. In Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar, however, we are presented with a much more specific geographical location. There Álfheimar are described as lying between two rivers: the Gautelfr, which marked the northern border of Gautland, and the Raumelfr, which marked the southern border of Raumaríki (Fas, III 1).

5. ‘Kongur sá réð fyrir Álfheimum'or Áli hét. Drottning hans hét Álffrún. Hún átti dóttur eina, og sú hét Signý og var hún að öllu vel að sér bún. Og er ég sú sama Signý. Og nær hún hafði fengið alldur og nám, var hún gipt


Ég mát þá ekki mæla fyrir harmi.

Hilídur, döttir mín, mælti þá: “Það villda ég, Gríðhildur,” sagði hún, “að ég launad þer nokkrur þín álög og það mæli ég um að óðrum fæti

12 According to the ONP, austurríki can refer to any of the Baltic or Slavic lands, located approximately to the east of Scandinavia.

13 vorum appears in the manuscript but the first person plural form vorum is clearly required. There are several such verbal incongruities in the following section which may be the result of Jón Erlandsson’s (not fully successful) attempts to turn the third-person framed story into an intense first-person account.

14 The motif of the recurring battle, where the participants receive mortal wounds but rise the next day to fight again, is known from the Hjáðningavíg in Skáldskaparmál and Sórla þáttur. Here, however, as with a similar sister-battle

by the name of Eiríkur. He fell in battle in the east. He had a daughter who was called Hilídur and was the most beautiful of maidens. And she is now beside you in the bed. Then I went to my father, and we stayed with him. My mother then fell sick and died, and the king, my father, took it hard. I was in my bower and grieved greatly for my mother. My father then took as his queen a woman named Grímhildur. She was beautiful to look at, but she was in reality the worst troll-hag. The king loved her deeply. They had 7 daughters, and they all took after their mother and became the worst of hags.

‘It came to pass in the kingdom that soon after the king, my father, married Grímhildur, a man disappeared every fifth night, and everybody thought that Grímhildur must be behind it. The king then began to grow old, and at that point the queen thought there was little to be gained from sharing a bed with him and much less than she wanted because she had a prodigious sex drive. She plotted then to betray the king and get herself another younger man, so she gave him poison to drink, and he died immediately as a result of that, and he was buried in a mound beside his queen. Grímhildur got worse now to the extent that she laid waste to the whole kingdom, despoiling it of both beast and man. After these terrible deeds she came to my bower where I was sitting with my daughter.

‘When she arrived, she spoke thus: “You, Signý,” she says, “have sat here for a long time in great honour and esteem, but I shall take all that away from you and I cast this spell upon you that you shall disappear from this place and reside in a cave and become the worst of trollwives. You shall be named Gríður. Your daughter shall accompany you, and each man who looks upon her will fall madly in love with her. You shall murder each man who you see in her bed. You have 7 sisters, all of whom are my daughters. They shall engage in battle with you every night. They shall cut you all into pieces and mutilate you, but you will never die and you will never be freed from this curse until you meet that man who does not fear your terrifying short-sword when you swing it at him. And on account of the fact that it will seem terrifying to them, such a man will never be found!”

‘I could not speak for grief.’

Hilídur, my daughter, then spoke: “I would like, Gríðhildur,” she said, “to repay you somewhat for your curse and thus I pronounce that with one foot you

in Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana, the emphasis seems to be rather on the cut-throat nature of sisterly relationships, as well as providing a rather gruesome addition to the curse.
er hann kallaði hilldur, dóttur hennar, tröllkonu.

gegndi um líflát hans, en signý hafði hengt hann á þessari nótt fyrir það

Þeir sjá um síðir að hann hangir við sigldútre. Þeir vissu ekki hverju þetta

skipinu, en er þeir vakna, sjá þeir að björn er horfinn og leituðu hans.

því trúa er björn sagði. eina nótt var það, er menn kongssonar sváfu á

hún sé hin mestu tröllkona. sigurður bað björn þegja og ekki villdi hann

það óveður og kvað illuga hafa sótt hana í millum og sagði björn að

nú hitna. Mánuð lá kongsson þar, og gaf þeim alldrei byr. Kendi björn

heim til Danmörk. hafði hann fengið ofurfjár og gaf gull og silfur á báðar

og vil ég það halldist hvorki.”

‘Hildur sagði að það yrði að staða. Hurfum15 við mæðgur þá burt í

hellið þennan, og er ég sú hin sama Signý, en Hildur mún döttir. Og vil

eg ní gipta þér döttur mín og launa þér svo að þú hefur leyst okkur úr

þessum álögum.’

Og og ændaðri þessari sögu komu í hellirinn VII skessur með biturligum

skálomum og hlaupa til Gríðar og höggva til hennar bæði hart og tíðum. Hleypur

Illuga þá upp og tekur sverð sitt og höggva til þessara skessu og lettir

eigi fyrir enn hann hefur drepið þær allar og brennir þær síðan á miklu báli.

Gríður mælti: ‘Nú hefur þú, Illugi, frelsta okkur mæðgur af þessum

skessum. Hef ég átt í þessu striði XI vetur.’

Illugi sagði það nógut langt veríð hafa.

6. Eptir þetta fylgdi Signý þeim Illuga og Hildli til bátsins og gaf hún

þeim mikit gull. Hafði Illugi nú með sér eldinn. Skilldist Signý þar við

þau.16 Illugi rær til manna sinna. Þeir urðu við það glaðir og létu þeir sér

nú hitna. Mánúð lá kongsson þar, og gaf þeim alldrei byr. Kendi Björn

Hildli það óveður og kvað Illuga hafa sótt hana í hellra og sagði Björn að

hún sé hin mesta tröllkona. Sigurður þá björn þegja og ekki villdi hann

þvi trúður er Björn sagði. Eina nót var það, er menn kongssonar svafú á

skipinu, en er þeir vakna, sjá þeir að Björn er hofrinn og leituðu hans.

Þeir sjá um síður að hann hangir við sigldútre. Þeir vissu ekki hverju þetta

gegndi um lifðan þans, en Signý háði hengt hann á þessari nótt fyrir það

er hann kallaði Hildli, döttur hennar, tröllkonu.

Eptir það sigldi Sigurður frá Finnmörk, og gaf honum allvel byr, og kom

heim til Danmerkur. Hafði hann fengið ofurfjár og gaf gull og silfur á báðar

shall stand in this bower, and with the other foot at home in the king’s

hall. Slaves shall make a large fire beneath you. That fire shall blaze

both night and day, and you shall be completely burnt by it from below,

but freeze from above, and you shall never have any respite. And if we,

mother and daughter, should be freed from this curse, then you shall im-

mediately fall down into the fire and burn.”

‘Grímhildur then began to speak and said: “Our chatter is so silly, and I

would prefer that neither of these pronouncements should come to pass.”

‘Hildur said that they would stand. We were then whisked away into

cave, and I am the same Signý, and Hildur my daughter. And I

would now like to marry you to my daughter and repay you for freeing

us from this curse.’

And at the end of the story 7 hags with sharp short-swords came into

cave and run towards Gríður and strike at her vigorously and repeated-

edly. Illugi then jumps up and takes his sword and slashes at these hags

doesn’t stop until he has killed all of them and burns them afterwards

on a large pyre.

Gríður spoke: ‘Now you, Illugi, have saved us, mother and daughter,

from these hags. I have been engaged in this battle for 11 years.’

Illugi said that was quite long enough.

6. After that Signý accompanied Illugi and Hildur to the boat and gave

them a great deal of gold. Illugi now had fire with him. Signý leaves

them there. Illugi rows to his men. They became extremely glad at that

and set to warming themselves up. The prince waited there for a month,

but got no fair wind. Björn said that Hildur was the cause of that bad

weather and said that Illugi had gone looking for her in caves and he

also said that she was the greatest of trollwives. Sigurður asked Björn to

hold his tongue and didn’t want to believe what he said. It happened one

night, while the prince’s men slept on the ship; when they woke up, they

see that Björn has disappeared and searched for him. It didn’t take long

for them to see that he is hanging from the mast. They had no idea how

to explain his death, but Signý had hanged him that very night because

he had called Hildur, her daughter, a trollwife.

After that Sigurður sailed from Finnmark and he got most favour-

able winds and came home to Denmark. He had acquired a huge

amount of wealth and bestowed gold and silver left, right and centre.

15 Further instances of lack of concord (see note 13) are found in this passage

and have been corrected in this text. Here komast has been replaced by the first

person plural komustum, as it appears in most other texts of Illuga saga (see

Introduction, p. xxxii for a description of this form), and hurfu has been corrected

to the first person plural form hurfun.

