

A New Critical Edition and Translation of the Poetic Edda  
Along with Commentary, Fragments, Spells and a Few Other Old Germanic  
Poems

Translated and Edited by Konrad O.L. Rosenberg

October 27, 2023

The following people have been especially helpful in giving corrections and general feedback: Nikhil S. Dwibhasyam, Joseph S. Hopkins, John Newman, Trevor L. Payne, Thibault.

# Contents

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Contents</b>  | <b>iii</b>  |
| Abbreviations . . . . .  | vi          |
| <b>Introduction (INCOMPLETE!)</b>  | <b>ix</b>   |
| Introduction to Eddic poetry . . . . .   | ix          |
| Ancient Germanic cult(ure) . . . . .   | ix          |
| Notes to English translation . . . . .   | ix          |
| Notes to critical edition . . . . .  | x           |
| <b>Bibliography</b>  | <b>xiii</b> |
| <b>Mythic poetry</b>   | <b>1</b>    |
| The Spae of the Wallow ( <i>Völuspá</i> )                                      | 3           |
| The Speeches of Webthrithner ( <i>Vafþrúðnismál</i> )                          | 29          |
| Dreams of Balder ( <i>Baldrs draumar</i> )                                     | 45          |
| <b>The Speeches of the High One (<i>Hávamál</i>)</b>                           | <b>51</b>   |
| The Guest-strand . . . . .   | 52          |
| Verses of practical advice, mostly in <i>Firnwordslaw</i> . . . . .            | 72          |
| Weden's failed seduction of Billing's maiden. . . . .                          | 74          |
| Weden's obtaining of the Mead of Poetry . . . . .                              | 77          |
| The Speeches of Loddfathomer . . . . .   | 80          |
| The Rune-Tally . . . . .   | 88          |
| The Leed-Tally . . . . .   | 91          |
| <b>The Speeches of Grimmer (<i>Grímnismál</i>)</b>                             | <b>97</b>   |
| From the sons of king Reeding ( <i>Frá sonum Hrauðungs konungs</i> ) . . . . . | 98          |
| <b>The Leed of Hoarbeard (<i>Hárbarðsljóð</i>)</b>                             | <b>115</b>  |
| <b>The Lay of Thrim (<i>Þrymskviða</i>)</b>                                    | <b>127</b>  |

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| The Lay of Hymer ( <i>Hymiskviða</i> )                                       | 137     |
| The Flyting of Lock ( <i>Lokasæmna</i> )                                     | 151     |
| From Eagre and the gods ( <i>Frá Egg ok goðum</i> ) . . . . .                | 151     |
| The Speeches of Shirner ( <i>Skírnismál</i> )                                | 161     |
| The Thule of Rígh ( <i>Rígsþula</i> )  | 175     |
| The Leed of Hindle ( <i>Hyndluljóð</i> )                                     | 185     |
| The Lay of Wayland ( <i>Völundarkviða</i> )                                  | 191     |
| Regarding Wayland ( <i>Frá Völundi</i> ) . . . . .                           | 192     |
| Eddic fragments from Snorre's Edda   | 205     |
| <br>Heroic poetry of the Codex Regius  | <br>207 |
| First Lay of Hallow Hundingsbane ( <i>Helgakviða Hundingsbana fyrsta</i> )   | 209     |
| The Lay of Hallow Harwardson ( <i>Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar</i> )            | 211     |
| Regarding Harward and Sighlind ( <i>Frá Hjörvarði ok Sigrínn</i> ) . . . . . | 211     |
| Second Lay of Hallow Hundingsbane ( <i>Helgakviða Hundingsbana aðra</i> )    | 215     |
| The Speeches of Fathomer ( <i>Fáfnismál</i> )                                | 217     |
| The Speeches of Sighdrive ( <i>Sigrdrífumál</i> )                            | 219     |
| The Third Lay of Guthrun ( <i>Guðrúnarkviða þriðja</i> )                     | 225     |
| The Lay of Attle ( <i>Atlakviða</i> )  | 229     |
| The Death of Attle ( <i>Dauði Atla</i> ) . . . . .                           | 229     |
| <br>Other heroic poetry  | <br>237 |
| The Lay of Hildbrand   | 239     |
| <br>Ancient Germanic Charms and Spells                                       | <br>245 |
| Continental Germanic spells  | 249     |
| The two Merseburg charms . . . . .   | 249     |
| Against worms ( <i>Contra vermes</i> ) . . . . .                             | 250     |
| The Old Saxon Baptismal vow . . . . .  | 250     |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Old English spells</b>                        | <b>253</b> |
| Against a dwarf . . . . .                        | 253        |
| Wið færstice . . . . .                           | 253        |
| Nine herbs charm . . . . .                       | 254        |
| <b>Old Norse spells</b>                          | <b>259</b> |
| Ribe rune charm . . . . .                        | 259        |
| Charms from Bryggen . . . . .                    | 259        |
| Runic plates . . . . .                           | 261        |
| <b>Encyclopedia (INCOMPLETE!)</b>                | <b>263</b> |
| Cultural and religious expressions (C) . . . . . | 265        |
| Persons and objects (P) . . . . .                | 270        |
| Groups and tribes (G) . . . . .                  | 272        |
| Place names, locations and events (L) . . . . .  | 274        |
| Poetic formulæ (F) . . . . .                     | 275        |

## Abbreviations

- 1st = first-person
- 2nd = second-person
- 3rd = third-person
- acc. = accusative case
- cert. = certainly
- c. = circa
- cf. = confer
- corr. = corrected in the ms.
- cpd. = compound
- dat. = dative case
- e. = excerpt (not the whole verse)
- e.g. = *exemplio gratia*; for instance
- emend. = emended by
- fol. = folio
- gen. = genitive case
- imper. = imperative
- i.e. = *id est*; that is
- l. = line
- ll. = lines
- lit. = literally
- Lomb. = Lombardic
- metr. emend. = metrical emendation
- MHG. = Middle High German
- ms. = manuscript
- mss. = manuscripts
- nom. = nominative case
- norm. = normalized from the ms. spelling

- OE = Old English
- OF = Old Frisian
- OHG = Old High German
- om. = omitted in
- ON = Old Norse
- OS = Old Saxon
- p. = page
- PGmc. = Proto-Germanic
- pl. = plural number
- PN. = Proto-Norse
- PNWGmc. = Proto-North-West Germanic
- sg. = singular number
- v. = verse
- vss. = verses
- viz. = namely
- wo. = without
- wrt. = with regard to





# Introduction (INCOMPLETE!)

## Introduction to Eddic poetry

Don't go too in depth on individual poems! Each one will have its own introduction.

## Metrics and conventions

Alliteration Kennings

## How can we know the age of the Eddic poems?

Linguistic criteria Archeological evidence Comparison with known Christian texts (Sólarljóð, Hugsvinnsímál) Snorri thought they were old Saxo had access to them Many of them clearly describe non-Icelandic surroundings Especially Hávamál is clearly Norwegian

## Ancient Germanic culture

### Economy (fief)

### Morals

Honour, personal integrity Notes on the terms *argr* and *ergi*

## Religious conceptions

Cosmic cycles Reincarnation Analogies with other Indo-European traditions

## Notes to English translation

Point about literal translation for use by scholars of comparative mythology The “guiding star” of this translation effort has been literality and consistency. All previous translations (to my knowledge) have such issues as: rendering identically repeated phrases differently at various places; covering up or obscuring technical and cultural terminology; simplifying kennings and other expressions—and this often without notes, to a point where the original meaning is, at times, unrecognizable. While I wholly encourage all readers of sufficient interest to study Old Norse (and other ancient Germanic languages!), perhaps even using the present edition as a tool, I also realize that this is a demanding task which

not all interested students and scholars of comparative mythology, anthropology, literature, religion and other fields will be able to fulfill. I therefore want these groups to be able to have a text that is as close to the original as possible, at the very least when it regards sense and expression.

### English proper nouns

One of the most idiosyncratic parts of the present edition will be its handling of proper nouns. I have opted to render all cultural and religious terms, names of places, heroes, gods, and other entities by their English cognates (thus *Thunder* for Old Norse *Þórr*) and where such do not exist, their philologically expected English (*Anglish*) forms (e.g. *wallow* for Old Norse *vǫlva*). One reason for this is ideological. I believe that these myths and poems are a common Germanic or Northern European heritage, and should be treated as such. The English once knew gods such as Woden and Thunder, and called them by names naturally evolved in their language. So too did the Germans and Scandinavians, of course, and I would hope that any translators into those languages would follow this spirit and render the names in their natural forms there as well.<sup>1</sup> Another is philological. Forms like *Odin* and *Thor* are, while now commonly accepted, debased. They do not even represent the Old Norse pronunciation as accurate as would be possible (for instance, *Odin* would be better anglicized as *Othin*; the dental fricative still survives in English!), and many are difficult for English speakers to pronounce. I shudder when hearing a word like *ǣsir* pronounced /aɪ'sɪr/.

### Notes to critical edition

My goal with the critical editing of the texts has been to produce something as close to the original mss. as possible, without excessive emendation to the preserved recension(s). There are texts in three languages in the present edition, namely Old Norse, Old English and Old High German. Old Norse texts have been normalized according to roughly the same orthography as Finnur Jónsson (1932). On the other hand the Old High German and Old English texts have only been lightly normalized, correcting obvious errors and marking vowel length with acute accents.

### Normalization

My general goal in normalizing texts has been to strive for a uniform orthography, where the same sound is written with the same character. This of course means disregarding local manuscript traditions and philological tradition, but I see this as justified. My goal is to render the texts themselves in a manner that gives as much information as possible; not to present a facsimile edition for students of paleography. Anyway, such aspects as the long *f*, arbitrary punctuation and spelling variants, and lack of line breaks are never reproduced in modern editions of poetry.

In practice this means that the acute accent is used in marking long vowels.

<sup>1</sup>For instance in German perhaps *Wuten*, *Donner*, *Froh*, in Swedish *Oden*, *Tor*, *Frö*.

## Normalization of Old Norse

The orthography is inspired by Finnur Jónsson (1932) in that it strives for a more archaic form than the mss., one that accords with the date at which the poetry may have been composed. Because of this, it has more in common with that of the First Grammatical Treatise (see (First Grammarian, 1950)) than with the standard Old Icelandic orthography seen in most editions. Thus I make use of *ø* and *é* rather than the traditional *œ* and *æ*, to represent the vowels descended from Proto-Norse *ō* and *ā* after i-umlaut (cf. the short *ø*, *ē* < *o*, *a* + i-umlaut). *á* and *ǫ* are kept separate based on etymology. The old *s*—which is found even in manuscripts such as AM 237 a fol (c. 1150) and was used by Snorre as late as the 1200s but later becomes *r*—is retained in the words *es* ‘which, that, where, when’, *es* ‘is’ (3rd sg. pres. ind. of *vesa* ‘to be’), *vesa* ‘to be’, and inflections of it such as *vas* (3rd sg. pret. ind.). Note that the pl. pres. ind. (*erum* &c.), pl. pret. ind. (*vörum* &c.) and pl. pret. subj. (*vérim* &c.) forms of *vesa* retain their *r*, as it is caused by an ancient alternation termed Verner’s law, and not the result of this much younger sound change. Superfluous and hypermetrical pronouns (usually *ek*, *hann*, *hón*) have in many places been removed. When metrically beneficial I have contracted *ek* ‘I’, *eru* ‘are’ and *es* ‘which &c.’, *es* ‘is’ to *’k*, *’ru* and *’s*. I follow Finnur Jónsson (1932)’s method of distinguishing between the relative particle *es* and verb form *es*; the first is directly appended to the previous word, whereas the second has a space before it. Thus *hann’s* ‘he who, that’ but *hann ’s* ‘he is’.

## Normalization of Old English

## Normalization of Old High German

## Manuscripts

### Eddic poetry

There are two surviving ancient mss. which contain full Eddic poems.

The first and most important is GKS 2365 4to, here **R**. It dates to the 1270s and has 45 surviving leaves, containing TODO poems. Of these 10 are mythological, and the rest heroic, dealing with legends mostly of the Migration Period. Notably, following fol. 32, there is a large gap of missing pages. This occurs in the heroic section, specifically cutting off *Sighdrive*. It is unclear how many leaves and poems went missing. **R** is not just a compilation of poems, it shows editorial input as well. Several of the mythological poems are separated by short prose sections, which tie them together into a loose frame narrative, though it is clear from their style and composition that they are originally separate works. When it comes to the heroic poems long prose sections occur both within and between them, creating a ‘saw<sup>C</sup>’-like narrative where the prose in many cases holds up the poetry, rather than the reverse. For further literature see TODO.

The second ms. is AM 748 I a 4to, here **A**. It dates to the 1300s and is but a fragment, consisting of just 6 leaves. It contains only mythological poems, and in a different order from **R**; unlike it there is no trace of a frame narrative. On the first two leaves are contained the final verses of *Hoarbeard* (1r–v), the complete *Dreams* (1v–2r), and the first verses of *Shirner*, after which a single leaf has gone. The next four leaves follow each other and contain the second half of *Webthritner*, the complete *Grimner* and

*Hymer*, and the beginning of the prose introduction to *Wayland*. **A** is the only medieval manuscript attesting *Dreams*, and its variants of the poems attested in **R** are clearly not copied from it, but rather derive from a common ancestor. This makes it very valuable for textual criticism. For further literature see TODO.

Several Eddic poems are quoted in *Yilfer*, namely (TODO): *Wallow*, *Webthritbner*, *Grimner*. The text also quotes a few fragmentary verses of Eddic character (possibly from lost Eddic poems), which have here been edited together with their surrounding prose passages. For *Yilfer* I have relied on the following four main mss.:

1. The Codex Regius of the Prose Edda **S** (GKS 2367 4to; 1300–1350)
2. The Codex Trajectinus **T** (Traj 1374; a c. 1595 paper copy of a ms. closely related to **S**.)
3. The Codex Wormianus **W** (AM 242 fol.; 1340–70)
4. The Codex Upsaliensis **U** (DG 11; 1300–25)

For discussion on their internal stemmatics and origins I refer to Haukur Þorgeirsson (2017). When all employed witness mss. of *Yilfer* agree on a reading the siglum **G** is used in the critical apparatus, which is thus equivalent to **STWU**.

A few other Eddic poems have also been edited. One of them, *Righ*, only survives in **W**, though it is sadly incomplete (see its Introduction). Other Eddic poems survive only in younger paper mss., namely: TODO. While I have not consulted these paper mss. for poems attested in medieval mss., I have had to rely on them for these poems. Their exclusive survival there does not necessarily prove them to be late antiquarian works, as is clearly shown by *Dreams*, which among medieval mss. is only attested in the fragmentary **A**. It thus cannot be excluded that some of these poems would have existed in other lost medieval mss., perhaps even in the lost pages of **R** or **A**.

### West Germanic poetry

As none of the West Germanic poems edited here (TODO: Will we be editing other poems than Hildebrandslied?) survive in more than one copy, the specific details of their transmission is discussed in their individual Introductions.

# Bibliography

- af Edholm, K. (2009). En vendeltida kultplats i Lilla Ullevi. <https://www.academia.edu/11602352>
- Cleasby, R., & Vigfússon, G. (1874). *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Clarendon Press.
- de Vries, J. (1952). Die Götterwohnungen in den Grímnismál. *Acta Philologica Scandinavica*, 21, 172–180.
- Enright, M. J. (1996). *Lady with a Mead Cup: Ritual, Prophecy and Lordship in the European Warband from La Tène to the Viking Age*. Four Courts Press.
- et al., M. C. R. (n.d.). *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages*. Brepols.
- Finnur Jónsson. (1932). *De gamle Eddadigte*. G. E. C. Gads Forlag.
- First Grammarian. (1950). First Grammatical Treatise: The Earliest Germanic Phonology (E. Haugen, Ed.). *Language*, 26, 4–64. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/522272>
- Fulk, R. D., Bjork, R. E., & Niles, J. D. (Eds.). (2008). *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg: Edited with Introduction, Commentary Appendices, Glossary, and Bibliography* (4th edition). University of Toronto Press.
- Gudmundur Finnbogason. (1929). Nokkrar athugasemdir við Hávamál. *Skírnir*.
- Guðni Jónsson. (1954). *Eddukvæði*.
- Haukur Þorgeirsson. (2017). A Stemmatic Analysis of the Prose Edda. *Saga-Book*, 41, 49–70. <https://www.academia.edu/35399203>
- Haukur Þorgeirsson. (2020). In Defence of Emendation: The Editing of Völuspá. *Saga-Book*, 44, 31–56. <https://www.academia.edu/86747086>
- Hopkins, J. (2017). Goddesses Unknown III: On the Identity of the Old Norse Goddess Hlín. *RMN Newsletter*, 12–13, 30–36.
- Hopkins, J. (2021). Phantoms of the Edda: Observations Regarding Items of Unknown Provenance in the Prose Edda [Author's version]. In Frog & J. Ahola (Eds.), *Folklore and Old Norse Mythology* (pp. 633–652).
- Jackson, E. (1995). The art of the list-maker and the Grímnismál catalogue of the homes of the gods: A reply to Jan de Vries. *Arkiv för nordisk filologi*, 110, 5–39.
- Jón Helgason. (1971). *Eddadigte I: Völuspá, Hávamál*. Dreyers Forlag. <https://www.nb.no/items/2a5e422337696677b43fe0ff80b5a668>
- Keyser, R., & Munch, P. A. (Eds.). (1848). *Norges gamle Love: Norges love ældre end kong magnus haakonsöns regjerings-tiltrædelse i 1263*. (Vol. 1). Chr. Grøndahl.
- La Farge, B., & Tucker, J. (1992). *Glossary to the Poetic Edda*. Carl Winter Universitetsverlag.

- Läffler, F. (1879). Om den fornsvenska hednalagen. *Kungl. Vitterhets-, historie- och antikvitetsakademiens månadsblad*, 8, 100–140. [https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Om\\_den\\_fornsvenska\\_hednalagen](https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Om_den_fornsvenska_hednalagen)
- Läffler, F. (1895). Hedniska edsformulär i äldre Vestgötalagen. *Antiquarisk tidskrift för Sverige*, 5, 149–160. [https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Hedniska\\_edsformul%C3%A4r\\_i\\_%C3%A4ldre\\_Vestg%C3%B6talagen](https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Hedniska_edsformul%C3%A4r_i_%C3%A4ldre_Vestg%C3%B6talagen)
- Larrington, C. (2014). *The Poetic Edda* (Revised edition). Oxford University Press.
- Lincoln, B. (1986). *Myth, Cosmos, and Society: Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction*. Harvard University Press.
- Love, J. S., Larsson, I., Djärv, U., Peel, C., & Simensen, E. (2020). *Lexicon of Medieval Nordic Law* (XML edition). Open Book Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0188.01>
- Males, M. (2023). Textual Criticism and Old Norse Philology. *Studia Neophilologica*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393274.2023.2205888>
- Nordberg, A. (2005). Handlar Grimnesmål 42 om en sakral måltid? *Scripta Islandica*, 56, 51–60. <https://www.academia.edu/2572883>
- Pettit, E. (1986). *The Poetic Edda: A Dual-Language Edition* (HTML edition). Open Book Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.11647/obp.0308.37>
- Riseley, C. (2014). *Ceremonial Drinking in the Viking Age* (Master's thesis). Oslo University.
- Rydberg, V. (1886). *Undersökningar i germanisk mytologi*. Albert Bonniers Förlag.
- Sapp, C. D. (2022). *Dating the Old Norse Poetic Edda: A multifactorial analysis of linguistic features*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Schjødt, J. P., Lindow, J., & Andréén, A. (Eds.). (2020). *The Pre-Christian Religions of the North: History and Structures* (Vols. 4). Brepols. <https://doi.org/10.1484/M.PCRN-EB.5.112891>
- Sjöberg, N. (1907). Från ett julgille i början af 1500-talet. *Fataburen*, 241–242. [https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Fataburen/1907/Fr%C3%A5n\\_ett\\_julgille\\_i\\_b%C3%B6rjan\\_av\\_1500-talet](https://sv.wikisource.org/wiki/Fataburen/1907/Fr%C3%A5n_ett_julgille_i_b%C3%B6rjan_av_1500-talet)
- Stefan Karlsson. (1979). Íviðjur. *Gripla*, 3, 227–228. <https://gripla.arnastofnun.is/index.php/gripla/article/view/482>
- Streitberg, W. (1910). *Die gotische Bibel. Zweiter Teil: Gotisch-griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*. Winter Verlag.
- Thorpe, B. (Ed.). (1840). *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England: Comprising Laws Enacted under the Anglo-Saxon Kings from Aethelbirht to Cnut* (Vol. 1). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139177405>
- Watkins, C. (1995). *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*. Oxford University Press.
- West, M. L. (2007). *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*. Oxford University Press.

Mythic poetry





# The Spae of the Wallow (*Völuspó*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.865)–early C11th (0.121)

Meter: *Firnwörðslaw*

The **Spae of the Wallow** is the most comprehensive mythological text surviving from Heathen times.

The poem is attested in full in two independent recensions. The first is **R** (GKS 2365 4to; 1270s), where it is the first poem, found on folios 1r–3r. Second is **H** (AM 544 4to; 1300–75), where it is found at 20r–21r in the middle of a large collection of saws and Catholics works. Many verses are also cited in *Ylfer*. For its constituent manuscripts see the General Introduction.

As seen from the title, the poem is a <sup>r</sup>spae<sup>C</sup> (*spó* ‘prophecy’) in the form of a monologue spoken by a <sup>r</sup>wallow<sup>C</sup> (*völva* ‘seeress, sibyl, prophetess’), summoned by Woden in order to relate mythological knowledge.

The motif of Woden journeying to ask beings (typically ettins or wallows) is also seen in the poems *Dreams*, wherein Woden summons a wallow out of her grave in <sup>r</sup>Hell<sup>L</sup> in order to understand why the god <sup>r</sup>Balder<sup>P</sup> is having ominous nightmares, and *Webthrithner*, wherein Woden challenges (and defeats) the wise ettin <sup>r</sup>Webthrithner<sup>P</sup> to a wisdom contest.

In its being a sort of mythic catalogue it also resembles the latter part of *Highb*, *Grimner*, *Sighdrive* and *Allwise*, though it differs from them in a key way: it gives a (mostly?) complete chronological overview of the important events of the mythology. That is not to say that the events described are clear. They are related in a highly allusive fashion—certainly presupposing that the audience already be familiar with them—and there may also be gaps and later inserts that obscure our understanding.

---

The poem begins with a bid for silence (1), and the wallow recalling her earliest memories (2). She then recounts the ordering of the world by the gods (3–6) and the golden age of peace and plenty (7–8), which is, however, interrupted by the intrusion of three unidentified ettin-maidens (8, and see note there). After this follow two verses about the shaping of the dwarfs (9–10), and then several originally separate *dwarf-tallies* (11–15), which are without doubt later inserts. Returning to the main narrative thread is described the creation and endowment of the first man and woman (16–17), Ugdrassle’s Ash (18), and the three <sup>r</sup>norns<sup>G</sup> living under it (19).

This is where the two full recensions of the poem diverge. Because of its older age and larger count of verses I have here followed the order of **R**: the wallow recalls how a woman named Goldwey was sacrificed and reborn three times (20), and how she, under the name Heath, practiced sorcery and witchcraft (21). She then recalls the first war in the world, between the Ease and Wanes (22–23), and alludes to the slaying of the smith, who according to *Ylfer* 42 was promised 'Frow<sup>P</sup> and the sun and moon in exchange for building the wall of Osyard (24–25). This is followed by a cryptic verse describing Homedall's hidden silence or hearing (26).

In **H** the structure is quite different. After the description of the norns (19), the Ease go to decide what action to take regarding the promising of Frow to the ettin (my 24–25), and Homedall's hearing is described (26). Then follows the two verses about the old hag in Ironwood who raises the wolves that will swallow the sun and moon (40–41). After this come verses 20–23 in the same order as **R** (see above).

To illustrate the differences between mss., and which verses are attested in which, I have prepared the following table showing the order of verses by manuscript, compared to the present edition. As most verses in **G** are quoted on their own, and have little relation to the original order, these are simply marked with plus signs. When verses are quoted in a series, they are preceded by an alphabetically incrementing letter denoting which series they belong to. When there is a major difference in a ms. relative to the ed., such as in v. 10 where **G** omits the first two lines, it is then marked with a star. The verses beginning with *Þá gingu regin öll* 'Then went the Reins all' are represented by the following sentence.

|       | <i>Present ed.</i>      | <b>R</b> | <b>H</b> | <b>STW</b> | <b>U</b> |
|-------|-------------------------|----------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1     | Hljóðs bið'k allar      | 1        | 1        | —          | —        |
| 2     | Ek man jǫtna            | 2        | 2        | —          | —        |
| 3     | Ár vas alda             | 3        | 3        | +          | +        |
| 4     | Áðr Burs synir          | 4        | 4        | —          | —        |
| 5     | Sól varp sunnan         | 5        | 5        | +*         | +*       |
| 6     | ... nōtt ok niðjum      | 6        | 6        | —          | —        |
| 7     | Hittusk ęsir            | 7        | 7        | —          | —        |
| 8     | Tęfðu ĩ tųni            | 8        | 8        | —          | —        |
| 9     | ... hveřr skyldi dverga | 9        | 9        | B1         | B1       |
| 10    | Þar vas Móðsognir       | 10       | 10       | B2*        | B2*      |
| 11–15 | <i>Dwarf-tallies</i>    | 11–15    | 11–16    | +          | +        |
| 16    | Unz þrír kvǫmu          | 16       | 17       | —          | —        |
| 17    | Qnd þau né ǫttu         | 17       | 18       | —          | —        |
| 18    | Ask veit'k standa       | 18       | 19       | +          | +        |
| 19    | Þaðan koma meýjar       | 19–20    | 20–21    | —          | —        |
| 20    | Þat man hǫn folkvíg     | 21–22    | 27       | —          | —        |
| 21    | Hęiði hétu              | 23       | 28       | —          | —        |
| 22    | ... hvárt skyldu ęsir   | 24       | 29       | —          | —        |
| 23    | Fleygði Óðinn           | 25       | 30       | —          | —        |
| 24    | ... hveřr hęði lopt alt | 26       | 22       | C1         | C1       |
| 25    | Þórr ęinn þar vá        | 27       | 23       | C2*        | C2*      |
| 26    | Veit hǫn Hęimdallar     | 28       | 24       | —          | —        |

|            | <i>Present ed.</i>  | R          | H                  | STW   | U   |
|------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|-------|-----|
| 27         | Ein sat hōn úti     | 29         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 28         | Alt veyt'k, Óðinn   | 29         | –                  | +     | +   |
| 29         | Valði hēnni Hērfōðr | 30         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 30         | Sá hōn valkyrjur    | 31         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 31         | Ek sá Baldri        | 32         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 32         | Varð af mēiði       | 33         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 33         | Þó hann éva hēndr   | 34         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 34         | Þá kná Váli         | –          | 31                 | –     | –   |
| 35a        | Hapt sá hōn liggja  | 35a        | –                  | –     | –   |
| 35b        | Þar sitr Sigyn      | 35b        | 32                 | –     | –   |
| 36         | Ö fēllr austan      | 36         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 37         | Stóð fyr norðan     | 36         | –                  | –     | –   |
| 38         | Sal sá hōn standa   | 37         | 36                 | E1    | E1  |
| 39         | Sér hōn þar vaða    | 38         | 37                 | E2*   | E2* |
| 40         | Austr býr hin aldna | 39         | 25                 | A1    | A1  |
| 41         | Fyllisk fjörvi      | 40         | 26                 | A2    | A2  |
| 42         | Sat þar á haugi     | 41         | 34                 | –     | –   |
| 43         | Gól of ösum         | 42         | 35                 | –     | –   |
| 44, 49, 57 | Geyr Garmr mjök     | 43, 46, 55 | 33, 38, 43, 48, 51 | –     | –   |
| 45         | Bróðr munu berjask  | 44         | 39                 | –     | –   |
| 46         | Leika Míms synir    | 45         | 40                 | D1*   | D1* |
| 47         | Skelfr Yggdrasils   | 45*        | 41                 | D1*   | D1* |
| 48         | Hvat 's með ösum?   | 49         | 42                 | D2    | D2* |
| 50         | Hrymr ekkr austan   | 47         | 44                 | D3    | –   |
| 51         | Kjóll fērr austan   | 48         | 45                 | D4    | –   |
| 52         | Surtr fērr sunnan   | 50         | 46                 | +, D5 | +   |
| 53         | Þá kōmr Hlínar      | 51         | 47                 | D6    | –   |
| 54         | Þá kōmr hinn mikli  | 52         | –                  | D7    | –   |
| 55         | Ginn lopt yfir      | –          | 48                 | —     | –   |
| 56         | Þá kōmr hinn mēri   | 53*        | 49*                | C8    | –   |
| 57         | Sól tēr sortna      | 54         | 50                 | C9    | –   |
| 59         | Sér hōn upp koma    | 56         | 52                 | –     | –   |
| 60         | Finnask ęsir        | 57*        | 53                 | –     | –   |
| 61         | Þar munu ętir       | 58         | 54                 | –     | –   |
| 62         | Munu ósánir         | 59         | 55                 | –     | –   |
| 63         | Þá kná Hōnir        | 60         | 56                 | –     | –   |
| 64         | Sal sér hōn standa  | 61         | 57                 | +     | +   |
| 65         | Þar kōmr hinn dimmi | 62         | 59                 | –     | –   |
| X          | Þá kōmr hinn ríki   | –          | 58                 | –     | –   |

- 1 „Hljóðs bið'k allar · hęlgar kindir,  
2 męiri ok minni · męgu Hęimdallar;

[R 1r/2, H 20r/1]

vilt at, Valfǫðr, · vėl fram tēlja'k  
 4 forn spjǫll fira, · þau's frēmst of man?

“For hearing I ask all holy kindreds, greater and lesser, sons of Homedall<sup>a</sup> [MEN]! Wilt thou, Walfather (= Weden), that I well count forth the ancient tidings of men, those which I foremost recall?”<sup>b</sup>

1 hęlgar] om. R

2 męiri ok minni ‘greater and lesser’] It is unclear what is being modified here. It may either be ‘greater and lesser holy kindreds’, in which case it may be equivalent to the phrase ‘Ease and Elves’<sup>F</sup> (both earthly and heavenly supernatural beings; see Encyclopedia for occurrences.) or ‘the greater and lesser sons of Homedall [MEN]’, in which case it refers to all social classes. It seems rather out of character for such a high ranking person in Norse society as the poet must have been to invoke an ancestral relationship between human social classes, considering how biologically such distinctions were otherwise regarded (cf. my introduction to the *Rígh*), but on the other hand this may be part of the likely liminal nature of the performance. In any case, the wallow is clearly asking all intelligent beings that may be present for silence, and the expression is a merism of the type ‘gods and men’; see West (2007)[99-100].

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Rígh*, wherein Rígh, identified by the prose as Homedall, sires three castes of men (namely earls, churls and thralls).

<sup>b</sup>Cf. *Webthritbner* 34, 35 with very similar phrasing. The whole introductory formula is positively Indo-European, see West (2007)[63,92-93,312].

[R 1r/4, H 20r/2]

2 Ek man jǫtna · ár of borna,  
 2 þá's forðum mik · fǫdda hǫfðu;  
 níu man'k hęima, · níu iðiðjur,  
 4 mjǫtvið męran · fyr mold neðan.

I recall ‘Ettins’<sup>G</sup>, born of yore, they who formerly had nourished me. Nine ‘Homes’<sup>C</sup> I recall; nine ‘Inwithies’<sup>G</sup>; the renowned ‘Metwood’<sup>P</sup> beneath the soil.<sup>a</sup>

3 iðiðjur] thus RH. R has previously been as read †iðið†, but this was disproven by an x-ray scan undertaken by Stefan Karlsson (1979).

<sup>a</sup>Certainly ‘Ugdrassle’<sup>P</sup>, “beneath the soil” likely referring to it still being a seed.

[R 1r/6, H 20r/4, G]

3 Ár vas alda · þar's Ymir byggði,  
 2 vas-a sandr né sęr, · né svalar unnir;  
 jǫrð fannsk ęva · né upphiminn;  
 4 gap vas ginnunga, · en gras hvērgi.

’Twas the beginning of ‘elds’<sup>C</sup>, there as ‘Yimer’<sup>P</sup> dwelled; was there not sand nor sea, nor cool waves. Earth was never found, nor ‘Up-heaven’<sup>L</sup>; a gap ’twas of ginnings, but grass nowhere.<sup>a</sup>

1 þar's Ymir byggði ‘there where Yimer dwelled’] þat's ękki vas ‘that when nothing was’ G 4 hvērgi ‘nowhere’] ękki ‘not’ H

<sup>a</sup>According to *Ylfir* 4–5 the world first consisted of two extremities: Nivelham in the north, from which the freezing venom-rivers called the ʀIlewaves<sup>L</sup> ran until they froze to ice; and Muspellsham in the south, from which sparking lava flowed. The ice and lava met in the ʀGap of Ginnings<sup>L</sup> (*Ginnungagap*; see Encyclopedia), “which was as calm as windless air”, and there combined to form the first being, ʀYimer<sup>P</sup>, who was the ancestor of the ettins. This is also told in

4    Áðr Burs synir · bjǫðum of ypðu, [R 1r/8, H 20r/5]  
 2    þeir es Miðgarð · mēran skópu;  
      sól skęin sunnan · à salar stęina;  
 4    þà vas grund gróin · grønum lauki.

Before the sons of ʀByre<sup>P</sup> raised up the flatlands, they who shaped the renowned ʀMiddenyard<sup>L</sup>.  
 Sun shone from the south on the stones of the hall; then was the ground grown with green leek.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The sons of Byre (according to *Ylfir* 6: Weden, Will and Wigh) lift the lands out of the primordial chasm.

5a    Sól varp sunnan, · sinni Måna, [R 1r/11, H 20r/7]  
 2    hęndi hinni hógri · of himinjǫður;

Sun cast from the south—the companion of ʀMoon<sup>P</sup>—her right hand over heaven’s rim;<sup>a</sup>

2 over heaven’s rim ] *ʀvm himin iodyrʀ* ‘over the heaven-horse-beast(?)’ R; *of iǫður* ‘over the rim’ H

1 sinni Måna ‘the companion of Moon’] At times translated as ‘its moon’. This cannot be correct, as *måni* ‘moon’ is masculine, while *sinni*, dative singular of *sinn* ‘its (reflexive)’ is feminine.

<sup>a</sup>The sun heaved herself up over the horizon and rose for the first time.

5b    sól þat né vissi, · hvar hǫn sali átti; [R 1r/12, H 20r/7, G]  
 2    stjornur þat né vissu, · hvar þér staði ǫttu;  
      måni þat né vissi, · hvat hann męgins átti.

Sun knew not where halls she owned; stars knew not where steads they owned; Moon knew not what sort of might he owned.

2 stjornur ... ǫttu ] In G this line follows 5, so that the order is sun, moon, stars.

6    Þà gingu ręgin ǫll · à rǫkstóla, [R 1r/13, H 20r/9]  
 2    ginnhęilǫg goð, · ok umb þat gęttusk:  
      Nǫtt ok niðjum · nǫfn of gǫfu,  
 4    morgin hétu · ok miðjan dag,

undurn ok aptan, · órum at tēlja.

Then went the Reins all onto the rake-seats:<sup>a</sup> the gin-holy gods, and from each other took counsel about that.<sup>b</sup> To night and the moon-phases names did they give; morning they called, and middle day; afternoon and evening, the years for to tally.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Presumably their thrones by 'Ugdrassle's Ash'<sup>L</sup>; first element *rpk* defined by CV as 'reason, ground, origin'.

<sup>b</sup>10, 23, 25 (TODO) would suggest two lines be missing here.

<sup>c</sup>Cf. *Webbthritbner* 23, 25.

[R 1r/16, H 20r/10]

7 Hittusk ęsir · á Iðavelli,  
2 þęir's hęrg ok hof · hó timbruðu;  
afla lęgðu, · auð smiðuðu,  
4 tangir skópu · ok tól gęrðu.

The Ease found each other on 'Idewold'<sup>L</sup>, they who 'harrow'<sup>C</sup> and 'hove'<sup>C</sup> high timbered; hearths they laid, wealth they smithed, tongs they shaped and tools they made.

2 þęir's ... timbruðu 'they who ... timbered'] *afls kostuðu* · *allz freistuðu* '[their] strength they tried; everything they tempted' H

[R 1r/18, H 20r/12]

8 Tęflðu i tųni, · tętitir vęru,  
2 vas þęim vęttugis · vant ór golli,  
unz þrįar kvęmu · þursa męyjar,  
ámátkar mjęk, · ór Jętunhęimum.

They played 'Tavel'<sup>C</sup> in the yards; merry were they: for them was nothing golden wanting<sup>a</sup>—until three came, maidens of 'Thurses'<sup>G</sup>, very loathsome out of 'Ettenham'<sup>L</sup>.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Indeed, even the gaming bricks were made out of gold; cf. v. 59.

<sup>b</sup>These three maidens are never mentioned again (unless they are taken to be the norns in v. 19, but they would then be introduced twice). It's possible that an additional verse would have come after this one, giving further information about them, but if it was it was already lost in the version employed by the author of *Ylfęr* (ch. 14), who transparently paraphrases:

“And thereafter they crafted metal and stone and wood, and so abundantly [did they craft] that metal which is called gold, that all their house-tools and riding-tools were golden, and that age is called the golden age, before it was spoiled by the arrival of the women. They came out of Etttenham.”

after which he describes the creation of the dwarves (see next verse).

- 9 Þá gingu reigin ǫll · á røkstóla,  
 2 ginnheilog goð, · ok umb þat gétusk:  
 Hværr skyldi dverga · drótt of sképja  
 4 ór brimi blóðgu · ok ór blóum leggjum?

[R 1r/20, H 20r/14, G]

Then went the Reins all onto the rake-seats: the gin-holy gods, and from each other took counsel about that: Who would shape the retinue of †Dwarfs<sup>G</sup>, out of the bloody surf, and out of the blue-black legs?

3 hværr skyldi dverga ‘Who would ... of dwarfs’] thus RWU; *at skyldi dverga* ‘That they would ... of dwarfs’ ST; *bverir skyldu dvergar* ‘Which dwarfs would [shape the retinues]’ H 3 drótt ‘retinue’] thus G; *drotin* R with late definite is wo. doubt not original; *dróttir* ‘the retinues’ H 3 of sképja ‘shape’] *spekja* ‘soothe’ U 4 brimi blóðgu ‘bloody surf’] thus HSWU; *Brimis blóði* ‘the blood of Brimmer’ RT 4 blóum ‘blue-black’] metr. emend.; *blám* R; *Bláins* ‘Blown’s’ HW; *Bláms* STU is prob. a corrupt form of *Bláins*

4 ór brimi ... leggjum ‘out of the bloody ... legs’] I think that the poem simply telling of “the bloody surf” and “the blue-black legs” fits better with its general allusive style, but the resulting composite reading may be somewhat controversial.

According to *Ylfer* 14 the dwarfs first originated as maggots in the corpse of Yimer, whose bones are described in *Grimner* TODO and *Webthritner* TODO as being used to make rocks. Dwarfs dwell in the rocks and earth; cf. for instance *IngT* 2, where the Swedish king Swayther (*Sveigðir* disappears into a rock in pursuit of a dwarf. More difficult to explain is the creation of dwarfs out of Yimer’s blood (which according to *Grimner* TODO and *Webthritner* TODO is the sea), since dwarfs are never said to dwell in water. — If one chooses the reading *Bláinn* ‘Blown’ (named in the †thules<sup>C</sup> as a dwarf) instead of *blóum* ‘blue-black’, then following Gurevich (*Skp* 2017, p. 693) one may see a kenning “the legs of Blown (dwarf) [STONE]”. Blown has otherwise been read as a poetic name for Yimer, but that is never attested elsewhere.

- 10 Þar vas Móðsognir · mēztr of orðinn  
 2 dverga allra, · en Durinn annarr;  
 þeir manlíkun · mǫrg of gērðu,  
 4 dvergar ór jörðu, · sēm Durinn sagði.

[R 1r/21, H 20r/15, G]

There was Moodsowner made the worthiest of all dwarfs, but Dorn [was] second. They man-likenesses many did make: dwarfs out of the earth, as Dorn said.

1 Þar vas Móðsognir] thus H; *Þar †mótsognir vitnir†* ‘there Mootsowner wolf’ R. The prose of *Ylfer* 14 confirms that the correct form of the name is *Móðsognir*, not *Mótsognir*. 3 þeir ... gērðu ‘They ... many’] thus RHU; *þar manlíkun · mǫrg of gērðusk* ‘There man-likenesses many were made’ STW 4 ór ‘out of’] thus R; i ‘in’ GH 4 sēm Durinn sagði ‘as Dorn said’] thus RHSW; *sēm †dur menn† sagði* ‘as door-men(?) said’ T; *sēm †þeim dyrinn kendi†* ‘as the animals(?) taught them’ U

1–2 Þar ... annarr ‘There ... second’] om. G, but the author must have had access to the full verse, since he paraphrases it in the following way: *Móðsognir var ǫðstr ok annarr Durinn* ‘Moodsowner was the highest in rank, and Dorn the second.’

3–4 þeir ... sagði ‘They ... said.’] There are two conflicting forms of the verse. Either the dwarfs were created on their own; this is supported by the prose of *Ylfer* (see note to last v.) and by the G containing this verse. On the other hand, both R and H have the “worthiest” dwarfs Moodsowner and Dorn shaping “man-likenesses” out of soil. I have chosen the latter reading, but both should be considered.

Two lists of dwarfs. That both belonged to the original poem is impossible, since several names (Oakenshield, Great-grandfather) appear in both. The three following verses seem to belong together, since there is no repetition of names. From the last line of the middle one, it seems that it should have been placed at the end of the group.

[R 1r/23, H 20r/17, G]

- 11** Nýi ok Niði, · Norðri, Suðri,  
 2 Austri, Vestri, · Alþjófr, Dvalinn,  
 Bívurr, Bávurr, · Bǫmburr, Nóri,  
 4 Ánn ok Ánarr, · Ái, Mjóðvitnir.

New and Nithe, Norther and Suther, Easter and Wester, Allthief, Dwollen, Bewer, Bower, Bamber, Noor, Own and Owner, Great-grandfather, Meadwitner.

[R 1r/25, H 20r/18, G]

- 12** Veigr ok Gandalf, · Vindalf, Þráinn,  
 2 Þekkr ok Þorinn, · Þrór, Vittr ok Littr,  
 Nár ok Nýráðr, · nú hef'k dverga,  
 4 Reginn ok Ráðsviðr, · rétt of talða.

Wey and Gandelf, Windelf, Thrown, Thetch and Thorn, Throo, Wit and Lit, Nee and Newred—now have I the dwarfs—Rain and Redswith—rightly tallied.

[R 1r/28, H 20r/20, G]

- 13** Fíli, Kíli, · Fundinn, Náli,  
 2 Hepti, Víli, · Hannarr, Svíurr,  
 Frár, Hornbori, · Frégr ok Lóni,  
 4 Aurvangr, Jari, · Eðkinskjaldi.

Filer, Chiler, Found and Needler, Hefter, Wiler, Hanner, Swigher, Fraw, Hornborer, Fray and Looner, Earwong, Earer, Oakenshield.

[R 1r/30, H 20r/22, G]

- 14** Mál es dverga · i Dvalins liði  
 2 ljóna kindum · til Lofars tēlja,  
 þeir es sóttu · frá salar stēini  
 4 aurvanga sjöt · til Joruvalla.

