Bók þessi er tileinkuð vinum mínun á Árnastofnun

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The cover illustration is based on a figure attached to the shrine of St Manchan, Boher, County Offaly, which was probably made in Ireland in the twelfth century. It is thought to represent St Óláfr.

The maps are based on those in Íslenzk fornrit XXIX by permission of Hið íslenzka fornritafélag

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Acknowledgments

The present work began life as a BA dissertation, or ‘Semester 8 project’, in English Studies at the University of Stirling, Scotland, completed in the spring of 1979. The Viking Society agreed to publish it fairly quickly thereafter, but one thing or another has prevented its publication until now. Owing to the work’s long gestation period, there are a great many people to whom I owe my thanks. Ursula Dronke first suggested the idea of a translation with commentary of Ágrip and Michael Alexander, now Professor of English at St Andrews, supervised the original project. I edited the text from photographs of the manuscript at Stofnun Árna Magnússonar in Reykjavík, checking my text subsequently against the manuscript itself at Det Arnamagnæanske Institut in Copenhagen; to the staffs of both these institutions I owe my gratitude, in particular to Ólafur Halldórsson and Stefán Karlsson in Reykjavík and to Jonna Louis-Jensen in Copenhagen. I should also like to acknowledge the help of Christopher Sanders of Den arnamagnæanske kommissions ordbog. Others who have helped in one way or another in the preparation of this volume include Bjarni Einarsson, who very kindly read over my introduction and notes at an early stage and made available to me the text of his edition while it was still in proof, Bjarni Guðnason, who read over the first draft of my text, and Carolyne Larrington, who also read over the notes and made a number of valuable comments and suggestions. Anthony Faulkes and Richard Perkins have both read over the entire work, the former probably more times than he would care to remember, and to both of them I owe a debt of gratitude. Finally, I should like to thank my wife Ragnheiður, without whose help and encouragement I should probably never have completed this—or indeed any other—project. It is a sobering thought that at no time during our married life have I not, in theory at least, been working on Ágrip.

M. J. Driscoll
Reykjavík
September 1994
Preface to second edition

For this reprint I have taken the opportunity to correct some errors and infelicities in the first printing, among them several brought to my attention in reviews of the book, in particular those by Jan Ragnar Hagland (Maal og Minne 2 (1996), 215–16) and Kari Ellen Gade (Alvíssmál 7 (1997), 112–15). Hallgrímur J. Ámundason’s MA thesis from 2001, an edition of Ágrip with detailed palaeographic and linguistic commentary, has also prompted me to revise a number of readings in my own edition. I have not, however, made substantial revisions to the introduction (except in section (i)) or notes, nor have I updated the bibliography.

M. J. Driscoll
Copenhagen
May 2007
INTRODUCTION

(i) Manuscript and provenance

Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum, or simply Ágrip, is the name given by modern scholars to a short text, written in the vernacular, dealing with the history of the kings of Norway from the late ninth to the early twelfth century, and preserved in a single Icelandic manuscript, AM 325 II 4to, dating from the first half of the thirteenth century. The manuscript is imperfect, comprising in its present form four quires, the first, second and fourth of them originally consisting of eight leaves, the third of seven. The first leaf of the first quire was at some point cut from the rest, so that nothing remains of it apart from a strip 1.5 cm wide along the inner margin. In addition, only two leaves, a bifolium, remain of the fourth quire, with the result that there are two significant lacunae toward the end of the text. A fifth quire generally assumed to have followed has left no trace. The text is written in two columns throughout, which is rather unusual for a small quarto manuscript (c. 15 x 13 cm), most of 25 lines. There are two contemporary hands, otherwise unknown, but clearly those of practised scribes. The first of these writes fols 1r–22v, i.e. to the end of chapter LV in the present edition, and the second fols 23 and 24. Some scholars have argued for a third hand on fol. 24, but the evidence for this is insubstantial. Spaces for initials and chapter headings were left by the scribes but not filled in. A later, probably fifteenth-century, hand has added initials and chapter headings in greenish-coloured ink on fols 8r, 8v, 9r, 10r and 11r. Although the

1 The name derives from Finnur Magnússon’s edition in Formmanna sögur X, ‘Stutt ágrip af Noregs konunga sögum’ (‘Short summary of the histories of the kings of Norway’), which was in turn probably suggested by Árni Magnússon’s description of the text, ‘Compendium Historiae Norvegicae’; see Katalog 1889–94, I 553.

2 Katalog 1889–94, I 553; cf. Ágrip 1880, xxxiv. Hreinn Benediktsson 1965, xxi, gives the date more specifically as ‘probably towards the middle of the first half of the 13th century’. Munch (Ágrip 1834, 273) initially declared the manuscript to be from the fourteenth century, but later (Oddr Snorrason 1853, vi) referred to it as ‘et . . . Haandskrift, der neppe kan være stort yngre end 1200’; Konráð Gíslason (1846, xxxviii) dated it to the early thirteenth century, and similar datings — late twelfth or early thirteenth century — are found in Storm (1871, 414; ‘ved Aar 1200 eller lidt senere’), Bugge (1873, 2; ‘rimelig ikke længe efter 1200’) and Guðbrandur Vigfússon (1878, lxxxi: ‘end of the twelfth century’).

3 E. g. Dahlerup (Ágrip 1880, xxvii–xxx) and Hreinn Benediktsson (1965, xxi); cf. Brieskorn 1909, 149–52; Finnur Jónsson, Ágrip 1929, viii.
ink has faded somewhat most of these chapters headings can still be made out, e.g. fol. 8rb ‘floti astridar’ (‘Ástríðr’s flight’), fol. 9rb ‘vm olaf konung’ (‘Concerning King Óláfr’) and fol. 10ra ‘Gipting olafs konungs’ (‘The marriage of King Óláfr’). There are, in addition to these, several marginal notes in later hands. On fol. 4v, for example, the words ‘hialmadr og brynjadr’ (‘helmeted and mail-clad’) are written in a fifteenth-century hand, imitating an addition made to the text by the scribe at this point (cf. p. 14 note b). Probably in the same hand is a comment in the lower margin of fol. 5r: ‘þetta þiki mer vera Gott blek ennda kann ek iciki b[e]tr[a] sia’ (‘this seems to me to be good ink, at least as far as I can see’), presumably a pen trial. In the bottom margin of fol. 9v a rather amateurish hand, probably of the seventeenth century, has written: ‘þessa bok uilda eg gæt lært meda[n] Gud gefe myer Gott ad læra’ (‘I would like to study this book while God makes it possible for me to study’). There are also illegible scribbles in a later hand (or hands) on fols 2r, 3r, 5v, 6r and 19r. On fol. 16r a similar hand has written what appears to be the name ‘fiorgeir Jónsson’; this is presumably Fjørgvei Jónsson (c.1661–1742), brother of Bishop Steinn Jónsson and ráðsmáður (steward) at Hólar, one of the manuscript’s previous owners.4

One unusual aspect of the manuscript is the very large number of erasures. Throughout the manuscript single words, groups of words and even whole sentences have been erased, often so thoroughly that it is now impossible to see what had been written there. In a few cases these may be the work of the scribe himself—in one instance at least a scribal error has clearly been corrected—but as the spaces have for the most part been left empty this is unlikely to be true for the majority. Four lines at the end of chapter IX have been erased, presumably because the same events are dealt with more fully later in the book and someone, perhaps the scribe himself, wanted to avoid the repetition, but for most of the erasures there is no apparent reason. Curiously, few of them in any way affect the grammar or syntax. It is, suggests Bjarni Einarsson, as if someone had, as a kind of diversion, gone through the manuscript looking for words that could be removed without damaging the text.5

Ágrip’s forty-eight pages span the period of Norway’s history from the death of Hálfdan svarti (‘the black’) in about 880 to the accession of Ingi krókhryggr (‘the hunchback’) in 1136. In its original form, however, the text is thought to have begun with Hálfdan’s reign and

4 For a full description of the manuscript see Ágrip 1880, iii–vi.
5 Ágrip 1984, vi.
continued, like the more expansive and better-known series of Kings’ Sagas Heimskringla and Fagrskinna, down to the accession of Sverrir Sigurðarson in 1177.6

Several features of the text—omissions, dittographies etc., and the fact that there is more than one hand—indicate that it must be a copy of an older original. Some scholars have suggested that even when complete the extant version represented no more than an abridgement of a much longer text.7 Most agree that although the manuscript itself is without doubt Icelandic,8 the original must certainly have been written in Norway.9 That the author was Norwegian—or at least writing in Norway10—is suggested by a number of factors. The orthography of the manuscript is inconsistent and in many respects quite odd, and at least some of the features it exhibits must be due to a Norwegian exemplar.11 There are also several anomalous morphological forms, some of which are clear ‘Norwegianisms’, and many of the nicknames used in Ágrip—háfœta (‘high-leg’), hvítbeinn (‘white-leg’), lafskegg (‘dangling beard’), berleggr (‘bare-leg’)—are different from those normally found in Icelandic sources, and may therefore represent Norwegian, rather than Icelandic, tradition.12

6 See e. g. Ágrip 1984, xvii; Indrebø 1922, 19. Maurer (1867, 146) thought it to have continued down to 1161, and Dahlerup (Ágrip 1880, iii) that it ‘har sluttet med Sigurd Jorsalefarer’, i. e. in 1130 (like Theodoricus).

7 E. g. Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1878, lxxxvii: ‘As the only example of an Icelandic abridgement it is interesting.’ Much of the evidence for this view is discussed by Sigurður Nordal (1914, 46–48).

8 See e. g. Konráð Gíslason 1846, xxxviii.

9 Icelandic provenance has occasionally been claimed; see e. g. Jón Pórkelsson 1856, 141–42 and 147–48 (‘getum vör eigi sêð, að það sê nein sônnun fyrir norskum uppruna . . . Ágrips af Noregs konunga sögum’). More recently, Bjarni Guðnason (1977, 119) has been content to say merely that ‘Ágrip er ef til vill íslenskt að uppruna’.

10 Finnur Jónsson 1920–24, II 618–19, claims that while Ágrip may well have been written in Norway, ‘må det betragtes som uvitsvissom, at forfatteren er en Íslænder’. The argument is wonderfully circular: no Norwegian is known to have written a historical text in the vernacular—after all, Sverrir and Håkon Håkonarson both imported Icelanders to write their sagas—ergo, no historical text in the vernacular can have been written by a Norwegian.

11 On ‘Norwegianisms’ in the text see Ágrip 1880, xxx–xxxiii; Storm 1873, 25–27; and Hægstad 1906–42, II.2, 156; see also, however, Ágrip 1929, ix. Generally, care must be taken when assessing the value of such ‘Norwegianisms’, as their presence in Icelandic manuscripts does not in any way demonstrate Norwegian origin; see Stefán Karlsson 1978 and 1979.

12 See Indrebø 1922, 56–57.
The text itself provides some information on its author. Unlike saga-authors generally, the author of Ágrip evinces little interest in, and indeed some ignorance of, Iceland and Icelanders. He misinterprets a kenning in one of the skaldic verses he cites, which, it has been claimed, no ‘educated Icelander of that day’ could have done. The centre of much of the action is Niðrós (modern Trondheim), which is often referred to simply as Kaupangr (‘town’), and with which the reader is apparently expected to be familiar. The Preendir—the people of Prándheimr, the modern-day Trøndelag—are mentioned five times in the text, as against only one mention each for the inhabitants of other parts of the country, the Vírsar, Upplendingar, Háleygir and Mœrir, suggesting that the author’s interests were centred there, and that he himself may have lived there, and there have written his book.

One might also be forgiven for detecting in Ágrip an underlying Norwegian national sentiment, particularly with regard to its presentation of the various achievements of the Norwegian royal house. In chapter XLIX, for example, Magnús berfœttr’s expedition to Sweden (in Heimskringla and in foreign chronicles a Norwegian defeat) is presented as a resounding victory.

It is also possible to discern in Ágrip a certain tendentiousness. The author, obviously a cleric, clearly sides with Ingi krókhrygg and his follower Gregóríus Dagsson, which would suggest that he was an opponent of the Birkibeinar, or ‘Birch-legs’, and that his work was, at least in part, polemical, intended to convince the populace that the descendants of the kings who had collaborated with the church were more worthy of their support than the Birkibeinar and their followers.

Discernible also is a tendency on the part of the author to take the part of ‘the people’—lýðrinn, a word occurring with unusual frequency in the text—against bad kings who impose taxes and hardships. Ágrip is decidedly not an aristocratic work.

Ágrip is generally said to have been written ‘c.1190’. This date has been arrived at because Ágrip’s author, as we shall see below, is thought to have made use of another Norwegian synoptic history, Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium, written by one
'Theodoricus monachus', which, on the basis of internal evidence, would appear to have been written shortly after 1177 but certainly before 1188, thus providing us with a convenient *terminus post quem* for Ágrip. The only certain *terminus ante quem* is the date of the manuscript itself, i.e. the first half of the thirteenth century, as was said above, but there is some external evidence (not, admittedly, a great deal) to indicate that it is somewhat older than that. Snorri Sturluson knew Ágrip, and used it in his *Heimskringla*, thought to have been written around 1230. *Fagrskinna* and the so-called ‘Legendary saga’ of Óláfr Haraldsson, both of which predate *Heimskringla*, appear also to have used Ágrip, pushing its likely date of composition back somewhat further. Finally, certain similarities between passages in Ágrip and in the Icelandic translation of Oddr Snorrason’s *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, thought to date from about 1200, suggest that Ágrip was known to the translator. If so, Ágrip must have been written sometime before 1200 but after 1188, hence ‘c.1190’.

(ii) Ágrip’s sources

‘The history of Icelandic literature’, wrote Jón Helgason, ‘contains no more intricate problem than that of the relationship between the various Sagas about the Norwegian Kings.’ Scholarship on the Kings’ Sagas has in general tended to concentrate on this question of sources and textual relations, often to the exclusion of all else, so that one may occasionally find oneself in agreement with Theodore M. Andersson’s recent comment that ‘the charm of kings’ saga study is decidedly remote’. Ágrip lies in many ways at the very heart of the ‘problem’ of the Kings’ Sagas. While its influence on subsequent material is fairly clear—it became known in Iceland soon after its composition and was used, as was mentioned above, by Snorri in his *Heimskringla*—the nature of the sources used by the author of Ágrip himself has been the subject of much learned debate over the last century and a half, particularly as regards Ágrip’s relationship to the two other Norwegian synoptic histories, Theodoricus’s *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagienstium* and the anonymous *Historia Norvegiae*.

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18 Nordal 1914, 8–9.
19 See Bjarni Ásbúrnarson 1937, 57–58; Nordal 1914, 37–39.
20 1934, 12.
21 1985, 198.
22 See Ulset 1983, 16–47.
Theodoricus’s book, written in Latin, begins with the reign of Haraldr hárfagri and ends with the death of Sigurðr Jórsalafari in 1130, and must have been composed, as noted above, sometime between 1177 and 1188. Despite a number of attempts to do so, it does not seem possible to pin-point the date of composition within that period, although it is customary to see it as nearer the beginning of the period than the end. Theodoricus’s sources have, like Ágrip’s, been the subject of much debate. He himself says that he has based his account on the reports, therefore presumably oral, of Icelanders, who know more about these things than anyone else, having preserved these stories in their poetry. Although he appears to claim to have had no written sources—he is reporting, he stresses, what he has heard, not seen (‘non visa sed audita’)—he refers in the text to a Catalogus regum norwagiensium, presumably a written work, and he seems also to have known a Translatio S. Olavi. Neither of these has survived.

Historia Norvegiæ, also written in Latin, is preserved in a single fragmentary manuscript containing texts and documents in Latin and Scots relating to the history of Orkney, Scotland and Norway. P. A. Munch, the first editor of the Historia Norvegiæ, considered the manuscript to be Orcadian and to date from the mid-fifteenth century, but Michael Chesnutt has demonstrated that it cannot have been compiled before 1500, and then on the Scottish mainland. The original is thought to have been Norwegian. Little can be said with any certainty with regard to its date of composition, but various scholars have suggested dates ranging from 1152–63 to 1266 or later. In its present

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24 See e. g. Nordal 1914, 8–9.
25 ‘Operæ pretium duxi . . . paucā hæc de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium breviter annotare, et prout sagaciter perquirere potuiμus ab eis, penes quos horum memoria praecipue vigere creditur, quos nos Islendinga vocamus, qui hæc in suis antiquis carminibus percelebrata recolunt.’ (MHN 3)
27 The Translatio is discussed in e. g. MHN xxxiv; Nordal 1914, 10–12; Bjarni Áðalbjarnarson 1937, 6; Jónas Kristjánsson 1972, 146–47.
28 Symbolæ ad historiam antiquiorum Norvegicarum (1850).
30 Hanssen (1949, 28) dated it to 1152–63; Storm (MHN xxiii) suggested 1180–90; Kohl (1919, 102; 1921, 211–13), Schreiner (1928, 73) and Ellehøj (1965, 144–46; 295), favoured c.1170; Finnur Jónsson (1920–24, II 594; 1928, 276), Paasche (1957, 464–65) and Bjarni Áðalbjarnarson (1937, 22) have all argued for 1200–20; Meissner (1902, 42–43) proposed 1264–66, and
form the chronicle breaks off with St Óláfr’s return to Norway in about 1015, and it is uncertain how much further it may originally have extended, although the prologue suggests the author intended to continue the story down to nearer his own day.31

These three works are manifestly interrelated; in places Ágrip’s text is virtually identical with that of Theodoricus, while in others it seems to agree rather with Historia Norvegiae. The nature and number of correspondences between the three point to a written, rather than an oral, connection, and Siegfried Beyschlag’s theory32—that the three synoptics independently preserve an established oral tradition—has few adherents. The scholarly literature on these works has tended to concentrate on their literary relations, and could be described, at least in comparison with the length of the works themselves, as extensive. The arguments advanced are often extraordinarily complex.33 There is no consensus, although Theodoricus’s work and Historia Norvegiae are believed by most to be unconnected. It is how Ágrip relates to them that is anything but clear. Generally, however, Ágrip’s author is thought to have made direct use of Theodoricus, translating passages virtually word for word, while the similarities between Ágrip and Historia Norvegiae are explained by most scholars as the result of their having had a common source, either Latin or Norse, although many admit that there is really nothing to preclude the possibility that Ágrip used Historia Norvegiae directly.34 There have been a number of candidates posited for this common source. An earlier generation of scholars assumed it to have been a Norwegian work, otherwise unattested,35 but more recently the chief contenders have been the lost works of Sæmundr Sigfússon (1056–1133) and Ari Porgilsson (1067/8–1148).
Ágrip af Nóregskonungsogum

Sæmundr, called inn fróði, ‘the wise’, wrote, probably in Latin, a history of the kings of Norway. This work has not survived apart from a few lines interpolated into the Icelandic translation of Oddr Snorrason’s Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar, but Sæmundr’s book was also the basis for the metrical Nóregskonungatal, composed in Iceland at about the same time as Ágrip (between 1184 and 1197) and preserved in Flateyjarbók. On the basis of the poem it is possible to get some idea of the nature and scope of Sæmundr’s book, which appears to have begun with Hálfdan svarti and ended with the death of Magnús góði, although the central figures would have been Haraldr hárfagri, Hákón góði, Óláfr Tryggvason and Óláfr helgi.

Ari, also called inn fróði, is well known as the author of Íslendingabók, the earliest extant example of narrative prose in a Scandinavian language. References to Ari in later works indicate that his writings must have included more than the extant Íslendingabók, however, and indeed in the prologue to that work Ari himself states that there was an earlier version, containing attartala, ‘genealogy’, and konungaævi, ‘lives of kings’. What form these may have taken is not clear, but some indication is provided by Ari’s own lögsögumannaævi, ‘Lives of the Lawspeakers’, in the extant Íslendingabók, in which the Lawspeakers are listed and the term of office given for each, along with a brief mention of the most important events during each Lawspeaker’s term. This is, conceivably, the form the konungaævi took in the older recension of Ari’s Íslendingabók.

In his closely-argued book Studier over den ældste norrøne historieskrivning Svend Ellehøj attempts to show that the common source of Ágrip and Historia Norvegiæ must have been Ari’s lost konungaævi, and he also includes Sæmundr as one of Ágrip’s sources. His argument, while persuasive, is not iron-clad. But even what he, and nearly everyone else, has taken as read—that Theodoricus could not have known the works of Sæmundr and Ari because he had no written sources, and that similarities between Theodoricus and Ágrip can therefore only be explained as the latter having made direct use of the former—has recently been called into question. Bjarni Guðnason, reviving and augmenting an older theory, has argued convincingly...
that, despite his statements to the contrary, Theodoricus did know and use the works of Sæmundr and Ari.39 Building on Bjarni’s work, Gudrun Lange’s study Die Anfänge der isländisch-norwegischen Geschichtsschreibung argues that not only Theodoricus but all three Norwegian synoptics could have used both Sæmundr and Ari, and also the original Latin version of Oddr Snorrason’s Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar and the ‘oldest saga’ of Óláfr helgi. If she is right, her findings effectively put paid to the idea of a twelfth-century Norwegian school of historiography flourishing independently of the Icelandic school of Sæmundr and Ari.40

Ágrip’s author may have had written sources other than the lost books of Sæmundr and Ari, and there has been no shortage of nominees. It has been suggested, for example, that he had access to some kind of law-book, as witnessed by his description of the ‘Álfífulg’ and their consequences in chapters XXVIII and XXIX.41 Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson thought he must also have used a lost Hákonar saga góða.42 Finnur Jónsson, among others, postulated a lost saga about the earls of Hlaðir,43 and Didrik Arup Seip proposed Eiríkr Oddsson’s lost work Hryggjarstykki as one of Ágrip’s sources.44 These can only ever remain conjectural. As Gudrun Lange’s study shows, the only thing that can be said with any certainty about Ágrip’s written sources is that very little indeed can be said with much certainty.

Ágrip clearly drew on oral sources as well. One such was skaldic poetry, at least some of which is likely to have come from oral tradition. The author cites seven verses: two strophes attributed to Sighvatr Póðarson, two half-strophes—one, which he misinterprets, from the otherwise unknown poem Oddmjör—and three couplets which are probably to be traced to local tradition. The poet Eyvindr skáldspillir is mentioned, along with his poem Háleygjatal, but no verses are cited. This is indeed unfortunate, as the verses referred to have not survived. Traces of skaldic poems have been discerned elsewhere in Ágrip. Bjarni Einarsson,45 for example, detects a verse behind Ágrip’s description of the Icelander Póðálfir inn sterki (chapter VI)—three

39 Bjarni Guðnason 1977; essentially the same theory was advanced independently in Andersson 1979.
41 Ágrip 1984, xii–xiii.
42 See e. g. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1937, 54.
43 Ágrip 1929, xiii.
45 Ágrip 1984, xxix.
Ágrip af Noregskonungasögum

strofes from a poem about him by Pórór Sjáreksson are cited in Heimskringla and a further half-strophe in Fagrskinna.

Scholars agree that one of the major sources for Ágrip must have been Trøndelag local tradition, which provided the Snjófríðr episode (later borrowed by Snorri) and other material of an anecdotal nature.48

(iii) Style and language

Ágrip’s style is difficult to define. Guðbrandur Vigfússon called it ‘quaint’, and for that reason ‘interesting’, while Finnur Jónsson said: ‘über den stil—wenn man überhaupt von stil sprechen kann—braucht man nicht viel zu sagen.’ When reading Ágrip one is perhaps first struck by its awkwardness. There are, to begin with, the endless compound sentences, each clause beginning with en (‘but’) or ok (‘and’). Scattered throughout are sentences of extreme complexity—the first sentence of chapter II for example—many of which border on incomprehensibility. Some of this awkwardness, admittedly, may be due to omissions—as was mentioned above, some scholars are of the opinion that in its present form Ágrip is no more than a précis—or it may be that the author, working from two or more sources, has tried to cram too much into his text. Several parenthetical remarks seem particularly ill-chosen, for example the information on the size of the ship Ormr inn langi (‘The Long Serpent’) provided in chapter XX just as Óláfr Tryggvason is meeting his end. But given the age of the text and the fact that it is among the earliest attempts to write a continuous narrative in the vernacular to have survived, such awkwardness is perhaps not surprising.

There are, at the same time, many passages that suggest a fair degree of stylistic awareness—if not sophistication—on the part of the author. He is fond of using rhetorical figures such as antithesis: ok bar inn sami reiði hans út, er bóð hans haði bórit inn (‘the same (man) bore his anger out as had borne his message in’), syrgði hann hana dauða, en landsljóð allra syrgði hann villtan (‘he mourned for her, dead, but the

47 Fagrskinna 91–93; it is the second half of the third strophe that is not cited in Heimskringla.
48 This material is most fully discussed in Indrebø 1922, 52–56.
49 The fullest description of Ágrip’s style is Indrebø 1922, 20–23, from which many of the examples here derive.
50 Guðbrandur Vigfússon 1878, lxxvii.
51 Ágrip 1929, xviii.
people all mourned for him, bewitched’), seig hón svá í ǫsku, en konungr steig til vížku (‘she sank so into ash, but the king rose to wisdom’), or Björn enn digri fell at höfði konunginum, en Þorsteinn knarrasmíðr var þegar drepinn á fastr konunginum (‘Björn digri fell before the king, and Þorsteinn knarrasmíðr was killed right on the king’s heels’).

This fondness for antithesis is evident also in descriptions such as lítil kona sínnum, en mikil róðum (‘a woman small of stature, yet great of counsel’), or mildr af gulli . . . en fastaldr á jórðum (‘open-handed with gold . . . but tight-fisted with land’), to name but two. He also repeats the same or related words, often creating neatly-balanced sentences, such as var hennar fyr prúiliga til óprúiðar (‘her journey, begun in splendour, ended in disgrace’), or ok lauk svá saurlífis-maðr í saurgu hási sínum dógum ok svá ríki (‘and thus a man who had lived a life of filth ended, in a house of filth, his days and also his rule’). There are several examples of zeugma, where a single verb is used with two disparate objects, such as: kom hann svá til trúar, því næst til Nóregs (‘he came thus to belief and then to Norway’), or tók þá lýðr við trú, en Óláfr við ríki (‘then the people took the faith and Óláfr the kingdom’). These are doubtless to be ascribed to the author’s Latin learning and are characteristic of the so-called ‘courtly style’, commonly found in Old Norse texts of various kinds, but particularly associated with translated romances, or riddarasögur. Common, too, are alliterating collocations, particularly in personal descriptions, such as rôskr ok risuligr (‘valiant and imposing’), grimmr ok greypr (‘cruel and savage’), marglyndr ok málsnjallr, vandlyndr ok vantsílitr (‘temperamental and eloquent, irascible and intemperate’), fastr ok fégjarn (‘mean and miserly’) and so on. He also uses non-alliterating synonymous collocations, as in í hernuð ok í víking (‘raiding and plundering’), farin ok sløkkñ (‘gone and extinguished’), færgðar ok göðs ordáls (‘fame and good repute’), nauð ok illing (‘evil and oppression’), í kærlek ok í virkum (‘in favour and affection’) etc. He appears also to use a kind of rhyme, for example in grenjandi ok enjandi (‘bellowing and shrieking’), perhaps also in fjölmennu ok göðmennt (‘many men and good men’). In the sentence seig hón svá í ǫsku, en konungr steig til vížku ok hugði af heimsku, mentioned earlier, ǫsku—vížku—heimsku form a kind of rhyme similar to the skothending commonly found in skaldic poetry. This may not, of

52 See textual note c on p. 20 below.
53 For a definition see Halvorsen 1962; several hundred examples are given in Cederschiöld 1884, v–xvi. Cf. also Jónas Kristjánsson 1981.
course, have been deliberate, but in view of the author’s obvious penchant for rhetorical embellishment, it is tempting to think it was. Ágrip preserves an unusually high number of rare words and *hapax legomena*, as well as some words not uncommon in themselves but used in an unusual way. These include the adjectives *risuligr* (‘tall (in stature)’, normally used of buildings), *listuligr* (‘magnificent’), *jåtsi* (‘agreeing to something’ + dat.), *halzi* (‘in possession of something’ + gen.) and *frekeflðr* (‘harshly-imposed’), this last occurring only in Ágrip; the nouns *vitorð* (‘report’ or ‘knowledge’, normally ‘counsel’), *ím* (‘doubt’, normally ‘dust, ashes’), *ørferð* (‘fate’, coupled with *ørnefni*, ‘name (of a person)’, normally ‘place-name’), *misheldi* (‘ill-treatment’) and *illing* (‘evil’); the verb phrase *at stefja manntjón* (‘to prevent loss of life’), unique to Ágrip; and the contractions *svági* (= *svá eigi*), *hérnú* (= *sé* hér nú) and *vérrum* (= vér erum). Also, many of the nicknames, such as *skreyja* and *heikilnefr*, are otherwise unattested and of uncertain meaning. Unusual grammatical forms include *hvak*, strong preterite of the verb *hvika* (‘to waver’), normally *hvikaði*;* sløri*, also spelt *sleri*, preterite of the verb *slá* (‘to strike’), normally *sló*;* segr*, third person singular of *segja* (‘to say’), normally *segr*; *viðrtalan* (‘conversation’), normally *viðr*tal; *stí* (‘sty’), n., normally *stía*, f.; and *djákn* (‘deacon’), n., normally *djákn(i)*, m.

The text contains only a few loan words, for example the Latin word *propheta*; *kempa* (‘champion’), instead of the older *kappi*; *fróva*, from Low German; and *kurteiss*, one of the very first words borrowed into Old Norse from French.

Editorial principles

(i) Orthography and morphology

The orthography of the manuscript, as was mentioned above, is somewhat idiosyncratic and more than usually inconsistent, particularly as regards the representation of vowels in accented syllables. For the purposes of the present edition it was thought best to normalise the

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54 I am grateful to Christopher Sanders of Den arnamagnæanske kommissions ordbog for his assistance in checking these words and forms.
56 The form *hvak* is otherwise unattested; see Noreen 1923, § 498, Anm. 8.
57 See Noreen 1923, § 501, Anm. 2; § 506.
58 See Ágrip 1880, vi–xvii.
orthography of the text along the lines used in the series Íslenzk fornrit. This has meant, for example, that although the voiced and unvoiced dental spirants /ð/ and /β/ are both normally written \( \hat{b} \) in the manuscript, in keeping with early Icelandic (but not Norwegian) scribal practice,\(^{59}\) the present edition normalises. Similarly, there is no apparent pattern in the distribution of the characters \( u, v \) and \( y \) in the manuscript,\(^{60}\) but their use has been fully normalised here, as has the representation of intervocalic /l/ and the use of \( i \) and \( j \), of which the last occurs only sporadically in the manuscript as an orthographic variant of \( u \).\(^{61}\) Both \( c \) and \( ch \) occur frequently in the manuscript for /kl/, and /kk/ is normally written \( ck \), while /kv/ is written \( qu \);\(^{62}\) in all these cases the present edition normalises. Normalised too has been the use of \( z \), which in the manuscript is used (as it was in Icelandic orthography until well into the sixteenth century\(^{63}\)) for a dental + /s/, for example in gen. sg. forms such as malz (= ‘malts’), lanz (= ‘lands’), or halvarz (= ‘Hallvarðs’), and is also used after /ll/ or /nn/, e. g. alz (= ‘alls’), mannz (= ‘manns’). In the present edition, however, \( z \) is used as it was in official Icelandic orthography up until 1973, i. e. in the second person plural and past participles of middle voice verbs and in words where a dental has been assimilated to /s/, e. g. íslenzka.\(^{64}\) Finally, geminate consonants are almost invariably written as single when followed by another consonant—normal practice in Icelandic until the nineteenth century\(^{65}\)—e. g. ‘allt’, written alt, or ‘slokku’, written slælp; these are fully normalised, as are the many instances of geminate consonants written as single and vice versa.\(^{66}\)

In unaccented syllables \( i \) is much commoner than \( e \), occurring nearly seven times as often. Conversely, \( o \) occurs more frequently than \( u \), in

\(^{59}\) Hreinn Benediktsson 1965, 21–22. There are a few sporadic examples of \( \delta \) in the manuscript, but for /\( \hat{d} /\) rather than \( \delta /\).