16 It has been pointed out that, considering that the curse has been lifted, it

makes no sense for Gríður not to accompany Illugi and her daughter away from

the cave. See Introduction, pp. xix–xx for the attempt presented in one manuscript,

IB 233 4to (f.26v), to justify this behaviour.
he is now at home with his father. Illugi was with Sigurður for a long time, although he had a large farm near the hall. A little later Hringur fell ill, which led to his death. Sigurður organises the funeral feast and invites all the best men in the kingdom to it. And then Sigurður was elected king over that territory which his father had ruled over. King Hringur had been a petty king over Denmark and had ruled over Skåne. Signý comes then to Denmark, and Illugi and Hilldur received her warmly. Illugi tells his men, those who were in the kingdom, all the details about her. King Sigurður asked for her hand in marriage. Signý said that Illugi should decide about that. The king discusses that matter with him. Illugi gives Signý, his kinswoman, in marriage to him. Their life together was good. They had many children, and all of them became men of distinction. King Sigurður and Signý lived for a long time; Illugi lived longer, but his children with Hilldur have not been mentioned. This Illugi became later on the sworn brother of Gnoð-Ásmundur. And here we end the Saga of Illugi, Gríður’s Foster-son.

19 bardaga appears in the manuscript, but this has been corrected to búgarð, the form which is found in most of the textual witnesses (e.g. AM 123 8vo, AM 193 d fol., AM 582 4to).

20 In several manuscripts, the earliest of which is BL Add. 4859 (1694), this sentence is followed by the words og var hann síðan Gríðarfóstri kallaður ‘and from then on he was called the foster-son of Gríður’. All seventeenth-century manuscripts (and most of the subsequent ones) bear a title which contains the nickname ‘Gríðarfóstri’ (usually Söguþáttur af Illuga Gríðarfóstra), but the nickname is only attested within the text in these above-mentioned manuscripts. The name itself highlights the ironic nature of much of the saga, particularly if we compare Illuga saga to Hálfdanar saga Brönumfóstra. Brana, in that saga, saves Hálfdan (son of King Hringur of Denmark) from a trollwife named Sleggja, gives him magical gifts and brokers his marriage with a princess. These actions appropriate to a foster-parent stand in stark contrast to Gríður’s attacks on Illugi, murder of Björn (stated to be due to a personal vendetta) and brokering of a marriage with her own daughter.

21 At the end of Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana we are told that the eponymous Ásmundur was, after the main events of the saga, given the nickname Gnoð-Ásmundur for building a ship (the Gnoð) which was the biggest ever made (Fas, III 365). No mention is made of Illugi in that saga.
Glossary

Numbers in the glossary refer to numbered lines in the text. Entries for different forms of personal pronouns and possessive pronouns are collected under the entry for, respectively, the first, second and third person (masculine) singular forms (students should refer to an Old Norse or Modern Icelandic grammar in order to familiarise themselves with these paradigms). Likewise, entries for demonstrative pronouns, articles and all adjectives appear collected under the entry for the masculine nominative singular form. Where an oblique form of a word begins with a letter different from that of the dictionary entry a signpost is included in the glossary. Where line references are given but no grammatical data, the form referred to is the same as the headword (i.e. the infinitive in the case of a verb; generally the nominative singular for a noun or adjective). A maximum of three line references are given for any one form, but if ‘etc.’ is appended further examples can be found within the text. The following abbreviations are used:

acc. accusative  
adj. adjective  
adv. adverb  
art. article  
aux. auxiliary verb  
card. cardinal  
comp. comparative  
conj. conjunction  
dat. dative  
def. with suffixed definite article  
dem. demonstrative  
e-d eittvað, accusative of object  
e-n einhvern, accusative of person  
e-m einhverjum, dative of person  
e-s einhvers, genitive of person/object  
e-u einhverju, dative of object  
f. feminine  
fig. figurative  
gen. genitive  
indef. indefinite  
inf. infinitive  
interj. interjection  
impr. impersonal (construction)  
imper. imperative  
irreg. vb. irregular verb  
m. masculine  
n. neuter  
nom. nominative  
um. numeral  
ord. ordinal  
past past tense  
pers. personal name  
pl. plural  
poss. possessive  
pp. past participle  
prep. preposition  
pres. present tense  
pres. part. present participle  
prei.-pres. preterite-present verb  
pron. pronoun  
refl. reflexive (middle voice)  
rel. pron. relative pronoun  
sg. singular  
str. strong (verb or adjective)  
subj. subjunctive  
sup. superlative  
s-one someone  
s-thing something  
w. with  
wk. weak (verb or adjective)  
1st, 2nd, 3rd first, second, third person

að prep. w. dat. to, towards 47, 92, 121 etc.; at 61; with regards to, concerning 6, 9, 95 etc.; in, at, ~ morgni in the morning 61, ~endaðri at the end 194; w. inf. to, in order to 24, 35, 61 etc.; conj. that 13, 19, 20 etc.; used superfluously after rel. pron., ‘hverjar ~ 174.

af prep. w. dat. from, of 5, 144, 162 etc.; resulting from, due to 42, 81; as regards, with respect to 3; ~ sér for one’s own part, on one’s own behalf 121.

 afl n. strength, physical prowess.  
 ~ afla dat. sg. 9.

afla wk. to get, to fetch, to earn (sér for oneself) 24, 53.

alldrei adv. never 30, 145, 176 etc.; ~ enn never yet, until now 127.

alldur m. age; fá ~ to come of age 151.

allglaður adj. extremely happy 131.
allur adj. all (of, of the), (the) whole 5, 10, 70 etc.; n. sg. as adv. entirely, directly 99, 133; n. sg. as pron. everything 16, 141; ad öllu in all regards, with respect to everything 17, 117, 150; see also VEGUR.
- alla m. acc. pl. 10, 175.
- allar f. acc. pl. 197.
- allir m. nom. pl. 74, 76, 112 etc.
- allra m. gen. pl. 5.
- allt n. acc. sg. 166, 170.
- allt n. nom. sg. 70.
- öll f. nom. sg. 185.
- öll n. acc. pl. 221.
- öll n. nom. pl. 224.
- öllum f. dat. pl. 159.
allvel adv. extremely well; ~ gaf honum byr there was a most favourable wind 212.
ambátt f. (female) servant, slave, maid 38.
ambáttligur adj. like a slave woman, wretched.
- ambáttligri comp. f. acc. sg. 111.
andast refl. wk. to breathe one’s last, to die.
- andaðist past 3rd sg. 155.
anagnar adj. and pron. other, another; öðrum . . . öðrum with one . . . with the other 182-83 (‘öðrum’ m. dat. sg.).
- aðra m. acc. pl. 12, 84.
- aðr m. nom. pl. 143.
- annan m. acc. sg. 109, 164.
- annari f. dat. sg. 122.
- annars m. gen. sg. 14.
aptur adv. back 130.
arnarkló f. eagle’s talon.
- arnarklaer nom. pl. 98.
auga n. eye.
- augu nom. pl. 99.
austur m. bilge water.
- austra dat. sg. 76.
austuriki n. ‘the eastern empire’, Eastern Europe (Baltic lands, Russia) 152 (dat. sg.) (see note).
á prep. w. dat. on 75, 197, 207 etc., (with)in 26, 183, about 221; prep. w. acc. onto 43, 74 etc., at 10; ~ sér (denoting a personal quality or physical feature) e.g. nefið ~ þér ‘your nose’ 110.
áfall n. wave (that breaks over a ship).
- áföll acc. pl. 78.
Álfheimur, Álfheimar m. the world of the elves (see note).
- Álfheimum dat. pl. 149.
Álfrún f. pers. 149.
Áli m. pers. 149.
álog n. pl. curse, spell 182.
- álögum dat. 146, 177, 186 etc.
árás f. assault, attack, raid.
- árásum acc. pl. 68.
ást f. love; fella ~ til e-s to fall in love with s-one 107, 173.
átt(i), see eiga.
bak n. back 43; á ~ið at the back, behind 99.
bana wk. to kill.
- banaði past 1st sg. 56.
band n. bond, knot, place where two ropes are connected 73.
- bónum dat. pl. 77.
bani m. death; fá bana to die 165.
- bana gen. sg. 216.
bardagamaður m. warrior 4.
bardagi m. fight, battle; eiga bardaga to fight 175 (m. acc. sg.),
barn n. child.
- barna gen. pl. 226.
- börn acc. pl. 224.
báðir adj. both 67; n. as adv. both 166, 184, 195; see also HÖND.
- báðar f. nom. 98.
- bæði n. acc. 74.
- bæði n. nom. 120.
bál n. fire, pyre 184.
- bál acc. sg. 184.
- báli dat. sg. 197.
- bálið acc. sg. def. 187.
bátur m. boat.
- bát acc. sg. 93.
- bátsins gen. sg. def. 201.
begar str. to carry, to bear; ~ af e­m to surpass s-one, to be better at s-thing than s-one 12 (past 3rd sg.;) ~ til to happen 160 (past 3rd sg.;) ~ sig to comport oneself 83 (past 3rd sg.;) refl. ~ st lít af to take s-thing badly 155 (past 3rd sg.).
- bar past 3rd sg. 45.
berja wk. to strike, to hit; refl. ~ st to fight (medi alongside, við against) 35.
- barði past 3rd sg. 44.
- barðist refl. past 3rd sg. 2.
betur, see vel.
bet(u), see geður.
biðja str. to ask (w. inf. s-one to do s-thing); að ~ e­s sér til handa to ask for s-one’s hand in marriage 222 (past 3rd sg.).
- bað past 3rd sg. 23, 206.
- biður pres. 3rd sg. 40, 63.
bila wk. to fail, to waver.
- bilar pres. 3rd sg. 30.
binda str. to bind, to tie up.
- binda pres. 3rd pl. 77.
bíðulíður adj. sharp.
- biturlígu n. dat. sg. 123.
- biturlígum f. dat. pl. 194.
biða str. to wait (for), to await 80, 118.
bjarg n. cliff, precipice.
- björgum dat. pl. 79.
bjartur adj. bright, shining.
- björntu n. dat. sg. 123.
bjóða str. to invite (e­m til e­s s-one to s-thing).
- býður pres. 3rd sg. 217.
Björn (ráðgjafi) m. pers. 16, 19, 26 etc.
- Björn acc. sg. 88, 206.
blöðliga adv. happily, gladly 59.
blöðuleikur m. diversion, play, enjoyment; gjöra blöðuleik to make sport 121 (m. acc. sg.).
blöður adj. tender, affectionate 6; gjöra sig blöðan to enjoy oneself 121 (m. acc. sg.).
- blöð f. nom. sg. 49.
- blöðastur sup. m. nom. sg. 131, 139.
blygða wk. to shame, to put to shame.
- blygðir subj. pres. 2nd sg. 126.
bóð n. side (of a ship).
- bóð acc. pl. 74.
bregða str. w. dat. to draw (e.g. a sword); fig. ~ e­m to upbraid s-one, to rebuke s-one 34 (sub. pres. 3rd sg.;) e­m ~ til e­s s-one takes after s-one 159 (past 3rd sg.).
- brá past 3rd sg. 123.
breiður adj. broad, wide 109.
brenna str. to burn 185, 187.
- brenndar pp. f. nom. pl. 98.
- brennr pres. 3rd sg. 197.
bringa f. chest.
- bringuna acc. sg. def. 44.
brjóta str. to break.
- braut past 1st sg. 56.
brotna wk. to break.
   - brotnar pres. 3rd sg. 47.