'Tis time to tally the dwarfs in Dwollen's retinue [back] to Loffer for the kindreds of men;<sup>a</sup> they who sought, from the stone of the hall, the abode of Earwongs<sup>L</sup> to the Earwolds<sup>L</sup>.<sup>b</sup>

3 þeir] þeim H



<sup>a</sup>A standard genealogical introduction (compare *HalT* 1). The (patrinlineal) line of dwarfs is to be counted back to their progenitor, Loffer. This possibly disagrees with v. 10, where Moodsowner is said to be the foremost (and presumably the oldest) of the dwarfs, and Loffer is not mentioned.

<sup>b</sup>Cf. *Yilfer* 14: “But these came from Swornshigh (*Svarinsbaugr*) to the Earwongs on the Erwolds, and thence Loffer is come; these are their names: Sherper (*Skirpir*), Werper (*Virpir*), Showfind, Great-grandfather, Elf and Ing (*Ingí*), Oakenshield, Fale (*Falr*), Frost, Finn, Ginner.”

- 15 Þar vas Draupnir · ok Dolgþrasir, [R 1r/32, H 20r/24, G]  
 2 Hár, Haugspori, · Hlévangr, Glói,  
 Skirfir, Virfir, · Skáfiðr, Ái,  
 4 Alfr ok Yngvi, · Eikinskjalldi,  
 Fjalarr ok Frosti, · Finnur ok Ginnarr;  
 6 Þat mun é uppi, · meðan öld lifir,  
 langniðjatal · til Lofars hafat.

There was Dleepner and Dollowthrasher, High, Highspurer, Leewong, Glower, Sherver, Werper, Showfind, Great-grandfather, Elf and Ing, Oakenshield, Feller and Frost, Finn and Ginner: That will ever be remembered while the age lives,<sup>a</sup> the tally of descendants lifted to Loffer.

6 é] om. R 7 til] om. H

<sup>a</sup>Two archaic formulæ. The first literally ‘that will ever [be] up above’, cf. *HarS* TODO: “We two are cursed, brother, thy bane am I become! That will ever be remembered (*þat mun é uppi*, but both mss. *þat mun enn uppi*), evil is the doom of the norms!” The second is found in a runic inscription, U 323 (980–1015): “Ever will lie—while the age lives (*meþ + altr + lifir með aldr lifir*)—the hard-hammered bridge, broad, after a good man.” An especially close parallel is found in *Þstf Stuttdr* (v. 5, Kari Ellen Gade ed. in *SkP* II): *Ey mun uppi · Eñdils, meðan stendr // sólborgar salr, · svorgðöis fþr*. ‘Always will be remembered—while the hall of the sun’s stronghold [SKY/HEAVEN > EARTH] stands—the journey of the fattener of Andle’s bird-fattener [RAVEN/EAGLE > WARRIOR].’

- 16 Unz þrír kvømu · ór því liði [R 1v/1, H 20r/26]  
 2 øflgir ok ástkir · észir at húsi;  
 fundu á landi · lítt meḡandi  
 4 Ask ok Emblu · ørløglausa.

Until three came out of that host: strong and lovely Ease along the house; they found on land the little availing Ash and Emble, ‘orlay<sup>C</sup>-less.’<sup>a</sup>

1 þrír] gramm. emend. *þrjár* RH 1 ór því liði] *þussa brúðir* ‘brides of thurses’ H is wo. doubt corrupt. 2 øflgir ok ástkir ‘strong and lovely’] *ástkir ok øflgir* ‘lovely and strong’ H

2 at húsi ‘along the house’] i.e. ‘along the settlement’.

<sup>a</sup>According to *Ylfir* 9 the sons of Byre (cf. v. 4) were walking along the sea-shore, when they found two logs which they picked up and shaped into humans. That the two were logs seems to be supported by their names; Ash is easily identified with the same-named wood species (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Humans are also very commonly kenned with tree-names in scoldic poetry (for a short discussion see SkP I, p. lxxv ff.), and while this is rarer in the Eddic corpus it occurs e.g. in *Sighdrive* 4: *brynþings apaldr* ‘apple-tree of the byrnie-<sup>C</sup>Thing<sup>C</sup> [BATTLE > WARRIOR]’.

[R 1v/3, H 20r/27]

- 17 Qnd þau né óttu, · óð þau né hofðu,  
 2 ló né létu · né litu góða;  
 qnd gaf Óðinn, · óð gaf Hónir,  
 4 ló gaf Lóðurr · ok litu góða.

Breath they owned not, <sup>1</sup>wode<sup>C</sup> they had not, not craft nor sound nor good countenance.  
 Breath gave Weden, wode gave Heener, craft gave Lother, and good countenance.

[R 1v/5, H 20r/29, G]

- 18 Ask veyt<sup>1</sup>k standa, · heitir Yggdrasill,  
 2 hór baðmr, ausinn · hvíta auri;  
 þaðan koma doggvar · þér's i dala falla;  
 4 stendr é yfir grønn · Urðar brunni.

An ash I know stand[ing], <sup>1</sup>Ugdrassle<sup>L</sup> 'tis called; a high beam [TREE], poured with white mud.<sup>a</sup> Thence come the dew-drops which in the dales fall; it stands ever green over the <sup>1</sup>Well of Weird<sup>L</sup>.

1 standa ‘standing’] thus RHU; *ausinn* ‘poured, sprinkled’ STW 1 Yggdrasill] Yggdrasils S 2 baðmr ‘beam’] *borinn* ‘born’ U is wo. doubt corrupt. 2 ausinn ‘poured’] *heilagr* ‘holy’ G 3 þér's] *es* ‘which’ ST 4 é] *om.* U 4 grønn] *grvnn*† S; *grvnn*† U

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘white mud is (or has been) poured upon it.’ Cf. perhaps the Indian ritual pouring of beverages onto the *lingam*—For the whole passage cf. v. 26.

[R 1v/8, H 20r/31]

- 19 Þaðan koma meýjar · margs vitandi  
 2 þrjár ór þeim sé, · es und þolli stendr;  
 Urð hétu eina, · aðra Verðandi,  
 4 skóru á skíði, · Skuld hina þriðju  
 þér lög lögðu, · þér líf kœru,  
 6 alda þorum, · orlög seggja.

Thence come maidens, much knowing: three out of that lake, which stands under the pine<sup>a</sup>: Weird they called one, the other Werthing—carved they on boards—Shild the third. Laws they laid, lives they chose: for the children of mortals, the <sup>1</sup>orlay<sup>C</sup> of men.<sup>b</sup>

2 sé ‘lake’] *sal* ‘hall’ H 2 und ‘under’] *á* ‘on’ H 6 seggja ‘of men’] *at seggja* ‘to say’ H

<sup>a</sup>But here simply meaning ‘tree’; perhaps the same applies for “ash” earlier.

<sup>b</sup>i.e. ‘they have laid laws, they have chosen lives’. It is well known that in Old Norse as in other old Germanic languages the simple past is often used interchangeably in both the perfective and imperfective sense.

- 20 Þat man hōn folkvíg · fyrst i hēimi, [R 1v/11, H 20v/5]  
 2 es Gollvęigu · gęirum studdu  
 ok i hōll Håars · hāna bręnnu,  
 4 þrysvar bręnnu · þrysvar borna,  
 opt ósjaldan, · þó enn lifir.

That troop-conflict<sup>a</sup> [WAR] she recalls, the first in the ʀHome<sup>C</sup>, as Goldwey with spears they goaded, and in the hall of ʀHigher<sup>P</sup> (= Wēden) [= Walhall] burned her: thrice they burned the thrice born; often unseldom, though she yet lives.<sup>b</sup>

4 þrysvar bręnnu ] †þrysvar brendu þrysvar brendu† H

<sup>a</sup>While appealing to read *folk-víg* ‘troop-conflict’ as meaning ‘ethnic conflict’ (between the Ease and Wanēs), I more cautiously see the first element *folk* carrying its earlier meaning of ‘troop, group of warriors’.

<sup>b</sup>Very cryptic. TODO: double check Snorri. Goldwey was apparently sacrificed, cremated and reborn three times (in short succession?) by the Ease.

- 21 Hęiði hétu, · hvar’s til húsa kom, [R 1v/13, H 20v/7]  
 2 vōlu vęlspáa, · vitti ganda;  
 sęið hvar’s kunni, · sęið hug lęikinn;  
 4 ę vas angan · illrar brúðar.

Heath they called—where to houses she came—the well-spacing<sup>a</sup> ʀwallow<sup>C</sup>; she bewitched ʀgands<sup>C</sup>. She soth<sup>b</sup> where she could, she soth deluded minds; ever was she the love of any evil bride.

2 vōlu ] ok vōlu H 3 hvar’s kunni ‘where she could’] *hon kunni* ‘she could’ R; *hon hvars hvn kunni* ‘she soth where she could’ H 3 hug lęikinn ‘deluded minds’] *hon leikinn* R; *hon hugleikin* H

<sup>a</sup>Gifted at soothsaying.

<sup>b</sup>Past tense of ʀsithe<sup>C</sup> (ON *síða*) ‘to enchant, bewitch’.)

- 22 Þa gingu ręgin ۆll · á rۆkstóla, [R 1v/16, H 20v/9]  
 2 ginnhęilōg goð, · ok umb þat gęttusk:  
 Hvárt skyldu ęsir · afráð gjalda,  
 4 eða skyldu goð ۆll · gildi ęiga?

Then went the Reins all onto the rake-seats: the gin-holy gods, and from each other took counsel about that: whether the Ease should tribute yield, or should the gods all a banquet hold?

[R 1v/17, H 20v/11]

- 23 Fleygðí Óðinn · ok ì folk of skaut;  
 2 þat vas enn folkvíg · fyrr ì hēimi;  
 brotinn vas borðveggr · borgar ása,  
 4 knóttu vanir vígspōu · vōllu sporna.

Weden hurled, and into the opposing troop did shoot;<sup>a</sup> that was yet a troop-conflict [war] earlier in the 'Home'. Broken was the board-wall<sup>b</sup> of the fortification of the Ease; the Wanes did by a conflict-<sup>c</sup>spae tread the fields.

<sup>2</sup> fyrr 'earlier'] thus H; *fyrst* 'first' R. The R reading is certainly due to the close relation with 20/1, but it cannot be correct as this verse is describing a different war, and thus not the first!

<sup>a</sup>The object, a spear, is understood. This seems to reference a ritual, well-attested in the literature, wherein a war-chief would dedicate an opposing army as a human sacrifice to Weden by throwing a spear over them, typically with the incantation *Óðinn á yðr alla* 'Weden owns you all!'; he would then own the battle-slain in that they joined him as 'Ownharriers' in 'Walhall'. Weden is also described as "owning" dead men in *Hoarbeard* 24 (namely slain nobles, contrasted with 'Thunder' who is insultingly said to "own the kin of thralls") and in runic inscription *N B380*, here edited under Charms and Spells, a sort of greeting wherein the receiver is wished to be owned by Weden (and "received" by Thunder). For further literature see PCRN HS II:24, p. 560, II:25, p. 617, and especially III:42, p. 1166ff.

<sup>b</sup>Wall made of planks.

<sup>c</sup>The Wanes used a magic spell to invade the Ease.

[R 1v/19, H 20r/34, G]

- 24 Þa gingu regin ǫll · á rokstóla,  
 2 ginnheilog goð, · ok umb þat gétusk:  
 Hvęrr hęfði lopt alt · lęvi blandit  
 4 eða ętt jǫtuns · Óðs meý gefna.

Then went the Reins all onto the rake-seats: the gin-holy gods, and from each other took counsel about that: Who had the air all with treason blended, or to the ettin's 'aught<sup>c</sup> given 'Wode<sup>p</sup>'s maiden [= Frow]?<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>That is, promised Frow to the ettin NAME. TODO: relate with what Snorri writes about the building of the wall.

[R 1v/20, H 20r/36, G]

- 25 Þórr ęinn þar vá · þrunginn móði,  
 2 hann sjaldan sitr, · es slíkt of fregn;  
 á gingusk ęiðar, · orð ok sóri,  
 4 mól ǫll meginlig, · es á meðal fóru.

Thunder alone fought there, pressed by wrath; he seldom sits, when of such<sup>a</sup> he learns. Trampled were oaths, speeches and vows; the mighty treaties all, which between them had gone.

<sup>1</sup> þar vá 'fought there'] thus HTU; *þar var* 'was there' R; *þat vann* 'did, accomplished it' S; *þat vá* 'fought it' W 3–4 á ... fóru.] om. W 4 fóru 'had gone'] *vǫru* 'had been' HT

1–4 Þórr ... fóru. ] The order followed is that of **RH**; in **G** the two helmings (*Þórr ... fregn; á ... fóru*) come in reverse order.

<sup>a</sup>Oath-breaking, lies and deception.

- 
- 26**    Veit hón Heimdallar · hljóð of folgit [R 1v/23, H 20v/1]  
       2    und heiðvönum · heilgum baðmi;  
           á sér ausask · aurgum forsi  
       4    af veði Valföðrs. · Vituð ér enn eða hvat?

Knows she the sound of Homedall [= HORN OF YELL?] hidden, 'neath a shady<sup>a</sup>, hallowed beam [Ugdrassle's Ash]. On [it] she sees being poured a muddy torrent<sup>b</sup>, from the pledge of Walfather<sup>c</sup> (= Weden) [Mimer's well?]<sup>d</sup>—know ye yet, or what?<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*heiðvanr*, literally 'clear-, bright-less'.

<sup>b</sup>lit. 'on she sees being poured with a muddy torrent', which should be the same mud as in v. 19. However, if ms. *á* is read as *é* 'river', it would mean "A river she sees being fed by a muddy waterfall, from ..."

<sup>c</sup>Presumably referring to Weden's sacrifice of an eye at Mimer's well.

<sup>d</sup>"Do you (Weden) know enough now, or what?"—repeated in 28, 33, 34, 38, 40, 47, 60, 61.

---

The following two verses are written together as one in **R**.

- 27**    Eín sat hón úti, · þá's hinn aldni kom [R 1v/25]  
       2    yggjungr ása · ok i augu leið;  
           hvæs fregnið mik? · hví freistið mín?

Lone sat she outside, when the old one came: the Terrifier of the Ease [= Weden], and into [her] eyes looked. [The Wallow:] "Why inquest thou me? Why triest thou me?"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*freista* has a sense of testing someone, especially intellectually. Cf. *High* 2, 26, 142, *Webthritbner* 3, 5.

- 28**    Alt veit'k, Óðinn, · hvar auga falt [R 1v/26, G]  
       2    i hinum mæra · Mímis brunni;  
           drekk mjöð Mímir · morgin hværjan  
       4    af veði Valföðrs. · Vituð ér enn eða hvat?

I know it all, Weden; where thy eye thou hidst: in the renowned 'Well of Mime'<sup>L</sup>, [there] drinks Mime mead every morning, from the pledge of Walfather<sup>a</sup> (= Weden) [Mimer's well?]<sup>d</sup>—know ye yet, or what?"



stóð of vaxinn · vøllum héri  
 4 mjór ok mjök fagr · mistiltęinn.

I saw Balder's—the bloody victim's, Weden's child's—<sup>r</sup>orlay<sup>C</sup> sealed;<sup>a</sup> grown did stand—  
 higher than the plains—a slender and very fair mistletoe.

1 tívur 'victim'] Probably not related to *týr* 'tue, god' (nom. pl. *tívar*), as the dat. sg. of that word is *tívi* and the intrusive *r* is hard to explain. CV connects it with OE *tifr* 'victim, hostage', and this is the most reasonable explanation.

<sup>a</sup>Or 'hidden'. The verb *fela* 'hide, conceal' is used in poetry to describe burial in mounds, as in *IngT* 24 ("[...] And afterwards the victory-havers hid (*fǫlu*) the ruler on Borrey.") or the C10th Karlevi stone ("Hidden (*fulkin folginn*) in this mound lies he whom the greatest deeds followed; [...]")

32 Varð af meðoi, · þeim's mér sýndisk,  
 2 harmflaug hęttlig, · Høðr nam skjóta.  
 Baldrs bróðir vas · of borinn snimma,  
 4 sá nam, Óðins sonr, · ęinnętttr vega.

[R 2r/4]

Became of that beam, which meager looked, a baneful harm-flier—Hath took to shoot.  
 Balder's brother [= Wönnel] was born early; that one took—Weden's son, one night  
 old—to fight.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>While the slaying of Balder is told in *Ylfęr* 49 and the revenge the gods took on Lock is told in *Ylfęr* 50, the slaying of Hath by his half-brother Wönnel is not elaborated on. Perhaps this brother-killing was seen as too immoral, and so the author left it out? Wönnel is mentioned in *Ylfęr* 30 as "the son of Weden and Rind" and as "brave in battles and a very lucky shot", and in *Scold* 19 relevant kennings for him are "son of Weden and Rind" and "revenge-os of Balder; the enemy of Hath and his bane". Thus more was clearly known about him by the author than was included in the text.

The revenge narrative is also dealt with by Saxo (III.4.1–8) in his typical euhemerized form (for Saxo's Latin forms of relevant names see respective Encyclopedia entries): Weden learned from the Finnish wizard Horsethief that Rind, daughter of the Russian king,

This leaves the most explicit account of the revenge-narrative *Dreams* 11. Weden (who could not murder his own son) seduced the woman Rind (in the by Cormac Awmundson's), who gave birth to Wönnel

33 Þó hann ęva hęndr · né høfuð kęmbði,  
 2 áðr á bál of bar · Baldrs andskota.  
 En Frigg of grét · í Fęnsølum  
 4 vø Valhallar. · Vituð ęr ęnn eða hvat?

[R 2r/6]

Washed he never hands, nor head combed, before onto the pyre he did bear Balder's  
 opponent. But Frie did lament, in the Fenhalls, the woe of Walhall<sup>a</sup>—know ye yet, or  
 what?

<sup>a</sup>i.e. Balder's death.

34 Þà kná Váli · vígbønd snúa

[H 20v/12]

2      hēldr vōru harðgōr · hōpt ór þōrmum.

Then did ʀWonnell<sup>C</sup> the war-bonds turn; were they rather sturdy, fetters made out of intestines.<sup>a</sup>

---

1 Váli 'Wonnell'] *Vála* H

---

1–2 Þá ... þōrmum.] Only attested in H, where it is combined with 35b.

---

<sup>a</sup>According to *FrL*, the Ease captured Lock and bound him with the intestines of his son Nare, while his son Narve became an outlaw (*varð at vargi*). *Ylfēr* 50 has a longer but somewhat different account: the Ease captured Lock's two sons, Wonnell and "Nare or Narve". They turned Wonnell into a wolf (*vargr*; note the double meaning) and had him tear apart his brother Narve, whose intestines were then taken and used to bind Lock so that he lay on top of three pointed stones; one digging into his shoulder-blades, one digging into his loins and one digging into his houghs. The intestine-bonds then turned into iron.

Since the author of *Ylfēr* knew *Wallow*, it is possible that he combined a text similar to *FrL* with this verse, interpreting *Vála vígbōnd* as 'Wonnell's war-bonds' and *vargr* as 'wolf' rather than the more probable 'outlaw'. Wonnell is otherwise only known as the son of Weden, and there is no reason why he could not also bound Lock. For further differences between them see *FrL*.

[R 2r/8]      **35a**      Hapt sá hōn liggja · und Hveralundi

2      léggjarns líki · Loka aþekkjan;

A captive she saw lying, 'neath Wharlund: the recognizable shape of guile-eager Lock.

[R 2r/9, H 20v/13]      **35b**      þar sitr Sigyn · þeygi of sínum

2      veri vęlglýjuð. · Vituð ér ęnn eða hvat?

There sits Sighyn, not at all cheerful, o'er her husband<sup>a</sup>—know ye yet, or what?

---

<sup>a</sup>According to *FrL* and *Ylfēr* 50, after bi After binding lock (see Note to 34) the Ease placed a serpent above him.

---

[R 2r/10]      **36**      Ó fęllr austan · of ęitrdala

2      sōxum ok sverðum, · Slíðr hętir sú.

A river falls from the east, above the venom-dales, with saxes and swords; Slide is that one called.

[R 2r/11]      **37**      Stóð fyr norðan · à Niðavøllum

2      salr ór golli · Sindra ęttar,

en annarr stóð · à Ökólni,

4      bjórsalr jōtuns, · en sá Brimir hętir.



Stood to the north, on the Nithewolds, a hall out of gold, of the lineage of Sinder [DWARVES]; but another one stood, on Uncoalner, the beer-hall of an ettin, but Brimmer is that [hall] called.

- 38 Sá hōn standa · sólu fjarri [R 2r/13, H 20v/19, G]  
 2 Náströndu á, · norðr horfa dyrr;  
 falla eitrdropar · inn umb ljóra,  
 4 sá's undinn salr · orma hryggjum.

A hall she saw standing, far from the sun, on Nawstrand; north face the doors;—fall venom-drops in through the smoke-vent, that hall is wound by the spines of snakes.

- 39 Sá hōn þar vaða · þunga strauma [R 2r/15, H 20v/21, G]  
 2 menninginsvara · ok morðvarga  
 ok þann's annars glepr · eyrarúnu.  
 4 Þar saug Níðhoggr · náí framgingna;  
 sléit vargr vera. · Vituð ér enn eða hvat?

There she saw wading, through heavy streams, oath-breaking men and murder-wargs, and the one who beguiles another's ear-whisperer [WIFE]. There sucked ʀNithehewer<sup>P</sup> from corpses passed-on; the warg tore men asunder—know ye yet, or what?<sup>a</sup>

1 Sá hōn 'she saw'] *thus* R; ser hōn 'she sees' H; skulu 'shall [be]' G 4 saug 'sucked'] *thus* H; súg (*corrupt*) R; kveir 'torments'

<sup>a</sup>Uniquely in this verse is described punishment in the Heathen afterlife. The crimes are what one might expect from the Germanic worldview: breaking oaths, committing a murder and evading punishment, and seducing a married woman.

- 40 Austr býr hin aldna · í Éarnviði [R 2r/17, H 20v/2, G]  
 2 ok fœðir þar · Fēnris kindir;  
 verðr af þeim ǫllum · ęinna nøkkurr  
 4 tungls tjúgari · í trolls hami.

In the east<sup>a</sup> dwells the old woman, in ʀIronwood<sup>L</sup>, and nourishes there the kindreds of ʀFenrer<sup>P</sup> [WOLVES]; from them all becomes one most particular: a seizer of the moon, in the ʀhame<sup>C</sup> of a troll.<sup>b</sup>

1 býr 'dwells'] *thus* HG; sat 'stayed' R 1 aldna 'old'] arma 'wretched' U 1 Éarnviði 'Ironwood'] *metr. emend.*; Járnvíði R<sup>H</sup>SWU; Járnvíðjum 'Ironwoods' T 2 fœðir] *thus* HG; fœddi 'nourished' R 3 af] ór TS 4 tjúgari 'seizer'] †tuigan† T; tregari 'griever' U

4 tjúgari ‘seizer’] As the young agentive suffix *-ari* is found nowhere else in the poem it is possible that this word is corrupt. If it is, it must have occurred early in the transmission as reflexes of *\*tjúgari* are found in all surviving mss.

<sup>a</sup>The cardinal direction associated with Ettinham, which is presumably where Ironwood is located.

<sup>b</sup>The old hag raises the cubs of the wolf Fenrer, of which a particularly fierce one will swallow the moon. According to *Grimner* 40 the sun is chased by a wolf called Skoll, while another wolf, Hate Rothswitner’s son, runs in front of her. This is elaborated upon in *Yilfer* 12, where it is said that Skoll swallows the moon, while Hate swallows the sun. High then explains that “A lone troll-woman (*gygr*) lives to the east of Middenyard in that forest called Ironwood”, and “feeds the sons of many ettins, all in the likenesses of wolves, and thereof these wolves (i.e. Skoll and Hate) come. And it is also said that from that lineage a single one becomes the mightiest, and he is called ‘Moongarm’<sup>P</sup>. He fills himself with the life of all those men who die and he swallows the moon and stains heaven and all the air with blood. Thereof the sun loses its rays and the winds are violent and moan hither and thither, and thus it says in the Spae of the Wallow: [...]” after which this and the following verse are quoted. This seems very much like a composite from several sources—probably *Wallow* 40–41 and *Grimner* 40—but becomes contradictory when it states that two wolves swallow the moon. Assuming that this is only a confusion on the part of the author of *Yilfer*, this verse and the next must be describing Skoll, but it is of course not impossible that there was confusion about the exact details of these events among the Heathen poets. In favour of this seems to speak *Webthritner* 46–47, where the sun is said to be swallowed by Fenrer (but see note there).

[R 2r/19, H 20v/4, G]

41 Fyllisk fjörvi · feigra manna,  
2 rýðr ragna sjöt · rauðum dreýra,  
svört verða sólskin · umb sumur eptir,  
4 veðr öll válynd. · Vituð ér enn eða hvat?

It [= the wolf] fills itself with the life of <sup>r</sup>fey<sup>C</sup> men; it reddens the abode of the <sup>r</sup>Reins<sup>G</sup> with red gore. Black becomes the sunshine about the summers afterwards;<sup>a</sup> the winds all woeful—know ye yet, or what?

<sup>a</sup>After the air is filled with blood the sun can no longer shine clearly.

[R 2r/21, H 20v/16]

42 Sat þar á haugi · ok sló hǫrpu  
2 gýgjar hirðir, · glaðr Eggþér;  
gól of hǫnum · í Gaglviði  
4 fagrrauðr hani, · sá’s Fjalarr hęitir.

Sat there on the mound<sup>a</sup> and struck the harp, the gow’s herdsman, glad <sup>r</sup>Edgethew<sup>P</sup>.<sup>b</sup> Above him crowed, in Galewood<sup>c</sup>, a fair-red cock, he who is called Feller.

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Thrim* 6, where the ettin Thrim is said to sit on a mound, and *Shirner* P2, where a herdsman in Ettinham sits on a mound. The significance of this mound-sitting is uncertain, but it is clearly associated with ettins.

<sup>b</sup>Edgethew “herds” the flock of monstrous wolves.

<sup>c</sup>*gagl* ‘wild goose’, maybe here referring to carrion-eating ravens? Galewood is probably the same location as Ironwood.

[R 2r/23, H 20v/18]

43 Gól of ǫsum · Gollinkambi,

- 2 sá vękr hęłđa · at Hęřjafęđrs,  
en annarr gęlr · fyr jęřđ neđan  
4 sętrauđr hani · at sęlum Hęłjar.

Above the Ease crowed Goldencombe: he wakes men at the Father of Hosts's <Weden's> [hall]; but another one crows beneath the earth: a soot-red cock at the halls of Hell.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The crowing of the three cocks (the first in Ettinham, the second in Walhall and the third in Hell)

- 44 Gęyr Garmr mjęk · fyr Gnipahęlli, [R 2r/25]  
2 fęstr mun slitna, · en Freki rinna;  
fjęłđ vęit hęn fręđa, · framm sę'k lęgra  
4 of ragna ręk, · ręmm sigtíva.

Barks Garm loudly before the Gnip-caverns; the rope will tear, and Freck run. Much she knows of learning, forth I see yet further; about the mighty Rakes of the Reins, of the victory-tues.

- 45 Bręđr munu bęřjask · ok at bęnum verđask, [R 2r/28, H 20v/24, G]  
2 munu systrungar · sifjum spilla;  
hart 's í hęimi, · hórdęmr mikill,  
4 skęggęld, skalmęld, · skildir klofnir,  
vindęld, vargęld, · áđr veręld stęypisk  
6 mun ęngi mađr · ęđrum þyrma.

Brothers will fight, and become each other's slayers; sister's sons will spill their kinship.<sup>a</sup>  
'Tis hard in the Home, whoredom great: axe-eld, sword-eld—shields are rent—wind-eld, warg-eld; before the world<sup>b</sup> tumbles down, no man will another spare.

2 systrungar 'sister's sons' ] †stystrungar† T 3 í hęimi 'in the Home' ] *thus* RHU; með hęłđum 'among men' STW 4 skildir 'shields' ] *add.* 'ru 'are' R 4 klofnir 'cloven' ] klofna 'become cloven' U 5 áđr 'before' ] *unz (norm.)* 'until' U 5 stęypisk 'tumbles down' ] *grundir gjalla · gífř fljęgandi (norm.)* 'foundations shrill, fiends flying' *add. after this line* H 6 ęngi ] †enn† U

5 vindęld 'wind-eld' ] In H capitalized, marking the beginning of a new verse.

6 mun ... þyrma 'before ... spare' ] *om.* STW

<sup>a</sup>Whether through incest or treachery. TODO: literary evidence of the phrase *spilla sifjum*.

<sup>b</sup>*ver-ęld* 'world' is literally 'man-eld', 'the eld of man'.

- 46 Lęika Míms synir, · en mjętuđr kyndisk [R 2r/32, H 20v/27, G]  
2 at hinu galla · Gjallarhorni;  
hętt blęss Hęimdallr, · horn 's á lopti;

4 mēlir Óðinn · við Míms hofuð.

Play the sons of Mime, and the Metted is kindled, at [the sounding of] the shrill Horn of Yell. Loudly blows Homedall; the horn is aloft; Weden speaks with the head of Mime.

---

4 mēlir 'speaks'] †mey† S; †nie† T

---

1–4 *Lēika* ... hofuð.] In G ll. 1–2 (*Lēika* ... *Gjallarhorni*; 'Play ... Horn of Yell.') are missing, and ll. 3–4 (*bōtt* ... *hofuð*. 'High ... head [of Mime.]') are instead paired with the first two lines of the next v. (*Skēlfir* ... *losnar*;)

[R 2v/3, H 20v/28, G]

47 Skēlfir Yggdrasils · askr standandi,  
2 ymr it aldna tré, · en jötunn losnar;  
hrēðask allir · à hēlvegum  
4 áðr Surtar þann · sefi of glēypir.

Quakes Ugdrassle's Ash, standing; groans the old tree, and the ettin loosens. All are frightened on the Hell-ways, before Surt's kinsman does devour it.

---

1–2 Skēlfir ... losnar 'Quakes ... loosens'] thus HG; in R the two lines are reversed.

3–4 hrēðask allir ... glēypir 'All are frightened ... devour [it.]' Only in H.

[R 2v/8, H 20v/30, G]

48 Hvat 's með øsum? · hvat 's með ølfum?  
2 gnýr allr Jötunhēimr, · èsir 'ru à þingi,  
stynja dvergar · fyr stēindurum  
4 veggbergs vísir — · vituð ér enn eða hvat?

What is with the Ease? What is with the Elves? Roars all Ettinham, the Ease are at the Thing. Dwarfs groan before gates of stone, the princes of the wedge-rock—know ye yet, or what?

---

1 ølfum 'Elves'] asynivm 'Ossens' U 2 gnýr ... þingi] *om.* U 3 stēindurum] steins U— -dyrum HWU  
4 veggbergs vísir] *om.* U 4 veggbergs 'wedge-rock'] vegbergs 'way-rock' HTW

[R 2v/4, H 20v/32]

49 Geyr nú Garmr mjök · fyr Gnipahēlli,  
2 fęstr mun slitna, · en Freki rinna;  
fjölð vęit hōn fróða, · framm sé'k lęngra  
4 of ragna røk, · rōmm sigtíva.

Barks now Garm loudly before the Gnip-caverns; the rope will tear, and Freck run. Much she knows of learning, forth I see yet further; about the mighty Rakes of the Reins, of the victory-tues.

- 50 Hrymr ękr austan, · heřsk lind fyrir, [R 2v/4, H 20v/32, STW]  
 2 snýsk Jormungandr · í jötunmóði;  
 ormr knýr unnir, · en ari hlakkar,  
 4 slítr nái neffǫlr; · Naglfar losnar.

Rim drives from the east, holding his shield before himself; Ermingand writhes about in ettin's wrath. The worm propels the waves, but the eagle screams: the pale-beak tears corpses; Nailfare loosens.

3 en ari hlakkar 'but the eagle screams' ] ǫrn mun hlakka 'the eagle will scream' ST

- 51 Kjóll fær austan · koma munu Múspells [R 2v/6, H 20v/34, STW]  
 2 of lög lýðir, · en Loki stýrir;  
 fara fiřlmęgir · með Freka allir,  
 4 þeim es bróðir · Býleists í fǫr.

A ship travels from the east—come will Muspell's subjects by sea—but Lock steers it. Travel the warlocks all with Freck; with them comes the brother of Bylest [= Lock] along.

- 52 Surtr fær sunnan · með sviga lęvi, [R 2v/10, H 20v/36, G]  
 2 skinn af sverði · sól valtíva;  
 grjótbjǫrg gnata, · en gífř rata,  
 4 troða halir hęlveg, · en himinn klofnar.

Surt comes from the south with the betrayer of the stick [FIRE]; from the sword shines the sun of the slain-Tues. Boulders clash, but the fiends reel; men march on the 'Hell-ways'<sup>L</sup>, but heaven is cloven.

1 Surtr ] Svartr U 3 gífř rata ] guðar hrata '[but] the gods stagger' Uis *wo. doubt corrupt, the anachronistic masc. pl. of guð is provenough*

- 53 Þa kǫmr Hlínar · harmr annarr framm, [R 2v/13, H 20v/37, STW]  
 2 es Óðinn fær · við ulf vega,  
 —en bani Bęlja · bjartr at Surti—  
 4 þa mun Friggjar · falla angan.

Then comes 'Line'<sup>P</sup>'s second sorrow to pass,<sup>a</sup> as Weden goes to strike against the wolf—but the bane of 'Bellow'<sup>P</sup> [= Free], bright, [goes] against Surt—then will Frie's beloved [= Weden] fall.

4 angan ] angantyr R

<sup>a</sup>That the first sorrow was the death of Balder (see vv. 31–33) is unanimously understood. Line is described in *Ylfir* 35 as a minor goddess *sett til gæzlu yfir þeim mönnum, er Frigg vill forða við báska nökkurum* ‘placed to watch over those men which Frie wishes to protect against any particular danger’. In spite of this, almost all translators and commentators have understood Line as here referring to Frie, or questioned whether her existence as a separate goddess is not a misunderstanding on the part of the author of *Ylfir*. Hopkins (2017) argues excellently that this need not be the case; as a subordinate goddess of Frie, Line’s two sorrows would be her failing to protect Balder and Weden (the son and husband of her mistress, respectively) from harm.

[R 2v/15, STW]

- 54 Þá kómr hinn mikli · mögr Sigföður,  
 2 Viðarr vega · at valdýri;  
 léttr megi Hveðrungs · mund of standa  
 4 hjör til hjarta; · þá ’s hefnt fœður.

Then comes the great lad of <sup>r</sup>Sighfather<sup>P</sup> (= Weden): Wider, to strike at the murderous beast. He lets his hand plunge the sword into the heart of <sup>r</sup>Whethring<sup>P</sup>’s (= Lock) lad [= Wolf]; then is the father [= Weden] avenged.

1 Þá kómr ... Sigföður ‘Then ... Sighfather’] Gęngr Óðins sonr · við ulf vega ‘Goes Weden’s son against the wolf to fight’ G 2 vega] of veg G

[H 20v/39]

- 55 Ginn lopt yfir · lindi jarðar,  
 2 gapa ýgs kjaptar · orms í hœðum;  
 mun Óðins son · ęitri móta  
 4 vargs at dauða · Viðars niðja.

Yawns over the air the girdle of the earth [= Middenyardsworm]; gape the jaws of the fierce worm in the heights. The venom of the beast will meet Weden’s son [= Thunder], after the deaths of Wider’s kinsmen [= the Ease].

3 ęitri ‘venom’] emend.; *ormi* ‘the worm’ H. It seems likely that the author of *Ylfir* had access to this verse. Cf. *Ylfir* 51: “Thunder bears the bane-word from the Middenyardsworm and thence strides away nine paces. Then he falls dead to the earth due to the venom (*ęitri*) which the Worm blows on him.” 4 dauða] da... H

1–4 Ginn ... niðja.] The final part of this verse is almost completely illegible. For the present edition I have relied on the reading of Jón Helgason (1971, pp. 13, 44 ff.).

[R 2v/17, H 20v/41, STW]

- 56 Þá kómr hinn męri · mögr Hlœðynjar  
 2 gęngr Óðins sonr · við orm vega.  
 Drepr af móði · Miðgarðs véurr;  
 4 munu halir allir · hęimstœð ryðja;  
 gęngr fet níu · Fjörgynjar burr  
 6 neppr frá naðri, · níðs ökvíðnum.

Then comes the renowned lad of Lathyn [= Thunder]: the son of Weden goes the <sup>r</sup>worm<sup>C</sup> to meet. Middenyard’s Wigh-ward strikes out of wrath; all men will clear their

homesteads.<sup>a</sup> The son of Firgyn goes nine paces, pained, away from the loathsome adder [= Middenyardsworm].<sup>b</sup>

1 þá kœmr ‘then comes’] *Gengr* ‘goes’ G 2 gengr ... vega] Only in R 3–6 Drepr ... ökvíðnum ‘Middenyard’s ... adder’] *neppr af naðri / niðs ökvíðnum / munu balir allir / heimstøð ryðja, / es af móði drepr / Miðgarðs véurr* ‘[Goes the renowned lad of Lathyn,] pained, away from the loathsome adder. All men will clear their homesteads, when Middenyard’s wigh-ward strikes out of wrath.’ G

<sup>a</sup>It seems likely that the order found in *Ylfér* is original. After Thunder (appropriately kenned ‘Middenyard’s wigh-ward’) is slain, the Ettins take over the lands and make farming impossible. Cf. *Thrim* 18: “Shortly the Ettins will settle Osyrd, unless thou thy hammer for thyself dost fetch!”

<sup>b</sup>Thunder, mortally wounded, struggles nine steps away from the Worm before he falls. See note to previous verse.

- 57 Sól tér sortna, · sökkr fold í mar,  
2 hverfa af himni · heððar stjornur;  
geisar ęimi · við aldrnara;  
4 leikr hór hiti · við himin sjalfan.

[R 2v/20, H21r/1, G]

The sun does blacken, sinks the fold [EARTH] into the sea; disappear off heaven the clear stars. Rages smoke from the nourisher of life [fire]; licks the high heat heaven itself.

1 sökkr ... mar] This line is very similar to a line of v. 24 in Arnthur ‘earl-scold’ Thurstson’s *Drape of Thurfinn* (SkP: Arn *Þorfdr* 24<sup>11</sup>): *sökkr fold í mar dökkvan* ‘sinks the fold into the dark sea’. For this reason, *sökkr* ‘sinks’ STW has been chosen over *sígr* ‘descends’ RHU.

- 58 Geyr nú Garmr mjök · fyr Gniphahelli,  
2 fęstr mun slitna, · en Freki rinna;  
fjöld vęit hön fróða, · framm sé’k lęgra  
4 of ragna røk, · rømm sigtíva.

[R 2v/22, H21r/2]

Barks now Garm loudly before the Gniph-caverns; the rope will tear, and Freck run. Much she knows of learning, forth I see yet further; about the mighty Rakes of the Reins, of the victory-tues.

- 59 Sér hön upp koma · ęðru sinni  
2 jęřđ ór ęgi · iðjagróna;  
falla forsar, · flýgr ęrn yfir,  
4 sá’s á fjalli · fiska vęiðir.

[R 2v/23, H21r/4]

Up she sees coming, another time: the earth out of the ocean, ever green anew. Fall torrents; flies an eagle above, he who on the fells fish does catch.

[R 2v/24, H21r/5]

- 60** Finnask ęsir · ą İðavęlli  
 2 ok umb moldþinur · mętkan dęma,  
 ok minnask þar · ą meęindęma  
 4 ok ą Fimbultýs · fornar rúnar.

The Ease find each other on Idewold, and about the mighty earth-strip [the Midden-yardsworm] converse, and there look back on mighty verdicts, and on Fimbletue's (We-den's) ancient runes.

1 finnask 'find each other'] *bittask* H provides closer parallelism with v. 7. 3 ok minnask ... meęindęma 'and remember ... mighty judgements'] om. R

[R 2v/26, H21r/7]

- 61** Þar munu ęptir · undrsamligar  
 2 gollnar tęflur · í grasi finnask,  
 þęr's í árdaga · áttar hęfðu.

There will afterwards wondrous golden Tavel-bricks in the grass be found: those which in days of yore they had owned.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Cf. v. 9. The rediscovering of the golden game pieces symbolizes a new golden age.

[R 2v/28, H21r/9]

- 62** Munu ęsánir · akrrar vaxa;  
 2 bęls mun alls batna · mun Baldr koma;  
 búa Hęðr ok Baldr · Hropts sigtoptir,  
 4 vęl valtívar. · Vituð ér ęnn eða hvat?

Unsown will fields grow; the bale will all be bettered; Balder will come. Hath and Balder bedwell the victory-plots of Roft (= Weden)—well, the slain-Tues—know ye yet, or what?<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The evil of Hath's slaying Balder will be forgotten as the two peacefully live together.

[R 2v/30, H21r/11]

- 63** Þą kná Hęnir · hlautvið kjósa  
 2 ok burir byggva · bróðra tveęggja  
 vindhęim víðan. · Vituð ér ęnn eða hvat?

Then does Heener choose the ʀleat<sup>C</sup>-wood,<sup>a</sup> and the sons of two brothers [= Hath and Balder] settle the wide wind-home [HEAVEN]—know ye yet, or what?

2 bróðra tveęggja 'of two brothers'] Alternatively *bróðra Tveęggja* 'the brothers of Tway (= Weden)', attested in *Ylfęr* 6 as ʀWill<sup>P</sup> and ʀWigh<sup>P</sup>, but they are never attested as having children, and it is thus more natural to read *tveęggja* as the gen. pl. of *tveir* 'two'.

<sup>a</sup>Restore the blout and practice divination.



- 64 Sal sér hōn standa · sólu fēgra,  
 2 golli þakðan, · à Gimléi;  
 þar skulu dyggvar · dróttir byggva  
 4 ok umb aldrdaga · ynðis njóta.

[R 2v/31, H21r/12, G]

A hall she sees standing, fairer than the sun: thatched with gold, on Gemlee; there dutiful men shall dwell, and during their life-days enjoy delight.

1 sér hōn 'she sees'] *veit* 'I know' G 2 golli þakðan 'thatched with gold'] *golli bētra* 'better than gold' ST  
 2 Gimléi] metr. emend.; *Gimlé* RHG 3 þar 'there'] *þann* '[in] that [hall]' TW

- 65 Þar kōmr hinn dimmi · drēki fljúgandi,  
 2 naðr frānn neðan · frá Niðafjōllum;  
 berr sér í fjōðrum · —flýgr vōll yfir—  
 4 Níðhoggr nái; · nú mun hōn sökkvask.“

[R 3r/2, H21r/15]

Then comes the shadowy dragon flying; the gleaming adder down below from the <sup>L</sup>Nithefells. Nithehewer in his feathers—flying over the field—carries corpses.” — Now she will sink!<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The wallow, referring to herself in third person, descends back down into her grave, whence Weden woke her. See Introduction.

- X Þà kōmr hinn ríki · at rēgindōmi  
 2 ofluḡr ofan · sá's ollu rēðr.

[H21r/14]

— Then comes the mighty one, for the great judgement; strong from above, the one who over all things wields.

1–2 Þà ... rēðr.] This verse is found only in H, in between the last two vv. It is without doubt a late, Christian addition.



# The Speeches of Webthrithner

## (*Vafþrúðnismól*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C9th (0.105)–C10th (0.894)

Meter: *Leed-meter*

A wisdom contest poem, known by the author of *Ylfir*.

