

Notes

Chapter 1 — The Oral Prelude to Saga Writing

1. Milman Parry's studies are collected in *The Making of Homeric Verse* (1971; reprinted 1987); F. P. Magoun Jr., "The Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry" (1953) and "Bede's Story of Cædman: The Case History of an Anglo-Saxon Oral Singer" (1955); Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *La Chanson de Roland y el neotradicionalismo* (1959); trans. as *La Chanson de Roland et la tradition épique des Francs* (1960).
2. Larry D. Benson, "The Literary Character of Anglo-Saxon Formulaic Poetry" (1966; rpt. 1995).
3. Klaus von See, "Was ist Heldendichtung?" (1978), 17–18: "Magouns Entdeckung initiierte nun eine wahre Flut von Aufsätzen, die auf mechanische, rein quantitative Weise—durch Abdruck ausgewählter Textpartien und Unterstreichung der auch andernorts vorkommenden Verse—die Formelhaftigkeit und damit die Mündlichkeit der altenglischen Epik nachzuweisen versuchten."
4. See in particular John Foley's annotated bibliography, *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research* (1985). Four of his more recent studies are *Traditional Oral Epic* (1990), *Immanent Art: From Structure to Meaning in Traditional Oral Epic* (1991), *The Singer of Tales in Performance* (1995), and *Homer's Traditional Art* (1999).
5. The analysis of the verse stands, for example, at the center of Foley's *Traditional Oral Epic* (1990). For a brief survey of the situation in Homeric studies see E. J. Bakker, "Homer and Oral Poetry Research" (1999), 1: 163–83.
6. Robert Kellogg, "A Concordance of the Elder Edda," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1958; later published as *A Concordance of Eddic Poetry* (1988). See also Kellogg's essay "The Prehistory of Eddic Poetry" (1990), 189–99, and Gísli Sigurðsson's essay "On the Classification of Eddic Heroic Poetry in View of the Oral Theory" (1999), 245–55. Joseph Harris provides a good overview of the early work in this area in "Eddic Poetry,"

- in *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide* (1985; rpt. 2005), 111–26 (especially 111–15). See also Gísli Sigurðsson in his edition of Eddic poetry: “Munnleg geymd og aldur eddukvæða” in *Eddukvæði* (1998), xv–xxiii.
7. See for example Gerd Sieg, “Die Zweikämpfe der Isländersagas” (1966); Fredrik J. Heinemann, “*Hrafnkels saga freysgoða* and Type-Scene Analysis” (1974); Lars Lönnroth, *Njáls saga: A Critical Introduction* (1976a), 42–103.
 8. *The Problem of Icelandic Saga Origins* (1964). A few years earlier the same ground was covered by Marco Scovazzi, *La saga di Hrafnkell e il problema delle saghe islandesi* (1960). These surveys were supplemented by Else Mundal, *Sagadebatt* (1977). See also her summation in “Den norrøne episke tradisjonen” (1990).
 9. Andreas Heusler, “Die Anfänge” (1913; rpt. 1969). Björn M. Ólsen’s most important contributions appeared in a series of specialized articles on the relationship between various sagas and *Landnámabók* published in *Aarbøger for nordisk oldkyndighed* in 1904, 1905, 1908, 1910, and 1920. In each case he argued for some degree of literary dependence on *Landnámabók*. Sigurður Nordal forged a general theory of literary evolution in the sagas beginning with his book *Snorri Sturluson* (1920), 103–31.
 10. *The Icelandic Family Saga* (1967).
 11. I remember being influenced by Eberhard Lämmert, *Bauformen des Erzählens* (1955) and Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961).
 12. “The Textual Evidence of an Oral Family Saga” (1966). My paper was reviewed and supplemented by W. Manhire, “The Narrative Functions of Source-References in the Sagas of Icelanders” (1975–76). Cf. Klaus von See, “Altnordische Literaturgeschichte als Textgeschichte” (1981), 533.
 13. See Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (1966), 309.
 14. *Early Epic Scenery* (1976), especially 145–59; “The Epic Source of *Níflunga saga* and the *Nibelungenlied*” (1973).
 15. “Hjálmar’s Death-Song and the Delivery of Eddic Poetry” (1971); the chapter entitled “The Language of Tradition” in *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction* (1976a), 42–103; *Den dubbla scenen. Muntlig diktning frá Eddan til Abba* (1978), 29–52; “Iqrð fannz æva né upphiminn: A Formula Analysis” (1981); rpt. in his *The Academy of Odin* (2011), 219–41.
 16. *Uppruni og þema Hrafnkels sögu* (1976); an abbreviated version was translated from the Norwegian in John Tucker’s anthology *Sagas of the Icelanders: A Book of Essays* (1989), 257–71.
 17. *Hrafnkatla* (1940); trans. R. George Thomas, *Hrafnkels saga freysgoða* (1958).
 18. “Another Audience—Another Saga: How Can We Best Explain Different Accounts in *Vatnsdæla saga* and *Finnboga saga ramma* of the Same Events?” (1994); “Aðrir áheyrandur—önnur saga?: Um ólíkar frásagnir Vatnsdælu og Finnboga sögu af sömu atburðum” (1994); “Methodologies for the Study of the Oral in Medieval Iceland” (1997). Gísli’s studies