brúður f. bride.
   - brúði dat. sg. 131.

burt adv. away, (usually as ‘í ~’) 171, 190; see also HVERFA.

búa str. to prepare, to make ready; pp. ‘vel búin(n)’ accomplished 6 (sup. m. nom. sg.), 150 (f. nom sg.); refl. ~st to prepare oneself (að for/to) 61 (‘býst’ pres. 1st sg.).
   - búin pp. n. nom. pl. 66.

búgarður m. farmstead.
   - búgarð acc. sg. 215.

búnaður m. adornment, attire.
   - búnaði dat. 97.

byggja wk. to live in, to dwell in.
   - byggir pres. 2nd sg. 171.

byrr m. favourable wind.
   - byr acc. sg. 204, 212.
   - byrjar gen. sg. 81.

dagborð n. breakfast table.
   - dagborðum dat. sg. 61-62.

Dagur m. pers.
   - Dags gen. 2.

dagur m. day.
   - daga acc. pl. 64, 184.

Danmörk f. Denmark.
   - Danmörk acc. 1, 219.
   - Danmerkur gen. 213, 220.

dauði m. death 82.
   - dauða acc. sg. 126, 136, 138 etc.

dauður m. death; til dauðs to death 104 (gen. sg.).
deili n. pl. details 221.
detta str. to fall 187.
deyja wk. to die 176.
   - deyr pres. 3rd sg. 128.
djarfur adj. bold 134.
dóttir f. daughter 4, 168, 172 etc.
   - dóttur acc. sg. 112, 126, 134 etc.
   - dóttur dat. sg. 103, 116, 120.
   - dætur acc. pl. 158,
   - dætur nom. pl. 175,

dreka str. to drink 165, 216; see also ERFI.
drepa str. to kill, to slay.
   - drepið pp. 147, 197.
drottning f. queen 149.
   - drottningu acc. sg. 4, 157.
   - drottningu dat. sg. 162, 165.
dagur n. day, twelve hours 76.

eða conj. or 96.
ef conj. if 14.
ég 1st pron. I 27, 28, 51 etc.
   - mér dat. 31, 53, 55 etc.
   - mig acc. 114, 115, 117.
   - okkur acc. dual 192, 198.
   - vér nom. pl. 227.
   - við nom. dual 154, 186, 190.
eiga pret-pres. to own, to possess, to have (e.g. a wife, a child) 4, 5, 8 etc.; to rule over 218; ~ bardaga to fight 175; ~ í to be engaged in 199 (~átt’ pp.).
   - átt pp. 174.
   - átti past 3rd sg. 7, 11, 215.
   - áttu past 3rd pl. 224.
eigi adv. not 17, 33, 48 etc.; ~ því síður nevertheless 17.
eigna wk. w. dat. to declare s-one’s property; refl. ~st e-m to marry s-one 160 (‘eignaðist’ past 3rd sg.).
einginn pron. no one 75, 128, 179; adj. no 82 (‘öngvan’ m. acc. sg.); n. as adv. ‘ekki’ = ‘eigi’ not 22, 34, 35 etc.; ekki helldur rather not 34; ekki að síður nevertheless 45.
- öngva f. acc. sg. 106, 111.
- öngvan m. acc. sg. 102, 121, 137.
einn indef. art. and card. num. a (certain), one 9, 23, 91.
- ein f. nom. sg. 106.
- eina f. acc. sg. 79, 120, 150 etc.
- einum m. dat. sg. 46.
- eitt n. acc. sg. 7, 128.
einnsaman adj. alone 90.
Eiríkur m. pers. 152.
eitur n. poison.
- eitur acc. sg. 164.
eldla wk. as refl. ~st to grow old 162.
elldiður m. firewood.
- elldiviðar gen. sg. 54.
elldur m. fire.
- elldi dat. sg. 83, 86, 89 etc.
en conj. but 7, 12, 17 etc.; sometimes with weakened or no contrast implied and 155, 164, 191 etc.
endaður m. end.
- endaðri dat. sg. 194.
enn conj. w. comp. than 99, 111, 117 etc.; adv. yet; see also ALLDREI, FYRR.
enn n. forehead 100.
eptir prep. w. acc. after 32, 106, 167 etc.; on account of 156; w. dat. for (with a sense of purpose, a goal) 118; see also LÁTA.
er, ert, ertu, see vera.
er rel. pron. which 40, 77, 87 etc.; who 4, 5, 9 etc.; when 66; as ‘há er’ when the referent is f. acc. 8, 216; conj. when 41, 42, 49 etc.; see also þÁ.
erfi n. funeral feast; að drekka ~ to celebrate a funeral 216.
erfiði n. tool, hard work.
- erfiði dat. sg. 81.
ergi n. deviant, insatiable sexual appetite; e-n sækja mikil ~ s-one has a high sex drive 163.
eyða wk. to lay waste to, to ravage.
- eyði past 3rd sg. 166.
eyra n. ear.
- eyr run nom. pl. def. 100.
eyvík f. inlet with islands.
- eyvík acc. sg. 79.
faðir m. father 10, 155, 156 etc.
- föður acc. sg. 24.
- föður dat. sg. 23, 65, 214.
- föður gen. sg. 154.
fagna wk. w. dat. to greet.
- fagnar pres. 3rd sg. 63.
fagur adj. beautiful, fair.
- fagurt n. nom. sg. 111.
- fegri comp. f. acc. sg. 112.
- fögur f. nom. sg. 157.
falla str. to fall (in battle); to hang down, to dangle.
- féll past 3rd sg. 152.
- féllu past 3rd pl. 100.
fara str. to go, to travel 27, 33, 61 etc.; to go, to proceed (events) 22, 64, (pres. 3rd sg.); see also HERNAÐUR, SKJÓTÚR.
- fari subj. pres. 3rd sg. 28.
- farið pp. 117.
- farir subj. pres. 2nd sg. 116.
- fer pres. 3rd sg. 36, 42.
- fór past 1st sg. 127, 154.
- fór past 3rd sg. 41.

fá str. to get, to acquire, to receive 24, 126, 134 etc.; to get a wife, to marry 156; w. pp. as aux. to be able to 144 (‘fé’ pres. 1st sg.); see also ALLDUR, ÁFALL, BANI.
- fá pres. 3rd pl. 69, 78.
- fékk past 3rd sg. 165.
- fengu past 3rd pl. 83.
- fær pres. 2nd sg. 102.

fámálugur adj. taciturn.
- fámálug f. nom. sg. 107.

fé n. money, wealth.
- fé dat. sg. 3.
- fjár gen. sg. 25.

feðgar m. pl. father and son.
- feðga acc. 20.
- feðga gen. 32.

fella wk. to fell, to make fall 173; see also ÁST.
- felli past 3rd sg. 107.

fénaður m. livestock.
- fénaði dat. sg. 167.

ferð f. journey.
- ferð dat. sg. 48, 50.

ferlíki n. monstrosity, freak 110.

festa wk. to make fast, to moor.
- festir pres. 3rd sg. 93.

fimmti ord. num. fifth.
- fimmtu f. acc. 161.

fimur adj. agile, skilled 10.

finna str. to find, to come across; refl. ~st to be found, to exist 179.
- fann past 3rd sg. 42.
- fannstu past 2nd sg. w. suffixed pron. 50, 53.
- finnist refl. subj. pres. 3rd sg. 55.
- finnur pres. 2nd sg. 86, 87.