Weden first asks his wife, Frie, for counsel, as he is curious about the ancient wisdom which the ettin Webthrithner might possess (1). Frie expresses worry, as she considers Webthrithner wiser than all other ettins (2), but Weden says that he has travelled far and wide, and wishes to know what Webthrithner's hall is like (3). Frie wishes Weden good luck against the ettin (4) and he departs, to challenge Webthrithner's *orðspeki* 'word-wisdom' (5). He arrives at hall of Webthrithner (6), who promptly declares that Weden will not come out of the hall unless he be wiser than him (7). Weden introduces himself as Gainred, saying that he has travelled far in need of Webthrithner's hospitality (8). Webthrithner invites Weden to sit down (9), but he instead utters a gnomic verse not unlike those of the first section of *Híð* (10).

Webthrithner then begins to ask questions relating to the mythology, each answered by Weden in turn. The questions concern which horses pull the day (11–12) and night (13–14), the river which divides the gods and ettins (15–16) and the plain where Surt and the gods will fight (17–18).

Webthrithner calls the god learned, invites him to sit on the bench, and declares that the loser of the contest must give his head (19). It is now Weden's turn to ask and the ettin's to answer, namely about the origins of earth and heaven (20–21), of sun and moon (22–23), of day, night, and the phases of the moon (24–25), and of winter and summer (26–27); then about the earliest god or ettin, namely *Ǫrvarǫf* (28–29), his origins (30–31) and how he reproduced asexually (32–33). He continues by asking what Webthrithner first remembers (34–35), about the origin of the wind (36–37) and of the god *Ǫrvarǫf* (38–39), then about Walhall (40–41) and where Webthrithner learned these esoteric pieces of wisdom (42–43).

After this the structure and tone of the questions change; each one begins with the same first half as that of verse 3, and they concern the end-times. Weden asks about the humans who will survive after the Fimble-winter (44–45), how the sun will rise after Fenrer has destroyed the current one (46–47), about some obscure ettin-maidens (48–49; see there), which Ease will survive after the flame of Surt goes out (50–51) and how Weden will die (52–53). Finally, the god asks what he spoke in the ear of Balder before

he burned on the pyre (54). Webthrithner finally realizes the identity of his guest, and says that no man may ever know what he spoke in the ear of his son. He laconically accepts his imminent death, and the futility of his wisdom (55); the poem ends with his admission that Weden is ever the wisest of beings (56).

[R REGTODO] [ʀWeden<sup>P</sup> quoth:]  
 1 Ráð mér nú Frigg · alls mik fara tíðir  
 2 at vitja Vaðprúðnis;  
 forvitni mikla · kveð'k mér á fornum stöfum  
 4 við þann hinn alsvinna jötun.

“Counsel me now, ʀFrie<sup>P</sup>, as I desire to journey to visit ʀWebthrithner<sup>P</sup>; great curiosity I have of ancient staves by that all-wise ʀettin<sup>G</sup>.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘I am greatly curious of the all-wise ettin’s ancient pieces of wisdom.’ Cf. v. 55.

[R REGTODO] [Frie quoth:]  
 2 Hęima lętja · mynda'k Hęrjafoðr  
 2 í gøðum goða;  
 ęngi jötun · hugða'k jafnramman  
 4 sęm Vaðprúðni vesa.

“I would hold the Father of Hosts [= Weden] at home<sup>a</sup> in the yards of the gods, for no ettin [have] I thought to be even-strong with Webthrithner.”

<sup>a</sup>lit. perhaps ‘I would dissuade/hinder ... at home’

[R REGTODO] [Weden quoth:]  
 3 Fjölð ek fór, · fjölð freistaða'k,  
 2 fjölð ek reynda regin;  
 hitt vil'k vita, · hvé Vaðprúðnis  
 4 salakynni sęi.

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the ʀReins<sup>G</sup>. This I wish to know: how the condition of the halls of Webthrithner might be.”

[R REGTODO] [Frie quoth:]  
 4 Hęill þú farir, · hęill þú aptr komir,  
 2 hęill á sinnum sęir;  
 øði þér dugi · hvar's skalt, Aldaføðr,

4 orðum mēla jōtun.

“Whole journey thou, whole come thou back, whole be thou on thy paths! Thy wisdom avail thee, where thou shalt, ʀEldfather<sup>P</sup> (= Weden), words with the ettin exchange.”

5 Fór þá Óðinn · at frēista orðspēki [R REGTODO]  
2 þess hins alsvinna jōtuns;  
at hōllu kom, · es átti Hymis faðir;  
4 inn gekk Yggr þegar.

Then journeyed Weden, to test the word-wisdom of that all-wise ettin. To a hall he came, which the father of ʀHymer<sup>P</sup> [= Webthrithner] owned; shortly ʀUg<sup>P</sup> (= Weden) walked in.

3 es] ok R 3 Hymis] *metr. emend. after* Finnur Jónsson (1932); Íms R

[Weden quoth:]

6 Hęill þú nú, Vafþrúðnir, · nú em’k í hōll kominn [R REGTODO]  
2 á þik sjalfan sęa;  
hitt vil’k fyrst vita, · ef fróðr sęir  
4 eða alsviðr, jōtunn.

“Hail thee now, Webthrithner; now am I come into the hall, to gaze upon thy self! This I wish first to know, if learned thou be, or all-wise, ettin.”

[Webthrithner quoth:]

7 Hvat ’s þat manna, · es í minum sal [R REGTODO]  
2 verpumk orði á?  
út þú né kōmr · órum hōllum frá.  
4 nema þú inn snotrari sęir.

“What sort of man is that, who in my hall throws words at me? Out comest thou not from our halls, unless thou be the cleverer.”

[Weden quoth:]

8 Gagnráðr hęiti’k, · nú em’k af gōngu kominn, [R REGTODO]  
2 þyrstr til þinna sala;  
laðar þurfi · hęf’k lęngi farit  
4 ok þinna andfanga, jōtunn.

“<sup>r</sup>Gainred<sup>P</sup> I am called, now am I come from walking, thirsty, to thy halls. In need of a welcoming have I journeyed for long; and [in need] of thy reception, ettin!”

---

1 Gagnráðr] Gangráðr ‘Journey-adviser’ G

[R REGTODO] [Webthrithner quoth:]  
**9** Hví þú þá, Gagnráðr, · mēlisk af golfi fyrir?  
 2 far þú í sess í sal;  
 þá skal fręista, · hvárr flęira viti,  
 4 gęstr eða hinn gamli þulr.

“Why then, Gainred, speakest thou from the floor before me? Take a seat in the hall! Then it shall be tried, which of the two might know more; the guest, or the old <sup>r</sup>thyle<sup>C</sup> [I].”

[R REGTODO] [Gainred quoth:]  
**10** Óauðigr maðr, · es til auðigs kōmr,  
 2 mēli þarft eða þęgi;  
 ofrmēlgi mikil · hygg’k at illa geti  
 4 hveim’s við kaldrifjaðan kōmr.

“An unwealthy man, who to a wealthy one comes, ought to speak the needful or be silent.<sup>a</sup> Great over-speaking, I judge, will bring evil for whomever to a cold-ribbed<sup>b</sup> man comes.”

---

<sup>a</sup>Last line identical to *Higb* 18. The verse on the whole bears close resemblance to that poem.

<sup>b</sup>i.e. ‘cold-hearted, cunning’.

[R REGTODO] [Webthrithner quoth:]  
**11** Seg mér, Gagnráðr, · alls á golfi vill  
 2 þíns of fręista frama,  
 hvé hęstr hętir, · sá’s hveįjan dreęr  
 4 dag of dróttmōgu.

“Say to me, Gainred, since on the floor thou wilt try thy fame: What is the horse called, which pulls each day above the lads of the retinue [MEN]?”

[R REGTODO] [Gainred quoth:]  
**12** Skinfaxi hętir, · es hinn skíra dreęr  
 2 dag of dróttmōgu;  
 hęsta baztr · þykkir með Hręiðgotum;



“<sup>L</sup>Iving the river is called, which divides the ground between the sons of ettins and the gods. Throughout [her] life-days she shall flow open; ice forms not on the river.”

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO] 17 Sæg þat, Gagnráðr, · alls á golfi vill  
 2 þíns of fręista frama,  
 hvé vøllr hętir, · es finnask vęgi at  
 4 Surtr ok hin svøsu goð.

“Say this, Gainred, since on the floor thou wilt try thy fame: How that plain is called, where <sup>P</sup>Surt and the excellent gods find each other at war?”

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO] 18 Vęgríðr hętir vøllr, · es finnask vęgi at  
 2 Surtr ok hin svøsu goð;  
 hundrað rasta · hann's á hveřjan veg;  
 4 sá's þeim vøllr vitaðr.

“<sup>L</sup>Wighride is the plain called, where Surt and the cheerful gods find each other at war. A hundred <sup>C</sup>rests it stretches in each direction; for them that plain is marked out.”

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO] 19 Fróðr ert nú gęstr, · far á bekk jøtuns,  
 2 ok męlumk í sęssi saman;  
 høfði veðja · vit skulum høllu í  
 4 gęstr, of gęðspeki.

“Learned art thou now, guest, sit down on the ettin's bench and let us speak on the seat together. Wager a head, shall we two in the hall, guest, over god-wisdom.”

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/1] 20 Sæg þat hit ęina, · ef þitt øði dugir  
 2 ok þú Vafþrúðnir vitir,  
 hvaðan jorð of kom · eða upphiminn  
 4 fyrst, hinn fróði jøtunn.

“Say the one, if thy wisdom suffices, and thou, Webthriðner, knowest: Whence Earth did come, or <sup>L</sup>Up-heaven, first, learned ettin.”

1 øði] The first word on fol. 3r. of A; from this point we have the poem in both manuscripts.



[Webthrithner quoth:]

21 Ór Ymis holdi · vas jorð of sköpuð, [R REGTODO, A 3r/2]  
 2 en ór beinum björg,  
himinn ór hausi · hins hrimkalda jǫtuns,  
 4 en ór sveita sér.

“Out of <sup>r</sup>Yimer<sup>P</sup>’s hull was the earth created, but out of his bones the crags; heaven out of the skull of the rime-cold ettin, but out of his blood<sup>a</sup> the sea.<sup>b</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>*svēiti* ‘sweat’ is often used to refer to blood.

<sup>b</sup>This v. closely resembles *Grimner* 40–41 TODO.

[Gainred quoth:]

22 Seg þat annat, · ef þitt óði dugir [R REGTODO, A 3r/3]  
 2 ok þú Vaðrúðnir vitir,  
 hvaðan Máni of kom, · svá’t fęrr męnn yfir,  
 4 eða Sól hit sama.

“Say the other, if thy wisdom suffices, and thou, Webthrithner, knowest: Whence Moon did come, he that travels over men, or Sun likewise?”

[Webthrithner quoth:]

23 Mundilfari hętir, · hann’s Mána faðir [R REGTODO, A 3r/4]  
 2 ok svá Solar hit sama;  
himin hverfa · þau skulu hverjan dag  
 4 óldum at ártali.

“<sup>r</sup>Mundelfare<sup>P</sup> is he called; he is the father of the Moon, and likewise of the Sun. Circle in the heaven shall they every day, for people to tally years.”

[Gainred quoth:]

24 Seg þat þriðja, · alls þik svinnan kveða [R REGTODO, A 3r/6]  
 2 ok þú Vaðrúðnir vitir,  
 hvaðan dagr of kom, · sá’s fęrr drótt yfir,  
 4 eða nótt með niðum.

“Say the third, as they call thee wise, and thou, Webthrithner, knowest: Whence the day came, the one that travels over the retinue, or night with the moon-phases?”

[Webthrithner quoth:]



2 þá vas Bergelmir borinn,  
 þrúðgelmir · vas þess faðir,  
 4 en Aurelmir afi.

“Uncountable winters before the earth would be created, then ʀBearyelmer<sup>P</sup> was born. ʀThrithyelmer<sup>P</sup> was that one’s father, but ʀEaryelmer<sup>P</sup> the grandfather.”

[Gainred quoth:]

30 Seg þat sétta, · alls þik svinnan kveða,  
 2 ok þú Vaþrúðnir vitir,  
 hvaðan Aurelmir kom · með jotna sonum  
 4 fyrst, hinn fróði jotunn.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/14]

“Say the sixth, as they call thee wise, and thou, Webthrithner, knowest: Whence Earyelmer came among the sons of ettins, first, learned ettin?”

[Webthrithner quoth:]

31 Ór Élivógum · stukku eitrdropar,  
 2 svá óx unz ór varð jotunn;  
 órar éttir · kómu þar allar saman;  
 4 því’s þat é alt til atalt.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/15]

“Out of the ʀlleaves<sup>L</sup> splashed venom-drops; thus grew until an ettin emerged. Our lineages came there all together, therefore they are ever wholly fierce.”

---

1–4 Ór ... atalt] *quoted in G*

3–4 órar ... atalt] *om. RA*

---

<sup>a</sup>Over aeons splashing venom-drops combined into a sentient being, Yimer, the ancestor of all Ettins. The account of the poem is not nearly as detailed as that of *Yilfer*.

[Gainred quoth:]

32 Seg þat sjaunda, · alls þik svinnan kveða,  
 2 ok þú Vaþrúðnir vitir,  
 hvé sá born gat · hinn baldni jotunn,  
 4 es hann hafði-t gýgjar gaman.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/16]

“Say the seventh, as they call thee wise, and thou, Webthrithner, knowest: How did that one, the defiant ettin, beget children, when he did not enjoy the pleasure of a troll-woman?”

---

3 baldni] *thus A; aldni ‘the aged, old’ Rbreaks alliteration*

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/17]

33 Und hendi vaxa · kvøðu hrimþursi  
 2 mey ok mog saman;  
 fōtr við fōti · gat hins fróða jōtuns  
 4 sexhǫfðaðan son.

“Neath the arm<sup>a</sup> on the ʀime-thurse<sup>G</sup>, they said that a maiden and lad grew together. A foot against a foot begot, of the learned ettin, a six-headed son.”

<sup>a</sup>lit. ‘hand’.

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/18]

34 Seg þat óttunda, · alls þik fróðan kveða,  
 2 ok þú Vafþrúðnir vitir,  
 hvat fyrst of mant · eða fremst of vęizt,  
 4 þú ert alsviðr jōtunn.

“Say the eigth, as they call thee learned, and thou, Webthriðner, knowest: What thou first rememberest, or foremost knowest? Thou art all-wise, ettin.”

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/19]

35 Ørófi vetra · áðr vęri jorð of sköpuð,  
 2 þá vas Bergelmir þorinn;  
 þat fyrst of man’k, · es hinn fróði jōtunn  
 4 á vas lúðr of lagiðr.

“Uncountable winters before the earth would be created, then Bearyelmer was born. That I first remember, when the learned ettin on the tree-trunk was laid.<sup>a</sup>”

1–4 Ørófi ... lagiðr ] The whole verse is quoted in *Ylfēr*.

<sup>a</sup>The reference here is obscure. According to the prose of *Ylfēr*, after the sons of ʀByre<sup>P</sup> (that is, ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, ʀWill<sup>P</sup> and ʀWigh<sup>P</sup>) slew Yimer, so much blood flew from his wounds that all the race of Ettins were drowned, save for Bearyelmer and his family, who survived by getting up on his *lúðr*. In regular prose, *lúðr* usually means ‘trumpet’, but it can also refer to a hollow tree-trunk. Considering the transitive nature of Bearyelmer being laid (*of lagiðr*) on it, it could rather be interpreted as describing a boat burial, in which case the first thing Webthriðner remembers would be Bearyelmer’s funeral.

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/21]

36 Seg þat níunda, · alls þik svinnan kveða,  
 2 ok þú Vafþrúðnir vitir,  
 hvaðan vindr of kōmr · svá’t fęrr vág yfir,  
 4 ę menn hann sjalfan of séa.

“Say the ninth, as they call thee wise, and thou, Webthrithner, knowest: Whence the wind comes, he that travels over the wave; ever men see his self.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>Almost certainly a negation has been lost here, men can of course not see the wind.

[Webthrithner quoth:]

37 Hrēsvelgr hēitir, · es sitr á himins enda,  
2 jotunn í arnar ham;  
af hans vengjum · kveða vind koma  
4 alla mēnn yfir.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/22]

“<sup>†</sup>Rawswallower<sup>P</sup> he is called, who sits at the end of the heavens; an ettin in an eagle’s <sup>†</sup>hame<sup>C</sup>. From his wings, they say that the wind comes over all men.”

[Gainred quoth:]

38 Seg þat tíunda, · alls þú tíva røk  
2 oll Vaþrúðnir vitir,  
hvaðan Njórðr of kom · með ása sonum;  
4 hofum ok horgum · rēðr hundmorgum  
ok varð-at osum alinn.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/24]

“Say the tenth, since thou of the <sup>†</sup>Rakes of the Tues<sup>P</sup> all, Webthrithner, knowest: Whence <sup>†</sup>Nearth<sup>P</sup> did come among sons of the <sup>†</sup>Ease<sup>G</sup>? Of <sup>†</sup>hoves<sup>C</sup> and <sup>†</sup>harrows<sup>C</sup> he rules a hound-many,<sup>a</sup> and he was not begotten to the Ease.”

<sup>a</sup>This is probably a reference to the large presence of theophoric place-names relating to Nearth in Norway. Cf. also *Grimner* 16 for Nearth’s connection with harrows.

[Webthrithner quoth:]

39 Í Vanahēimi · skópu hann vís rēgin  
2 ok sēldu at gíslingu goðum,  
í aldar røk · hann mun aptr koma  
4 hēim með vísum vonum.

[R REGTODO, A 3r/26]

“In <sup>†</sup>Waneham<sup>L</sup> the wise <sup>†</sup>Reins<sup>Ga</sup> shaped him, and sold him as a hostage to the gods. In the rake of the <sup>†</sup>eld<sup>Cb</sup> he will come back, home among the wise <sup>†</sup>Wanes<sup>G</sup>.”

<sup>a</sup>While *reggin* ‘Reins’ is usually just a synonym of *goð* ‘gods’, it seems here to refer specifically to the Wanes, in contrast with the <sup>†</sup>Ease<sup>G</sup>.

<sup>b</sup>i.e. the <sup>†</sup>Rakes of the Reins<sup>P</sup>.

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/28]

40 Sæg þat ęllipta, · hvar ýtar túnum í  
 2 hoggvask hverjan dag;  
val þęir kjósa · ok ríða vígi frá,  
 4 sitja męir of sáttir saman.<sup>a</sup>

“Say the eleventh: Where men in yards hew away at each other every day? The slain they choose and from the battle ride; [then] they sit more at peace together.”

3 val þęir kjósa ‘the slain they choose’] The same root words are present in *valkyrja* ‘<sup>r</sup>walkirrie<sup>G</sup>’, though those are women, not men.

<sup>a</sup>This and the next v. are damaged in both R and A; R has only this verse, but splits it in two (the 2nd starting with *val*), while A has l. 1 (Ms.: *S. þ. e. XT*) and then jumps to the answer. They have here been reconstructed, but it is possible some lines are still missing. TODO: use edtext instead

[Webthrithner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3r/28]

41 Allir ęinhęjar · Óðins túnum í  
 2 hoggvask hverjan dag,  
val þęir kjósa · ok ríða vígi frá,  
 4 sitja męir of sáttir saman.

“All the <sup>r</sup>Ownharriers<sup>G</sup> in Weden’s yards hew away at each other every day. The slain they choose and from the battle ride; [then] they sit more at peace together.”

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/1]

42 Sæg þat tolpta, · hví þú tíva røk  
 2 ęll Vaþrúðnir vítir,  
 frá jotna rúnum · ok allra goða  
 4 þú hit sannasta sęgir,  
 hinn alsvinni jotunn.

“Say the twelfth: Why thou, the rakes of the Tues all, Webthrithner, knowest? From the <sup>r</sup>runes<sup>C</sup> of the ettins and of all the gods speakest thou the truest, all-wise ettin.”

[Webthrithner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/2]

43 Frá jotna rúnum · ok allra goða  
 2 ek kann sęja satt,  
 því’t hvern hęf’k hęim of komit,  
 4 níu kom’k hęima · fyr niflhęl neðan;  
 hinig dęyja ór hęlju halir.

“From the runes of the ettins and of all the gods I can speak truly, for I have come into each ʀHome<sup>C</sup>. Into nine Homes I came beneath ʀNivelhell<sup>L</sup>; that way die men out of ʀHell<sup>L</sup>.<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>Presumably lower underworlds, more severe than the ‘normal’ one. Finnur Jónsson (1932) considers *ór hęlju* ‘out of Hell’ a later interpolation, presumably for metric reasons, but there is no textual support for it.

[Gainred quoth:]

44    Fjoḷḷ ek fór, · fjoḷḷ fręistaḁa’k, [R REGTODO, A 3v/4]  
       2        fjoḷḷ ek ręynda ręgin;  
           hvat lifir manna, · þá’s hinn męra líḁr  
       4        fimbulvetr með firum?

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins.<sup>a</sup> What remains of men, when the renowned ʀFimble-winter<sup>L</sup> passes among people?”

---

<sup>a</sup>Cf. v. 3.

[Webthrithner quoth:]

45    Lif ok Lifþrasir, · en þau lęynask munu [R REGTODO, A 3v/6]  
       2        í holti Hoddmímis;  
           morgindęggvar · þau sér at mat hafa;  
       4        þaḁan af aldir alask.

“ʀLife<sup>P</sup> and ʀLifethrasher<sup>P</sup>, but they will hide themselves in ʀHoardmimer<sup>P</sup>’s wood.<sup>a</sup> Morning-dew [will] they have as their food; thence generations [will] be bred.”

---

<sup>a</sup>Perhaps in the hollowed-out Uggdrassle.

[Gainred quoth:]

46    Fjoḷḷ ek fór, · fjoḷḷ fręistaḁa’k, [R REGTODO, A 3v/8]  
       2        fjoḷḷ ek ręynda ręgin;  
           hvaḁan kęmr sól · á hinn slętta himin,  
       4        es þessa hęfr Fęnrir farit?

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins. Whence comes Sun onto the smooth heaven, when ʀFenrer<sup>P</sup> has this one<sup>a</sup> slain?”

---

4 þessa hęfr Fęnrir farit ‘when Fenrer has this one slain.’] Cf. *Wallow* TODO. Here it is Fenrer himself who will swallow the sun unless it there be taken as a poetic synonym for ‘wolf’ (which undoubtedly is its original meaning). TODO

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. the current incarnation of the sun, as explained in the next v.

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/9]

47 Eina dóttur · berr alfróðull,  
 2 áðr hana Fenrir fari;  
 sú skal ríða, · þá's regin deyja,  
 4 móður brautir mér.

“One daughter the elf-wheel [= Sun] bears before Fenrer might slay her. She shall ride—when the Reins die—the maiden, her mother's paths.”

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/10]

48 Fjölð ek fór, · fjölð fręistaða'k,  
 2 fjölð ek reynda regin;  
 hveṛjar 'ru meyjar, · es líða mar yfir,  
 4 fróðgeðjaðar fara.

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins. Which are the maidens that pass over the ocean; learned-minded they go?”

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/11]

49 Þriar þjóðáar · falla þorp yfir  
 2 meyja Mogþrasis;  
hamingjur einar · þér's í hęimi eru,  
 4 þó þér með jotnum alask.

“Three great rivers fall over the settlement of the maidens of Maythrasher; the only Hamings are they in the Home,<sup>a</sup> though they are among the ettins begotten.”

---

<sup>a</sup>In Ettinham, or in the entire world?

[Gainred quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/13]

50 Fjölð ek fór, · fjölð fręistaða'k,  
 2 fjölð ek reynda regin;  
 hveṛir ráða esir · eignum goða,  
 4 þá's sloknar Surtalogi?

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins. Which Ease rule the estates of the gods, when the flame of ʀ Surt<sup>P</sup> goes out?”

[Webthriðner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/14]

51 Viðarr ok Váli · byggva vé goða,



2 þá's sloknar Surtalogi;  
 Móði ok Magni · skulu Mjǫlni hafa  
 4 Vingnis at vígþroti.

“Wider<sup>P</sup> and Wonnel<sup>P</sup> inhabit the wighs<sup>C</sup> of the gods, when the flame of Surt goes out. Mood<sup>P</sup> and Main<sup>P</sup> shall own Millner<sup>P</sup>, when Wingner<sup>P</sup> is too tired to fight.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>lit. ‘at Wingner’s fight-exhaustion,’ referring to his death.

[Gainred quoth:]

52 Eǵlǫð ek fór, · fǵlǫð fręistaða’k,  
 2 fǵlǫð ek ręynda ręgin;  
 hvat verðr Óðni · at aldrłagi,  
 4 þá's rǵufask ręgin?

[R REGTODO, A 3v/16]

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins. What brings Weden’s life to an end, when the Reins are rent?<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>Formulaic; see *Dreams* 14 and Note.

[Webthritner quoth:]

53 Ulfr gļęypa · mun Aldafǫðr,  
 2 þess mun Vǫðarr vřeka;  
 kalda kǵapta · hann klyfja mun  
 4 vitnis vígi at.

[R REGTODO, A 3v/17]

“The wolf will devour Eldfather<sup>P</sup> (= Weden); that will Wider avenge. The cold jaws he will cleave, of the Wolf at the battle.”

[Gainred quoth:]

54 Eǵlǫð ek fór, · fǵlǫð fręistaða’k,  
 2 fǵlǫð ek ręynda ręgin;  
 hvat męłti Óðinn, · áðr á bál stigi,  
 4 sǵalfr í ęyra sȳni?

[R REGTODO, A 3v/19]

“Much I journeyed, much I tried, much I tested the Reins. What spoke Weden, before [he = Balder] would mount the pyre,<sup>a</sup> himself in the ear of the son [= Balder]?”

<sup>a</sup>I agree with Finnur Jónsson (1932) that the subject is *sonr* ‘son’ from the next line. The phrase *stíga á* ‘step onto, mount’ is also used to refer to one stepping aboard a ship or mounting a horse (see CV: *stíga* for citations), and so its use for a person being borne onto the pyre seems formulaic. This has been compared with *Beowulf* 1118b: *gúðrinc ástáb* ‘the warrior mounted [his pyre]’, but the interpretation of that line is not controversial; Fulk et al. (2008)[186] follow Grundtvig in emending *gúðrinc* to *gúðréc* ‘war-smoke’, relating it to *Beowulf* 3144b

(*wuduréc ástáb* ‘wood-smoke rose up’, also in a description of a cremation). They state that *Grimner* 54 ‘almost certainly refers not to Baldr but to Óðinn, probably imagined to mount the pyre in order to set fire to it.’

[Webthrithner quoth:]

[R REGTODO, A 3v/19]

55 Eȝ manngi v̥eit, · hvat þú í árdaga  
2 sagðir í ȝyra syni;  
f̥eigum munni · mēlta’k mína f̥orna stafi  
4 ok of ragna r̥ok.

“Ever no man knows, what thou in days of yore saidst in the ear of the son. With ʀfey<sup>Ca</sup> mouth I spoke my ancient ʀstaves<sup>C</sup>, and of the Rakes of the Reins.

1 manngi] *manni* dat. sg. RA is impossible; a subject is needed.

<sup>a</sup>Webthrithner realizes that he was bound to die (*f̥eigr* ‘fey’, a word with strong fatalistic connotations) from the moment he proposed the wager (v. 19), as no being can outwit Weden.

[R REGTODO, A 3v/21]

56 Nú við Óðin · deilda’k mína orðsp̥eki;  
2 þú ert ȝ v̥isastr vera.

Now with Weden I shared my word-wisdom;<sup>a</sup> thou art ever wisest of beings.<sup>b</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>The same word-wisdom Weden in v. 5 set out to try.

<sup>b</sup>*verr* literally means ‘husband, man,’ but here surely in the broader sense of ‘(male) being’. For other instances of gods being called men, see TODO.

# Dreams of Balder (*Baldrs draumar*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C9th (0.110)–C10th (0.890)

Meter: *Firnwörðslaw*

In ancient manuscripts only preserved in A, but the poem also survives in later manuscripts with a few extra verses (see below). It follows the structure of a riddle contest.

The poem begins *in medias res*; ʀBalder<sup>P</sup> has been having nightmares, and so the gods meet at the Thing to figure out why (1). ʀWeden<sup>P</sup> rides to ʀHell<sup>L</sup>, where he has an encounter with a bloody dog (2). It barks for a long time at him, but he passes it and continues to “the high house of ʀHell<sup>P</sup>” (3), from which he rides west, to the grave of a certain ʀwallow<sup>C</sup>, whom he revives using magic (4). She asks which man has forced her out of the grave (5), and Weden introduces himself as Waytame, before asking for whom the benches of Hell are covered with gold (6). The wallow responds that barrels of mead stand brewed for Balder and that the gods are very anxious (7). Weden asks her who will slay Balder (8), and she responds that it is Hath, carrying a “high fame-beam” (9). Weden then asks her who will avenge Balder’s death by slaying Hath (10). The wallow responds that ʀRind<sup>P</sup> will give birth to Weden’s son ʀWonne<sup>P</sup>, who will slay Hath when only one night old (11). Weden then asks about some mysterious maidens (12; see Note), which betrays his identity. The wallow tells him that she now knows his true identity, to which Weden responds that he does as well: she is not a wallow, but rather the “mother of three thurses” (13). The wallow tells him to ride home and “be famous”; he must still die at the ʀRakes of the Reins<sup>L</sup> (14).

- 
- 1    Senn vǫru ésir · allir á þingi  
2    ok ósynjur · allar á máli,  
     ok of þat réðu · ríkir tívar:  
4    hví véri Baldri · ballir draumar?

[A 1v/18]

Soon were the ʀEase<sup>G</sup> all at the ʀThing<sup>C</sup>, and the ʀOssens<sup>G</sup> all at speech, and of this counseled the mighty ʀTues<sup>G</sup>:<sup>a</sup> Why did Balder have troubling dreams?

---

<sup>a</sup>Identical to *Thrim* 13.

- [A 1v/19]      2    Upp reís Óðinn, · aldinn gautr,  
                  2    ok hann á Sleiþni · sǫðul of lagði,  
                  reïð niðr þaðan · niðhēljār til;  
                  4    mǫtti hvelpi, · þeim's ór hēlju kom.

Up rose Weden—the aged Geat—and he on ʀSlapner<sup>P</sup> the saddle did lay; rode down thence to ʀNivelhell<sup>L</sup>; met the whelp that out of Hell came.

- [A 1v/21]      3    Sá vas blóðugr · of brjóst framan,  
                  2    ok galdrs fǫður · gól oflengi,  
                  framm reïð Óðinn, · foldvegr dunði,  
                  4    kom at hǫu · Hēljār ranni.

That one was bloody on the front of the chest, and at the father of ʀgalder<sup>C</sup> [= Weden] for a long time bayed.—Forth rode Weden, the fold-way [EARTH] resounded;<sup>a</sup> he came to the high house of Hell.

<sup>a</sup>A similarity may be noted with the description of ʀThunder<sup>P</sup>'s riding in *Harvest-long* 14: *dunði ... mána vegr und bǫnum* 'the moon's way [HEAVEN] [...] resounded beneath him') and *Thrim* 20; see also note there.

- [A 1v/22]      4    Þá reïð Óðinn · fyr austan dyrr,  
                  2    þar's hann vissi · vǫlu leiði;  
                  nam hann vittugri · valgaldr kveða,  
                  4    unz nauðug reís, · nás orð of kvað:

Then rode Weden east from the door, there as he knew the wallow's grave; he took to sing a corpse-ʀgalder<sup>C<sup>a</sup></sup> for the cunning woman, until forced she rose, a corpse's words did speak:

<sup>a</sup>An incantation to wake her up; cf. *High* 156 where Weden describes a spell that can revive hanged men.

- [The wallow quoth:]  
 [A 1v/24]      5    „Hvat 's manna þat · mér ókunnra,  
                  2    es mér hefʀ aukit · ǣfitt sinni;  
                  vas'k snifin snévi, · ok slęgin regni,  
                  4    ok drifin dǫggu, · dauð vas'k lęngi.“

“What sort of man is that, unknown to me, who has caused for me this toilsome journey?<sup>a</sup> I was snowed by snow and struck by rain and sprayed with dew;<sup>b</sup> dead was I for long.”

<sup>a</sup>i.e. out of the grave.

<sup>b</sup>Cf. *HHund II* 47–48 (TODO).

[Weden quoth:]

- 6 „Vegtamr hęiti’k, · sonr em’k Valtams, [A 1v/25]  
 2 sęg męr őr hęlju, · ek őr hęimi mun,  
 hveim eru bękkir · baugum sánir?  
 4 flęt fagrliga · flóuð eru golli.“

“Waytame I am called, I am Waltame’s son; tell me the news of Hell—I will [tell thee those] of the world. For whom are the benches sown with †bighs<sup>C</sup>? Fairly are the rooms flooded with gold.”

[The wallow quoth:]

- 7 „Hér stęndr Baldri · of brugginn mjøðr, [A 1v/27]  
 2 skírar vęigar, · liggr skjöldr yfir,  
 en ásmęgir · í ofvęni;  
 4 nauðug sagða’k, · nú mun’k þęgja.“

“Here stands brewed for Balder mead; pure draughts—a shield lies over [them];<sup>a</sup> but the os-lads [= Ease] [stand] in great suspense; forced I spoke, now I will shut up.”

<sup>a</sup>Shields covering casks of mead is a common trope. Cf. TODO.

[Weden quoth:]

- 8 „Þęgj-at vølva, · þik vil’k fregna, [A 1v/29]  
 2 unz ’s alkunna, · vil’k ęnn vita,  
 hvęrr mun Baldri · at bana verða,  
 4 ok Óðins son · aldri ręna?“

“Shut not up, wallow; thee I wish to ask! Until all is known I wish to know further: Who will for Balder become the bane, and Weden’s son [= Balder] rob of age?”

[The wallow quoth:]

- 9 „Hjōðr berr hōvan · hróðrbaðm þinig, [A 2r/1]  
 2 hann mun Baldri · at bana verða,  
 ok Óðins son · aldri ręna;  
 4 nauðug sagða’k, · nú mun’k þęgja.“

“†Hath<sup>P</sup> bears the high fame-beam [MISTLETOE] thither;<sup>a</sup> he will for Balder become the bane, and Weden’s son [= Balder] rob of age; forced I spoke, now I will shut up.”

<sup>a</sup>Cf. particularly

[Weden quoth:]

- [A 2r/3] **10** „Þegj-at vǫlva, · þik vil’k fregna,  
 2 unz ’s alkunna, · vil’k enn vita,  
 hverr mun heipt Hęði · hefnt of vinna,  
 4 eða Baldrs bana · á bál vega?“

“Shut not up, wallow; thee I wish to ask! Until all is known I wish to know further: Who will for avenge that evil-doing on Hath, or drag onto the pyre Balder’s bane [= Hath]?”

[The wallow quoth:]

- [A 2r/4] **11** „Rindr berr Vála · í vestrsolum,  
 2 sá mun Óðins sonr · einnéttir vega;  
 hond of þver-at · né hofuð kembir,  
 4 áðr á bál of berr · Baldrs andskota;  
 nauðug sagða’k, · nú mun’k þegja.“

“Rind bears ‘Wonne’<sup>P</sup> in the western halls; that one will, Weden’s son, one night old, fight. His hand he washes not, nor head combs, before onto the pyre he bears Balder’s opponent [= Hath]; forced I spoke, now I will shut up.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>The similarity in wording to the treatment of this myth in *Wallow* is striking; apart from the tense, ll. 2–4 here are identical to 32/4–33/2 there (for discussion on the narrative see Note to *Wallow* 32). The irregularity of the verse length could suggest that a line has been inserted in analogy with the aforementioned poem.

[Weden quoth:]

- [A 2r/6] **12** „Þegj-at vǫlva, · þik vil’k fregna,  
 2 unz ’s alkunna, · vil’k enn vita,  
 hverjar ’ru meýjar, · es at muni gráta  
 4 ok á himin verpa · halsaskautum?“

“Shut not up, wallow; thee I wish to ask! Until all is known I wish to know further: Which are the maidens that weep as they wish, and onto heaven throw their throat-corners?<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>According to *Ylfir* 49 Hell promised to give Balder back to the Ease if “all things in the world, living and dead, cry for him”. The Ease relayed this message, and “the men and the animals and the earth and the stones and trees and all metals” cried for Balder. It may be that these maidens were included among the grievors (perhaps they were the walkiries, and this is what reveals Weden’s identity?), but their identity is otherwise unknown.

[The wallow quoth:]

- [A 2r/8] **13** „Ert-at Vegtamr, · sem ek hugða,  
 2 heldr ert Óðinn, · aldinn gautr.“  
 „Ert-at vǫlva · né vís kona,

4      hęldr ert þriggja · þursa móðir.

“Thou art not Waytame, as I thought; rather art thou Weden, the aged Geat!”—“Thou art not a ʀwallow<sup>C</sup>, nor a wise woman; rather art thou of three ʀThurses<sup>G</sup> the mother!”

[The wallow quoth:]

14    „Hęim rið Óðinn · ok hróðigr ves,  
2      svá komi-t manna · męirr aptr á vit,  
         es lauss Lōki · líðr ór bōndum  
4      ok ragna rōk · rjufęndr koma.“

[A 2r/9]

“Ride home Weden, and be renowned!<sup>a</sup> So may no other man come again to visit [me], when loose, Lock passes out of his bonds, and [at] the ʀRakes of the Reins<sup>P</sup> the renders come.<sup>b</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>A sarcastic, taunting statement, the sense being: “Your renown, Weden, will not save you at the ʀRakes of the Reins<sup>L</sup>.”

<sup>b</sup>The *rjufęndr* ‘renders’ are presumably Surt and Lock with his children, as described in *Wallow* 40 ff. The root *rjuf-* ‘CV: to break, rip up, break a hole in’ is also used in this context in the formulaic *þá’s rjufask ręgin* ‘when the ʀReins<sup>G</sup> are rent’ (*Webthritbner* 52), *unz (of) rjufask ręgin* ‘until the Reins are rent’ (*Grimner* 4, *Lock* TODO and *Sighdrive* TODO).

Late verses in paper manuscripts? TODO





# The Speeches of the High One

## (*Hávamól*)

The **Speeches of the High One** is the second poem of **R**, which is also the only ancient manuscript in which it is attested. Several verses are however cited in other places, such as Eyv *Hák* (TODO: formatting) 21 and *FbrS* TODO.

The poem as it currently comes down to us hardly seems like a single composition, much rather like a grab bag of traditional verses and poems associated with the god Woden. It combines two separate advice-poems with verses concerning Woden's love adventures, runes and spells. Little unites these various strands other than their speaker.

Following previous authors, I identify several such strands, excepting various lone insert-verses. In the present edition each of them is given a separate, short introduction:

- 1–79 The Guest-strand; practical life advice placed within the context of a guest arriving at a homestead.
- 81–89 Other verses of advice, mostly composed in *Firnwordslaw*.
- 90–101 Woden's failed seduction of Billing's maiden.
- 102–109 Woden's obtaining of the Mead of Poetry
- 110–135 The Speeches of Loddfathomer; Woden's advice to Loddfathomer.
- 136–144 The Rune-tally; various verses relating to runes.
- 145–163 The Leed-tally; Woden's listing of 18 spells.
- 164 Final verse, composed when the poem as we have it was assembled.

Whatever their origins, it is clear from the final verse that they have been thought of as a single work, but it is notable that this verse, which also contains the title *Hávamól* 'Speeches of the High One', is highly metrically irregular. It has likely been composed by the person who assembled the disparate elements listed above into one text.

---

## The Guest-strand

The Guest-Strand (Old Norse: *Gestabáttir*) is possibly the finest work in Norse poetry. Sadly, its structure has been obscured by various inserted and possibly displaced verses. My hope is to shed some light on the original vision behind the poem, while as usual not changing the order of verses as they appear in the only surviving witness manuscript.

The poem moves through many elements of life, but in a poetically almost seamless way. To move from one topic to another, the poet often employs transitions where a verse recalls the structure of the previous one, but with a new subject. This is particularly evident in verses 4–5 and 10–11.

The strand begins with a verse encouraging travellers to be wary of entering strange houses without first spying out who is inside (1), after which a voice inside of a farmstead (possibly Weden?) announces that a guest is waiting to be let in (2). The same speaker then lists several things which the newly arrived guest needs from the host, namely: fire, food and clothes (3), water, a towel, a great welcome, a good reception, an opportunity to speak and silence in return (4).

After this focus shifts to the conduct of the wanderer, with an introductory verse explaining that he needs wit (specifically *manwit*<sup>C</sup> (*manvit*); see Encyclopedia), lest he become a laughing-stock (5). He should be silent but attentive, and choose his words carefully (6–7). He should be confident in himself and his own decisions, and not rely too much on the opinions of others (8–9), since there is nothing better one may bring along on the journey than much *manwit* (10).

Here the advice moves to the subject alcohol. Where the best thing one may bring along on the journey is *manwit*, the worst is too much ale (11). It is not as good as men call it (12) since it “robs [them] of their senses”; it is even personified as a “heron of forgetfulness” (13). A drinking round is best when the participants do not drink too much, but rather regain their senses afterwards (14).

Verse 15 contains some general advice; a royal child should be silent, thoughtful and bold in battle, and all men should stay happy, until they die.

TODO.

- 
- 1    Gáttir allar · áðr gangi framm  
 2        of skoðask skyli,  
       of skygnask skyli;  
 4    því't óvíst 's at vita, · hvar óvinir  
       sitja á flęti fyrir.

All doorways—before one might go forth—should be watched, should be spied at; for uncertain 'tis to know, where enemies sit on the benches inside.

---

2 of skoðask skyli ] om. G

- 2    Gefęndr heilir, · gęstr 's inn kominn,

2        hvar skal sitja sjá?  
           mjök es bráðr · sá's á bröndum skal  
 4        síns of fręista frama.

Hail the givers,<sup>a</sup> a guest is come in! Where shall this one sit? Very impatient is he, who on the fires shall try his distinction.<sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>The hosts.

<sup>b</sup>Possibly referring a Norwegian folk custom, wherein a guest would sit down on the wood-pile outside of the door, waiting until being let in. See further TODO SOME ARTICLE on this custom. The speaker thus announces to the hosts that a frozen, wet and tired guest has arrived and currently sits impatiently on the wood-pile, and ought to be taken in.

3        Elds es þorfr · þeim's inn es kominn  
 2        ok á knúi kalinn,  
           matar ok váða · es manni þorfr,  
 4        þeim's hefr of fjall farit.

Of fire is there need for the one who is come in, and cold about the knees; of food and of clothing is there need for the one who over the fell has fared.

4        Vats es þorfr · þeim's til verðar kómr,  
 2        þerru ok þjóðlaðar,  
           góðs of óðis, · —ef sér geta mętti—  
 4        orðs ok ģndrþęgu.

Of water is there need for the one who comes for a meal; of a towel and of a great welcome; of a good reception—if he might get one—of speech, and of silence in return.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>There is a well thought-out linear progression throughout this verse. The guest must first wash himself, then dry himself with a towel, then be welcomed to sit and eat at the table and speak with the host. The host has done his part, and now it is the guest's turn. This nicely leads the transition to the following verses, where the proper conduct of the guest (first in speech, and then in various other areas) is discussed.

5        Vits es þorfr · þeim's víða ratar;  
 2        dełt es hęima hvat;  
           at augabragði · verðr sá's ģkki kann  
 4        ok með snotrum sitr.

Of wit is there need for the one who widely roams; everything is easy at home. A laughing-stock<sup>a</sup> becomes he who nothing knows, and among the clever sits.

---

<sup>a</sup>An idiom, *augabragđ* lit. 'twinkling of an eye, moment'.