- culminated in the imposing book *Túlkun Íslendingasagna í ljósi mun-
legrar hefðar* (2002) and were reconfirmed in Tommy Danielsson's two
books *Hrafnkels saga eller Fallet med den undflyende traditionen* and
Sagorna om Norges kungar (2002). I reviewed their work in "Five Saga
Books for a New Century" (2004).
19. "The Long Prose Form" (1986).
 20. "The Long Prose Form" (1986:36). John Foley made use of Clover's
concept in *Immanent Art* (1991), 12. See also Gísli Sigurðsson, "Meth-
odologies" (1997), 187–90.
 21. Bååth, *Studier öfver kompositionen i några isländska ättsagor* (1885);
Heusler, "Die Anfänge," (1913:74–80; reprinted 1969:449–54).
 22. *Oral Tradition and Saga Writing* (1999).
 23. On the dating see Finnur Jónsson, *OOLH* (1923), 2:550–51 and 557;
Magnús Jónsson, *Guðmundar saga dýra* (1940), 60–61; Peter Foote,
"Sturlusaga and Its Background" (1951; reprinted 1984, especially 29);
Jacqueline Simpson, "Advocacy and Art in *Guðmundar saga dýra*"
(1957–61), especially 334–35; Guðrún Nordal, Sverrir Tómasson,
Vésteinn Ólason, *Íslensk bókmenntasaga* (1992), 1:316 (estimate of
1200–1220). In his study "Frásagnaraðferð Sturlu sögu" (1994), 2:803–
17, Viðar Hreinsson considers this saga to be the oldest in *Sturlunga saga*.
He provides a careful analysis of the authorial strategies that set Sturla
off from his antagonists and allow him to emerge gradually as a properly
endowed chieftain. My discussion below, which emphasizes the narrative
and structural complications of the text, should not be understood to
preclude the sort of controlling perspective that Viðar proposes. On the
structuring of *Sturlu saga* and *Guðmundar saga* see most recently the
balanced assessment of Úlfar Bragason, *Ætt og saga* (2010), 94–98 and
128–40.
 24. Peter Erasmus Müller, *Sagabibliothek*, 3 vols. (1817–20). The genre
boundaries are retained in two recent books on the sagas: Ármann
Jakobsson, *Í leit að konungi* (1997) and Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues
with the Viking Age* (1998).
 25. Textual references are to *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Jón Jóhannesson, Magnús
Finnbogason, and Kristján Eldjárn, 2 vols. (1946), here 1:68; or to *Stur-
lunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson, 2 vols. (1988), here 1:56.
 26. On occurrences in *Sturlunga saga* see Guðrún Nordal, *Ethics and Action
in Thirteenth-Century Iceland* (1998), 161–63. In *Egils saga* Egill engages
in an extended contest to recover the inheritance of his wife Ásgerðr,
but his opponents are Norwegians. In *Laxdæla saga* (chapter 18) there
is an episode that is more about legal trickery than about a dramatic
confrontation. In *Vápnfirðinga saga* Brodd-Helgi Þorgilsson and Geitir
Lýtingsson quarrel over the dowry of Halla, Brodd-Helgi's divorced wife
and Geitir's sister (ÍF 11:36–38).
 27. I proposed a date around 1220 for *Ljósvetninga saga* in Andersson
and Miller, *Law and Literature* (1989), 78–84, and in "Guðbrandur
Vigfússon's Saga Chronology" (1989). In *Íslensk bókmenntasaga*, 2:107,
Vésteinn Ólason remained neutral on the question of dating *Ljósvetninga
saga* around 1220 or later in the century. Jónas Kristjánsson, "Íslendinga

- sögur og Sturlunga” (1988), 105, was inclined to believe that *Ljósvetninga saga* was among the earliest of the sagas about early Icelanders, but he did not hazard a date.
28. In her edition of *Porgils saga ok Hafliða* (1952), x-xxix, Ursula Brown reviews the dating criteria in some detail and finds “no strong grounds for supposing that *Porgils saga* was written much earlier than 1237, the latest date it contains” (xxix). In *Íslensk bókmenntasaga*, 1:321, Guðrún Nordal retains a date around 1240. I weigh an earlier date in Andersson and Miller, *Law and Literature* (1989), 80–82.
 29. Knut Liestøl, *The Origin of the Icelandic Family Sagas* (1930), 55–100; Andreas Heusler, *Die altgermanische Dichtung* (1941; rpt. 1957), 210–13.
 30. John D. Niles, *Beowulf: The Poem and Its Tradition* (1983), 152–62; Bernard Fenik, *Homer and the Nibelungenlied* (1986), 97–110.
 31. ÍF 6:231 (from *Hauksbók*). The passage is referred to as an instance of oral performance by, for example, W. A. Craigie, *The Icelandic Sagas* (1913), 14–15; Knut Liestøl, *The Origin of the Icelandic Family Sagas* (1930), 57; Marco Scovazzi, *La saga di Hrafnkell* (1960), 272–74. Rolf Heller, “Zur Entstehung der Grönlandsszenen der Fóstbrœðra saga” (1977), 1:326–34, argued that the Greenland scenes are a literary fiction with little or no recourse to oral tradition.

Chapter 2 — The Prehistory of the Kings’ Sagas

1. I have summarized Heusler’s work in “Heusler’s Saga Studies” (2005). For a survey of the field as a whole see Carol J. Clover, “Icelandic Family Sagas (*Íslendingasögur*),” in *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide* (1985; reprinted 2005), 239–315.
2. Knut Liestøl, *The Origin of the Icelandic Family Sagas* (1930).
3. T. M. Andersson, *The Problem of Icelandic Saga Origins* (1964).
4. These studies were summarized in Lönnroth’s *European Sources of Icelandic Saga-Writing* (1965). An abbreviated version may be found in his *The Academy of Odin: Selected Papers on Old Norse Literature* (2011), 13–23.
5. *Sagan om kärleken: Erotik, känslor och berättarkonst i norrön litteratur* (2007).
6. *Uppruni og þema Hrafnkels sögu* (1976).
7. Sigurður Nordal, *Hrafnkels saga freysgoða*, trans. R. George Thomas (1958).
8. Else Mundal, *Sagadebatt* (1977); Carol J. Clover (as in note 1).
9. Carol J. Clover, “The Long Prose Form” (1986).
10. “The Long Prose Form in Medieval Iceland” (2002); revised as chapter 1 above.
11. Gísli Sigurðsson, *Túlkun Íslendingasagna í ljósi munnlegrar hefðar* (2002); trans. by Nicholas Jones as *The Medieval Icelandic Saga and Oral Tradition* (2004); Tommy Danielsson, *Hrafnkels saga eller Fallet med den undflyende traditionen* and *Sagorna om Norges kungar* (2002).