Finnmörk f. Finnmark.
- Finnmörk dat. sg. 212.

fjökunnugur adj. well versed in, skilled in magic arts.
- fjökunnug f. nom sg. 38.

fjórður m. fjord.
- fjórður dat. sg. 212.

flagð n. ogress, hag.
- flagð acc. sg. 45.
- flagðið acc. sg. def. 46.

flagðkona f. ogress, hag.
- flagðkonur nom. pl. 159.

flestir, see margur.

forkunnar adv. extremely 63.

fólk n. people 70.

fóstbróðir m. foster-brother 226.

föstbraðralag n. foster-brotherhood; sverja í ~ to become sworn brothers, to swear an oath of foster-brotherhood 13.

fötur m. foot.
- fæti dat. sg. 182, 183.

fram adv. forward 106, 122, 132 etc..

framan adv. from the front, from the front side 44.
frá prep. w. dat. (away) from 8, 42, 90 etc.; see also HALLDA.
frælsa wk. to save (e-n af e-m s-one from s-one); refl. ~st to be saved 177.
  - frelst pp. 198.
fréttu wk. to ask (e-n að e-u s-one about s-thing).
  - frétti past 3rd sg. 95.
fríður adj. beautiful, handsome.
  - fríð f. nom. sg. 106.
  - fríða f. acc. sg. 100.
  - fríðari comp. f. acc. sg. 106.
  - fríðastur sup. m. nom. sg. 6.
  - fríðust sup. f. nom. sg. 153.
frjósa str. to freeze 185.
frýnligur adj. friendly, pleasant.
  - frýnlig f. nom sg. 141.
frægð f. renown, fame.
  - frægðar gen. sg. 25.
fylgja wk. w. dat. to accompany 29.
  - fylgir subj. pres. 2nd sg. 58.
  - fylgði past 3rd sg. 201.
fylkiskongur m. petty king, regional king, vassal 219.
fyrir prep. w. acc. before, into the presence of 62; w. dat. from, against 18,
because of, on account of 180; ~ það er in compensation for, as payback
for 210; ~ því að because, on account of the fact that 178; í ~ in front, on
the foremost side 99; see also RÁDA.
fyrirætla wk. to intend.
  - fyrirætlað pp. 128.
fyrri adv. before 141; ~ (…) enn before, until 48, 177, 197.
gagn n. benefit, advantage; gagn að verða to turn out out be of use, to
give favourable results 89.
Gandvík f. the White Sea 77 (see note).
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- bekust wk. sup. m. dat. pl. 217.
- góðar f. nom. pl. 224.

 gölf n. floor.
- gólfom nom. sg. def. 111.

Gríður f. pers. 92, 94, 102 etc.
- Gríðar gen. 195.

Grímlíndur f. pers. 157, 161, 166 etc.
- Grímlíndi dat. sg. 160.

grænn adj. green.
- græn n. nom. pl. 100.

gull n. gold.
- gull n. acc. sg. 202, 213.

haf n. sea.
- haf acc. sg. 72, 76.

hafa wk. to have, to possess 96, 202 etc.; as aux. in perfect tenses 107, 200, 205 etc.; see also SORG.
- hafa pres. 3rd pl. 50, 128, 146.
- hafði past 1st sg. 156.
- hafði past 3rd sg. 39, 44, 151 etc.
- hafi subj. pres. 3rd pl. 70.
- hef pres. 1st sg. 109, 111, 137 etc.
- hefur pres. 2nd sg. 145, 169, 174 etc.
- hefur pres. 3rd sg. 7, 31, 127 etc.
- hófðu past 3rd pl. 82.

hafl n. hail 95.

hallada str. to sail 71, ~ frá landi to set sail 66; to keep, to preserve, ~ e-u heilu to keep s-thing in one piece 79 (~helldu' past 3rd pl.); ~ á to hold onto, to have in one’s hand 87 (~helld pres. 1st sg.); ~ við e-u to strain against s-thing 72 (~helld' pp.); refl. ~st to be upheld, to stand (a pronouncement) 189 (~halldist' subj. pres. 3rd sg.).

hanga str. to hang, ~ ofan to hang down, to dangle.

- hangir pres. 3rd sg. 209.
- hækk past 3rd sg. 96.

hann 3rd pron. he 4, 5, 7 etc.; w. ref. to m. nouns it 87.
- hana f. acc. sg. ‘her’ 100, 117, 131 etc.
- hann m. acc. sg. ‘him’ 19, 20, 40 etc.
- hans m. gen. sg. ‘his’ 10, 48, 81 etc.
- hennar f. gen. sg. ‘her’ 96, 97, 99 etc.
- henni f. dat. sg. ‘her’ 5, 8, 56 etc.
- honum m. dat. sg. ‘him’ 16, 29, 34 etc.
- hún f. nom. sg. ‘she’ 33, 34, 38 etc.
- það n. nom. sg. ‘it’ 26, 41, 67 etc.
- þau n. acc. pl. 203.
- þau n. nom. pl. 158, 220, 224 etc.
- þá m. acc. pl. ‘them’ 20, 70.
- þeim f. dat. pl ‘them’ 159.
- þeim m. dat. pl. ‘them’ 12, 81, 178 etc.
- þeim n. dat. pl. 201, 202.
- þeir m. nom. pl. ‘they’ 10, 13, 31 etc.
- þeirra m. gen. pl. ‘their’ 2, 15, 32.
- þeirra n. gen. pl. ‘their’ 224, 226.
- þær f. acc. pl. ‘them’ 197.
- þær f. nom. pl. ‘they’ 159, 175.

harður adj. hard; n. as adv. ‘hart’ hard, vigourously, heavily 41, 43, 47 etc.

harmur m. grief, sorrow.
- harmi dat. sg. 180.

haust n. autumn.
- hausti dat. sg. 71.

hár adj. high 109.
- hátt n. as adv. 141.
- hæra comp. m. acc. sg. 109.

hár n. hair.
- hár acc. sg. 122, 132.

háttur m. way, manner; með þeim/slíkum hættu in that/such a way 56, 146 (‘hætti’ dat. sg.).

hefna wk. to avenge 14.

heil adj. whole, undamaged; see also HALLDA.
- heilu n. dat. sg. 80.

heim adv. (towards) home, homewards 36, 48, 71 etc.

heiman adv. away from home 41.

heimskuligur adj. foolish.
- heimskuligt n. nom. sg. 188.

heita str. to be called 95.
- heitir pres. 3rd sg. 144.
- hét past 3rd sg. 1, 4, 8 etc.

heitur adj. hot; fig. passionate.
- heita f. acc. sg. 173.

helblár adj. black as death, corpse-blue.
- helblátt n. nom. sg. 100.

helldur adv. rather 34; see also EINGINN.
- helst sup. ‘most (of all)’ 163.

hellir m. cave 91, 108.
- hellir acc. sg. 171, 191.
- hellirinn acc. sg. def. 93, 194.
- hellra acc. pl. 205.

hengja wk. to hang (s-one).

hér adv. here, at this point 45, 102, 227.

herða wk. to become taut.
- herður pres. 3rd sg. 72.

herjansson m. son of Óðinn (devil), scoundrel 125.

Hermann m. pers.
- Hermann acc. 2.

hernaður m. harrying, plundering, raiding; fara í hernad to go on a raiding expedition 33 (‘hernað’ acc. sg.).

heygja wk. to be buried in a mound.
- heygður pp. m. nom. sg. 165.

heyra wk. to hear.
- heyrr imper. 2nd sg. ‘listen’ 125.
- heyrir pres. 3rd sg. 94.

Hildur f. pers. (Illugi’s mother) 8, 36, 39 etc.; (Gríður’s daughter) 144, 153, 181 etc.
- Hildar gen. 226.
- Hildi dat. 32, 38, 201 etc.

hingað adv. to here, to this place 128.

hinn definite art. used with adj., particularly sup. the 3, 18.
- híð n. nom. sg. 158.
- hin f. nom. sg. 38, 92, 191 etc.
- hinum m. dat. pl. 217.

hirða wk. to care, to be bothered.
- hirði pres. 1st sg. 104.

hitna wk. to heat up; e-m hitna s-one gets warm 204.

hitta wk. to meet, to encounter.
- hittir pres. 2nd sg. 177.

hjál n. chatter, prattle 188.

hjarta n. heart; fig. courage, spirit 127.

hjá prep. w. dat. beside, next to 64, 103, 153 etc.; fig. alongside, next to (in a comparison) 111; at the house of, staying with 23, 38, 111.

hjáhvíla f. lovemaking, sexual encounter.
- hjáhvílum dat. pl. 163.
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**hlæja** str. to laugh.
- hlæjandi pres. part. 137.