6 At hyggjandi sinni · skyli-t maðr hrósinn vesa,  
 2 heldr gétinn at gæði,  
þá's horskr ok þogull · kømr hëimisgarða til,  
 4 sjaldan verðr víti vorum.  
því't óbrigðra vin · fēr aldrigi,  
 6 an manvit mikit.

Of his thinking should man not be boastful; rather guarding of his senses, when sharp and silent he comes to a homestead; sudden injury seldom strikes the wary, (for thou gettest never an unfickler friend, than much ʀmanwit<sup>C</sup>.)

---

5–6 því ... mikit ] The shift in person from third to second, along with the abnormal verse length (six lines instead of four), indicates that this is an insertion.

7 Hinn væri gæstr, · es til verðar kømr,  
 2 þunnu hljóði þęgir;  
ęyrum hlýðir, · en augum skaçar,  
 4 svá nýsisk fróðra hverr fyrir.

The wary guest—when for a meal he comes—with thin heed shuts up.<sup>a</sup> With ears he heeds, but with eyes observes; so pries each learned man about.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. is in attentive silence.

8 Hinn es sęll, · es sér of getr  
 2 lof ok líknstafi;  
óðęlla es við þat, · es ęiga skal  
 4 annars brjóstum í.

The one is blessed, who for himself gets praise and staves of grace. 'Tis uneasy regarding that which one shall own in another man's breast.

9 Sá es sęll, · es sjalfr of á  
 2 lof ok vit meðan lífr;  
því't ill rýð · hefr maðr opt þęgit  
 4 annars brjóstum ór.

That one is blessed, whose self owns praise and wits while he lives; for ill counsels has man oft taken out of another man's breast.

10 Byrði bętri · berr-at maðr brautu at,

- 2            an sé manvit mikit;  
              auði bętra · þykkir þat í ókunnum stað;  
 4            slíkt es válaðs vera.

A better burden bears man not on the road than much manwit. In an unknown place it seems better than wealth; such is the shelter of the impoverished.

- 11        Byrði bętri · berr-at maðr brautu at,  
 2            an sé manvit mikit;  
              vegnest verra · vegr-a vęlli at,  
 4            an sé ofdrykkja ols.

A better burden bears man not on the road than much manwit. Worse way-provision he drags not along in the field<sup>a</sup> than a too great drink of ale.

---

<sup>a</sup>*vęllr* 'plain, (uncultivated) field' is repeated in vv. 38 and 49. It is easily understood that the heaths and plains of Iron Age Norway were particularly unsafe places, where a traveller needed to keep his wits with him, lest he fall victim to robbers or murderers.

- 12        Es-a svá gótt, · sęm gótt kveða,  
 2            ol alda sonum;  
              því't fęra veit, · es fęira drekkr,  
 4            síns til gęðs gumi.

'Tis not so good, as good they say, ale for the sons of men; for the less he knows, as the more he drinks, man of his own senses.

- 13        Óminnishegri heitir, · sá's yfir olðrum þrumir,  
 2            hann stelr gęði guma;  
              þess fogls fjõðrum · ek fjõtraðr vas'k  
 4            í garði Gunnlaðar.

The heron of forgetfulness is that one called, who above ale-feasts hovers; he robs men of their senses.<sup>a</sup> With that bird's feathers I was fettered in the yards of ʀGuthlathe<sup>P</sup>.

---

<sup>a</sup>Here drunkenness is personified as a hovering bird, a "heron of forgetfulness".

- 14        Qlr ek varð, · varð ofrõlvi,  
 2            at hins fróða Fjalars;  
              því es olðr bazt, · at aptr of heimtir  
 4            hvęrr sitt gęð gumi.

Drunk I became—I became the drunkest by far—at the learned Fealer’s [home]. Thus is an ale-feast best, as each man takes his senses back home.

- 15     Þagalt ok hugalt · skyli þjóðans barn  
              2        ok vígdjarft vesa;  
              glaðr ok reifr · skyli gumna hvęrr,  
              4        unz sinn biðr bana.

Silent and thoughtful should the ruler’s child be, and battle-bold. Glad and cheerful should each man be, until he suffer his bane.

- 16     Ósnjallr maðr · hyggsk munu ey lifa,  
              2        ef við víg varask;  
              en elli gefr hōnum · engi frið,  
              4        þótt hōnum gęirar gęfi.

The unvalorous man thinks he will forever live, if he of war is wary; but old age gives him no peace, although spears might give him.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>He might have been spared by the spears, but death will still find him. The underlying meaning seems to be that since death is unavoidable it is better to live bravely, even if one risks dying in battle, than to live cowardly and die of old age. This verse connects well to the ancient view of the ‘straw-death’.

- 17     Kópir afglapi, · es til kynnis kōmr,  
              2        þylsk hann umb eða þrumir;  
              alt es sęnn, · ef sýlg of getr,  
              4        uppi es þá gęð guma.

Gapes the oaf when to visit he comes; he mumbles about or loiters. All at once—if a sip he gets—are the senses of the man exposed.

- 18     Sá einn vęit, · es víða ratar  
              2        ok hęfr fīqlð of farit,  
              hvērju gęði · stýrir gumna hvęrr,  
              4        sá es vitandi ’s vits.

He alone knows, who widely roams, and has travelled much: his own senses does each man control, who is aware of his wits.

- 19     Haldi-t maðr á kęri, · drekki þó at hófi mjðð,

- 2            méli þarft eða þegi;  
               ókynnis þess · váar þik ęngi maðr,  
 4            at gangir snimma at sofa.

Man ought not to hold onto the cask; yet drink mead in moderation;<sup>a</sup> he ought to speak the needful or shut up.<sup>b</sup> For that uncouthness will no man blame thee, that thou go early to sleep.

<sup>a</sup>Drinking horns at this time could not be set down, and so to “hold onto” one was presumably an expression for not drinking. The verse may also be referring to the toasting ritual wherein a single vessel would be passed around and drunk from by each person (indeed this is the origin of the Scandinavian toasting-word, *skål* ‘prosit; cheers!’, but lit. ‘bowl!’). In such an event “holding onto” the vessel and refusing to drink was rude; in 1519 a man in Jämtland was killed in an argument resulting from his refusal to pass on to the bowl (see Sjöberg (1907)).

<sup>b</sup>Identical to *Webbtrithner* 10/2.

- 20        Gróðugr halr, · nema gęðs viti,  
               etr sér aldrtrega;  
               opt fęr hlógis, · es með horskum kęmr,  
               manni hęmskum magi.

The gluttonous man—unless he know his sense—eats himself a life-sorrow. Oft the belly—when among the sharp he comes—brings a foolish man ridicule.

- 21        Hjarðir þat vitu, · nęr hęim skulu,  
               ok ganga þá af grasi;  
               en ósviðr maðr · kann ęvagi  
               síns of mál maga.

Herds know when homewards they shall [turn], and then part from the grass; but an unwise man never knows the measure of his own belly.

- 22        Vesall maðr · ok illa skapi  
               hlęr at hvívetna;  
               hitki hann vęit, · es vita þyrpti,  
               at hann es-a yamma yanr.

The wretched man, and the ill-spirited, laughs at whatever. This he knows not, which he might need to know: he is not free of blemishes.

- 23        Ósviðr maðr · vakir umb allar nętr  
               ok hyggj at hvívetna;

þá es móðr, · es at morni kømr;  
 4 alt es víl sẽm vas.

The unwise man is awake for all nights, and thinks of whatever. Then he is weary when the morning comes; [his] trouble is all as it was.

24 Ósnotr maðr · hyggr sér alla vesa  
 2 viðrhléjendr vini;  
 hit-ki hann fíðr, · þótt þeir of hann fár lesi,  
 4 ef með snotrum sitr.

The unclever man thinks all who laugh with him friends. This he finds not, that they find flaws in him, if among the clever he sits.

25 Ósnotr maðr · hyggr sér alla vesa  
 2 viðhléjendr vini;  
 þá þat fíðr · es at þingi kømr,  
 4 at á formélendr fåa.

The unclever man thinks all who laugh with him friends. Then he finds—when to the Thing<sup>C</sup> he comes—that he has spokesmen few.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Repeated in v. 62. He has few who are ready to take his side and speak up for him; the sense is that true friends are proven in conflict, not in talking. The Thing (see Encyclopedia) was the old Germanic legal assembly, and so the specific reference here is legal disputes, but it should be kept in mind that they could easily turn into deadly feuds.

26 Ósnotr maðr · þykkisk alt vita,  
 2 ef á sér i vó veru;  
 hitki hann vẽit, · hvat hann skal við kveða,  
 4 ef hans fręista firar.

The unclever man seems to know everything if he takes shelter in a nook. This he knows not, what he shall say in return if men test him.

27 Ósnotr maðr, · es með aldir kømr,  
 2 þat 's bazt at hann þęgi;  
 ęngi þat vẽit, · at hann ękki kann,  
 4 nema hann męli til mart.  
 vęit-a maðr, · hinn's vętki vẽit,  
 6 þótt hann męli til mart.



The unclever man, when among people he comes, 'tis best that he shut up. None knows that he nothing knows, unless he speak too much. Man knows not, who nothing knows, although he speak too much.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>That is, mindless speech will not make him any wiser.

28    Fróðr sá þykkisk, · es fregna kann,  
       2        ok sęja hit sama,  
       ęyvitu lęyna · męgu ýta synir  
       4        því es gęngr of guma.

Learned seems he who can ask and answer the same. Naught may the sons of men conceal of that<sup>a</sup> which goes about a man.

---

<sup>a</sup>Rumours and gossip.

29    Örna męlr, · sá's ęva þęgir,  
       2        staðlausu stafi;  
       hraðmęlt tunga, · nema haldęndr ęigi,  
       4        opt sér ógótt of gęlr.

Quite enough speaks he—who never shuts up—utterings of absurdity. A quick-spoken tongue—unless it be held in place<sup>a</sup>—oft sings evil [into being] for itself.

---

<sup>a</sup>lit. 'unless holders own it' or 'unless it own holders'. The 'holders' may perhaps refer to the teeth holding the tongue in places.

30    At augabragði · skal-a maðr annan hafa,  
       2        þótt til kynnis komi;  
       margr fróðr þykkisk, · ef freginn es-at  
       4        ok nái þurrfjallr þruma.

As a laughing-stock shall man not have another, although he come to visit. Many a one seems learned if he is not asked, and manages to loiter about dry-skinned.<sup>a</sup>

---

2 þótt "although"] Perhaps an error? *es* 'when' would surely work better in context.

---

<sup>a</sup>This sense of *fjall* is apparently almost non-existent in Old Norse literature, but compare Swedish *fjäll* 'scale (on fish and reptiles)'. The meaning is in any case figurative, equivalent to the English "get one's feet wet".

31    Fróðr þykkisk · sá's flótta tękr

2            gęstr at gęst hęðinn;  
              vęit-a gęrla · sá's of verði glissir,  
 4            þótt með gręmum glami.

Learned seems he who takes to flee<sup>a</sup> when a guest at a guest is scoffing. He knows not clearly, who grins above the food, that he with fiends be prattling.

1 flótta 'flee'] Emended to *flátta* 'mock' by Guðmundur Finnbogason (1929)

<sup>a</sup>Probably not literally, rather 'pulls back, does not take part'.

32        Gumnar margir · erusk gagnhollir,  
              en at virði vrekask;  
              aldar róg · þat mun é vesa;  
 4            órir gęstr við gęst.

Many men are 'hold<sup>C</sup> to each other, but over a meal drive each other away. The strife of mankind will that ever be; guest raves against guest.

33        Árliga verðar · skyli maðr opt fáa,  
              nema til kynnis komi;  
              sitr ok snópir, · léttr sęm solginn sé,  
 4            ok kann fregna at fęu.

An early meal should man oft get, unless he come to visit: he sits and idles haplessly, makes as if starved, and can ask about little.

34        Afhvarf mikit · es til ills vinar,  
              þótt á brautu búi,  
              en til góðs vinar · liggja gagnvegir,  
 4            þótt hann sé firr farinn.

A great detour 'tis to a wicked friend, although he on the highway live; but to a good friend lie the shortest ways, although he far gone be.

35        Ganga skal, · skal-a gęstr vesa  
              ęy í ęinum stað;  
              ljúfr verðr leiðr, · ef lengi sitr  
 4            annars fletjum á.

One shall go; shall not be a guest forever in one place. The loved becomes loathed if for long he sits on another man's benches.

- 36    Bú es bętra, · þótt lítit sé,  
       2        halr es hęima hęęrr;  
           þótt tvęr gęitr ęigi · ok taugreętan sal,  
       4        þat es þó bętra an bón.

A dwelling is better, though small it be: each is a warrior at home. Though two goats he own, and a cord-roofed hall, that is yet better than begging.

- 37    Bú es bętra, · þótt lítit sé,  
       2        halr es hęima hęęrr;  
           blóðugt es hjarta · þęim's biðja skal  
       4        sér í mál hęert matar.

A dwelling is better, though small it be: each is a warrior at home. Bloody is the heart of the one who shall beg for himself each meal of food.

- 38    Vópnum sínum · skal-a maðr vęlli á  
       2        feti ganga framarr;  
           því't óvíst 's at vita, · nęr verðr á vegum úti  
       4        gęirs of þorf guma.

From his weapons shall man in the field not take one step further; for uncertain 'tis to know, when on the ways outside, man comes in need of a spear.

2 *feti ganga framarr* 'take one step further'] Cf. *Lock* 1: *svát ęinugi feti gangir framarr*, 'so that thou not take one step further'.

- 39    Fann'k-a mildan mann · eða svá matar góðan,  
       2        at vęri-t þiggja þęgit;  
           eða síns fęar · svági [...],  
       4        at lęið sé laun, ef þęgi.

I found not a generous man, or one so 'good of meat<sup>C</sup>, that a gift were not accepted; or one of his 'fee<sup>C</sup> so not [...], that the rewards were loathed, if he accepted [them].<sup>a</sup>

1 *matar góðan* 'good of meat'] A Viking Age expression; see Encyclopedia.

3 [...] It is doubtless that a word has been lost here; the meter and sense require it. Finnur Jónsson (1932) suggests *glęggvan* 'miserly, stingy', giving a litotes 'so not stingy', i.e., 'so generous'.

<sup>a</sup>No man is so generous that he would refuse a gift presented to him, nor loathe receiving a favour as thanks for his generosity.

- 40    Fęar síns, · es fęngit hęfr,

- 2 skyli-t maðr þorð þola;  
 opt sparir leiðum · þat's hefr ljúfum hugat;  
 4 mart gengr verr an varir.

Of his own fee<sup>C</sup>, which he has earned, should man not suffer need. Oft one saves for the loathed what was meant for the loved; many a thing goes worse than one expects.

- 41 Vopnum ok vóðum · skulu vinir glæðjask;  
 2 þat 's á sjölfum sýnst;  
 viðrgefendr ok endrgefendr · erusk vinir lengst,  
 4 ef þat bíðr at verða vël.

With weapons and garments shall friends gladden each other; that is most seen on one-self.<sup>a</sup> Mutual givers and return-givers are friends for the longest, if it<sup>b</sup> is to last long.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. in one's own lived experience.

<sup>b</sup>The friendship.

- 42 Vin sínum · skal maðr vinr vesa,  
 2 ok gjalda gjof við gjof;  
 hlátr við hlátri · skyli hǫldar taka,  
 4 en lausung við lygi.

With his friend shall man be a friend, and reward gift against gift; laughter against laughter should men take, but duplicity against lie.

- 43 Vin sínum · skal maðr vinr vesa,  
 2 þeim ok þess vin;  
 en óvinar síns · skyli engi maðr  
 4 vinar vinr vesa.

With his friend shall man be a friend, with him and his friend; but with his enemy's, should no man, friend's friend be.

- 44 Veiðt, ef vin átt, · þann's vël trúir  
 2 ok vilt af hǫnum gótt geta,  
 gæði skalt við þann · ok gjofum skipta,  
 4 fara at finna opt.

Know, if thou have a friend, one on which thou well trust, and wilt receive good from: mind and gifts shalt thou share with him; journey to find him oft.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>This verse is closely related to 117, which seems like an abridged version of this one.

45    Ef þú átt annan, · þann's þú illa trúir,  
       2        vilt af hönum þó gótt geta,  
       fagrt skalt mēla, · en flátt hyggja  
       4        ok gjalda lausung við lygi.

If thou have another, one on which thou badly trust, and wilt yet receive good from:  
 fairly shalt thou speak, but falsely think, and pay duplicity against lie.

46    Þat 's enn umb þann, · es þú illa trúir  
       2        ok þér es grunr at gæði,  
       hléja skalt við þeim · ok of hug mēla;  
       4        glík skulu gjöld gjofum.

'Tis yet regarding that one, on which thou badly trustest, and who causes thy senses  
 doubt:<sup>a</sup> laugh shalt thou with him, and speak with care; rewards shall be equal to gifts.<sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>lit. "and for thee is doubt in senses".

<sup>b</sup>Equivalent to the last line of the previous v. ("reward duplicity against lie").

47    Ungr vas'k forðum, · fór'k einn saman,  
       2        þá varð'k villr vega;  
       auðigr þóttumk, · es annan fann'k,  
       4        maðr es manns gaman.

Young was I once, I travelled alone; then I became lost about the ways. Wealthy I thought  
 myself when another one I found; man is man's pleasure.

48    Mildir fróknir · menn bazt lifa,  
       2        sjaldan sút ala;  
       ósniðallr maðr · uggir hvatvetna,  
       4        sýtir é glöggr við gjofum.

Generous, bold men live the best; seldom they nourish grief. The unvalorous man is  
 frightened by whatever; ever the stingy man grieves a gifts.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Refer back to v. 39; after receiving a gift, one was culturally obliged to give something back.

- 49    Váðir mínar · gaf'k velli at  
       2        tveim trémønnum;  
       rekkar þat þóttusk, · es ript hofðu;  
       4        nęiss es nökkviðr halr.

My garments I gave in the field, to two tree-men. Champions they seemed when cloaks they had; shameful is the naked warrior.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>One of the hardest verses in the poem. After much thought I consider the probable sense to be that the clothes make the warrior; under expensive gear a thin tree-man might be hiding, and likewise even a strong man (I see the choice of the word *halr* 'warrior' rather than the more neutral *maðr* 'man, person' as intentional) when naked and facing a heavily armoured opponent becomes as vulnerable as the 'tree-man' on a plain.

- 50    Hrórnar þoll, · sú's stęndr þorpi á,  
       2        hlýrat hęnni þorkr né barr;  
       svá es maðr, · sá's manngi ann;  
       4        hvat skal hann lęngi lifa?

Wilters the pine that stands on the yard; shields her not bark nor needle. So is the man who loves none; for what shall he live for long?

- 51    Eldi hęitari · brinnr með illum vinum  
       2        friðr fimm daga,  
       en þá slokna, · es hinn sętti kōmr,  
       4        ok versnar allr vinskapr.

Hotter than fire burns peace among bad friends, for ʀ five days<sup>C,a</sup>; but then goes out when the sixth one comes, and all the friendship worsens.

<sup>a</sup>A reference to the five-day week (see also v. 74); the number is symbolic. See further Encyclopedia.

- 52    Mikit ęitt · skal-a manni gefa;  
       2        opt kaupir sér í lítlu lof,  
       með holfum hlęif · ok með hollu kęri  
       4        fekk ek mér fęlaga.

Much at once shall one not give a man; oft one buys oneself praise for little. With half a loaf and an awry cask, I got me a companion.

- 53    Lítilla sanda, · lítilla sęva,  
       2        lítil eru gęð guma;  
       því't allir męnn · urðu-t jafnspakir;

4            holf es old hvar.

Of small sands, of small seas; small are the senses of man. For all have not become evenly knowing; half is every man.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>The genitive “of small sands, of small seas” is probably a partitive; man’s horizons are small, the universe is far greater than he, and always will be. On the meaning of the second half of the verse I find that of Gudmundur Finnbogason (1929) most convincing, namely that everybody has both strengths and weaknesses. As nobody can excel at everything, nobody is complete; every person is half. This fits particularly closely with v. 71 and 131.

54    Meðalsnotr · skyli manna hverr,  
       2            éva til snotr sé;  
           þeim es fyrða · fęgrst at lifa,  
       4            es vęl mart vitu.

Middle-clever should each man be; never too clever. For those men ’tis fairest to live, who know well enough.

55    Meðalsnotr · skyli manna hverr,  
       2            éva til snotr sé;  
           snotrs manns hjarta · verðr sjaldan glatt,  
       4            ef sá ’s alsnotr es á.

Middle-clever should each man be; never too clever. The clever man’s heart is seldom gladdened, if he is all-clever that owns [it].

56    Meðalsnotr · skyli manna hverr,  
       2            éva til snotr sé;  
           ørlog sin · viti ęngi fyr;  
       4            þeim es sorgalausastr sefi.

Middle-clever should each man be; never too clever. His own ʀorlay<sup>C</sup> ought none to know ahead; his is the most sorrowless mind.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Who knows not his fate. It is fitting that Weden would say this, having knowledge of the inevitable destruction of the world and himself.

57    Brandr af brandi · brinnr unz brunninn es,  
       2            funi kvęykisk af funa;  
           maðr af manni · verðr at máli kuðr;  
       4            en til dólskr af dul.

Fire by fire burns until it burnt is; flame is kindled from flame. Man by man becomes known for speech, but the too dull by his delusion.

- 58    Ár skal rísa, · sá's annars vill  
       2        fé eða fjör hafa;  
               sjaldan liggjandi ulfr · lér of getr,  
       4        né sofandi maðr sigr.

Early shall rise he, who another man's <sup>r</sup>fee<sup>C</sup> or life will have. Seldom does the lying wolf get a thigh, or the sleeping man victory.

- 59    Ár skal rísa, · sá's á yrkjendr fáa,  
       2        ok ganga síns verka á vít;  
               mart of dveļr · þann's umb morgin sefr,  
       4        halfr es auðr und hvötum.

Early shall rise he who owns workers few, and go his work to meet. Much is kept back from him who in the morning sleeps; half the wealth is due to the brisk.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Half of a man's wealth is due to his briskness.

- 60    Þurra skíða · ok þakinna néfra,  
       2        þess kann maðr mjöt,  
               ok þess viðar, · es vinnask męgi  
       4        mál ok missęri.

Of dry planks and of thatching birch bark: thereof man knows the measure—and of that firewood which may be used for a season and half-year.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Over the winter.

- 61    Þvegin ok mętr · ríði maðr þingi at,  
       2        þótt hann sé-t vęddr til vęl;  
               skúa ok bróka · skammisk ęngi maðr  
       4        né hests in hęldr.  
               þótt hann hafit góðan.

Washed and full<sup>a</sup> ought a man to ride to the Thing, although he be not clothed too well; of his shoes and his breeches ought no man to be ashamed, nor of his horse instead. (although he has not a good one.)



5 þótt ... góðan ‘although ... good one’] As Finnur Jónsson (1932) points out, surely a late insert. Whoever made it was not aware of the rules of the *Leed-meter*, interpreted the c-line as a *Firnwordslaw* a-line, and then inserted the supposed b-line.

<sup>a</sup>A collocation. Cf. *Rein* TODO: *kembðr* ‘combed’ — *þvegginn* ‘washed’ — *mettr* ‘full’; *Wallow* 33: *þó* ‘washed’ — *kembði* ‘combed’. These examples attest to the importance of personal hygiene in the culture, something further seen by the ubiquity of combs in graves from this time.

62     Snapir ok gnapir, · es til sévar kømr,  
       2         orn á aldinn mar;  
           svá es maðr, · es með morgum kømr  
       4         ok á formélendr fáa.

Shuffles and stoops—when to the sea it comes—the eagle on the aged ocean. So is the man, when among the many he comes, and has spokesmen few.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Cf. v. 25.

63     Fregna ok segja · skal fróðra hverr,  
       2         sá's vill heitinn horskr;  
           einn vita · né annarr skal,  
       4         þjóð veit ef þrir eru.

Ask and speak shall each learned man, who wishes to be called sharp; one shall know, but not another: thirty<sup>a</sup> know if there are three.

<sup>a</sup>þjóð lit. ‘people, nation’; cf. *Scold* (TODO): *þjóð eru þrír tígir* ‘thirty are a people’.

64     Ríki sitt · skyli ráðsnotra  
       2         hverr í hófi haða;  
           þá hann þat finnr, · es með fróknum kømr,  
       4         at engi es einna hvatastr.

His power should each counsel-clever man use in moderation; then he finds it—when among the bold he comes—that none is the briskest of all.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>i.e., every man has his match. For the expression compare particularly *Wals* TODO *þviat hvern sa, er með maugum kemr, ma þat finna eitthvert sinn, at einge er einna hvatastr* ‘for each one who comes among the many must at some point find that none is the briskest of all.’

65     Orða þeira, · es maðr oðrum segir,  
       2         opt hann gjöld of getr.

For those words which man to another says, he oft gets recompense.

- 66    Mikilsti snimma · kom'k í marga staði,  
       2        en til sið í suma;  
       ol vas drukkit, · sumt vas olagat;  
       4        sjaldan hittir leiðr í lið.

Much too early I came to many places, and too late to some. The ale was drunk, at other times yet unbrewed;<sup>a</sup> seldom finds the loathsome man his place.

---

<sup>a</sup>lit. "some [of it] was unbrewed"

- 67    Hér ok hvar · myndi mér heim of boðit,  
       2        ef þyrpta'k at mólungi mat,  
       eða tvau lér hengi · at hins tryggva vinar,  
       4        þar's ek hafða ett etit.

Here and there would I to a home be invited, if at no meal-time I needed food; or [if] two hams would hang at the trusty friend's [home], where I one had eaten.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Not everyone is hospitable, especially with regards to food, which was valuable and had to be closely counted among subsistence farmers. The poet notes that even a "trusty friend" (might be sarcastic) would invite him to eat at his house more often if he brought more food than he ate.

- 68    Eldr es baztr · með yta sonum  
       2        ok sólar sýn,  
       heylyndi sitt, · ef hafa náir,  
       4        án við lost at lifa.

Fire is best among the sons of men, and the sight of the sun; one's good health—if thou manage to keep it—and living without vice.

- 69    Es-at maðr alls vesall, · þótt sé illa heyll,  
       2        sumr es af sonum séll,  
       sumr af frændum, · sumr af fé órnú,  
       4        sumr af verkum vel.

Man is not all wretched, though he of poor health be: someone is blessed by sons, someone by kinsmen, someone by ample 'fee<sup>C</sup>, someone by works done well.

70      Bętra 's lifðum, · ok sęllifðum,  
              2      ęy getr kvikr kú;  
              ęld sá'k upp brinna · auðgum manni fyr,  
              4      en úti vas dauðr fyr durum.

'Tis better with the living, and the blessed living: ever gets the quick<sup>a</sup> a cow.<sup>b</sup> A fire<sup>c</sup> I saw burning high for a wealthy man, but outside he was dead before the door.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. the living.

<sup>b</sup>A reference to the cattle-based economy (see also v. 76), the cow being used as a metonym. The meaning is that new opportunities always present themselves.

<sup>c</sup>His funeral-pyre.

71      Haltr riðr hrossi, · hjörð rekr handarvanr,  
              2      daufr vęgr ok dugir;  
              blindr es bętri, · an bręndr sęi;  
              4      nýtr manngi nás.

A halt man rides a horse; a handless drives a herd; a deaf fights and avails. Blind is better than be burnt; no man has use for a corpse.

72      Sonr es bętri, · þótt sé síð of alinn  
              2      ęptir ginginn guma;  
              sjaldan bautarstęinar · standa brautu nęr,  
              4      nema ręisi niðr at nið.

A son is better, although he late be born after a passed-on man<sup>a</sup>; seldom beat-stones<sup>b</sup> near the highway stand, save by kinsman after kinsman raised.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. after the father is dead.

<sup>b</sup>Large menhirs raised as memorial stones, later and especially in Upland decorated with Runic inscriptions.

73      Tveir 'ru ęins hęrjar, · tunga es hęfuðs bani;  
              2      mér 's í heðin hvern · handar vęni.

Two are of one host;<sup>a</sup> the tongue is the head's bane;<sup>b</sup> in every cloak I expect a hand.

---

1–2 Tveir ... vęni] Whole v. undoubtedly a later insertion, the divergent meter is proof enough.

---

<sup>a</sup>*hęrjar* gen. sg. of *hęrr* 'host, army' may alternatively be read as the nom. pl. meaning 'harriers, raiders,' present in *ęinhęrjar* ('Ownharriers<sup>G</sup>'). Thus 'two are the destroyers of one (i.e. the person)'.

<sup>b</sup>The tongue and the head are part of the same body and need each other, yet the former often leads to the demise of the latter. — For this phrase cf. especially the Old Swedish Heathen Law (Löffler, 1879): *Faldr*

*þan orð haur giuit · Glöpr orða værstr · Tunga bouuðbani · Liggi i vgildum acri* “Falls the one who has given the word—wickedness is the worst of words; the tongue the head’s bane-man—may he lie in an unpaid field (i.e. no weregild will be paid for him).”

74    Nótt verðr fęginn, · sá’s nesti trúir,  
       2        skammar ’ru skips ráar,  
               hverf es haustgríma;  
       4        fjölð of viðrir · á fimm dögum,  
               en męir á mánaði.

At night he rejoices, who trusts on his provisions; short are the ship’s sailyards;<sup>a</sup> ever-shifting is the autumn night. The weather shifts much in ʀ five days<sup>C, b</sup> but more in a month.

<sup>a</sup>TODO: Write about the varying interpretations (Finnur, Cleasby, Skp) of this line.

<sup>b</sup>See note to v. 51 and Encyclopedia.

75    Vęit-a hinn, · es vętki vęit,  
       2        margr verðr af aurum api;  
               maðr es auðigr, · annarr óauðigr,  
       4        skyli-t þann vítka váar.

The one knows not, who nothing knows: many a man becomes by treasures the fool.<sup>a</sup> A man is wealthy, another not wealthy; one oughtn’t to curse him for his woe.

2 af aurum] ‘aflaðrom’ *ms.*

<sup>a</sup>For *api*, here “fool”, see ʀape<sup>C</sup>.

76    Dęyr fé, · dęja fręndr,  
       2        dęyr sjalfr hit sama;  
               en orðstírr · dęyr aldrigi  
       4        hvęim’s sér góðan getr.

ʀFee<sup>C</sup> dies, kinsmen die, oneself dies the same;<sup>a</sup> but a word-glory never dies, for whomever gets himself a good one.

<sup>a</sup>The power of this succinct merism may be less clear to the modern reader. In Germanic Iron Age society a man’s wealth was reckoned by how many heads of cattle (for which compare particularly English *chattel* ‘tangible, movable property’ and the etymology of *capital*) he owned, and his social power by the number of able male relatives ready to side with him in conflict. The meaning is thus: all your power will pass away, and so too must you. — For poetic analogues, see West (2007, pp. 99 ff.).

77    Dęyr fé, · dęja fręndr,

- 2           dęyr sġalfr hit sama;  
             ek vęit ęinn · at aldriġi dęyr:  
 4           đómr of đauðan hvern.

Fee dies, kinsmen die, oneself dies the same. I know one that never dies: the ʀDoom<sup>C</sup>  
 o'er each man dead.

- 78      Fullar grindr · sá'k fyr Fitjungs sonum,  
 2           nú bera þęir vānar vǫl;  
             svá es auðr · sęm augabragð,  
 4           hann es valtastr vīna.

Full pens I saw for the sons of Fitting; now they carry the staff of hope.<sup>a</sup> So is wealth  
 like the twinkling of an eye; it is the ficklest of friends.

<sup>a</sup>A beggar's staff.

- 79      Ósnotr maðr, · es ęignask getr  
 2           fé eða fljóðs munuð;  
             metnaðr hǫnum þróask, · en manvit aldriġi;  
 4           framm gengr hann drjúgt í dul.

The unclever man, if he gets to own fee or a girl's grace: his conceit flourishes, but never  
 his manwit; far he goes forth in delusion.

- 80      Þat es þá ręynt, · es þú at rúnnum spyrr · hinum ręginkunnum,  
 2           þęim's gęrðu ginnręgin  
             ok fāði fimbulþulr;  
 4           þá hęfr hann bāzt, ef hann þęgir.

Then that is proven of which thou inquires the runes, the ones born of the Reins, those  
 which the ʀgin-Reins<sup>G</sup> made, and the Fimblethyle (= Weden) painted. (Then he has it  
 best, if he shuts up.)<sup>a</sup>

1 hinum ręginkunnum 'the ones born of the Reins'] This expression also appears on the C4th–6th Noleby  
 stone; see Encyclopedia ʀrune<sup>C</sup>.

<sup>a</sup>This verse, dealing with runic magic, hardly fits into the previous or following section. It would on the other  
 hand fit very well in the much later Rune-Tally. The last verse with its shift in person is likely to be an insert.

Verses of practical advice, mostly in *Firnwordslaw*.

- 81 At kveldi skal dag leyfa, · konu es brēnnd es,  
 2 męki es reýndr es, · mey es gefin es,  
ís es yfir kømr, · ǫl es drukkit es.

At evening shall one praise day, a woman when she is burned, a sword when it is tried, a maiden when she is given,<sup>a</sup> ice when one crosses over, ale when it is drunk.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. in marriage.

- 82 Í vindi skal við hoggva, · veðri á sę róa,  
 2 myrkri við man spjalla, · mǫrg eru dags augu,  
 á skip skal skriðar orka, · en á skjǫld til hlífur,  
 4 męki til hoggs, · en mey til kossa.

In wind shall one cut wood, in storm row on the sea, in darkness meet with a maiden; many are the eyes of day. A ship shall one have for its speed, but a shield for shelter; a sword for striking, but a maiden for her kisses.

- 83 Við ęld skal ǫl drekka, · en á ísi skríða,  
 2 magran mar kaupa, · en męki saurgan,  
hęima hęst fęita, · en hund á búi.

By fire shall one drink ale, and on the ice skate; buy a meager stallion, and a rusty sword; fatten the horse at home, and the hound in the household.

- 84 Meyjar orðum · skyli manngi trúa,  
 2 né því's kveðr kona;  
 þvít á hverfanda hvéli · vǫru þeim hjǫrtu skǫpuð,  
 4 brigð í brjóst of lagið.

A maiden's words should no man trust, nor that which a woman speaks. For on a spinning wheel were their hearts shaped; fickleness in their breasts was laid.

3 þvít] *om. FbrS* 3 vǫru] *er FbrS* 3 hjǫrtu skǫpuð] *hjarta skapat FbrS* 4 brigð] *ok brigð FbrS* 4 lagið] *'laginn' FbrS*

3–4 þvít ... lagið] Quoted in slightly divergent form in *FbrS* (Thott 1768 4<sup>ox</sup>, fol. 210r) preceded by the words: "And then he remembered the ditty which had been composed about loose women: [...]"

- 85 Brestanda boga, · brinlanda loga,

- 2      gínanda ulfi, · galandi króku,  
          rýtanda svíni, · rótlausum viði,  
 4      vaxanda vági, · vellanda katli,

The bursting bow, the burning flame, the gaping wolf, the crowing crow, the roaring swine, the rootless tree, the waxing wave, the swelling kettle,

- 86**    fljúganda fleini, · fallandi böru,  
 2      ísi einnétum, · ormi hringlęgnum,  
          brúðar beðmólum · eða brotnu sverði,  
 4      bjarnar lęiki · eða barni konungs,  
          sjúkum kalfi, · sjalfráða þreli,  
 6      völu vilmęli, · val nyfęldum.

the flying spear, the falling billow, the one-night old ice, the coiled-up serpent, the bed-speeches of a bride, or the broken sword, the play of a bear, or the child of a king, the sick calf, the freed slave, the pleasing speech of a wallow, newly felled corpses,

In the following two verses come in the opposite order, but it is clear that 88 should conclude the old list of things not to trust. It is clear from its meter that 87 is a separate composition; it was probably inserted in between 86 and 88 by an inattentive scribe.

- 88**    bróðurbana sinum · þótt á brautu móti,  
 2      húsi halfbrunnu, · hęsti alskjótum,  
          þá 's jór ónýtr, · ef einn fótr brotnar;  
 4      verðr-it maðr svá tryggr · at þessu trúi öllu.

his brother's bane-man—though on the highway they meet—a half-burned house, an all-fleet horse: then is the steed useless, if one foot breaks. There may be no man so trusting, that he trust in all this.

- 87**    Akri ársónum · trúi ęngi maðr,  
 2      né til snimma syni;  
          veðr reðr akri, · en vit syni;  
 4      hętt es þęira hvárt.

An early sown field ought no man to trust, nor too early<sup>a</sup> a son. The weather rules the field, but the wits the son; there is risk to both of them.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. in life.

- 89**    Svá 's friðr kvinna · þęira's flátt hyggja,

- 2      sęm aki jó óbryddum · á ísi hólum  
       tęitum, tųévetrum · ok sé tamr illa,  
 4      eða í byr óðum · bęiti stjórnlauðu,  
       eða skyli haltr hęnda · hręin í þáfalli.

So is the love of women—those who falsely think—like one rode an unshod horse on slippery ice—a merry one, two winters old, and badly tamed—or in mad wind tacked a rudderless [ship], or [as] should a halt man catch a reindeer on a thawing mountain.

### Weden's failed seduction of Billing's maiden.

- 90      Bert nú męli'k, · því-at bęði vęit'k,  
       2      brigðr es karla hugr konum,  
       þá fęgrst męlum, · es flást hyggjum;  
       4      þat tęlir horska hugi.

Plainly I now speak, for I know both [sides]: fickle is men's thought towards women. We then speak the most fairly, when the most falsely we think; that entices sharp minds.

- 91      Fagrt skal męla · ok fé bjóða,  
       2      sá's vill fljóðs óst fáa,  
       líki leyfa · hins ljósa mans,  
       4      sá fęr, es fríar.

Fairly shall speak, and offer 'fee<sup>C</sup>, he who will earn a girl's love; [he shall] praise the body of the light maiden; he gets, who woos.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>i.e., 'he who woos her gets her'.

- 92      Ástar firna · skyli ęngi maðr  
       2      annan aldrigi;  
       opt fáa á horskan, · es á hęimskan né fáa,  
       4      lostfagrir litir.

For [his] love should no man ever blame another; oft they seize the sharp one, when they seize not the foolish one, lust-fair looks.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Looks so fair



- 93    Eyyvitar firna, · es maðr annan skal,  
       2        þess es of margan gēngr guma;  
       heimska ór horskum · gērir holða sonu  
       4        sá hinn mátki munr.

For nothing shall man ever blame another, which happens to many a man; fools out of sharp ones makes—among the sons of men—that mighty delight [LOVE].

- 94    Hugr einn þat veit, · es býr hjarta nér,  
       2        einn es sér of sefa;  
       ong es sótt verri · hvēim snotrum manni  
       4        an sér ongu at una.

The spirit alone knows what dwells close to the heart; [man] is alone himself with his mind. No sickness is worse for any clever man, than [to have] himself none to love.

---

<sup>4</sup> una ‘love’] usually means ‘to be content’ but seems here to correspond in sense to the long-stemmed verb *unna* ‘to love’. It is probably a metrical variant, since a trochee is not allowed at the end of the c-verse.

- 95    Þat þá reyndak, · es í reyri sat’k,  
       2        ok vétta’k míns munar,  
       hold ok hjarta · vas mér hin horska mér,  
       4        þeygi hana at heldr hef’k.

That I then discovered, as I sat in the reed, and awaited my pleasure. My flesh and heart that sharp maiden was; I have her none the more.

- 96    Billings meý · ek fann þęðjum á  
       2        sólhvíta sofa;  
       jarls ynði · þótti mér ękki vesa  
       4        nema við þat lík at lifa.

Billing’s maiden I found on the beds, sun-white, sleeping. An earl’s pleasure seemed me naught to be, save for living alongside that body.

[Billing’s maiden:]

- 97    „Auk nér aptni · skalt-u Óðinn koma,  
       2        ef vilt þér męla man,  
       alt eru óskęp, · nema ęin vitim  
       4        slikan lęst saman.“

“And by evening shalt thou, Weden, come, if thou wilt for thee have the maiden [= me]; all is misshapen, if we might not know one such vice together.”

98     Aptr ek hvarf · ok unna þóttumk  
        2         vísum vilja frá;  
                hitt ek hugða, · at hafa mynda’k  
        4         geð hennar alt ok gaman.

Back I turned—and thought myself to love [her]—away from my wise will; this I thought, that I would own her senses all and pleasure.

99     Svá kom’k nést, · at hin nýta vas  
        2         vígdrótt of vakin;  
                með brinnondum ljósum · ok bornum viði,  
        4         svá vas mér vilstígr of vitaðr.

So I came next, as was the useful<sup>a</sup> battle-people all awake; with burnings lights and carried wood;<sup>b</sup> so was for me a miserable path<sup>c</sup> marked out.

<sup>a</sup>Sarcastic.

<sup>b</sup>They were presumably armed with sticks.

<sup>c</sup>Ambiguous whether it refers to the beating he would have received at the hands of the men had he entered, or to his walk of shame away from the hall.

100    Auk nér morni, · es vas’k enn of kominn,  
        2         þá vas saldrótt of sofin;  
                grey eitt þá fann’k · hinnar góðu konu  
        4         bundit beðjum á.

And by morning, when I was come again, then was the hall-people asleep. A lone bitch I then found, owned by the good woman, bound on the beds.

101    Morg es góð mer, · ef gorva kannar,  
        2         hugbrigð við hali;  
                þá þat reynda’k, · es hit ráðspaka  
        4         teygða’k á flerðir fljóð.  
                hóðungar hverrar · leitaði mér hit horska man  
        6         ok hafða’k þess vetki vífs.

Many a good maiden—if one knows her clearly—is heart-fickle towards men; that I learned when into sins I lured that counsel-clever woman. All sorts of disgraces that

sharp girl sought out for me, and I had naught of that wife.

---

### Weden's obtaining of the Mead of Poetry

The quite complicated myth of how Weden came to own the Mead of Poetry is also told in *Scold* 5–6, which I here summarize with minor details left out: After the war between the Ease and Wanes, the two tribes of gods make a truce between them through spitting into a vat. They do not want to dispose of the truce-mark, and thus create a man, ʀQuasher<sup>P</sup>, out of the spit. He is so wise that no man can ask him a question which he cannot answer. He goes around the world, and comes to the dwelling of two dwarfs named Fealer and Galer. They kill him, and let his blood run into two vats named Soon and Bothem and a kettle named ʀWoderearer<sup>P</sup>; they then make mead through mixing the blood with honey, and “anyone who drinks from it becomes a scold or man of learning”. Some time later, the two dwarfs murder an ettin named ʀGilling<sup>P</sup> and his wife. Their son, ʀSutting<sup>P</sup>, learns of this and takes the dwarfs to a small islet which will flood at high tide. In exchange for their lives and as recompense for his father, the dwarfs offer Sutting the dear mead (*mjǫðinn dýra*; cf. here vv. 104 and 138). Sutting accepts this, moves the mead to his home, the mountain ʀNitbarrow<sup>L</sup>, and places his daughter ʀGuthlathe<sup>P</sup> to watch it. Later, Weden is out journeying and comes to a place where nine thralls cut hay. After sharpening their scythes with a special whetstone he throws it into the air, and they promptly kill each other over it. In the evening he comes to the master of the thralls, Baye, Sutting's brother. Baye laments over the death of his workmen, and so Weden, calling himself ʀBaleworker<sup>P</sup>, offers to do the work of the thralls over the summer in exchange for one drink of Sutting's mead. Baye tells him that Sutting alone owns the mead, but that he will come along with Weden to ask for a drink. When the two come to Sutting, he refuses to give away a single drop. Weden then tells Baye that they will get through anyway; he takes out his drill ʀRate<sup>P</sup> and tells Baye to drill through the mountain (presumably into the room where the mead was stored). After the passage is done, Weden turns himself into a snake and crawls through. There he meets Guthlathe and lays with her for three nights, after which she promises him three drinks of the mead. With each drink Weden drinks from each vessel, and thus has all the mead inside of him. He turns himself into an eagle and flies away from the mountain, but Sutting, also in the shape of an eagle, follows him. In order to get away Weden had to shit out some of the mead, which is the lot of bad poets. The rest he gave to the Ease, and to men who know how to compose.