\(^{61}\) This is entirely typical for Icelandic manuscripts generally, see Hreinn Benediktsson 1965, 46.

\(^{62}\) See Hreinn Benediktsson 1965, 30–34.

\(^{63}\) See e. g. Noreen 1923, §§ 43, 238.2 d, 245.1; Alexander Jóhannesson 1923–24, § 273; and Bandle 1956, §§ 108.2, 114.

\(^{64}\) On the (rather unusual) use of \( \hat{b} \) for /\( \hat{z} /\) in the manuscript, e. g. bept for ‘bext’, see Brieskorn 1909, 160–66.

\(^{65}\) See Jón Aðalstein Jónsson 1959, esp. 86, 90, 96; this practice is followed by Finnur Jónsson in his edition (Ágrip 1929).

\(^{66}\) See Ágrip 1880, xvii; some of these (e. g. setti for ‘setja’, fittiom for ‘Fitjum’) may derive from the Norwegian exemplar; see Seip 1955, 113.
a proportion of roughly three to one. These have been fully normalised, so that i and u are used throughout.

Vowels in accented syllables have been normalised in accordance with accepted editorial practice, with the exception that in the present edition the clear distinction made in the manuscript between /át/ and its u-mutated form /á/ is preserved. These two phonemes had fallen together in Icelandic by 1250, or well before the date of the vast majority of extant vernacular manuscripts, so that this distinction is not usually made in normalised editions, other than in verses attributed to skalds from the twelfth century and earlier.

The following exceptions to common practice have also been made:

1. The proper name ‘Magnús’ is normally written magnus, i.e. with mutated vowel; I have spelt this form of the name Magnús. The few instances of unmutated /a/ have been allowed to stand.

2. ‘Norwegianisms’, i.e. instances of unmutated /a/, and where /h/ is lacking before /l/ and /r/ have been allowed to stand, e.g. kalluð, reyr, lut.

3. Superlative forms of ‘góðr’ are frequently written with a, e.g. bæztir; these have been allowed to stand.

4. Forms of the word ‘sonr’ (other than dat. sg. and nom. pl.) occur most frequently with u when written in full; where abbreviated, expansion has been in keeping with this practice. When they occur, however, forms with o have been preserved.

5. The combination /pt/, as in ‘eptir’ and ‘aptr’, is consistently written ft, at least by the principal hand, and the present edition therefore prints eftir, aftir etc.

In addition to these, individual spellings felt to be of interest (i.e. those with a basis in phonology, rather than in scribal caprice) have been allowed to stand, or are mentioned in a note. There is as a result a certain degree of inconsistency in the orthography of the edition.

67 This is, again, quite in keeping with other manuscripts of the period; see Hreinn Benediktsson 1962.

68 The latter is represented in the manuscript by the characters a, o and ð; rarely by a except in Hand II.

69 See Noreen 1923, § 107; when nasalised, /ð/ had fallen together with /ð/ by the mid-eleventh century, see Noreen 1923, § 116; Hreinn Benediktsson 1965, 61–62.


71 See Seip 1955, 48; there are no instances of lack of /h/ before /l/.

72 See Noreen 1923, § 240.2.
Variant spellings such as fríðla and frilla, gersimi and gørsimi, have been allowed to stand, as have the various forms of the definite article, which appear written both with i and e.

In general, ‘aberrant’ morphological forms have been retained. There is, for example, a good deal of variation in forms of the indefinite pronoun ‘nøkkurr’. In each case the form found in the manuscript has been used, although the spelling has been normalised. The variant forms ‘fyr’ for ‘fyrir’ and ‘miðal’ for ‘meðal’ and older forms such as ‘vas’ and ‘umb’ are preserved when they occur. Similarly, ‘fressur’, nom. and acc. n. pl. of the demonstrative pronoun ‘sjá’, another ‘Norwegianism’, occurs four times and is retained.

Obvious or probable errors have been corrected; missing letters (i.e. those mistakenly omitted rather than assimilated) are supplied in angle brackets; misspellings are corrected in the text and the original reading given in a footnote.

Words or letters which cannot now be read are supplied in square brackets; where these have been erased and cannot be reconstructed the present edition prints [ooo], the number of os indicating the probable number of letters missing.

(ii) Punctuation, chapter division etc.

The only mark of punctuation used in the manuscript is the point, but even this is used neither consistently nor in keeping with modern practice. The punctuation and capitalisation in the present edition are therefore entirely editorial. The practice of the manuscript has, however, been allowed to influence the placing of stops and other marks of punctuation to some extent—in not, for example, preceding er by a comma in restrictive (defining) relative clauses as is normally done in, for example, Íslenzk fornrit.

I have chosen to separate with commas, rather than stops, the large numbers of ‘subjectless’ sentences beginning with en or ok. In places I have resorted to using dashes to enclose a parenthetical remark.

The text is quite clearly divided into chapters. These are unnumbered in the manuscript and without headings. Some of the chapters, it will be noted, are extremely short, e.g. chapter XXX, and several

73 See Noreen 1923, § 470; Seip 1955, 197.

74 Although this is marked in the manuscript as a separate chapter, Bjarni Einarsson (Agrip 1984, 29) incorporates it into the previous chapter, where it logically belongs. I have chosen to follow the manuscript, as did Finnur Jónsson in his edition (Agrip 1929, 31). After chapter XXIX, therefore, my chapter numbers are one higher than those of the IF edition.
begin in awkward places, chapter L being perhaps the most obvious case. Nearly three-quarters of the chapters begin with the word En. In the edition this division, however awkward, is retained. Chapter numbers are obviously editorial and do not take into account any chapter divisions that may have occurred in the lacunae.

There are no paragraph divisions in the manuscript, although when a sentence happens to begin a new line it will occasionally begin with a slightly larger capital drawn in the margin. I have chosen to ignore these. In the manuscript the verses are written as prose and their arrangement here is therefore also editorial.

Numbers in the text are most often written with roman numerals, normally preceded and followed by points. I have chosen to retain this form of notation in the present edition, normalising to the extent that I have sets points before and after whether they appear in the manuscript or not.

(iii) Previous editions and translations

Ágrip has been edited and translated several times, although never before into English in its entirety.\(^{75}\) In 1834 P. A. Munch published an edition together with a Danish translation under the title ‘Brudstykke af en gammel norsk Kongesaga’ in *Samlinger til det norske Folks Sprog og Historie* II, 273–335. The following year an edition by Finnur Magnússon, ‘Stutt ágrip af Noregs konúnga sögum’, appeared in the tenth volume of the series *Fornmanna sögar* (1835), 377–421. This edition was the basis for a Danish translation by N. M. Petersen, ‘Kort Omrids af de norske Kongers Sagaer’, published in *Oldnordiske Sagaer* X (1836), 329–71, and a Latin translation by Sveinbjörn Egilsson, ‘Epitome historiarum regum Norvegicorum’, in *Scripta historica Islandorum* X (1841), 350–92. In 1880 Verner Dahlup produced a diplomatic edition, *Ágrip af Noregs konunga sögum: Diplomatarisk udgave*, in the series published by *Samfundet til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur* (1880)—probably the most ‘diplomatic’ edition ever produced in Old Norse–Icelandic studies\(^{76}\)—which incorporated many readings from an unpublished transcription of the text made by Gustav Storm (see Ágrip 1880, xxxvii; several of these are referred to in the

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\(^{75}\) Margaret Ashdown 1930, 144–51 (textual notes pp. 208–16), includes a normalised text with facing English translation of the section of Ágrip from chapter XVI to the beginning of chapter XXIII in the present edition.

\(^{76}\) Two columns of text were printed, equally ‘diplomatically’, in Konráð Gíslason 1846, xxxix–xl.

A note on the translation

In my translation of the text I have endeavoured to reproduce as closely as possible the Old Norse original, producing, I hope, a result which is, if not always fair, at least true. The conventions of English grammar and syntax have, however, often necessitated the rearrangement of clauses within a sentence and not infrequently the addition of grammatical subjects.

I have not translated the Old Norse nicknames, partially as a result of my own dissatisfaction with renderings such as ‘paunch-shaker’ for flambar-skelmir or ‘shock-head’ for luфа, but also because of my feeling that a man’s name—and Norse nicknames were names—is his name, however accessible its meaning may be. Translations are provided in the notes or in the index. I have also refrained from anglicising personal and place-names, although I have ‘translated’ names of countries where they correspond to modern political entities like Norway, Sweden and Denmark, and have given Anglo-Saxon names, Æthelstan for example, their accepted English form. Most of the personal names in Ágrip have no counterpart in English, however, and while names such as ‘Ragenwald’ may have set the hearts of nineteenth-century Englishmen a-racing, I felt nothing would be gained by the use of forms foreign to both English-speakers and Scandinavians. Where English equivalents do exist—Eric, Swen, Harold, Canute—I have for the sake of consistency not used them. I have retained for the most part the Old Norse forms of place-names, even in cases where there is a clear modern Scandinavian counterpart, in the belief that Niδaróss, for example, is a very different place from Trondheim. I give the modern-day equivalents in the notes and index and maps are provided for any readers who might wish to undertake a pilgrimage to the saga-steads of Scandinavia.
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum

A synoptic history of the kings of Norway
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum


II. Haraldr tók eftir Hálfdan ríki þat er faðir hans hafði haft, ok aflaði sér meira ríkis með þeim hætti—er maðrinn var snemma röskr ok risuligr vexti—at hann helt orrostu við næsta konunga ok sigraði alla, ok eignaðísk hann fyrstr konunga einn Nóreg á tvítögs\(^b\) aldri, ok helt ena síðurstu orrostu við konung þann er Skeeðar-Brandr hét, í Hafrvági fyr Jaðri, ok flýði Brandr til Danmarkar ok fell í orrostu á Vinnlandi, sem segir í kvæði því er heitir Oddmjór, er gótt er umb konungatal, með þessum orðum:

1. Skjöldungur rak með skildi
Skeeðar-Brandr ór landi;
réð sá konunger síðan
snjállir Nóregi ñllum.

\(^a\) written spurdadaga (over line division).
\(^b\) following this word there is an empty space, about one third of the line (1.5 cm).
A synoptic history of the kings of Norway

I. . . . he was then taken as sole king. He was then called Haraldr lúfa,¹ for he was not then fine-haired, but later his name changed and he was called Haraldr hárfagri, because he was the handsomest of men and finest-haired.

Here it is fitting to elucidate a problem posed by Christian men as to what heathen men knew about Yule, for our Yule has its origin in the birth of Our Lord. Heathen men had a feast, held in honour of Óðinn, and Óðinn is called by many names: he is called Viðrir and he is called Hár and Þríði and Jólñir; and it is after Jólñir that Yule is named.²

This is how Hálfdan³ died: he was being feasted⁴ in Haðaland, and leaving there in a sledge he drowned in Rønd in Rykinvík, where there was a hole in the ice for cattle; and he was taken to Steinn in Hringaríki and there buried in a mound.⁵

II. Haraldr succeeded Hálfdan in the kingdom his father had had and enlarged his kingdom—he was valiant at an early age and of imposing stature—he fought battles with neighbouring kings and defeating them all, and by the age of twenty he was the first king to gain all Norway. He fought his final battle with a king named Skeiðar-Brandr, in Hafrsvágr,⁶ off Jaðarr. Brandr fled to Denmark and fell in a battle in Wendland, as is told in the poem Oddmjór,⁷ which was composed about the kings of Norway, in this way:

1. The Scylding-king⁸ drove with shield
   Skeiðar-Brandr⁹ from land;
   the king thereafter governed,
   valiant, Norway all.
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum


III. Jólaaftan, er Haraldr sat at mat, þá kom Svási fyrir dyrrr ok sendi konungi boð at hann skyldi út ganga til hans, en c konungur brásk reiðr við þeim sendiboðum, ok bar inn sami reiði hans út en boð hans hafði borit inn. En hinn d þá hann þá eigi fyrir því at sínr [i] annat sinni ok gaf hónum bjórskinn eitt til, ok kvað sík vera þann Finninn er hann hafði játt at setja gamma sinn annan veg brekkunar á Poptyn, þar sem þá var konunginn. En konunginn gekk út ok varð hónum þess játsi, at hann gekk yfir í gamma hans með áeggjan e sumra sína manna, þóat sumir letti. Stóð þar upp Snjófríð, döttir Svása, kvenna vænust, ok byrlaði ker mjáðar fullt konunginum, ok hann tók allt

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a the lack of \\ may be a Norwegian dialectal feature; cf. Noreen 1923, § 297 and Anm. 1; Seip 1955, 76, 109–10, 164.
b here and below the nom. ending r is lacking, cf. Noreen 1923, § 384, Anm. 2.  
c MS hr. (i.e. hann), but corrected below line.  
d written ængjar; cf. engiar (= Eggjar) below, note a on p. 42.
It was ten winters he fought for the country, before becoming sole ruler of Norway, and he brought good order and peace to his country. Haraldr had twenty sons, and by many women, though only two came to be kings, Eiríkr blóðøx and Hákon góði. Eiríkr blóðøx was the eldest of his sons and Hákon the youngest, whom Æthelstan, king of England, fostered; third was Óláfr digrbeinn; fourth Bjørn kaupmaðr, whom some call buna; fifth Guðrøðr; sixth Hálfdan svarti; seventh Dagr; eighth Hringr; ninth Guðrøðr skirja; tenth Rǫgnvaldr; eleventh Sigtryggr; twelfth Fróði; thirteenth Hrœrekkr; fourteenth Tryggvi; fifteenth Gunnrøðr; sixteenth Eysteinn; seventeenth Sigurðr hrísi; eighteenth Guðrøðr ljómi; nineteenth Hálfdan hvítbeinn, whom some called háfœta; and the twentieth Rǫgnvaldr reykill, whom some call Ragnar. He was the son of a certain Lappish woman called Snjófríðr, the daughter of Svási, king of the Lapps, and took after his mother. He was called a sorcerer—that is to say a soothsayer—and he lived in Haåaland and practised sorcery there and was called a warlock.

III. On the eve of Yule, as Haraldr sat at table, Svási came to the door and sent word in to the king that he should come out to him. This request angered the king, and the same man bore his anger out as had borne the message in. Svási asked him nevertheless a second time and also gave him a beaver skin and said that he was that Lapp whom the king had allowed to set up his hut on the other side of the hill at Poptyn, where the king then was. The king went out and he agreed to go to Svási’s hut, egged on by some of his men, though others tried to dissuade him.

There Snjófríðr stood up, Svási’s daughter, the most beautiful of women and offered the king a cup full of mead. He took it and with it her hand, and suddenly it was
saman ok hOND hennar. Ok þEGar var⁵ sem eldshiti kOmi í þôrund hans ok vildi þEGar hafa hana á þEIRI nótt. En SváSI sagði at þat mundi eIGI vera, nema hÓNUM nauðgum,⁶ nema konungrinn festi hana ok fengi at lóGum. Ok hann festi ok fekk ok unni svá með ÓerSLum, at ríki sitt ok allt þat er hans tÍGN byrjaðI þá fyrréIt hann ok sat hjá henni nótt ok dag nálIga,⁷ meðan þau líðu bæðI, ok .iiJ. vetr síðan hón var dauð. SyrgðI hann hana dauða, en landslýðIR allr syrgðI hann vIlItan.

IV. En þESSa vILLu at lægja komd til læknanar þorleif(r) spaki, er með viti lægðI⁸ þá vILLu ok með eftirmæli með þessum hætti: ‘Eigi er, konungr, kynligt, attu³ munir svá fríða konu ok kynstórA, ok tÍgnir hana á dúni ok á guðvefi sem hón bað þIk. En tÍgn þIN er þó minni en hæfir—ok hennar—í þvI at hón líggr of lengI í sama fatnaðI. Er myklu sannlígra at hón sé hrørð.‘ Ok þEGar er hón var hrørð, þá slóri á þefjáni ok ýldu ok hverskyns illum lýk af líkamanum. Var þá hvatað báli ok hón brennd. BlánaðI þó áðr allr líkaminn, ok ullu ör ormar ok eðlur, froskar ok þoddur, ok allskyns illyrMI. Seig hón svá í ósku, en konungr steig til vízku ok hugðI af heimsku, stýrðI síðan ríki sínu ok styrkðI; gladdisk hann af þegnum sínum, ok þegnar af hÓnum, en ríkt af hvóru tveggja, ok sat at NóregI einvaldskonungr sex tógu vetra síðan, er hann hafðI innan tíu vetra aflat alls Nóregs, andaðIsk síðan á rogalandi ok var heygðr á Haugum upp frá HASLejjarSundi.

V. En eftIR HaralD tók Eiríkr blóðóð⁹ við ríki, en hókon bróðIR hans var vestr í EnglandI með Adalsteini konungi,
as if fiery heat entered into his flesh and he wished to have her that same night. But Svási said that this should not be so—except against his will—unless the king betrothed himself to her and then wedded her according to the law. And he betrothed himself to her and wedded her and loved her so witlessly that he neglected his kingdom and all that beseeemed his kingly honour, and he stayed by her almost night and day while they both lived and for three years after she died. He mourned for her, dead, but the people all mourned for him, bewitched.

IV. But Þorleifr spaki came to cure him and put an end to this enchantment, and he did it wisely and with blandishments in this way: ‘It is not strange, king, that you should remember so beautiful and noble a woman and honour her thus on down and velvet, as she asked you. And yet your honour is less than is fitting—and hers—for she has lain too long in the same clothes. It would be much seemlier if she were moved.’ And when she was moved there issued from the body a rank and fulsome stench and foul odours of every sort. A pyre was hastily prepared and she was burnt, but before that the body blackened and there bubbled out worms and vipers, frogs and toads and multitudes of vermin. She sank thus into ash, but the king rose to wisdom and abandoned his folly; he from then on took control of his kingdom and strengthened it; he was gladened by his subjects and they by him and the kingdom by them both, and he ruled Norway as absolute king for sixty years thereafter, after having won all of it in ten. He later died in Rogaland and was buried at Haugar, inland from Hasleyjarsund.¹⁴

V. Æthelstan, to whom
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum

er faðir hans lífs hafði hann sendan til fóstrs. Eiríkr blóðax
var fríðr sýnum, mikill ok inn virðilagstí. Hann átti Gunnhildi,
dóttur Þórar lafskeggs—þeira synir vóru þeir Gamli ok
Goðormr, Haraldr gráfeldr ok Erling(r), Sigurðr slefa; enn
eru nefndir fleiri, Goðrøðr ljómi ok Ragnfrøðr, Hálfdan ok
Eyvindr ok Gormr—ok helt Nóregi .v. vetr alls með þeim
tveim vetrum er hónum var fyr konung heilsat í landinu þá
er Haraldr lifði, en þrjá síðan. Gunnhildr kona hans var
alla kvenna fegrst, lítil kona sýnum en mikil rúðum. Hón
göðisk svá ílloðug, en hann svá álýðinn til grimmeikks
ok til allskyns áþjánar við lýðinn, at þungt var at bera.
Hann réða Óláf digrbein, bróður sín, ok Bjórn ok fleiri
brœðr sín. Pví var hann kallaðr blóðax at maðrinn var
[0000] ofstopamaðr ok greypr, ok allra mest af rúðum
hennar. Pá kvöðdu vitrir menn Hókon aftí í land með
leynd tveim vetrum eftir andlát Haralds hárfagra, ok hann
kóm tveim skipum vestan ok sat svá um vetr at hann hafði
eigi konungs nafn.b Hókon var manna vænstr, mikill ok
listuligr, ok svá sterkr [0000]c at engvir fengusk hónum
jafnir. Hann var hofði öllum hæri en aðrir menn, hárit þat á
hofði sem silki gult væri. Hann var [í]d öllum ridderaskap
ok korteisi um fram of aðra menn. Hann var nálaga tvítogr
er hann kom í land. En hónum tók brátt svá flokkr at vaxa
at Eiríkr mátti þá eigi víðstóðu hafa, ok fýði hann þá ok
kona hans til Danmarkar fyrrst. En Hókon sat þá einn
konungur at Nóregi, ok var Nóegrav svá góðr undir hans ríki
at hann var eigi munadhr betri, fyr útan þat at eigi var kristni
á. En hann var kristinn ok átti konu hefdina ok veik mjøk
af kristinni fyr hennar sakar ok fyr vildar sakar við lýðinn
er á möt stóð kristinni, helt þó sunnudags helgi ok frjádaga

a more commonly réð af dugum.
b nafn written nán (= nanfn or nánfn), cf. note a on p. 48.
c there is a short erasure at the end of the line followed by another, even shorter, at
the beginning of the next line; as the text appears, here as elsewhere, to have been
unaffected, one could imagine an original var h(= var hann).
d this word appears to have been erased.
his father, while alive, had sent him to be fostered. Eiríkr blóðóx was a handsome man, tall and very stately. His wife was Gunnhildr, daughter of Æzurr lafskegg.\textsuperscript{15} Their sons were Gamli and Goðormr, Haraldr gráfeldr and Erlingr, Sigrúðr slefa; there are still more named: Guðrøðr ljómi, Ragnfrøðr, Hálfdan, Eyvindr and Gormr. Eiríkr ruled Norway for five years, including the two years he was considered king while Haraldr lived and three years thereafter.\textsuperscript{16}

Gunnhildr, his wife, was of all women the most beautiful; a woman small of stature yet great of counsel. She became so wicked in her counsel, and he so easily led to acts cruel and oppressive to the people, that it was hard to bear. He had killed his brother Óláfr digrbeinn and Björn and others of his brothers. Thus he was called blóðóx, because he was a cruel and ruthless man, and mostly as a result of her counsel.\textsuperscript{17}

Then, two years after the death of Haraldr hárfagri, wise men, in secrecy, called Hákon back to Norway. He came from the west with two ships and stayed there the winter without the name of king. Hákon was the best-looking of men, tall and magnificent, and so strong that his equal could not be found. He was a full head taller than other men and his hair was like yellow silk. In chivalry and all courtesy he excelled other men. He was nearly twenty when he came to the country.

His following grew so quickly that Eiríkr could not stand against him, and he and his wife fled, going first to Denmark.\textsuperscript{18} Hákon ruled thereafter alone as king of Norway, and Norway so prospered under his rule that none could remember when it had been better—except that there was then no Christianity. Hákon was a Christian, but his wife was heathen,\textsuperscript{19} and he departed much from Christian ways for her sake and in order to please the people, who stood against Christianity, although he kept the holiness of Sunday and the Friday fast.
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fóstu. Hókon før til Danmarkar suðr tveim skipum ok barðisk þar ok hrauð. x. skip með tveim skipum. Í þeirri for lagði hann undir sík Selund\(^a\) ok Skáney ok Gautland et vestra, ok helt svá aftr í Nóreg. Á hans dógum snörusk margir menn til kristni af vinsældum hans, en sumir hófnudu blótum, þótt eigi kristnaðisk.\(^b\) Hann reisti nekkverar kirkjur í Nóregi ok setti læða menn at, en þeir brendu kirkjurnar ok vógu prestana fyrir hónum, svát hann mátti eigi því halda fyr illvirkjum þeira. Ok þar eftir gerðu Præindir for at hónum á Mærini ok þóðu hann blót að aðra konunga í Nóregi, ‘ella rekum vêr þik af ríki, nema þú geri nekkvern hlut í samþykki eftir oss’. En fyr því at hann sá ákafa þeira [00000000000000] á hönd hónum [000000]\(^c\) at hofðingja ráði, þá snori hann svá til, at hann fyrkvað eigi í nekkverum hlut í yfirbragði til vingunar við þá. Svá er sagt at hann biti á hrosslífr, ok svá at hann bráði dúki umb, ok beit eigi bera, en blótad si eigi óðruvísl, en svá er sagt at síðan gekk hónum allt þyngra en áðr. Hann setti Golaflingslog eftir ráðagøð Pørleifs spaka, er verit hafði forðum. Én þá er hann hafði xv. vetr haldit Nóregi með vinsæld ok með fríði, þá sóttu synir Eiríks blóðoxar í Nóregd—Gamli Gunnhildarsunr, er þeira bróðra var özzr ok vaskligastr at gervöllu, ok Godormr ok Harald græfdr ok allir þeir bróðr—ok heldu [000000]\(^d\) orrostu í Körmt við Ógvaldsnes við Hókon [000000000000000]—þar fell Godormr, Hálfdan, Eyvindr, en aðrir kómsk á flóta undan—en aðra orrostu lítlu síðarr í Fræði enn við Hókon, ok varð Hókon enn ofri, en þeir bróðr flýðu ör landi allir nema Gamli. Hann flýði til lands

\(^a\) written Selundr, but er erased.
\(^b\) added above the line; there are three other examples of crisna-, however, cf. notes b on p. 30, a on p. 34 and b on p. 74.
\(^c\) here the first letter could conceivably be s and the last i; Storm reconstructed snæri (see Ágrip 1880, 102).
\(^d\) MS noregi, i. e. dat. instead of acc.
\(^e\) here a word of about six letters has been erased, conceivably fyrsta.
\(^f\) here nearly an entire line has been erased.
Hákon went south to Denmark with two ships and fought there, defeating ten ships with his two. On this voyage he won Sjóland, Skáney and Vestra-Gautland and then returned to Norway.

In his day many men turned to Christianity as a result of his popularity, and others, although they did not become Christian, ceased the practice of pagan rites. He built some churches in Norway and set clerics in them, but the heathens burnt his churches and killed his priests so that he could not continue this activity as a result of their evil work. And later the Þrœndir rose against him at Mærin and asked him to worship the gods as other kings in Norway had done. ‘We will drive you from the kingdom,’ they said, ‘if you do not act in some way in accordance with our wishes.’ Because he saw their zeal against him, and following the advice of the chieftains, he responded in such a way that he refused nothing, so as to appear to appease them.

It is said that he bit horse-liver, but wrapped it in cloth so that he should not bite it directly. He would worship in no other way, and thereafter, it is said, his troubles were greater than before.

He established the Gulafling Law, following the advice of Þorleifr spaki, as it had been of old.

After he had ruled Norway for fifteen years with peace and popularity, the sons of Eiríkr blóðóx returned to Norway: Gamli Gunnhildarson, who of the brothers was foremost and most valiant in every way, and Goðormr and Haraldr gráfeldr and all the brothers. They fought Hákon in battle in Kørmøt, near Qgvaldsnes. There fell Goðormr and Hálfdan and Eyvindr, but the others fled and escaped. Another battle was fought shortly thereafter against Hákon in Fraði, and again Hákon won. The brothers all fled the country, with the exception of Gamli, who went to the
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ok it³ ofra of Súrnadal til Próndheims, en menn Hókonar með lýðsins⁴ fulltingi⁵ sóttu á móð hónum ok felldu í Gaulardali, þar sem nú er kallat Gamlaleir af hans nafni.

VI. En því næst á .ix. vetra fresti sú þeir bræðr hafðu í Nóreg sótt með bardaga, þá heldu þeir bræðr er eftir vóru —Haraldr gráfeldr, er þeira var merkilegastr at Gamla fallinn—með Gunnhildi móður sinni aðr í land, ok heldu orrostu við Hókon á Fitjum í Storð hjá Byskupssteini. Þar vóru fjórir of einn á móð Hókoni. Þar var með þeim í því liði sá maðr er hét Eyvindr skreyja.⁶ Hann var kappi mikill, meiri en aðrir menn, ok bitu varla jórð. Hann gekk svá umb daginn at ekki vétta helt við hónum, þvíat engi hafiði fong á í móti hónum. Hann fór svá grenjandi ok emjandi, ok ruddi svá at hann hjó á báðar hender ok spurði hvar hann Norðmannna konungr væri, ‘hví leyinsk hann nú?’ ‘Haltu svá vel⁷ fram ef þú vill hann hitta,’ kvað konunginn, en hann óestisk at meir við, ok hjó á báðar hender með mikillí breiðri ðxi svá af í jórðu nam staðar. Pá maelti Þórálfr enn sterki, íslenzkir maðr, er þá var með konunginum, núþján vetra gamall ok kallaðr var jamsterkr konunginum: ‘Vílltu, herra,’ kvað hann, ‘at ek róðumsk í móð hónum?’ ‘Nei,’ kvað hann, ‘mik vill hann hitta; skal hann ok því mik finna,’ varp af hófði sér dulhetti er 〈Eyvindr〉 skáldaspíllir hafði sett á hjálm [oo]⁸ gollroðinn er konunginn hafði á hófði til leyndar, at þá væri hann torkenndri [oooo] en aðr, þvíat hann var auðkenndr fyr hæðar sakar ok yfirbragrðs. Siðan gekk konunginn undan merkjunum fram í móð hónum kappanum, í súlkskyrtu ok hjálm á hófði, skjöld fyr sér, en sverð í hendi er Kvernbiti hét, ok sýndisk maðrinn svá

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³ MS in.
⁴ s added above the line, incorrectly, before ð.
⁵ MS fultígi.
⁶ written scraygia.
⁷ added above the line.
⁸ first written svat (cf. p. 14), but with a second a added above the line.
⁹ possibly not an erasure.
mainland and then overland through Súrnadalr to Prándheimr. Hákon’s men, with the help of the people, came against him and killed him in Gaulardalr, at that place which is now called Gamlaleir after him.\textsuperscript{25}

VI. But then, nine years\textsuperscript{26} after the brothers attacked Norway, Haraldr gráfelfdr—who was the most noteworthy of the brothers after the death of Gamli—and those brothers who remained came back to the country with their mother Gunnhildr and fought a battle with Hákon at Fitjar in Storð, near Byskupssteinn. They were four to one against Hákon.

In their army was a man named Eyvindr skreyja.\textsuperscript{27} He was a great champion, bigger than other men, and little iron could bite him. He fought that day in such a way that none could stand against him, for no one could have power against him. He went bellowing and shrieking forward, clearing a path by hacking on both sides, demanding where the Norwegian king was; ‘Why does he hide now?’

‘Keep on as you are, if you would find him,’ said the king, and at this Eyvindr grew more violent and hewed on both sides with a great broad axe, striking down to the ground each time. Pórálfr sterki,\textsuperscript{28} an Icelander who was then with the king, nineteen years old and said to be as strong as the king himself, spoke then: ‘Do you wish, my lord,’ he said, ‘that I attack him?’