**hollur** adj. loyal, dependable 30.

**hor** m. mucus, snot.
- horinn nom. sg. def. 96.

**hraustur** adj. brave.
-hraustir m. nom. pl. 74.

**Hringur Skjalldarson** m. pers. 1, 3, 216 etc.

**hringur** m. ring.
- hring acc. sg. 87.

**hrið** f. sleet, snow-storm 96.

**hryggur** m. back, spine.
- hrygginn acc. sg. def. 56.
- hryggurinn nom. sg. def. 47.

**hraeddur** adj. afraid (við e-n of s-one).
- hraett n. nom. sg. 70, 127.

**hraeda** wk. to fear; refl. ~st to be afraid, to fear (e-ð s-thing).
- hraeddist past 3rd sg. 141.
- hraedist pp. 147.
- hraedist pres. 1st sg. 129, 136.
- hraedist pres. 3rd sg. 138, 177.

**hræra** wk. to move (á sér oneself), to stir.
- hrærð past 3rd sg. 124.

**hugsa** wk. to intend, to plan.
- hugsað past 3rd sg. 164.

**hver** pron. each one, what 173 (‘hvern’ m. acc. sg.), 209 (‘hverju’ n. dat. sg.); hvað sem what(so)ever, no matter what 12; refl. pron. each other 14 (‘hver annars’ first part m. nom. dual, second part m. gen. sg.); rel. pron. which, who 174 (‘hverjar’ f. nom. pl.); interrogative pron. what?, who? 100; adj. each, any 161 etc.
- hvað n. acc. sg. 116.
- hver m. nom. sg. ’each’ 172.
- hverja f. acc. sg. 175.
- hverjum m. dat. sg. 29.
- hvert n. nom. sg. 73.

**hverfa** str. to disappear, að í burt to disappear into thin air, to be whisked away.
- horfinn pp. m. nom. sg. 208.
- hurfum past 1st pl. 190.
- hvarf past 3rd sg. 161.
- hverfir subj. pres. 2nd sg. 171.

**hvergi** adv. nowhere 69, 73, 143.

**hvila** f. bed.
- hvílu acc. sg. 116, 120.
- hvílunni dat. sg. def. 119.

**hvorki** adv. neither 189.

**hvortveggi** pron. both (of them).
- hvortveggjum n. dat. pl. 68.

**hyggja** wk. to think.
- hugðir pres. 2nd sg. 125.

**hæla** wk. to praise, to flatter 115.

**hæll** m. heel.
- hælarnir nom. pl. def. 43.
höfuð n. head; fig. life, fate 86, 88.
   - höfði dat. sg. 123, 133.
   - höfuð acc. sg. 97.
höggva str. to strike, to hew, to hack 176.
   - höggur pres. 3rd sg. 196.
   - höggva pres. 3rd pl. 195.
höll f. hall.
   - hallar gen. sg. 36.
   - höllinni dat. sg. def. 215.
hönd f. hand; á báðar hendur liberally, ‘left, right and centre’ 214; see also BIDJA.
   - handa gen. pl. 222.
   - hendi dat. sg. 44, 123.
   - hendur nom. pl. 97.
   - hönd acc. sg. 132.
illa adv. badly, in an evil way 16, 39, 115.
ilskast refl. wk. to become worse.
   - ilskasta past 3rd sg. 166.
ilskuverk n. evil deed, crime 167.
Illugi Gríðarfóstrí m. pers. 9, 11, 12 etc.
   - Illuga acc. 21, 40, 44 etc.
   - Illuga dat. 201.
   - Illuga gen. 227.
illur adj. bad, evil.
   - verri comp. f. nom. sg. 55.
inn adv. in 59, 74.
i prep. w. acc. in, into 33, 72, 76 etc.; w. dat. in 2, 23, 30 etc., on (an expedition, trip etc.) 57, 58.
íprótt f. often in pl. sport, pastime, pursuit.
   - ípróttum dat. pl. 6.
jafman adv. always 11, 13.
já interj. yes 52.
játa wk. to agree (w. dat. to s-thing).
   - játar pres. 3rd sg. 40, 59.
jörð f. ground, earth.
   - jarðar gen. sg. 94.
kala str. to get cold, to freeze 84.
   - kali subj. pres. 3rd sg. 104.
kall m. (old) man 7.
kalla str. to call 100.
   - kallaði past 3rd sg. 211.
   - kallaður pp. m. nom. sg. 10.
kalldur adj. cold; imp. e-m er kallt s-one is cold 82.
kappi m. warrior, champion 18.
   - kappa dat. sg. 29.
kasta wk. w. dat. to throw, to cast off.
   - kastar pres. 3rd sg. 119, 130.
kelling f. wife, old woman 120.
   - kellingu acc. sg. 8.
kenna wk. to know; að kenna e-ð e-m to say that s-one is the cause of s-thing 204 (‘kendi’ past 3rd sg.).
keyra wk. to fling, to cast.
   - keyrir pres. 3rd sg. 46.
kippa wk. w. dat. to pull, to yank.
   - kippar pres. 3rd sg. 122, 132, 140.
klaeði n. garment, pl. clothes.
   - klaeðum dat. pl. 119.
koma str. to come, to arrive 41, 46, 48 etc.; to come to pass, to happen 13, 20; að vera komið to have arrived 45, 93; að ~ að máli við e-n to speak to s-one 39; að ~ e-m úr e-u, að ~st úr e-u to free s-one from s-thing, to escape from s-thing 145, 186.
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- kemur *pres. 3rd sg.* 66, 92, 93 etc.
- kom *past 3rd sg.* 49, 169, 212.
- komin *pp. n. nom. pl.* 120.
- kominn *pp. m. nom. sg.* 43.
- komnir *pp. m. nom. pl.* 81.
- komu *past 3rd pl.* 43, 194.

**kona** *f.* woman, wife 106.
- konu *dat. sg.* 139.

**kongshöll** *f.* royal hall, king’s hall.
- kongshallar *gen. sg.* 61.
- kongshöll *dat. sg.* 183.

**kongsríki** *n.* kingdom.
- kongsríki *dat. sg.* 8, 217, 221.

**kongsson** *m.* prince 11, 13, 22 etc.
- kongssonar *gen. sg.* 207.
- kongssyni *dat. sg.* 20, 21, 58.

**kongur** *m.* king 1, 3, 19 etc.
- kong *acc. sg.* 62, 164.
- kongi *dat. sg.* 152.
- kongs *gen. sg.* 5, 16, 18 etc.

**kostur** *m.* choice.
- kost *acc. sg.* 104.

**kunna** *pret.-pres. aux.* to be able to, to be possible.
- kann *pres. 3rd sg.* 89.

**kveða** *str.* to say (w. *acc. plus inf.* construction ‘that’ plus clause); ~ *st w. inf.* ‘to say (of oneself) that’ plus clause 95, 101.
- kvað *past 3rd sg.* 57, 205, 222.

**kveðja** *str.* to greet.
- kveður *pres. 3rd sg.* 62.

**kvinnaverk** *n.* a woman’s work, a task fit for a woman 148.

**kvikindi** *n.* beast, creature 44.

**kvöll** *n.* evening 94.

**kvöldriða** *f.* ‘evening-rider’ 39 (see note).

**kynda** *wk.* to light, to kindle 184.

**kyrr** *adj.* still, peaceful 124, 142.
- kyr *n. nom. sg.* 14.

**kær** *adj. w. dat.* dear (to), beloved 20.

**land** *n.* land, country.
- land *acc. sg.* 18, 79, 93.
- landa *gen. pl.* 73.
- landi *dat. sg.* 24, 66, 92.

**langur** *adj.* long; *dat. pl.* ‘löngum’ as *adv.* a long time 214; *n. nom. sg.* ‘langi’ as *adv.* a long way, by far 12, 76, 200.
- langa *f. acc. sg.* 46.
- lengra *comp. n. nom. sg.* as *adv.* 99.

**launa** *wk.* to repay (*e-m e-ð s-one for s-thing*) 192.
- launað *pp.* 145.
- launaði *subj. past 1st sg.* 182.

**láta** *str.* to say, to make out 115; *að ~ eptir* to leave behind 40 (*’lét’ past 3rd sg.*); *að ~ líf sitt* to die 47; *aux. w. inf.* to have (*s-thing done*), to cause (*s-thing to happen*) 216.
- létu *past 3rd pl.* 203.
- lætur *pres. 3rd sg.* 132.

**leggja** *wk.* to organise, to set up 11 (*’lögðu’ past 3rd pl.*); to sail 69; *að ~ e-ð á e-n* to cast a spell on someone 170 (*’legg’ pres. 1st sg.*).