The core of this manytwisted myth is very old. Parallels are found already in the Rig Veda, where the *somu* (the ritual equivalent of the Germanic mead) is held by the archer *Kṛṣānu* within “a hundred iron fortresses”, but carried out by a falcon and given to *Manu*, the first sacrificer.

The version below cannot have been the only source of *Scold*, since the detail of Weden flying out as an eagle, which is not attested here, clearly parallels the account in the *Rig Veda*.

The verses below are in the same order as **R**. The strand begins with a general advice-verse (102), after which the narrative comes, which differs in some ways from that of *Scold*. It may be arranged chronologically as follows: Weden arrives at Suttings halls, and “speaks many words” (103), calling himself Baleworker (109). He is presumably denied, and thus has to bore through the mountain with the drill Rate (105)—note that there is no mention of Baye here. After arriving to the room where Guthlathe watches the mead, she falls in love with him. Weden in tuns swears an oath to her on a bigh (109) and they sleep together (107). Guthlathe then gives him the dear mead, and Weden repays her cruelly by departing, leaving her to weep (104, 109). One notes the emphasis on Weden’s betrayal of Guthlathe, unlike the transactional affair in *Scold*. The day after his departure a group of Rime-Thurses—which for some reason does not include Sutting—shows up at the abode of the gods. They ask whether “Baleworker” is among them, or if Sutting has slain him (108). Weden responds in third person that he thinks that he had sworn an oath, but that his words cannot be trusted (109).

- 102 Hęima gl̥aðr gumi · ok við gęsti ręifr,  
 2 s̥viðr skal of s̥ik vesa;  
 minnigr ok mólugr, · ef vill margfróðr vesa;  
 4 opt skal góðs geta;  
 fimbulfambi hętir, · sá’s fátt kann sęgia;  
 6 þat es ósnotr s̥aðal.

At home shall man be glad, and cheerful towards the guest; wise about himself. Remembering and speaking, if he wishes to be many-learned; oft shall he speak of good. A fumble-fool is he called who little can say; that is an unclever man’s nature.

- 103 Hinn aldna jōtun sóttak, · nú em’k apr̥ of kominn;  
 2 fátt gat’k þęgjandi þar;  
 mōrgum orðum · męlta’k í minn frama  
 4 í Suttungs solum.

The old ettin I sought, now am I come back; I got little silence there. Many words I spoke to my furtherance, in the halls of Sutting.

- 104 Gunnlōð mér of gaf · gollnum stóli á  
 2 drykk hins dýra mjaðar;  
 ill iðgjöld · lét’k hana ęptir hafa  
 4 síns hins hęila hugar.  
 (síns hins svára sęfa).

†Guthlathe<sup>P</sup> did give me, on the golden chair, a drink of the dear mead; evil recompense

I let her have afterwards, for her whole heart; for her severe affection.

- 105    Rata munn · létumk rúms of faa  
           2        ok of griót gnaga;  
           yfir ok undir · stóðumk jotna vegir,  
           4        svá hétta'k hofði til.

Rate's mouth I let bring me room, and gnaw away at the rubble. Over and under me stood the roads of the ettins [MOUNTAINS]; so I risked my head.

- 106    Vel keypts hlutar · hef'k vel notit;  
           2        fás es fróðum vant;  
           því't Óðrerir · nú upp 's kominn  
           4        á alda vés jaðar.

The well purchased thing [MEAD OF POETRY] I have used well; little is lacking for the learned—for Woderearer is now come up onto the rim of the <sup>C</sup> wigh of men [= Midden-yard].<sup>a</sup>

---

4 jaðar 'rim'] *jarðar* R has a long root-syllable and must be emended. TODO: note on sense.

---

<sup>a</sup>Weden has made good use of the mead of poetry, since it is now available to wise men on earth.

- 107    Ifi es mér á, · at vera'k enn kominn  
           2        jotna gorðum ór,  
           ef Gunnlaðar né nyta'k, · hinnar góðu konu,  
           4        es logðumk arm yfir.

There is doubt in me, that I were yet come out of the yards of the Ettins, if Guthlathe I had not used: that good woman, whom I laid my arm over.

- 108    Hins hindra dags · gingu hrimþursar  
           2        Háva ráðs at fregna,  
                   (Háva hollu í,  
           4        at Bolverki spurðu, · ef veri með hondum kominn  
                   eða hefði honum Suttungr of sóit.

The other day went the Rime-Thurses to ask for the counsel of the High One; in the hall of High One. About Baleworker (= Weden) they asked, if he were come among the bonds (gods), or if Sutting had slain him.

- 109 Baugēið Óðinn · hygg at unnit hafi,  
 2 hvat skal hans tryggðum trúa?  
 Suttung svikvinn · hann lét sumbli frá  
 4 ok grótta Gunnlōðu.

A ʀbigh-oath<sup>C</sup> I ween that Weden has sworn; how shall one trust his truces? He let Sutting walk betrayed from the simble, and Guthlathe made to weep.

### The Speeches of Loddfathomer

*Loddfáfnismól*. Advice given to Loddfathomer. In R this section is marked out with a large initial, like the beginnings of separate poems.

- 110 Mál 's at þylja · þular stóli á;  
 2 Urðar brunni at  
 sá'k ok þagða'k, · sá'k ok hugða'k,  
 4 hlýdda'k á manna mál;  
 of rúnar heyrða'k dóma, · né umb rōðum þogðu  
 6 Háva hollu at,  
 Háva hollu í  
 8 heyrða'k segja svá:

'Tis time to ʀthill<sup>C</sup>, upon the chair of the ʀthyle<sup>C</sup>. At the well of Weird, I saw and I shut up: I saw and I thought: I heeded the matters of men. Of runes I heard them speak, nor about counsels were they silent, at the hall of the High One (= Weden) [= Walhall], in the hall of the High One, I heard [them] say thus:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The speaker, describing himself as a thyle (*þulr* 'sage, chanter of memorized poetry'), says that he will relate what he has heard said at the hall of the High One (= Weden) [= Walhall]. Considering the location, it seems almost certain that the giver of this advice was ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>. The receiver of the advice, ʀLoddfathomer<sup>P</sup> (see Encyclopedia for etymologies), is otherwise unknown.

- 111 Rōðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rōð nemir,  
 2 njóta munt ef nemr,  
 þér munu góð ef getr:  
 4 nōtt þú rís-at, · nema á njósn séir,  
 eða leitir þér innan út staðar.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: At night thou rise not, unless at scouting thou be, or thou art forced out from within a place.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Very difficult phrase. Possibly a euphemism for needing to relieve oneself?

- 112    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
       2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
       4    fjolkunnigri konu · skal-at-tu í faðmi sofa,  
               svá't hon lyki þik liðum.  
       6    Hón svá gęrir · at þú gáir ęigi  
               þings né þjóðans máls;  
       8    mat þú vill-at · né manskis gaman  
               fęrr þú sorgafullr at sofa.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: In the bosom of a <sup>C</sup>feal-cunning woman shalt thou never sleep, so that she might lock you in [her?] limbs. She makes it so that thou heed not the <sup>C</sup>Thing, nor the ruler's speech; food wilt thou not [have], nor any man's pleasure; thou farest sorrowful to sleep.

- 113    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
       2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
       4    annars konu · tęyg þér aldrigi  
               ęyrarúnu at.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Never lure another man's woman into [becoming] thy ear-whisperer [LOVER].

- 114    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
       2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
       4    á fjalli eða firði, · ef þik fara tíðir,  
               fásk-tu at virði vęl.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: on the fell or firth—if thou desire to travel—get thyself a good meal.

- 115    Rǫðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rǫð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        illan mann · lát aldrigi  
                   óhöpp at þér vita.  
           6        af illum manni · fęr aldrigi  
                   gǫld hins góða hugar.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: An evil man let thou never know of thy misfortunes. From an evil man receivest thou never recompense for thy good heart.

---

5 óhöpp at þér vita] Excluding some corruption (but there hardly seems to be any) this line is probably one the few undisputed cases of *v*-alliterating with a vowel.

- 116    Ofarla bíta · sá'k ęinum hal  
           2        orð illrar konu,  
                   flárǫð tunga · varð hǫnum at fęrlagi  
           4        ok þęgi of sanna sǫk.

Biting I saw, high up on one man, the words of an evil woman; a deceit-counseling tongue brought his life to end, and in no way over a truthful charge.

- 117    Rǫðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rǫð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        vęizt, ef vin átt, · þann's vęl trúir,  
                   fár þú at finna opt;  
           6        þvít hrisi vęx · ok hęu grasi  
                   vęgr, es vętki trøðr,

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Know, if thou have a friend, one on which thou well trust, journey to find him oft; for with brushwood and tall grass grows the way which no man treads.

---

6 hrisi vęx ok hęu grasi 'with brushwood and with tall grass grows'] Identical with *Grimner* 17/1.

- 118    Rǫðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rǫð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:



- 4     góðan mann · teyg þér at gamanrúnum  
          ok nem líknargaldr meðan lífir.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Lure a good man to thee through pleasure-runes,<sup>a</sup> and learn healing-galders while thou livest.

---

<sup>a</sup>Pleasurable conversation. Cf. 128.

- 119   Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
       2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
       4     vin þínum · ves aldrigi  
               fyrri at flaumslitum.  
       6     sorg etr hjarta, · ef þú segja né náir  
               einhverjum allan hug.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: With thy friend be thou never the first to tear apart the company. Sorrow eats thy heart if thou cannot speak to anyone thy whole mind.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>cf. v. 122.

- 120   Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
       2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
       4     orðum skipta · skalt aldrigi  
               við ósvinna apa.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Words shalt thou never exchange with unwise apes.

- 121   Því't af illum manni · munt aldrigi  
       2        góðs laun of geta,  
               en góðr maðr · mun þik gerva meða  
       4        líknfastan at lofi.

For from an evil man wilt thou never get a reward for thy goodness, but a good man will know make thee health-firm by [his] praise.

4 *líkn*fastran ‘health-firm’] A cpd. from *líkn* ONP: ‘mercy, compassion, relief, comfort, help’ and *fastr* ‘fast, firm’. La Farge and Tucker (1992) give a tentative ‘assured of favour’, while CV gives ‘fast in goodwill, beloved’. I read it as literally as possible, since the word *líkn* has some connections with healing.

122    *Sifjum* ’s þá blandit · hværr es sēgja réðr  
    2            *einum* allan hug;  
    alt es bētra · an sé brigðum at vesa:  
    4            es-a sá vinr es vilt eitt sēgir.

Kinship is then blended,<sup>a</sup> when any man decides to speak to one man his whole mind. Everything is better than to be among the fickle; he is no friend, who speaks that which is wanted alone.

---

<sup>a</sup>cf. v. 44.

123    *Róðumk* þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rōð nemir,  
    2            *njóta* munt ef *nemr*,  
    þér munu góð ef getr:  
    4            þrimr orðum sēnna · skal-at-tu þér við verra mann,  
    opt hinn bētri bilar.  
    6            þá's hinn verri vegr.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: With three words shalt thou not flyte with a worse man;<sup>a</sup> oft the better one breaks when the worse one strikes.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘not even with three words’.

124    *Róðumk* þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rōð nemir,  
    2            *njóta* munt ef *nemr*,  
    þér munu góð ef getr:  
    4            *skósmiðr* þú verir · né *skeptismiðr*,  
    nema sjölfum þér séir.  
    6            *Skór* ’s *skapaðr* illa · eða *skapt* sé vranget,  
    þá ’s þér bōls beðit.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Thou ought not to be a shoe-maker nor shaft-maker, unless thou be one for thyself. [If] the shoe is shaped badly or the shaft be crooked, then for thee a ʀbale<sup>C</sup> is bidden.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘the customer will put a curse you’.

- 125    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                     þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        hvars þú ból kant, · kveð þér bólvi at  
                     ok gefat þínum fjöndum frið.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Where thou a bale knowest, declare it to be a bale, and give not thy enemies peace.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘if somebody puts a curse on you, do not ignore it, but respond forcefully’, though it should be noted that the verse has often been interpreted as a command to call out evil, even when done towards somebody else, and there is nothing in it that goes against that reading.

- 126    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                     þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        illu fæginn · ves þú aldrigi,  
                     en lát þér at góðu getit.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Gladdened by evil be thou never, but let thyself be pleased by good.

5 en lát þér at góðu getit ‘but rather let thyself be pleased by good’] This construction is equivalent to CV: *geta*, A. IV. with acc.

- 127    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                     þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        upp líta · skal-at-tu í orrostu;  
                     gjalti glíkir · verða gumna synir  
           6        síðr þitt of heylli halir.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Up shalt thou not look in battle—alike to a madman become the sons of men—lest men bewitch thy [sense/life/face].<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>A very difficult verse. CV explains *gjalti* as an old dative of *gpltr* ‘boar, hog’, and thus sees the closely related phrase *verða at gjalti* as “to be turned into a hog”, i.e. ‘to turn mad with terror’, esp. in a fight”. The vowel breaking is however unexpected here, since *gpltr* (< Proto-Norse *\*galtur*) is an u-stem, which makes the stem-vowel in the dat. sg. *glti* (< *\*galtiu*, cf. *kunimudiu*, dat. sg. of *\*Kunimundur*, on the Tjurkö 1 bracteate) the result of i-umlaut rather than an original short *\*e*.

La Farge and Tucker (1992) instead explains the word as a borrowing from Old Irish *geilt* ‘insane, mad’. Pettit (1986) follows this, and argues that the whole theme of the verse probably be of Celtic origin, giving several

examples from Celtic literature of warriors going mad upon looking up into the sky during battle. In this case the men (*balir*, which word seems to have an association with warriors; cf. 36–37, 49) would be to quote Pettit some sort of “supernatural sky warriors”, in my opinion most likely the ‘Ownharriers’<sup>G</sup>.

- 128    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4    Ef vilt þér góða konu · kvęðja at gamanrúnum  
                   ok fá fognuð af,  
           6    fogru skalt hęita · ok láta fast vesa;  
                   lęiðisk manngi gótt ef getr.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: If thou wilt for thee welcome a good woman to pleasure-runes, and receive good cheer from [her]; fair things shalt thou promise, and let it be fast; none loathes a good thing if one gets it.

---

<sup>4</sup> gamanrúnum ‘pleasure-runes’] While easily interpreted as ‘intercourse’, the word is used in 118 with a decidedly non-sexual meaning. It probably just means ‘good, light-hearted conversation’.

- 129    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4    varan bið’k þik vesa · ok ęigi ofvaran,  
                   ves þú við ęl varastr, · ok við annars konu  
           6    ok við þat hit þriðja, · at þjófar né lęiki.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Wary I ask thee to be, and not over-wary; be wariest with ale, and with another man’s woman, and with the third, that thieves do not outplay [thee].

- 130    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
                   þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4    at háði né hlátri · haf aldrigi  
                   gęst né ganganda.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: In mockery or laughter have thou never a guest nor wanderer.

- 131    Opt vitu ógorla, · þeir's sitja inni fyr,  
           2        hvęrs þeir 'ru kyns es koma;  
               es-at maðr svá góðr · at galli né fylgi,  
           4        né svá illr at ęinu-gi dugi.

They oft hardly know, who sit inside, of what sort those men are who come; no man is so good that no flaw follows him, nor so evil that he to nothing avails.

- 132    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        at hórum þul · hlę aldrigi,  
               opt 's gótt þat's gamlir kveða,  
           6        opt ór skorpum bęlg · skilin orð koma  
               þeim's hangir með hóum  
           8        ok skollir með skróum,  
               ok váfir með vilmogum.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: At a hoary thyle laugh thou never; oft 'tis good, that which the old sing. Oft out of a scorched leather discerning words come; out of that one that hangs with hides, and dangles with dry skins, and sways among lads of toil [THRALLS].<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>TODO: Some note on this. *vilmogum* meaning 'veal-stomachs'? Cf. Crawford's video on this.

- 133    Róðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú róð nemir,  
           2        njóta munt ef nemr,  
               þér munu góð ef getr:  
           4        gęst þú né gęyj-a · né á grind hrękir;  
               get þú vóluðum vęl.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Bark not at a guest, nor spit at the gate;<sup>a</sup> furnish the impoverished well.

---

<sup>a</sup>Behind which the guest stands, waiting for the farmer to open.

- 134    Ramt es þat tré, · es ríða skal  
           2        qllum at upploki;  
               baug þú gef · eða þat biðja mun

4 þér lés hvers á liðu.

Strong is that wood which shall swing to open for all;<sup>a</sup> give a bigh, or it will bid thee every kind of deceit onto thy limbs.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. the beam of the gate in front of the farm.

135 Rǫðumk þér Loddfáfnir, · at þú rǫð nemir,  
 2 njóta munt ef nemr,  
 þér munu góð ef getr:  
 4 hvar's ǫl drekkir · kjós þér jarðar megin,  
 þvít jorð tekr við ǫðri, · en eldr við sóttum,  
 6 eik við abbindi, · ax við fjolkyni,  
 holl við hýrógi; · heiptum skal mána kvęðja,  
 8 beiti við bitsóttum, · en við bǫlvi rúnar;  
 fold skal við flóði taka.

I counsel thee Loddfathomer, that thou learn the counsels; thou wilt benefit if thou learnest; they will be good for thee if thou gettest: Wherever thou ale drinkest, choose for thee the might of the earth; for earth takes against drunkenness, but fire against sickness; oak against dysentery, the ear [of wheat] against sorcery, bearded rye against hernia—in conflicts shall one invoke Moon<sup>a</sup>—heather against bite-sicknesses; but 'runes'<sup>C</sup> against 'bale'<sup>C</sup>; the fold [EARTH] must take against the flood.

<sup>a</sup>According to *Willow* 5, the moon has some sort of power, and based on *Lock* P3 *kvęðja* 'greet, call' seems to be the word used for invoking in prayer.

<sup>b</sup>cf. v. 124, 149.

## The Rune-Tally

These scattered verses have the header *Rúnatal* þátrr 'Strand of the Rune-Tally' in younger Eddic paper manuscripts. They give an archaic, mystic impression; it is as if they were drawn from the lips of an Odinic priest.

136 Vęit'k at ek hekk · vındga meįði á  
 2 nętr allar níu,  
 gęiri undaðr · ok gefinn Óðni,  
 4 sjalfr sjolfum mér,  
 á þeim meįði, · es manngi vęit,  
 6 hvers af rótum rinnr.

I know that I hung on the windy beam, for all of nine nights; wounded by spear and given to Weden—myself to myself—on that beam, which no man knows, of whose roots it runs.

137 Við hleifi mik seldu-t · né við horni-gi;

2 nýsta'k niðr, · nam'k upp rúnar,  
 ópandi nam, · fell'k aptr þaðan.

With loaf they gladdened me not, nor with any horn. I peered down, I took up the runes, screaming I took; I fell back thence.

138 Fimbulljóð níu · nam'k af hinum frégja syni

2 Bólþorns, Bestlu fǫður,  
 ok ek drykk of gat · hins dýra mjaðar  
 4 ausinn Óðreri.

Nine 'fimble-leeds'<sup>C</sup> I learned from the famous son of 'Balethorn'<sup>P</sup>, the father of 'Bestle'<sup>P</sup>—and a drink I got, of that dear mead poured to 'Woderearer'<sup>P</sup>.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>This verse fits poorly here and seems like an insert. It mentions *ljóð* 'leeds; (magical) songs, incantations' rather than runes, and has nothing to do with Weden's hanging on the tree. Bestle was Weden's mother and Balethorn his maternal grandfather. The famous son of Balethorn would then be his maternal uncle. The custom of sending sons away to be fostered by their maternal uncles or grandfathers (which seems to be what is going on here) was quite common in Germanic society, cf. TODO.

139 Þá nam'k frévask · ok fróðr vesa

2 ok vaxa ok vǫl hafask;  
 orð mér af orði · orðs leitaði  
 4 verk mér af verki verks.

Then I took to thrive, and be learned, and grow and have myself well. A word for me of a word a word sought out; a work for me of a work a work.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Each good word and deed was followed by another.

140 Rúnar munt finna · ok ráðna stafi,

2 mjök stóra stafi,  
 mjök stinna stafi,  
 4 es fáði fimbulþulr  
 ok gerðu ginnręgin  
 6 ok ręist Hroptr ragna.

ʀRunes<sup>C</sup> wilt thou find, and interpreted staves: very large staves, very stiff staves, which  
ʀFimblethyle<sup>P</sup> (= Weden) painted, and the ʀgin-Reins<sup>G</sup> made, and Roft (= Weden) of  
the Reins carved.

---

6 ragna 'of the Reins'] 'rōgna' R

141 Óðinn með ósum, · en fyr olfum Dáinn,  
2 Dvalinn dvergum fyr,  
Ásviðr jotnum fyr,  
4 ek reist sja<sup>l</sup>fr s<sup>u</sup>mar.

ʀWeden<sup>P</sup> among the ʀEase<sup>G</sup>, but for the ʀElves<sup>G</sup> ʀDowen<sup>P</sup>; ʀDwollen<sup>P</sup> for the ʀDwarfs<sup>G</sup>;  
ʀOnswith<sup>P</sup> for the Ettins; I myself carved some.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>The identity of the speaker is not clear.

142 Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé rísta skal? · Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé ráða skal?  
2 Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé fáa skal? · Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé fręista skal?  
Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé biðja skal? · Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé blóta skal?  
4 Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé senda skal? · Vei<sup>z</sup>t, hvé sóa skal?

Knowest thou how one shall carve? Knowest thou how one shall read? Knowest thou  
how one shall paint? Knowest thou how one shall try? Knowest thou how one shall bid?  
Knowest thou how one shall ʀbloom<sup>C</sup>? Knowest thou one shall send? Knowest thou how  
one shall ʀsoo<sup>C</sup>?<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>A symmetric structure would be attained if the first four verbs refer to ʀrunes<sup>C</sup>—carving, interpreting, painting  
(with blood?), and divining—while the latter four refer to sacrifice—praying, sacrificing, sending (the sacrifice  
or the prayer; making sure the gods receive it), and slaying the victim. See further relevant Encyclopedia  
entries. The meter of the v. is unusual, but bears some resemblance to Vg 216 (the Högstena galder). TODO:  
Elaborate.

143 Bętra 's óbeðit · an sé ofblótít,  
2 ęy sér til gildis gjof;  
bętra 's óęent · an sé ofsóit;  
4 [...]

'Tis better unbid than overʀblooted<sup>C</sup>; a gift always sees recompense. 'Tis better unsent  
than overʀsooed<sup>C</sup>; [...].<sup>a</sup>

---

4 [...] Last line probably missing here; the meter and sense require it.

---

<sup>a</sup>Identical wording (*biðja* 'to bid; to pray' : *blóta* 'to bloom; to sacrifice'; *senda* 'to send' : *sóa* 'to soo; to slay')  
suggests a close relation to the previous verse. — The sense seems to be that it is better not to sacrifice at all



than to sacrifice in excess, since even a small gift (to the gods) will be rewarded. This mechanistic system of gifts and rewards between man and the gods is also seen in other Indo-European pagan literatures. Compare the Sanskrit *Dehí me, dádamí te* ‘Give to me; I give to thee’ or Latin *dō ut dēs* ‘I give that thou might give’.

144 Svá þundr of reist · fyr þjóða røk  
2 þar’s upp of reis, · es aþr of kom.

Thus ‘Thound’ (= Woden) carved for the rakes of nations, where up he rose as back he came.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>A very cryptic v. TODO.

## The Leed-Tally

This final section of the poem has fittingly been called the Leed-Tally (*Ljóðatal*). The speaker (certainly Woden) recounts eighteen spells, aristocratic and Odinic in character; they deal with such things as healing (2, 12), battle (3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 13), countering sorcery (6, 10), stilling the elements (7, 9), and seduction (16, 17).

In particular the fourth spell bears a strong likeness to the first Merseburg charm.

145 Ljóð þau kann’k, · es kann-at þjóðans kona  
2 ok manskis mōgr.  
Hjōlp hēitir ēitt, · þat þér hjalpa mun  
4 við sōrgum ok sōkum, · ok sūtum gōrvōllum.

Those ‘leeds’ I know, as knows not the ruler’s woman, and no man’s lad. Help is called one, it will help thee against sorrows and sakes,<sup>a</sup> and all kinds of griefs.<sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Legal proceedings.

<sup>b</sup>TODO: elaborate on translation

146 Þat kann’k annat, · es þurfu ýta synir,  
2 þeir’s vilja lēknar lifa.

I know another, which the sons of men need;<sup>a</sup> they who wish to live as healers.

---

<sup>a</sup>Identical wording to 164/2.

147 Þat kann’k þriðja, · ef mér verðr þōrf mikil  
2 hāpts við mína hēiptmōgu,  
ēggjar dēyf’k · minna andskota,

4           bíta-t þeim vópn né velir.

I know the third, if I come in great need of hindrance against my conflict-lads [ENEMIES];  
I dull the edges of my opponents; for them neither weapons nor staffs bite.

148      Þat kann'k fjórða, · ef mér fyrðar bera  
2           þond at þóglimum,  
          svá ek gæl, · at ganga má'k,  
4           sprettr mér af fótum fjoturr.  
          en af höndum hapt.

I know the fourth, if men bear bonds onto my shoulder-limbs [ARMS]: so I gale that walk  
I may; springs from my feet the fetter, but from my hands the bond.

149      Þat kann'k fimta, · ef sé'k af fári skotinn  
2           flein í folki vaða,  
          flýgr-a svá stint, · at stöðvi'g-a'k,  
4           ef hann sjónum of sé'k.

I know the fifth, if I see a dangerous arrow wading in the troop; it flies not so stiffly that  
I may not hinder it, if I see it with my sights.

150      Þat kann'k sétta, · ef mik sérir þegn  
2           á rótum rás viðar.  
          þann hal, · es mik heipta kvæðr,  
4           þann eta meín heldr an mik.

I know the sixth, if a thane injures me on the roots of a green tree;<sup>a</sup> that man who sings  
hatred against me, him the harms eat rather than me.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e., he carves harmful magic runes into the roots.

151      Þat kann'k sjaunda, · ef sé'k hovan loga  
2           sal of sessmögum,  
          brinnr-at svá breitt, · at hönnum bjargi'g-a'k;  
4           þann kann'k galdr at gala.

I know the seventh, if I see a high hall burning above seat-lads [WARRIORS]: it burns not  
so broadly that I do not save it [= the hall]<sup>a</sup>—that galder I can gale.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. he can reduce the fire so that the hall is not destroyed (and presumably so that the trapped warriors survive).

- 152 Þat kann'k áttá, · es ǫllum es  
 2 nytsamligt at nema,  
 hvar's hatr vęx · með hildings sonum,  
 4 þat má'k bóta brátt.

I know the eighth, which for all is useful to learn: wherever hatred grows among the sons of princes, it I may shortly mend.

- 153 Þat kann'k níunda, · ef mik nauðr of stęndr  
 2 at bjarga fari mínu á floti,  
 vind ek kyrrí · vági á  
 4 ok svęfi'k allan sę.

I know the ninth, if need requires me to save my friend on a floater [SHIP]: the wind I calm on the wave, and put all the sea asleep.

- 154 Þat kann'k tíunda, · ef sé'k túnriður  
 2 lęika lopti á,  
 ek svá vinn'k, · at þęr villar fara  
 4 sinna hęim-hama  
 sinna hęim-huga.

I know the tenth, if I see ʀ town-riders<sup>G</sup> playing aloft: I accomplish it so that they journey lost of their home-ʀ hames<sup>C</sup>; of their home-minds.<sup>a</sup>

3 þęr villar fara 'they (feminine) journey lost' emend.; þęir villir fara 'they (masculine) journey lost' R

<sup>a</sup>The *riður* '(female) riders' were witches who were thought to leave their hames (*hamir* 'skins, shapes') in a form of astral projection in order to fly around in the air, tormenting villagers. Their original bodies would of course be lying in a comatose state, and with the bodies their original minds; their humanness. Weden was through his second sight able to see these riders, and could use his superior magical abilities in order to confuse them so that they were not able to return to their original hames or minds; a cruel fate. — Weden likewise brags about tricking *riders* in *Hoarbeard* 20.

- 155 Þat kann'k ęllipta, · ef skal'k til orrostu  
 2 lęiða langvini,  
 und randir gęl'k, · en þęir með ríki fara,  
 4 hęilir hildar til,  
 hęilir hildi frá,  
 6 koma þęir hęilir hvaðan.

I know the eleventh, if I shall lead old friends into battle: beneath the shields I gale, and they go powerfully, healthy to the conflict; healthy from the conflict; they return healthy from wherever.

- 156 Þat kann'k tolpta, · ef sé'k á tré uppi  
 2 váfa virgilná,  
 svá ek ríst · ok í rúnum fá'k,  
 4 at sá gęngr gumi.  
 ok męlir við mik.

I know the twelfth, if I see high up on a tree a gallow-corpse waving: so I carve, and paint in the runes, that that man walks and speaks with me.

- 157 Þat kann'k þrettánda · ef skal'k þegn ungan  
 2 verpa vatni á,  
 mun-at hann falla, · þótt í folk komi,  
 4 hnígr-a sá halr fyr hjörum.

I know the thirteenth, if I shall upon a young thane throw water:<sup>a</sup> he will not fall, although he comes into battle; that man sinks not down before swords.

<sup>a</sup>Describing the pagan ritual of pouring water on a newborn child. Cf. *Rígh* 7, 21, 34.

- 158 Þat kann'k fjögurtánda, · ef skal'k fyrða liði  
 2 tēlja tíva fyr,  
 ása ok alfa · ek kann allra skil,  
 4 fár kann ósnotr svá.

I know the fourteenth, if I shall count the Tues before the retinue of men: of all the Ease and Elves I know the discernments;<sup>a</sup> few unwise men can do so.

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Hymr* 38, where the corresponding verb *skilja* is used in the context of god-knowledge.

- 159 Þat kann'k fimtánda, · es gól þjóðrörir  
 2 dvergr fyr Dęllings durum,  
 afl gól ósum, · en olfum frama,  
 4 hyggju Hroptatý.

I know the fifteenth, which Thedrearer galed, the dwarf before Delling's doors. Power he galed for the Ease, but for the Elves fame; thought for Roft-Tue (= Weden).

- 160 Þat kann'k sextánda, · ef vil'k hins svinna mans  
 2 hafa geð alt ok gaman,  
 hugi hverfi'k · hvitarmri konu  
 4 ok sný'k hęnnar ollum sęfa.

I know the sixteenth, if I will from the wise girl have her whole sense and pleasure; the heart I change of the white-armed woman, and I turn her whole affection.

161 Þat kann'k sjautjándá · at mik sęint mun firrask  
2 hit manunga man.

I know the seventeenth, that the girl-young girl will lately shun me.

162 Ljóða þessa · munt Loddfáfnir  
2 lengi vanr vesa;  
þó sé þér góð ef getr,  
4 nýt ef nemr,  
þorf ef þiggr.

Of these leeds wilt thou, Loddfathomer, long be deprived, although they might be good for thee if thou gettest, beneficial if thou learnest, needful if thou acceptest.

163 Þat kann'k átjándá, · es ęva kęnni'k  
2 męy né manns konu,  
—alt es þętra · es ęinn of kann,  
4 þat fylgir ljóða lokum—  
nema þęiri ęinni, · es mik armi ęęrr,  
6 eða mín systir sę.

I know the eighteenth, which I will never teach a maiden nor man's woman—everything is better when one alone can do it; that follows the end of the leeds—save for her alone who wraps me in her arm,<sup>a</sup> or who my sister is.

<sup>a</sup>This interesting expression is also used *Wayland* 2. — The one who wraps Weden in her arm may be his wife, Frie. He has no known sister.

164 Nú eru Háva mól kveðin · Háva hollu í;  
2 allþorf ýta sonum,  
óþorf jętna sonum;  
4 ęęill sá's kvað, · ęęill sá's kann,  
njóti sá's nam,  
6 ęęilir þęir's hlýddu.

Now are the speeches of the High One sung, in the hall of the High One; of great need for the sons of men, of harm for the sons of ettins! Hail he who sang [them]; hail he who knows [them]; may he benefit who learned [them]; hail those who heeded [them]!

---

3 jōtna] ýta *corrected in margin* **R**

# The Speeches of Grimner (*Grímnismól*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.976)

Meter: *Leed-meter*, *Firnwordslaw* (2/3–4, 28/3–5, 45/3–5, 48/4, 49/1–2, 53),  
*Galder-law* (46)

The **Speeches of Grimner** are preserved whole in both **R** and **A**.

The poem itself is surrounded by two long introductory prose narratives containing some very old motifs, which are here brought up in the notes. It's hard to say for how long these texts have accompanied the poem (TODO: I may write about this in the Introduction, since this question is important for several other poems), but since they are found in both **R** and **A** and contain these motifs it would seem that they are fairly old. Together with verses 1–3 they form a frame narrative that gives additional meaning to the gnomic verses enclosed within.

The gnomic verses themselves, the meat of the poem, are mythological and often quite obscure. In this they align closely with the gnomic verses in other Eddic poems such as *High*, *Webthritner*, *Sighdrive*, and *Allwise*.

Weden begins by listing the halls of the gods (4–17). This section has been discussed in detail by de Vries (1952) TODO! who considers it corrupt. Specifically, he sees the second half of v. 4 as a later insert, since it does not elaborate on the “holy land” mentioned in the first half. Jackson (1995) has argued convincingly against this, showing how the first half serves as a generalized introduction to the list; the holy land is the dwelling-places of the gods.

After this list come several verses relating to Weden and his hall, Walhall (18–23). Mentioned are the preparation of food in Walhall (18), Weden's wolves (19) and ravens (20), the river through which the dead have to wade (21) and the gate through which they have to pass (22), the count of doors in Walhall (23), the count of doors in Thunder's hall Bilshirner (24), and two animals which stand on the hall and gnaw on the branches of the tree Leered (25–26). From the latter animal's—the stag Oakthirner's—horns droplets fall into Wharyelmer, which is the origin of all rivers (26).

This introduces a list of mythic rivers (27–28), ending with the waters through which Thunder must wade on his way to Ugdrassle (29). This leads to a list of the horses ridden by the other gods on their way to Ugdrassle (31) which is followed by a description of the roots of Ugdrassle (31), then its animals (32–36) the Walkirries (37), and beings associated with the sun and moon (38–40), the things created from Yimer's body (41–42) with a digression on the significance of the ʀbloot<sup>P</sup> for men in the present (43, see

note there!), the creation of the ship *Shidebladner* (44) and finally a list of the noblest of several categories of things and groups (45).

After these lists Woden utters an unclear verse invoking the gods (46), before listing many of his names and the circumstances in which they were used (47–50). He then turns to Garfrith, disappointed by the inhospitality and poor conduct of his former protégé, and predicts his imminent death (51–53). He finally reveals himself by his true name, daring Garfrith to face him (53). After this he repeats several of his names (54), and the poem ends.

In the final prose section we are told that Garfrith, after learning that he was torturing Woden, hurried up to take the god away from the fires, but tripped and fell on his sword and died. After this his son Eyner ruled for a long time.

### From the sons of king Reeding (*Frá sonum Hrauðungs konungs*)

[R 8v/31, A 3v/23]

- P1a** Hrauðungr konungr átti tvá sonu. Hét annarr Agnarr, enn annarr Geirrøðr.  
 2 Agnarr var tíu vetra enn Geirrøðr átta vetra. Þeir reru tveir á báti með  
 dorgar sínar at smáfiski. Vindr rak þá í haf út. Í náttmyrkri brutu þeir  
 4 við land ok gingu upp; fundu kotbónda einn. Þar vóru þeir um vetrinn.  
 Kerling fostaði Agnar enn karl Geirrøð. At vóri fekk karl þeim skip. Enn  
 6 er þau kerling leiddu þá til strandar, þá mælti karl einmæli við Geirrøð. Þeir  
 fengu byr ok kvómu til stöðva fður síns. Geirrøðr var fram í skipi. Hann  
 8 hljóp upp á land enn hratt út skipinu, ok mælti: "Far þú þar er smyl hafi  
 þik." Skipit rak út. Enn Geirrøðr gekk út til bójar; hánun var vel fagnat;  
 10 þá var faðir hans andaðr. Var þá Geirrøðr til konungs tekinn, ok varð maðr  
 ágétr.

King Reeding owned two sons. One was called Eyner, and the other Garfrith. Eyner was ten winters old, and Garfrith eight winters. The two were rowing in a boat with their trolling-lines for small fishing. The wind then drove them out into the sea. In the dark of night they crashed into land and walked up; they found a lone cottage-farmer. There they were over the winter. The wife fostered Eyner, but the husband Garfrith.<sup>a</sup> In the spring the husband gave them ships, but when they followed the farmer's wife in leading them to the shore, the husband spoke privately with Garfrith.<sup>b</sup> They got a good gust, and came to their father's harbour. Garfrith was in the front of the ship. He leapt up onto land and pushed out the ship, and spoke: "Go thou whither the fiends may have thee!" The ship drove out. But Garfrith walked towards the farm; he was welcomed well; by then his father was passed-on. Then Garfrith was taken as king, and became an excellent man.

<sup>a</sup>The wife was Frie, and the husband Woden; this is clarified by the following prose. The motif of Woden preferring the youngest brother is also found in *Rígh*.

<sup>b</sup>Surely instructing him to push his brother out to sea.



- P1b** Óðinn ok Frigg sátu í Hliðskjölfu ok sá um heima alla. Óðinn mælti: Sér [R 9r/10, A 4r/3]  
 2 þú Agnar fóstura þinn, hvar hann elr börn við gýgi í hellinum? En Geirrøðr,  
 fóstri minn, er konungr ok sitr nú at landi. Frigg segir: Hann er matníðingr  
 4 sá at hann kvelr gesti sína ef hánúm þykkja ofmargir koma. Óðinn segir  
 at þat er in mesta lygi. Þau veðja um þetta mál. Frigg sendi eskismey  
 6 sína, Fullu, til Geirrøðar. Hon bað konung varask at eigi fyrgerði hánúm  
 fjolkunnigr maðr sá er þar var kominn í land ok sagði þat mark á at engi  
 8 hundr var svá ólmr at á hann myndi hlaupa. En þat var inn mesti hégómi  
 at Geirrøðr væri eigi matgóðr ok þó lét hann handtaka þann mann er eigi  
 10 vildu hundar á ráða. Sá var í feldi blám ok nefndisk Grímnir ok sagði ekki  
 fleira frá sér þótt hann væri atspurðr. Konungr lét hann pína til sagna ok  
 12 setja milli elda tveggja ok sat hann þar átta nêtr. Geirrøðr konungr átti son  
 tíu vetra gamlan ok hét Agnarr eftir bróður hans. Agnarr gekk at Grímni  
 14 ok gaf hánúm horn fullt at drekka, sagði að konungr gerði illa er hann  
 lét pína hann saklausan. Grímnir drakk af. Þá var eldrinn svá kominn at  
 16 feldrinn brann af Grímni. Hann kvað:

Weden and Frie sat in ʀLithshelf<sup>L</sup> and looked over all the Homes.<sup>a</sup> Weden spoke: “Seest thou Eyner, thy foster-son, where he begets children with the troll-woman in the cave?<sup>b</sup> But Garfrith, my foster-son, is king and now sits at land.” Frie says: “He is such a meat-nithing that he tortures his guests if he judges too many are coming.” Weden says that this is the greatest lie; they make a wager about this matter. Frie sent her handmaid Full to Garfrith’s. She bade the king be wary, that he not be ended by that ʀfeel-cunning<sup>C</sup> man who was come in the land, and said that his sign was that no hound was so fierce that he would leap at him. But that was the greatest vainglory that Garfrith were not meat-good, and yet he has that man seized, whom the hounds would not touch. He was clad in a blue cloak, and called himself Grimner, and did not tell any more about himself, even though he was interrogated. The king had him tortured that he would speak, and set him between two fires, and he sat there for eight nights. King Garfrith had a son ten winters old, and he was named Eyner after his brother. Eyner walked up to Grimner, and gave him a full horn to drink, saying that the king did ill as he had him tortured without cause. Grimner drank from it. Then the fire had come such that the cloak burned on Grimner. He quoth:

<sup>a</sup>Very similar to the Longbeard Origin Myth (TODO: reference and elaborate).

<sup>b</sup>This may relate to Frie’s role as love-goddess. Eyner is in any case a ʀdegenerate<sup>C</sup> man, what one would call a ‘coomer’.

- 1 Hęitr ert hripuðr · ok hęldr til mikill,  
 2 gęgumk firr funi!  
 Loði sviðnar, · þótt á lopt bera’k;  
 4 brinnumk feldr fyrir.

[R 9r/27, A 4r/17]

Hot art thou, flame, and rather too large; go far from me, fire! The woolen cape is singed though I hold it aloft; the cloak burns before me.

[R 9r/29, A 4r/18]

2     Átta nętr · sat'k milli ęlda hér,  
       2     svá't męr mann-gi mat né bauð  
       nema ęinn Agnarr, · es ęinn skal ráða,  
       4     Gęirrøðar sonr, · Gotna landi.

For eight nights sat I in the middle of the fires here, while no man offered me food; save for lone Eyner, who lone shall rule—the son of Garfrith—the land of the Gots!

[R 9r/31, A 4r/20]

3     Hęill skalt, Agnarr, · alls hęilan biðr  
       2     þik Veratýr vesa;  
       ęins drykkjar · skalt aldrigi  
       4     bętri gjöld geta:

Hale shalt thou be, Eyner, as hale Weretue (= Weden) bids thee be; for one drink shalt thou never get a better recompense:<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>The recompense being the esoteric lore which is told from the following verse onwards.

[R 9r/33, A 4r/22]

4     Land es hęilagt, · es liggja sé'k  
       2     ọsum ok ọlfum nęr;  
       en í Þrúðhęimi · skal Þórr vesa  
       4     unz of rjúfask ręgin.

The land is holy, which I see lying close to the <sup>r</sup>Ease and Elves<sup>F</sup>; but in Thrithham shall Thunder be, until the Reins are rent.

[R 9v/2, A 4r/23]

5     Ýdalir hęita, · þar's Ullr of hęfr  
       2     sér of gora sali;  
       Alfhęim Fręy · gófu í árdaga  
       4     tívar at tannféi.

Yewdales are called where Woulder has made himself a hall. Elfham to Free in days of yore did the Tues as a tooth-gift<sup>a</sup> give.

---

<sup>a</sup>The gift that a child receives when he gets his first tooth.

- 6 Bór 's hinn þriði, · es blíð regin [R 9v/3, A 4r/25]  
 2 silfri þokðu sali;  
 Valaskjölf heitir, · es vélti sér  
 4 óss í árdaga.

Bower is the third, where the blithe Reins with silver thatched a hall. Waleshelf is called [the hall] which the os in days of yore won through wiles.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Several previous editors and translators (e.g. Finnur Jónsson (1932), Pettit (1986), Larrington (2014)) has rendered this phrase with variants of 'craftily made for himself' but I disagree.