‘No,’ said the king, ‘it is I he wishes to meet; so meet me he shall.’ And he threw off the hood Eyvindr skáldaspillir\textsuperscript{29} had placed over the golden helmet he had on his head, in order to hide him so that he would be more difficult to recognise—for his height and bearing made him easily known. Then the king went out from under his banner and faced the warrior, wearing a silk shirt, a helmet on his head, a shield before him, and in his hand the sword called Kvernbiti,\textsuperscript{30} and thus dressed he seemed to all falcon-like.
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búinn öllum [ooooo]a haukligr. Pá óð kappinn at fram hjálmaðr ok brynjaðr í móts ok tvíhendi öxina ok hjó til konungs, en konungrinn hvak undan lítt þat, ok missti kappinn hans ok hjó í jörðina niðr ok steypðisk eftir nökkvut svá, en konungrinn hjó hann með sverðinu í miðju í sundr í brynjunní svát sinn veg fell hvárv hlutrinn. En eftir þat er kempan var fallin, þá snorísk bardiaginn á hendr þeim broðrum, ok fellu þá þeir Gormr ok Erlingr í þeirið ok fjöldi manna, en allir bræðr þeira flýðu til skipa ok svá ór landi, hver r sem komask mátti, en konungrinn Hókon rak flóttann með ñinu líði. Þá flaug þr at konunginn, sú er engi vissi hverr skaut, ok fló undir brynstúkuna í arminn ofraé í músina. En þat er sagt at með górmningum Gunnhildar snorísk matsveinn einn af þr með skeyti ok varð þetta á munni: ‘Gefit rúm konungsbana!’ ok lét fara skeytit í flokkinn er at móti fór, ok særdi konunginn sem áðr sagði. En þá er konungrinn kenndi at þat var banásár, fyr því at hónum mátti eigi blóð stóðva, þá bað hann konungrinn flytja sík til Alrekstaða, en á leiðinni koma þeir við hellu þá er nú heittir Hókonarhella. Þar hafði hann fæddr verit af ambótt þeiri er hét Þóra Morstøng. Hón var af Most(r) kynjuð ok fædd, því var hón svá kolluð. En er konungrinn sá at at hónum leið, þá iðrarísk hann mjók mótsverða við guð. Vinir hans baðu hónum at ferra lík hans til Englands vestr ok jarða at kirkju. ‘Ek em eigi þess verðr,’ kvað hann. ‘Svá lífða ek

1 here a word of about five letters has been erased; Storm suggested þorðum (Ágrip 1880, 103).
2 hjálmaðr ok brynjaðr] added twice in the margin, once in the same hand, once in a younger hand.
3 í brynjunní] added in the margin in the same hand.
4 one expects here the word orrostu, but similar constructions occur elsewhere in the text and must be intentional.
5 some, e. g. Bugge (1873, 8), have seen this as an error for hógra (i. e. hóegra, ‘right’).
6 matsveinn einn] added in the margin in the same hand.
7 written over the line is callóð; previous editors have preferred this reading, although it requires the addition of er.
8 i. e. Moststøng; this is perhaps simply an error.
9 MS kirkjom, which scarcely makes sense.
Then the warrior strode forward, helmeted and mail-clad, and, gripping the axe with both hands, he struck at the king. The king drew back a little and the warrior missed him and struck the ground, stumbling somewhat. The king split him in two in the middle with his sword, through the chainmail, so that he fell in halves to either side.

When the champion had fallen, the tide of battle turned against the brothers, and then Gormr fell, and Erlingr, and many men besides. Their brothers all fled to ship and all who could left the country. But King Hákon and his forces pursued them. Then there flew toward the king an arrow—shot by no one knows whom—and it passed under the sleeve of his corselet and into the muscle of the upper arm. But it is said that through the sorcery of Gunnhildr a kitchen boy wheeled round, crying: ‘Make room for the king’s banesman!’ and let fly the arrow into the group coming toward him and wounding the king, as has been said.

When the king realised that his wound was mortal—for the flow of blood could not be stopped—he asked to be moved to Alreksstaðir. Along the way they came to the slab of rock which is now called Hákonarhella. There he had been born of a bondwoman named fióra Morstƒng. She was of Mostr-kin and had herself been born there and was for this reason so called.

When the king saw that death was near he repented greatly of his offences to God. His friends offered to take his body west to England and bury it there at a church. ‘I am not worthy of that,’ he said. ‘I have lived in many ways
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sem heiniðir menn í mýrgu, skal mik ok fyr því svá jarða sem heiniða menn. Vætti ek mér þaðan af meiri miskunnar af guði sjólfum en ek sjá verðr, ’ ok andaðsk á Hökonarhelli, en hann var heygðr á Sæheimi á Norðhórðalandi. Hann hörmuðu bæði vinir hans ok övinir. Eigi var meira fé borit í haug med hönun en sverð hans Kvernbiti ok búnaðr hans. Í steinþró var hann lagðr í hauginum.

VII. En þat goðisk þá umb Eiríks ævi blöðoxar er hann flyði ór landi at hann fluttisk með skipaliði vestri til Englands ok var í útilegu ok hernaði ok beiddisk miskunnar af Englands konungi, sem Aðalstein konungr hafði hónum heiti, en hann þá af konunginum jarlsríki á Norðimbralandi, gerðisk þar enn med þóum Gunnhildar konu sinnar svá grimmr ok greypr við lýð sinn at hann þóttisk varla bera mega. Af því réðsk hann í hernuð ok í viking víða í Vestrlandum, ok fell Eiríkr í Spáníalandi í útilegu. En Gunnhildr snórisk aftir til Danmarkar til Haralds konungs, er þá var konungr í Danmörku, ok var þar með sunu sína til þess er þer vörðu rosknir menn mjökt svá at aldri.

VIII. En eftir fráfall Hökonar tóku Norðmenn eftir ráði Hökonar konungs Harald gráfeld til konungs í Nóregri. En Haraldr gráfeldr kómr aftir í land ok nár ríki með bræðrum sinum Sigurði slefu, Goðrøði ljóma ok Ragnfrøði. Haraldr var þeira bræðra fremstr ok vænstr ok einna bezt at sér gerr. Því var þetta kveðit —

2. Æ standa mér augu
   of eld til Gráfeldar

—at máðrinn var fríðr sýnum.

— added in the margin.
⁴ M$ er.
⁵ sunu sinum apparently corrected from synum sinum.
⁶ added above the line, incorrectly after vænstr.
⁷ added above the line.
as a heathen, and as a heathen shall I therefore be buried. I hope for greater mercy from God Himself than I am worthy of.’ And he died at Hákonarhella and he was buried at Sæheimr in Norðhordaland. He was mourned by both friends and enemies. There were no more goods set in his mound with him than his sword Kvernbiti and his battle-dress. He was laid in the mound in a stone coffin.

VII. And it happened then that when Eiríkr blóðøx fled the country he went west with his ships to England and there spent his time raiding and plundering. There he asked quarter of the English king, as Æthelstan had promised him. He received from the king an earldom in Northumbria. Through the advice of his wife Gunnhildr he became once again so cruel and savage in his dealings with his people that they could scarcely endure it. Because of this he went raiding and harrying widely in western Europe and fell in Spain while on a raid. Gunnhildr returned to King Haraldr, who was then king in Denmark, and remained there with her sons till they were fully grown to manhood.

VIII. After Hákon’s death, the Norwegians, following King Hákon’s counsel, took Haraldr gráfeldr as king in Norway. Haraldr gráfeldr returned to Norway and took the kingdom together with his brothers Sigurd slefa, Guðrøðr ljómi and Ragnfrøðr. Haraldr was foremost of the brothers, the most accomplished and best looking. This verse was composed:

2. Steady is my eye across the fire
   fixed on Grey-cloak;

because he was a handsome man.
IX. Haraldr [00000000000] a var konungr .x[v]. b vetr. Hann fylgði róðum móður sinnar ok góði hardan rétt landsmanna ok þeir allir brœðr. Var um þeira ævi í Nóregi sultr ok seyrak ok hverskyns illr yfirvangr. Þeir vóru allir ofstopamenn ok bardaga, vóru ok nálaga allir fyr því dreipnir at menn móttu egy þoła þeim ofríki ok ólog. Svá er sagt at Vórsar gerðu fyr at Haraldi konungi ok þeim brœðrum ok Sigurði c á þingi einu ok vildu taka af lífi, en þeir kómkundan. En þeir drópu síðan d Sigurð slefu á Alreksstoðum. Var þar flokksforingi Vémundr volubrjótr. Drap [o] e Sigurð maðr sá er hét Þorkell kleypr, er Sigurðr hafði tekit konu hans nauðga. Lagði hann Sigurð gegnum með sverði, ok hefndi hans þegar hirðmaðr hans, sá er hét Erlingr gamli. Haraldr gráfeldr g[erði fyr at] Tr[yggva] brœðr[ung sínum ok drap hann], en Þórólf lússkegg hljóp þr landi síðan með Óláf, son Tryggva konungs f.

X. Í þann tíð bað Haraldr Danakonungr Haraldi gráfeld til sín af vél. Hann kom í Limafjörð þrim skipum, en þar kom á hendl hónum Gull-Haraldr, sunr Knúts, bróðursunr Haralds blátannar, með .ix. skipum, ok með ráðagorð þeira Hökonar jarls, er þá var jarl í Nóregi at foðurleif sinni síðan þeir brœðr reðu foður hans á Hökloi í Próndheimi. En er Haraldr konungr gráfeldr sá at hann var svikum ok oflíði borinn, þá mælti hann við Gull-Harald: ‘Pat hlægir mik,’ þá kvað hann, e. at ek sé skamman þinn sigr, fyr því at Hökon jarl, frendi várr, ferr hér með líði ok dreyp yðr á fötr oss þegar 〈á〉 leið, ok hefnir svá várr.’ Þar fell

a the length of the erasure suggests there were probably two words here, the second of which may conceivably have been gráfeldr; Storm claimed to be able to make out ldr (Ágrip 1880, 104).

b the second letter is now impossible to read; the number could also be .xii.

ok Sigurði added above the line.

d added in the margin.

e here a single letter has been erased, probably h (= hann).

f Haraldr . . . konungs this sentence is now largely unreadable, having been almost completely erased. The reconstruction derives from Storm (Ágrip 1880, 105) and has
IX. Haraldr was king fifteen winters. He followed his mother’s counsel, and, with his brothers, tyrannised over the people. In their time there was hunger and starvation and injustices of every kind in Norway. They were all overbearing men, eager for battle, and nearly all were killed as a result of the fact that men would not suffer their tyranny and lawlessness.

It is said that the Vǫrsar rose against King Haraldr and the brothers and Sigurðr at an assembly and meant to kill them, but they escaped. But later they killed Sigurðr slefa at Alreksstaðir. There they were led by Vémundr völubrjótr. Sigurðr was killed by a man named Pörkell kleypr, whose wife he had forcibly taken. Pörkell ran him through with a sword, and one of Sigurðr’s men called Erlingr gamli straightway avenged him.

Haraldr gráfeldr came against his cousin Tryggvi and killed him, but Pórólfr lúsarskegg fled the country with Óláfr, King Tryggvi’s son.

X. At that time Haraldr king of the Danes had treacherously invited Haraldr gráfeldr to Denmark. He sailed into Limafrjóðr with three ships, and there Gull-Haraldr, son of Knútr, nephew of Haraldr blátjónn, came against him with nine ships, by the design of the Danish king and Jarl Hákon, who had become jarl of his patrimony in Norway after the brothers had killed his father at Hókló in Prándheimr. But when King Haraldr gráfeldr saw that he had been betrayed and his forces outnumbered, he said to Gull-Haraldr: ‘It makes me laugh,’ he said, ‘that I see your victory to be short-lived, because Jarl Hákon, my kinsman, is on his way here now with an army, and in killing you on our heels, he will straightway avenge us.’

been accepted by every subsequent editor, but it is doubtful whether there would have been room in the line for both sinum and ok drap hann; Storm read vndan for what appears rather to be or landi. The words síðan and konungs are added below the line.

* þá kvæð hann] added, rather unnecessarily, in the margin.
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Haraldr konungr gráfeldr at Hálsi í Limafirði ok lið hans allt, en Hókon jarl drap þegar Gull-Harald ok vann svá Nóreg undir sík, með skattgildi við Danakonung.

XI. En eftir fráfall Haralds kómr Hókon jarl til ríkis ok hafði einn Nóreg allan mjökk svá, ok undir jarls nafni sem hans forellrar höfðu haft. Ætt hans var af Höyleygjum ok af Mærum, ok jarla ætt í hvára tveggja kviðsl, ok vildi hann fyrir því eigi tíghna sík konungs nafni. Faðir hans hét Sigurðr Hynnjarl en módir hans Bergljót, dóttir Póris þegjanda, jarsa af Mæri. Hann átti Ólofu, dóttur Haralds hárfagra. Hón var módir Bergljótar. Hann hafði enn at nýfengnu ríki gagnstöðu í fyrstunni af Gunnhildi konungamóður, ok lá hvárt um annat með illum prettum, þvítat þat skorti hvártí þeira. Hókon jarl var manna vænstr sínunum, ekki hór, [000000]b virðiligr. Hann var spekingr mikill í vízku sinni, ok varð hann fyr því slegrí en Gunnhildr í sínum röðum. Hann átti enn vingótt við Harald konung, er þá réð fyr Danmorku, ok beendi hann til at hann skyldi koma flárðum við Gunnhildi, ok koma henni ör landi með þeim hátti at hann sendi henni rit sitt ok sendi menn at þíðja hennar. Ok hann sendi henni rit ok kvæð þat semst at hón gomul giftisk gømlum konungi, ok hón hlýðdi á þat, ok var hennar fór ger prýðiliga til óþróðar,c þvítat þegar hón kom til Danmarkar þá var hón tekin ok sökt í myr í einni, ok lauk svá hónd sínum doðum, at því sem margir segja.

XII. En Hókon jarl sat í ríki .xx. vetr síz Haraldr gráfeldr fell at Hálsi í Limafirði, ok sat með ríki miklu ok óvinsæl(d)e

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[a] i. e. jarls; see Noreen 1923, § 291.7.
[b] here a word of about seven letters has been erased; in the margin the word riqxinn has been added in a slightly younger hand.
[c] prýðilega til óþróðar] written prýðilega til Óþróðar. While the meaning is fairly obvious, the syntax of this sentence is not immediately clear; there appears to be an omission or error, or both. Most previous editors (e. g. Finnur Jónsson, Ágrip 1929, 15) have emended to þróðar, following which the word farar is to be understood. Another possibility, however, is that a construction such as varð (henni) til óþróði is meant, either with an otherwise unattested gen. sg. þróðar (cf. Noreen 1923, § 411.2), or a gen.
fell there, at Háls in Limafjörðr, and all his men, but Hákon immediately killed Gull-Haraldr, winning Norway for himself as a vassal of the Danish king.

XI. Following the death of Haraldr, Jarl Hákon came to power and ruled alone very nearly all Norway, and with the jarl’s title his forefathers had had. His kin were Háleygir and Mœrir, and there had been jarls on both sides, for which reason he did not wish to honour himself by assuming the kingly title. His father was called Sigurðr Hynnjjarl, and his mother was Bergljót, the daughter of Þórir þegjandi, jarl of Mœrr. He was married to Ólof, daughter of Haraldr hárfagri. She was Bergljót’s mother.

In the early days of his reign Hákon had opposition from Gunnhildr konungamó›ir, and they were often engaged in nasty trickery each against the other, for neither of them was lacking in that.

Jarl Hákon was the handsomest of men, not tall, but imposing. He was a man of great wisdom and therefore more cunning than Gunnhildr in his machinations. He was then still on good terms with King Haraldr, who then ruled Denmark, and asked him to trick Gunnhildr into leaving the country by sending to her messengers bearing a writ proffering marriage. And Haraldr sent her the writ, saying it would be fitting that she in her old age marry an old king, and she agreed to do this. But her journey, which began in splendour, ended in disgrace, for when she arrived in Denmark she was taken and sunk in a bog, and, according to many, so ended her days.

XII. Hákon jarl ruled twenty winters after the death of Haraldr gráfeldr at Háls in Limafjörðr. He ruled imperiously, and, as time passed, grew more and more unpopular, particu-
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mikilli ok margfaldri, er á leið upp, ok með einni þeirri er hann dró til heljar, at hann lét sér konur allar jumt heimilari er hann fýsti til, ok var engi kvenna munr í því gørr, ok engi grein, hvers kona hver væri, eða systir, eða dóttir.

XIII. En hann fásti eitthvert sinni til konu þeirrar er Guðrún hét Lundasól. Hón bjó á Lundum í Gauladali, a ok gerði hann af Meðalhúsum þræla sína at taka hana ok fytja sér til ösemðar. En meðan þrælarinnir mötuðusk, þá hafði hón svá líði safnát at þá var eigi kostr at fytja hana, ok sendi hón þá orð Höðoni jarli at hón mundi eigi á hans fund sækja, nema hann b sendi konu þá er hann hafði er Þóra hét á Remoli. En eftir þau orð sækir hann upp í Gauladal með öllu líði sínu. En Halldórr á Skerdingsstæðju skar upp þr allt at dalinum, ok sótti alla vega flokkur á mótt hónum. Ók þá er jarlinn síá líðit, ok hann fann at hann var svikinn, þá dreifði hann öllu líði sínu frá sér. En hann ok þráll hans Kárkr réðu vakar nekkur ok drekkdu þar hesti hans ok létu eftir skikkju hans ok svá sverð á ísinum, en þeir fluttusk í helli einn er enn heitir Jarlshellir í Gauladali. Ok sofnaði þar þrállunn, ok lét ílla, ok sagði síðan, er hann vaknaði, at maðr sværtr ok illiligr fyr hjá helleinum, ok öttadisk hann at hann mundi inn ganga, ok sagði hónum at Ulli var drepinn. En jarlinn svaraði at þá myndi vera drepinn sunr hans, ok svá varð ok. Sofnar þrállinn í annat sinni, ok lætr eigi betr en fyr, sagði síðan at inn sami maðr hafði þá farit ofan aftr, ok bað segja jarlinum at þá vóru lokin sund þoll. En jarlinn skilði í því kominn enddag sinn, ok fluttisk til Remols til konu þeirrar er Þóra hét, er var friðla hans, ok hón leyndi hónum ok þrállinn í svínstí sínu. Síðan kom flokkur ok rannsakaði, ok með því at hann fannsk eigi, þá ættadisk flokkurinn at Brenna beinn upp at

a first written golar-, but with the o corrected to au and the t erased.
b MS hon.
c MS carki, presumably an error.
larly because—and this led to his death—he considered all women whom he desired equally available to him, making no distinction as to who was whose wife or sister or daughter.

XIII. He once desired a woman named Guðrún Lundasól. She lived at Lundir in Gauladalr, and he sent his thralls from Meðalhús to get her and bring her to him for unseemly purposes. But while the thralls were eating she got together so great a band of men that there was no possibility of taking her. She sent word to Jarl Hákon saying that she would not seek his company unless he sent away the woman he kept as mistress, who was named Þóra of Remol. After these words he proceeded to Gauladalr with all his men.

Halldórr of Skerðingssteðja called men to arms from everywhere in the valley, and a band of men came against the jarl from every direction. When the jarl saw the forces and realised that he had been betrayed, he sent away all his men and he and his thrall Karkr rode till they came to a hole in the ice, and there they drowned his horse and laid his cloak and then his sword on the ice, and then they went to a cave, which is still called Jarlshellir, in Gauladalr.

There the thrall fell asleep and rested uneasily and said afterwards when he awoke that a man dark and grim had passed before the cave, and he had feared that the man would enter. Then he had told him that Úlli was dead. The jarl answered that his son must then be slain, and this was so. The thrall slept again and rested no better than before, saying afterwards that the same man had passed again and had asked him to tell the jarl that all hope was gone. And the jarl understood from this that his last day was come, and they went to Remol, to the woman named Þóra, who was his mistress, and she hid him and the thrall in her pig-sty.

Later a band of men came and searched the house, and finding nothing, they intended to burn the farm to the
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hringum. En þá er jarlinn heyrði þat, þá vildi hann eigi bíða þísla af óvinum sínum, ok lét þrálinn skera sík á barka, ok lauk svá saurtífsmaðr í saurgu húsi sínum dógu, ok svá ríki. Var høfuðit flutt til Kaupangs. Ok þá er litið fór ofan of Steinbjörg, þá var fjórðrinn allr fullr af skipum, er allr lýðrinn sötti eftir þru hann af lífi at taka. Var þá høfuðit flutt í Hólm, ok kastaði hverr maðr steini at, en þrállinn Karkr bar í ljós høfuðit ok vænti sér af því lífs, en hann var þó upp hengðr. Þat vas of vár er Hókon dó. Í því bili kom Óláfr Tryggvasunr af Engandi í Nóreg [oooooo000000000000000000].

XIV. (E)n Hókon jarl réð eigi firir því einn fyr Nóregi at hann ætti eftir þá at taka er næst høðu áðr fyrir hónum konungar verit, nema fyrir styrs sakar ok megin, ok at hann var vitr maðr, þóat hann snóri viti sínu til ills, ok fyrir þess annars sakar at ætt öll Gunnhildarsuna var þá farin ok sløkkð nálíga, ok þóat hón væri nókkur, þá var òllum mønnun á henni hatr ok vænti sér þá betra, ok gafsk vón at lygi.

XV. (E)n hann átti þó ætterni til konungs þess at telja langfedługum er Hersir hét. Hann var konungr í Naumudali. Hét kona hans Vigða, er enn heitir óní eftir Vigða í Naumudali. En Hersir missti hennar ok vildi týna sér eftir hana, ef deimi fyndis(þ) til at þat hefði nekkveri konungr fyrri górt. En deimi fundusk til at jarl hefði þat górt, en eigi at konungr hefði þat górt. Ok hann fór þá á haug nekkvern ok veltsk fyrir ofan, ok kvaðsk þá hafa velzk ór konungs nafni, ok hengði síðan í jarls nafni, ok vildi hans afspringr síðan ávallt eigi við konungs nafni taka. En

* here approximately a line and a half of text (4.7 cm) has been erased.
When the jarl heard this he wished not to be tortured by his enemies and had the thrall slit his throat, and thus a man who had lived a life of filth ended, in a house of filth, his days and his rule. The head was taken to Kaupangr. And when the men came down from Steinbjørg the fjord was full of ships, as all the people had received the call to battle, so Hákon’s life could be taken.

The head was then moved to Hólmr, and there every man threw a stone at it. The thrall Karkr had come forward with the head, and for this he expected to be given his life, but he was hanged nevertheless. It was in the spring that Hákon died.

At that same time Óláfr Tryggvason came to Norway from England. Eiríkr Hákonarson fled the country to Sweden with his brother Sveinn, and there they joined Óláfr the Swede.

XIV. Jarl Hákon had not ruled alone over Norway through right of descent from those who had been kings before him, but rather as a result of strength and force, and because he was a wise man, though he turned his wisdom to evil; and furthermore because the sons of Gunnhildr and their kin were all gone and had nearly all been killed, and though there were some of their kin, all men hated them, and had hoped for better, though they hoped in vain.

XV. Yet he had had, among his ancestors, a king whose name was Hersir. He had been king in Naumudalr. His wife was called Vigða and the river in Naumudalr is still called Vigða after her. Hersir suffered her loss and wished to kill himself after her if an instance could be found of a king having done this before. It was found that a jarl had done so, but never a king. He went then to the top of a mound and rolled down, saying he had thus rolled from the kingship, and then he hanged himself as a jarl and for this reason his descendants would afterwards never take the
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sönnendi\textsuperscript{a} til þessa má heyra í Höleygjatali er Eyvindr orti, er kallaðr var skálaspillir.

XVI. \textit{E}n til ríkis eftir Hókon jarl steig Óláfr Tryggvasunr, ok tígnaði sik konungs nafni í Nóregi, er ættar rétt átti af Haraldi hárfrgra, þváat Óláfr hét sunr Haralds, er faðir var Tryggva, er of daga Gunnhildarsuna tók konungs nafn ok vald á Raumáriki, ok var þar tekinn af lífi á Sótanesi ok er þar heygðr, ok kalla menn þar\textsuperscript{b} Tryggvareyr. En aftak hans segja eigi allir einum hætti. Sumir kenna búþundum, at þeim þötti yfirboð hans hart ok drópu hann á þingi. Sumir segja at hann skylldi gera sætt við foðurbróðursunu sína, ok tóku þeir hann af með svikum ok illræðum Gunnhildar konungamóður, ok trúa því flestir.

XVII. \textit{E}n eftir fráfall hans flá fl‡í Estríðr,\textsuperscript{c} er Tryggvi hafði fengit á Upplþundum, braut til Orkneyja með Ólafí þrévetrum, syni sínum ok Tryggva, at forðask bæði fláræði Gunnhildar ok suna hennar ok Hókonar jarls, er ól kippðusk þá enn\textsuperscript{d} um Nóreg, þvíat eigi vörð þá enn synir Gunnhildar af lífi teknir. Ok kom hón til Orkneyja með þrým skipsþognum. En með því at eigi máttí leynask ferð hennar, ok mart kunni til svika gerask, þá sendi hón barnit á braut með manni þeim er sumir kalla Pórólflúsarskegg [ooooo0000],\textsuperscript{e} ok hafði hann barnit á launungu á braut til Nóregs, ok flutti með miklum ótta til Svíbjóðar. Ok ór Svíbjóð\textsuperscript{f} vildi hann fara til Hölmgarðs, þvíat þar var nokkvut ætterni hans. En þá kvömu Eistr at skipi því er hann var á, ok var sumt\textsuperscript{g} dreipit af, en sumt hertekit, fóstri hans dreppinn, en hann hertekinn fyr ey þeiri er heitir Eysýsla, en síðan seldr í nauð.

\textsuperscript{a} written sannendi; perhaps simply an error for sannendi.
\textsuperscript{b} added above the line.
\textsuperscript{c} written æstríðr, the Danish form of Æstriðr.
\textsuperscript{d} added above the line.
\textsuperscript{e} here Storm read sumir løpskeggi (Ágrip 1880, 108).
\textsuperscript{f} MS svíþjóð.
\textsuperscript{g} written here and four words on sumpt.
name of king. The truth of this can be heard in the Háleygjatal, which Eyvindr composed, who was called skáldaspillir. 48

XVI. After Hákon jarl Óláfr Tryggvason ascended the throne and assumed the name of king in Norway, to which he had right through descent from Haraldr hárfragri, because one of Haraldr’s sons was named Óláfr, who was the father of Tryggvi, who in the days of the sons of Gunnhildr held the title and authority of king in Raumaríki. He was killed on Sótanes and there buried and men call this place Tryggvareyrr. 49 But not all tell of his slaying in the same way: some blame the farmers, that they felt his rule to be harsh and killed him at assembly; some say that he was about to be reconciled with his cousins, and that they killed him through the treachery and wicked counsel of Gunnhildr konungamóðir, and most believe this.

XVII. After his death, Ástríðr, whom Tryggvi had married in Uppland, fled to Orkney with Óláfr, their three-year-old son, 50 in order to avoid both the treachery of Gunnhildr and her sons and that of Jarl Hákon, who were all still struggling for control of Norway, for the sons of Gunnhildr had not yet been slain. Ástríðr came to Orkney with three fully-manned ships, but because her voyage could not be concealed and much perfidy could befall them, she sent the child away with the man whom some call Þóρólfr lýsarskegg. 51 He took the child in secrecy to Norway and thence, in great fear, to Sweden. He wished to go from Sweden to Hólmgarðr, for some of Óláfr’s kin were there. 52 Men from Estonia came on board their ship and killed some men and took others hostage. Þórolfr was killed and Óláfr taken hostage near the island called Eysýsla, 53 and afterwards sold into slavery.
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XVIII. Ef ýn guð, er þetta barn hafði kosið til stórra hluta, stilliti hónum til lausnar með þeim hætti at maðr kom til Eistlands, sendímaðr konungs af Hólmgarði, er var sendr at taka skatt af landinu, ok var frændi barnsins ok leysti frænda sinn ok hafði til Hólmgarðs, ok var hann þar umb hrið svá at ekki var margra manna vitorð á hans ætterni. En þá er hann var .xij. vetra gamall, þá gerðið svá til at um dag nekkverna á torgi, þá kenndi hann í hendi manni ðxi þá er Þórofl hafði haft, ok leitaði efir atburðum hvé hónum hefði sú ðx komit, ok varð af hins ansvórum sannfróðr at þat var bæði ðx fóstra hans ok svá bani, ok tók ðxina ór hendi hónum ok drag þann er þangat hafði, ok hefndi svá fóstra sínís. En þar var mannhelgr mikil ok miklar viðlögur við manns aftak, ok fekk hann þat til ráðs at hann hljóp á hald dróttningarinnar, ok með been hennar, ok af því at hvatligt þótti vera verkit manni .xij. vetra gömlum at vinna, ok af því at sannlig þótti hefndin vera, þá þá hann miskunn af konunginum, ok tók síðan at vaxa vitorð af hann ok svá metorð ok allt yfiræti. En síðan er á leið á stundina, þá var hónum fengti lið ok skipastóll, ok för hann bæði á eitt landa ok ðunnur lónd ok herjaði, ok aukaðu flokk hans brátt Norðmenn ok Gautar ok Danir, ok vann nú stórvirki, ok aflaði sér með því frægðar ok göðs orðlags.

XIX. Hann drýgði víða herskap bæði á Vendlandi b ok á Flæmingjalandi, á Englandi ok á Skotlandi, á Írlandi ok á gömum goðum lóndum, hafði íðuliga vetsetu sína á Vennlandi í borg þeirri er hét Jómsborg. En hvégi lengi sem hann drýgði slíkt athæfi, þá geroðisk svá til of síðir at hann lendi þar við í einum stað í Englandi sem var einn mikill guðs vinr ok sá einsetumaðr ok frægr af göðum viðendum

a MÍ á eitt land, with o added above the a (= lónd); Brieskorn (1909, 147–48) suggests this should be read á Eistlónd, the plural being used to refer to the area covered by the present-day Baltic republics.

b Dahlerup (Ágrip 1880, 109) suggests emending to frislande, and Bugge (1873, 9) adding oc a frislande.
XVIII. But God, who had chosen this child for great things, saw to his release in this way: a man came to Estonia, an ambassador from the king in Hólmgarðr, sent to collect tribute in that country. He was the child’s kinsman, and he ransomed his kinsman and brought him to Hólmgarðr. There he remained a while and few knew of his descent.

When he was twelve years old, it happened one day in the market place that he recognised in a man’s hand the axe Þórólfr had had, and he asked the man under what circumstances he had come to possess the axe. From his answers Óláfr knew for certain that this was both his fosterfather’s axe and also his slayer. He took the axe from his hands and killed him who had brought it there, thus avenging his fosterfather.

Inviolability of the person was there highly regarded, and there were great penalties for manslaughter, and Óláfr resolved then to seek the support of the queen. Through her petition and because it was thought a manly deed for a twelve-year-old to have performed—and because it was considered a just revenge—he was granted the king’s pardon. Thereafter, as report of him increased, so also did his esteem and honour. And as time went on he was given men and ships and went harrying from land to land. Norwegians, Gauts and Danes quickly swelled his flock, and through great feats he won for himself fame and good repute.