**leið** *f.* path, way.
- leið *acc. sg.* 46.

**leiða** *wk.* to lead (*til e-s to s-thing*).
- leiðdi *past 3rd sg.* 216.

**leika** *str.* to play, to entertain oneself; *að ~ e-n illa* to play a trick on someone, to bewitch someone 39 (*’leikið’ pp.*).
- leikir *subj. pres. 2nd sg.* 116.
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leiksveinn m. playmate, buddy.
- leiksveina acc. pl. 12.

leikur m. game, sport.
- leika acc. pl. 10, 11.

leita wk. w. gen. or dat., sometimes also with ‘að’ to look for, to seek
86, 89.
- leituðu past 3rd pl. 208.

leka str. to leak 76.

lend f. lower back, buttocks.
- lendar acc. pl. 99.

lengi adv. (for) a long time 169, 225.
- lengur comp. 118, 225.

létta str. to desist, to stop (doing s-thing).
- létti past 3rd sg. 48.
- léttir pres. 3rd sg. 196.

leysa wk. to release, to free.
- leyst pp. 192.

lifa str. to live.
- lifið past 3rd sg. 225.
- lifðu past 3rd pl. 225.

liggja str. to lie 103, (at anchor, weatherbound) 204; að ~ víð e-u to be in the balance, to be on the verge of s-thing 78.
- lá past 3rd sg. 124, 142.

lif n. life.
- lif acc. sg. 47, 144.

liľát n. loss of life, death.

likur adj. like, similar (w. dat. to).
- likt n. dat. sg. 79.

lița str. to look at, to behold; e-m lișt á e-u s-one likes s-thing 115, 117
(‘lișt’ refl. pres. 3rd sg.).
- lițur pres. 3rd sg. 173.

litill adj. little; n. as adv. ‘ľtíð’ little 162.
- litlu n. dat. sg. as adv. ‘by a little’ i.e. ‘a little bit’ 215.
- minna comp. n. nom. sg. as adv. 163.

litt adv. little 155.

ljúka str. to end, to bring to a close.
- lúkum pres. 1st pl. 227.
- lýkur pres. 3rd sg. 36.

lofa wk. to praise 114.

lyginn adj. deceitful 17.

lymskur adj. wily, cunning 17.

lystå wk. imp. to want, to desire.
- lystir pres. 3rd sg. 116.

lysing f. marriage bans.
- lýsingum dat. pl. 118.

maður m. man 3, 16, 161 etc.
- mann acc. sg. 146, 177.
- manna gen. pl. 6, 39, 203.
- menn acc. pl. 24, 84, 147.
- menn nom. pl. 81, 143, 207 etc.
- mönnum dat. pl. 80, 89, 90 etc.

margur adj. many (a) (sometimes with following noun in gen.).
- flestir sup. m. nom. pl. 78, 81.
- marga m. acc. pl. 11.
- margan m. acc. sg. 39, 146.
- mörg n. acc. pl. 224.

mágkona f. kinswoman, female relative.
- mágkonu acc. sg. 223.

mál n. conversation, the act of speaking; að vera ~ að w. inf. to be time to do something 108, 138; case, matter 223 (acc. sg.); see also KOMA, TAKA.
- máli dat. sg. 36, 39.
- máls gen. sg. 108, 188.
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**mánaðarfrest** *n.* a month’s time; á mánaðarfresti within a month 26 *(dat. sg.)*.

**mánuður** *m.* month.
- mánuð *acc. sg.* 204.

**méð** *prep.* w. *dat.* with 14, 27, 35 etc.; see also HÁTTUR.

**mega** *pret.-pres. aux.* to be able (or permitted) to 33, 57.
- mátti *past 1st sg.* 180.

**meiða** *wk.* to maim, to seriously injure 176.

**meta** *str.* to esteem, to value; w. *gen.* ‘mikils’ to value highly, to prize.
- mat *past 3rd sg.* 19.

**meyja** *f.* maiden, girl 153.

**mikill** *adj.* large, great, on a large scale 9 etc.; *comp. and sup.* often used to emphasise characteristics both positive and negative better, the best, worse, the worst e.g. ‘hinn mesti bardagamaður’ the greatest of warriors 3; *n.* as *adv.* ‘mikit’ a great deal, a lot 72, 158; see also META.
- meira *comp. m. nom. sg.* 110.
- meiri *comp. m. nom. sg.* 30.
- mesta *sup. wk. f. nom. sg.* 38, 92, 171 etc.
- mesta *sup. wk. n. nom. sg.* 158.
- mestan *sup. m. acc. sg.* 112.
- mesti *sup. wk. m. nom. sg.* 18.
- mesta *sup. wk. f. nom. pl.* 159.
- mikil *f. nom. sg.* 163.
- mikilli *f. dat. sg.* 23, 170.
- mikils *n. gen. sg.* as *adv.* 19.
- mikinn *m. acc. sg.* 69, 71.
- mikit *n. acc. sg.* 97, 184 etc.
- mikit *n. nom. sg.* 110.
- mikla *f. acc. sg.* 107, 156, 173.
- miklar *f. acc. pl.* 68.
- miklu *n. dat. sg.* 197.
- miklum *m. dat. sg.* 137.
- miklum *n. dat. pl.* 145.

**mikilsháttar** *adv.* distinguished 224.

**míldur** *adj.* gentle; ~ *af fé* generous 3.

**milli** *prep.* in ‘á milli’ w. *gen.* between 15.

**minn** *1st poss. adj.* my 50, 155, 156 etc.
- minn *m. acc. sg.* 136.
- minnar *f. gen. sg.* 167.
- minni *f. dat. sg.* 103, 116.
- mitt *n. acc. sg.* 147.
- mitt *n. nom. sg.* 127.
- mín *f. nom. pl.* 155, 168, 181 etc.
- mína *f. acc. sg.* 53, 126, 134 etc.
- mínar *f. nom. pl.* 174.
- míns *m. gen. sg.* 154.
- mínu *f. dat. sg.* 88.
- okkart *n. nom. dual* 188.
- vorum *m. dat. pl.* 89.

**minna,** see *lítill.*

**mjög** *adv.* very, a great deal 19, 36, 75 etc.

**morgunn** *m.* morning.
- morgni *dat. sg.* 61.

**móðir** *f.* mother 48, 154.
- móður *acc. sg.* 156.
- móður *dat. sg.* 59.
- móður *gen. sg.* 159.

**móður** *adj.* worn out, exhausted.
- móðir *m. nom. pl.* 78.

**munnur** *m.* mouth.
- munninn *acc. sg.* def. 96.
**munu** pret.-pres. aux. will.
- mun pres. 3rd sg. 30, 108, 117 etc.
- mundi past 1st sg. 126.
- mundi past 3rd sg. 161.
- munu pres. 3rd pl. 112.

**munur** m. difference.
- mun acc. sg. 112.

**myrða** wk. to murder 173.
- myrt pp. 146.

**myrkur** adj. dark.
- myrkt n. nom. sg. 42.

**mæðgur** f. pl. mother and daughter 186, 190.
- mæðgur acc. 198.

**mæla** wk. to speak, to pronounce 108, 180; að ~ um to utter (e.g. a spell) 182 (‘mæli’ pres. 1st sg.).
- mælir subj. pres. 2nd 102.
- mælir past 3rd sg. 53, 114, 125 etc.

**nafn** n. name.
- nafni dat. sg. 95.

**ná** wk. to get, to obtain 83.

**náð** f. mercy, í ~ um in peace 138.

**nám** n. training, education, instruction.
- nám acc. sg. 151.

**né** conj. nor 109, 114.

**neðan** adv. from below 185.

**nef** n. nose.
- nefið nom. sg. def. 110.

**nefna** wk. to name; refl. ~st to be named 172.
- nefndur pp. m. nom. sg. 7.

**nei** interj. no 126.

**nema** conj. unless 102.

**nður** adv. down(wards) 47.

**nokkur** adj. some, any; n. nom. sg. ‘nokkuð’ and dat. ‘nokkrú’ as adv. somewhat, in any way, by any chance 53, 182.
- nokkra m. acc. pl. 22, 64.
- nokkra f. acc. sg. 186.
- nokkur n. nom. pl. 50.

**norður** adv. northwards, in a northerly direction 72, 76.

**nógu** adv. sufficiently 200.

**nótt** f. night; í ~ tonight 103.
- nótt acc. sg. 161, 175, 207.
- nóttina acc. sg. def. 60.
- náttur acc. pl. 184.

**né** adv. 14, 22, 31 etc.

**nýttindi** n. pl. news 50.

**nær** adv. near (w. dat. to somewhere); sup. in ‘því næst’ next, subsequently 78; conj. when 151.
- nærri comp. as emphatic ‘very close’ 215.

**nös** f. nostril.
- nösum dat. pl. 96.

**ofan** adv. from above, down 96, 185, 187.

**ofurfé** n. a huge amount of money, a fortune.
- ofurfjár gen. sg. 69, 213.

**og** conj. and 1, 3, 4 etc.

**okkur**, see ég.

**okkart**, see minn.

**opt** adv. often.
- optar comp. 128.

**orð** n. word.
- orð acc. pl. 130.

**orðið**, see verða.
Orkneyjar f. pl. Orkney, the Orkney Islands.
  - Orkneyja gen. 68.

orrusta f. battle.
  - orrustu dat. sg. 35, 152.