- 7 Sökkvabekkr heitir hinn fjórði, · en þar svalar knegu [R 9v/5, A 4r/26]  
 2 unnir glymja yfir;  
 þar þau Óðinn ok Sága · drekka umb alla daga  
 4 glöð ór gollnum krum.

Sinkbench is called the fourth, but there cool waves do clash above; there Weden and Sey drink all days, glad, out of golden casks.

- 8 Gláðshøjmr heitir hinn fimti · þar's hin gollbjarta [R 9v/7, A 4r/28]  
 2 Valholl víð of þrumir;  
 en þar Hroptir · kýss hverjan dag  
 4 vápndauða vera.

Gladsham is called the fifth, where the gold-bright Walhall—wide—stands fast; but there Roft (= Weden) chooses every day weapon-dead men.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Cf. v. 14.

The order of the following two verses is that of A. R has them reversed.

- 9 Mjok 's auðkent · þeim's til Óðins koma [R 9v/10, A 4r/30]  
 2 salkynni at séa,  
 skoptum 's rann reft, · skjöldum 's salr þakiðr,  
 4 brynjum of bekki stráat.

Very easily recognized, for those who to Weden's come, is the hall to see: With spear-shafts is the house roofed; with shields is the hall thatched; with byrnies the benches strewn.

- 10 Mjok 's auðkent · þeim's til Óðins koma [R 9v/9, A 4r/31]  
 2 salkynni at séa,

vargr hangir · fyr vestan dyrr  
 4 ok drúpir ǫrn yfir.

Very easily recognized, for those who to Weden's come, is the hall to see: A wolf hangs before the western door, and an eagle droops over.

2 salkynni at séa 'the hall to see'] 'sia at sia' A

[R 9v/12, A 4v/2]

11 Þrymhęimr hęitir hinn sętti, · es Þjazi bjó,  
 2 sá hinn ámatki jǫtunn;  
 en nú Skaði byggvir, · skír brúðr goða,  
 4 fornar toptir fǫður.

Thrimham is called the sixth, where Thedse dwelled, that terrifying ettin; but now Shede bedwells—pure bride of the gods—the ancient plots of her father.

[R 9v/14, A 4v/3]

12 Bręiðablik eru hin sjaundu, · en þar Baldr hęfir  
 2 sér of gǫrva sali,  
 á því landi · es liggja vęit'k  
 4 fęsta fęiknstafl.

Broadblinks are the seventh, and there Balder has made for himself a hall; on that land, where I know lie the fewest staves of treachery.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Evil deeds.

[R 9v/16, A 4v/5]

13 Himinbjörg eru hin ǫttu · en þar Hęimdall  
 2 kveða valda véum.  
 þar vǫrðr goða · drekkur í vęru ranni  
 4 glaðr góða mjǫð.

Heavenbarrows are the eighth, and there Homedall, they say, wields over wighs. There the ward of the gods [= Homedall] drinks in the tranquil house, glad, the good mead.

[R 9v/17, A 4v/6]

14 Folkvangr es hinn níundi · en þar Fręyja ręðr  
 2 sessa kostum í sal;  
 halfan val · hon kýss hvęrjan dag  
 4 en halfan Óðinn á.

Folkwong is the ninth, and there Frow rules the choice of seats in the hall; half the slain she chooses each day, but half Weden owns.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>This verse is cited and closely paraphrased in *Ylfir* 24. — The roots of *kjósa val* ‘choose the slain’ are the same as those in ‘walkirrie’<sup>C</sup> (*val-kyrja* ‘chooser of the slain’), and as Frow is a prominent goddess this would surely make her the chief walkirrie. This is paralleled by *Sarle*, where Frow assumes the name ‘Gandle’<sup>C</sup> (*Göndul*, a name attested in several lists of walkirries; see *Wallow* 30 and Notes) and incites the legendary never-ending Conflict of the Headnings (*Hjáðningavíg*). In spite of this parallel, there are good arguments for believing that the chief walkirrie should be ‘Frie’<sup>C</sup>, Woden’s wife. First, one of the functions of the walkirries is to bear ale to the Ownharriers (*Grimner* 37). This mirrors royal Germanic banquets attested in heroic poetry, where the host’s wife or daughter would pour ale to his retainers and guests (the so-called ‘lady with a mead cup’ ritual; see Enright (1996) and Riseley (2014)). As Woden’s wife, we would expect Frie to have this role. Second, TODO Third, TODO.

- 15      Glitnir es hinn tíundi; · hann es gulli studdr [R 9v/19, A 4v/8]  
       2      ok silfri þakðr it sama;  
           en þar Forseti · byggir flestan dag  
       4      ok svéfir allar sakir.

Glitner is the tenth, it is studded by gold, and thatched by silver the same; but there Forset dwells most of the day, and resolves<sup>a</sup> all [legal] matters.

---

<sup>a</sup>Puts to sleep,

- 16      Nóatún eru hin elliptu · en þar Njörðr hefir [R 9v/21, A 4v/9]  
       2      sér um gorrva sali,  
           manna þengill · inn meinsvani  
       4      hótimbruðum horgi rēðr.

Nowetowns are the tenth, and there Nearth has made himself a hall. The prince of men, the guileless one, rules the high-timbered ‘harrow’<sup>C</sup>.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Webthritbner* 38.

- 17      Hrísi vex · ok hōu grasi [R 9v/23, A 4v/11]  
       2      Víðars land, víði,  
           en þar mōgr of lēzk · af mars baki  
       4      frókn at hefna fōður.

With brushwood and with tall grass grows ‘Wider’<sup>P</sup>’s land, with forest; but there the lad [= Wider] declares—on the back of his steed—valiant, to avenge his father [= Woden].<sup>a</sup>

---

1 hrísi vex ok hōu grasi ‘with brushwood and with tall grass grows’] Identical with *Higb* 117/6.

---

<sup>a</sup>Wider will avenge his father, Woden. See *Webthritbner* 53.

- 18      Andhrímnir · léttr í Eldhrímnir [R 9v/24, A 4v/12]

2           Sęhrímni soðinn,  
             flęska bęzt, · en þat fáir vitu,  
 4           við hvat ęinhęrjar alask.

Andrimner lets in Eldrimner Sowrimner be boiled. The best of meats, but few know that, by what the Ownharriers are nourished.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The cook Andrimner 'face-sooty' has the boar Sowrimner 'sow-sooty' boiled in the cauldron Eldrimner 'fire-sooty'; by this meat are the Ownharriers nourished.

[R 9v/26, A 4v/14]

19       Gera ok Freka · sęðr gunntamiðr,  
           2       hróðigr Hęrjafęðr,  
           en við vín ęitt · vąpngęfugr  
           4       Óðinn ę lifir.

The battle-accustomed, glorious Father of Hosts [= Weden] feeds Gerr and Freck; but by wine alone, the weapon-worshipful Weden ever lives.

[R 9v/28, A 4v/15]

20       Huginn ok Muninn · fljúga hvērjan dag  
           2       jǫrmungrund yfir;  
           óumk of Hugin, · at aptr né komi-t;  
           4       þó séumk męir of Munin.

Highen and Minden fly every day over the ermin-ground [EARTH]. I fear for Highen, that he may not come back; yet I worry more for Minden.

2 jǫrmungrund 'ermin-ground' ] 'the immense ground' (for the rare prefix 'ermin-'<sup>C</sup> see Encyclopedia.); the earth as a vast expanse of land. This compound also occurs in a kenning in the verse on the late C10th Karlevi stone (Öl 1) referring to the unbounded sea as the "ermin-ground of Andle" (*Ęndils jǫrmungrund*, Andle being a sea-king), and in *Beowulf* 859 as *eormengrund* with the same sense.

[R 9v/30, A 4v/17]

21       Þýtr Þund, · unir Þjóðvitis  
           2       fiskr flóði í;  
           áarstraumr · þykkir ofmikill  
           4       valglaumi at vaða.

Þ'Thound<sup>P</sup> roars; thrives Thedwitner's fish [= Middenyardsworm?] in the flood; the river-stream seems far too great for the noisy slain host [= Ownharriers] to wade through.<sup>a</sup>

1-2 Þjóðvitis fiskr 'Thedwitner's fish' ] Thedwitner is easily analyzed as þjóð 'great, main' + vitnir 'wolf'. Thus the main, great wolf, i.e. the 'Fenrerswolf'<sup>P</sup>. Its 'fish' would then be the Middenyardsworm; cf. *Hymer* 24.

<sup>a</sup>Thound is presumably the river surrounding Walhall, which the dead have to pass over to reach the hall.

- 22 Valgrind heitir · es stendr velli á [R 9v/32, A 4v/18]  
 2 heilog fyr heigum durum;  
 forn 's sú grind, · en þat fáir vitu,  
 4 hvé hon 's í lás of lokin.

↑ Walgrind<sup>La</sup> 'tis called, which stands on the plain; holy in front of the holy doors. Ancient is that gate, but few know that, how its lock is locked.

---

<sup>a</sup>'Corpse-gate;' the gate guarding Walhall.

- 23 Fimm hundruð golfa · ok umb fjórum tögum [R 9v/34, A 4v/22]  
 2 svá hygg'k Bilskirni með bugum;  
 ranna þeira, · es reipt vita'k,  
 4 míns vait'k mest magar.

With five hundred floors, and around fourty, so I judge ↑ Bilshirner<sup>L</sup> altogether. Of those houses, which I might know rafted, I know my lad's [= Thunder] to be the greatest.

- 24 Fimm hundruð dura · ok umb fjórum tögum, [R 10r/2, A 4v/20]  
 2 svá hygg at Valhøllu vesa;  
 átta hundruð Eihēja · ganga ór einum durum,  
 4 þá's fara við vitni at vega.

Five hundred doors, and around fourty, so I judge there to be on Walhall. Eight hundred ↑ Ownharriers<sup>G</sup> go out of one door,<sup>a</sup> when to fight with the wolf they journey.

---

<sup>a</sup>The hundred is probably here the long hundred (120, rather than 100), which gives a sum of 640 \* 960 = 614, 400 Ownharriers.

- 25 Heiðrún heitir geit, · es stendr hollu á [R 10r/4, A 4v/24]  
 2 ok bítr af Léraðs limum;  
 skapker fylla · skal hins skíra mjaðar,  
 4 kná-at sú vëig vanask.

Heathrune is called the goat, which stands on the hall [= Walhall], and bites off the branches of Leered. The shape-vats<sup>a</sup> shall she fill with the pure mead; those draughts cannot wane.<sup>b</sup>

---

1 hollu á 'on the hall'] TODO.

---

<sup>a</sup>According to CV the central beer-vat, from which drinks were poured into smaller vessels.

<sup>b</sup>The mead is the goat's milk.

[R 10r/6, A 4v/26]

- 26** Eikþýrnir heitir hjörtr · es stendr hǫllu á  
 2 ok bítr af Léraðs limum;  
 en af hans hornum · drýpr í Hvergǫlmi  
 4 þaðan ęiga vǫtn ǫll vega:

Oakthirner is called the stag, which stands on the hall [= Walhall], and bites off the branches of Leered. But from his horns does drip into Wharyelmer; thence all waters have their ways:<sup>a</sup>

---

1 hǫllu á 'on hall'] TODO. See previous v.

---

<sup>a</sup>After which several vv. of mythic river-names are listed.

[R 10r/9, A 4v/28]

- 27** Síð ok Víð, · Sękin ok Eikin, · Svǫl ok Gunnþró,  
 2 Fjorm ok Fimbulþul,  
 Rín ok Rinnandi,  
 4 Gipul ok Gǫpul, · Gǫmul ok Gęirvimul,  
 þęr hverfa umb hodd goða,  
 6 Þyn ok Vin, · Þoll ok Hǫll,  
 Gráð ok Gunnþorin.

Side and Wide, Seeken and Oaken, Swale and Guththrew, Ferm and Fimblethule, Rine and Rinnend, Gipple, Gapple, Gamble and Garwimble—they circle around the hoard of the gods [osyard]—Thin and Win, Thall and Hall, Grade and Guththorn.

[R 10r/12, A 5r/1]

- 28** Vína heitir enn, · ǫnnur Vegsvinn,  
 2 þriðja Þjóðnuma,  
 Nýt ok Nȳt, · Nęnn ok Hręnn,  
 4 Slíð ok Hríð, · Sylgr ok Ylgr,  
 Víð ok Vǫn, · Vǫnd ok Strǫnd,  
 6 Gjǫll ok Lęiptr, · þęr falla gumnum nęr  
 es falla til hęljar heðan.

TODO

[R 10r/15, A 5r/4, G]

- 29** Kǫrmt ok Ǫrmt · ok kęrlaugar tvęr  
 2 þęr skal Þórr vaða  
 dag hveřn · es dóma fęrr  
 4 at aski Yggdrasils;  
 því't ǫsbrú · bręnn ǫll loga  
 6 hęilǫg vǫtn hlóa.



Carmt and Armt, and the two Carlays, those shall Thunder wade<sup>a</sup> every day when to judge he fares, at the ash of ʀUgdrassle<sup>L</sup>; for the ʀos<sup>G</sup>-bridge [RAINBOW] burns all with flame; the holy waters bellow.

---

6 hlóa ] A hapax. TODO.

---

<sup>a</sup>For Thunder's association with wading cf. TODO.

- 30**      Glaðr ok Gyllir, · Glę ok Skeiðbrimir, [R 10r/17, A 5r/6]  
           2      Silfrintoppr ok Sinir,  
               Gísl ok Falhófnir, · Gulltoppr ok Léttfeti,  
           4      þeim ríða ęsir jóum  
               dag hvęrn · es dóma fara  
           6      at aski Yggdrasils.

Glad and Yiller, Glare and Sheathbrimmer, Silvrentop and Sinewer, Yissel and Fallowhofner, Goldtop and Lightfeet; on those horses ride the Ease, every day when to judge they fare, at the ash of ʀUgdrassle<sup>L</sup>.

- 31**      Þríar rótr · standa á þría vega [R 10r/20, A 5r/8]  
           2      undan aski Yggdrasils;  
               Hęl býr und ęinni, · annarri hrímþursar,  
           4      þriðju męnnskir męnn.

Three roots stand on three ways, from beneath Ugdrassle's Ash. Hell lives under one, [under] another the ʀRime-Thurses<sup>G</sup>, [under] the third manly men.

- 32**      Ratatoskr hętir íkorni · es rinna skal [R 10r/22, A 5r/9]  
           2      at aski Yggdrasils;  
               arnar orð · hann skal ofan bera  
           4      ok sęja Níðhoggvi niðr.

Wratetusk is called the squirrel, who shall run at Ugdrassle's Ash. The eagle's words he shall carry from above, and say to Nithehew below.

- 33**      Hirtir ʀu ok fjórir · þęir's af hęfingar [R 10r/23, A 5r/11]  
           2      á gaghálsir gnaga:  
               Dáinn ok Dvalinn, · Dúnęyrr ok Duraþrór.

TODO

[R 10r/25, A 5r/12, G]

34 Ormar fleiri · liggja und aski Yggdrasils  
 2 an þat of hyggi hværr ósviðra apa:

More worms lie under Ugdrassle's Ash than each unwise ʀape<sup>C</sup> might ween:

[R 10r/26, A 5r/13, G]

35 Góinn ok Móinn, · þeir 'ru Grafvitnis synir,  
 2 Grábakr ok Grafvølluðr,  
 Ofnir ok Sváfnir, · hygg'k at é skyli  
 4 meĩðs kvistu máa.

Gowen and Mowen—they are Gravewitner's sons—Greyback and Gravewalled; Ovner and Sweefner, I ween, shall always injure the branches of the beam [TREE = Ugdrassle's Ash].

[R 10r/28, A 5r/14]

36 Askr Yggdrasils · drýgir erfðei  
 2 meĩra an mennt viti:  
 Hjótrtr bítr ofan · en á hliðu fúnar,  
 4 skęðir Níðhoggr neðan.

Ugdrassle's Ash suffers hardship greater than men might know: a hart bites it from above, but it rots on the side; Nithehew gnaws at it from below.

[R 10r/30, A 5r/16]

37 Hrist ok Mist · vil'k at mér horn beri,  
 2 Skeggjöld ok Skogul,  
 Hildr ok Þrúðr, · Hlökk ok Hęrfjotur,  
 4 Goll ok Gęiröul,  
 Randgríð ok Ráðgríð, · Ręginlęif;  
 6 þęr bera ęinhęrjum ö.

Rist and Mist I wish might bear to me a horn<sup>a</sup>—Shageld and Shagle; Hild and Thrith, Lank and Harfetter, Gall and Garalel; Randgrith, Redegrith and Rainlaf; they bear to the Ownharriers ale.<sup>b</sup>

3 Hildr ok Þrúðr 'Hild and Thrith'] thus A; *Hildi ok Þrúði* R stems from ðz, ðz with r rotunda being interpreted and copied as ði, ðr; this becomes clear upon viewing the facsimile images.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. for to drink out of.

<sup>b</sup>The women listed in this verse are Walkirries.

[R 10r/32, A 5r/18]

38 Árvakr ok Alsviðr, · skulu upp heðan  
 2 svangir sól draga;  
 en und þęira bógum · fölu blíð ręgin,

4            ęsir, ísarnkol.

Yorewaker and Allswith<sup>a</sup> shall above hence—slender [horses]—pull the sun; but under their shoulders hid the blithe Reins—the Ease—iron-coals.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>These figures both appear in *Sighdrive* TODO. Along with the close formulation of the next verse, it is clear that they are closely related.

<sup>b</sup>According to *Yilfer* 11 the gods took two horses to pull the sun's chariot—Yorewaker and Allswith—and “under the shoulders of the horses the gods placed two wind-bags to cool them, but in some sources (*i sumum fróðum*, i.e. this verse) this is called iron-coals (*ísarnkol*).”

39       Svalinn heitir, · hann stęndr sólu fyrir,  
2           skjöldr skínanda goði;  
          björg ok brim · veit'k at brinna skulu,  
4           ef hann fellr í frá.

[R 10v/2, A 5r/20]

Swollen is [one] called, he stands before the sun; a shield [before] the shining god [SUN].  
Crag and surf I know shall burn, if he falls away.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The sun-disc was apparently thought to be a translucent shield, which protected the earth from the full power of the Sun. Without it the whole world (“crag and surf”, LAND and SEA; the totality of the earth) would burn up. The “shield that stands before the shining god [SUN]” is also mentioned in *Sighdrive* TODO.

40       Skoll heitir ulfr, · es fylgir hinu skírleita  
2           goði til varna viðar,  
          en annarr Hati, · hann 's Hróðvitnis sonr,  
4           sá skal fyr heíða brúði himins.

[R 10v/4, A 5r/21]

↑ Skoll<sup>P</sup> is called the wolf, which follows the pure-skinned god [= Sun] to the protection of the woods; but another one [is called] ↑ Hate<sup>P</sup>—he is ↑ Rothwitner<sup>P</sup>'s son—that one shall [run] in front of the bright bride of heaven [= Sun].<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>According to *Yilfer* 12, which is probably based on this verse, Skoll chases the sun but Hate chases the moon. See note to *Wallow* 40 for discussion on this.

41       Ór Ymis holdi · vas jörð of sköpuð,  
2           en ór sveita sęr,  
          björg ór beinum, · baðmr ór hári,  
4           en ór hausi himinn.

[R 10v/6, A 5r/23]

Out of Yimer's hull was the earth shaped, but out of his blood<sup>a</sup> the seas; crags out of his bones, trees out of his hair, but out of his skull, heaven.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>In poetry *sveiti*, while cognate with ModEngl. ‘sweat’, almost always carries the meaning of ‘blood’. This is also seen in the OE cognate *swát* (e.g. *Beowulf* 1286a: *sweord swáte fáb* ‘sword stained with sweat’, 2689b–2690: *he geblódegod wearð // sáwuldríore; · swát ýðum wéoll* ‘he was bloodied by soul-gore; the sweat gushed in waves’).

<sup>b</sup>The understanding is of the heavens as a dome, something that fits well with the clouds being Yimer's brains as mentioned in the next verse.

[R 10v/8, A 5r/25]

42 En ór hans bróum · gęřou blíð řęgin  
2 Miðgarð manna sonum,  
en ór hans hęila · vęru þau hin harðmóðgu  
4 ský ęll of skępuð.

But out of his eyebrows the blithe ʀReins<sup>G</sup> made ʀMiddenyard<sup>L</sup> for the sons of men;<sup>a</sup>  
but out of his brains were the hard-stirred clouds all shaped.

<sup>a</sup>I agree with Finnur Jónsson (1932) in that this describes the gods enclosing Middenyard ('the middle enclosure') by using the hair of his eyebrows as poles.

[R 10v/9, A 5r/26]

43 Ullar hylli · hęfr ok allra goða  
2 hvęrr's tękr fyrstr á funa,  
því't opnir hęimar · verða of ása sonum,  
4 þá's hęfja af hvera.

The ʀholdness<sup>C</sup> of ʀWoulder<sup>P</sup>—and of all the gods—has each who first touches the fire;  
for the ʀHomes<sup>C</sup> become open o'er the sons of the Ease, when the cauldrons are heaved off.<sup>a</sup>

1 hylli 'holdness'] i.e. 'favour, loyalty, grace'. This word and its adjectival equivalent *boltr* 'hold; favourable, loyal, gracious' are often used when speaking about divine grace, not just in Christian texts, but likewise as here wrt. to the Heathen gods. See Encyclopedia for other examples.

<sup>a</sup>This verse is one of the most difficult in the poem, and many interpretations have been made (for a summary see Nordberg (2005)). Finnur Jónsson (1932) and Sijmons and Gering (p. 208, TODO) interpret this verse as relating to the frame narrative, so that Woden, still bound between the two fires, wishes for the gods to rescue him. This, however, scarcely makes sense given its placement in the gnomic wisdom section of the poem, unless the surrounding section is taken to be later "inserts"—this is Finnur's solution, but there is no textual or internal support for it. I believe instead (and here I agree with Nordberg) that the verse refers to the cooking and eating of sacred stew in large cauldrons during the ʀbloot<sup>C</sup>, and Woulder's role in the setting of the ritual fire (see Encyclopedia and (af Edholm, 2009)). This interpretation is especially interesting in that this verse immediately follows 41–42, which deal with the ordering of the world through the dismembering of the primordial sacrificial victim Yimer. It is well attested comparatively (see (Lincoln, 1986)—especially the first two chapters—for its Indo-European analogues) that the ritual sacrifice in the present was seen as a reenactment and continuation of the gods' creation of the world in the mythic past through the previously mentioned primordial sacrifice—these three verses would seem to attest this view also in the Germanic tradition.

[R 10v/11, A 5r/28]

44 Ívalda synir · gingu í árdaga  
2 Skíðblaðni at skapa,  
skipa bazt · skírum Fręy,  
4 nýtum Njarðar bur.

The sons of Iwald went—in days of yore—Shidebladner to shape: the best of ships for the pure Free; for the useful son of Nearth [= Free].

- 45     Askr Yggdrasils, · hann 's óztr við  
        2        en Skíðblaðnir skipa,  
          Óðinn ása · en jóa Sleipnir,  
        4     Bilrøst brúa · en Bragi skalda,  
          Hábrók hauka · en hunda Garmr.

[R 10v/13, A 5r/29]

Ugdrassle's Ash, that is the noblest of trees, but Shidebladner of ships; Weden of the Ease, but of horses Slopner; Bilrest of bridges, but Bray of scolds; Highbrook of hawks, but of hounds Garm.

- 46     Svipum hefð nú ypt · fyr sigtíva sonum,  
        2        við þat skal vilbjörg vaka,  
          øllum ósum · þat skal inn koma  
        4        Égis þekki á  
          Égis drekku at.

[R 10v/15, A 5v/2]

My gaze have I now lifted up before the sons of the victory-Tues [= Ease]; by that shall the willed rescue awake.<sup>a</sup> With all the Ease shall it come in, onto the benches of Eagre, at the drinking of Eagre.

---

<sup>a</sup>Weden has made the Ease aware of his identity, and thus they will come to help him.

- 47     Hétumk Grímr, · hétumk Gangleri,  
        2        Herjann ok Hjalmbéri,  
          Þekkr ok Þriði, · Þundr ok Uðr,  
        4        Hælblindi ok Hár.

[R 10v/17, A 5v/4]

I called myself Grim, I called myself Gangler; Harn and Helmbearer. Theck and Third, Thound and Ith, Hellblind and High.

- 48     Saðr ok Svipall · ok Sanngétall,  
        2        Herteitr ok Hnikarr,  
          Bíleygr, Báleygr, · Bolverkr, Fjölñir,  
        4        Grímr ok Grímnir, · Glapsviðr ok Fjolsviðr.

[R 10v/19, A 5v/5]

Sooth and Swiple, and Soothgettle; Hartat and Nicker. Bileye, Baleeye, Baleworker, Fillner, Grim and Grimmer, Glapswith and Fellswith.

[R 10v/21, A 5v/7]

- 49**      Síðhotttr, Síðskeggr, · Sigfǫðr, Hnikuðr,  
           2      Alfǫðr, Valfǫðr, · Atríðr ok Farmatýr;  
                   einu nafni · hétumk aldri  
           4      síz ek með folkum fór.

Sidehat, Sideshag, Sighfather, Nicked, Allfather, Walfather, Atrider and Farm-Tue; by one name I never called myself, since among men I fared.

[R 10v/23, A 5v/9]

- 50**      Grímni mik hétu · at Geirraðar  
           2      en Jálk at Ósmundar  
                   en þá Kjalar · es ek kjalka dró,  
           4      Þrór þingum at.

Grimner they called me at Garred's [estate], but Yelk at Osmunds. But Keller then, as I drew the sled; Throo at 'Things'<sup>C. a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Presumably referencing other now-lost myths involving Weden travelling in disguise. The last is possibly a reference to the name under which Weden would be invoked at the start of Things (legal assemblies, see Encyclopedia).

[R 10v/24, A 5v/10]

- 51**      Óski ok Ómi, · Jafnhár ok Biflindi,  
           2      Gǫndlir ok Hárbarðr með goðum.

TODO

[R 10v/25, A 5v/11]

- 52**      Sviðurr ok Sviðrir · es ek hét at Sökkmímis  
           2      ok dulða'k þann hinn aldna jǫtun  
                   þá's ek Miðviðnis vas'k · ins méra burar  
           4      orðinn einn bani.

TODO

[R 10v/28, A 5v/13]

- 53**      Qlr ert Geirrǫðr, · hefr þú of drukkit;  
           2      miklu ert hnugginn, · es þú ert mínu gęngi,  
                   ollum einherjum · ok Óðins hylli.

Worse for ale art thou, Garfrith; thou hast drunk too much. Of much art thou bereft when thou art [bereft] of my support; of all the Ownharriers, and of Weden's 'holdness'<sup>C. a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Linguistically, Garfrith is not bereft of the support of the Ownharriers but rather of the Ownharriers themselves, but presumably the sense is the same. By breaking the code of conduct to which he owes his success he lost Weden's favour, and thus been excluded from the community of oath-bound Odinic warriors (the Ownharriers). Cf. here

- 54 Fjölð þér sagða'k, · en þú fát of mant, [R 10v/30, A 5v/15]  
 2 of þik véla vinir;  
 mēki liggja · sé'k míns vinar  
 4 allan í dreypa drifinn.

Much I said to thee, but thou recallest little; 'tis friends that deal with thee! The sword I see, of my friend, lying all drenched in gore.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Weden expresses his disappointment in Garfrith's conduct and predicts his imminent death.

- 55 Eggmóðan val · nú mun Yggr hafa, [R 10v/31, A 5v/16]  
 2 þitt vęitk líf of liðit;  
 varar ro dísir, · nú knátt Óðin séa;  
 4 nálgask mik ef þú męgir.

An edge-tired corpse will Ug now have; I know thy life to be passed. Wary are the dises; now thou dost see Weden—approach me, if thou mayst!

- 56 Óðinn nú heiti'k, · Yggr áðan hét'k, [R 11r/2, A 5v/18]  
 2 hétumk þundr fyr þat,  
 Vakr ok Skilfingr, · Vöfuðr ok Hroptatýr  
 4 Gautr ok Jalkr með goðum.

Weden I am now called, Ug was I earlier called; I called myself Thound before that. Wacker and Shelfing, Waved and Roft-Tue, Geat and Gelding among the gods.

- 57 Ofnir ok Sváfnir · hygg'k at orðnir sé [R 11r/4, A 5v/20]  
 2 allir at ęinum mér.

Ovner and Sweefner, I ween, are become all for me alone.

- P2 Geirröðr konungr sat ok hafði sverð um kné sér ok brugðit til miðs. En er [R 11r/5, A 5v/21]  
 2 hann heyrði at Óðinn var þar kominn stóð hann upp ok vildi taka Óðin frá eldinum. Sverðit slapp ór hendi hánun; vissu hjöltin niðr. Konungr drap  
 4 fęti ok steypitz áfram en sverðit stóð í gögnum hann ok fekk hann bana. Óðinn hvarf þá. En Agnarr var þar konungr lengi síðan.

King Garfrith sat and had a sword about his knee, and it was brandished half-way up. But when he heard that Weden were come there, he stood up and wanted to take Weden from the fire. The sword slipped out of his hand; the hilt pointed downwards. The king tripped and threw himself forth, but the sword went through him, and he received his bane. Weden then disappeared, but Eyner was there king for a long while afterwards.

---

4 hann] þar af A 5 Óðinn hvarf þá.] *om.* A 5 var þar] varð A 5 lengi síðan.] *om.* A



# The Leed of Hoarbeard (*Hárbarðsljóð*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): early C11th (0.578)–late C11th (0.377)

Meter: Unclear (TODO)

In my opinion the poem can be seen as an allegory on class relations, namely between the self-owning Norwegian and later Icelandic farmers, and the warlike Norwegian earls.

Of all Eddic poems this one is probably the strangest in terms of form. Verse length varies greatly, and many of the lines (see especially the final verse) are of an obscene length reminiscent of late continental Germanic poems like the *Heliand*; some simply have no metrical qualities at all. The young clitic definite is (uniquely) employed frequently throughout the poem. These criteria would seem to point towards a late origin for the poem (though not later than the late C13th, when *R* was written).

Against this late origin speaks the presence of rare words (e.g. *ǫgurr* v. 13) and a thorough understanding of the personalities of the two gods which would seem unlikely to stem from several centuries after the conversion of Iceland. The model devised by Sapp gives the poem a 57.8% likelihood of being from the early C11th, and a 37.7% likelihood of being from the late 11th. These scores are most similar to those obtained by *Griper*, a poem that on the surface seems much more archaic.

What could we then be dealing with? It may of course be that the poem is heavily corrupt, but there is no good evidence for this (apart from the above-mentioned irregularities). Most lines are readily understandable and fit well both within their respective context and the poem as a whole. I think a better solution to this problem is to assume that the poem has been acted out as a sort of carnivalesque theatre, with two masked actors, each playing one of the gods. This would explain the variations in meter and line length, and the prose; some lines were simply shouted out, and the lack of alliteration in them would then have a powerful, discordant effect.

This is shown also by uses of the word ‘here’ in vv. 9 and 14. TODO: mention concept of “double scene” by Lars Lönnroth?

---

P1 Þórr fór ór austrvegi ok kom at sundi einu. Qðrum megum sundsins var [R 12r/30]  
2 ferjukarlinn með skipit. Þórr kallaði:

Thunder journeyed out of the eastern ways and came to a sound. At the other side of the sound was the ferryman with the ship. Thunder called out:

[R 12r/32]           1   „Hvęrr ’s sá sveinn sveina · es stęndr fyr sundit handan?“  
 “Who is that swain of swains, that stands across the sound?”

[R 12v/1]           2   „Hvęrr ’s sá karl karla · es kallar of váginn?“  
 “Who is that churl of churls, that calls out over the wave?”

[R 12v/2]           3   „Fęr þú mik of sundit, · fōði’k þik á morgun;  
                           2   męis hefi’k á baki, · verðr-a matrinn bętri.  
                           Át’k í hvíld · áðr ek heiman fōr,  
                           4   síldr ok hafra; · saðr em’k ęnn þęss.“

“Ferry me over the sound, I feed thee in the morning! A basket I have on my back; the food does not get better.<sup>a</sup> I ate for a while before I journeyed from home, herring and oatmeal/he-goats; I am still full from that.”

---

4 hafra ‘he-goats/porridge’] The easiest reading here is the acc. pl. of *hafri* ‘he-goat’. Thunder also eats his goats in *Ylfęr* 44, where he butchers and cooks them in the evening and brings them back to life by blessing them with his hammer at dawn. Finnur Jónsson (1932) and Pettit (1986) prefer this reading; see also Note to next verse.—Many other scholars have here read an accusative plural of *hafri* ‘oat’, i.e. ‘porridge, oatmeal’. Stiles (forthcoming TODO) connects this with *Indrá’s* (who is the Vedic equivalent of Thunder) “partner and yokemate” (*RV* 6.56.2) *Pūšan’s* eating porridge (e.g. 6.56.1, 57.2). Another similarity Stiles notes between Thunder and *Pūšan* is that both have chariots driven by goats (e.g. 6.57.3: “Goats are the draft-animals for the one”, 58.2: “Having goats as his horses”). Whether the Vedic tradition has split an original god into two or whether Thunder has absorbed elements of another god is hard to say.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. ‘you will not get better food than that.’

[R 12v/5]           4   „Árligum verkum · hrósar þú vęrðinum; · vęizt-at-tu fyr gęrla,  
                           2   dępr ’ru þín heimkynni, · dauð hygg’k at þín móðir sé.“

“Of early works boastest thou; of eating!<sup>a</sup> Thou knowest not clearly [what is] before [thee]: dismal is the state of thy home—dead I think thy mother might be!”

---

<sup>a</sup>

[R 12v/6]           5   „Þat sęgir þú nú · es hverjum þikkir  
                           2   męst at vita— · at mín móðir dauð sé.“

“Thou now sayest that which to each man seems most important to know: that my mother might be dead!”

- 6 „Þeygi 's sem þú · þrjú bú eigir góð; [R 12v/8]  
 2 þerþeinn þú stendr · ok hefir brautinga gørvi,  
 þat-ki at þú hafir brękr þínar.“

“Tis hardly as if thou might own three good homesteads; bare-legged thou standest, and hast the gear of a tramp; 'tis not even as if thou have thy own breeches!”

- 7 „Stýrðu hingat eikjunni, · ek mun þér stöðna kenna [R 12v/9]  
 2 eða hvęrr á skipit · es þú heldr við landit?“

“Steer hither the boat! I will show thee to the harbour—or who owns the ship which thou holdest by the shore?”

- 8 „Hildólfr sá heitir · es mik halda bað, [R 12v/11]  
 2 rekr inn ráðsvinni · es býr í Ráðseyjarsundi;  
 bað-at hann hlennimeñn flytja · eða hrossaþjófa,  
 4 góða eina · ok þá's ek gørva kunna;  
 sęg-ðu til nafns þíns · ef þú vill of sundit fara.“

“Hildolf is called he who asked me to hold it, the counsel-wise man who lives in Redesey sound. He bade me not to carry robbing-men, nor horse-thiefs; good men only, and those whom I know well—state thy name if thou wilt fare o'er the sound!”

- 9 „Sęja mun'k til nafns míns · þótt ek sękr sjá'k [R 12v/15]  
 2 ok til alls øðlis: · Ek em Óðins sonr,  
 Męila bróðir · en Magna faðir,  
 4 þrúðvaldr goða · við þór knátt-u hér dóma! Hins vil'k nú spyrja ·  
 hvat þú heitir?“

“I will state my name—[and would] even if I were outlawed—and all my origin: I am Weden's son, Male's brother and Main's father, the strength-wielder of the Gods; with Thunder dost thou here speak! This I will now ask, what thou art called?”

- 10 „Hárbarðr ek heiti, · hyl'k of nafn sjaldan.“ [R 12v/18]

“Hoarbeard I am called, seldom I conceal my name.”

- 11 „Hvat skalt-u of nafn hylja · nema þú sakar eęir?“ [R 12v/18]

“Why shalt thou conceal thy name, unless thou be guilty of crime?”

[R 12v/19]

12 „En þótt ek sakar ęiga · fyr slíkum sem þú ert  
2 þá mun'k forða fjörvi mínu · nema ek fęigr sé.“

“Even though I were guilty of crime, for such a one as thou art I would still protect by life, unless I be ʀfey<sup>C</sup>.”

[R 12v/21]

13 „Harm ljótan mér þikkir í því  
2 at vaða of váginn til þín · ok vęta ęgur minn;  
skylda'k launa kęgursveini þínum kanginyrði · ef ek komumk yfir  
sundit.“

“An ugly harm it seems to me to wade o'er the wave to thee, and wet my burden. I would repay thee, swaddle-swain, for thy mocking words if myself I could bring over the sound.”

---

2 ęgur ‘burden’] The sense of this word is not clear, though it is probably the same as the first element of the compound *ęgurstund* ‘burdensome hour’, found in *Wayland* 42. Some authors have read it as a crude euphemism for ‘penis’, which would not be out of character for this poem. I however consider the best interpretation to be that of an author whose name I’ve forgotten (TODO!), namely that Thunder is referring to the food he carries on his back (cf. v. 3).

[R 12v/23]

14 „Hér mun'k standa · ok þín heðan bíða;  
2 fannt-a-tu mann inn harðara · at Hrungni dauðan.“

“Here I will stand, and hence await thee; thou foundest not a harder man since the death of ʀRungner<sup>P1a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>Rungner was an ettin slain by Thunder, TODO. Hoarbeard’s mentioning of him sets off a long interchange, wherein the two boast of their deeds, and ask what the other one was doing meanwhile.

[R 12v/25]

15 „Hins vilt-u nú geta · es vit Hrungnir deildum,  
2 sá inn stórúðgi jętunn, · es ór stęini vas hęfuðit á,  
þó lét'k hann falla · ok fyr hníga;  
4 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Hárbarðr?“

“This wilt thou now mention, of when I and Rungner dealt with each other; that great-minded ettin on which the head was made of stone. Yet I let him fall, and sink down before [me]—what didst thou then meanwhile, Hoarbeard?”

[R 12v/27]

16 „Vas'k með Fjølvari · fimm vetr alla  
2 í ęy þeiri · er Algrón hętir;  
vega vér þar knóttum · ok val fęlla,  
4 margs at fręista, · mans at kosta.“

“I was with Felwar for five winters all in that island which Allgreen is called. There we knew to fight, and fell corpses; many to tempt, a girl to win.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>I read *margs* ‘many a’ as modifying *mans* ‘girl’, thus giving ‘(we knew) to tempt and to win many a girl’.

17 „Hversu snúnuðu yðr konur yðrar?“ [R 12v/30]  
 “How did your women pleasure (TODO!!!) you?.”

<sup>a</sup>Seemingly a prose line; see Introduction.

18 „Sparkar óttum vér konur · ef oss at spökum yrði; [R 12v/30]  
 2 horskar óttum vér konur · ef oss hollar véri,  
 þér ór sandi · síma undu  
 4 ok ór dali djúpum  
 grund of grófu;  
 6 varð’k þeim einn qlum · øfri at rððum;  
 hvílda’k hjá systrum sjau  
 8 ok hafða’k gëð þeira allt ok gaman; hvat vannt-u þá meðan,  
 þórr?“

“We [I] owned frisky women, if they were pleasing towards us [me]; we [I] owned wise women, if they were <sup>†</sup>hold<sup>C</sup> towards us [me]; out of the sand a rope they wound, and out of a deep dale dug up the ground; I alone became superior to all of them in counsels; I rested by those sisters seven, and had their senses all, and pleasure—what didst thou then meanwhile, Thunder?”

19 „Ek drap Þjaza, · hinn þrúðmóðga jotun, [R 13r/2, A 1r/1 (l. 4b ff.)]  
 2 upp ek varp augum · Allvalda sonar  
 á þann hinn hejða himin;  
 4 þau ’ru merki mest · minna verka,  
 þau’s allir menn síðan of sé;  
 6 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Hárbarðr?“

“I slew <sup>†</sup>Thedse<sup>C</sup>, the strength-minded ettin; up I threw the eyes of the son of Allwald [= Thedse] onto that clear heaven; those are the greatest marks of my works, those that all men since do see<sup>a</sup>—what didst thou then meanwhile, Hoarbeard?”

<sup>a</sup>We here have a rare example of native Germanic star-lore. Is the exact constellation identifiable? TODO.

20 „Miklar manvélar · hafða’k við myrkriður [R 13r/5, A 1r/1]

2 þá's ek vélta þér frá verum;  
 harðan jötun · hugða'k Hlébarð vesa;  
 4 gaf hann mér gambantęin  
 en ek vélta hann ór viti.“

“Great girl-tricks I used against ʀmirk-riders<sup>C</sup>, when I tricked them away from their husbands.<sup>a</sup> A hard ettin I judged Leebeard to be; he gave me a ʀgombentoe<sup>C</sup>, but I tricked him out of his wits.”

<sup>a</sup>Alternatiely ‘away from men’. The *riður* ‘(female) riders’ were witches thought to torment people and cause disease and suffering. See *Higb* 154 for a more detailed explanation.

[R 13r/7, A 1r/3] 21 „Illum huga launaðir þú þá góðar gjafar.“  
 “With an evil mind rewardedst thou that good gift.”

[R 13r/8, A 1r/4] 22 „Þat hefir ęik · es af annarri skęfr;  
 2 umb sik es hvęrr í slíku;  
 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Þórr?“

“An oak has that which it scrapes from another; each is for himself in such [a matter]—what didst thou then meanwhile, Thunder?”

[R 13r/9, A 1r/4] 23 „Ek vas austr · ok jötna barða'k  
 2 brúðir bølvisar · es til bjargs gingu;  
 mikil myndi ętt jötna · ef allir lifði,  
 4 vętr myndi manna · undir Miðgarði;  
 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Hárbarðr?

“I was in the east, and ettins I fought; bale-wise brides who walked to the mountain. Great would the lineage of ettins be if all lived; naught would remain of men within Middenyard<sup>a</sup>—what didst thou then meanwhile, Hoarbeard?”

<sup>a</sup>A remarkable clear statement of purpose. This conception is far from unique to this verse; in *Hymr* 11, for instance, Thunder is described as “the opponent of Rooder”, “the friend of manly retinues” and “Wighward”, attesting his role in the slaying of ettins and the protection of men and their sanctuaries (ʀwighs<sup>C</sup>). Kenned as the wigh-ward (sanctuary-defender) of Middenyard. For Thunder’s killing of women cf. vv. 37–39 below and also

[R 13r/11, A 1r/6] 24 „Vas'k á Vallandi · ok vígum fylgða'k,  
 2 atta ek jöfrum · en aldrięi sętta'k;  
 Óðinn á jarla · þá's í val falla  
 4 en Þórr á þręla kyn.“

“I was in ʀWalland<sup>L</sup> and followed conflicts; I incited princes, and never reconciled them. Weden owns the earls which fall among the slain, but Thunder owns the kin of thralls.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>We see here a sort of aristocratic, Odinic disregard for lower life and life as a good in itself; where Thunder boasts of saving men, Weden sarcastically responds that he caused the deaths of men so that he could have them for himself.

25 „Ójafnt skipta · es þú myndir með ósum liði [R 13r/13, A 1r/8]  
2 ef þú éttir vilgi mikils vald.“

“Translation.”