- I have discussed these books in “Five Saga Books for a New Century” (2004).
12. Siegfried Beyschlag, *Konungasögur* (1950).
 13. Ármann Jakobsson, *Staður í nýjum heimi* (2002), 78–86, has argued with good reason that the þættir were part of the original composition. See also ÍF 23:XLIV. I have tried to isolate the þátrr-like oral components in *Óláfs saga helga* in *Heimskringla* in chapter 4 below.
 14. See Bjarni Guðnason, “Theodoricus og íslenskir sagnaritarar” (1977); T. M. Andersson, “Ari’s *konunga ævi* and the Earliest Accounts of Hákon jarl’s Death” (1979); Gudrun Lange, *Die Anfänge der isländisch-norwegischen Geschichtsschreibung* (1989), 166–71, 177–78.
 15. See T. M. Andersson, *The Growth of the Medieval Icelandic Sagas* (2006), 21–59.
 16. I have argued the dating of *Víga-Glúms saga* in “*Víga-Glúms saga* and the Birth of Saga Writing” (2006), the dating of *Fóstbræðra saga* in “Redating *Fóstbræðra saga*” (forthcoming), and the dating of *Gunnlaugs saga* in “The Native Romance of Gunnlaugr and Helga the Fair” (2008).
 17. The most clear-cut examples are “Hreiðars þátrr,” “Halldórs þátrr Snorrasonar,” “Auðunar þátrr vestfirzka,” “Brands þátrr orva,” “Sneglu-Halla þátrr,” “Stúfs þátrr Kattarsonar,” “Odds þátrr Ófeigssonar,” and “Þátrr af Gullásu-Pórði.”
 18. On the conversion of five lands see MHN, 116, and *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum*, ed. M. J. Driscoll (1995; reprinted 2008), 30.
 19. See *Heimskringla*, ÍF 27:214–18, 240.
 20. *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (1932), 170; ÍF 23:205.
 21. Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler (1917; reprinted 1977), 159, 267.
 22. Perhaps the most striking expression of the Icelandic claim to genealogical equality with the Norwegians may be found in “Halldórs þátrr Snorrasonar” in *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (1928–32), 149–55; ÍF 23:180–87.
 23. The morphology was analyzed by Joseph Harris, “Theme and Genre in Some *Íslendinga þættir*” (1976; reprinted 2008).
 24. *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, 199–200; ÍF 23:235–37.
 25. Preben Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære* (1993), 78; Vésteinn Ólason, “The Icelandic Saga as a Kind of Literature with Special Reference to Its Representation of Reality” (2007), 34.

Chapter 3 — The First Written Sagas of Kings and Chieftains

1. Bjarni Guðnason, *Fyrsta sagan* (1978).
2. This still unresolved puzzle is reviewed by Lárus H. Blöndal, *Um uppruna Sverrissögu* (1982). Blöndal himself is open to the idea that Karl Jónsson composed the whole saga, which would therefore have been completed before his death in 1213.

3. Gustav Storm, *Otte brudstykker* (1893), 23; Sigurður Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914), 54.
4. See Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937), 59.
5. I argue for this looser dating in *Oddr Snorrason's Saga of Olaf Tryggvason* (2003), 3–5.
6. See Jonna Louis-Jensen, “Syvende og ottende brudstykke” (1970) and Jónas Kristjánsson, “The Legendary Saga” (1976), 282.
7. *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar af Oddr Snorrason munk*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (1932), 156; ÍF 25:272.
8. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937), 63.
9. Konrad Maurer, *Ueber die Ausdrücke* (1867), 566–80 (esp. 576–79).
10. Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914), 123.
11. Finnur Jónsson, *OOLH*, 2nd ed. (1920–24), 2:605–11.
12. *Ibid.*, 608.
13. *Ibid.*, 385.
14. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937), 79.
15. Lars Lönnroth, “Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga” (1963): 60–64.
16. *Olafs saga hins helga*, ed. Oscar Albert Johnsen (1922), 19, or *Olafs saga hins helga*, ed. and trans. Anne Heinrichs et al. (1982), 66; Theodoricus monachus, *Historia de Antiquitate* in MHN (1880; reprinted 1973), 26, and *Historia de Antiquitate*, trans. David and Ian McDougall (1998), 20; *Ágrip af Nóregs konungasögum*, ed. and trans. M. J. Driscoll (1995; reprinted 2008), 36; *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (1932), 94. See also Ólafur Halldórsson, “Mostur og Sæla” (1984).
17. See Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson in *Heimskringla* III (ÍF 28:XXXV).
18. Lars Lönnroth, “The Baptist and the Saint” (2000), 259.
19. *Ibid.*, 263.
20. Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu* (1972), 162.
21. Jónas Kristjánsson, “The Legendary Saga” (1976), 282.
22. Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914), 31–37.
23. Jónas Kristjánsson, “The Legendary Saga” (1976), 290–91.
24. *Ibid.*, 282.
25. *Konunga sögur*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, vol. 1 (1957).
26. Carol Clover, “The Politics of Scarcity” (1988): 154.
27. See Dietrich Hofmann, “Die *Yngvars saga víðförla* und Oddr munkr inn fróði” (1981; reprinted 1988). The passage is cited from *Fornaldar sögur norðurlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson (1954), 2:425. See also *Yngvars saga víðförla jámte ett bihang om Ingvarsinkrifterna*, ed. Emil Olson (1912), 1.
28. Lönnroth, “The Baptist and the Saint” (2000), 263.
29. See Maurer, *Ueber die Ausdrücke* (1867), 578; Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914), 13; Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937), 79. In Peter Andreas Munch's edition *Saga Olafs konungs Tryggvasonar* (1853), 72, Munch suggested that there could have been a misunderstanding of Latin *suus* in Oddr's text.
30. See *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, ed. Guðni Jónsson (1957), 60: “Leitt er mér um at hitta þess kyns menn eða þeira traust at sækja.”
31. *Ágrip*, ed. M. J. Driscoll (1995; rpt. 2008), 28–30.