XIX. He harried widely, both in Wendland and Flanders, in England and in Scotland, in Ireland and in many other countries, generally wintering in Wendland, in the town called Jómsborg. But however long he kept up such practice, it happened finally that he came to a place in England where there lived a great man of God, a hermit, famed for good and wide learning. Óláfr wished to test
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Ok fýstisk Óláfr at freista þess ok gerði einn sinn þjónustumman í konungs búnaði hans hjálpæða at leita sér undir konungs nafni, ok fekk þessur ansvør: ‘Eigi ertu konungr, en þat er ráð mitt attu sér trú konungi þínun.’ Ok fýsti Óláf ok at meirr hann at finna er hann haði heyrð sér svo ansvör, þvíat nú tók ím af hónum at hann var sannr própheti. En í hans viðrættala ok þess ens gøða manns fortølu, þá máæti hann við hann með þessum orðum af heilagri vitrun ok hifneskri framsýn: ‘Þú mont vera,’ kvað hann, ‘ágaet konungr ok ágaet verk vinna. Þú munt mǫrgum þjóðum til trúar koma ok til skírnar, montu bæði þér í því ok svá mǫrgum þðrum hjálpa. Ok til þess att þíisk eigi um þessur mín ansvör, þá montu þetta til marks hafa: þú munt við skip þín svíkum metu ok flokkum, ok mon á bardaga reitask, ok montu tína nokkvuru líði ok sjálfr sár fá, ok montu af því sári banvenn vera ok á skildi til skips borinn. En af þessu sári montu heill verða þínnan .vij. nátta, ok brátt eftir þat við skírn taka.’ Allt gekksk eftir þessi sögu, ok kom hann svá til trúar, því næst til Nóregs, ok haði með sér Sigurð byskup, er til þess var vígðr at boða lýðum guðs nafn, ok enn nekkvera lærða menn, Pangbrand prest ok Þormóð, ok enn nekkver djókn. Ok of kristnis boð kom hann fysta þíngi á í Mostr á Hǫrðulandi, ok var auðvelt at flytja, bæði at guð stuðdi ok mǫnum haði verit leið ápján Hókonar illa, ok tók þar a lýðr við trú, en Óláfr við ríki. Hann haði .vij. vetr ok .xx. er hann kom í Nóreg, ok á þeim .v. vetrum er hann bar konungs nafni í Nóregi kristnaði .v. Ísland ok Hjaltland, Ork(n)eyjar ok it .v. Færreyjar, ok reísti fyrst kirkjur á sjálfs(s) sínss hófuðbólum, ok felldi blót ok blötdrykkjur, ok lét í stað koma í vild við lýðinn

* MŚ þ(i. e. þat).
* i. e. kristnaði, cf. below, pp. 34 and 74.
* first written vj, but the ð has been erased.
him and sent one of his retainers dressed in kingly clothing to seek helping advice in the name of king, and he received this answer: ‘You are no king, but it is my advice that you be loyal to your king.’ And when Óláfr heard such an answer he desired even more to meet him, for now he was in no doubt that he was a true prophet. In the course of that good man’s conversation and persuasion he spoke to Óláfr with these words of holy revelation and heavenly foresight: ‘You will be,’ he said, ‘an excellent king and do excellent works, and you will bring many peoples to faith and baptism, and in this way you will benefit both yourself and many others. And so that you may not doubt my words, you shall take this as a sign: at your ships you will meet with treachery and bands of men. It will end in battle and you will lose some of your men and you yourself be wounded. As a result of this wound you will be near death, and you will be borne on a shield to your ship. But from this wound you will recover within seven nights, and soon afterward you will receive baptism.’ All happened as had been told, and in this way Óláfr came to the faith and then to Norway, and brought with him Bishop Sigurðr, who had been ordained to proclaim the name of God to the people; and still other learned men, the priest Pangbranðr and Þormóðr and also several deacons. He first proclaimed the Christian faith at an assembly at Mostr in Hǫrðaland—and it was easy to preach, both because it was supported by God and because men had grown tired of the tyranny of Hákon ill—and there the people took the faith and Óláfr the kingdom.

He was twenty-seven years old when he came to Norway, and during the five years he bore the name of king in Norway he Christianised five countries: Norway, Iceland, Shetland, Orkney and the fifth, the Faeroes. He first raised churches on his own estates and he abolished pagan feasts and sacrifices, in place of which, as a favour
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hóttardrykkjur jól ok páskar, Jóansmessu mungát, ok haustól at Míkjálssmessu. Óláfr var mikill maðr, hár, sýniligr, hvítr á hárslítt allan, réthraðr ok manna snøriligastr ok bezt at sér görr í allri korteisi.

XX. <E>n brátt eftir þetta kvángadísk Óláfr ok tók systur Sveins tjúguskeggs Danakonungs, er Þyri hét, er hertogi nekkværi í Vinlandi hafði festað nauðga, ok heldusk fyr því eigi þau festarmöl. En eftir samkvómu þeira þá veitti Sveinn konungr áhald þingum þeim er ját vóru, ok skilat með systur hans, ok þótt Óláfi konungi sú neisa með sneypu. Ok at hefna þess þá safnaði hann her til Danmarkar ok beidd liðsins í landamæri, ok með því at sinkaðið kváma þeira, þá helt hann yfir til Vinþlands með .xi. einum skipum ok vænti liðs eftir sér. En þá er sú vón varð at lygi—af því at flokkrinnd vendi þegar aftr, er hann var ór landi—þá ætlaðið hann at afla sér gengis í Vinþlandi af sínnum sannvínunum, er hónum hófuðu í útilegu hollir vinir verit ok tryggvir félagar. En þat tósk eigi, því Sveinn konungr hafði kvatt til liðs með sér Óláf Svíakonung ok Eiríkr, sun Hökonar illa, ok kvómu þessir at hónum fyrr Sjólandi með tveimí skipum ok átta tegum skipa. Sveinn hafði .xxx. skipa ok Óláfr .xxx. skipa, Eiríkr .ii. ok .xx., ok lagði at hónum fyrr Sveinn með .xxx. skipa, ok för manntjón mikla, ok vendi aftr með sneypu. En því næst lagði til Óláfr enn svenskí með þófnu liði við Svein, ok bar aftr jafna sneypu. Síðan lagði Eiríkr at ok bar ofra skjöld. En til falls Ólafs konungs var ekki vitat. Hitt var sét, at þá er mjók rénaði orrostan, at hann stóð lífs þá enn í lyftinginni á Orminum laanga, er hafði tvau rúm ok .xxx. En þá er Eiríkr skyldi ganga upp í stafninn á leit hans, þá sleri ljósi fyrir hann sem elding væri, en konungrinn sjálfir horfinn er

a á hárslit allan] written in a slightly younger hand over an erasure.
b following this word an s has been written, but partially erased.
c i. e. tósk.
d tveim] written tvém or tvéin.
to the people, he ordained the holiday feasts Yule and Easter, St John’s Mass ale and an autumn-ale at Michaelmas.

Óláfr was a big man, tall and handsome, with straight, light hair and beard, and of all men he was the quickest and best versed in all courtly behaviour.

XX. Soon after this Óláfr married the sister of Sveinn tjúguskegg, king of the Danes, whose name was Pyri and whom a duke in Wendland had forcibly betrothed to himself, for which reason the betrothal had not stood.65

After the wedding King Sveinn withheld the things promised in dowry with his sister, and King Óláfr considered this a disgrace. To seek vengeance he collected an army to go to Denmark and awaited forces on the coast,66 but because their arrival was delayed, he sailed to Wendland with only eleven ships, expecting the army to follow him. But when his hope was not realised, because the men had turned back as soon as he was out of the country, he intended to gather support in Wendland among his true friends, who had been faithful friends and trusted companions with him on viking expeditions. But this proved unsuccessful, for King Sveinn had called upon Óláfr, King of the Swedes, and Eiríkr, son of Hákon illi, and they came against him off Sjóland with eighty-two ships: Sveinn had thirty ships, Óláfr thirty and Eiríkr twenty-two. Sveinn came first against him with thirty ships, but suffered great losses and turned back with disgrace. Then came Óláfr the Swede with equal strength, and he met with equal disgrace. Lastly came Eiríkr and he won the day.67

But of the fall of King Óláfr nothing was known. It was seen that as the fighting lessened he stood, still alive, on the high-deck astern on the Long Serpent, which had thirty-two rowing-places.68 But when Eiríkr went to the stern of the ship in search of the king, a light flashed before him, as though it were lightning, and when the light disap-
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ljósit hvarf af. Sumir menn geta hann á báti braut hafa komízk, ok segja at hann hafi verit senn síðan í munklífi nokkvuru á Jórsalalandi. En sumir geta at hann hafi fyrir börð fallit. En hvatki er lífi hans hefir lukt, þá er þat líkilt at guð hafi sólina.

XXI. (E)n með því at Sveini þótti þá sem hann hefði unnit Nóreg með aftaki Óláfs, þá jätti hann Eiríki ok Sveini, sunum Hókonar, Nóregi, ok helt Eiríkr einn landi síðan Sveinn fell á frá, Danakonungr. Ok þá er Eiríkr hafði alls styrt Nóregi .xii. vetr með jarls nafni, þá gaf hann upp Hókoní syni sínum landit, en hann fór til Englands vestr ok réðsk í líð með Knúti, mági sínum, er hann vann England, ok dó þar af blöðrós er hónum var úfr skorinn.

XXII. (E)n svá mikla kostan ok stund sem Óláfr Tryggvasunr lagði á at fremja krisni—er við ekki vétta sparðisk, þat er guði væri tígn í ok kristninni styrkr—svá lægðu þeir feðgar allt megir fram at drekkja kristninni, ok sváð gefisk, ef eigi hefði guð þá sína miskunn til sent með tilkvómu Óláfs (Haraldssunar) grønska, er þat mund hafði hug sinn mjók á veraðar sigri, sem hér má brátt heyra, ok veik síðan trú sinni til kristni ok laut af staðfestu trúar eilífu sælu ok helgi. En at menn viti æterni hans til ríkis, þá má hér nú heyra.

XXIII. (H)aráldr, faðir Óláfs ens helga, hann var sunr Guðrøðar, en Guðrøð sunr Bjarnar, en Bjórn sun Haralds hárfagra, er fyrsti einvaldskonungr var yfir Nóregi. En mart er sagt frá víðlendi ferðar Óláfs, en hvégi víða er hann fór, þá sótti hann þegar aft(r) er guð vildi opna ríki fyrir hónum, ok kom hann siglandi vestan af Englandi með

i. e. kristni.

Written in the margin. If this is not simply a scribal error (t for c) it is among the earliest examples of the later medio-passive ending -st in Icelandic; even so it may derive from the exemplar. See Kjaran G. Ottósson 1992, 93.

added in the margin.
peared, the king himself was gone. Some suppose he got away in a boat and say that he was seen afterwards in a monastery in the Holy Land, but others think that he fell overboard. But whatever ended his life, it is likely that God has the soul.

XXI. Because Sveinn felt that he had won Norway through Óláfr’s death he granted it to Eiríkr and Sveinn, Jarl Hákon’s sons,69 and Eiríkr ruled the country alone after King Sveinn of Denmark died.70 And when Eiríkr had ruled Norway twelve winters in all with the title of jarl, he left the country to his son Hákon and went west to England,71 where he took service in the army of his brother-in-law Knútr,72 when he conquered England, and there bled to death when his uvula was cut.73

XXII. But as much pain and effort as Óláfr Tryggvason had put into forwarding Christianity—and he spared nothing which was to the honour of God and the strengthening of the Christian faith—so Eiríkr and his son put all their strength into the quelling of it; and this would have come to pass had not God’s mercy been manifested in the arrival of Óláfr, son of Haraldr grenski,74 who at that time had his mind much set on worldly victory, as will soon be heard.75 He later turned his faith to Christianity and through his steadfast belief gained eternal bliss and sanctity.

And that men may know of his ancestral birthright to the realm, this may now be heard.

XXIII. Haraldr, father of St Óláfr, was the son of Guðrøðr, and Guðrøðr the son of Bjørn, and Bjørn the son of Haraldr hárfagri, who was the first sole monarch of Norway.

Much is said about the extent of Óláfr’s travels, but however widely he travelled, he returned when God wished to make the kingdom available to him,76 and he came from
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knörrum tveim, ok kom at við Sælu ok sigldi síðan í Sauðungasund. Ok svá sem guð skipaði til, þá var sén for Hókonar, er þá stýrði landi eftir Eirík foður sinn, xv. vetra gamall, enn vænsti maðr, ok stefndi í Sauðungasund, sem allra manna leið var í þat mund, ok óvitandi at Óláfri digri lá fyrir, ok hafði eigi Hókon lið meira en langskip eitt ok skútú eina. En þá er konungrinn varð várri við ferð hans, lagði hann sínu megin sundsins hvörur skipinu. En þá er Hókon röri á þá, heimtusk brátt skip hans saman, ok varð hann þar hantekinn², ok þá hann lif ok svá lið hans allt af konunginum, ok fyrsvör landit Nóreg Óláfi eilífliga. Þá höftu þeir feðgar Eiríkr ok Hókon landi ráðit xiii. vetr með jarls naðni ok Sveinn Hókonarsunr. Enn helgi Ólafur gaf hónum Hókoni Suðreyjar, sem sumir segja, ok styrkði hann svá at þeira var hann halzi ok þar var hann konungr meðan hann lífði.

XXIV. _ET_ þá tók inn helgi Ólafur við Nóregs ríki ok styrkði ríki sitt með kristni ok þllum góðum síðum, ok bar þó með mikilli óhægð, þvíat margir leiðtuðu á innan lands ok útan, allra helzt fyr kristnis sakar er hann bauð. Hann var enn fyrsta vetr lengstum með Sigurði mági sínum á Upplöndum, en of várit eftir sótti Sveinn jarl með herskildi í land hans, ok heldu orrostu fyr Næjum pálmadag við Grenmar, ok vann Ólafur sigri. Par fell mikill hlutar lið<§> Sveins, en Sveinn helt undan. Einarr þambaskellmir kastaði akkeri í skip Sveins ok sigldi með hann nauðgan á braut til Danmarkar. Síðan fór Sveinn austr í Garda, ok kom aldregi aftar.

XXV. _ET_Síðan bað Ólafur döttur Ólafs sønska, Ástríðar, systur Ingigerðar,ª er fyrr var heitin hónum, ok brá faðir

¹ i. e. handtekinn; cf. p. 56.
² MS ingi riðar.
the west, sailing from England with two ships, and made land at Sæla and then sailed into Sauðungasund.

And as God had ordained, Hákon’s approach could be seen—fifteen years old and a very handsome man, he then ruled the country after his father Eiríkr—and he headed for Sauðungasund, at that time a common route, and was unaware that Óláfr digri lay ahead. He had no more forces than one longship and a small cutter. When the king realised that Hákon was coming, he placed his ships one on either side of the strait. And when Hákon rowed up to them, his ships immediately pulled towards each other and Hákon was there taken captive. He and all his men were granted life by the king, and Hákon pledged Norway to Óláfr for all time.

Eiríkr and his son Hákon had then ruled Norway for fourteen years with a jarl’s title, together with Sveinn Hákonarson. St Óláfr gave Hákon the Hebrides, according to some, and supported him so that he was able to keep them, and he was king there for as long as he lived.

XXIV. And so St Óláfr became king of Norway and strengthened his kingdom through Christianity and good ways, although with great difficulty, for there were many who opposed him, both within and without Norway, particularly because of the Christian faith he preached.

He spent most of the first winter with his stepfather Sigurðr in Uppland. The following spring Jarl Sveinn attacked the country and they met in battle on Palm Sunday off Nesjar by Grenmarr and the victory was Óláfr’s. There fell a great part of Sveinn’s army, but Sveinn himself escaped. Einarr Þambarskelmir cast an anchor onto Sveinn’s ship and forced him to sail away to Denmark. Thereafter Sveinn went east to Garðar and never returned.

XXV. Later Óláfr asked for the hand of Ástríðr, the daughter of Óláfr sœnski and the sister of Ingigerðr, to whom he
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hennar heitum þeim fyr reiði sakar, ok gifi Jaritláfi Austvegs konungi, ok gat Óláfr digri meðanni þorn. En þeira órnegn eða þærfróðir vitum vér eigi, nema um Gunnhildi dóttr þeira, er tök Ottó hertogi á Saxlandi. Óláfr var fríðr sýnum ok listuligr, jarpt⁶ [o] hár hafði hann ok rauðara skegg, riðvaxinn⁵ meðalmaðr, [oo]⁴ ekki hór. Hann var á .xx.⁢d aldri er hann kom í Nóreg, ok lýndisk vitrum munnom í Nóregi hann mikit afbragði í vízkru sinni, ok òllum vaskleik um hvern mann fram.

XXVI. 〈E〉n á þessu méri réð Knútr fyr Englandi, er hann hafði unnit með hjólp ok með fulltingi ens helga Óláfs, ok launaði inum helga Óláfí eigi betr en hann bar fé undir hófðingja er í Nóregi vóru—sem síðan reynisk—at þeir skyldu svíkja landit undan hónum. Var í þeiri þolu Erlingr á Sóla, Kálfr á Eggju, Þórir hundr ok margir aðrir. En þá er inn helgi Óláfr fyr austr til móts við Knút konung, þá mætti hann Erlingi ok vänti at hann væri⁶ til lýðveizlu kominn í mótf hónum. En hann réð til konungs þá með bardaga, ok helt orrostu við hann, ok vann inn helgi Óláfr sigr, ok varð Erlingr svá nauðstaddr at engi var annarr köstr en hann hljóp á miskunn konungs, ok hann veitti hónum vörn þá er aðrir sottu at hónum. En Áslákr hét maðr Fitjaskalli, er stafnbúi var konungs. Hann gekk aftir á skip ok hafði undir skafti sér leyniliga handóxi, ok varð engi fyrri vörri við en hann hafði þoggtvit hann í hofuði banasár, ok kvað svá at orði: ‘Svá skal marka níðinginn!’ En konungrinn svaraði: ‘Nú hefir þú þoggtvit Nóreg ór hendi mér.’ En þá varð hann vór af þeim munnm er þar tök hann at allir stærstu menn í landinu vóru í svikum við

⁴ MSS apparently jarpt, suggesting an original jarpt á hár.
⁵ hafði . . . riðvaxinn] these words are written over an erasure.
⁶ probably en.
⁷ written in the margin in the same hand is [a] tvit[gvs] aldri.
⁸ written var, probably simply an error.
⁹ -veizlu . . . mótf] the word náliga is written in the margin next to this line, apparently
had previously been betrothed. Her father had broken off that betrothal out of anger and had given her to Yaroslav, king of Russia. Óláfr digri had some children by Ástríðr, but with the exception of their daughter Gunnhildr, whom Duke Otto of Saxony married, their names and fates are unknown.

Óláfr was handsome and good-looking, with reddish-brown hair and a redder beard, squarely built and of medium height, not tall. He was in his twentieth year when he came to Norway, and to wise men in Norway he seemed outstanding in his wisdom and in all valour surpassing other men.

XXVI. At this time Knútr ruled England, which he had won with the help and support of St Óláfr, but he rewarded him no better than by bribing the chieftains who were in Norway into betraying the country away from him, as later happened. Among these chieftains were Erlingr of Sóli, Kálf of Egg, Pórir hundr and many others. And when St Óláfr went east against King Knútr he met Erlingr, whom he supposed to be there to support him, but Erlingr turned against him and fought him in battle. St Óláfr won the victory and Erlingr was in such straits that there was no alternative but to go and put himself at the king’s mercy, and the king protected him when others attacked him. But a man named Áslákr Fitjaskalli, the king’s forecastleman, walked to the stern of the ship with a hand-axe concealed under his cloak, and before anyone had noticed, he struck Erlingr a mortal wound on the head and spoke these words: ‘Thus shall the nithing be branded.’ The king answered: ‘Now you have struck Norway from my hand.’ And from the men he captured there, the king learned that all the most important men in the country were involved in his
hann. Ok snórisk hann þá norðr í fjórð þann er heitir Sleygsarýjórðr, inn frá Borgund, a ok gekk þar af skipum ok upp at dal þeim er heitir Valdalr, ok helt síðan ór landi á fjogrtánda vetri síz hann kom í land, b ok þvi næst í Austrvega, ok hafði sun sinn með sér, Magnús göða.

XXVII. (E)n Knútr skipar þá í ríki Hókoni systursyni sínum, ok gislaði land undir sík af allra baðra manna sunum, en lagði fólkið til áðjánar ok til hlýðskylðis. c En Hókon fórk um várit eftir í Englandshafi, en er Knútr frá þat, þá setti hann Svein, sun sinn, ok Álfífu móður hans í ríkit.

XXVIII. (V)ar þá í fyrstu svá mikit danskra manna metorð at eins þeira vitni skyldi rinda tíu Nordmannan. d Engi skyldi ná af landi at fara nema með konungs leyfi, en ef færi þá felli undir konung eignir þess. En hverr er mann vægi skyldi hafa fyrvegt landi ok lausum eyri. Ef maðr varð í útlegð ok tæmdisk hönum arfr, þá eignaðisk konungr arf þann.

XXIX. (A)t jólum skyldi hverr búandi konungi fá af arni hverjum mæli malts ok lær af oxa þrévetrum—þat var kallat vinar e toddi—ok spann smjór, ok húsreyja hver rykkjartó—þat var lín örengr fsvá mikit at spennt fengi umb mesta fingri ok lengsta. Búendr skyldir g ok at gera hús þau óll er konungr vildi hafa á bústöðum sínum. Sjó menn skyldlab gera einn liðfærkan, ok gera fyrir hvvern er v. vetra gamall væri, ok þar eftir hómlur eiga. Hverr maðr er

a MS borgung.

b á . . . land[ added in the margin in the same hand.

c the first element of this word is normally lÝð- (from lÝða, ‘people’), but is written with an h both here and on the next page, probably due to folk-etymology relating it to hlýða, ‘obey’.

f this should probably read vinjar; see Seip 1955, 165; Noreen 1923, § 383.

e this should perhaps be read örennt; cf. áeggjan and Eggjar-Kálf, both written with -eng- (notes e on p. 4 and a on p. 42).
betrayal. He turned north into the fjord called Sleygsarfjörðr, in from Borgund, and there he left his ships and went up the valley called Valdalr and thereafter he left the country, in the fourteenth winter after his arrival in the country, and went to Russia and he took with him his son, Magnús góði.

XXVII. Knútr first set his nephew Hákon over the kingdom and secured the country by taking hostage the sons of the most important men, and he oppressed the people and made them do him homage. But Hákon drowned the following spring in the North Sea and when Knútr received word of this he set his son Sveinn and Ælfgyfu, Sveinn’s mother, over the kingdom.89

XXVIII. There was in the beginning such high regard for Danish men that the testimony of one of them would overturn that of ten Norwegians. No one could leave the country without the king’s permission, but if anyone did leave, his possessions were forfeit to the king. And whosoever killed a man would lose land and chattels, and if a man were in outlawry and succeeded to inheritance, that inheritance was the king’s.

XXIX. At Yule each farmer was to give the king a measure of malt for each hearth, a ham from a three-year-old ox—this was called ‘a bit of the meadow’90—and a measure of butter; and each housewife should supply a ‘lady’s tow’91—that was as much clean flax as could be clasped between thumb and middle finger. The farmers were also to build all the houses the king wished to have on his estates. Each seven men were to outfit one able-bodied man—and this included all who had reached the age of five—who would thereafter man an oar.92 Each man who went fishing was

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8 i. e. vöru skyldir.
9 thus MS; some editors, e. g. Finnur Jónsson (Ágrip 1929, 30), have emended to skyldi.
á haf róri skyld(í) gjalda konungi landvördöu hvaðan sem hann róri, en þat eru fimm fiskar. Skip hvert er fær af landi braut skyldi konungr hlæða rúm yfir þvert skip. Maðr hverr er til Íslands fær skyldi gjalda landaura, hérrenzkr ok útlenzkr. Ok helzk sjá hlýðskyldi til þess er Sigurðr konungr Jórsalafari gaf af ok brœðr hans flestar þessar ánaúðir.

XXX. E)n þó at sjá nauð ok illing lægi á landi, þá treystusk menn eigi uppreist at veita fyrir suna sinna sakar er í gísling vöru.

XXXI. E)n eftir þetta þá sökir inn helgi Óláfr aftr í land um Svíþjóð, ok kom af Jamtalandi til Pröndheims, ok kom niðr í Veradali, ok tók þá Eggjar-Kálfr uppri á möt hónum ok efti orrostu með þöllu megni, bæði fyrir kapps sakar ok ilski, ok fekk með sér fjölmenni, allra helzt fyr þess sakar at kristniboð hans kömi eigi á landit, er menn vissu at hann myndi ný bjóðuð ok styrkja með þöllu megni, sem fyrir hafði hann gert, ok fekk þó þat til orðs at góðra manna synir skyldu eigi fyrir gísl [0000] vera, ok helt orrostu við Óláfr konung á Stiklastðum. Þeir vöru hofðingjar fyr líði Prœnda með Kálfi: Þórir hundr, Erlendr ór Gerði, Áslákr af Finneyjum. En með Óláfr vöru í ferð Haraldr bróðir hans, .xv. vetra gamall, enn vænsti maðr ok mikill vexti, Røgnvaldr Brúsasunr, ok Björn enn digri. Í þeirri orrostu fell Erlendr ór Gerði fyrst manna ór Prœnda líði. Þat var ok snemma orrostu er Óláfr konungr fell. Hann hafði sverð í hendi, en hvárki hafði hann hjálm né brynju. Hann fekk [00] sár af húskarli Kálfs á kné. Þá hneig hann [000000] ok bazk fyrir ok skaut niðr sverðinu. Þórir hundr

1 written engiar calfr.
2 ný bjóðuð the preposition á may be missing before ný, or this could be a compound verb, otherwise unattested; ný could conceivably also be the adjective with kristniboð.
3 here four letters have been partially erased; Storm believed them to have been slom (the sl would be in that case a dittography), but Dahlerup (Ágrip 1880, 113) is
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to pay the king a ‘land bundle’ from wherever he put out, and this was five fish. On each ship sailing from the country the king was to load a space across the ship. Each man who sailed to Iceland, native or foreign, was to pay a land tax. These obligations remained until Sigurðr Jórsalafari and his brothers abolished most of these impositions.

XXX. And even though such evil and oppression lay on the country, men dared not rise up for the sake of their sons who were held hostage.

XXXI. Later St Óláfr returned to Norway through Sweden and came from Jamtaland to Trándheimr and came down in Veradalr, and then Kálf of Egg, because of his malevolence and eagerness to fight, rose against him and prepared for battle with all his might. He gained the support of many men, mostly those who wished to keep Óláfr’s Christian preaching from the country, for they knew that he would again preach it and support it with all his power as he had done before. But Kálf gave as his pretext that the sons of good men should not be held hostage and fought King Óláfr in battle at Stiklastaðir.

These were the chieftains leading the Þrœndir’s army with Kálf: Þórir hundr, Erlendr of Gerði, Áslákr of Finneyjar. On Óláfr’s side were his brother Haraldr, fifteen years of age, a handsome man of great stature, Rögnvaldr Brúðason and Björn digri.

In that battle Erlendr of Gerði fell first of the Þrœndir’s army. It was also early in the battle that King Óláfr fell. He had a sword in his hand, but had neither helmet nor mailcoat. He was wounded in the knee by one of Kálf’s men. He sank down and prayed and threw down his sword. Pórir

unconvinced. The first two letters appear to have ascenders and could therefore be sl; they could, however, also be fl, ft or st, and the third and fourth letters look more like vr than om. None of these combinations produces anything that fits the context, however.

a enn . . . venti] written over an erasure.
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum

ok Þorsteinn knarrasmiðr bóru banorð af Óláfi konungi. Ok steig svá enn helgi Óláfr af þeiri orrostu ór þessu ríki í himinríki. Björn enn digri fell at høfði konunginum, en Þorsteinn knarrasmiðr var þegar drepinn á fœtr konunginum. Í þeiri orrostu fell Áslákr af Finneyjum, ok fjöldi manna af Þrænda liði.

XXXII. 〈E〉n þá tók landsfólk eftir fall konungs fulliga við vesold þangat út er Sveinn var ok Álfífá. Ok var þá hørmuligtt undir því ríki at búu, bæði með öfretli ok með óárani, er fólkit lifði meir við búfjár mat en manna, fyr því at aldregi var ár á þeira dogum, sem heyra má í visu þessi er Sigvatr kvaði:

3. Álfífu mon ævi
   ungr drengr muna lengi
   er oxa mat òtu
   inni skaf sem hafrar;
   annat var, þá er Óláfr
   ógnbandaðr réð landi,
   hverr átti þá hrósa
   hjalmar hløðnu korni.

XXXIII. 〈E〉n inn helgi Óláfr bar þessa heims .xv. vetr konungs nafn í Nóregi til þess er hann fell. Þá var hann hálffertøgr at aldri, ok var þá er hann fell frá burð dróttins várs þúshundrað vetra ok .ix. vetr ok .xx. En í orrostu þeiri er inn helgi Óláfr fell í, þá varð Haraldr bróðir hans sárð. Hann flýði eftir fall hans braut yr landi okc í Austvega ok svá til Miklagarðs, ok segja sumir at hann tæki konungs nafn í Nóregi,d en sumir synja.

a following this word there is a space, large enough for about eight letters, which seems to have been left blank by the scribe.
b hjalmar hløðnu most editors see this as a corruption of hjálmþornuðu.
c braut . . . ok\) written over an erasure. There is a full stop after hans, which suggests that the next word was either ok or en.
d í Nóregi added above the line.
hundr and Þorsteinn knarrasmiðr dealt King Óláfr his death blow. And thus in that battle St Óláfr rose from this kingdom to the kingdom of heaven. Björn digri fell before the king and Þorsteinn knarrasmiðr was killed right on the king’s heels. In this battle Áslákr of Finneyjar fell and many men of the Þröndir’s army.

XXXII. After the death of the king, the people’s misery became complete under Sveinn and Ælfgyfu. It was miserable living under their rule, both because of their tyranny and the bad seasons, when the people lived more off cattle fodder than the food of men, because the seasons were never good in their time, as can be heard from this verse by Sighvatr:  

3. Ælfgyfu’s time  
long will the young man remember,  
when they at home ate ox’s food,  
and like the goats, ate rind;  
different it was when Óláfr,  
the warrior, ruled the land,  
then everyone could enjoy  
stacks of dry corn.

XXXIII. St Óláfr had borne in this world the name of king in Norway for fifteen years when he fell. He was then thirty-five years of age and it was, when he fell, one thousand and twenty-nine winters from the birth of Our Lord. In the battle in which St Óláfr fell his brother Haraldr was wounded, and after Óláfr’s death he fled the country to Russia and went thereafter to Mikligarðr, and some say that he claimed the kingly title in Norway, but others deny this.
XXXIV. (E)n þá er guð tók at birta jartegnum um inn helga Óláf, þá rëðusk þinr boðtu menn til at fara ór landi at sækja Magnús, sun ins helga Óláfs, þvíat menn fundu misræði sín ok íðruðusk, ok vildu þá þat bèta á syni hans er þeir hofðu á sjólfrum hónum brotí, ok söttu í Austvega til Jaritláfs konungs, ok bör til þess allra baztra manna orðsending ok bœnarstað at hann skyldi til lands sækja. Ok vóru hofðingjær í þeiri fór Røgnvaldr jarl, Einarr þambaskelmir, Sveinn bryggjuföt, Kálfr Árnasunr. En þeira þen var eigi fyrð heyrð né framgeng en þeir unnu hónum land ok trúnað, þvíat Ingigerðr dróttning stóð á móti.

XXXV. (E)n næst kömr hann í land fjórum vetrum eftir fall foður síns Óláfs konungs, ok með því at þau Sveinn ok Ælfifa vissu manna þokka við hann ok óvinsæð sina, þá flyðu þau til Danmarkar. En Magnús konungr tók við ríki með allþýðu þokka of síðir, þóat með margi angri veri fyrst, þvíat hann hóf ríki sitt með harðræði fyrð œsku sinnar sakar ok ágirndar rðuneytis. Hann var nálíga .xi. vetra er hann kom í land. Hann átti þeir sæl bœn saman við fenn allir, en magnís andsvoðr. Stóð upp þá maðr, Atli at nafni, ok meilti eigi fleiri orð en þessur: ‘Svá skorpnar skór at fœti mér at ek má eigi ór stað komask.’ En Sigvatr kvad þar þegar vísu þessa:

4. Hætt er þat er allir ætla,
áðr skal við því ráða,
hárir menn er ek heyrí,
hót, skjoldungi á móti.
Gneyftb er þat, er hofðum hniiftc
heldr ok niðr í feldi,

a sinnar sakar] MS sacar sínar, but with superscript letters to indicate inversion.
b gneyft] frequently emended to greypt.
c hniift] MS hniiftr; frequently emended to hneppta.
XXXIV. When God began to provide miraculous proof of St Óláfr, the most important men decided to go abroad and fetch Magnús, St Óláfr’s son, for men had realised their mistake and had repented and wished to make up to Óláfr’s son the offence that they had caused Óláfr himself to suffer. They went to Russia to King Yaroslav, bearing the message of all the most important men and their request that he return to Norway. The leading men on this expedition were Jarl Rǫgnvaldr, Einarr þambarskelmir, Sveinn bryggju-fótr and Kálfr Árnason. But their request was neither heard nor granted until they had pledged Magnús both the country and their loyalty, because Queen Ingigerðr was opposed.