26 „Þórr á afl órit · en ekki hjarta; [R 13r/14, A 1r/9]  
2 af hréðslu ok hugblęyði · þér vas í hanzka troðit  
ok þóttisk-a þú þá Þórr vesa;  
4 hvárki þá þorðir · fyr hréðslu þinni  
hnjósa né fisa · svá't Fjalarr heyrði.“

“Thunder owns ample strength, but no heart; out of fear and mind-softness didst thou tread into a glove, and then seemedest thou not to be Thunder. Thou daredst neither—for thy fear—to sneeze nor to fart so that Feller might hear [it].<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>This story is also referenced in *Lock* 60. It is elaborated heavily on in *Ylfer* 45: Thunder, Lock, and the siblings Thelwe and Wrash had travelled east for a long time when they discovered a large hall, with an opening on one end, as wide as the building. They took rest inside, but in the middle of the night there was a great earthquake and the ground beneath them trembled. Thunder rose and led the party to a side-room to the right in the middle of the hall. He sat closest to the opening with his hammer ready, while the others sat terrified further inside. At daybreak they left the hall and found a huge ettin named *Skrymir* (ʀShrimer<sup>P</sup>) sleeping next to them. His snoring had caused the earth-quakes, and the hall was his mitten; the side-room was the thumb-part.

27 „Hárbarðr hinn ragi, · munda'k þik í Hęl drepa [R 13r/17, A 1r/11]  
2 ef mętta'k seilask of sund.“

“Hoarheard the ʀdegenerate<sup>C</sup>, I would strike thee into ʀHell<sup>L</sup>, if I might sail o'er the sound!”

28 „Hvat skyldir of sund seilask · es sakir 'ru allz øngar? [R 13r/18, A 1r/12]  
2 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Þórr?“

“Why should thou sail o'er the sound when there are no offenses?—what didst thou then meanwhile, Thunder?”

[R 13r/19, A 1r/13]

- 29 „Ek vas austr · ok ána varða'k  
 2 þá's mik sóttu · þeir Svárangs synir;  
 grjóti mik bǫrðu, · gagni urðu þó lítt fegnir,  
 4 þó urðu mik fyrri · friðar at biðja.  
 hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Hárbarðr?“

“I was in the east, and warded the river, when the sons of Sweering attacked me. With rocks they fought me, yet they rejoiced little in victory; yet they earlier had to beg me for peace—what didst thou then meanwhile, Hoarbeard?”

[R 13r/22, A 1r/15]

- 30 „Ek var austr · ok við ęinhverja dómða'k,  
 2 lék'k við ina lindhvítu · ok lǫng þing háða'k,  
 gladda'k ina gullbjǫrtu, · gamni męr unði.“

“I was in the east, and with a certain woman conversed; I played with the linen-white one, and held long-lasting trysts:<sup>a</sup> I gladdened the gold-bright one; the maiden enjoyed pleasure.”

---

<sup>a</sup>*þing* (see ‘Thing’<sup>C</sup>) usually means ‘legal assembly’, but clearly not here.

[R 13r/24, A 1r/17]

- 31 „Góð ǫttu þeir mankynni þar þá.“

“Then they had good girl-visits there.”

[R 13r/24, A 1r/17]

- 32 „Liðs þíns véra'k þá þurfi, Þórr, · at hęlda'k þęiri inni línhvítu męy.“

“Of thy help I might have been in need then, Thunder, that I might hold that linen-white maiden.”

[R 13r/25, A 1r/18]

- 33 „Ek mynda þér þat þá vęita · ef ek viðr of kęmisk.“

“I would then have granted thee that, if I were able.”

[R 13r/26, A 1r/18]

- 34 „Ek mynda þér þá trúa, · nema mik í tryggð véltir.“

“I would then have trusted thee, unless thou betrayed my trust.”

[R 13r/27, A 1r/19]

- 35 „Em'k-at ek sá hęlbítr · sem húðskór forn á vár.“

“I am not such a heel-biter as an old hide-shoe in spring.<sup>a</sup>”

---



<sup>a</sup>Proverbial (a heel-biter being someone who betrays his companions); the leather of a shoe would become very stiff and chafing over the winter.

36           Hvat Shed þá meðan, Þórr?“ [R 13r/28, A 1r/20]  
“What didst thou then meanwhile, Thunder?”

37           „Brúðir berserkja · barða’k í Hléseyju; [R 13r/28, A 1r/20]  
2           þér höfðu verst unnit, · véltu þjóð alla.“  
“The brides of berserks I fought in Leesie; they had done the worst: deceived a whole people.”

38           „Kléki þá, Þórr, · es þú á konum barðir.“ [R 13r/29, A 1r/21]  
“A great disgrace didst thou then, Thunder, when thou foughtest women.”

39           „Vargynjur vóru þér · en varla konur, [R 13r/30, A 1r/22]  
2           skelldu skip mitt · es ek skorðat hafða’k,  
              ógðu mér járnlurki · en eltu þjálfu.  
4           hvat vannt-u þá meðan, Hárbarðr?“  
“She-wolves were they, but hardly women; they knocked my ship which I had propped; frightened me with an iron-cudgel, but chased Thelwe around—what didst thou then meanwhile, Hoarbeard?”

40           „Ek vas’k í hernum · es hingat gjörðisk [R 13r/32, A 1r/23]  
2           gnęfa gunnfana, · geir at rjóða.“  
“I was in the army, as hence it made ready to raise the war-standard; to redden the spear.”

41           „Þess vilt-u nú geta, es þú fórt oss óljúfan at bjóða.“ [R 13v/1, A 1r/24]  
“This wilt thou now mention, as thou wentest to bid us [= the Ease] hatred!”

---

1 óljúfan ] oliyfán A; †olubann† R

42           „Bóta skal þér þat þá · munda baugi [R 13v/2, A 1r/25]  
2           sem jafnendr unnu · þeir’s okkr vilja sétta.“

“I will then restore thee for that with a hand-high, like the settlers [have] considered, those who wish to reconcile us.”

[R 13v/3, A 1r/26]

43 „Hvar namt þessi · in hnófiligu orð  
2 es heyrða’k aldrigi · hnófiligri?“

“Where learnedst thou these sarcastic words, which I never heard more sarcastic?”

[R 13v/5, A 1r/27]

44 „Nam’k at mǫnnum þeim inum aldrǫnum es búa í heimis-skógum.“

“I learned them from the old men who dwell in the home-forests.”

[R 13v/5, A 1v/1]

45 „Þó gefr þú gótt nafn dysjum, es þú kallar þat heimis-skóga.“

“Yet thou givest a good name to poor cairns,<sup>a</sup> as thou callest them home-forests.”

---

<sup>a</sup>cf. his waking the dead in various poems TODO.

[R 13v/6, A 1v/2]

46 „Svá dómi’k of slíkt far.“

“So I speak about such matters.”

[R 13v/7, A 1v/2]

47 „Orðkringi þín · mun þér illa koma  
2 ef ek réð á vág at vaða;  
ulfi héra · hygg’k at ópa mynir  
4 ef hlýtr af hamri hogg.“

“Thy word-glibness will bring thee evil, if I resolve to wade on the wave; higher than a wolf I think that thou wilt scream, if thou suffer a strike from the hammer.”

[R 13v/9, A 1v/4]

48 „Sif á hó heima, · hans munt fund vilja,  
2 þann munt þræk drýgja, · þat ’s þér skyldara.“

“Sib has a lover at home; him wilt thou wish to meet! On that one shalt thou use thy strength—that befits thee more!”

1 hó ‘lover’] Most translators take this acc. sg. word as an alternative form of *bórr* m. ‘adulterer’ (gen. *bórs*), containing the same root as *bóra* f. ‘whore, prostitute’, *bór* n. ‘adultery, fornication’, ModEngl. whore. The -*r* has presumably been interpreted as the masc. nom. sg. ending, giving nom. \**bór*, gen. \**bós*. Further, this accusation is also found in *Lock* TODO, where Lock says that he has been Sib’s lover (*bórr*). Notably, CV interprets this word as the unrelated *bór* m. ‘pot-hook’, “insinuating that Thor busied himself with cooking and dairy-work.” This seems very unlikely when considering Thunder’s response in the next verse: “I think that thou liest!” and the parallel in *Lock*.

- 49 „Mélir þú at munns ráði · svá’t mér skyldi vęrst þikkja, [R 13v/10, A 1v/5]  
2 halr inn hugblauði, · hygğ’k at þú ljúgir.“

“Thou speakest to the counsel of thy mouth that which would seem to me the worst; heart-soft man, I think that thou liest!”

- 50 „Satt hygğ’k mik segja, · seinn ert at fęr þinni, [R 13v/12, A 1v/6]  
2 langt myndir nú kominn, Þórr, · ef þú litum fęrir.“

“I think myself to speak truly: late art thou in thy journey; far would thou now be come, Thunder, if thou had brought thy colours.”

---

2 litum fęrir ‘brought thy colours’] Very unclear expression. *fęra litum* TODO.

- 51 „Hárbarðr inn ragi, · hełdr hefir nú mik dvalðan!“ [R 13v/14, A 1v/8]

“Hoarbeard the degenerate; thou hast now delayed me greatly!”

- 52 „Ása-Þórs · hugða’k aldrigi myndu [R 13v/14, A 1v/8]  
2 gleppja fęhirði farar.“

“The journey of Thunder of the Ease I never thought that a shepherd [= I] would divert.”

- 53 „Ráð mun’k þér nú ráða: · Ró þú hingat bátinum, [R 13v/15, A 1v/9]  
2 hęttum hętingi, · hitt fęður Magna!“

“I will now counsel thee a counsel: Row hither the boat; seize with the taunting; come to the father of Main [= Thunder = me]!”

- 54 „Far þú firr sundi, · þér skal fars synja!“ [R 13v/17, A 1v/10]

“Go far from the sound; the ferry shall be denied thee!”



# The Lay of Thrim (*Þrymskviða*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C9th (0.741)–C10th (0.259)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

Compare *Harvest-long*, *Hymer*, other poems and refer to the SkP intro to one of the big Thunder poems. TODO.

- 
- 1    Vręiðr vas þá Ving-Þórr · es hann vaknaði  
2    ok síns hamars · of saknaði,  
     skegg nam at hrista, · skqr nam at dýja,  
4    réð Jarðar burr · umb at þreifask.

Wroth was then Wing-Thunder when he woke, and of his hammer was bereaved. His beard he took to shake, his locks he took to pull; resolved the son of Earth to look about.

---

1 Vręiðr] TODO: Note about ambiguity of alliteration.

- 2    Ok hann þat orða · allz fyrst of kvað:  
2    „Hęyrðu nú, Loki, · hvat ek nú męli  
     es ęigi vęit · jarðar hvēgi  
4    né upphimins: · áss es stolinn hamri!“

And he that word first of all did say: “Hear thou now, Lock, what I now speak, which nowhere is known, not on earth nor Up-heaven:<sup>a</sup> the ʀos<sup>G</sup> [= Thunder = I] has been robbed of his hammer!”

---

<sup>a</sup>Formulaic, see Encyclopedia: ʀEarth and Up-heaven<sup>F</sup>.

- 3    Gingu þęir fagra · Freyju túna  
2    ok hann þat orða · allz fyrst of kvað:  
     „Muntu mér, Freyja, · fjaðrhams léa  
4    ef ek míninn hamar · mętta’k hitta?“

Went they to the fair yards of ʀFrow<sup>P</sup>, and he that word first of all did say: “Wilt thou me, Frow, the ʀ feather-hame<sup>P</sup> lend, if I my hammer might find?”

4 „Þó mynda’k gefa þér · þótt ór gulli vëri  
2 ok þó sælja · at vëri ór silfri.“

“I would yet give it to thee, though it were golden; and yet offer<sup>a</sup> it to thee, as it were silvern.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*sælja* ‘sell’ here has its earlier meaning, cf. Gotish *saljan* Streitberg (1910, p. 116): ‘*opfern*; θύειν’.

<sup>b</sup>Regaining the hammer is of such importance to the gods (cf. v. 17; without it the Ease stand powerless against the ʀEttins<sup>G</sup>), that Frow would lend the feather-hame to the greedy and untrusty Lock, even if it were made out of gold or silver.

5 Fló þá Loki, · ʃaðrhamr dunði,  
2 unz fyr útan kom · ása garða  
ok fyr innan kom · jøtna hęima.

Flew then Lock<sup>a</sup>—the feather-hame rustled—until outside he came of the ʀ yards of the Ease<sup>L</sup>, and inside he came of the ʀ homes of the Ettins<sup>L</sup>.

<sup>a</sup>Though Thunder is the one asking for the hame (“if I *my* hammer might find”), Lock is the one that takes off flying.

6 Þrymr sat á haugi, · þursa dróttinn,  
2 greyjum sínum · gullbønd snøri  
ok mǫrum sínum · mǫn jafnaði.

Thrim sat on the mound,<sup>a</sup> the lord of ʀThurses<sup>G</sup>: on his greyhounds the golden leashes he twirled, and on his mares the manes he cut even.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Apparently a typical seating position for ettins. See *Wallow* 42 for other attestations.

<sup>b</sup>The image suggested here reminds one of the ancient “master of animals” motif, especially as attested on panel A of the Gundestrup cauldron.

7 „Hvat ’s með ósum? · Hvat ’s með ǫlfum?  
2 Hví est ęinn kominn · í jøtunhęima?“  
„Illt es með ósum, · illt es með ǫlfum!  
4 Hęfir þú Hlórriða · hamar of folginn?“

“What is with the Ease? What is with the elves? Why art thou alone come into the ʀEttin-homes<sup>L</sup>?” — [Lock quoth:] “’Tis ill with the Ease, ’tis ill with the elves! Hast thou the hammer of Loride (= Thunder) hidden?”

3 illt es með ölfum] Inserted in analogy with the first pair, regardless it is needed for metrical reasons.

- 8 „Ek hefí Hlórriða · hamar of folginn  
 2 átta røstum · fyr jorð neðan;  
 hann engi maðr · aptr of heimtir  
 4 nęma fōri mér · Freyju at kvęn.“

“I have the hammer of Lorde hidden, eight rests<sup>C</sup> beneath the earth; it no man will fetch again, unless he bring me Frow as wife.”

- 9 Fló þá Loki, · fjaðrhamr dunði,  
 2 unz fyr útan kom · jøtna hęima  
 ok fyr innan kom · ása garða;  
 4 mōtti hann Þór · miðra garða  
 ok þat hann orða · allz fyrst of kvað:

Flew then Lock—the feather-hame rustled—until outside he came of the homes of the Ettins, and inside he came of the yards of the Ease. He met Thunder in the middle of the yards, and he [= Thunder] that word first of all did say:

- 10 „Hęfir þú ørendi · sem erfíði?  
 2 Seg-ðu á lopti · long tíðendi!  
 Opt sitjanda · sogur of fallask,  
 4 ok liggjandi · lygi of þęllir.“

“Hast thou an errand, as hardship?<sup>a</sup> Say thou aloft, the long tidings! Often sitting, tales fail each other, and lying down, lies are dealt.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The collocation *ørendi* ‘errand’ ... *erfíði* ‘hardship’ is formulaic; cf. *HHarw* 5. Thunder asks Lock if he has bad news.

<sup>b</sup>Proverbial. If one sits down and thinks too much over bad news, details will be left out, excuses thought up. Thus it is best that Lock immediately tell Thunder what he has learned.

- 11 „Hefí’k ørendi · erfíði ok:  
 2 Þrymr hefí þinn hamar, · þursa dróttinn;  
 hann engi maðr · aptr of heimtir  
 4 nęma hōnum fōri · Freyju at kvęn.“

“I have an errand, hardship also: Thrim has thy hammer, the lord of Thurses; it no man will fetch again, unless he bring him Frow as wife.”

- 12      Ganga þeir fagra · Freyju at hitta  
           2      ok hann þat orða · allz fyrst of kvað:  
               „Bitt-u þik, Freyja, · brúðar líni!  
           4      Vit skulum aka tvau · í jötunhëima.“

Go they the fair Frow to find, and he<sup>a</sup> that word first of all did say: “Bind thee, Frow, with a bride’s linen<sup>b</sup>! We two shall drive into the Ettin-homes.”

<sup>a</sup>Unclear. Possibly Lock, since he was the speaker of the last verse.

<sup>b</sup>A linen band tied around the bride’s head. TODO: Reference this note.

- 13      Vręið varð þá Freyja · ok fnasaði,  
           2      allr ása salr · undir bifðisk,  
               stokk þat it mikla · męn Brisinga:  
           4      „Mik vęizt verða · vergjarnasta  
               ef ek ęk með þér · í jötunhëima.“

Wroth became then Frow, and snorted—the whole hall of the Ease trembled below—threw she off the great necklace of the Brisings: “Thou knowest that I will become the most man-eager,<sup>a</sup> if I drive with thee into the Ettin-homes.”

<sup>a</sup>Either Frow is speaking out of self-awareness of her own lustful inclinations, or the sense is that she will be accused of being lustful by the other gods, but there is no verb here corresponding to ‘accuse’. For Frow’s promiscuity see *Lock* 30 and Note.

- 14      Sęnn vóru ęsir · allir á þingi  
           2      ok ósynjur · allar á máli,  
               ok of þat réðu · ríkir tívar:  
           4      hvé þeir Hlórriða · hamar of sótti.

Soon were the ʀEase<sup>G</sup> all at the ʀThing<sup>C</sup>, and the ʀOssens<sup>C</sup> all at speech, and of this counseled the mighty ʀTues<sup>G</sup>:<sup>a</sup> how they the hammer of Lorida would seek out.

<sup>a</sup>Identical to *Dreams* 1.

- 15      Þá kvað þat Hęimdallr, · hvítastr ása,  
           2      vissi hann vęl framm · sęm vanir aðrir:  
               „Bindu vér Þór þá · brúðar líni;  
           4      hafi hann it mikla · męn Brisinga!

Then quoth that ʀHomedall<sup>P</sup>, the whitest of the Ease; he knew well forth,<sup>a</sup> like the other ʀWanes<sup>G</sup>: “Let us bind Thunder with the bride’s linen; may he have the great ʀnecklace of the Brisings<sup>P</sup>.”



---

<sup>a</sup>*vita fram* 'to know forth', i.e. to know the future. Compare *framviss* 'forth-wise; prescient.'

- 16    Lötum und hönnum · hrynja lukla  
       2    ok kenváðir · umb kné falla  
           en á brjósti · breiða stëina  
       4    ok hagliga · umb hofuð typpum!“

Let us place by his side keys to jingle, and women's garments to fall down about his knees, and on the breast broad stones, and skillfully let us tip his head!<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>This verse contains an interesting description of Viking age bridal dress: As the everyday manager of the household, keys were the mark of a respectable married woman. The “broad stones” on the breast are probably tortoise brooches, while the tipping of the head refers to some sort of bridal hat (TODO: Literature). Breast-brooches are also mentioned in *Wayland* 25, 36.

- 17    Þá kvað þat Þórr, · þrúðugr áss:  
       2    „Mik munu ęsir · argan kalla  
           ef ek bindask lét · brúðar líni!“

Then quoth that Thunder, the mighty os: “Me would the Ease call ʀ degenerate<sup>C</sup>, if I let myself be bound with bride's linen!”

- 18    Þá kvað þat Loki · Laufęjar sonr:  
       2    „Þęgi þú, Þórr, · þęira orða!  
           Þęgar munu jętnar · Ásgarð búa  
       4    nęma þú þinn hamar · þér of hęimtir.“

Then quoth that Lock, the son of Leafie: “Shut thou, Thunder, those words up! Shortly the Ettins will settle Osyrd, unless thou thy hammer for thyself dost fetch!”

- 19    Bundu þęir Þór þá · brúðar líni  
       2    ok inu mikla · męni Brisinga,  
           létu und hönnum · hrynja lukla  
       4    ok kenváðir · umb kné falla  
           en á brjósti · breiða stëina  
       6    ok hagliga · of hofuð typpðu.

Bound they Thunder then, with bride's linen, and with the great necklace of the Brisings. They placed by his side keys to jingle, and women's garments to fall down about his knees, and on the breast broad stones, and skillfully they tipped his head.

- 20 Þá kvað þat Loki · Laufeyjar sonr:  
 2 „Mun ek ok með þér · ambótt vesa,  
 vit skulum aka tvau · í jötunhëima.“

Then quoth that Lock, the son of Leafie: “I will also with thee be a handmaid; we two<sup>a</sup> shall drive into the Ettin-homes.”

<sup>a</sup>The form used, *tvau*, is the neuter plural, i.e. one of the pair is female and the other male. This is either an error due to mindless copying of v. 11, or a backhanded insult against Thunder.

- 21 Senn vóru hafrar · hëim of vrekni,  
 2 skyndir at sköklum, · skyldu vël renna;  
 björg brotnuðu, · brann jörð loga;  
 4 ók Óðins sonr · í jötunhëima.

Soon ʀhe-goats<sup>Ca</sup> were driven home, hasted onto the cart-poles; they were to run well. Crag burst, the earth burned with flame; the son of Weden [= Thunder] drove into the Ettin-homes.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Thunder's cart was driven by he-goats, and he is likewise called “the lord of he-goats” in *Hymer* 20, 31. See Encyclopedia.

<sup>b</sup>A very similar but more detailed description of Thunder driving is found in Thedwolf's *Harvest-long* 14–16. In both poems his wagon is drawn by he-goats, causing great cosmic disturbance: crags (*björg* in both) are rent asunder and fires rage before him. See also *Dreams* 3 for a related description of Weden riding.

- 22 Þá kvað þat Þrymr, · þursa dróttinn:  
 2 „Standið upp, jötnar, · ok stráið þekki!  
 Nú fórið mér · Freyju at kván,  
 4 Njarðar dóttur · ór Nóatúnun.

Then quoth that Thrim, the lord of Thurses: “Stand ye up, ettins, and strew the benches! Now bring me Frow as wife; the daughter of ʀNearth<sup>P</sup> of the ʀNowetowns<sup>L</sup>.”

- 23 Ganga hér at garði · gullhyrnðar kýr,  
 2 øxn alsvartir, · jötnei at gamni,  
 fjöld á’k meïðma, · fjöld á’k menja;  
 4 einnar mér Freyju · ávant þykkir.“

Here march to the estate golden-horned cows, all-black oxen, to the enjoyment of the ettin [= me]. A great deal I own of treasures, a great deal I own of necklaces; of Frow alone methinks is missing.”

- 24 Vas þar at kveldi · of komit snimma

- 2 ok fyr jǫtna · ǫl framm borit.  
 Einn át oxa, · átta laxa,  
 4 krásir allar, · þér's konur skyldu,  
 drakk Sifjar verr · sáld þrjú mjaðar.

There was the evening come quickly, and before the ettins ale brought forth. Ate he [= Thunder] one ox, eight salmons, and all the dainties which were meant for the women; drank the husband of Sib [= Thunder] three sieves of mead.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Hymr* 15. It is rather interesting that the same kenning is used in both verses when both concern Thunder's great eating; possibly one poet was playing on the other's expression, or they were both referencing some now-lost work.

- 25 Þá kvað þat Þrymr, · þursa dróttinn:  
 2 „Hvar sátstu brúðir · bíta hvassara?  
 Sá'k-a brúðir · bíta enn breiðara  
 4 né enn meira mjöð · mey of drekka!“

Then quoth that Thrim, the lord of Thurses: “Where sawest thou brides bite sharper? Saw I never brides bite yet broader, nor yet more mead a maiden drink.”

- 26 Sat in alsnotra · ambótt fyr  
 2 es orð of fann · við jötuns máli:  
 „Át vętr Freyja · átta nöttum,  
 4 svá vas hón óðfús · í jötunheima.“

Sat the allclever maid-servant [= Lock] in front, when she a word did find against the speech of the ettin: “Ate Frow naught, for eight nights; so madly was she longing for the Ettin-homes.”

- 27 Laut und línu, · lysti at kyssa,  
 2 en hann útan stókk · ęndlangan sal:  
 „Hví eru ęndótt · augu Freyju?  
 4 Þykki mér ór · augum brenna!“

He looked 'neath the linen, he lusted for a kiss, but he from the outside leapt back, across the length of the hall: “Why are the eyes of Frow fiery? Methinks there is flame coming out of the eyes!<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>Lit. “Methinks out of the eyes burn.”

- 28 Sat in alsnotra · ambótt fyrir

- 2 es orð of fann · við jötuns máli:  
 „Svaf vętr Freyja · átta nóttum,  
 4 svá vas hón óðfús · í jötunhęima.“

Sat the allclever maid-servant [= Lock] in front, when she a word did find against the speech of the ettin: “Slept Frow naught, for eight nights; so madly was she longing for the Ettin-homes.”

1 fyrir] add. *þf. R* is possibly a lost word.

- 29 Inn kom in arma · jötna systir,  
 2 hin es brúðfjár · biðja þorði:  
 „Láttu þér af höndum · hringa rauða  
 4 ef þú ǫðlask vill · ástir mínar,  
 ástir mínar, · alla hylli!“

In came the wretched sister of the ettins, the one who for the bride-price had dared ask: “Take off from thy hands the red rings, if thou wilt win my loves; my loves, [and] all [my] holdness<sup>C</sup>.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The sister, who already asked for the hammer, now has the audacity to ask Thunder (still disguised as Frow) to give her the very rings on his hands.

- 30 Þá kvað þat Þrymr, · þursa dróttinn:  
 2 „Berð inn hamar · brúði at vígja,  
 leggið Mjöllni · í meýjar kné,  
 4 vígið okkr saman · Várar hęndi!“

Then quoth that Thrim, the lord of Thurses: “Bear ye in the hammer, the bride to bless; lay Millner in the maiden’s knee, bless us two together by the hand of ‘Ware’!<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>A minor goddess presumably presiding over marriage. See Encyclopedia.

- 31 Hló Hlórriða · hugr í brjósti  
 2 es harðhugaðr · hamar of þekki;  
 Þrym drap hann fyrstan, · þursa dróttin,  
 4 ok ęt jötuns · alla lamði.

Laughed the heart in Loride’s chest, when, hard-hearted, he recognized the hammer. Thrim he slew first, the lord of Thurses, and all the lineage of the ettin he thrashed.

- 32 Drap hann ina ǫldnu · jötna systur,

- 2      hin es brúðfjár · of beðit hafði;  
         hón skell of hlaut · fyr skillinga  
4      en högg hamars · fyr hringa fjöð.

He slew the old sister of the ettins, the one who for the bride-price had asked; she received a smiting before shillings, and a strike of the hammer before a multitude of rings.

**33**      Svá kom Óðins sonr · endr at hamri.

Thus Woden's son regained his hammer.



# The Lay of Hymer (*Hymiskviða*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.694)–early C11th (0.268)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

Attested in two manuscripts, **R** and **A**. The two are surprisingly consistent; all verses are shared, and come in the same order. The title *Hymiskviða* ‘the Lay of Hymer’ comes from **A**. **R** instead has in the usual red ink the header *Þórr dró Miðgarðsorm* ‘Thunder pulled the Middenyardsworm’.

While its meter is *Firnwordslaw*, typical for Eddic poems, this poem is notable for its unusual amount of kennings and complex word-order, both of which are clearly Scoldic traits. The myth of Thunder’s fishing, likewise, is well known from a number of Skaldic poems (see TODO), with which this poem shares both kennings (e.g. 22/4 *umbgjörð allra landa* ‘the encircler of all lands [= Middenyardsworm]’) and wording (especially). These factors suggest that *Hymer* was composed in a Scoldic environment, perhaps even by a poet by whom we have other works preserved, although that can of course not be known.

Another notable thing about this poem is its nature as a compilation of several myths. (It must here be said, that unlike *Highb*, which has clear differences of style and language between its parts, *Hymer* is clearly a stylistic and narrative whole, composed by a single poet and then transmitted faithfully!) This is most clearly seen in its analogues. Thus, the story of Thunder’s fishing is told in *Yilfer* 48, but Tue is not present, and there is no mention of a cauldron. TODO!

- 
- 1    Á̊r valtívar · v̊eiðar nó̊mu  
2    ok s̊umblsamir · áð̊r saðir yrð̊i,  
     h̊ristu t̊eina · ok á hlaut s̊ou,  
4    fundu at É̊gis · ørkost hvera.

[R 13v/26, A 5v/25]

Of yore the slain-Tues [GODS] had caught game<sup>a</sup>, and at the ʀsimple<sup>C</sup> before they might eat<sup>b</sup>, they shook the twigs and looked at the ʀleat<sup>C</sup>; they found at Eagre’s a great choice of cauldrons.<sup>c</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Lit. ‘took game’

<sup>b</sup>Lit. ‘might become sated’

“The gods sprinkled the leat (*blaut* ‘sacrificial blood’) of the beasts and interpreted the pattern; they found it most auspicious to feast at Eagre’s. TODO: reference to leat-twigs.

[R 13v/28, A 5v/27]

2 Sat berghúi · barntęitr fyrir,  
2 mjok glíkr męgi · Miskorblinda,  
lęit í augu · Yggs barn í þrá:  
4 „þú skalt ęsum · opt sumbl ęęra!“

Sat the mountain-dweller [ETTIN = Eagre] there, merry like a child, much alike to the lad of Misherblind;<sup>a</sup> into his eyes looked the child of Ug (= Weden) [= Thunder] stubbornly: “Thou shalt for the Ease oft host simbles!”<sup>b</sup>

4 ęęra ‘host’] ęęfa ‘give’ A

<sup>a</sup>A reference to a lost myth? Unless Misherblind is an alternative name for Firneet, Eagre’s father.

<sup>b</sup>Having seen that Eagre has a great store of cauldrons, Thunder orders him to host future banquets for the Ease.

[R 13v/31, A 5v/29]

3 Qnn fekk jętni · orębęinn halr,  
2 hugęi at hefndum · hann nęst við goę,  
baę hann Sifjar ver · sęr fęra hver,  
4 „þann’s ek ęllum ęl · yęr of hęita.“

Great toil for the ettin the word-peevisish man [= Thunder] caused; he [= Eagre] thought of revenge, soon, against the god; he bade Sib’s husband [= Thunder] bring him a cauldron, “that one with which I for you all ale might heat.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Eagre gets back at Thunder by telling him that he needs a single cauldron which can hold enough ale to supply all the Ease.

[R 14r/1, A 5v/30]

4 Né þat męttu · męrir tívar  
2 ok ginnreęin · of ęeta hvērgi,  
unz af tryggęum · Týr Hlórrięa  
4 ąstrąę mikit · ęinum sagęi:

But that one might the renowned ʀTues<sup>G</sup> and the ʀgin-Reins<sup>G</sup> nowhere get ahold of—until, out of loyalty, a great loving counsel Tue to Lorde (= Thunder) alone did say:

[R 14r/3, A 6r/2]

5 „Býr fyr ąstan · Ęlívąga  
2 hundvíss Hymir · at himins ęnda,  
á minn faęir · móęugr kętil,  
4 rumbrugęinn hver · rastar djúpan.“



“Dwells to the east of the ʀllewaves<sup>L</sup> the hound-wise Hymer, at heaven’s end.<sup>a</sup> Owns my father [= Hymer], fierce, a kettle; a size-renowned cauldron, a ʀrest<sup>C</sup> deep.”

---

4 rúmbregðinn] ʀrumbrygðanʀ A

---

<sup>a</sup>According to *Webbthritbner* 31 the llewaves were the poisonous wild rushes out of which the ettins emerged, and so it only makes sense that they would be found in the east, where the ettins dwell. Hymer’s dwelling even further east than them illustrates his fierceness.

[Thunder quoth:]

6 „Vęizt, ef þiggjum · þann lögveli?“

[R 14r/4, A 6r/4]

2 „Ef, vinr, vęlar · vit gęrvum til!“

“Knowest thou if we will receive that liquid-boiler [CAULDRON]?” — [Tue quoth:] “If friend, we two make use of wiles!”<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Like elsewhere in this poem the speakers are not indicated, but it is most sensible that Thunder asks and Tue answers.

7 Fóru drjúgum · dag þann framan

[R 14r/5, A 6r/4]

2 Ásgarði frá · unz til Eęils kvęmu;

hirði hafra · hornęęfgasta;

4 hurfu at hęllu · es Hymir átti.

— Journeyed they with great strides from the beginning of the day, from Osyard, until to Agle’s [home] they came—he herded the horn-noblest he-goats<sup>a</sup>—they turned to the hall which Hymer owned.

---

1 dag þann framan ‘from the beginning of the day’] emend. following Finnur Jónsson (1932); *dag þann fram* ‘on that day forth’ R; *dag frálęga* ‘swiftly at day’ A 2 Eęils ‘Agle’s [home]’] thus R; *Eęis* ‘Eagre’s [home]’ A is probably from confusion with Eagre (the ettin) described earlier in the poem, alternatively the shepherd shared his name.

---

<sup>a</sup>Thunder left his goats in the care of the shepherd Agle, whose identity is unclear.

8 Męgr fann ęmmu, · mjęk lęiða sér,

[R 14r/7, A 6r/6]

2 hafði hęfða · hundruð níu.

en ęnnur gekk · algollin framm

4 brúnhvít bera · bjórvęig syni.

The lad [= Tue] found his grandmother very loathsome; heads she had, nine hundred.—But another one stepped—all-golden—forth: white-browed, she carried a beer-draught for her son [= Tue]:

- [R 14r/9, A 6r/8]
- 9 „Áttniðr jǫtna · ek vilja’k ykkr  
 2 hugfulla tvá · und hvera sǣtja;  
 es mín fríi · mǫrgu sinni  
 4 glǫggri við gæsti · gǫrr illi hugar.“

“Descendant of ettins [= Tue]! I would wish to set you high-mettled two under the cauldrons; my lover [= Hymer] has many a time been stingy toward guests, quick to ill temper.”<sup>a</sup>

---

3 fríi ‘lover’] thus R; *fǫðir* ‘father’ A

---

<sup>a</sup>Tue’s mother hides him and Thunder, lest Hymer find them.

- [R 14r/11, A 6r/9]
- 10 En váskapaðr · varð síðbúinn,  
 2 harðráðr Hymir, · heim af vǣiðum;  
 gekk inn í sal, · glumðu jǫklar,  
 4 vas karls, es kom, · kinnskógr frørrinn.

But the misshapen one was come late—the hard-minded Hymer—home from the hunt. He entered the hall—icicles clattered<sup>a</sup>—on the churl who came [= Hymer] was the cheek-shaw [BEARD] frozen.

---

1 síðbúinn ‘come late’] om. A

---

<sup>a</sup>In Icelandic the word *jökull* comes to specifically mean ‘glacier’, but this development is peculiar and its base meaning is ‘icicle’, a word with which it is also cognate. The icicles are certainly those in Hymer’s beard.

- [Tue’s mother quoth:]
- [R 14r/13, A 6r/11]
- 11 „Ves þú heill, Hymir, · í hugum góðum!  
 2 Nú ’s sonr kominn · til sala þinna,  
 sá’s vit vǣttum · af vǣgi lǫngum;  
 4 fylgir hǫnum · Hróðrs andskoti,  
 vinr verliða; · Véurr heitir sá.

“Be thou hale, Hymer, in good spirits!<sup>a</sup> Now the son [= Tue] is come to thy halls, the one whom we two have been awaiting from a long way off. Follows him the opponent of Rooder <ettin>, the friend of manly retainers; ʀ Wighward<sup>P</sup> <= Thunder> is that one called.

---

<sup>a</sup>This formula is very closely paralleled in runic inscription N B380 (edited under Charms and Spells). Cf. also *Beowulf* 407a: *Wæs þú Hrōðgár hál* ‘Be thou, Rothgar, hale!’

- [R 14r/15, A 6r/13]
- 12 Sé þú hvar sitja · und salar gaffi,  
 2 svá forða sér, · stendr súl fyrir.“  
 Sundr stǫkk súla · fyr sjón jǫtuns,

4 en allr í tvau · áss brotnaði.

See where they sit 'neath the hall's gable: thus they protect themselves—a pillar stands before them!<sup>a</sup> The pillars sprang asunder before the sight of the ettin, but all in two the roof-beam was broken.

2 forða sér] forðask A 2 súl] *ísol* A 4 allr] *áðr* 'earlier, before that' RATODO: elaborate, mention Finnur

<sup>a</sup>Tue's mother reveals the hiding place of the gods.

13 Stukku átta, · en einn af þeim  
2 hvern harðsleginn · heill af þolli;  
frammingu þeir, · en forn jötunn  
4 sjónum leiddi · sinn andskota.

[R 14r/17, A 6r/15]

Eight [cauldrons] sprung apart, but one of them—a hard-forged cauldron—[came] whole off its peg.<sup>a</sup> Forth went they, but the ancient ettin with his sight closely followed his opponent [= Thunder].

<sup>a</sup>The cauldrons were presumably hanging on the roof-beam. Eight of them broke, but a single one remained whole.

14 Sagði-t hönnum · hugr velt þá's sá  
2 gýgjar gróti · á golf kominn,  
þar vöru þjórar · þrír of tæknir,  
4 bað sænn jötunn · sjóða ganga.

[R 14r/19, A 6r/16]

His [Hymer's] heart was not pleased then, when he saw the gow's distresser [= Thunder] come on the floor. There were three bulls taken: bade the ettin at once [his servants] to go roast [them].

2 gróti 'distresser'] *gæti* 'keeper, warder' A 4 sænn 'at once'] *sun* '[his] son [= Tue]?' A

15 Hvern létu þeir · hofði skemra  
2 ok á seyði · síðan böru,  
át Sifjar verr · áðr sofa gingi,  
4 einn með öllu · øxn tvá Hymis.

[R 14r/21, A 6r/18]

Each [bull] they let shorten by a head, and onto the fire-pit then carried: ate the husband of Sib [= Thunder]—before he might go to sleep—alone by himself two of Hymer's oxen.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *Thrim* 24.

[R 14r/23, A 6r/19]

- 16 Þótti hǫrum · Hrunnis spjalla  
 2 verðr Hlórriða · vǫl fullmikill,  
 „munum at aptni · ǫðrum verða  
 4 við veiðimat · vér þrír lifa.“

To the hoary friend of Rungner <ettin> [= Hymer] seemed Lorde's <Thunder's> eating far too great; “next evening will we three by game-meat have to live.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The construction is difficult, but should probably be read in prose word order as *vér þrír munum at ǫðrum aptni verða lifa við veiðimat*, where *verða* has a similar use as its modern German cognate *werden*. Hymer's stinginess—he refuses to share more of his own food, forcing his guests to go hunt—breaks all Indo-European rules of hospitality and illustrates the otherness of the Ettins. See Introduction to the poem.

[R 14r/24, A 6r/21]

- 17 Véurr kvaðsk vilja · á vág róa,  
 2 ef ballr jǫtunn · beitur géfi.  
 „Hverf þú til hjarðar, · ef hug trúir,  
 4 brjótr berg-Dana, · beitur sókja.

Wighward <= Thunder> called himself willing to row on the wave, if the baleful ettin might give pieces of bait. “Turn to the herd if thou trust in thy heart—breaker of boulder-Danes [ETTINS > = Thunder]!—to seek pieces of bait.

3 hjarðar] *ballar* corr. A

[R 14r/26, A 6r/23]

- 18 Þess vǫntir mik, · at þér mynit  
 2 ǫgn at oxa · auðfeng vesa.“  
 Sveinn sýsliga · sveif til skógar,  
 4 þar's oxi stóð · alsvartr fyrir.

I ween that the oxen for bait will not be an easy catch for thee.”—The swain (= Thunder) sharply turned to the woods, there where an ox stood, all-black, before [him].

1 vǫntir mik] *vǫnti ek* R 1 mynit ‘will not’] thus A; *myni* ‘will’ R. I prefer the A reading since it makes this the first of Hymer's several challenges to Thunder, ones which the god easily accomplishes.

[R 14r/28, A 6r/24]

- 19 Braut af þjóri · þurs ráðbani  
 2 hótún ofan · horna tveggja.  
 „Verk þikkja þín · verri myklu  
 4 kjóla valdi · an kyrr sitir.“

Off from the bull broke the counsel-slayer of the thurse [= Thunder] the high meadow of the two horns [HEAD] from above.—“Thy works seem far worse to the wielder of keels [= Hymer = me], than if thou calm did sit.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Hymer snidely belittles Thunder's feat of pulling off the head of the ox (presumably by the horns).

20 Bað hlunngota · hafra dróttinn

[R 14r/30, A 6r/26]

2 átrunn apa · útar föra,  
en sá jötunn · sína talði,  
4 lítla fýsi · lengra at róa.

The lord of he-goats [= Thunder] bade the kinsman of the ʀape<sup>Ca</sup> [ETTIN = Hymer] to push the launching-steed [BOAT] further out; but that ettin told of his scarce wish to row longer.<sup>b</sup>

2 átrunn] *ʀatrænnʀ* A 3 talði] *millði* (corr.) A 4 lengra at róa] metr. emend.; *at róa lengra* RA

<sup>a</sup>The specific sense of *api* is uncertain. It seems to generally refer to a fool, but see Encyclopedia.

<sup>b</sup>There is some humour in the situation as Hymer, who just mocked Thunder, is now forced to do his willing by rowing.

21 Dró męrr Hymir · móðugr hvala

[R 14r/31, A 6r/27]

2 ęinn á ęngli · upp sęnn tváa,  
en apr í skut · Óðni sífjaðr  
4 Véurr við vélar · vað gęrði sér.

Pulled renowned Hymer—fierce—whales: one on the hook, soon up two; but back in the stern the Weden-related Wighward (= Thunder) wilily<sup>a</sup> made himself a fishing-line.

1 męrr 'renowned'] thus R; *męirr* 'more, further' A

<sup>a</sup>Probably in the sense that he made the fishing line behind Hymer's back when he was distracted pulling up the whales.

22 Eęnði á ęngul · sá's ęldum bergr,

[R 14v/1, A 6r/29]

2 orms ęnbani · oxa hęfði;  
gęin við agni, · sú's goð fía,  
4 umbgјorð neðan · allra landa.

On the hook fastened he who saves men [= Thunder]—the lone slayer of the Worm—the head of the ox. At the bait snapped the one whom the gods hate [= Middenyardsworm]—the encircler of all lands<sup>a</sup> from below.

3 agni 'bait'] thus A; *ęngli* 'hook' R

<sup>a</sup>This kenning occurs identically in a fragment by C9th scold Alewigh Snub (Qlv *Þórr*, edited by Margaret Clunies Ross in *SkP* III).

[R 14v/3, A 6v/1]

- 23 Dró djarfliga · dáðrakkr Þórr  
 2 orm ęitrfaan · upp at borði;  
 hamri kníði · hófjall skarar  
 4 ofljótt ofan · ulfs hnitbróður.

Pulled boldly deed-ready Thunder the venom-glistening Worm up on the gunwale; with the hammer he struck the high mountain of hair<sup>a</sup> [HEAD]—very hideous, from above—on the clash-brother of the Wolf [= Middenyardsworm].

<sup>a</sup>A rather unfitting kenning, since serpents do not have hair.

[R 14v/5, A 6v/2]

- 24 Hraungǫlkn hrutu, · ęn hǫlkn þutu,  
 2 fór hin forna · fold ǫll saman;  
 [...]  
 4 sökðisk síðan · sá fiskr í mar.

The lavafield-monsters [ETTINS] bounded, but the bedrock resounded; moved the ancient earth all at once; [...]; sank thereafter that fish [= Middenyardsworm] into the sea.

1 hrutu ] thus A; *blumðu* ‘dashed’ R

1 hraungǫlkn ‘lavafield-monsters’ ] Both mss. have *bręin*-, which may mean either ‘clean’ or ‘reindeer’, neither of which fit. On the other hand *braun ONP*: ‘stone/barren area, wasteland; lava-field’ is well attested in scoldic kennings for ettins. The precise meaning of *galkn* ‘monster’ (plural *gǫlkn*) is unclear; but it is attested in three scoldic verses, always in kennings of the type “troll-woman of the shield [AXE]”. While the mss. ‘*galkn*’ (norm. *gǫlkn*) could be both singular and plural, the form of the verb precludes the former. This means that the word cannot be referring to the Middenyardsworm, refuting the interpretation of Larrington (2014): “the sea-wolf shrieked”.