ófrýnn adj. ill-humoured, looking in a bad mood 49.

ógangur m. aggression.
  - ógangi dat. sg. 137.

ógladur adj. unhappy 37.

ógn f. threat.
  - ógnir acc. pl. 129.

ógurligur adj. fearful, terrifying.
  - ógurliga wk. n. acc. sg. 147, 178.
  - ógurligt n. nom. sg. 179.

ókyrrast refl. wk. to become rough, to get choppy 74.

ótrúann adj. unfaithful, disloyal (w. dat. to s-one).
  - ótrúan acc. sg. 21.

óveður n. bad weather.
  - óveður acc. sg. 205.

óvinur m. enemy.
  - óvinum dat. pl. 7.

páll m. peat spade.
  - pál acc. sg. 40.
  - pálinn acc. sg. def. 42, 51.

raun f. experience; gen. 'raunar' used as adv. 'truly' 157.

ráða str. w. dat. to decide (s-thing), to determine (s-thing) 222; ad ~ fyrir e-u to rule over (a place), to have s-thing in one’s power 86.
  - ráðið pp. 219.
  - réð past 3rd sg. 1, 91, 149.

ráðgjafi m. advisor 16.

reiða wk. to brandish, to wield; ad ~ e-ð ad e-m to swing s-thing at s-one.
  - reiddi past 3rd sg. 123.
  - reiðir 2nd sg. 178.
  - reiðir past 3rd sg. 140.

reiðugliga adv. angrily, fiercely 125.

reka str. imp. to be driven; rekur á storm it starts to get stormy 71.
  - rekur past 3rd sg. 72, 76, 79.

renna str. to run, to pour.
  - rann past 3rd sg. 74.

reyna wk. to try (out), to test 12.
  - reyndur pp. 'experienced' 34.

rif n. reef on a sail (see note).
  - rif acc. sg. 73.

riða str. to ride; ad ~ e-ð ad e-m to drive s-thing towards s-one 133.
  - reið past 3rd sg. 55.

ríki n. kingdom.
  - ríki acc. sg. 218.
  - ríkinu dat. sg. def. 160.
  - ríkið acc. sg. def. 166.

ró f. peace, rest, respite.
  - ró acc. sg. 186.

róa str. to row 85.
  - rær past 3rd sg. 90, 203.

rúm n. room, space, bed-closet.
  - rúmið acc. sg. def. 130.

rægja wk. to slander (e-n við e-n s-one to s-one).
  - rægði past 3rd sg. 20.

saga f. story, saga.
  - sögu dat. sg. 2, 194, 227.
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<td><strong>samur</strong></td>
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<td><strong>sannmæli</strong></td>
<td>n. truth, a true saying.</td>
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<td><strong>sænýrði</strong></td>
<td>n. truth, a true saying.</td>
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<td><strong>sax</strong></td>
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<td><strong>segjá</strong></td>
<td>wk. to say 113, to tell 148, w. acc. plus inf. construction ‘that s-one does s-thing’ 21, imp. ‘sem segir í’ as it says in 2; ~st w. inf. ‘to say (of oneself) that one does s-thing’ 24, 105.</td>
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<td><strong>sel</strong></td>
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<td>- selinu dat. sg. def. 42.</td>
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<td><strong>senda</strong></td>
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<td><strong>sendiferð</strong></td>
<td>n. mission, errand; vera í sendiferðunum to take part in an expedition 57 (‘sendiferðunum’ dat. pl. def.).</td>
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<td><strong>sig</strong></td>
<td>refl. pron. oneself (himself, herself etc.); in dat. ‘sér’ oneself (himself, herself etc.), for oneself (for himself, for herself etc.) 24, 25, 164 etc.; see also AF, Æ, BERA, BÍDJA, BLÍDUR, HRÆRA.</td>
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<td><strong>sigur</strong></td>
<td>m. victory (á e-m over s-one).</td>
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<td><strong>silfur</strong></td>
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<td><strong>sinn</strong></td>
<td>n. time, occasion.</td>
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**sinn** poss. adj. his 6, 23, 24 etc., her 33, 47, 120, their 31, 80 etc.
- sinn m. acc. sg. 93, 138.
- sinna m. gen. pl. 203.
- sinnar f. gen. sg. 159.
- sinni f. dat. sg. 48, 60, 131 etc.
- sitt n. acc. sg. 196.
- sína f. acc. sg. 223.
- sínum m. dat. pl. 90, 221.
- sínum m. dat. sg. 65, 214.

**síťja** str. to sit 64.
- sat past 1st sg. 168.
- setið pp. 170.

**síð** adv. late.
- síðar comp. 215.

**síðan** adv. then, afterwards 79, 93, 197 etc.

**síðags** adv. in the afternoon, late in the day 41.

**síðir** f. pl. as adv. in ‘um síðir’ in a while, at last 209.

**síður** adv. less 45; see also eigi, einginn.

**sjá** str. to see 157.
- sèð pp. 109, 110, 111 etc.
- sér pres. 2nd sg. 174.
- sér pres. 3rd sg. 63.
- sá pres. 3rd pl. 73, 78, 113 etc.

**sjálfráður** adj. in one’s own power, of one’s own making; e-m er eigi sjálfrátt one has no say in the matter 17 (‘sjálfrátt’ n. nom. sg.).

**sjó** m. sea.
- sjórin nom. sg. def. 73.

**skamma** wk. to shame, to disgrace.
- skammar pres. 2nd sg. 134.

**skammur** adj. (a) short (distance, frá from) 8; n. as adv. ‘skammt kominn’ come a short way 43.

**skálm** f. short sword.
- skálum dat. pl. 195.

**Skáney** f. Skåne 219.

**skegg** n. beard.
- skegg acc. sg. 97.

**skemma** f. bower.
- skemmu dat. sg. 156, 183.
- skemmu gen. sg. 167.

**skessa** f. ogress, trollwife.
- skessna gen. pl. 196.
- skessum dat. pl. 199.
- skessur nom. pl. 194.

**skilja** wk. to break off (e.g. a discussion) 31; refl. ~st við e-n to leave s-one 202 (‘skilldist’ past 3rd sg.).

**skip** n. ship.
- skip nom. pl. 66.
- skip acc. pl. 24.
- skipi dat. sg. 75, 80.
- skipið nom. sg. def. 72, 75, 79.
- skipinu dat. sg. def. 82, 208.

**skipbrot** n. shipwreck.
- skipbrot acc. sg. 78.

**skjálfa** str. to shake, to tremble.
- skjalfa pres. 3rd pl. 143.

**skjótur** adj. fast, quick; n. as adv. quickly 103; nú mun skjótt að öllu farið everything will now proceed apace 117.

**Skjöldur Dagsson** m. pers. 2.

**Skotar** m. pl. the Scots.
- Skotum dat. pl. 69.

**Skotland** n. Scotland.
- Skotlands gen. 68.
skringiligur adj. bizarre, weird.
  - skringiligum m. dat. sg. 97.

skulu pret.-pres. aux. shall, will (when giving commands or pronouncements relating to the future).
  - skal pres. 1st sg. 86, 88, 89 etc.
  - skal pres. 3rd sg. 26, 119, 172 etc.
  - skallt pres. 2nd sg. 85, 126, 172 etc.
  - skalltu pres. 2nd sg. w. suffixed pron. 87, 103, 134 etc.
  - skuli subj. pres. 3rd pl. 80.
  - skuli subj. pres. 3rd sg. 222.
  - skal pres. 3rd sg. 26, 119, 172 etc.
  - skallt pres. 2nd sg. 85, 126, 172 etc.
  - skalltu pres. 2nd sg. w. suffixed pron. 87, 103, 134 etc.

sköllóttur adj. bald.
  - sköllótt n. acc. sg. 97.

slitna wk. to break, to snap 73.

slíkur adj. such; pron. such a thing, such a one 148 (‘slíkt’ n. nom. sg.); see also HáTTUR.
  - slíkan m. acc. sg. 137.
  - slíkum m. dat. sg. 146.

snúa str. to turn, to twist; að ~ að e-m or ~st að e-m to turn towards s-one 120.
  - snýr pres. 3rd sg. 130.
  - snýst refl. pres. 3rd sg. 139.

sofa str. to sleep 138; að ~ af um nóttina to sleep through the night 60 (‘svaf’ past 3rd sg.).
  - sofð imper. 2nd pl. 138.
  - sváfu past 3rd pl. 207.

sonur m. son.
  - son acc. sg. 5, 9, 33 etc.
  - sonar gen. sg. 2.
stúlka f. girl, young woman 55.
  - stúlku acc. sg. 53.
sundur adv. asunder; í ~ into pieces 176.

Sunlöð f. pers. 38, 45.
svara wk. to answer.
  - svarar pres. 3rd sg. 28.

svarð n. sword.
  - sverð acc. sg. 196.
sverja wk. to swear; refl. ~st to make an oath (regarding oneself); see also FÓSTBRÆDRALAG.
  - sórust past 3rd pl. 13.