XXXV. He returned to Norway four years after the death of his father King Óláfr, and Sveinn and Ælfgyfu, knowing of his favour with the people and of their own unpopularity, fled to Denmark. And Magnús took the kingdom with the good will of the people in the end, though in the beginning he was the cause of many grievances, for because of his youth and the ambition of his advisers he began his rule harshly. He was nearly eleven years old when he came to the country.

He held assembly in Niðaróss and began by acrimoniously making accusations against all the Prændir, and they all stuck their noses in their cloaks, and were silent and gave no answer. Then a man named Atli stood up and said no more words than these: ‘So shrinks the shoe on my foot that I cannot move.’

Sighvatr spoke this verse then and there:

4. Dangerous is the threat
   —this must first be dealt with—
   when all the elders, as I hear,
   would rise against their king.
   It is dangerous too
   when the assembled men bow their heads
slegit hefir þögð á þegna,
þingmenn þós þing stíninga.

Ok raufsk þing þat með þeima hætti at konungr bað alla
menn finnask þar um morgininn. Ok fannsk þa í hans
ordum at guð hafði skipt skapi hans, ok var þa frekna snúin
til miskunnar. Hét öllum mónum gezkju ok efndi sem
hann hét, eða betr, ok aflaðisk hónum af því vinsæl(d)
mikil, ok nafn þat at hann var kallaðr Mógnús göði.

XXXVI. (E)n þá er hann hafði nokkvura vetr landi stýrt,
þögum skipat, ok öllum göðum síðum ok kristni styrt, þá
minntisk hann á röngyndi þau er við þóður hans höfðu verit
gó, ok helt her til Danmarkar, er allir vóru fullfúsir fyrir
helfnda sakar. En þá var Sveinn frá fallinn í Danmörku ok
svá Knútr faðir hans í Englandi, ok reð þá fyrir Danmörku
bróðir Sveins. Hröða-Knútr at nafni,a ok helt her á móti
Mógnúsi ok fundusk í Brenneyjum. Fóru vitir menn á
mæðal ok mæltu til sættar, ok gerðu með þeima hætti at
með því at Knúti þótti sem hann ætti rétt tilmæli til Nóregs,
þá hafði faðir hans aflat ok bróðir hans at seti—Mógnúsi
þótti ok illt misheldi þat er faðir hans hafði haft af Knúti,
svikb ok lands flótta ok lífs aftak—þá slóru þeir þó máli í
þá sætt at sá þeira er lengr líﬁði skyldi taka við bðóm
landum, ok hvárr sínu ríki ráða meðan báðir líﬁði þeir, ok
settu gísla, ok andaðisk Knútr fyrri, en Mógnús tók þá við
Danmörk fyr útan gagnmæli, þvíat synir boþtu manna
vóru í gíslinginni.

XXXVII. (E)n þá er Sveinn, sunr Úlfs ok Ástríðar, systur
Knúts ríkja, spurði þetta í England, þá aflaði hann alla
vega hers er hann mátti. En Mógnús (fór) at móti ok
funnusk á skipum við nes þat er kallat er Helganes ok

a written náðsi (cf. note b, p. 8 above).

b MS svit.
and stick their noses in their cloaks;  
the thanes are struck silent.\textsuperscript{102}

And the assembly broke up with the king’s request that  
all meet there the following morning. And then it could be  
heard from his words that God had changed his disposition  
and his acrimony was turned then to mercy. He promised  
all men kindness and kept what he had promised, or better,  
and as a result gained great popularity and the name by  
which he was called: Magnús góði.

XXXVI. After he had ruled the country for several years,  
established laws and good customs and strengthened Chris-

tianity, he remembered the injustices that had been done  
his father and went with an army to Denmark. They were  
all eager to go for the sake of revenge.

But in Denmark Sveinn had died and so had his father  
Knútr in England, and Denmark was then ruled by Sveinn’s  
brother, who was called Hrorða-Knútr,\textsuperscript{103} and he led an  
army against Magnús and they met at Brenneyjar. Wise  
men acted as intermediaries and an agreement was pro-

posed and made in such a way that since Hrorða-Knútr  
thought that he had rightful claim to Norway because his  
hather had won it and his brother had ruled it—and Magnús  
thought too that his father had suffered great wrong at the  
hands of Knútr, betrayal, exile, death—this agreement was  
reached: the one who lived the longer was to rule both  
countries, but each would rule his own kingdom while  
both lived.\textsuperscript{104} Then hostages were exchanged. Knútr died  
first,\textsuperscript{105} and Magnús then took Denmark without opposi-

tion, because the sons of the most important men were  
held hostage.

XXXVII. When Sveinn, son of Úlfr and Knútr rík’s sister  
Ástríðr,\textsuperscript{106} heard news of this in England, he gathered  
forces together from wherever he could. Magnús came  
against him and they met with their ships off the peninsula
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heldu bardaga, ok flýði Sveinn til Vinnlands ok eflíði þaðan her annat sinni, hvaðan ok er hann mátti fá, ok helt þeim her til Danmarkar, svát Mógúnus hafði skómmu áðr vitorð af, ok fyrir því líttinn viðbúnað, ok óttarðisk af líðleysi, ok bjósk þó sem hann mátti til viðtökku.

XXXVIII. (E)n of nóttina er hann skyldi berjask of morguninn, ok hónum var ótti mikill á ráði sínu, þá birtisk hónum fáðir hans í draumi, ok bað hann ekki óttask, sagði hónum at hann skyldi sigr vinna, ok svá gafsk. Möttusk þeir um morguninn á heidi þeiri er Hlírskógsheiðr heitir, er liggr við Skotborgaró, ok skipaði Mógúnus svá líði sínu í fylkingar, sem inn helgi Óláfr hafði áðr í draumi kennt hónum, ok á þeiri tíð gekk hann at berjask er hann hafði áðr sagt hónum of nóttina. Þat var þá er sól var í landsudri, ok kom fylking hans á arm fylkingu Sveins, ok snórisk hón úll fyrir, ok fekk Sveinn af morgu því mikinn skaða er hann hafði áðr til sigrs atlat, þvíat hann hafði óxnuma skipat í odd á líði sínu, ok bundit spjót á bak, en fjalar fyr augu. En nautin snórusk fyrst á frá, ok veik svá til at Sveinn var netjaðr meðal nautaflokksins ok flokks Mógúns, ok fekk inn mesta Sveinnb mannskaða, en hann freltiskc með flóta, ok rak Mógúnus lengi með annan mann Svein ok flokk hans. En þat var orðlag Sveins sagt ok hans manna at ef allir berðisk svá sem sá enn friði maðr enn ungi í silkiskytunni, þá hefði ekki barn undan komizk, en þat var konungrínn sjálfr, ok vendi aftir síðan til hers síns, ok urðú allir hónum fegnir. En áðr hofðu þeir óttazk fall hans, er hann dvalðisk svá lengi at reka flokkinn með eins manna hjólp. En Sveinn sötti sér friðland. Mógúnus konungr sitr nú í Danmørku með kyrð ok með fullum friði.

a written voxnom; presumably an error.
b inn mesta Sveinn] the word-order Sveinn inn mesta would be more natural.
c i. e. frelstisk (cf. p. 66, three lines up).
called Helganes and there fought. Sveinn fled to Wendland and
there gathered an army a second time, also from wherever
he could. He brought this army to Denmark in such a way
that Magnús remained unaware of his coming until shortly
beforehand and had therefore made little preparation and
was afraid that his men would be too few. He nevertheless
prepared as best he could for defence.

XXXVIII. During the night before the morning he was to
fight, as he was greatly apprehensive about his situation, his
father appeared to him in a dream and told him not to fear and
told him that he would gain victory, and so it came to pass.

They met that morning on the heath called Hlýrskógsheiðr,
which lies near Skotborgará, and Magnús arrayed his
forces in detachments as St Óláfr had instructed him in the
dream and went into battle at the time Óláfr had told him
to during the night. That was when the sun was in the
southeast, and his forces came upon one wing of Sveinn’s
army, who all turned, and Sveinn was harmed greatly by
many of the things that he had intended to bring him
victory, because he had had oxen placed at the front of his
ranks, with spears tied to their backs and wooden boards
before their eyes, but the cattle turned back and so it
happened that Sveinn was trapped between the herd of
cattle and Magnús’s troops. Sveinn suffered the greater
losses and escaped through flight, and Magnús and one
other man pursued Sveinn and his forces for a long time.
Sveinn and his men said that if all had fought as had the
handsome young man in the silken shirt, then not a child
would have got away—and that man was the king himself.
Magnús then turned back to his men and all were relieved
to see him. Earlier they had feared that he had been killed,
when he had been so long in pursuing Sveinn’s army with the
help of only one man. Sveinn sought asylum. King Magnús
now ruled Denmark in peace and complete tranquillity.
XXXIX. Þá sökir Haraldr, broðir ens helga Óláfs, heim ór Gardi um Austveg á kaupski, vel búinn at fé ok at gørsium, ok lenti at í Danmørk, þar er konungrinn Møgnúss vissi hvárki til hans né til skips hans, ok háttar svá at hann kom þar í nönd sem konungrinn var, ok kom þeim ræðgjafa konungs Møgnúss á funda við sík er Úlfr hét stalleri, ok talaði við hann mál Haralds sem hann væri sendimaðr Haralds, en eigi sjálfr Haraldr. Þá hann síðan at Úlfr skyldi frétta konungrinn Møgnúss hvessu hann myndi taka við fðúurbroeðr sínum ef hann sætti í land aft; kvað verðleika mikinn á vera at vel veri við hónum tekist. ‘Tel ek til þess,’ kvað hann, ‘skyldu þeira ok fylgð þá er hann hafði veitt enum helga Óláfi, bræðr sínum ok fðúur Møgnúss,’ kvað ok Harald vera vízk manð ok styrkjan, ok mörg ok mikil stórvirk hafa drýgt útan lands, maðr ok nú vel at fé búinn ok at gersimun, ok af óllu þessu mega hann mikinn styrk veita frænda sínum, ok mega stanza ok til mikils vanda ef hans viðtaka væri eigi með veg. En Úlfr tók glaðliga við þessu ørendi. Konungrinn Møgnúss tók ok glaðliga undir, kvað sig af óllum göðum drengjum er hann hafði með sér væta mikils styr(k)s ok göðs rðúneytis, en myklu mest þar sem fðúurbroðr hans var. En eftir þessur ansvör konungs sökir Haraldr til skips, en því næst á fund frænda síns, ok kenndi Úlfr þann enn mikla mannd oginn listuliga þá vera Harald er áðr hafði kallaz(k) sendimaðr Haralds. Var hér nú síðan mikill fagnaðar-fundr frænda, ok tekir Haraldr við hölfum Nóregi, ok til sökir sem bæði leiddi hann til ættarni ok svá göð gjof göðs konungs, þvíat Haraldr var sunr Sigurðar sýrar, en Sigurð sunr sunr Hálfdanar—er sumir kölluðu heikilnæf, en sumir hvítbein—en Hálfdan sunr Sygurðarhús, er var sunr Haralds hárfagra.

\* first written fundi, but i erased.
\* apparently first written uitrán, but ‘corrected’ by changing t to þ and adding c above the line (uitfcan).
\* written sugurflar; Syg- for Sig- in personal names was particularly common in Norway (cf. Noreen 1923, § 77.5 a Anm. 3).
XXXIX. But as time went on, Haraldr, brother of St Óláfr, returned home from Mikligarðr through Russia on a merchant ship, well provided with treasure and goods, and he landed in Denmark at a place where King Magnús knew nothing of him or of his ship. And so it happened that he came near to where the king was and got one of King Magnús’s advisers, whose name was Úlfr stalleri, to meet with him, and he discussed with him Haraldr’s situation, as though he were Haraldr’s messenger rather than Haraldr himself. He then asked Úlfr to enquire as to how King Magnús might receive his father’s brother if he were to return to the country and said that he very much deserved to be well received. ‘The reason for this,’ he said, ‘as I see it, is that they are kinsmen and because of the support he gave St Óláfr, his brother and Magnús’s father.’ He also said Haraldr was a wise and powerful man who had done many great deeds abroad, a man now also well provided with money and treasure, and through this he could give his nephew much support. But if he were not received with honour, great ill could come of it.

Úlfr undertook this errand gladly and King Magnús responded favourably and said that he expected much support and good counsel from all the good men he had with him, but especially from his uncle.

After the king’s answer, Haraldr returned to his ship and proceeded then to meet his nephew. Then Úlfr realised that the great and handsome man who had earlier called himself Haraldr’s messenger was Haraldr himself. It was then a very joyful meeting for the kinsmen, and Haraldr accepted half of Norway and took it as he had right to, both by descent and because of the good king’s good gift, because Haraldr was the son of Sigurðr sýr and Sigurðr son of Hálfdan, whom some called heikilnef and others hvítbeinn, and Hálfdan the son of Sigurðr hrísi, who was the son of Haraldr hárfagri.
XL. 〈E〉n Møgnús réð síðan Danmørk ok hólfum Nóregi með kyrð ok meða réð á fyrir útan allt ákall meðan hann lifði, ok réð alls hvórutveggja ríkinu. xiiiij. vetr með þeim sex er hann hafði Danmørk, ok fekk sött á Sjólandi ok andaðisk þar vetri síðarr en Haraldr kœmi í land, foðurbróðir hans. Pá hafði hann nálaga. iiii. vetr ok. xx. En lík hans var fært norðr í Pröndheim ok nið(r) sett í Kristskirkju, þar sem faðir hans hvílír. Ok var þetta h(þ)rutveggja landinu mikill harmdauði, þvíat engi lifði afspringr eftir hann nema ein dóttir, er hann fell í frá á ungum aldri. En í sött sinni gerði hann Þóri, bróður sinn sammæðra, til Sveins Úlfssonar með þeim hætti at hann sagði hónum eigi andlát hans, sagði heldr svá at hann hafði hónum gefit upp ríkit. En Sveinn þóttisk þó vita andlát hans ok tók með blíðu við mikilli gjöf ok sötti til ok lét standa alla þá skipan er hann hafði skipat í ríkinu, ok svá gjafar bæði við Þóri bróður hans ok svá við allra aðra.

XLI. 〈E〉n Haraldr konungr tekrid nú einn viðe ðllum Nóregi ok stýrði með herðu mikilli ok þó með góðum friði, ok var eigi sá annarr konungr er þllum monnement stæðiagi jammikill af fyr vízku sakir ok [00000] atgervi. En Haraldr kvángadisk brátt er hann kom í land, ok tók bróðurdóttur manns þess er Fiðr hét, er bjó austr á Ranríki, kynstórr maðr ok at auð vel búinn, ok veitti hann mági sínum, Haraldr konungr, veizlur miklar, ok gerðisk svá til enn síðan at hann vildi þær rjúfa, ok gerðisk af því misdeild með þeim, ok sötti Fiðrýrór landi með frændagengi sitt, ok sötti til Sveins konungs í Danmørku með. vij. langskipum ok þá af hónum jarls nafn, vísaði heim þeim sem fylgt hofðu hónum, vildi

*a following this the words at aldri have been partially erased and En written in the space.
b following this the words at aldri have been partially erased and En written in the space.
c niðr sett] written nið sett, but with the r partially erased, suggesting the scribe may simply have put it in the wrong place (cf. p. 64, line 5); alternatively, nið might be a variant form.
d following this is written einn, partially erased.
e MS úil. 〈E〉Haraldr konungr] MS haraldi konungi.
f reading uncertain; either fíp or fíp. i.e. síðan, or, more likely, síðar.
XL. Thereafter Magnús ruled Denmark and half of Norway in peace and tranquillity without further claims for as long as he lived. He ruled both kingdoms thirteen winters in all, including the six he ruled Denmark, and he fell ill in Sjóland and died there a year after his uncle Haraldr’s return. He was then nearly twenty-four years old. His body was moved north to Þórólheimr and buried in Kristskirkja, where his father rests. His death was much lamented in both countries, for no offspring survived him but for one daughter, dying as he did at this early age.

But while he had lain ill, he had sent his half-brother Þórir to Sveinn Úlfsson; Þórir was not to tell Sveinn that King Magnús had died, but rather that he had given him the kingdom. But Sveinn realised that Magnús had died and accepted the great gift joyfully. He took the kingdom and allowed to stand all the arrangements Magnús had made in the kingdom, and also the gifts to his brother Þórir and to everyone else.

XLI. King Haraldr now took sole rule over all Norway and ruled with great severity, yet peacefully. There was not another king who, because of his wisdom and his accomplishments, inspired as much awe in all his people.

Soon after coming to Norway, Haraldr married the niece of a man named Finnr, a man of good family and great wealth who lived to the east in Ranríki. King Haraldr granted his wife’s uncle great revenues, but later it happened that he wished to put a stop to these and they quarrelled as a result. Finn thereafter left the country with his kinsfolk and went to King Sveinn in Denmark with seven longships and received from him the title of jarl. He sent home those who had accompanied him, for he did not wish that they should lose their property or their wives or children. He and Sveinn gathered together forces
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eigi at þeir léti eignir sínar, svági konur eða börn. En Sveinn ok hann dróg sveit saman ok fóru með her í Nóreg, ok Haraldr konungr at móti, ok meyttusk við Nízi í Dønnork á Hallandi, ok lá Haraldr við ey þá er inn er við meginland, ok hugðusk þeir Sveinn at sítja hónum vatn, þvíat eigi vissu menn vatn í eynni. En Haraldr konungr lét leita ef ormri kvíkr fyndisk í eynni, ok hann fannsk ok var møddr síðan við eld at ráði konungs, at hann skyldi þyrsta sem mest. Var síðan þróðr bundinn við sporðinn ok hann lauss láðinn. Sótti hann þegar til vats at drekka ok var svá vatn fundit. En þá er Haraldr þóttisk viðr búinn, þá lagði hann til bardaga þegar lið hans var komit, þat er hann lá á bíð, ok var Sveinn sigraðr með miklu mannsþelli, ok flýði undan með fámenni. En Fjør varð hantekin ok friðr gefinn, ok fluttisk heim með Haraldi til eigna sinna.

XLII. 〈E〉n þá er Haraldr hafði xix. vetr ráðit fyrir Nóregi öllum síz Mógnús fell í frá, þá kómr maðr af Englandi, Tósti at nafni. Hann var jarl ok broðir Haralds Godinasonar, þess er þá réð fyr Englandi, ok jamborinn til lands við Harald, ok þó óllu svipðr, ok beiddisk lóveizlu af Haraldi ok hét hónum hölfu Englandi ef þeir fengu unnit. Ok Haraldr helt þangat her með hónum, ok unnu þeir allt Norðimbralend. En Englands konungr var þá í Normandie, ok þegar er hann spyrð, þá skundar hann aðr með her, ok kom þá svá á óvart at lið þeira var flest á skipum, en þeir vóþnlausir nálaga er uppi vóru, fyr útan høggvópn ok hlifðarvíþp. Pá snórusk þeir í eina fylking allir, ok bjøggusk við, en konungrinna sjálfr sat á hesti ok reið meðvan hann fylkiði liðinnu, en hestrinn fell undir hónum ok varp hónum af baki. En konungrinna mælti er hann stóð upp: ‘Sjaldan fór svá, þá er vel vildi,’ kvað hann, ok svá var ok sem konungrinna
and went with an army to Norway. King Haraldr came against them and they met by the Niz in Halland in Den-
mark. Haraldr lay by an island near to the mainland. Sveinn and Finnr thought to cut him off from fresh water, because no one thought there was water on the island. King Haraldr had men search for a live snake on the island. One was found and, following the king’s direction, then exhausted by a fire so that it should get as thirsty as possible. They then tied a string to its tail and set it free. It immediately sought drinking water and in this way water was found.

When Haraldr felt himself prepared and the men for whom he had been waiting arrived, he went into battle. Sveinn was defeated and suffered great losses and fled with a few men. But Finnr was captured and pardoned and returned home with Haraldr to his estates.

XLII. When Haraldr had ruled all Norway for nineteen years after the death of Magnús, a man came from England named Tostig. He was a jarl and the brother of Harold Godwineson, who then ruled in England, and though his right of birth was equal to Harold’s he was deprived of everything. He asked support of Haraldr and promised him half of England if they should win it. Haraldr took his army there with Tostig and they won all of Northumbria.

The king of England was then in Normandy, but as soon as he heard news of this he hurried back with an army and came so unexpectedly upon them that most of their troops were on board their ships, and those on land nearly unarmed but for striking weapons and weapons of de-
fence. They all came together in one formation and made ready. Haraldr of Norway was on horseback and rode as he arrayed his troops. The horse stumbled and threw him off. The king said as he stood up: ‘Seldom has it gone thus when fate was favourable.’ And it happened as the king
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sagði, at hann varð eigi ljúgspár, fyrir því at í þeim bardaga enum sama of daginn fellaðiði Harald konungur ok Tósti jarl ok mikit lið með þeim, en þat flyði til skipa er undan kom. Var foringi fyrir liði því Óláfr, sunn Haralds, enn vœnisti maðr, b nálíga .xx., er búaandi var kallaðr fyr spekðar sakar ok hógvær. En hann beiddisk [oooo]c gríða af Haraldi ok svá líkama fœður síns, ok þa hvárt tveggja, fluttisk síðan [með Póli jarli]d í Orkneyjar, en um várit eftir til Nóregar ok jarðaði [líf hans]e í Máríukirkju í Niðarósi—en nú liggr hann á Elgjusætri—þvat þat þott fallit at hann fylgði kirkju þeirri er hann hafði láttit gera, en Eysteinn erkibyskup lét þangat fara hreinlífsmönnum undir hendr, ok aukaði með því þá eign aðra er hann sjálfr hafði þangat gefit.

XLIII. En þá .xij. mánaðr er Haraldr var vestr ok þeir feðgar, þá réð sunn hans fyrir Nóregi meðan, sá (er) Mögnús hét, enn fríðasti maðr, ok skipa þeir brœðr ok Óláfr nú ríki síð á miðal. En vónu skjótarar,f .iij. vetrum síðarr, fell Mögnús á frá ok átti son eftir, þann er Hókon hét, ok var sá fenginn Steigar-Póri til fóstrs. En Óláfr réð einn fyr Nóregi .iiij. vetr ok .xx. síðan, ok var þar en konungs ævi eftir Harald hárfagra Nóregar í slíkri farsælu sem um hans daga, ok skipaði hann morgum þeim möllum til vægðar er Haraldr hafði með freku reist ok haldit. Hann var mildr af gulli ok af silfri ok góðum gripum ok gersinum, en fastaldrâ á þórðum. Olli vit hans því ok hitt, at hann sá at konungdóminum gegndi, ok eru morg hans verk góð at inna.

a following this word there is a space, large enough for four or five letters.
b something intended to follow this word is written in the margin; it cannot now be made out, but Storm was in his time able to read er var at aldri (Ágrip 1880, 117).
c here four or five letters have been erased; Dahlerup (Ágrip 1880, 117) suggests oc etc.
d síðan . . . jarli] there appears to have been an attempt made to erase these words.
had said, and his prophecy was not false, for that day in that same battle both he and Jarl Tostig fell and many with them. Those who escaped fled to the ships. The leader of this group was Óláfr, Haraldr’s son, a fine man, nearly twenty years old. He was called ‘búandi’ because he was quiet and gentle. He asked quarter of Harold and also for the body of his father and was granted both. He then went to Orkney with Jarl Páll and the following spring to Norway. He buried Haraldr’s body in Mariukirkja in Niðaróss—he now lies at Elgusetr—because it was thought fitting that he remain with the church that he himself had had built. Archbishop Eysteinn had him moved there into the care of the monks and thus added to the other possessions he had himself given them.

XLIII. The twelve months Haraldr and Óláfr were in the west, Haraldr’s son, the one named Magnús, ruled Norway, a most handsome man, and he and his brother Óláfr now divided the kingdom between them. But, sooner than expected, two years later, Magnús died, leaving a son named Hákon, who was then fostered by Steigar-Póirir. Thereafter Óláfr ruled Norway alone for twenty-four years, and during no king’s lifetime since Haraldr hárfagri had Norway seen such prosperity as in his day. He mitigated much which Haraldr harðráði had harshly begun and kept up. He was open-handed with gold and silver, valuables and treasures, but tight-fisted with land. The reason for this was his good sense and also that he saw that this would benefit his kingdom. And there are many of his good deeds to be related.

* [h] added above the line; now all but unreadable.
1 corrected by the scribe from sciotare, a Norwegianism (see Noreen 1923, § 442.1), which Seip (1955, 133) assumes derives from the exemplar.
2 i.e. fasthaldr.
XLIV. (H)ann gerði upp steinkirkjú at byskupsstólinum í Niðarósi yfir líkam ens helga Óláfs frænda síns, ok bjó hana til lykða. Ok hver hans geizka hafi verið ok ástsemd við lýðinn, þá má skilja af orðum þeim er hann mælti dag nökkurn í Miklagáldi. Var hann kátr ok í skapi góðu, ok gerðusk þeir til er þetta mæltu: ‘Hérnú, foðnuðr er oss á, konungr, attu eða svá kátr.’ En hann svaraði: ‘Hví,’ kvað hann, ‘skal ek nú eigi vera kátr, er ek sé bæði á lýð mínum kaeti ok frelsi, ok sit ek í samkundu þeirri er helgðu er helgum foðurbróður mínum. Um daga foður míns þá var lýðr undir aga miklum ok óttu, ok fólu flestir menn gull sitt ok gersimar, en ek sé nú at á hverjum skínn er á, ok er þeira frelsi míni gleði.’ Var ok svá gótt um hans daga at fyr útan orrostu þá friðaði hann fyrir sér ok fyrir lýð sínum útan lands, ok stóð hans næstu nágrønnum þó ógn af hónum, at hann væri høgr ok högvær, sem skáldit segr:a

5. Varði ógnar orðum
Óláfr ok friðmólum
jörð svá at engi þorði
allvalda til kalla.

XLV. (E)n þá er hann hafði ráðit Nóregi .vij. vetr ok .xx. með þeim enum fyrsta b er hann var vestr eftir fall Haralds, er Mógnús bróðir hans var í Nóregi, þá sýðisk hann á þeim er heitir Haukþar, austr á Ranríki, þar sem hann tók veizlu, ok andaðisk þar, ok var líkam hans fluttur norðr í Niðarósi ok var jarðad þi kirkju þeirri er hann hafði látt gera.

XLVI.(E)n hér eftir stígr Mógnús berlegg, d sunr hans, til ríkis. Hann var þá náliga tvíugr er hann tók konungs nafn eftir foður sinn—ok Hókon frændi hans annarr, er Steigardróðir hafði at foða sem sagði fyr; hann var vel hálfrítøgr

a apparently written sego.
b MS frysta.
c written iarpar, possibly only a slip, but on the loss of ði before another consonant see Seip 1955, 157–60.
d báin or béin, i. e. berbeinn, is written above Mógnús, apparently in a younger hand.
e Hann . . . sinn} written over an erasure.
XLIV. At the bishop’s seat in Niðaróss he erected a stone church over the body of his uncle St Óláfr and saw to its completion. And how great his kindness and love for his people were can be seen from the words he spoke one day at Miklagildi. He was merry and in excellent humour, and some ventured to say: ‘See now, it is pleasing to us, King, that you are so merry.’ And he answered: ‘Why should I not be merry when I see my people both happy and free, and I sit here at this feast in honour of my saintly uncle? In my father’s day men lived in great awe and fear, and most hid their gold and treasures, but now I see that on every man shine his possessions. Their freedom is my joy.’

It was so good during his days that he made peace abroad without battle, both for himself and for his people. And even though he was quiet and gentle, his nearest neighbours stood in fear of him, as the poet says:

5. Through threatening words  
   and peace-speeches  
   Óláfr defended his country  
   so that no king dared claim it.

XLV. When he had ruled Norway for twenty-seven years, including the year he was in the west after the death of Haraldr and his brother Magnús was in Norway, he was taken ill at the farm called Haukboer, eastward in Ranríki, where he was being feasted. He died there and his body was taken north to Niðaróss and there buried in the church he had had built.

XLVI. Thereafter his son Magnús berleggr took the kingdom. He was nearly twenty when he took the kingly title after his father—along with his cousin Hákon, who had been fostered by Steigar-Dórir, as was said before; he
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þá—ok vóru einn vetr báðir ok þann í Niðarósi, ok var Mögnús í konungs garði en Hökon í Skúlagarði niðr frá Klémetskirkju, ok helt svá jólavist. Þá nam Hökon af jólagjafar ok skyldir allar ok landaura gjald við Þrændi ok við Upplendinga alla þá er við hónum töku, ok bætti þar í mótt mórgu öðru rétt landsmanna. En þá tók fyr þessa sök hugr Mögnúss at óróask, er hann þottisk hafa minna af landi ok lands sköttum en faðir hans hafði haft eða foðurbróðir eða forellar. Þótti hónum sinn hlutr eigi síðr upp gefinn í þessi gjöf þeim til semðar en Hökonar, þottisk í því óvirðr ok mishaldinn af frænda sínum ok róðum þeira þóris beggja. Varð þeim ok á því mikill uggr, hversu Magnúsi myndi líka, fyr því at hann helt allan vetrinn. við. langskipum í opinni vök í Kaupangi. En um várit nálaga kyndilmessu þá lagði hann braut á náttarþeli ok tjölduðum skipum ok ljós undir, ok lagði til Hefringar, bjó þar of nóttina, ok gerði elda stóra á landi uppi. En þá hugði Hökon ok lið þat er í beenum var at þat varí gort til svíka, ok lét blása liði út, ok sötti allr Kaupangrs lýðr til, ok vóru í samnaðað of nóttina. En um morguninn er lýsti, er Mögnús sá allsherjar lið á Eyrunum, þá helt hann út ór firdinum ok svá suðr í Golaþingslog.

XLVII. (Ey)n Hökon byrjaði féðr sína í Vík austr, ok helt mótt í Kaupangi áðr ok sat á hesti ok hét Óllum mónnum vingan ok svá bað, kvað sér vera skugga á vilja frænda síns. Ok allir menn hétu hónum vingan með göðum vilja ok fylgð ef þyrfti. Ok fylgði hónum lýðr allr undir Steinbjorg út, en hann fluttisk þá til fjalls upp ok fór dag einn eftir rjúpu einni er flaug undan hónum er hann reið. Þá varð

more normally forellrar (cf. p. 20 above), but cf. forellar(s), pp. 66 and 74 below (see also Seip 1955, 279).

written sampnafle.
was then in his late twenties—and both ruled one winter and spent it in Niðaróss, Magnús in the king’s residence and Hákon in Skúlagarðr, down from Klémetskirkja, and there he celebrated the Christmas feast. Hákon abolished all Christmas dues, duties and land taxes for those Prøendir and Uplendingar who acknowledged him as king, and in return for this he enhanced the people’s rights in many other ways. Magnús became uneasy at this, because he felt the income from his lands and taxes to be less than that of his father, his uncle and his forebears. He felt that what was rightfully his, no less than Hákon’s own, had been given up to the honour of the Prøendir and Uplendingar. He felt dishonoured and wronged by his cousin and by his and Þórir’s schemes.

They greatly feared Magnús’s response to these measures, because the whole winter he kept seven longships at an opening in the ice at Kaupangr. But that spring, near Candlemas, he left during the night with the ships tented and with lights under the tents and made for Hefring. He stayed there the night and built huge fires ashore. Hákon and the men who were in the town suspected treachery and called together an army, and all the townsmen gathered together and remained in readiness throughout the night. But in the morning when it got light and Magnús saw the public troops on Eyrar, he sailed out of the fjord and south to Gulaflingslög.

XLVII. Hákon held a meeting in Kaupangr before undertaking the journey eastward to Vik. He sat on horseback and promised every man friendship and asked the same in return and said he was unsure of his cousin’s intentions. All willingly promised him friendship and, if necessary, support. All the people accompanied him up to Steinbjørg. He then went onto the mountain. One day he followed a ptarmigan which flew away from him as he rode. And he
hann sjúkr ok fekk banasótt ok andaðisk þar á fjallinu, ok kvómu á hálfs mánaðar fresti aftir tíðindin til Kaupangs. Ok menn skyldu ganga í móti líki hans, ok gekk allr lýðr á móti ok flestr allr grátandi, þvíat allir menn unnu hónum hugóustum, en lík hans var niðr sett í Kristskirkju.