32. See Andersson, *Oddr Snorrason's Saga of Olaf Tryggvason* (2003), 6–14.
33. MHN, 14; *Historia de Antiquitate*, trans. McDougall (1998), 10.
34. It has often been argued that Oddr made use of Theodoricus's text, but I have opposed this view in *Oddr Snorrason's Saga of Olaf Tryggvason* (2003), 6–7. It should be added that very recently Sverre Bagge, “Warrior, King, and Saint” (2010): 289, has expressed skepticism about the idea that the prophetic passages reviewed here can shed light on the chronology of the texts.
35. Lönnroth, “Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga” (1963): 63. Sverre Bagge, “Warrior, King, and Saint” (2010): 295n58, also believes that the motif is more likely to have originated at Nesjar than at Svøldr.
36. On this passage see Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914), 33–34.
37. Maurer, *Ueber die Audrücke* (1867), 576.
38. See MHN, 76–82, or *A History of Norway*, trans. Devra Kunin (2001), 2–5.
39. See G. Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature* (1953; rpt. 1967), 137 and references.
40. Theological precedent can be found for or against “forced service.” See the ambiguous discussion by Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (1947), 2:1218–19. Aquinas begins by quoting John Chrysostom: “Our Lord says this so as to forbid the slaying of men. For it is not right to slay heretics, because if you do you will necessarily slay many innocent persons.” Aquinas concludes: “Therefore it seems for the same reason unbelievers ought not to be compelled to the faith.” He then quotes Augustine to the effect that “it is possible for a man to do other things against his will, but he cannot believe unless he is willing.” In response to Luke 14:23 he writes: “I answer that, among unbelievers there are some who have never received the faith, such as the heathens and the Jews: and these are by no means to be compelled to the faith, in order that they may believe, because to believe depends on the will [*credere voluntatis est*].” The rest of the discussion is, however, more equivocal.
41. The material on Saint Óláfr is now conveniently assembled by Devra Kunin and Carl Phelpstead in *A History of Norway* (2001).
42. See *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson (1988), 1:117; Lárus H. Blöndal, *Um uppruna Sverrissögu* (1982), 169–70.
43. Finnur Jónsson suggested that the reference to a statement by King Sverrir in Oddr's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (1932; chapter 73, p. 226; ÍF 25:342) could have derived from Karl Jónsson's contact with the king after his return from Norway. See the “Indledning” to his edition, ii–iii.
44. See Lars Lönnroth, “Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga” (1963): 67, and Jan de Vries, *Altnordische Literaturgeschichte* (1967), 2:242. But cf. Lárus Blöndal, *Um uppruna* (1982), 170–71.
45. See Else Mundal, “The Dating of the Oldest Sagas of Early Icelanders” (forthcoming), and *Færeyinga saga*, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson (1987), ccxxii–ccxxxix, ccxlviii.

46. See his *OOLH*, 1st ed. (1901), 2:639–40; 2nd ed. (1920–24), 2:633–34.
47. *Fagrskinna* (1917).
48. *Fra sagn til saga* (1923), 183–217.
49. *Saga og oldfunn* (1927).
50. *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937).
51. *Ibid.*, 186.
52. The following abbreviations are used: *Fagrskinna* (ÍF 29) = *Fsk*; *Heimskringla* I (ÍF 26) = *Hkr*; *Morkinskinna* (ÍF 23–24) = *Msk*.
53. Gustav Indrebø, *Fagrskinna* (1917), 269, observed that *Fsk* 65, in contrast to *Hkr*, only takes note of Haraldr hárfagri’s helpers from Þrændalög: “Fgsk. talar i det heile liksom kong Harald skulde ha havt hovustødet sitt i Trøndelag, og liksom riksens samling skulde ha gaatt ut derifraa.” This version is almost too tendentious not to have originated in the regional bias of **Hlaðajarla saga*. If that is the case, then we must imagine that the author of **Hlaðajarla saga* rejected the vulgate version of events as we find them presented in *Hkr* 97–100 in favor of a hypothesis that both Haraldr’s unification and Magnús’s reunification proceeded from Þrændalög. See also Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Om de norske kongers sagaer* (1937), 218.
54. *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, xxxvi. But see also Gustav Indrebø, “Nokre merknader” (1938–39), 72–76.
55. *Orkneyinga saga*, ed. Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ÍF 34 (1965), 65–70; *Morkinskinna*, ed. Ármann Jakobsson and Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson, ÍF 23 (2011), XXXVII.
56. Indrebø, *Fagrskinna* (1917), 104–7, argued that *Fagrskinna* made no use of *Orkneyinga saga*, and in an unpublished review of the problem Kari Ellen Gade concludes that the link between *Morkinskinna* and *Orkneyinga saga* could be purely oral.
57. *Fagrskinna* (1917), 147–49.
58. See the genealogy in *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 3:100 (genealogy 51).
59. For the text of “Nóregs konunga tal” see Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Den norske-islandske skjaldedigtning B* (rettet tekst), 1:575–90.
60. See G. Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature* (1953), 211; Guðrún Nordal, Sverrir Tómasson, Vésteinn Ólason, *Íslensk bókmenntasaga* (1992), 1:348.