Sviði sóknandi m. pers. 7, 10.
  - Sviða gen. 32.

svikja wk. to betray, to deceive 164.
svo adv. so, thus 13, 20, 22 etc.; emphatic w. adj. so 19, 43, 47 etc.; conj. so that 74, ~ að 72, 166.
systir f. sister.
  - systur acc. pl. 174.
sýna wk. to show; refl. ~st to seem, to appear to be (e-m to s-one) 179.
sýnn adj. clear, obvious 82.
séckja wk. to look for, to seek 40; ~ e-ð til e-s (to attempt) to procure s-thing from s-one 101; see also ERGI.
  - sótt pp. 205.
  - sótti past 3rd sg. 163.
sæla f. joy, happiness.
  - sælu dat. sg. 170.
sæmd f. honour.
  - sæmd dat. sg. 23, 170.
sæng f. bed.
  - sæng dat. sg. 174.
  - sænginni dat. sg. def. 140, 154.
taka str. to take; að ~ e-ð to pick up s-thing, to take s-thing in hand 196; að ~ e-ð af e-m to deprive s-one of s-thing 170; að ~ e-m vel or að ~ vel við e-n to receive s-one kindly, courteously 62, 220; að ~ (til) að w. inf. to start to 71, 73, 74 etc., að taka til máls to start to speak 108, 188; að ~ á to reach (somewhere) 98; pp. ‘að vera tekinn yfir’ to be taken as ruler over 218; see also SÓTT.
  - tekur pres. 3rd sg. 75.
  - tók past 3rd sg. 84, 155, 162 etc.
tal n. conversation, discussion.
  - tal acc. sg. 31, 32.
tala wk. to speak; ~ máls við e-s to discuss a matter with s-one 222.
  - talði past 3rd sg. 75.
tá f. toe.
  - táði acc. pl. 99.
tíðum adv. frequently 195.
tími m. time 66; einn tíma on one occasion 23; um nokkrá tíma for a while 22.
trúa wk. w. dat. to believe 207.
  - trúði past 3rd sg. 22.
  - trúðu past 3rd pl. 161.
trúr adj. true, faithful 30.
tröllflagð n. trollwife, ogress 158.
tröllkona f. trollwife, ogress 91, 92, 171 etc.
  - tröllkonu acc. sg. 211.
um prep. w. acc. about, with regard to 210, over 100, around 132, for (w. period of time) 22, 60; see also MÆLA, SÍÐIR.
undir prep. w. dat. under, beneath 184.
ungur adj. young.
  - ungan m. acc. sg. 33.
  - ynga comp. m. acc. sg. 164.
unna str. w. dat. to love.
  - unni past 3rd sg. 158.
upp adv. up 79, 93, 130 etc.
urðu, see verða.
úr prep. w. dat. out of 24, 96, 145 etc.; see also KOMA, STANDA.
úti adv. outside 49.
vakna wk. to wake up.
  - vakna pres. 3rd sg. 208.
Valland n. Gaul, France.
  - Vallandi dat. sg. 5.
vallda str. w. dat. to cause 162.
vangi m. cheek.
  - vangana acc. pl. def. 100.
valla adv. hardly 55.
vaskur adj. brave, bold.
  - vaska m. acc. pl. 147.
veðja wk. w. dat. to bet (s-thing), to put (s-thing) at stake (við e¬u with s-one) 88.
vefja str. to wind.
  - vefur pres. 3rd sg. 131.
vega str. to kill, to slay
  - vegnir pp. m. nom. pl. 14.
vegur m. way, direction; alla vega in all directions, from all sides, all over 175 (‘vegur’ acc. pl.).
vel adv. well 63, 83, 150 etc.; see also BÚA, TAKA.
  - betur comp. 117.
velgjörningur m. good deed.
  - velgjörning acc. sg. 145.

vera irreg. vb. to be 21, 30, 33 etc.; að ~ med to stay with 154, 214; að ~ l to be wearing 98; as aux. w. pp. in passive tenses 26, 151, 165 etc.; as aux. w. verbs of motion to express perfect tenses 120, 208 etc.
  - er pres. 1st sg. 151, 191.
  - er pres. 3rd sg. 23, 29, 33 etc.
  - ert pres. 2nd sg. 110.
  - ertu pres. 2nd sg. w. suffixed pron. 134, 143.
  - eru pres. 3rd pl. 174.
  - sé subj. pres. 3rd sg. 27, 206.
  - var past 1st sg. 155
  - var past 3rd sg. 1, 3, 4 etc.
  - verðið pp. 7, 31, 200 etc.
  - voru past 3rd pl. 66, 74, 75 etc.
  - vari subj. past 3rd sg. 148.
verða str. to become 89; að ~ að standa to come to pass, to hold true 190 (‘yrði’ subj. pres. 3rd sg.); þótti lítið ~ af e¬u ‘thought not much would come of s-thing’, ‘thought little benefit would be derived from s-thing’ 162; see also GAGN.
  - orðið pp. 127.
  - urðu past 3rd pl. 159, 203, 224 etc.
  - varð past 3rd sg. 226.
  - verðir subj. past 2nd sg. 171.
verja wk. to defend (e¬ð fyrir e¬u s-thing against s-thing).
  - varð past 3rd sg. 18.
verri, see illur.
vetur m. winter, year.
  - vetur acc. pl. 199.
við prep. w. acc. with 131, 139, against 47, 56, 175, upon (hearing s-thing etc.), as a result of 59, 130, 203; w. dat. (together) with 5, 8.
við, see ég.
Vilhjálmur m. pers.
- Vilhjálm gen. 4.

vilja aux. to want (to do s-thing), will 24, 101, 105 etc.
- vil pres. 1st sg. 27, 57, 189 etc.
- vill pres. 3rd sg. 71, 100.
- vildi subj. pres. 1st sg. 34, 181.
- vildu past 3rd sg. 163, 206.
- villt pres. 2nd sg. 104, 114.

vinna str. to win 68.
- vann past 3rd sg. 13.

vinsæll adj. popular 3.

vinur m. friend.
- vinum dat. pl. 6.

virðing f. honour, esteem.
- virðingu dat. sg. 23.

vita pret.-pres. to know.
- vissu past 3rd pl. 209.

vitur adj. wise 3.

vík f. inlet.
- vík acc. sg. 77.

viking f. viking expedition, raiding trip.
- víkingu acc. sg. 58.

víkingur m. pirate, raider.
- víkingum dat. pl. 18.

visa wk. to show; að ~ e-m á e-d to direct s-one to s-thing, to send s-one to fetch s-thing 51 (‘visaði’ past 1st sg.).

viss adj. certain; n. ‘víst’ as adv. certainly 88, 111, 114; adv. ‘að vísu’ certainly 28.

vöndur adj. wicked, evil 125.

vopn n. weapon.
- vopnum dat. pl. 14.

vorum, see minn.

vöndur m. stick, club, ‘wand’.
- vönd acc. sg. 44.

vöxtur m. size.
- vexti dat. sg. 9.

vér, see ég.

yfir prep. w. acc. over 85, 218, 219.

ykkar, see þú.

ykkur, see þú.

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það, see hann or sá.

þar adv. there, in that place 42, 80, 169 etc.; rel. pron. ~ að where 167; conj. ~ til until 46.

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- þennan m. acc. sg. 85, 87, 104 etc.
- þessara f. gen. pl. 196.
- þessi n. acc. pl. 130, 167.
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- þetta n. acc. sg. 21, 32, 45 etc.
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- þínar f. nom. pl. 143.
- þínu n. dat. sg. 86.

þjóna wk. w. dat. to serve, to assist (s-one).
- þjónar pres. 3rd sg. 120.
- þjónir subj. pres. 2nd sg. 58.

þola wk. to endure, to suffer 126.

þora wk. to dare.
- þyrði subj. past 3rd sg. 35.

þó adv. however, nevertheless 42, 83, 157 etc.; conj. although, even though 104.

þrífa wk. to grab, to seize (i e-ð s-thing).
- þrifur pres. 3rd sg. 122.

þrot n. lack; að þrotum kominn on one’s last legs 81.

þræll m. thrall, slave.
- þrælar nom. pl. 183.

þurfa pret.-pres. aux. to need, to be obliged to.
- þarf pres. 3rd sg. 118.

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þvi conj. because 29, 82, 116 etc.; adv. thus, for that reason 19, 127.

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- þykir pres. 3rd sg. 115.
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æðruorð n. a word of fear, a cowardly word 75.

æður f. vein.
- æðar nom. pl. 143.

æfisaga f. life story, biography.
- æfisógu acc. sg. 148.

ætla wk. to think.
- ætla pres. 1st sg. 55.

óðrum, see annar.

óðrumegin adv. on the other side 91.

ófunda wk. to resent, to begrudge s-one s-thing.
- ófundaði 19.

óll(um), see allur.

órlög n. pl. fate.
- órlögin nom. def. 128.