XLVIII. 〈E〉n eftir fráfall Hókonar þá mátti Þórir eigi vikva skapi sínu til Mögnúss, er þá tók víð ríki, ok reisti upp mann þann er Sveinn var kallaðr, sunn Haralds flettis, fyr ofmetaðar sakar, ok eflusk af Upplöndum ok kvómu niðr í Raumsdali ok á Sunnmæri, ok þfludu þar skipa ok heldu norðr í Pröndheim síðan. En þá er Sigurðr ullstrengur spurdí ok margir aðrir konungs vinir þessa uppreist Steigar-Þóris ok fjáðdskap, þá söfnudu þeir með þrælskrud þlúi líði í móti Þóri er þeir móttu, ok stefndu því líði til Viggjar. En Sveinn ok Þórir heldu þangat líði sínu, ok þorðusk víð þá Sigurð ok nöðu uppgangu ok urðu ofri ok veittu mikit mannsþ. En Sigurðr flýði á fund konungs Mögnúss, er þeir fluttusk til Kaupangs, ok hvarfluðu í firðinum þeir Þórir eftir. En þá er þeir Þórir vóru búnir ór firðinum ok lagt skipum sínum í Hefring, a þá kom Mögnús konungr útan í fjórðinn. En þeir Þórir logðu skipum sínum yfir á Vagnvikastrond, ok flýðu af skipum ok kvómu niðr í dal þeim er heitir Þeodarl í Seljuþerfi, ok var Þórir borinn í bærum yfir fjallit. Söfnudub skipum síðan ok fluttusk á Hólogaland, en konunginn Mögnús eftir þeim, ok sá hvár flokkkrinn annan á firði þeim er Harmr heitir. Logðu hinnir síðan til Hesjutúna. Þeir Þórir hugðusk hafa fengit meginland, en þat var ey, ok urðu þar margir handteknir með Steigar-Þóri, en hann sjálfr síðan hengðr í hólmi þeim er Vambarhólmr heitir. Þá mælti Þórir, er hann sá gálgann: ‘Ill eru ill róð,’ ok kvan þetta áðr hann væri hengðr ok snaran látni á hálsinn:

a í Hefring\[ thus also Morkínskinna and Fagrskinna; Heimskringla has við Hefring, which seems more logical.\b after this líði is written, but with points underneath to indicate deletion.\]
then fell ill and this was his death-sickness and he died there on the mountain. Word reached Kaupangr a fortnight later. It was requested that the people should go to meet his body and all the townspeople went, nearly all of them crying, for all men had heartfelt love for him. His body was buried in Kristskirkja.

XLVIII. But after the death of Hákon, Þórir could not support Magnús, who then took over the kingdom, and he arrogantly put forward a man called Sveinn, the son of Haraldr flettir.132 They gathered support in Uppland and came to Raumsdalr and Sunnmørr and there obtained ships, proceeding then north to Prándheimr. When Sigurðr ullstreng and many others of the king’s friends received word of Steigar-Þórir’s rebellion and enmity they summoned all the forces they could against him and turned their army towards Vigg. Sveinn and Þórir brought their army there and fought Sigurðr, and they succeeded in getting ashore and won the victory, killing many men. Sigurðr fled to King Magnús, and Þórir and his men sailed to Kaupangr and there sailed back and forth in the fjord, waiting. When they had positioned their ships by Hefring and were ready to sail out of the fjord King Magnús sailed into it. But Þórir and his men took their ships over to Vagnvíkastrandr133 and there left them and they came down to the valley called Þexdalr in Seljuhverfi. Þórir was carried over the mountain on a litter.134 Thereafter they gathered ships and went to Hálogaland, but King Magnús came after them and the armies sighted each other on the fjord called Harmr. Þórir and his men then went to Hesjutún. They thought they had reached the mainland, but it was an island, and there Steigar-Þórir was captured and many with him. Þórir himself was then hanged on an islet called Vambarhólmr. When he saw the gallows he said: ‘Bad is a bad plan,’ and before he was hanged and the noose put round his neck he spoke this verse:
6. Vórum félagar fjórir
forðum, einn við stýri.

En Egill Áskelssunr á Forlandi, enn vaskasti maðr, var ok þar dreپп ön ok hengð með Þóri, þvíat hann vildi eigi flýja frá Ingibjǫrgu konu sinni, Ógmundardóttur, systur Skopta. Þá mælti konungrinn Mǫgnús, er hann Egill hekk á gálganum: ‘Illa koma hóum gó›ir frændr í hald.’ En Sveinn flýði í haf út ok svá til Danmarkar, ok var þar til þess er hann kom í sætt við Eystein konung, sun Mǫgnúss, er hann tök í sætt ok gördi skutilsvein sinn ok hafði í karleik ok í vírktum. En Mǫgnús konung hafði þá ríki einn saman ok ankannalaust, ok friðaði vel fyr landi sín, ok eydi öllum víkingum ok útilegum þunnnum, ok var maðr herskár ok røskr ok starfsamr, ok líkari í öllu Haraldi foðurfeðr sín, í skaplyndi heldur en foður sín, Allir vóru þær miklir menn ok fríðir sýnum.\textsuperscript{3}

XLIX. (M)ǫgnús fór margar herfarar ok fekk þat fyrst til ákalls á Gautland austr, at hann kvæð Dal ok Véar ok Vǫrðynjar með rēttu eiga at liggja til Nóregs, kvæð sín, forella haft hafa forðum, ok settisk konungrinn síðan við landamæri með miklu liði ok bjó í tjóldum, ok hugðisk til áreiðar á Gautland. En þá er Ingi konung frá þat, þá samnaði hann brátt liði saman ok stefndi á fund hans. En þá er konunginum Mǫgnúsi kom sönn njósn of ferð hans, þá eggjuðu hofðingjar aftrhvarfs, en hann þekkðisk eigi þat, ok helt á mótt konunginum Inga fyrr en hann verði ok á náttarþelj ok gerði mikinn mannskaða, en konungrinn Ingi frettisk með flóttu. En síðan var máli snúit til sættar, ok tök Mǫgnús konungr Margrétu, döttur Inga konungs, ok þessar eignir með er hann kallaði áðr til.

\textsuperscript{3} Allir . . . sýnum\} written twice in the margin, the first for the most part erased.
6. Four fellows were we once, one at the helm. 

Egill Áskelsson from Forland, a very brave man, was also killed and hanged there with Þórir because he would not leave his wife Íngibjörg Ógmundardóttir, Skopti’s sister. As Egill hung from the gallows, King Magnús said: ‘Good kin are of little benefit to him.’

Sveinn fled out to sea and on to Denmark and remained there till he was reconciled with Magnús’s son King Eysteinn, who made peace with him and made him his page and held him in favour and affection.

King Magnús ruled alone and uncontested, kept his land in peace and rid the country of all vikings and outlaws. He was a warlike man, doughty and industrious, and in disposition he was in every respect more like his grandfather Haraldr than like his father. They were all tall and handsome men.

XLIX. Magnús went on many campaigns. His first claim was eastwards against Gautland, saying that Dalr, Véar and Varðynjar rightfully belonged to Norway, as his forefathers had ruled them in the past. He took up position at the border with a great army camped in tents and intended to mount an invasion of Gautland. When King Íngi received word of this he soon gathered together an army and went to meet him.

But when King Magnús heard true report of his movements, the chieftains urged that they turn back, but he would not consent to this and attacked King Íngi earlier than he expected, and at night, and killed many men, but King Íngi escaped through flight. Afterwards they came to an agreement whereby Magnús took King Íngi’s daughter Margrét and with her those lands to which he had earlier laid claim.
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L. (Í) þessi herfor vóru með Mógnúsi konungi Ógmundr Skoptasunr, Sigurðr Sigurðarsunr ok Sigurðr ullstrengr ok margir aðrir. [E]n eftir þetta leitar konungrinn Mógnús í Orkneyjar með liði. Vóru þá með hónum þessir hofdingjar: Dagr, faðir Gregóris, Viðkuðr Jóannisunr, Úlfr Ranasunr, bróðir Sigurðar, fóður Nikulauss, ok margir aðrir stórir hofdingjar. Tekr hann í Orkneyjum síðan jarlinn Erland með sér ok Mógnús, sun hans, áttján vetra gamlan, er nú er heilagr, lagðisk ut síðan í hernað fyr Skotland ok fyr Bretland, ok drap í þeirjar jarl þann er Hugi hét enn digri. Hann (var) skotinn í auga, ok gekk þar af til heljar. En hinn er skotit hafði kastadi boganum til konungs, at því er sumir segja, ok kvað svá at ordi, at ‘heill skotit herra!’—kenndi þat skot konunginum. Vendt heim ór þessi herfor með hlóðnum skipum gulls ok sílfrs ok gersima.

LI. (E)n fóm vetrum síðarr göðisk hann vestri til Írlands með skipastöli ok farr með miklu liði ok ætlar at vinna landit ok vann nekkverri lut í fyrstunni. Dirfösk hann af því ok gerðisk síðan óvarari, með því at í fyrstu gekk hónum með vildum, sem Haraldi foðurfeðr hans er hann fell á Englandi. Drógu hann til liflás ok in súmu svik, þvítir ñornuðu á mótt Mógnúsi konungi óvígjum her með leynd umb aftannin fyr Barthólómeusmessu, þá er þeir gengu frá skipum á land upp at høggva strandhógg. Fundu þeir eigi fryr en líðit kom á midal þeira ok skipanna, en þeir konungrinn lútt við búnr at herkleðum, þvít konunggrinn var upp enginn í silkihjúp ok hjálmi á hofdi, sverði gyðar ok spjóti í hendi, (f) stighosum—svá var hann oft vanr—ok fell í þessi Mógnús konungur ok mikli lið með hónum. Þar heittir á Úlanstíri er hann fell, ok Eyvindr Finn[s]unr fell þar með hónum ok margir aðrir stórir hofdingjar. Var Viðkuðr staddr næst konunginum ok fekk
L. With King Magnús on this expedition were Ógmundr Skoptason, Sigurðr Sigurðarson, Sigurðr ullstrengr and many others.

Thereafter King Magnús made for Orkney with an army. These chieftains were with him: Dagr, the father of Gregóríús, Víðkunnr Jóansson, Úlfr Hranason, the brother of Sigurðr, who was Nikulaus’s father, and many other important chieftains.140 In Orkney he took with him Jarl Erlendr and his eighteen-year-old son Magnús, who is now a saint.141 They harried the coasts of Scotland and Wales, and on that expedition killed a jarl named Hugi digri.142 He was shot in the eye and died as a result. The one who shot the arrow threw the bow to the king and, according to some accounts, remarked: ‘Well shot, Sir,’ thus attributing it to the king. Magnús returned home from this expedition with his ships laden with gold, silver and costly things.

LI. A few years later he set out west to Ireland with a fleet of ships, taking a large force of men, intending to conquer that country.143 He won a part of it straight away and as a result grew bolder and then became more unwary, because all went well for him in the beginning, just as it had for his grandfather Haraldr, when he fell in England. And the same treachery drew him to his death, for the Irish raised in secrecy an overwhelming army against King Magnús on St Bartholomew’s Eve,144 when he and his men had gone ashore from their ships to make a strand-raid. The first thing they knew was that the army had come between them and their ships. The king and his men had little armour, for the king had gone ashore wearing a silk doublet and on his head a helmet, girt with a sword and with a spear in his hand, and he wore gaiters, as was his custom. King Magnús fell on this expedition and many men with him. Where he died is called Ulster, and Eyvindr Finnsson145 died there with him, along with many other great chieftains.
sör þrjú,\(^a\) en þá er konungrinn Mógnús sá sér vísan bana, þá bað hann Víðkunn hjálpa sér með flótta, ok sötti hann þá ok þat lið annat sem undan komsk til skipa, ok svá heim í land aftr. Fekk hann síðan af því mikít metord af sunum hans, at hann hafði svá vel þar haft sík. Þá var Mýrjartak Kondjálfsunr yfirkonungr á Írlandi. Hans dóttur átti Sigurðr Mógnússunr nekkvera stund. Hón hét Bjaðmunjo. Mógnús berlegg gr ves alls konungr .x. vetr.

LII. 〈E〉n eftir Mógnús þá stíga\(^b\) til ríkis synir hans þrár, Eysteinn ok Sigurðr ok Óláfr, allir góðir menn ok listuligir, róir menn, hægsamir ok friðsamir, ok er mart gött ok dýrligt frá þeim at segja. Var Óláfs þó of litla ríð við freistat, þvat hann lífði eigi lengr en túlf vetr eftir fráfall foður síns, andaðisk í Kaupangi seytján vetra gamall, ok var jarðaðr í Kristskirkju, ok þormuðu allir menn hans fráfall. En í fyrstu, er þeir bræðr sitja í ríki þrár, Eysteinn ok Sigurðr ok Óláfr, þá fýsir Sigurð at ferðask ðó landi til Jórsala með ráði bræðra sinna ok þótu manna í landinu. En at kaupa sér guðs mískunn ok vinsæld við alþýðu, þá toku þeir allir bræðr af aðþjávar ok ánauðir ok illar aðgur er frekir konungar ok jarlar hóðu lagt á líðinn, sem fyr var sagt.

LIII. 〈N〉ú leiddu þeir bræðr svá ánauði til frelsís, en síðan ferðaðisk Sigurðr konungr ðó landi til Jórsala með sex tógu skipa fjórum vetrum eftir fráfall Mógnúss foður síns, ok hafði með sér fjólmenn ok góðmennt—ok þó þá eina er fara vildu—sat á Englandi en fyrsta veitinn, en annan út til Jórsala, ok sætti þar mikilli tígn, ok þá þar dýrligar görsimar.

\(^a\) written þrio.
\(^b\) tiga repeated, but with points underneath to indicate deletion.
Víðkunnr stood nearest to the king and received three wounds, and King Magnús asked him to save himself by flight when he saw for certain that he himself would die. Víðkunnr and the others who managed to escape returned to their ships and then back home to Norway. For having behaved so well Víðkunnr later received great honour from the sons of Magnús.

At that time Mýrjartak Kondjálfsason ruled as high king in Ireland. Sigurðr Magnússon was married to his daughter for a time. Her name was Bjaðmunjo. Magnús berleggr was king ten years in all.

LII. After Magnús, his three sons Eysteinn, Sigurðr and Óláfr succeeded to the kingdom. They were all good men, handsome, gentle men, quiet and peace-loving, and there is much good and splendid to be said about them. Trial was made of Óláfr only a short time, however, for he lived but twelve winters after his father’s death. He died in Kaupangr at the age of seventeen and was buried in Kristskirkja. His death was mourned by all.

But in the beginning, when the three brothers Eysteinn, Sigurðr and Óláfr, ruled, Sigurðr got the urge to leave Norway and travel to Jerusalem, and his brothers and the most important men in the country agreed to this.

To gain for themselves the mercy of God and the favour of the people, all the brothers abolished harsh and oppressive measures and onerous taxes which impudent kings and jarls had imposed on the people, as has been told.

LIII. In this way the brothers now changed oppression to freedom. Then four years after the death of his father Magnús, King Sigurðr travelled abroad to Jerusalem with sixty ships. He had with him a large and goodly company, though only those who wanted to go. He stayed in England the first winter and spent the next on the journey to Jerusalem, where he was received with great honour and given splendid treasures.
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LIV. Þeiddisk konungrinn af krossinum helga ok þólaðisk, en eigi þó fyrir en tölfr menn ok sjálfir hann enn þrettándi svóru at hann skyldi fremja kristni með þillum mætti sínum, ok erkibyskupsstól koma í land ef hann mætti, ok at krossinn skyldi þar vera sem inn helgi Óláfr hvíldi, ok at hann skyldi þúnd fremja ok sjálfir gera. Ok helt hann þessu sumu, þvíat þúnd framði hann, en hinu brá hann, er til mikils geigs myndi standa, ef eigi hefði guð þann geig með þartegnum leyst; reisti kirkju við landsenda ok setti þar krossinn nálíga undir vald heiðinna manna—sem síðan gafsk—hugði þar til lands gæzlu ok varð at misræðum. Kómu þar heiðnir menn ok brendu kirkjuna, þóku krossinn ok kennimaninni ok fluttu a hvártvegga braut. Kom síðan at inum heiðnum hiti svá mikill at þeir þóttusk nálíga brenna, ok óttuðisk þann atburð sem skyssi, en prestrinn segir þeim at þá bruni kómr af guðs megin ok af kraft ens [he]lgan kross, ok þeir skutu þá báti ok settu bæði til lands, krossinn ok prestinn. Ok með því at prestinum þótti eigi heilt at setja hann annat sinni undir sama vóda, þá fluttí hann krossinn á launungu norðr til staðarins til ins helga Óláfs, sem hann var svarinn, ok nú er hann síðan.

LV. Þein mart var ok annat gótt í ferð hans. Sigr vann hann á nekkverum borgum heiðnum, ok hét til þoku einnar þeirrar at fella af kjótótum á þvattdegi í Nóregi. Til Miklagaðs för hann ok hlaut þar mikla tígn af viðtöku keisarans ok stórar gjafir, ok lét þar eftir til minna þarvistar sínar skip sín, ok tók af skipi sínu einu hofuð mikil ok fjárverð ok setti á Pétrskirkju. En heim í Nóreg sekkir hann um Ungeraland ok Saxland, af Danmörk eftir þríja vetr er hann fór ór landi,
LIV. The king asked for a fragment of the True Cross and was given one, but not until twelve men, and he himself the thirteenth, had sworn that he would advance Christianity with all his might and establish an archbishop’s see in his country if he could, and furthermore that the Cross would be kept where St Óláfr lay, and that a tithe, which he himself was to pay as well, would be levied. And he kept to some of this, for he imposed a tithe, but the rest he disregarded, and this would have caused great harm had not God intervened miraculously. Sigurðr built a church on the frontier, and put the Cross there, almost in the heathen’s hands—as later happened—thinking this would act to protect the country, but this proved ill-advised, for the heathens came, burned the church and captured the Cross and the priest and took both away. Thereafter such a great heat came upon the heathens that they thought themselves almost burning and this terrified them as a bad omen, and the priest told them that this fire came from God’s might and the power of the Holy Cross, so they put out a dinghy and put both the Cross and the priest ashore. The priest thought it unwise to subject the Cross a second time to such danger and moved it in secrecy north to the place where it had been sworn on oath that it would be kept, to the shrine of St Óláfr, and there it has remained ever since.

LV. There were many other good things on Sigurðr’s journey. He won victories over several heathen towns and vowed to ban the eating of meat on Saturdays in Norway if he took one of them.

He went to Mikligarðr and received much honour there from the emperor’s reception and great gifts. He left his ships there as a memorial of his visit. He took off one of his ships several great and costly figure-heads and put them on the church of St Peter. He returned to Norway through Hungary, Saxony and Denmark three years after
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ok fagnaði allr lýðr kvómu hans. Þá var hann tvítugr er hann kom aftr í land ór þessi ferð, ok var ordinn enn tíðasti. Vetri var Eysteinn elleiðra þeira bræðra, en Óláfr þá .xij. vetra gamall. Eru enn margir hóstaðir skráðdir af þeim görsimum er þá flutti Si . . .

LVI. . . . ok lögðu vistagjald á Smáland, .xv.c. nauta, ok töku við kristni. Ok vendi síðan Sigurðr konungr heim með morgum stórnum görsimum ok fjárhlutum er hann hafði aftali þeirri, ok var sjá leiðangr kallaðr Kalmarna leiðangr. Sjá leiðangr var sumri fyrr en myrkr et mikla. Göðisk þá gött of hans daga bæði of ár ok of margfaldar aðra geózku, nema þat einu var at, at hann mátti varla skapi sínu stýra, þá er at hónum kom óhegjandi, þá er á leið upp. En þó pótti hann allra konunga dýrligast vera ok merkiligast, ok allra helzt af ferð síni. Hann var ok inn ríkuligasti maðr, ok manna hæstr, sem faðir hans ok forellar. Unni hann lýð sínum, en lýðrinn hónum, ok birti hann þost síni með þessum kviðlingi:

7. Búendr þykja mér baztir,
byggt land ok friðr standi.

LVII. En af því trausti er hann þóttisk hafa af ástsem lýðsins, þá létt hann sér lifanda sverja Magnúsi syni sínum landit í öllum Nóregi. Hann var fríllu sunr, ok allra manna veðstr þeira er verit hafi.

LVIII. ÞEýn eftir þetta þá sækir sá maðr vestan af Írlandi er Haraldr hét gillikrist, ok kallaðisk sunr Mógnúss ok

* there is a leaf missing in the MS here.
+ i. e. kristni.
* written görsimum; or has been added over the line.
* MS carlmarna (perhaps a folk-etymology rather than a scribal error).
* written sumtri, the þ perhaps corrected from r.
* probably the word af.
* MS adds ýst síns, struck out.
* MS en.
* the first þ has apparently been 'corrected' from þ.
he had left, and all the people rejoiced at his return. He was twenty when he returned to Norway after this journey and he had become most famous.

Eysteinn was a year older than Sigurðr, and Óláfr was then twelve years old.

There are still many holy places adorned with the treasures King Si[gurðr] brought . . . .

LVI. . . . and levied a food-tax of fifteen-hundred cattle on Smálønd; and the people accepted Christianity. King Sigurðr then returned home with much treasure and booty gathered on that expedition. It was called the Kalmarnar expedition and took place the summer before the great darkness.

Sigurðr’s time was a good one, both in terms of harvests and many other beneficial things, with the one exception that he could hardly control his temper when he suffered attacks as he grew older. But he was nevertheless regarded as the most splendid and remarkable of all kings, and in particular because of his journey. He was also a very fine-looking man and very tall, as his father and forefathers had been. He loved his people, and they him, and he expressed his affection in this verse:

7. Farmers I find best;
   may farmed land and peace endure.

LVII. Because of the support he felt he had through the people’s love, Sigurðr had the whole of Norway swear allegiance to his son Magnús while he still lived. Magnús was the son of a mistress and was the finest man there has ever been.

LVIII. But after this there came a man from the west from Ireland named Haraldr gillikrist, and he claimed to be
bróðir Sigurðar, bauð til þess sönnur, ok konunginn þekkðisk, meir með einvilja sínun en með vitra manna ráði, ok trað Haraldr .ix. plóðjórn sindrandi, ok varð skírr, var síðan í góðu yfirlæti með brœðr sínun, þvít maðrinn var vaskra\[0000] ok líðmanniligr [0000], hör voxtum ok inn vakrligstí sýnum. (En eðar stóðu sem unnir vörum um Mögnús. Haraldr vann ok eð aðr hann næði skírslum at hann skyldi ekki til ríkis kalla meðan Mögnús líði, ok vildi konunginn með þeim eðstaf staðfesta eð lÝðsins ok ríki sunar síns ok váða úti byrgja ok stefja manntjón. En þessar skírslir vörur gervar á Sæheimi, ok sýndisk mönnum skírslirnarb frekflt., af því at hann bar til faðernis en eigi til ríkis, er hann haði fyrir svarit. En brátt eftir þetta andaðisk konunginn austri Ósló, en Haraldr ok Mögnús vörur í Túnsbergi, ok vörur þegar orð gor út til Mögnúss, ok hann hvataði ferð sinni inn til Óslóar ok komsk hann svá at görsimun. En líkamr Sigurðar konungs var jarðaðr í Hallvardskirkju, þá er hann haði alls ráðit Nóregi .vij. vetr ok .xx.

LIX. (Nýú vill Mögnús einn í ríki setjask, sem hónum visar með réttu tilskipan föður hans ok eðr alþýðu, en Haraldi gezk eigu at því ok kallar til hálfs ríkis, ok vill hvártki muna eða sína né skipan bróður síns. Ok gerisk nú á fyrstu .vij. nótum með þeim úsamþykkki, ok dregsk nú í tvá staði hirðin ok höfðingjar ok alþýða, ok fekkssk Haraldi af því orði líð ok . . .

LX. . . . föstrar þeira, ok höfðu þeir eina hirð báðir, Íngi konungr ok Sigurðr konungr, en Eysteinn konungr einn sér. Ok er þessir höfðingjar Ónduðusk allir, [000000] er

\[written over an erasure in different ink.\]
\[MS scírslirnar.\]
\[written frekflt; this is a nonce-word; one might have expected the form frekefíðar, though maybe a word like gervar or frambar should be understood or supplied.\]
\[here there are probably four leaves missing, after which a new hand begins.\]
the son of Magnús and Sigurðr’s brother, and offered to give evidence of this. The king gave him leave to do so, more because it was his will than by the advice of his counsellors. Haraldr walked over nine glowing hot plough-shares and was clean, and was afterwards made much of by his brother, for he was valiant and doughty, tall and very lively in appearance. But the oaths regarding Magnús still stood.

Before he was allowed to submit to ordeal, Haraldr had also sworn an oath that he would make no claim to the throne while Magnús lived. With this oath the king wished to confirm the oath of the people and thus secure his son’s rule and so keep trouble at bay and prevent loss of life.

These ordeals were carried out at Sæheimr, and people thought them excessive, for Haraldr had submitted to ordeal in order to prove his paternity and not his right to the throne, which he had already forsworn.

Soon after this the king died east in Oslo, while Haraldr and Magnús were in Tûnsberg, and word was immediately sent to Magnús and he hurried to Oslo and in this way gained the treasure. The body of King Sigurðr was buried in Hallvarðskirkja, when he had ruled Norway twenty-seven winters in all.

LIX. It was then Magnús’s intention to rule alone, as his father’s arrangement and the oath of the people entitled him to, but Haraldr was not pleased with this and laid claim to half the kingdom, choosing to remember neither his oaths nor his brother’s arrangement. During the first week there arose disagreement between them, and the court, the chieftains and the people split into two groups. Haraldr gained plenty of support as a result and . . .

LX. . . . their fosterfathers. King Ingi and King Sigurðr shared one following together and King Eysteinn had one of his own, but soon after, with the deaths of all the
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með sínum ráðum hofðu [oooooooooooooo] drengiliga stýrt ríkinu með þeim eptir landslogum þeira—[Sáða-Gyrðr]a ok Ömundi, Þjóðólfur Ólafsson ok Óttarr birtingur, er átti Ingirði, móður Inga konungs, ok Ögmundr sviptir ok Ögmundr dengir, bróðir Erlinga skakka, sunn Kyrpinga-Orms, er bæði var miklu tígnari at metordum Erlinga meðan þeir líðu báðir ok eðli at vetraliti—þá skildu þeir bróðir, Sigurðr ok Ingi, bráðliga eptir þat hirð sínar. Sigurðr konungr var mikill máðr vesti ok lóðmannligr, ramr at aflí, marglyndr ok málsnjallr, vandlyndr ok vanstilltr, hraustr ok glaðr. Eystrinn konungr var hár máðr ok styrkr [oooo] ok bermölugr, slégvitr, undirhyggjumaðr, fastr ok fégjarn, svartr ok skrúfhlárr. Ingí konungr var hvítr máðr ok vænn í andli, vanheill, ryggbrotinn ok visnaði fótr annarr, svá at hann fór mjók haltr, þýðr ok þeikr við sínar menn. Sigurðr konungr var ofstopamaðr mikill of alla hluti ok öeiramaðr þegars hann óx upp, ok svá þeir Eystrinns báðir bróðir, ok var þat nær sanni nókkvi er Eystrinn var, en hann þótti þó allra fégjarnastr þeira. Ingí konungr var vinsæll við alþýðu. Ó nókkuru eptir andlát róðuneytis konunganna gerðisk sá atburðr at máðr hét Geirsteinn ok átti .i.j. sonu, Hjarranda ok Hísing, ok hans dóttir var frilla Sigurðar konungs ok þeir í kærlleikum við hann. Geirsteinn var öeirðarmaðr mikill ok ranglár, sat í trausti konungsins. Skammtb í frá hónum bjó gofug ekkja er Gýða hét, systir Ragnhild(ð)ar, er átti Dagur Eilífsunnur austan ór Vík. Hón var skórungr mikill. Geirsteinn ferr opt á hennar fund ok vill gjarna fá hennar öst, en þat var ón hennar vilja, ok þá ylmðiskc hann í móti ok segr því munu

* there is an erasure here of about nine letters; this is Storm’s reading (Ágrip 1880, 124).

b written scampt.

c MS vinflsc, suggesting that the scribe did not understand his exemplar.
following chieftains, who had, through their counsel, governed the kingdom with them bravely and in accordance with the law of the land: [Sáða-Gýrðr], Ámundi, Pjóstólfr Álason, Óttarr birtingr—who was married to Ingírðr, King Ingi’s mother—Ǫgmundr sviptir and Ǫgmundr dengir—who was the brother of Ærlingr skakki Kyrpinga-Ormsson and both older than Ærlingr in years and the one who achieved by far the greater honour while they both lived—the brothers Sigurðr and Ingi divided their court.¹⁶¹

King Sigurðr was a tall man and doughty, strong, temperamental and eloquent, irascible and intemperate, valiant and merry. King Eysteinn was tall, strong and outspoken, a crafty, guileful man, mean and miserly, dark and curly-haired. King Íngi was fair and had a handsome face, poor in health, with a broken back and one withered leg, so that he walked with a great limp.¹⁶² He was kindly and amiable towards his men.

King Sigurðr was an overbearing man in every way and an unruly man when he grew up. And so was his brother Eysteinn, though it was rather more true in his case for he was considered the most avaricious of them all. King Íngi was popular with the people.

A little after the deaths of the kings’ counsellors, this came to pass:¹⁶³ there was a man named Geirsteinn who had two sons, Hjarandi and Hísingr, and a daughter who was the mistress of King Sigurðr, and they were on intimate terms with him. Geirsteinn was an unruly man and unjust. He was in the king’s favour.

A short way away from him lived a noble widow named Gyða. Her sister was Ragnhildr, who was married to Dagr Eilífsson from Vík in the east. She was a woman of outstanding character and Geirsteinn often went to see her and was eager to gain her love, but she was unwilling. As a result he went into a rage and said that refusing him
Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum

vera misráðit. Er þat et fyrsta ráð hans ok bragð at hann lætr reka fé hennar í akra sína ok gaf þar fyrir sakar henni, ok þar með lætr hann með kappi fylgja sínu fé í hennar akra, ok gera henni miklar meizlur á marga vega. Ok er hón sér hans ófokka svá mikinn ok sér skaða gjorvan, þá mælir hón við sína vini at hón missir mjökk gofga sinna vina ok forsýmannna, er hón skal svá marga vega óvirð vera. Pá sagði sá maðr henni er Gyrðr hét—hann var þar upp fødd við henni ok góðrar ættar ok vaskligr maðr—

‘Fróva,’ segr hann, ‘þat er satt er þú mælir. Mikit vanhald hefir þú af þessum manni beðit, en sjóm vér at hér til víkr þú máli er vèrrum at hafa atgerðir.’ Ok þat bar at einn dag er hón gekk of bœ sinn at hón sá mart fé í sínum ökrum ok mart gera mikinn skaða. Pá verðr hón reið, tekr eitt spjót ok hleypr út ok vendir flangat til sem féit var. Nú kómr í móti henni Gyrðr ok tekr af henni spjótit ok gengr í mót fénu ok rekr á braut ok yfir brú er á var ánni milli bœjanna, ok nú kómr í móti hónum Geirsteinn, ok hleypr þegar at hónum ok seigir, at þeir hafa of dregit fram þraela, er slíkir skulu hónum jafnas, ok leggr til hans. Gyrðr berr af sér lagit ok høggur til hans í móti á vinstri síðu, ok veitir hónum banasár, ferr síðan á fund Gyðu ok segr svá búit. Hón hefir ok þá búit hesta .ij., annan við fé, en hónum annan til reiðar . . a

* the manuscript breaks off here.
would prove to be a mistake. His first plan and scheme was to have all her cattle driven onto his corn-fields and lay the blame for this on her; then in retaliation he had his cattle led onto her corn-fields and in many ways caused her great injury.