Chapter 4 — Sources and Attitudes in *Óláfs saga helga* in *Heimskringla*

1. Elias Wessén, “Om Snorres Prologus” (1928–29) concluded that *Óláfs saga helga* was written initially without a prologue. It was then expanded into *Heimskringla* with a prologue added. Finally the *Heimskringla* prologue was refashioned to serve as a prologue for the *Separate Saga of Saint Olaf*. Even with the doubts about whether *Óláfs saga helga* originally was a part of *Heimskringla*, this sequence remains possible.

- See most recently Jonna Louis-Jensen, “Dating the Archetype: *Eyrbyggja saga* and *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*” (forthcoming).
2. It will be noted that I take into account the cautions formulated by Jonna Louis-Jensen, “Heimskringla—Et værk av Snorri Sturluson?” (1997), Jo Rune Ugulen, “AM 39 fol., *Óláfs saga helga* og *Heimskringla*” (2002), and Patricia Pires Boulhosa, *Icelanders and the Kings of Norway* (2005), 6–21, and refrain from attributing *Óláfs saga helga* to Snorri Sturluson.
 3. On the author’s responsibility for the oratory see Oscar Albert Johnsen, “Friðgerðar-saga” (1916): 515–16, 519, 537; Sigurður Nordal, *Snorri Sturluson* (1920), 206; Curt Weibull, *Sverige och dess nordiska grannmakter* (1921), 139; Hallvard Lie, *Studier i Heimskringlas stil* (1937), 90–105.
 4. Oscar Albert Johnsen, “Friðgerðar-saga” (1916); Birger Nerman, “Torgny lagman” (1916); Otto von Friesen, “Fredsförhandlingarna mellan Olov skötkonung och Olav Haraldsson” (1942). See also Natanael Beckman, “Torgny lagman” (1918), “Sverige i isländsk tradition” (1922), “Ytterligare om Sigvats Austrfararvísur” (1934) and Jón Jónsson, “Athugasemd um Þorgný lögmann” (1918).
 5. See Curt Weibull, *Sverige och dess nordiska grannmakter* (1921), 116–48, and Ove Moberg, *Olav Haraldsson, Knut den Store och Sverige* (1941), 88–147.
 6. See also Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson in ÍF 27:XXXVI and XXXIX. More recently Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics* (1991), acknowledges oral sources (pp. 239–40) but also believes that some of the stories are Snorri’s invention (pp. 108, 279n34).
 7. On the drama of the passage see Hallvard Lie, *Studier i Heimskringlas stil* (1937), 11.
 8. In contrast to the popular reading suggested here, Lars Lönnroth offered a royalist reading in “The Ideology of *Heimskringla*” (1976b); rpt. in *The Academy of Odin* (2011), 141–62.
 9. Þórleifur Jónsson included in his *Fjörutíu Íslendinga-þættir* (1904) the story of Steinn Skaptason (pp. 311–22) and a composite version of “Þórarins þáttur Nefjólfssonar” (pp. 344–63) but none of the others. Some of the texts he would have excluded because they are not “Íslendinga þættir,” but it is not clear why he excluded the tale of Þóroddr Snorrason. None of the *þættir* discussed here was included in *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders* (1997), perhaps from a reluctance to dismember the unity of *Óláfs saga helga*.
 10. *Studier i Heimskringlas stil* (1937), 36–52.
 11. See Sigurður Nordal, “Om Orkneyinga saga” (1913): 36–49, especially 40–41.
 12. I have reviewed this problem in “Lore and Literature” (1988).
 13. See Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics* (1991), 41.
 14. See Michael J. Stitt, *Beowulf of the Bear’s Son* (1992), 197.
 15. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (ÍF 27:LI) expressed the view that Þóroddr himself transmitted the story, but he did not specify how much of it.
 16. Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914).
 17. Toralf Berntsen, *Fra sagn til saga* (1923), tried to identify a Norwegian

- “Háreks saga” and “Tore Hunds saga” (pp. 135, 144), but conceded that most of the stories in the saga come from Icelandic sources (pp. 104–6).
18. Halvdan Koht, “Sagaenes opfattelse av vår gamle historie” (1914); Fredrik Paasche, “Tendens og syn i kongesagaen” (1922).
 19. *Society and Politics* (1991), 65 and 201.
 20. Johann Schreiner, *Tradisjon og saga om Olav den hellige* (1926), 104. See also Hallvard Lie’s discussion of these terms in *Studier i Heimskringlas stil* (1934), 20–21.
 21. Gudmund Sandvik, *Hovding og konge i Heimskringla* (1955), delivered an explicit corrective to this viewpoint. See especially his concluding remarks (pp. 98–99). See also Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics* (1991), 199, 204, 237–38 and “Warrior, King, and Saint” (2010), especially 314–15.
 22. For Theodoricus see MHN (1880), 5–42 (esp. 29–30); *Ágrip*, ed. Bjarni Einarsson (ÍF29:25–30 [especially 27]).
 23. The alias is Hallvard Lie’s in *Studier i Heimskringlas stil* (1937), 103.