When she saw how great was his malevolence, and the damage he had done her, she said to her friends how greatly she felt let down by her noble friends and guardians, that she should now be slighted in so many ways. A man named Gyrðr who had been brought up in her neighbourhood and was of good family and a brave man, then said to her: ‘Lady,’ he said, ‘what you say is true: you have suffered very bad treatment at the hands of this man. But I see that you direct your speech to me, expecting me to act upon it.’ And it happened one day as she walked round her farm, that she saw many cattle in her corn-fields and many causing great damage. She became angry and took a spear and ran out and made for where the cattle were. Gyrðr came out to meet her, took the spear from her and walked over toward the cattle, driving them away and over the bridge spanning the river that divided the farms. Geirsteinn came to meet him and ran toward him immediately, saying that they had promoted slaves too highly if people like him were to be measured against him, and he thrust at Gyrðr. Gyrðr parried the blow and struck in return on the left hand side, dealing him a death wound. He then went to see Gyða and told her what had happened. She had already prepared two horses, one with money and the other for him to ride . . .
NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

1. According to Snorri (Heimskringla I 97, 122) and most of the other sources, Haraldr vows neither to cut nor comb his hair till he is king of all Norway. This vow is absent from the story as preserved here, but may have appeared in that part of the manuscript now wanting at the beginning. It is said that when Haraldr’s hair finally was cut, ten years later, he was redubbed hárfagri, ‘fine-hair’.

2. The Scandinavians retained jól, the name of their pre-Christian mid-winter feast, or forms of it, as the name of the Christian celebration which gradually replaced it. The Old Icelandic jólmánu›r, ‘yule-month’, was the third month of winter, lasting from mid-December to mid-January. Thus it corresponds to the OE geol, the twin months around the winter solstice, a sense preserved in the modern English Yule and Yule-tide. On Old Norse–Icelandic time-reckoning generally see Porsteinn Vilhjálmsson 1990, especially 16–24, and Árni Björnsson 1990; or, in English, Hastrup 1985, 17–49 and references there.

Jólnir as a name for Ó›inn appears elsewhere, but is not common. Snorri, quoting Eyvindr skáldaspillir, gives the plural form jólnar as a name for the gods in general (Edda Snorra Sturlusonar 1931, 166). In Flateyjarbók (I 564), Ó›inn’s name is (correctly) derived from that of the feast, and not, as here, the other way round.

Vi›rir, Hár and Pröði are probably the best attested of Ó›inn’s two hundred-odd names. Vi›rir is related to ve›r, ‘weather’, meaning ‘he who rules the weather’ (cf. Flateyjarbók I 564). Hár(r) and Pröði, ‘High’ (or ‘Hoary’, or ‘One-eyed’) and ‘Third’, appear frequently, for example in Snorri’s Gylfaginning (Edda Snorra Sturlusonar 1931, 10–16 et passim) as two members of a much-debated pagan trinity (see Lorenz 1984, 81–83). The third member, Jafnhár, ‘Equally High’, is here omitted. On Ó›inn’s various names see Turville-Petre 1964, 61–63.

3. Hálfdan svarti was the son of Guðrø›r, king in Vestfold. Haraldr hárfagri was Hálfdan’s son by his second wife Ragnhildr, daughter of Sigurðr hjørtjr, king in Hringaríki (now Ringerike). According to tradition, Hálfdan was forty at the time of his death and Haraldr ten at the time of his accession (cf. Ágrip’s own ‘by the age of twenty he was the first king to gain all Norway’ and ‘ten winters he fought’). Beginning with Ari fróbi, the Icelandic sources—and Ágrip, though whether on the basis of Ari’s chronology remains a point of contention—seem to reckon Haraldr’s birth to have been not later than 851 or 852 (see
Íslendingabók xxxv), a date historians agree must be too early. The problems surrounding dates for the earliest kings of Norway are complex; discussion can be found in Heimskringla I lxxi–lxxxi; Jón Jóhannesson 1956, 26–27 (1974, 13–15); Ólafia Einarsdóttir 1964, 59–61; Íslendingabók xxxv–xxxviii; and Andersen 1977, 79–84.

4. In other sources (e. g. Heimskringla I 91–92) a Yule-feast is specified; presumably the reason for the digression on the origin of the word jól in the preceding paragraph.

5. There is a large mound in Ringerike called Halvdanshaugen. Fagrskinna (58) and Ágrip agree that Hálfdan was buried there, but in Heimskringla (I 93) and other sources his body is said to have been divided into three (or four) parts, so that one part of him could be buried in each part of his kingdom. This is not known to have been a practice in Norway in heathen times, and the story is not generally credited.

6. The place here called Hafrsvágr is known in other sources as Hafrsfjörðr (i. e. ‘Goat’s fjord’ as opposed to ‘bay’). Finnur Jónsson (1928, 281) suggested that the author could here have been working from a Latin source in which the name appeared as Capri sinus, which, being unfamiliar with the original name, he rendered back into Norse as Hafrsvágr.

7. Oddmjör, ‘thin (i. e. narrow) at the point’. This poem is otherwise unknown, nor does the half-verse cited here appear elsewhere. Bjarni Einarsson (Ágrip 1984, xlvii; 4) suggests the name might have been applied to the poem because it was thought to end abruptly.

8. ON Skjöldungr, a descendant of the legendary Skjöldr, Beowulf’s Scyld Scefing, founder of the Scylding dynasty of Denmark; here used as a heiti (poetic synonym) for king (Lexicon Poeticum 510); hence my translation ‘Scylding-king’.

9. Skeiðarbrandr was the word for the decorated piece of wood on the side of a warship’s prow. It is used here to mean simply ship, and is therefore not, strictly speaking, a kenning, but rather an example of synecdoche. The author of Ágrip misinterprets the term, however, taking the second element as the personal name Brandr. This has been cited as evidence for Norwegian authorship, the locus classicus being Turville-Petre’s observation that ‘an educated Icelander of that day would be sufficiently well trained in scaldic diction to avoid such obvious pitfalls’ (1953, 173). But even if one accepts Turville-Petre’s
view of medieval Icelanders, it must be said in defence of our au-
author—and medieval Norwegians in general—that names of this sort
(genitive plus proper name) were in no way uncommon (e. g. Skalla-
Grímur), whereas the term skeiðarbrandr appears only twice in the
whole of skaldic literature, here, and in str. 7/3–4 of the poem Hrynhenda
by Arnórr Þórðarson jarlaskáld (Skjd. A I 334; B I 307), as the
determinant in the kenning skyldir skeiðarbrands, ‘a sailor’ (Lexicon
Poeticum 504). There is, moreover, a general resemblance, first pointed
out by Munch (Ágrip 1834, 274–75), between the first two lines of
Oddmírar and the two lines in Hrynhenda that contain the kenning:
’skyldir [or in some manuscripts ‘skjoldungr’] stókk með skoðan
þókka / skeiðarbrands fyr þér ór landi’. Sveinbjörn Egilsson (Ágrip
1841, 351) noted in addition a resemblance between the second
couplet of Oddmírar and two lines from Arnórr’s Magnúsdrápa, str. 7:
‘Náði siklingr síðan / snjallr ok Danmór allri’ (Skjd. A I 340; B I
312), suggesting that the whole verse cited here is simply a conflation of
the two.

It is also interesting, however, that the author of Ágrip seems to
have more information on ‘Brandr’ than can be gleaned from the half-
verse he cites, suggesting that the other half-verse—assuming there to
have been one—may have contained references to Denmark and
Wendland. On the other hand the author may merely have felt obliged
to say more about this king Brandr and simply invented for him what
seemed a probable fate for Haraldr’s final enemy.

10. Haraldr’s sons are also said to be twenty in Heimskringla, but a
few of the names, and many of the nicknames, differ. Historia Norvegiæ
names sixteen sons, thirteen of whom also appear in Ágrip. Ágrip also
includes one, Óystein, presumably Haraldr’s son by Svanhildr (see
below), not mentioned by Snorri. Haraldr’s various sons are listed
here in roughly chronological order. Forms in Heimskringla, where
different, are given in brackets.

By Ása Hákonardóttir: Goðormr (Guthormr), Hálfdan svarti (‘the
black’); Heimskringla also lists Hálfdan hvíti (‘the white’) and
Sigfór, neither of whom is mentioned in Ágrip.

By Gyða Eiríksdóttir: Hrœrekr, Tryggvi (Sigtryggr in Heimskringla,
both named in Ágrip), Fróði; Heimskringla also lists Þorgils (sometimes
written Þorgís), and in Snorri’s Separate Óláfs saga helga (6)
 Gunnrøðr, ‘whom some call Guðrøðr’ (actually the same name) is
said to be Haraldr’s son by Gyða, together with Guthormr and
Hrœrekr. A daughter Álof (Ólof) is also mentioned in both Heimskringla and Ágrip.

By Ragnhildr Eiriksdóttir: Eiríkr blóðox, ‘blood-axe’; the cognomen is thought generally to refer to his murdering so many of his brothers—he is called fratrum interfactor by Theodoricus (7)—but in Fagrskinna (79) his nickname is explained as referring to his Viking days.

By Svanhildr Eysteinsdóttir: Óláfr digrbeinn, ‘stout-leg’ (called Geirstaðałfr, ‘the elf of Geirstaðir’, in Heimskringla (I 119); the Óláfr Geirstałáfır after whom this one was named also had the nickname digrbeinn, according to the ‘Legendary Saga’ (1982, 30)); Bjørn kaupmaðr, ‘merchant’, whom some call buna, the meaning of which is not entirely clear (Finnur Jónsson, Ágrip 1929, 3, note 2, gives it as ‘entw. “knochenröhr” oder “klumpfuß”’ (cf. Lind 1920–21, 49; Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, 92), and Cleasby–Vigfússon 1957, 86, as ‘one with the stocking hanging down his leg, ungarted’; Snorri (Heimskringla I 140) says that Bjørn’s brothers called him farmaðr or kaupmaðr, ‘sailor’ or ‘merchant’); Rǫgnvaldr, or Ragnarr, called reykkill in Heimskringla I 119, possibly related to rykka, ‘to pull’ (Lind 1920–21, 299).

By Áshildr Hringsdóttir: Dagr, Hringr, Guðrør, called skirja, probably ‘cow’ (see Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, 846), but tentatively related by Lind (1920–21, 327) to Norwegian (nynorsk) skjerja, ‘to screech with laughter’. Heimskringla also mentions a daughter, Ingígerð.

By Snjófríðr (Snæfríðr) Svásadóttir: Sigurð hrísi, probably related to hrísungr, ‘an illegitimate son’, or, more properly, ‘a son begotten in the woods’ (Fritzner 1886–96, II 61; Lind 1920–21, 157–58), Hálfdan hvítbeinn, ‘white-leg’ (called hálleggr or (in a verse) Háfata, ‘high-leg’, in Heimskringla), Guðrøðr ljómi, ‘lustre’, Rǫgnvaldr (réttilbeini, ‘straight-leg’, in Heimskringla, confused with Ragnarr rykkill in Ágrip; see note 12 below), Hákon gdí, ‘the good’, so called only in Ágrip and Fagrskinna (and once in Heimskringla), but otherwise known as Aðalsteinsfóstri, as he was brought up by King Æthelstan of England. He was not Haraldr’s son by Snjófríðr according to Snorri, but by Þóra Mó (r)strøng.

11. Snjófríðr: Snorri (Heimskringla I 126) uses the variant form Snæfríðr, and calls her father Svási merely ‘the Lapp’, rather than ‘king of the Lapps’. In Flateyjarbók (I 582), where there is no indication that he is Snjófríðr’s father, he is said to be a dwarf.
12. The awkwardness of this passage has led some scholars to postulate the existence of a Latin source for it, in which the Norse term seïðmaðr was included and then glossed, presumably with something like vocatus est seïðmadr, id est propheta. Finnur Jónsson (Ágrip 1929, 3) went as far as to suggest that this source might even have been the lost book of Sæmundr fróði (see Introduction, p. xv). Ulset (1983, 116–18) points out, however, that in Ágrip chapter XIX, where the text closely parallels that of Historia Norvegiae, the author uses the loan-word própheti, whereas, having once translated it as spámaðr, he might reasonably be expected to do so again. Ulset is of the opinion that the author has confounded two persons, Rognvaldr and Ragnarr, one of whom was called skratti (normally seïðskratti), the other seïðmaðr, from the word seïðr, ‘charm’ or ‘spell’. Both words signified ‘wizard’ or ‘warlock’ in medieval usage. Loath to omit one of the terms, our author decided to define one of them more closely, although in fact they are more or less synonymous. Bjarni Einarsson (Ágrip 1984, xxii) has suggested instead that the author may have preferred to use the loan word própheti in chapter XIX in describing a man of God, having used the more normal spámaðr here for a pagan wizard.

13. Snorri uses the story of Snjófríðr in Heimskringla (I 125–27), beginning here and following Ágrip down to ‘and the kingdom by them both’ (ch. IV). Stylistically the episode differs markedly from the material surrounding it in Heimskringla, and it is tempting to think that Snorri recognised a good story when he heard one and felt no need to alter it. He does, however, include one piece of information not found in the story as preserved here. After the death of Snæfríðr, he says: en lítr hennar skipaísik á engan veg, var hon jafnrjód sem flá, er hon var kvík. Konungr sat æ yfir henni ok hugái, at hon myndi lifna, ‘but her colour changed in no way; she was as rosy-cheeked as she had been in life. The king sat always by her, and believed that she would revive.’ As was mentioned above, a version of the story also appears in Flateyjarbók (I 582–83), one differing so significantly from that preserved in Ágrip that it cannot derive from it. There too we find the explanation for Haraldr’s behaviour: spread over Snjófríðr after her death is the cloth Svásanautr—presumably the guðvefr and fatnaðr mentioned in Ágrip and Heimskringla—which is so charged with magical properties that Haralldi konungi læitzst hennar likame suu biart ok innilígr at hann uillde æigi iarda lata, ‘her body appeared to King Haraldr so bright and lovely that he would not have her buried’.
This must therefore have been part of the original story, and Snorri must therefore have used a version of Ágrip different from—and closer to the original than—the one now extant. Ólafur Halldórsson (1969) has argued that the Flateyjarbók version of the story derives from the poem Snjófríœardrápa, only the first strophe of which is cited in Flateyjarbók (I 582; Skjd. A I 5; B I 5), where it is attributed to Haraldr himself. A further five half-strophes attributed to Ormr Steinþórsson and preserved in Edda Snorra Sturlusonar (1931, 92, 94, 146, 147, 176; Skjd. A I, 415–16; B I 385) are, Ólafur maintains, also part of this same drápa. Snjófríœardrápa and the story as preserved in Ágrip derive from a common source. A sixth half-strophe from the same poem is found in Magnús Ólafsson’s Edda; see Ólafur Halldórsson (1990).

The story’s ultimate origins in folklore have been investigated by Moe (1925–27, II 168–97), who points out the relationship between the first part of the story and, for example, the tale of King Vortigern and Rowena in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Historia Regum Britanniae (1985–88, I 67; II 91–92), and, somewhat more distant, between the second part and the story of Snow White—called Snofri in Norwegian versions of the tale.

14. The name Hasleyjarsund is not attested elsewhere, the strait in question being otherwise referred to as Haugasund (modern Haugesund), but Jan Ragnar Hagland (1989) has argued that Haugasund was originally not the name of the strait, but rather of a place on the coast, which was later applied to the strait itself, while Hasleyjarsund is the original name, deriving from the name of the island (Hasley, modern Hasselø, but in earlier dialect forms Hatløy).

15. Gunnhildr was probably the daughter of Gormr gamli, king of Denmark, and the sister of Haraldr blátœn. It was the common Icelandic view, however, that Gunnhildr was the daughter of Ózurr (cf. e. g. Heimskringla I 135, Fagrskinna 74, Egils saga 94, Njáls saga 11). His nickname lafskegg, ‘dangling beard’, appears also in Fagrskinna, but Snorri calls him toti, ‘protuberance’ (cf. English teat etc.), possibly with the same meaning, or in the sense of ‘nose’ or ‘snout’ (cf. Lind 1920–21, 385). In Historia Norvegic (105) Gunnhildr is identified as the daughter of Gormr. The origin of this confusion is not clear, but it may be due, at least in part, to Icelandic hostility toward Gunnhildr, whom they may have wanted to have had more humble origins. An interesting, if now somewhat dated, examination of
Gunnhildr and the legends surrounding her is offered by Sigurður Nordal (1941).

Snorri lists the sons of Eiríkr and Gunnhildr as Gamli, Guthormr, Haraldr gráfeldr (‘grey-cloak’), Ragnfrøðr, Erlingr, Guðfrøðr, Sigurðr slefa (‘drool’ or, conceivably, ‘snake’, see Lind 1920–21, 339; Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, 890), all of whom are mentioned in Ágrip, where we also find Hálfdan, Eyvindr, and Gormr. Snorri’s Guthormr is called in Ágrip Goðormr, an alternative form of that name; Gormr, a contracted form of Goðormr, is what one would expect Eiríkr and Gunnhildr’s first-born son to have been named (i. e. after his maternal grandfather). According to Lind (1905–15, 297–98) Gamli Eiríksson is the earliest and only certain example of the name Gamli found in Norway, although there are instances of the strong form, Gamall. Nicknames could, of course, also be passed on—we have already seen an example of this in Haraldr’s son Hálfdan svarti—and there are examples of nicknames becoming proper names in their own right (e. g. Magnús, from Karlamagnús = Charlemagne), so that Gamli and Gormr could have been the same person (Storm 1893, 216–17).

16. Snorri (Heimskringla I 147) divides the five years of Eiríkr’s reign the other way, three while Haraldr lived and two thereafter, and this is the generally accepted view.

17. As was noted above, Gunnhildr’s reputation is thought to have suffered at the hands of Icelandic historians. But even here, in a work apparently composed entirely in a Norwegian milieu and most probably by a Norwegian, the portrait is one of a beautiful, wicked, ambitious, treacherous and cruel woman, who practised sorcery on more than a few occasions. It may be that the author, like Theodoricus, got much of his material from Icelanders, and was prepared to accept their view of the story, but it may also be that Gunnhildr’s reputation in Norway was equally notorious. Both Theodoricus (7) and Historia Norvægie (105–06), for example, blame her for Eiríkr’s unpopularity.

18. According to Heimskringla (I 152 and II 159) and Egils saga (176), Eiríkr went to England by way of Orkney; Theodoricus (7) and Historia Norvægie (105), and Ágrip itself (chapter VII), say he went directly to England.

19. This heathen wife of Hákon’s is otherwise unknown, but his daughter Þóra is mentioned in Heimskringla (I 192).

20. Prøndir: men from the area of Prándheimr, the modern Trøndelag.
21. Hákon would have been brought up a Christian at the court of his foster-father, and although he did proclaim his intention to convert the people of Norway, and may even have brought English missionaries with him to Norway, his political good sense seems to have tempered his religious fervour and there are several stories like these of his attempting to have his cake and eat it. He would drink toasts to the gods only after making the sign of the cross over the cup (*Heimskringla* I 171), or, as here, would wrap the sacrificial horse-liver in cloth so as to bite but not taste it. The chieftains would not accept these compromises and in the end Hákon worshipped as his ancestors had done. Eyvindr skáldaspillir’s *Hákonarmál* (*Skjd. A* I 64–68; *B* I 57–60), composed in his memory, depicts his entry into Valhöll where he is welcomed as one who has *vel um byrmt véom* (*respected holy places*).

22. The original reads: *hann setti Gulaflingslög eftir ráðaugóð spaka, er verit hafói forðum*. Here *setti* cannot mean established, as the *Gulaflingslög* predated Hákon’s time; nor is it clear what *er verit hafói forðum* refers to (*er* could be either ‘which’ or ‘who’). Although syntactically it could refer to Þorleifr, *er* would seem more logically to refer to *lög*, in which case however one would expect a plural verb, i. e. *hafa*. Bjarni Einarsson (Ágrip 1984, li) suggests that something like *ok hagaði í flestu eptir flví* could be missing between *spaka* and *er* (but cf. *Heimskringla* I 163).

23. A child would take a metronymic rather than the more common patronymic when the father was unknown, deceased or less prominent than the mother (see Hødnebø 1974, 319).

24. The Battle of Fræði (modern Frei) is generally reckoned to have been fought five years after the battle at Körmt (modern Karmøy).

25. Gamli too fell at Fræði (cf. *Heimskringla* I 180–81), and the story related here may well derive from an incorrect interpretation of the name Gamlaæir, which probably means ‘old clay’. Although *leir(r)* is not common as a second place-name element (see Rygh 1897–1936, Forord og indledning 65), specific incidents such as this very rarely give rise to place names (see Dalberg and Sørensen 1972–79, I 196).

26. According to Snorri (*Heimskringla* I 182), the Battle of Fitjar was fought when Hákon had been king twenty-six years, and therefore only six years after Fræði, not nine as here. The *ix* of the MS could be a mistake for *vi.*, or the author could be reckoning from the Battle
of Kørmt, or it could simply reflect the apparent confusion among medieval historians as to the number and dates of battles between Hákon and the sons of Einarr. Theodoricus (10) mentions only one battle, Historia Norvegiae (107) and Fagrskinna (81–82, 88–93) two. Snorri and Ágrip agree at least as to number, if not as to date.

27. The name appears in the manuscript as scraygia (which would be normalised ‘skreygja’), but in Heimskringla (118, 189–90) and Egils saga (123), where he is said to be the brother of Queen Gunnhildr, he is called skreyja, the meaning of which may be ‘a sickly-looking man’ or ‘a coward’ (Lind 1920–21, 333). Neither seems appropriate to the character described here. Guðbrandur Vigfússon (Cleasby–Vigfússon 1957, 557) suggested ‘a brayer, bragger’, which Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (1989, 861–62) is prepared to accept. In Historia Norvegiae (111) he is called simply ‘Screyia’.

28. Pórálfr Skólmsson inn sterki is mentioned in a number of sources, and is everywhere said to be a man of great strength. Cf. e.g. Heimskringla (I 187), Fagrskinna (74), Grettis saga (187) and Landnámabók (257). Pórðr Sjáreksson composed a drápa on him, of which there are preserved three and a half verses (Skjd. A I 328–29; B I 302–03).

29. Eyvindr Finnsson, known as skáldaspillir (thought to mean ‘plagiarist’) was a Norwegian court poet whose Hákonarmál, mentioned above, through its resemblance to Eiríksmál (composed in honour of Einarr blóðøx), may have earned him his nickname.

30. Also called Kvernbitr, ‘mill-stone biter’. Cf. Heimskringla I 146: Aðalsteinn konungur gaf Hákoní sverð þat, er hjöldin várð ór gulli ok meðalkafinn, en brandrinn var þó betri, þar hjó Hákon með kvernstein til augans. Pat var síðan kallat Kvernbitr. Pat sverð hefri bezt komit til Nóregs. Pat átti Hákon til dauðadags. (‘King Æthelstan gave Hákon a sword with a golden hilt and haft, but the blade was even better. With it Hákon split a millstone to the eye. It was thereafter called Kvernbitr. It was the best sword ever to have come to Norway. Hákon had it until the day he died.’)

31. This information is not to be found in either Historia Norvegiae or Theodoricus, but Snorri (Heimskringla I 152–53) says that King Æthelstan sent word to Einarr offering him a kingdom in England. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (D) for 948 records that the Northumbrians had received Einarr as king in York. It is unlikely that he would have been in England much before 947, and Æthelstan died in the autumn of 939.
32. Only Ágrip and Historia Norvegiæ (106) place Eiríkr’s death in Spain. Snorri (Heimskringla I 154) and the other Scandinavian historians, undoubtedly on the authority of Eiríksmál (Fagrskinna 79), say he died along with five other Norse kings on Stainmoor in Westmoreland (see Seeberg 1978–79). Finnur Jónsson (1920–24, II 614, n. 2) suggests Span- may be a corruption of Stan-.

33. This number is now virtually unreadable in the manuscript and could be either .xv. or .xii. A comparison with the other sources is of no help, as Snorri (Heimskringla I 239) gives the first and Theodoricus (10) the second as the number of years in Haraldr’s reign. There is little external evidence to support either number. Noregskonungatal (Flateyjarbók II 522), which is thought, as was said, to be based on Sæmundr fröði’s lost book (see Introduction, p. xvi), says that Haraldr ruled for nine years. According to Historia Norvegiæ (107) he ruled for fourteen years.

34. kleypr, written clapr in the manuscript, may be another form of—or error for—klyppr, ‘squarely-built’, the form found in other sources (Lind 1920–21, 205). Snorri (Heimskringla I 218–19) uses it as a proper name.

35. This sentence is now almost unreadable in the manuscript, the result of an attempt at some point to rub it out. If the reading is correct, Ágrip here agrees with Theodoricus (11) in claiming that Haraldr gráfeldr killed Tryggvi. In chapter XVI, where the text is quite similar to that of Historia Norvegiæ (110–11), it is said that ‘not all tell of his [i. e. Tryggvi’s] slaying in the same way’.

36. Gull-Haraldr was the son of Knútr Danaást, Haraldr bláttjónn’s brother. In Jómsvíkinga saga (1969, 73–74; Flateyjarbók I 104–05) it is said that Haraldr bláttjónn was responsible for his brother Knútr’s death, as he would later be for his nephew’s.

37. This last speech of Haraldr gráfeldr is not found in Heimskringla or any of the other major Kings’ Sagas, but does appear in one manuscript of Jómsvíkinga saga (1969, 82).

38. In the later histories Gunnhildr, as a result of all her sons proclaiming themselves king at one time or another, is referred to as konungamóðir, ‘mother of kings’.

39. As Gunnhildr was probably Haraldr bláttjónn’s sister (see note 15 above), this story—found also in Theodoricus (12–13), Jómsvíkinga
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saga (1969, 83–84) and some manuscripts of Öláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta (I 170–71; Flateyjarbók I 152–53)—must be seen in the light of the medieval ‘smear campaign’ against Gunnhildr mentioned above (notes 15 and 17).

40. Snorri (Heimskringla I 295–98) calls him both Karkr and Pormóðr karkr, while he is Skópti karkr in Jómsvíkinga saga (1969, 185, 194) and Fagrskinna (139), and called just Karkr by Oddr Snorrason (1932, 78). The word itself could be related to the Norwegian (nyorsk) word kark, ‘thick bark’, or to karka, ‘to tie or bind tightly’ (Lind 1920–21, 189; Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, 447).

41. Ulli is a pet-name for Erlendr (Lind 1905–15, 1056). According to Snorri (Heimskringla I 295) and the other sources Öláfr Tryggvason had only shortly before killed Hákon’s son Erlendr, who was waiting by his father’s ships.

42. Literally ‘that all passages were closed’.

43. The author may here be working from two different sources, as this was already stated at the beginning of the chapter.

44. This is the only version of this story in which Karkr murders Hákon under orders, rather than on his own initiative (cf. Heimskringla I 297; Oddr Snorrason 1932, 83). This is perhaps meant further to demean Hákon’s already inglorious death preparatory to the arrival of the spectacular figure of Öláfr Tryggvason.

45. Hákon’s position had by this time so weakened that with Öláfr’s return to Norway he found every hand turned against him. Although his appetite for women was legendary (cf. Heimskringla I 290–91), the chief reasons for his unpopularity were obviously political (see Andersen 1977, 101).

46. Karkr is said to have been hanged in most of the other sources, but in Heimskringla (I 298) he is beheaded.

47. Hersir was the traditional title of a Norwegian chieftain from the earliest times down to about the time of Haraldr hárfagri, when it came to represent a rank below jarl, ‘earl’ and above hölðr, ‘yeoman, freeholder’ (Fritzner 1886–96, I 804–05; see also Sognér 1961). It is highly unlikely that Hersir was ever the name of any particular king and there is no other record of any king bearing this name. Similarly, Vigða is unknown as a woman’s name but does exist as a river-name (Rygh 1904, 296).
48. Sixteen verses and half-verses from the poem Háleygjatal (none of them relating to the incidents described here) have survived in Heimskringla, Edda Snorra Sturlusonar and Fagrskinna (see Skjd. A I 68–71; B I 60–62).

49. Tryggvareyrr (or -hreyrr, modern Tryggvarör), is the name of a large mound thought to date from the Bronze Age on the island Tryggö (ON Tryggvaey, ’Tryggvi’s island’), to the west of Sótanes (Sotanäs). In Historia Norvegiae (110) Tryggvareyrr is said to be on an island, but other sources, e. g. Oddr Snorrason (1932, 6) agree with Ágríþ in placing it on Sótanes itself. The text seems to imply that Sótanes is in Raumaríki (Romerike), and, if so, is incorrect. It is in Ranríki (modern Bohuslän), which, according to Snorri (Heimskringla I 151), is where Tryggvi ruled.

50. Snorri (Heimskringla I 225) has Ástríþ’s son born on an island in a lake after Tryggvi’s death. But as it was customary for a child born after the death of its father to be named after him, that Óláfr was named after his grandfather and not his father lends credence to the story as it is related here (cf. Storm 1893, 214).

51. There is an erasure following lúsarskegg in which Gustav Storm was able to make out sumir lúskeggi, ‘[but] some [call] shaggy-beard’ (see textual note). The reason for the erasure may be that since the author has already introduced Pórolfr in chapter IX, there calling him only lúsaskegg (lúsa- is gen. pl., lúsar- gen. sg.), it might have seemed odd to mention his other nickname here.

52. Sigurðr Eiríksson, Ástríþ’s brother, had long been at the court of Vladimir (ON Valdamarr), son of Grand Prince Svyatoslav of Kiev. On the Kievan Rus generally see Noonan 1986 and references there.

53. The island Ösel in the Baltic (Estonian: Saaremaa).

54. The year of Óláfr’s birth is usually reckoned to be 968 or 969. It is said that he was nine years old when he was ransomed by his uncle and brought to Hólmgarðr, and that he was another nine years at the court of King Vladimir (cf. Heimskringla I 232). This would then have been about the year 980.

55. Gautar, men of Gautland (modern Östergötland and Västergötland) in southern Sweden.

56. There are dozens of stories of Óláfr’s exploits between the time he left Hólmgarðr (c.986) and his triumphant return to Norway in 994 or
995. Many are unsupported but make interesting reading. Óláfr is mentioned enough in foreign sources, however, to indicate that he was quite busy during these years. It is probable that he fought at the Battle of Maldon in 991 and with Sveinn tjúguskegg at London in 994 (see the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (A, E, and F) for 993 and 994). The stories that he fought in Bornholm, lived in Wendland and plundered western Europe, however highly embellished, seem also to be based on fact; see Andersen 1977, 102–06 and references there. For summaries in English see Jones 1968b, 131–33; 1968a; Turville-Petre 1951, 133–35.

57. Jómsborg was supposed to be a town on the south Baltic coast inhabited by a group of mercenary Vikings known as the Jómsvíkingar. The principal source of information on them and their town is the early thirteenth-century Jómsvíkinga saga. For summaries of the debate surrounding Jómsborg and the saga’s historicity see Ólafur Halldórsson’s introduction to Jómsvíkinga saga 1969, esp. 28–51, or the introduction to Blake’s edition (1962, especially vii–xv).

58. The Isles of Scilly (ON Syllingar), according to Snorri (Heimskringla I 266) and most of the other sources.

59. The text has here the loan word própheti (see note 12 above).

60. According to Snorri (Heimskringla I 267), Óláfr and his men were baptised then and there. A similar story is told in the ‘Legendary Saga’ (1982, 64) about Óláfr helgi, who is also said to have met a hermit in Britain. Both these stories may be based on the story of how Totila, Visigothic king of Italy, tested the powers of St Benedict of Nursia, which appears in the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, a work early translated into Norse (see Turville-Petre 1953, 135–36). According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 994 Óláfr received baptism at Andover with King Æthelred acting as sponsor, and him þá Anealf behet, and eac geleste, þet he næfre eft to Angelcynne mid unfride cuman nolde.

61. According to Icelandic sources (Njáls saga 256, Kristni saga 14, and Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta I 149), Pangbrandr was the son of a Saxon count named Vilbaldus. In most sources he is said to come from Bremen or Saxony. Theodoricus (15) calls him Theobrand and says that he is Flemish. Pangbrandr was the first foreign missionary to go to Iceland. He spent two or three winters there, making a few converts and many enemies, some of whom he slew (cf. Kristni saga 25–26; Íslendingabók 14). He returned to Norway in 998 or 999.
Pormóðr is also mentioned in *Kristni saga* (38), *Íslendingabók* (15) and by Oddr Snorrason (1932, 91), but no source contains any information on his origins, although he is said to have accompanied Óláfr to Norway from England.

62. *illi* (*the bad*), i. e. in contradistinction to Hákon góði.

63. His age in other sources varies from twenty-two to thirty-three, but Ágrip’s assertion that he was twenty-seven is in keeping with the generally accepted chronology.

64. These claims are largely exaggerated. Certainly in the more accessible areas of western Norway and the Vík most people would have been at least nominally Christian, but those in the inland districts would still have been unbaptised and pagan.

Óláfr appears to have been very persuasive. He is known to have threatened people with mutilation or death if they refused baptism. But, as we have seen already, the conversion of Norway was a process that had begun before Óláfr’s return and one far from complete at the time of his death. It is not really until the death of his namesake, Óláfr helgi, that one can safely speak of a Christian Norway.

The conversion of Iceland, although in many respects untypical, is the best documented, and can serve to indicate general trends. According to Ari fróði, Christianity was accepted at the Alþingi the same summer as—in fact two or three months before—Óláfr’s death. Ari also states that Óláfr had been one of the initiators of the conversion, but it cannot be said that he was wholly responsible for it. On the conversion of Norway see Andersen 1977, for Iceland Strömbäck 1975 and Hastrup 1985, 179–89, and for Scandinavia generally Sawyer 1987.

65. This was Boleslaw ‘the Brave’, called Búrizláfr (or -leifr) in ON, who ruled Poland from 992 to 1025 and to whom Pyri Haraldsdóttir had in fact been wedded. Ágrip here agrees with *Historia Norvegiae* (116–17). The story also appears, but in a slightly different form, in *Heimskringla* (I 273, 341–43), Oddr Snorrason (1932, 143–47), and *Fagrskinna* (146–47).

66. The word *landamæri* would normally mean ‘boundary’, ‘borderland’ or ‘frontier’, but must logically here refer to the coast—the coast obviously also marking the extremities of the country. Margaret Ashdown (1930, 213) points to the similar use of *landgemyrce* in *Beowulf*, l. 209 (cf. Bosworth–Toller 1898, 618).
67. This was the Battle of Svolðr(ri), a favourite topic of skaldic poets and authors of Kings’ Sagas. Its causes, and even its location, remain the subject of much debate (see Ellehøj 1958; or Andersen 1977, 104–05, for a summary and further references).

68. ON rúm, ‘rooms, places’: Viking ships were divided into rowing-places, one for each pair of oars. Ormr inn langi, ‘the Long Serpent’, was the most famous ship of the age and by all accounts one of the largest. Brøgger and Shetelig (1950, 96) state that it had places for thirty-four pairs of oars and give it an overall length of about fifty metres.

69. King Sveinn retained direct control of the Vík, the area in which Danish influence was always the greatest. King Óláfr of Sweden was given control of Ranríki in the south-east and four provinces in eastern Frándheimr, most of which was effectively ruled by Sveinn Hákonarson as the king’s vassal. Eiríkr Hákonarson ruled the western provinces of Frándheimr and coastal provinces—in other words most of Norway—although it would be a mistake to underestimate Danish influence during this time (see Andersen 1977, 106–09).

70. 1008 was the traditional year for the death of King Sveinn, but the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (E) entry for 1014 informs us that *Her on flissum geare Swegen geendode his dagas to candelmæssan .iii. No Febr*.

71. The traditional chronology takes 1012 as the year of Hákon’s succession and there is no reason to doubt this; it is, however, unlikely that Eiríkr was in England before 1014. He ruled as earl in Northumbria from 1016 until his death in 1023.

72. This was Knútr inn ríki (Canute the Great) who by 1027 could in his letter to the English people title himself *Rex totius Angliae et Denemarchiae et Norregiae et partis Swavorum* (Andersen 1977, 129). He had first come to England with his father Sveinn tjúguskegg in 1013, and following Sveinn’s death a year later increased his power in England until, with the death of Edmund Ironside on St Andrew’s Day 1016, *feng Cnut cyng to eall Engla landes rice* (Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (D, under 1017)). He ruled until his death on 12 November 1035.

73. This rather unpleasant-sounding cause of death is attested by other sources (Theodoricus 25, Fagrskinna 167, Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta II 317). Snorri (Heimskringla II 32) says he bled to death but omits any further detail.
74. The text as it stands seems to indicate that Óláfr was called grœnski, i.e. from Grenland in southern Norway. Óláfr was in fact known in the early part of his life as Óláfr digri, ‘the stout’, and the surname grœnski (or grenski) is otherwise associated with his father Haraldr. Modern editors have therefore supplied the word Haraldssunar.

75. With the exception of the statement ‘much is said about the extent of Óláfr’s travels’ at the beginning of the next chapter, Ágrip in fact says nothing about Óláfr’s viking years; these make up on the other hand the last pages of Historia Norvegiæ (119–24).

76. Most of what is said about Óláfr’s travels can be found in the Vikingarvísur (the title is modern) of Sighvatr Pórðarson (Skjd. A I 223–28; B I 213–16; Fell 1981). For a summary in English of Óláfr’s early years based on the literary sources see Turville-Petre 1951, 140–46. Óláfr returned to Norway in the autumn of 1015, then about twenty.

77. According to Snorri and the other sources Óláfr places his two ships on either side of the strait with a thick cable tied between them, which would explain the reciprocal form ‘his ships pulled towards each other’ (heimtusk saman); cf. the ‘Legendary Saga’ (1982, 68), where the wording is closest to that of Ágrip; also Fagrskinna (171), Heimskringla (II 36–37), the Separate Óláfs saga helga (62–64) and Theodoricus (27).

78. There is no evidence in support of Ágrip’s assertion that Hákon ruled in the Hebrides.

79. Óláfr’s father, Haraldr grenski, had died shortly after Óláfr was born. After his death Óláfr’s mother had married Sigurðr sýr Hálfdanarson, a king in Hringaríki, part of the area known as Uppland, and it was there that Óláfr grew up.

80. Óláfr had been accepted as king only by the farmers of Uppland and the Vík, but Prándheimr, home of the jarls of Hlaðir, remained loyal to Sveinn.

81. Einarr was arguably the most important chieftain of his age and played a prominent role in Norwegian politics for over 50 years. The
meaning of his nickname, usually written *fambarskelfir*, is not entirely clear, but the possibilities are interesting enough to warrant mention here. *Pambar* is the genitive of *fomb*, a word meaning ‘guts, belly’, particularly with the notion of being blown up or extended, but which can also be used to mean ‘gut-string’, particularly bow-string. In view of Einarr’s reputation as an archer (cf. *Heimskringla* II 27), some scholars have opted for this explanation (e. g. Lind 1920–21, 405–06). The second element, written variously *skelmir* or *skelfir*, probably means ‘shaker’—although it could mean ‘devil’—but whether Einarr shook his belly or his bow-string is unresolved.

82. Garðar, literally ‘cities’ (i. e. walled strongholds), the old Scandinavian term for the Scandinavian settlements in Russia. On the term see Pritsak 1981, esp. 217–20.

83. Yaroslav, ON Jaríláfr (or Jarízláfr, -leifr), was the son of Vladimir (see note 52 above). He ruled in Kiev from his father’s death in 1016 until his own in 1054. His wife Ingigerðr died in about 1050. For the story of her betrothal to Óláfr and events following see *Heimskringla* II 114–47.

84. Gunnhildr is called Úlfhildr in *Heimskringla* (II 327–28; III 41) and elsewhere, and this is likely to be more correct as she is called Wulfhild in German sources. Otto—Ótta in *Heimskringla*—was really Ordulf (1059–72), the son of Bernhard Billung, Duke of Saxony. In contrast to the male offspring, quite a lot is known of the names and fates of Úlfhildr’s descendants at least, who seem to have made out reasonably well. Ordulf and Úlfhildr had a son, Magnus (1072–1106), whose daughter—he had no male offspring—married Duke Henry the Black of Saxony and Bavaria. Their son was Henry the Proud (d. 1139), father of Henry the Lion (d. 1195), father of Otto, Duke of Brunswick Luneburg (d. 1252), from whom are descended the Hanoverians.

85. This is also mentioned by Guillaume de Jumièges (1914, 81–82) and Adam of Bremen (1917, 112), and in *Historia Norvegiae* (121–22), but not, for example, by Theodoricus or Snorri.

86. The battle between Óláfr and Erlingr was fought on 21 December 1028 at the island of Bokn, near Tungunes in Jaðarr (modern Jæren).

87. According to Snorri (*Heimskringla* II 192) Áslákr and Erlingr were kinsmen.
88. Legally, \textit{nǐðingr} designated a person who had committed a crime which could not be atoned for, and who could therefore be killed with impunity. The term carried with it a sense of ‘unmanliness’ (if one takes manliness in the sense of ‘all that may become a man’), hence its use here of a traitor; treason was unmanly (see Sørensen 1980, esp. 16–39; 1983, 14–32).

89. According to Theodoricus (31) and Snorri (\textit{Heimskringla} II 335) Hákon Eiríksson drowned in the Pentland Firth (see Stenton 1971, 405). Sveinn was Knútr’s son by his English consort Ælfgyfu (ON Álfífa), daughter of Ælfhelm, aldorman of Northampton. This was ‘the other Ælfgyfu’, not Ælfgyfu, or Emma as she was more commonly called, Æthelred’s widow, whom Knútr married in 1017. See Stenton 1971, 397, and the \textit{Anglo-Saxon Chronicle} II 211.

90. \textit{Vinartoddi}: \textit{vinar}, more correctly \textit{vinjar}, is the genitive of \textit{vin}, ‘meadow’, a word occurring otherwise only in proper names, while \textit{toddí} is a ‘bit’ or ‘piece’ (Fritzner 1886–96, III 949; 709), and the meaning of the whole is therefore ‘a bit of the meadow’, a part of the farmer’s yearly produce paid as tax to the king.

91. \textit{Rygjartó}: \textit{rygjar} is from \textit{rygr}, ‘lady’, and \textit{tó} means ‘unspun wool or flax’ (Fritzner 1886–96, III 141; 709). These terms can also be found in medieval Norwegian law books such as the \textit{Frostafingslæg} (\textit{NgL} I 257–58). The close similarity between \textit{Ágrip} and the texts of the laws themselves suggests that the author was either working from a legal text or was at least familiar with legal terminology (\textit{Ágrip} 1984, xiii; Andersen 1977, 138).

92. In Norway the unit for the organisation of the levy or conscription was the \textit{hamla} (pl. \textit{hömlur}), this being the loop into which the oar was fitted, representing a single oarsman.

93. The text here has \textit{hér lenskr ok úl lenskr}, literally ‘here-landish and out-landish’; Snorri, writing in Iceland, has in the corresponding passage in \textit{Heimskringla} (II 400) \textit{par lenskr ok úl lenskr}, ‘there-landish and out-landish’.

94. Cf. chapter LII below.

95. The traditional date for the Battle of Stiklastaðir (or in some sources Stiklarstaðir; modern Stiklestad) was 29 July 1030; see Andersen 1977, 132–33.
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96. Haraldr, later called harðráði (‘hard-ruler’), was Óláfr’s half-brother, son of Sigurðr sýr (‘sow’) and Ásta Guðbrandsdóttir. Rognvaldr Brúðason was jarl of Orkney (d. 1045). Bjørn digri was Óláfr’s marshal.

97. Sighvatr Þórðarson was an Icelander who came to King Óláfr’s court in about 1015. The verse cited here can also be found in the ‘Legendary Saga’ (1982, 208; see also Skjø. A I 274; B I 253).

98. This date, the only attempt at absolute chronology in Ágríp, derives from Theodoricus (42): *occubuit autem beatus Olavus . . . anno ab incarnatione Domini millesimo vicesimo nono, ut nos certius indagare potuimus* (i.e. ‘as far as we can tell’). Bjarni Einarsson (Ágríp 1984, xxxvi) suggests that this was Theodoricus’s attempt to reconcile the year 1028, found in *Acta Sancti Olavi regis et martyris* (131–32), and the year 1030, given by Ari fróði and all later Icelandic historians as well as by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (E). Interestingly, Theodoricus begins his next chapter with the observation *Sciendum vero est, in libris nil adeo corruptum ut supputationen numerorum*. It should also be noted that Ágríp’s own (relative) chronology, reckoning from the fall of Óláfr helgi to the Battle of Stamford Bridge (nineteen days before Hastings), would have the Normans invade England in 1065 (see Ágríp 1984, lix).

99. If by this it is meant that Haraldr claimed the kingship immediately after Óláfr’s death it is the only one of the sources to say so. If this is not what is meant, it is not clear what is.

100. Miracles attributed to Óláfr are said to have been reported within hours of his death at Stiklastadir. Óláfr’s body was exhumed—according to some sources it rose to the surface of its own accord—a year and five days after his death and was found to be uncorrupted (see the ‘Legendary Saga’ 1982, especially 220–36; also Turville-Petre 1951, 159–64; Jones 1968a).

101. What his contemporaries viewed as the ‘harshness’ of Magnús’s first years of rule, a theme in the skaldic poetry of the time (e.g. Sighvatr’s *Bersǫgglísísur* and Arnórr Þórðarson’s *Hrynhenda*), was probably his taking revenge on his father’s former opponents and his continuation of the taxation policies instituted by Sveinn and Álfífa (Andersen 1977, 144).

102. This is one of nine strophes cited by Snorri (*Heimskringla* III 26–30), one of thirteen in the manuscript known as *Hulda* (fol. 4) and
one of sixteen in Flateyjarbók (III 267–69). The poem as a whole is known as Bersoglisvisur (or -flokur), ‘the plain-speaking verses’ (Skjd. A I 251–56; B I 234–39).

103. Hróða-Knútr, from Hróð in Jutland, was Knútr’s son by Emma of Normandy, and therefore his only legitimate heir. For an exhaustive discussion of the name, see Campbell 1949, 97–98.

104. Some historians have denied the existence of this agreement, but the anonymous Chronicon Roskildense (SmhDmæ. I 22), written c. 1140, agrees with Ágrip on this point (Andersen 1977, 161–62).

105. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (C) for the year 1042 reports:

   Hér gefor Harðacnut swa þat he æt his drince stóð. Ond he færinga feoll to þære eorðan mid egeslicum anginne, ond hine gelæhton ðe þar neh wæron, ond he syðdan nan word ne gecwæð. Ond he forðerðe on vi ði ðun.

106. Sveinn is commonly known as Estridsson (Estrid being the Danish form of Ástríðr). Ástríðr/Estrid was the daughter of Sveinn tjúguskegg, and Knútr’s half-sister and also the half-sister of King Óláfr the Swede. Sveinn grew up in Sweden and went to England probably in the year 1039. Ágrip is the only source of information on Sveinn’s stay in England. After Magnús’s death Sveinn ruled Denmark until his own death in 1074.

107. According to Snorri (Heimskringla III 56) the battle of Helganes was fought a full year after the Battle of Hláskógsheiðr. Sveinn and Magnús first met in the autumn of 1042, shortly after Magnús had been received as king. Their meeting at Gautelfr (modern Göta älv) was peaceful, ending with their pledges of friendship and allegiance. Sveinn was made jarl, to rule over Denmark as king’s regent as his father Úlfr Porgilsson had done before him.

108. Hláskógsheiðr (Lyrskovshede) lies in fact about 100 km to the south of Skotborgarå (now Kongeå), to the northwest of Hedeby in Schleswig.

109. Haraldr came to Sweden in 1045 and to Norway the following year. Snorri’s Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar (Heimskringla III 68–90) provides a fictionalised account of Haraldr’s exploits after Stiklastaðir as a member of the famous Varangian guard in Constantinople. Sigfús Blöndal (1954, 108–68; 1978, 54–102) examines all the written sources pertaining to Haraldr.
110. Úlfr stalleri was an Icelander, the nephew of Guðrún Ósvifrsdóttir of Laxdœla saga. According to Snorri (Heimskringla III 79) he had been with Haraldr in the Varangian guard, which only underlines the unlikelihood of this story. Úlfr was King Haraldr’s marshal, not Magnús’s.

111. A less joyful meeting is described by Snorri (Heimskringla III 94–102).

112. Heikilnef is a *hapax legomenon* of uncertain meaning; Lind 1920–21, 140, suggests *‘snippnása’* (i. e. *‘pointy-nosed’*; cf. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, 314).

113. Magnús died on 25 October 1047.

114. This sentence bears a striking resemblance to the 39th verse of Nóregskonungatal (Flateyjarbók II 524), leading some to conclude that it derives from Sæmundr’s lost book (Ellehøj 1965, 264; see Introduction p. xvi).

115. Ragnhildr, who later married Hákon Ívarsson, the great-grandson of Hákon Sigurðarson.

116. Póra, daughter of Þórbergr Árnason. His brother Finnr (Fiðr) was married to Bergljót Hálfdanardóttir, King Haraldr’s niece. Kálf Árnason, mentioned above (chapters XXVI and XXXI) was another of the brothers. Haraldr was already married to Ellisif (Elizabeth), the daughter of Jaroslav and Ingigerðr Óláfsdóttir and it is therefore more likely that Póra was his mistress than his queen; it was their issue, however, Magnús and Óláfr, that became the more prominent. According to the text here, Finnr lived *austri Ranríki*, ‘east in Ranríki’. This is probably a mistake in the text, however, as according to Snorri (Heimskringla III 126) Finnr Árnason lived *á Yrjum á Austrátt*, i. e. on the farm Austrátt (moden Austrått) in the area Yrjar, on the northern side of the mouth of the Trondheim Fjord. It is not difficult to imagine a copyist misreading an exemplar which read *á Austrátt á Yrjum*, particularly as *austrátt* can also mean ‘easterly direction’.

117. Snorri bases their quarrel on more complicated yet equally personal grounds (see Heimskringla III 126–35).

118. Halland is in southwestern Sweden, but at this time was politically part of Denmark. Haraldr of Norway and Sveinn of Denmark met in battle at the mouth of the River Niz on 9 August 1062.

119. *mæðr víð eld*: literally ‘exhausted with fire’. This story is not found in Heimskringla, but is recorded in Morkinskinna, 204–05.
120. Tostig (ON Tósti) was Harold’s younger brother. He had been made Earl of Northumbria in 1055, but was expelled from England along with his family and retainers following a revolt in Northumbria for which it seems he was partially to blame (Stenton 1971, 578–79).

121. Sjaldan fór svá, þá er vel vildi. Theodoricus has Raro . . . tale signum portendit victoriam (57). Snorri (Heimskringla III 186) also relates the incident, but has the king more optimistically say Fall er furarheill, ‘a fall is a good omen for a journey’. In Sverris saga (1920, 35) Jarl Erlingr says: Eigi fór þá svá er vel vildi.

122. Óláfr Haraldsson is called bóndi (older form búandi), ‘farmer’, in Ágrip and a few other sources (e. g. Heimskringla III 208), but is more commonly known as Óláfr kyrri, ‘the quiet’ or ‘the peaceful’ (see Lind 1920–21, 36; 231).

123. Elgjusetr (modern Elgeseter, near Trondheim) was an Augustinian monastery founded probably by Archbishop Eysteinn Erlendsson in about 1170.

124. This was to become the great cathedral of Kristskirkja (modern Kristkirken), though it was certainly not completed during Óláfr’s lifetime (see Heimskringla III 204).

125. Miklagildi: ‘the Great Guild’; each guild had a patron saint and the guildsmen would meet on the saint’s feast day (see Blom 1960). St Óláfr was the patron saint of Miklagildi; his feast day was 29 July, the day of the Battle of Stiklastaðir (see Heimskringla III 204–05).

126. This half-strophe is found also in Heimskringla in the last chapter of Snorri’s Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar (Heimskringla III 202) and in Morkinskinna (292). Its author is unknown.

127. Only Ágrip calls him berleggr, ‘bare-leg’; in Heimskringla and all other sources he is known as Magnús berfœttr or berbeinn, the meaning of which is the same (Lind 1920–21, 21). Snorri explains that Magnús was called by this name because after returning from ‘west viking’ he and his men dressed ‘as was the custom in the western lands [i. e. the British Isles]’ and describes what are clearly meant to be kilts. Bjarni Áðalbjarnarson (Heimskringla III 229) points out that nowhere in Snorri’s source material is Magnús’s nickname explained; it is not known whether kilt-wearing was in fact a custom in Ireland in Magnús’s day, and it is not unlikely that Snorri’s explanation is merely the one that seemed most likely to him. Cf. also Ágrip, chapter
LI: ‘he wore gaiters (stighosur), as was his custom.’ For an alternative explanation of his nickname see Saxo Grammaticus 1931, 342.

128. Skúlagarðr was the old kings’ residence, named after the English Skúli, foster-father of Óláfr kyrri (see Heimskringla III 197).

129. Klémentskirkja (Klemenskirken) is the oldest church in Trondheim, built by Óláfr Tryggvason.

130. Hefring (Høvringen): a headland to the west of Trondheim.

131. Dofrafjall (Dovrefjell) according to Snorri (Heimskringla III 212).

132. Sveinn was a Dane according to Snorri (Heimskringla III 213).

133. Vagnvíkastrand (now Leksvikstrand) is immediately across the fjord from Trondheim. The name Vagnvík survives in Vanvikan, the bay at the western end of Leksvikstrand.

134. According to Snorri (Heimskringla III 213), Þórir was gamall maðr ok þungfærðr (‘an old man and slow-going’), and, in his own words, as Snorri reports them (III 216), heill at hóndum, en hrumr at fótum, ‘hale of hand but feeble of foot’ (also in Fagrskinna 304).

135. This verse also appears in the other major vernacular Kings’ Sagas, Heimskringla (III 216), Morkinskinna (304), and Fagrskinna (305); see also Skj. A I 434, B I 403. Perkins (1987) relates it to Old Norse rowing chants and children’s verses.

136. Snorri (Heimskringla III 217) says of this statement that í því sýndisk, at konungr vildi hafa verit beðinn, at Egill hefði lifat (‘from this it was evident that the king had wanted to be asked to spare Egill’s life’). Little is known of Egill’s family—in Heimskringla he is called Ásláksson, Áskelsson here—but his wife Ingibjörg’s family was among the most prominent in Norway and Magnús might have expected them to come forward on Egill’s behalf. This would account for the references to Egill’s wife and her family here. But by ‘kin’ (frænd) Magnús could also be referring to himself; his grandmother Þóra Borbergsdóttir was Ógmundr’s sister, aunt of Egill’s wife Ingibjörg.

137. Skúlsveinn was a title of honour derived from the ON skutill, ‘a plate or small table’ (from OE scutel, Lat. scutella). Those with this title were involved with the everyday running of the king’s household (see Hamre 1971).

139. According to Theodoricus (61–62) there were two separate attacks, the second of which ended in defeat for Magnús. Morkinskinna (324, 328) similarly records two battles against Ingi at Fuxerna; Magnús is said to have been victorious in the first, while the outcome of the second is not explicitly stated. In Fagrskinna (310–11) and Heimskringla (III 226–28) there are two campaigns to Sweden, but only one battle against Ingi, indecisive in Fagrskinna but a defeat for Magnús in Heimskringla.

140. These figures, and those mentioned in the previous sentence, were all prominent in eleventh-century Norwegian politics.

141. St Magnús of Orkney (d. 1116).

142. Hugi digri (‘the stout’) was Hugh, son of Richard, Viscount of Avranches, whom King William made Earl of Chester in 1101. This account is found also in Theodoricus (62), but according to Snorri (Heimskringla III 222), Morkinskinna (319) and other sources it was another earl, Hugi prú›i (‘the magnificent’)—Hugh of Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury—whom Magnús killed. See A. Bugge 1914, 38–40; Charles 1934, 116–22.

143. Irish annals indicate that Magnús was in Ireland by 1102, when he conquered Dublin and made a pact with Muirchertach (ON Myrjartak, or in some sources Myrkjartan) Úa Briain (1086–1119), King of Munster, arranging for the marriage of his son Sigurðr (then either nine or twelve depending on the source) and Muirchertach’s daughter, said to have been five years old at the time. Magnús spent the winter on Man, and the following summer joined with Muirchertach in an attack on Domnall Úa Lochlainn, a king in Ulster. They were badly defeated in battle on 5 August, and according to Snorri (Heimskringla III 234–37) were awaiting supplies from Muirchertach in order to return to Norway when they were attacked by a large army of Irishmen. Irish annals relate that Magnús was killed by Ulstermen while raiding there, in County Down, in 1103. See A. Bugge 1914, 30–49; Ó Corráin 1972, 142–50.

144. Morkinskinna (334) follows Ágrip in this, but in Heimskringla (III 234) Magnús is said to have died on Bartholomew’s Day itself (24 August).
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145. Called Eyvindr ǫlög, ‘elbow’, in Heimskringla (III 233) and there said to be the king’s marshal (stallari).

146. In Heimskringla (III 224) Mýrjartak is said to be the son of King Pjállí rather than Kondjálfi, which may be a scribal error, i.e. konungs Pjálasonar for Kondjálasonar. He was in fact Muirchertach, son of Toirdelbach Úa Briain, grandson of Brian Bóroimhe. His daughter Biadmuin married Magnús’s son Sigurðr in 1102. Magnús set Sigurðr over Man, but he ruled it possibly less than a year before his father’s death brought him back to Norway. In Fagrskinna (315) it is said that Sigurðr left her fyrir vestan haf . . . ok vildi þá eika eiga hana, ‘in the west . . . and did not want to be married to her’ (cf. Morkinskinna 337).

147. Cf. chapter XXIX. Snorri does not mention that the brothers abolished these laws till after his account of Sigurðr’s return from Jerusalem (Heimskringla III 256).

148. Sigurðr left Norway in 1107 or 1108 and arrived in Palestine in 1110. See Runciman 1951–54, II 92–93, on how Sigurðr helped the Franks besiege Sidon.

149. Við landsenda: this was at Konungahella, on the northern side of the Göta älv. The church was called Krosskirka.


151. There is a leaf missing from the manuscript at this point, but the text of Morkinskinna (352–53) gives a fair idea of what followed.

152. The text that preceded these lines can be reconstructed from chapter XXIV of Magnússona saga in Heimskringla (III 263–64). Sigurðr Jórsalafari and the Danish king Nikolás had agreed to meet in Eyrarsund (Øresund), their intention being to Christianise the people of Smáland (Småland). The Danes arrived first and, growing tired of waiting, decided to return home. This angered Sigurðr, who in retaliation decided to raid Danish possessions in the area, taking the town Tumålporp (modern Östra Tommarp). They then went on into Sweden and plundered the market town Kalmarnar (Kalmar) and other parts of Smáland.

153. There was an eclipse of the sun, total in the vicinity of Prándheimr, on 11 August 1124.
154. Óhægyni, ‘discomfort’; Sigurðr was subject to fits of madness, called by Snorri staðleyzi, ‘restlessness’, or perhaps ‘instability, lack of self-control’, an example of which he provides in Magnússona saga (Heimskringla III 262).

155. Magnús was born in 1115, Sigurðr’s son by Borghildr Óláfsdóttir (Heimskringla III 257–58).

156. From Irish gille-Críst, ‘servant of Christ’. Haraldr is more commonly referred to as gilli. On Haraldr and the events following his arrival in Norway see Helle 1974, 24–27.

157. In other words he offered to submit to ordeal. Ordeal was often resorted to in cases such as this where proof could be offered in no other way. The most common form of ordeal was járnburðr, which involved carrying red-hot iron, but walking over iron was not unknown. The ordeal normally took place on a Wednesday; the hands and feet were immediately bandaged and inspected on the following Saturday. If the wound was clean the man was innocent of the crime of which he had been accused or the truth of his assertion was granted. If not the man was judged guilty or accounted a liar. The ordeal was unknown in Norway before Christian times and seems to have been introduced from England by missionaries. Ordeals were always conducted under the auspices of the Church. The practice was banned in 1247 (see Hamre 1960).

158. Sæheimr is the modern Sem in Jarlsberg, Vestfold. (It is clearly a different place from the Sæheimr mentioned in ch. VI, which was in Norðrøyðaland.)

159. There is a lacuna here of four leaves, the contents of which have been much discussed. It is unlikely that it contained anything not found in Snorri’s Magnúss saga blinda ok Haralds gilla (Heimskringla III 278–302). Ágrip resumes at about the same point as Snorri begins chapter XXI of his Haraldssonana saga (Heimskringla III 330). This was the beginning of a period of unrest that lasted until the rise to power of King Sverrir (see Helle 1974, 20–47; Gathorne-Hardy 1956).

160. Ingi, Sigurðr and Eystein were the three eldest sons (by three different women) of Haraldr gilli.

161. In the manuscript there is a space at the beginning of the list of names, before ok Ómundi, where a word of about nine letters has been erased. Snorri lists the same men in the same order, but names first one
Sáða-Gyðr (which Storm claimed to be able to make out here). Sáða-Gyðr Báðarson (not the Gyðr mentioned later in this chapter) was the foster-father of Sigurð Haraldsson.

Erlingr skakki was so called because he held his head at an angle as the result of a battle-wound. He and Ógmundr dengir were in fact half-brothers. In Morkinskinna and Heimskringla the comment that Ógmundr was ‘the one who achieved by far the greater honour while they both lived’ is put the other way round, i.e. that lítils þótti vert um Erling, meðan Ógmundr lífði. ‘little was thought of Erlingr while Ógmundr lived’ (Heimskringla III 330; cf. Morkinskinna 445). Erlingr later married the daughter of Sigurð Jórsalafari and became the effective ruler of Norway after twenty years of chaos during which the sons of Haraldr gilli had fought among themselves. He was eventually slain by Sverrir Sigurðarson in 1179.

162. According to Saxo Grammaticus (1931, 446–47), Ingi had been dropped by his nurse in infancy and was crippled as a result:

Sed infantiae sue tempore per incuriam nutritcis forte sinu delapsus, ita humo inflictus est, ut, contracto dorso, reliquum vitae tempus gibbo oneras exigeret. In quo quidem homine excellentis animi venustatem corporis deformitate affecti ludibrio fœdatum putares neque discernere quas, maius fortunæ beneficium receperit an opprobrium senserit.’

163. This story is absent from Heimskringla and Fagrskinna but appears in Morkinskinna (448–53). The text of the story in Morkinskinna is on the whole fuller and would appear to be more original than that preserved here (Agrip 1984, xliii–xliv). The episode centres around Gregóriaus Dagssoin, who has not yet been introduced into the story as it is preserved in Agrip although his name was mentioned in chapter 1. Gregóriaus was the son of Dag Eilifsson, who is said in the story to be married to Ragnhildr, the sister of Gyða. After killing Gerstein, Gyðr flees, seeking shelter with Gregóriaus, who protects him from Gerstein’s sons, when they come seeking revenge, and kills them both. For this Gregóriaus incurs the wrath of King Sigurð munnr, which leads ultimately to his becoming King Ingi’s counsellor and general.
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