Chapter 5 — Political Subtexts in *Morkinskinna*, *Heimskringla* III, and *Egils saga*

1. The dating criteria are reviewed in *Morkinskinna*, trans. Andersson and Gade (2000), 66–67.
2. See Diana Whaley, *Heimskringla: An Introduction* (1991), 28 and 33.
3. These events can be traced in *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson et al. (1988), 1:254–62, and the various editions of *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, ed. Gudbrand Vigfusson (1887), 37–38, 49–52; ed. Guðni Jónsson in *Konunga sögur* (1957), 3:52, 67, 69–71; ed. Marina Mundt, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* (1977), 27, 35–36. See also *Islandske annaler*, ed. Gustav Storm (1888), 23, 63, 125, 183, 255, 326.
4. Bogi Th. Melsteð provided a full recapitulation of the events in “Útanstefnur og erendisrekar útlendra þjóðhöfðingja” (1899): 122–30. See also Jón Jóhannesson, *A History of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth* (1974), pp. 239–40.
5. Haraldr Gormsson’s planned attack is reported in the *Heimskringla* version of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (ÍF 26:315–17). On this passage see Bo Almqvist, *Norrön niddiktning* (1965), 1:119–85. The Grímsey incident is related in the *Heimskringla* version of *Óláfs saga helga* (ÍF 27:215–17). On the background of the Grímsey episode see Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson’s introduction to *Óláfs saga helga* (ÍF 27:XLVII-L).
6. On the location of *Morkinskinna*, see Eivind Kválen, *Den eldste norske kongesoga* (1925), 46–53. I have supported his location in *Morkinskinna*, trans. Andersson and Gade (2000), 67–72.
7. I offered this suggestion in Andersson, “Snorri Sturluson and the Saga School at Munkaþverá” (1993), especially 16–17. The idea has not persuaded Ármann Jakobsson (see the studies listed in the Bibliography). Ármann offers a particularly well-balanced response and alternative in

- “The Individual and the Ideal” (2000a:esp. 80–84). He believes that episodes in *Morkinskinna* and *Heimskringla* should not be read as positive or negative assessments of kings but as exempla on human qualities in general.
8. Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson’s Heimskringla* (1991), 139 and 156.
 9. Gustav Indrebø contributed an interesting article on this contradiction in “Harald hardraade i Morkinskinna,” *Festskrift til Finnur Jónsson* (1928), 173–80. He believed that the core story was based on skaldic authority and was positive with respect to Haraldr, while the *þættir* (and the final comparison with Magnús góði) were negative and secondary additions.
 10. For a survey of the *þættir* see Heinrich Gimmler, *Die Thættir der Morkinskinna* (1976). It has long been suspected that many of the *þættir* in *Morkinskinna* are interpolations. Gimmler thought that six of the eight *þættir* he discussed were not in the original redaction. On the other hand, Jonna Louis-Jensen, *Kongesagastudier* (1977), 69 and 77–78, thought that a number of them may well have been in the original redaction. More recently Ármann Jakobsson, *Staður í nýjum heimi* (2002), preferred to consider the *þættir* in *Morkinskinna* as part of a general medieval esthetic rather than as interpolations or foreign bodies. See also ÍF 23:XL-L. Since many of the *þættir* are inspired by the same anti-royalist tendency that we find in *Morkinskinna* as a whole, I see no reason to disallow them as part of the original composition. They may not be the original creations of the *Morkinskinna* author, but he could well have refashioned them for his special project.
 11. *Morkinskinna* ed. C. R. Unger (1867), 51 (hereafter “Unger”); *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (1932), 155 (hereafter “FJ”); *Morkinskinna*, ed. Ármann Jakobsson and Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson, 1:187 (hereafter ÍF 23–24); *Morkinskinna*, trans. Andersson and Gade, 194 and 435n12 (hereafter Andersson/Gade).
 12. On this gem of a narrative see William Ian Miller’s brilliant reading in *Audun and the Polar Bear* (2008).
 13. Unger, 200–201; FJ, 409; ÍF 24:173; Andersson/Gade, 369.
 14. A good example of such retention is the mention of Þorleikr fagri in *Heimskringla* III (ÍF 28:113).
 15. Unger, 111–12; FJ, 265; ÍF 23:303; Andersson/Gade, 263.
 16. Gustav Storm, *Snorre Sturlassöns historieskrivning* (1873), 49. The fragments of *Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* were published by Storm (pp. 236–59) and by Jón Helgason and Jakob Benediktsson, *Hákonarsaga Ívarssonar* (1952). For more recent discussions see Bjarne Fidjestøl, *Det norrøne fyrstediktet* (1982), 15–17, and Russell G. Poole, *Viking Poems on War and Peace* (1991), 66–68. See also Andersson/Gade, 512–15.
 17. Unger, 85; FJ, 221; ÍF 23:258; Andersson/Gade, 236.
 18. Unger, 24; FJ, 103; ÍF 23:133–34; Andersson/Gade, 159.
 19. Unger, 27; FJ, 108; ÍF 23:137–38; Andersson/Gade, 162.
 20. Unger, 32; FJ, 118; ÍF 23:146; Andersson/Gade, 167.
 21. FJ, 143 [from *Flateyjarbók*]; Andersson/Gade, 183.

22. ÍF 28:102: “Brátt gerðusk greinir í um samþykki konunganna, ok váru margir svá illgjarnir, at þeira gengu svá illa í milli.” ÍF 28:104: “Við slíkar greinir gerðisk brátt umræða óvitra manna til þess, at konungum varð sundrþykki at. Mart fannsk þá til þess, er konungum þótti sinn veg hvárum, þótt hér sé fátt ritat.”
23. ÍF 28:105: “Síðan andaðisk Magnús konungr góði, ok var hann allmjök harmdaudi allri alþýðu.” ÍF 28:107: “Allra konunga var hann vinsælstr, bæði lofuðu hann vinir ok óvinir.”
24. Unger, 127.1–12; FJ, 291.13–28; ÍF 24:10; Andersson/Gade, 281: “Ok skipaði Óláfr konungr þeim mǫrgum hlutum til vægðar, er Haraldr konungr, faðir hans, hafði reist með freku ok haldit svá.”
25. “Nú skal ek kátr vera, er ek sé bæði á lýð mínum glæði ok frelsi. . . . En á dögum fōður míns var lýðr þessi undir aga miklum ok ótta, ok fálu þá flestir menn gull sitt ok gersimar, en nú sé ek á hverjum yðrum skína þat, er á. Ok er yðvart frelsi mín glæði.”
26. ÍF 28:207: “Eigi fæ ek betr stýrt ríkinu ok eigi er meiri ógn af mér en af fōður mínum, þótt ek hafa hálfa fleira lið en hann hafði, en engi pynding gengr mér til þessa við yðr eða þat, at ek vilja þyngja kostum yðrum.”
27. Unger, 137; FJ, 308; ÍF 24:31–33; Andersson/Gade, 293–94.
28. ÍF 28:218: “Hann var maðr rǫskr ok herskár ok starfsamr ok líkari í ǫllu Haraldi fōðurfōður sínum, í skaplyndi heldr en feðr sínum.”
29. Unger, 153.12, conjectured “*enn til sǫmðar* váru ríki Nóregi.” Finnur Jónsson (p. 332.19–20) omitted the conjecture. The ÍF edition 24:65 retains it in brackets.
30. Unger, 153; FJ, 333; ÍF 24:65; Andersson/Gade, 310: “Herra, allir mundu þess búinir at vinna yðr til sǫmðar, en hræddir eru vér um nǫkkut í þessu landi, hvat til sǫmðar vill gerask. Er land þetta fjǫlmennt en fólkit svikalt, ok er oss uggr á, hvé til verðr geymt. Fór svá um frænda yðvarn Harald konungr, at fyrst var honum allt upp gefit í Englandi, þar sem hann kom við. En þó lauk svá, at hann lézk þar sjálfr. Myndi vinum þínum þykkja allra bezt, at þú hefðir kyrr setit í þínu ríki, svá gott sem þú átt um at véla.”
31. ÍF 28:237.
32. Unger, 165.20–23; FJ, 351.25–29; ÍF 24:99; Andersson/Gade, 325.
33. Unger, 170.29–30; FJ, 359.20; ÍF 24:108; Andersson/Gade, 330.
34. Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson’s Heimskringla* (1991), 156.
35. ÍF 28:218, 263; Unger, 189.30–32; FJ, 388.3–6; ÍF 24:138; Andersson/Gade, 350.
36. “Hvernig var Snorri í sjón?” (1979), especially 174–80; here p. 175. On the flyting see also Marianne E. Kalinke, “*Sigurðar saga Jórsalafara*” (1984), especially 162–65. Kalinke, like Bagge, sees the ideals represented by the two kings as being equally balanced. Diana Whaley, *Heimskringla* (1991), 101, takes a view closer to the one advanced here.
37. Unger, 187.7–40; FJ, 384.1–385.10; ÍF 24:133–34; Andersson/Gade, 346–47; ÍF 28:261.
38. On the textual situation see Whaley, *Heimskringla* (1991), 41–62.
39. Melissa A. Berman, “The Political Sagas” (1985). Subsequently Preben

Meulengracht Sørensen provided a much fuller account of the political implications in *Egils saga* and the tension between the Icelandic ideals of individual freedom and the centralized authority of the Norwegian crown. See his *Fortælling og ære* (1993), 127–47. Meulengracht Sørensen warns that the political theme may not reflect current events as much as the underlying social ideal.

40. Compare Sölvi klofi's powerful speech against Haraldr hárfagri in *Egils saga* (ÍF 2:8) with the trimmed version in *Heimskringla* (ÍF 26:105). Haraldr's suppression of resistance in *Egils saga* (ÍF 2:11–12) has no counterpart in *Heimskringla* (ÍF 26:117–18).
41. Jónas Kristjánsson suggested a date as late as 1240 in “Egils saga og konungasögur” (1977), but in a later paper “Var Snorri Sturluson upphafsmaður Íslendingasagna?” (1990) he settled on a date around 1230. Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni* (2004), especially 206, returned to a late date around 1240, but Jonna Louis-Jensen, “Dating the Archetype: Eyrbyggja saga and Egils saga Skallagrímssonar” (forthcoming) urges an early date before the composition of *Heimskringla* I and III.

Chapter 6 — Domestic Politics in Northern Iceland

1. *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson (1988), 1:329.
2. Sigurður Nordal, “Snorri Sturluson: Nokkurar hugleiðingar” (1941): 29–30; *Sagalitteraturen* (1952), 245.
3. *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson (1988), 1:252; 3:181 (map 18).
4. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:245, 252.
5. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:246.
6. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:269; 3:181 (map 18).
7. *Den eldste norske kongesaga* (1925), 46–53; Andersson and Gade, *Morkinskinna* (2000), 67–69.
8. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:100–01; 3:169 (map 9).
9. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:107–8.
10. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:201; 3:93–95 (genealogies 40 and 42).
11. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:60.
12. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:101.
13. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), e.g., 1:74.
14. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:101; 3:93 (genealogy 40).
15. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:108; 3:93 (genealogy 40).
16. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:112.
17. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:113.
18. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 3:102 (genealogy 54).
19. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:213.
20. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:210.
21. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:214.
22. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:106.
23. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:210.
24. *Sturlunga saga* (1988), 1:217.

25. Andersson, "The Literary Prehistory" (1994), 1:22–25; Andersson and Gade, *Morkinskinna* (2000), 67–68.
26. *Færeyinga saga*, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson (1987), ccxxxii–ix.
27. *Über die ältere isländische Saga* (1852).
28. Finnur Jónsson, *OOLH* (1894–1901), 2:218–19. The texts are reprinted in adjacent columns in Andersson, "Viga-Glúms saga and the Birth of Saga Writing" (2006): 26–33. They show the wording to be far too close to allow for the possibility of oral variation.
29. Lotspeich, *Zur Viga-Glúms- und Reykdæla saga* (1903), 63.
30. In "The Composition of the Icelandic Family Sagas" (1909): 220, he extended this comment to apply to Viga-Skúta as well as Viga-Glúmr.
31. Lotspeich (1903), 34.
32. Lotspeich (1903), 38.
33. In "The Composition of the Icelandic Family Sagas" (1909): 217, Lotspeich generalizes: "It is the purpose of this present study to show that the saga writers in some cases probably used, in connection with the oral tradition, small written sources in the composition of their works." He does not, however, adduce any parallel examples of "small written sources."
34. Knut Liestøl, "Reykdæla saga: Tradisjon og forfattar" (1928). Finnur Jónsson, *OOLH* (1920–24), 2:223 and 501.
35. Liestøl (1928), 40.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Liestøl, *The Origin of the Icelandic Family Saga* (1930), 53.
38. Turville-Petre, "The Traditions of Viga-Glúms Saga" (1936): 64.
39. Turville-Petre, ed., *Viga-Glúms saga* (1940), xxix.
40. Björn M. Ólsen, *Um Íslendingasögur* (1937–39), 356 and 424.
41. Björn Sigfússon, ed., *Ljósvetninga saga*, etc. (1940), LXIV–LXIX.
42. Jónas Kristjánsson, ed., *Eyfirðinga sögur* (1956), XV–XXI.
43. *Eddas and Sagas* (1988), 244.
44. Walter Baetke, "Die Viga-Glúms-saga-Episode" (1958).
45. Baetke (1958), 20.
46. Baetke credited the parallel to Björn Sigfússon (ÍF 10:LXVIII), and Björn Sigfússon in turn traced it to Björn M. Ólsen, *Um Íslendingasögur* (1937–39), 422.
47. Arie C. Bouman, *Observations on Syntax* (1956).
48. Dietrich Hofmann, "Reykdæla saga und mündliche Überlieferung" (1972).
49. John McKinnell, trans., *Viga-Glums Saga* (1987), 9–10; Böðvar Guðmundsson, Sverrir Tómasson, Torfi H. Tulinius, and Vésteinn Ólason, *Íslensk bókmenntasaga*, (1993), 2:104.
50. See Irmgard Netter, *Die indirekte Rede in den Isländersagas* (1935), 17–18.
51. Baetke (1958), 11.
52. Möbius, *Über die ältere isländische Saga* (1852), p. 68; Ólsen, "Um Íslendingasögur" (1937–39), 355–56.
53. Lotspeich (1903), 32; Turville-Petre (1940), xxix; Bouman (1956), 69.
54. Hofmann (1972), 14–18.

55. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, *Studier i Landnámabók* (1974).
56. Jón Jóhannesson, *Gerðir Landnámabókar* (1941), 113–15.
57. See the critique by Gísli Sigurðsson, *Túlkun Íslendingasagna* (2002), 136–86.
58. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, *Studier* (1974), 63 and 66.
59. I suggested this in *The Growth of the Medieval Icelandic Sagas* (2006), 66–67. The grouping and relative dating of the saga cluster in Eyjafjörður have now been more fully discussed by Sten Kindlundh in “Om Reykdæla saga ok Víga-Skútu” (2009).
60. T. M. Andersson and William Ian Miller, trans., *Law and Literature in Medieval Iceland* (1989), 64–74.
61. Andersson and Miller (1989), 80–82.
62. On the value system in general see Andersson and Miller (1989), 55–62 and 98–118.
63. On the dating of *Orkneyinga saga* see Else Mundal, “The Dating of the Oldest Sagas of Early Icelanders” (forthcoming).
64. See Björn Sigfússon, “Veldi Guðmundar ríka” (1934), 195.

Chapter 7 — Warrior Poets in the Northwest

1. Bjarni Guðnason, “Aldur og einkenni *Bjarnarsögu Hítælakappa*” (1994); T. M. Andersson, “The Native Romance of Gunnlaugr and Helga the Fair” (2008).
2. Sigurður Nordal, *Om Olaf den helliges saga* (1914); Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu* (1972).
3. “Redating *Fóstbræðra saga*” (forthcoming).
4. Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu*, 201–8.
5. See the discussion by Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson in ÍF 6:XII–XXI. Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu*, 226–35, tried to identify other echoes, but some are doubtful and some are dependent on Jónas’s late dating of the saga.
6. On the locution used here see ÍF 6:128n3.
7. Compare the passage in ÍF 6:178 with the wording in ÍF 6:142–43.
8. See stanza 29 in ÍF 6:258–59; the other four killings are described in ÍF 6:257.
9. Guðni Kolbeinsson and Jónas Kristjánsson argued for the priority of the longer version in “Gerðir Gíslasögu” (1979).
10. The inquiry was initiated by Anne Holtsmark, “Studies in the *Gísla saga*” (1951), who identified Þorkell as the killer. I argued for Þorgrímr in “Some Ambiguities in *Gísla saga*” (1968): 28–39. The debate has continued especially in Icelandic journals. See for example Birgitte Spur Ólafsson, “Hver myrta Véstein?” in *Mímir* 19 (1980), 60–67, who also settles on Þorgrímr.
11. The killings of Bárðr and Skeggi are related in the short version in ÍF 6:7–8, 10–11; the long version has only the killing of Kolbeinn (as he is named here) because Skeggi is missing in a lacuna (ÍF 6:25).

12. See ÍF 6:25; the friendship, though not the displeasure, is also alluded to in the shorter version in ÍF 6:7.
13. In 1968 (note 10) I argued that Gísli has an ambiguous relationship with both brother and sister dating back to the Norwegian prelude and that he is himself a somewhat ambiguous figure, but Vésteinn Ólason, “Gísli Súrsson—a Flawless or Flawed Hero?” (1999), 163–75, takes a different view.
14. On the stanzas see Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson in ÍF 6:V-XII and especially Peter Foote in *The Saga of Gísli*, trans. George Johnston (1963), 112–23.
15. Emily Lethbridge has provided a thorough review of the dating problem in “Dating the Sagas and *Gísli saga Súrssonar*” (forthcoming).