3 [...] It is very likely that a line is missing here. In other texts describing this narrative Hymer cuts Thunder’s fishing line, and so that is probably what has gone missing. It is of course impossible to know what form it had; for the reader’s enjoyment and based on other poets and the account in *Ylfir* (see introduction to the poem) I’ve composed the following variant lines: *unz vinr Hrunnis · vað Þórs of skar* ‘until the friend of Rungner [= Hymer] Thunder’s fishing-line did cut’; *unz fęlr Hymir · fękk á saxi* ‘until pale Hymer grasped the knife’, either of which may be inserted at will.

[R 14v/6, A 6v/3]

- 25 Óęęitr jętunn, · es aptr ręru,  
 2 [...]  
 svá’t ár Hymir · ękki męlti,  
 4 vęifði róði · veðrs annars til.

The unmerry ettin [= Hymer], as they rowed back, [...], so that in the early morning Hymer spoke nothing; he pulled the oar around, against the storm:

2 [...] There is without doubt a line missing here; the meter usually requires four lines, and the first half of the sentence is incomplete without a verb (unless one understands an implied “was”, so that the verse would begin “Unmerry was the ettin”).

3 *ár* ‘in the early morning’] Finnur Jónsson (1932) suggests *svá’t at ór* ‘so that by the oar’. Assuming my interpretation is correct, the three would have been fishing

[Hymer quoth:]

26 „Munt of vinna · verk halft við mik,  
2 at heim hvala · haf til bójar  
eða flotbrúsa · fęstir okkarn.“

[R 14v/8, A 6v/4]

“Thou wilt win a half work by me if thou carry the whales home to the farm, or our float-jar [BOAT] do fasten.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>Hymer tells Thunder, who since he did not actually pull up the Worm now has nothing to show for the trip, that he can accomplish something half as good as the pulling of the whales if he carries them home, or if he fastens the boat (by the shore).

27 Gekk Hlórriði · gręip á stafni  
2 vatt með austri · upp lęgfáki;  
ęinn með ęrum · ok með austskotu  
4 bar til bójar · brimsvín jętuns  
ok holtriða · hver í gegnum.

[R 14v/9, A 6v/6]

Went Loride (= Thunder), grasped the stern; hurled with the bilge-water the lake-nag [BOAT] up.<sup>a</sup> Alone with the oars and the bilge-bucket he bore to the farm the brim-swines [WHALES] of the ettin, even through the cauldron of woodland ridges<sup>b</sup> [VALLEY?].

1 á] *til á* R 5 holtriða] *ęholtribaę* R

<sup>a</sup>Thunder did not pour the bilge-water, something that makes its weight considerably heavier, out of the boat. This was a great work of strength.

<sup>b</sup>TODO. What do other editors and translators say?

28 Ok ęnn jętunn · umb afęendi,  
2 þrágirni vanr, · við Þór sęnti,  
kvað-at mann ramman, · þótt róa kynni,  
4 krępturligan, · nema kalk bryti.

[R 14v/12, A 6v/7]

And yet the ettin, used to stubbornness, regarding strength of hand flyted with Thunder; he called not the man strong—although he could row, mightily—unless he broke the chalice.<sup>a</sup>

1 Ok] *enn* A

<sup>a</sup>Hymer accuses Thunder of weakness, refusing to call him strong unless he breaks a certain chalice.

[R 14v/14, A 6v/9]

- 29** En Hlórriði, · es at hōndum kom,  
 2 brátt lét bresta · brattstęin glęri,  
 sló sitjandi · súlur í gōgnum;  
 4 bōru þó hęilan · fyr Hymi síðan.

But Loride (= Thunder), when [it] came in his hands, impatiently crashed steep stone<sup>a</sup> with the glass [= chalice]; he struck right through the fastened<sup>b</sup> pillars; yet they [= Hymer's servants?] bore it whole before Hymer afterwards.

<sup>a</sup>Finnur Jónsson (1932) interprets the word as referring to stone pillars.

<sup>b</sup>*sitjandi* 'sitting' is ambiguous and can modify either Thunder or the (roof-bearing) pillars. I think it is more likely to modify the pillars, signifying their stability.

[R 14v/16, A 6v/10]

- 30** Unz þat hin friða · friðla kęndi  
 2 ástráð mikit, · ęitt es vissi,  
 „drep við haus Hymis, · hann 's harðari,  
 4 kostmóðs jōtuns, · kalki hverjum.“

Until the handsome mistress [= Tue's mother] gave a great loving counsel, the one she knew: "Strike against Hymer's skull; it is harder—on the choice-weary<sup>a</sup> ettin—than every chalice."

<sup>a</sup>A reference to the gods having eaten up his choicest food.

[R 14v/18, A 6v/12]

- 31** Harðr ręis á kné · hafra dróttinn,  
 2 fōrðisk allra · í ásmęgin;  
 hęill vas karli · hjalmstofn ofan,  
 4 en vínęrill · valr rifnaði.

Hard rose on the knees the lord of he-goats [= Thunder]; he summoned his highest os-might.<sup>a</sup> Whole was on the churl [= Hymer] the helmet-stump [HEAD] above, but the round wine-track [CHALICE] rent apart.

1 ręis] om. A

<sup>a</sup>Compare *Ylfęr* in its description of Thunder attempting to pull up the Worm: *Þá varð Þórr reiðr ok fęrðist í ásmęgin* "Then Thunder became wroth, and summoned his os-might."

[R 14v/20, A 6v/13]

[Hymer quoth:]

- 32** „Mōrg vęit'k męti · mér gingin frá,  
 2 es kalki sé'k · fyr knéum hrundit,  
 karl orð of kvað: · „kná'k-at sęgja  
 4 aptr ęvagi: · þú ert ęlðr of hęitt.



“I know many good things to be gone from me when I see the chalice thrown before [his] knees;”—the churl [= Hymer] then words did speak: “I cannot say it, ever again: ‘Thou art, ale, [well] heated!’<sup>a</sup>”

---

2 es] om. R 2 fyr] fyr̥ R

---

<sup>a</sup>Hymer laments that since his finest vessel is now broken, he will never again be able to enjoy strong drink.

- 33 Þat ’s til kostar · ef koma mēttið  
 2 út ór óru · þlkjól hofi.“  
 Týr leitaði · tysvar hróra;  
 4 stóð at hvóru · hverr kyrr fyrir.

[R 14v/22, A 6v/15]

It would be well done, if ye might make the ale-keel<sup>a</sup> [CAULDRON] to come out of our hall.<sup>b</sup>” Tue attempted, twice, to move it; stood nevertheless the cauldron still before [him].

---

<sup>a</sup>þlkjól is the accusative form, but in this sense (CV: *koma*, B) we would expect the dative *þlkjól*, something that the meter does not allow for.

<sup>b</sup>hof ‘hall’ usually means ‘hove; temple’.

- 34 Faðir Móða · fekk á þrēmi  
 2 ok í gognum sté · golf niðr í sal;  
 hóf sér á hofuð upp · hver Sifjar verr,  
 4 en á hælum · hringar skullu.

[R 14v/24, A 6v/16]

The father of Moody [= Thunder] grasped the brim, and stepped down through the floor in the hall;<sup>a</sup> heaved the husband of Sib [= Thunder] up onto his head the cauldron, but on his heels rings clattered.<sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>In the account of *Ylfir* Thunder is said to have stepped through the boat when trying to pull up the Midden-yardsworm. This detail is also seen on the carving of the Altuna stone from Uppland, Sweden; it may have been transposed to this place in the narrative.

<sup>b</sup>The rings from the cauldron-chain; this detail is mentioned in an example sentence contrasting long and short phonemes in FGT (1950): *beyrði til hōddu, þá er Þórr bar hverinn* “one heard the pot-links when Thunder bore the kettle”. According to Finnur Jónsson (1932) this chain reached from one end of the kettle to another, in which case this would be an oblique reference to the cauldron’s size, its diameter being the same as Thunder’s height.

- 35 Fóru-t lengi, · áðr líta nam  
 2 aptr Óðins sonr · ęinu sinni;  
 sá hann ór hręysum · með Hymi austan  
 4 folkdrótt fara · fjolhofðaða.

[R 14v/26, A 6v/18]

They journeyed not for long before the son of Weden [= Thunder] took to look back, a single time;—saw he out of stone-heaps, with Hymer from the east, a many-headed folk-troop [= ETTINS] journeying.

[R 14v/28, A 6v/19]

- 36** Hóf sér af hęrðum · hver standandi,  
 2 vęifði Mjǫlni · morðgjǫrnum framm,  
 ok hraunhvala · hann alla drap.

Heaved he off from his shoulders the cauldron, [while] standing; he swung the murder-eager Millner forth, and the rock-whales [= ETTINS] all he slew.

[R 14v/30, A 6v/21]

- 37** Fóru-t lęngi, · áðr liggja nam  
 2 hafr Hlórriða · halfdauðr fyrir,  
 vas skęr skǫkuls · skakkr á þęini,  
 4 en því hinn lęvįsi · Loki of olli.

They journeyed not for long before the he-goat of Loride <= Thunder> took to lie half-dead before [them]; the steed of the cart-pole [GOAT] was halt in the leg, but that the guile-wise Lock did cause.<sup>a</sup>

3 skęr] emend. from meaningless *fskirr*? RA

<sup>a</sup>Apparently Lock (who is not mentioned earlier in the poem) was placing curses on the returning party. Snorre mentions this, TODO.

[R 14v/32, A 6v/22]

- 38** En ęr hęrt hafið, · hęrr kann of þat  
 2 goðmǫlugra · gęrr at skilja,  
 hęr af hraunbúa · hann laun of fekk,  
 4 es bęði galt · bęrn sín fyrir.

But ye have heard—each god-knowledgeable<sup>a</sup> man knows about this more clearly discern—which rewards he [= Lock] from the rock-dweller [ETTIN] got, as he yielded up both his own children for it.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*goð-mǫlugr* ‘able to speak about the god-lore; versed in the mythology’ is a *hapax*.

<sup>b</sup>As pointed out in Finnur Jónsson (1932), a verse containing such an address to the audience is otherwise unheard of. — What myth is being referred to is unclear. TODO: What do other authors write

[R 15r/1, A 6v/24]

- 39** Þróttǫflugr kom · á þing goða  
 2 ok hafið hver, · þann’s Hymir átti;  
 en véar hęrjan · vęl skulu drekka  
 4 ǫlðr at ęgis · ęitt hęrmeitið.

The valour-mighty one [= Thunder] came onto the ʿThing<sup>C</sup> of the gods, and had that cauldron which Hymer owned; but the ʿWigh-beings<sup>G</sup> (= gods) shall well drink an ale-feast at Eagre's, every flax-cutting [FALL?].

---

4 *ęitt hęrmęitið* “one ... flax-cutting”] A very obscure kenning. La Farge and Tucker (1992) give several interpretations, viz. *ęitr-hęr-męitir* ‘poison-rope-cutter [SNAKE > WINTER]’, *ęitr-orm-męiðir* ‘poison-worm-injurer’ [WINTER]. The solution with the minimal amount of emendation is to read *ęitt* ‘one’ as modifying *ęlðr* ‘ale-feast’, and *hęrjan* ‘every’ as modifying *hęr-męitiðr* ‘flax-cutting’, a compound made up of *hęrr* ‘flax, cord’ and *męita* ‘to cut’ and referring to an obscure harvest festival. The interpretation is by no means certain.



# The Flying of Lock (*Lokasenna*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.965)

Meter: *Leed-meter*

Preserved in **R**, directly following *Hymer*, though the poems without doubt were originally separate; the stylistic differences are drastical.

The poem has been interpreted as blasphemous (TODO: elaborate), but shows no linguistic signs of being particularly late.

---

## From Eagre and the gods (*Frá Egi ok goðum*)

- P1    Égir, er ǫðru nafni hét Gymir, hann hafði búið ásum ǫl þá er hann hafði  
2    fengit ketil inn mikla sem nú er sagt. Til þeirar veizlu kom Óðinn ok  
3    Frigg kona hans. Þórr kom eigi þvíat hann var í austrvegi. Sif var þar,  
4    kona Þórs; Bragi, ok Íðunn kona hans. Týr var þar, hann var einhendr;  
5    Fenrisulfr sleit hönd af hánum, þá er hann var bundinn. Þar var Njörðr  
6    ok kona hans Skaði; Freyr ok Freyja; Víðarr son Óðins. Loki var þar, ok  
7    þjónustumenn Freys, Byggvir ok Beyla. Mart var þar ása ok alfa. Égir átti  
8    tvá þjónustumenn; Fimafengr ok Eldir. Þar var lýsigull haft fyr eldsljós;  
9    sjálft barsk þar ǫl. Þar var griðastadr mikill. Menn lofuðu mjök hversu  
10    góðir þjónustumenn Égis vóru. Loki mátti eigi heyra þat, ok drap hann  
11    Fimafeng. Þá skóku ésir skjöldu sína ok óptu at Loka, ok eltu hann braut  
12    til skógar, en þeir fóru at drekka. Loki hvarf aptr ok hitti úti Eldi; Loki  
    kvaddi hann:

†Eagre<sup>P</sup>, who by another name is called †Gymer<sup>P</sup>, had prepared an ale-feast for the Ease when he had got the great kettle as now is told.<sup>a</sup>

To that gathering came †Weden<sup>P</sup> and †Frie<sup>P</sup>, his woman. †Thunder<sup>P</sup> came not, for he was on the †Eastern Way<sup>L</sup>. Sib was there, Thunder's woman; †Bray<sup>P</sup> and †Idun<sup>P</sup>, his woman. †Tue<sup>P</sup> was there, he was one-handed. The †Fenrerswolf<sup>P</sup> tore his hand off when it was bound.<sup>b</sup> There was †Nearth<sup>P</sup>, and his woman †Shede<sup>P</sup>; †Free<sup>P</sup> and †Frow<sup>L</sup>; †Wider<sup>P</sup>, the son of †Weden<sup>P</sup>. †Lock<sup>P</sup> was there, and the servants of Free: †Bew<sup>P</sup> and †Beal<sup>P</sup>. There was a great many of the †Ease<sup>G</sup> and †Elves<sup>Gc</sup>.

Eagre had two servants: ʀFemfinger<sup>P</sup> and ʀElder<sup>P</sup>. There was glowing gold used instead of fire; the ale there poured itself. There was a great ʀgrith-stead<sup>C, d</sup>. Men greatly praised how good the servants of Eagre were. Lock could not stand that, and he slew Femfinger.

Then the Ease shook their shields and screamed at Lock,<sup>e</sup> and chased him away to the forest, but then they went to drink. Lock came back and found Elder outside; Lock greeted him:

<sup>a</sup>See the immediately preceding *Hymr*.

<sup>b</sup>This detail is probably brought up to chronologically date the events of the poem as happening after the binding of Fenrer in the mythology.

<sup>c</sup>A formulaic expression, see ʀEase and Elves<sup>F</sup>.

<sup>d</sup>A place wherein all violence was forbidden, see Encyclopedia.

<sup>e</sup>Some sort of ancient war dance. Cf. the Old Swedish Heathen Law: "He screams three nothing-screams TODO".

---

1 „Seg þú þat, Eldir, · svá't ęinugi  
2 feti gangir framarr,  
hvat hér inni · hafa at ęlmólum  
4 sigtíva synir.“

“Say thou it, Elder, so that thou take not one step further: what here within they bring up over the ale,<sup>a</sup> the sons of the victory-Tues [GODS].”

---

1–2 svá't ... framarr ‘so that ... further’] Cf. *High* 38: *feti ganga framarr* ‘take one step further’.

<sup>a</sup>lit. ‘have for their ale-speeches’

Elder quoth:

2 „Of vępn sín dóma · ok of vígrisni sína  
2 sigtíva synir;  
ása ok alfa, · es hér inni eru,  
4 manngi 's þér í orđi vinr.“

“Of their weapons they converse, and of their fight-valiance, the sons of the victory-Tues [GODS]; of the Ease and Elves which are here within, none is thee a friend in words.”

---

4 manngi ... vinr “none ... words.”] i.e. “none of them say anything good about you.” — The (lack of) alliteration here is very notable, and also occurs in a c-line of v. 10 (see note there). Both of the two lines are otherwise perfect, and so it seems that *v* (/w/) is participating in vowel-alliteration. Such is never encountered in scoldic poetry, it could have been delegated to the simpler Eddic styles. Alternatively the poem is of such age that it was composed before the North Germanic loss of *v* before rounded vowels. This is supported by the fact that in both this verse and v. 10 the words starting with vowels have cognates in other Germanic languages that begin with *w*; in the case of *ulfi* in v. 10 this consonant is well attested in old runic inscriptions.

If the alliteration indeed is on *v*, this does not require dating the whole poem to the Proto-Norse period; perhaps the poet was aware of the change which had taken place a few generations before him, and employed the older form as an archaism. For metrical reasons the poem must certainly post-date the syncope period (in the C6th), but we know from the transitional C7th Blekinge runestones from Stentoften (DR 357), Gummarp (DR 358) and Istaby (DR 359) that the loss of /w-/ occurred after syncope anyway. A C7th Proto-Norse form of the c-line might be: *mannagí's þér in worðé winn*.

Lock quoth:

3 „Inn skal ganga · Égis hallir í  
2 á þat sumbl at séa,  
jöll ok ófu · fœri'k ása sonum  
4 ok blænd'k þeim svá meini mjöð.“

“In shall I go into Eagre's halls, for to see that ʀsimble<sup>C</sup>; scorn and strife I bring to the sons of the Ease, and I mix for them so the mead with harm.”

---

3 jöll ok ófu “scorn and spite”] ioll oc áfo R These two interesting words have been interpreted in a variety of ways: CV sees the first word as *jöll* ‘wild angelica’, whereas the second is taken to be an error for *áfr* ‘a beverage [...] translated by Magnaeus by *sorbitio avenacea*, a sort of common ale brewed of oats’.

Elder quoth:

4 „Vejzt, ef inn gengr · Égis hallir í  
2 á þat sumbl at séa,  
hrópi ok rógi · ef eyss á holl regin,  
4 á þér munu þau þerra þat.“

“Know, if in thou goest into Eagre's halls, for to see that simble: if slander and strife thou pourest onto the ʀhold<sup>C</sup> ʀReins<sup>G</sup>, they will dry it off on thee.”

Lock quoth:

5 „Vejzt þat Eldir, · ef einir skulum  
2 sáryrðum sakask,  
auðigr verða · mun'k í andsvorum,  
4 ef þú mǣlir til mart.“

“Know it, Elder, if alone we two shall banter with wound-words: I will become wealthy in my answers, if thou speak too much.<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *High* TODO mǣla til mart.

P2 Síðan gekk Loki inn í hollina; en er þeir sá, er fyrir váru, hverr inn var  
2 kominn, þögnuðu þeir allir.

Thereafter Lock walked into the hall, but when those who were there before him saw who was come inside, they all turned silent.

Lock quoth:

6 „Þyrstr ek kom · þessar hallar til  
2 Loptr of langan veg,  
ósu at biðja, · at mér einn gefi  
4 mérán drykk mjaðar.

“Thirsty I, Loft (= Lock), came to these halls over a long way, to ask the Ease that they to me give a single renowned drink of mead.

7 Hví þegið ér svá · þrungen goð,  
2 at mēla né meguð;  
sessa ok staði · vęlið mér sumbli at,  
4 eða heitið mik heðan.“

Why shut ye up so, pressed gods, that ye may not speak? Seats and places choose for me at the simble, or call me [away] hence.<sup>3</sup>”

---

<sup>3</sup>i.e. “Cease your ambiguity; give me a seat or tell me to leave!”

Bray quoth:

8 „Sessa ok staði · vęlja þér sumbli at  
2 ęsir aldrigi;  
því't ęsir vitu · hveim þęir alda skulu  
4 gambansumbl of geta.“

“Seats and places choose the Ease never for thee at the simble; for the Ease know which men they shall bid to the gomben-simble.”

[Lock quoth:]

9 „Mant þat Óðinn, · es vit í árdaga  
2 blendum blóði saman?  
ólvi þęrgja · lézk ęigi mundu,  
4 nema okkr vęri bóðum borit.“

“Recallest thou, Woden, as we two in days of yore blended our blood together? Thou saidst thou wouldst not taste ale, unless it were for us both brought forth.”



[Weden quoth:]

10 „Rís þú Víðarr · ok lát ulfs fǫður sitja sumbli at, síðr oss Loki ·  
kveði lastastofum Égis hǫllu í.“

“Rise thou, Wider, and let the father of the wolf [= Lock] sit at the simble, lest Lock accuse us of fault in the hall of Eagre.”

---

1 Rís ... fǫður ‘Rise ... wolf’] For the alliteration see note to v. 2. A C7th Proto-Norse form of the c-line might be: *Rís þú Wíðarr · auk lát wulfs fǫður*.

P3 Þá stóð Víðarr upp ok skenkti Loka, en áðr hann drykki, kvaddi hann  
2 ásuna:

Then Wider stood up and poured to Lock, but before he [= Lock] drunk, he greeted the Ease:

11 „Heilir ésir, · heilar ósynjur  
2 ok ǫll ginnheilög goð,  
nema sá einn óss · es innar sitr  
4 Bragi bekkjum á.“

“Hail the ʀEase<sup>G</sup>! Hail the ʀOssens<sup>G</sup>, and all the ʀgin-holy<sup>C</sup> gods!<sup>a</sup> Save for that one ʀos<sup>G</sup>, who sits further within: Bray, on the benches.”

---

<sup>a</sup>The first two half-lines prayer formula are identical to *Sighdríve* 2–3, for which reason it is possibly of authentic Heathen origin. To the original audience Lock’s parody of it would then have been seen as highly offensive and blasphemous.

[Bray] quoth:

12 „Mar ok męki · gef’k þér míns féar  
2 ok bótir þér svá baugi Bragi,  
síðr þú ósum · ǫfund of gjaldir,  
4 gręmjat goð at þér.“

“Steed and sword I give thee of my own wealth, and so recompenses thee Bray with a ʀhigh<sup>C</sup>, since thou repayest the Ease with envy; do not anger the gods towards thee.”

[Lock] quoth:

13 „Jós ok armauga · munt é vesa  
2 þeggja vanr Bragi,  
ása ok alfa, · es hér inni eru,  
4 þú ert við víg varastr, ok skjarrastr við skot.“

“Of both steed and arm-highs wilt thou ever be, Bray, lacking; of the Ease and Elves which are here within, art thou the wariest of war, and the shyest of shot.”

[Bray] quoth:

- 14 „Veið'k, ef fyr útan véra'k, · sem fyr innan em'k,  
 2 Égis holl of kominn,  
 hofuð þitt · béra'k í hendu mér;  
 4 lít'k þér þat fyr lygi.“

“I know if outside I were, as inside I am come into the hall of Eage: thy head I would bear in my hands; this I see for thy lie.”

4 lít'k þér þat fyr lygi ] ‘litt ec þer þat fyr lygi’ R. A variety of emendations have been proposed for this line. Simplest would be *litt es þér þat fyr lygi* ‘that is little [punishment] for thee for lying’. Based on the similarity of *c* and *ē* (= *tt*) Finnur Jónsson (1932) gives *lykak þér þat fyr lygi* ‘so I would bring to thee for thy lie’.

[Lock] quoth:

- 15 „Snjallr ert í sessi, · skalattu svá gera,  
 2 Bragi þekkskrautuðr;  
 vega þú gakk · ef vrēiðr séir;  
 4 hyggsk vétr hvatr fyrir.“

“Valiant art thou in the seat; thou shalt not do thus, Bray the bench-ornamenter! Go to strike if thou art wroth; the bold does not think in advance.<sup>a</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>Cf. *High* nýsisk fróðra TODO, really the opposite sentiment.

[Idun] quoth:

- 16 „Bið'k, Bragi, · barna sífar duga  
 2 ok allra óskmaga,  
 at þú Loka · kveðir-a lastastofum  
 4 Égis hollu í. “

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

- 17 „Þegi þú, Iðunn, · þik kveð'k allra kvinna  
 2 vergjarnasta vesa  
 síz þú arma þína · lagðir ítrþvegna  
 4 umb þinn bróðurbana.“

“TRANSLATION”

[Idun] quoth:

**18** „Loka ek kveð'k-a · lastastöfum

<sup>2</sup> Égis hollu í;

Braga ek kyrri · bjórreífan,

<sup>4</sup> vil'k-at ek at it vręiðir vegisk.“

“TRANSLATION”

[Giben] quoth:

**19** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**20** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Weden] quoth:

**21** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**22** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Weden] quoth:

**23** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**24** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Frie] quoth:  
**25** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**26** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Frie] quoth:  
**27** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**28** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Frow] quoth:  
**29** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**30** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Frow] quoth:  
**31** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**32** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Nearth] quoth:

**33** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**34** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Nearth] quoth:

**35** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**36** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Tue] quoth:

**37** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**38** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Tue] quoth:

**39** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:

**40** „VERSE“

“TRANSLATION”

[Free] quoth:  
**41** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**42** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Bew] quoth:  
**43** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**44** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Bew] quoth:  
**45** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**46** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Homedall] quoth:  
**47** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

[Lock] quoth:  
**48** „VERSE“  
“TRANSLATION”

# The Speeches of Shirner (*Skírnismól*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.897)  
Meter: *Leed-meter*, *Galder-law* (TODO)

The whole poem is attested in both **R** and **A**. The name *Skírnismól* ‘**Speeches of Shirner**’ comes from **A**; **R** has the header *För Skírnis* ‘Shirner’s journey’.

The same myth is told in *Ylfér* 37. A single verse of the present poem is quoted there, namely the last one (42), with some minor differences in wording that would seem to stem from oral tradition (see Note there). One could speculate that the author of *Ylfér* did not have a copy of this poem in front of him, but rather knew of the story through an oral tradition which included only the last verse. This seems unlikely for the chief reason that this paraphrase does not add a single detail not already in the present poem, but on the other hand condenses and abbreviates that which is already written here. Thus Shirner’s journey and curse (roughly vv. 10–38 here) is simply summarized in the following manner: “Then Shirner journeyed and requested the woman [i.e. Gerd] for him [i.e. Free], and received her promise, that nine nights later she would come to the place which is called Barrey, and have a wedding with Free.”

On the other hand, the paragraph in *Ylfér* 37 that corresponds to what is here P1 is much more detailed. It goes: “Gymer was a man called, and his woman Earbode; she was of the lineage of mountain-risers. Their daughter is Gerd, who is fairest of all women. It was one day as Free had gone to Lithshelf and looked about all the Homes. And when he looked to the north he saw on a farm a large and fair house, and into that house walked a woman. And when she brought out her hands and closed the doors before her, then light shone off her hands—both into the air and onto the waters—and all the homes were brightened by her. That beauty, when he had set himself in that holy seat, harmed him so that he walked away filled with pain. And when he came home he spoke nothing. Nothing slept he, nothing drank he. Nobody dared to ask him to speak. Then Nearth had Shirner, Free’s shoe-swain, called unto him, and asked him to go to Free and ask him to speak, [...]”

It seems to me that this circumstance, where the part corresponding to the poem is a short paraphrase, but the part corresponding to the prose passage is much more detailed, can only have arisen if the former already had a fixed form, whereas the latter was freer and could vary with each retelling. For this, see further TODO.

---

[R 11r/10, A 2r/11]

- P1** Freyr, sonr Njarðar, hafði einn dag setsk í Hliðskjálf ok sá um heima alla;  
 2 hann sá í Jötunheima ok sá þar mey fagra, þá er hon gekk frá skála fǫður  
 síns til skemmu; þar af fekk hann hugsóttir miklar. Skírnir hét skósveinn  
 4 Freys. Njörðr bað hann kveðja Frey máls. Þá mælti Skaði:

ʀFree<sup>P</sup>, son of ʀNearth<sup>P</sup>, had one day sat himself down in ʀLithshelf<sup>L</sup> and looked about all the ʀHomes<sup>C</sup>. He looked into the ʀEttinhomes<sup>L</sup> and saw there a fair maiden as she walked from her father's hall to her bower; thereof he got great heart-aches. ʀShirner<sup>P</sup> was called the shoe-swain of Free. Nearth asked him to speak with Free. Then ʀShede<sup>P</sup> spoke:

[R 11r/14, A 2r/15]

- 1 „Rís-tu nú Skírnir · ok gakk at þeiða  
 2 okkarn mála mög,  
 ok þess at fregna · hveim hinn fróði séi  
 4 ofvræðiði afi.“

“Rise thou now, O Shirner, and go to ask our lad [= Free] to speak; and to learn at whom the learned man [= Free] might be cross.”

1 ris ... þeiða ‘rise ... speak’] Alliteration is missing here. A simple solution would be to replace *gakk* ‘go’ with a synonym like *rinn* ‘run’ or *ráð* ‘resolve’, but this breaks the mirroring in 2/2.

4 afi ‘man’] While this word usually means ‘father’ or ‘grandfather’, it must here certainly mean ‘man’ without a connotation of old age. See further CV.

Shirner quoth:

[R 11r/15, A 2r/17]

- 2 „Illra orða · es mér ón at ykkrum syni,  
 2 ef ek geng at mæla við mög,  
 ok þess at fregna, · hveim hinn fróði séi  
 4 ofvræðiði afi.“

“Bad words I expect from your son [= Free], if I go with the lad to speak; and to learn at whom the wise man might be cross.”

Shirner quoth:

[R 11r/17, A 2r/18]

- 3 „Seg þat Freyr, · folkvaldi goða,  
 2 ok ek vilja vita,  
 hví þú ęinn sitr · ęndlanga sali  
 4 minn dróttinn of daga.“

“Tell it, O Free, troop-wielder of the gods, I too would want to know: why thou alone stayest in the endlong halls, my lord, during the days?”



Free quoth:

4 „Hví of sęgja'k þér, · sęggr hinn ungi, [R 11r/19, A 2r/20]  
 2 mikinn móðtrega?  
 því't alfrøðull · lýsir of alla daga  
 4 ok þęgi at mínum munum.“

“Why should I tell thee, O young youth, about [my] great mood-grief? For the elf-wheel [SUN] shines during all days, and naught to my liking.”

Shirner quoth:

5 „Muni þína · hykk-a svá mikla vesa, [R 11r/20, A 2r/21]  
 2 at þú mér sęggr né sęgir;  
 ungir saman · vörum í árdaga,  
 4 vęl męttim tveir trúask.“

“Thy liking I do not think so large, that thou, O youth, oughtst not to me tell it. Young together were we in days of yore; we two might well trust each other.”

---

2 sęggr ‘man’] usually means simply ‘man’, its original meaning was ‘messenger’ and it seems to have some connotation with youth, something also seen in *Wayland* 23 where it’s used in reference to the young sons of king Nithad. It’s here used to mirror Free’s addressing Shirner as *sęggr hinn ungi* ‘the youth; Shirner points out that the two are of equal age, so Free is as much of a young man as he.

Free quoth:

6 „Í Gymis gørdum · ek ganga sá [R 11r/22, A 2r/23]  
 2 mér tíða męy;  
 armar lýstu, · en af þaðan  
 4 allt lopt ok loqr.

“In Gymer’s yards I saw walking a maiden, dear to me. The arms shone, but thereof all the air and sea.

7 Męr es mér tíðari · an manna hveim [R 11r/24, A 2r/24]  
 2 ungum í árdaga;  
 ása ok alfa · þat vill ęngi maðr,  
 4 at vit sátt séim.“

“The maiden is dearer to me than to any young man in days of yore. Of the †Ease and Elves<sup>F</sup> no man<sup>a</sup> wants that we two be reconciled.”

---

<sup>a</sup>For other examples of gods being called men see TODO.

Shirner quoth:

[R 11r/25, A 2r/25]

**8** „Mar gef mér þá, · es mik of myrkvan beri  
 2 vísan vafþloga,  
 ok þat sverð, · es sjalft vegisk  
 4 við jǫtna ǣtt.“

“Then give me the steed, which might bear me over the dark, wise wavering-flame; and that sword, which by itself might strike against the lineage of the ǫttins<sup>G</sup>.”

Free quoth:

[R 11r/27, A 2r/27]

**9** „Mar þér þann gef’k, · es þik of myrkvan berr  
 2 vísan vafþloga, ok þat sverð, · es sjalft mun vegask,  
 ef sá ’s horskr es hǣfr.“

“That steed I give thee, which bears thee over the dark, wise wavering-flame; and that sword, which by itself will strike, if he is sharp who owns it.”

1–3 berr ‘bears’; mun vegask, ef sá ’s horskr es hǣfr ‘will strike, if he is wise who owns it’] Responding, Free replaces the subjunctive verb forms (*beri* ‘might bear’ *vegisk* ‘might strike’), giving a sense of certainty and authority. The steed and sword are faultless, and if Shirner fails on the mission, it would be only due to his own fault (“if he is sharp who owns it”).

Shirner spoke with the horse:

[R 11r/29, A 2r/28]

**10** „Myrkt es úti, · mál kveð’k okkr fara  
 2 úrig fjǫll yfir  
 þursa þjóð yfir;  
 4 báðir vit komumk · eða okkr báða tǣkr sá hinn ámatki jǫtunn.“

“Tis dark outside; I call it time for us two to journey: over the drizzling mountains, over the people of the ǫttins<sup>G</sup>. Both two we come, or us both that terrifying ettin takes.”

4 ámatki jǫtunn ‘terrifying ettin’] Formulaic. *ámáttigr* ‘terrifying’ seems to have a supernatural connotation, and only occurs in four other places in the Poetic Edda: in *Wallow* 8, *Grimner* 11 and *HHarw* 17 it is paired with *jǫtunn* ‘ettin’, while in *HHarw* 14 it describes a man with clearly supernatural attributes.

<sup>a</sup>Shirner declares his intention not to abandon his horse.

[R 11r/31, A 2v/1]

**P2** Skírnir reið i Jǫtunheima til Gymis garða; þar váru hundar ólmir ok bund-  
 2 nir fyrir skíðgarðs hliði þess, er um sal Gerðar var. Hann reið at þar, er  
 fēhirðir sat á haugi, ok kvaddi hann:

Shirner rode into the Ettinhomes, to Gymer’s yards. There were hounds, fierce and bound in front of the slope of that wooden fence which surrounded Gird’s<sup>a</sup> hall. He rode to where a shepherd sat on a mound, and greeted him:

---

<sup>a</sup>It is first now that we are informed of the maiden's name.

- 11 „Seg þat hirðir, · es á haugi sitr [R 11v/2, A 2v/4]  
 2 ok varðar alla vega:  
 hvé ek at andspilli · komumk hins unga mans  
 4 fyr greyjum Gymis.“

“Say it, O herdsman, who sittest on the mound, and guardest all ways: How I to discourse might come with the young maiden, past Gymer's greyhounds?”

[The herdsman quoth:]

- 12 „Hvart ert feigr, · eða ert fram ginginn [R 11v/4, A 2v/5]  
 2 [...];  
 andspillis vanr · þú skalt é vesa  
 4 góðrar meýjar Gymis.“

“Whether thou art fey, or passed-on; [...] ? . Lacking discourse shalt thou ever be, with Gymer's good maiden.”

---

1 fram ginginn ‘passed-on’] i.e. ‘dead’.

[Shirner quoth:]

- 13 „Kostir 'ru bętri · an kløkkva sé [R 11v/6, A 2v/7]  
 2 hvęim es fúss es fara,  
 ęinu dógri · mér vas aldr of skapaðr  
 4 ok alt líf of lagit.“

“Choices are better than sobbing, for whomever is eager to journey. On a single day was my age shaped, and all my life laid [in place].<sup>a</sup>”

---

1 an] thus A; *hęldr an at* ‘rather than to [be]’ R

---

1 kostir ‘choices’] i.e. ‘alternative choices, other ways’.

---

<sup>a</sup>The Germanic fatalistic worldview, wherein one's course of life was predetermined at birth, are here clearly seen. Presumably after uttering these words Shirner rides through the fire surrounding the fortress. — The causative *leggja* ‘to lay (down, in place)’ is closely connected to fate; the expression is formulaic. Cf. *Lock* 48: *í árdaga vas þér hit ljóta líf of lagit* ‘in days of yore was thy ugly life laid [in place]’ and *Wallow* 19: *þér lög lögðu* ‘they [= the Norns] laid laws [in place]’.

[Gird quoth:]

[R 11v/7, A 2v/8]

14 „Hvat ’s þat hlym hlymja · es hlymja heyrí’k nú til  
 2 ossum rǫnnum í?  
 jǫrð bifask, · en allir fyr  
 4 skjalfa garðar Gymis.“

“What is that din of dins, which I of dins now hear in our houses? The earth trembles, and before [me] all the yards of Gymer quake.”

A servant-woman quoth:

[R 11v/9, A 2v/10]

15 „Maðr ’s hér úti, · stiginn af mars baki,  
 2 jó léttr til jarðar taka.“

“A man is here outside, stepped down off a horse’s back; he lets take his steed to the ground.<sup>a</sup> (TODO: translation)”

---

<sup>a</sup>According to Finnur Jónsson (1932) a still-known Icelandic expression; Shirner lets his horse graze.

[Gird quoth:]

[R 11v/10, A 2v/11]

16 „Inn bið þú hann ganga · í okkarn sal  
 2 ok drekka hinn mēra mjǫð,  
 þó ek hitt óumk, · at hér úti séi  
 4 minn bróðurbani.“

“Bid thou him to go in into our hall, and to drink the renowned mead; though I fear that here outside might be my brother’s bane-man.”

[Gird quoth:]

[R 11v/12, A 2v/13]

17 „Hvat ’s þat alfa · né ása sona,  
 2 né víssa vana;  
 hví ęinn of komt · ęikinn fúr yfir  
 4 ór salkynni at séa?“

“What sort is that, not of Elves, nor of sons of the Ease, nor of the wise Wanes? Why camest thou alone over the raging fire, to see the state of our hall?”

[Shirner quoth:]

[R 11v/14]

18 „Em’k-at alfa · né ása sona  
 2 né víssa vana,  
 þó ęinn of kom’k · ęikinn fúr yfir  
 4 yður salkynni at séa.

“I am not of the Elves, nor of sons of the Ease, nor of the wise Wanes—yet I came alone over the raging fire, to see the state of your hall.

19    Epli elliḡu · h r hef’k algollin, [R 11v/15, A 2v/14]  
      2       þau mun’k þ r Ge  r gefa,  
      fri  at kaupa, · at þ  þ r Frey kve ir  
      4        lei astan at lifa.“

Elven apples have I here, all-golden; those I will to thee, O Gird, give to purchase [thy] love, that thou callest Free for thee most unloathsome [LOVELIEST] in life.<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>*at lifa* seems to mean ‘in life’ here rather than the typical infinitive construction ‘to live’. This is an archaism from its origin as a verbal noun meaning ‘living’.

[Gird quoth:]  
 20    „Epli elliḡu · ek þigg aldrigi [R 11v/17, A 2v/15]  
      2       at mans-kis munum,  
      n  vit Freyr, · me an okkart f r lifir,  
      4       byggum b  i saman.“

“Eleven apples [will] I never accept, to any man’s liking; nor [will] I and Free—while our lives remain<sup>a</sup>—dwell both together.”

---

<sup>a</sup>lit. ‘while our life-force lives’

[Shirner quoth:]  
 21    „Baug þ r þ  gef’k, · þann’s br ndr of vas [R 11v/19, A 2v/17 (ll. 1–2)]  
      2       me  ungum   ins syni,  
       tta ’ru jafnh fgir, · es af drj pa  
      4       hina n undu h  rja n tt.“

“The  bigh<sup>C</sup> I then give thee, that one which was burned with Weden’s young son [= Balder]. Eight are even-heavy, which from it drip, every ninth night.<sup>a</sup>”

---

3–4 Baug ... n tt ‘The bigh ... night.’] In A these lines and 22:1–2 are missing. Instead 1–2 here and 22:3–4 are combined into one.

---

<sup>a</sup>The bigh, while not named, is clearly Dleepner as known from *Ylf r* 49, describing Balder’s funeral: “Weden laid on the pyre that gold ring which is called Dleepner. Its nature was such that every ninth night, eight even-heavy golden rings dripped from it.” When  Harmod<sup>P</sup> later comes to  Hell<sup>L</sup> to try to bring Balder back, Balder tells him to bring the ring back to Weden, as a token of memory.

[Gird quoth:]

[R 11v/21, A 2v/18 (ll. 3–4)]

**22** „Baug þikk-a’k, · þótt brændr séi,  
 2 með ungum Óðins syni;  
 es-a mér golls vant · í gørdum Gymis  
 4 at deila fé fǫður.“

“The bigh I accept not, though it may have been burned with Weden’s young son [= Balder]; I have no want of gold in Gymer’s yards, in sharing the ʀ fee<sup>C</sup> of my father.”

[Shirner quoth:]

[R 11v/23, A 2v/19]

**23** „Sér þú mēki, mēr, · mjóvan, málfaan,  
 2 es hef’k í hendi hér?  
 hǫfuð hoggva · mun’k þér halsi af,  
 4 nema mér sētt sęgir.“

“Seest thou, O maiden, this sword—slender, pictured-painted<sup>a</sup>—which I have here in my hand? Off thy neck will I hew thy head, unless thou agree with me.<sup>b</sup>”

<sup>a</sup>The sword is inlaid with metal forming a pattern. For examples see TODO.

<sup>b</sup>lit. ‘unless thou to me sayest an agreement/settlement.’

[Gird quoth:]

[R 11v/25, A 2v/20]

**24** „Ánauð þola · vil’k aldrigi  
 2 at manskis munum,  
 þó hins get’k, · ef it Gymir finnizk  
 4 vígs ótrauðir · at ykkv vega tíði.“

“Suffer coercion will I never, to any man’s liking; though I suppose, if thou and Gymer meet—men unreluctant of conflict—that ye two will wish to fight.<sup>a</sup>”

2 manskis “any man’s (lit. ‘no man’s’)” ] *mannz ænskis* A

<sup>a</sup>Gird says that she will let herself be forced to marry Free, even if this means that Shirner and Gymer will fight over her.

[Shirner quoth:]

[R 11v/27, A 2v/22]

**25** „Sér þú mēki, mēr, · mjóvan, málfaan,  
 2 es hef’k í hendi hér?  
 fyr þessum eggjum · hnígr sá hinn aldni jǫtunn,  
 4 verðr þinn feigr faðir.

“Seest thou, O maiden, this sword—slender, pictured-painted—which I have here in my hand? Before these edges the aged ettin [= Gymer] sinks down; ʀ fey<sup>C</sup> becomes thy father.

- 26 Tamsvændi þik drep'k, · en þik tæmja mun'k, [R 11v/28, A 2v/24]  
 2 mæt, at mínum munum,  
 þar skalt ganga · es þik gumna synir  
 4 síðan éva séi.

With the taming-wand I strike thee, but thee I will tame, O maiden, to my liking. There shalt thou go, where thee the sons of men never since may see.

---

1 tamsvændi 'taming-wand'] Has been interpreted as a sword, TODO.

- 27 Ara þúfu á · skalt ár sitja, [R 11v/30, A 2v/26]  
 2 horfa heimi ór;  
 snugga hēljār til;  
 4 matr sé þér mēir lēiðr · an manna hvēim  
 hinn fráni ormr með firum.

On an eagle's hill shalt thou sit in early morning; turn out of the world; hanker after 'Hell'. Food will be thee more loathsome, than to any man the gleaming serpent [the Middenyardsworm] among firs [MEN].<sup>a</sup>

---

1 ara þúfu á · skalt ár sitja 'on an eagle's hill shalt thou sit in early morning'] ár skalt sitja · ara þúfu á 'early shalt thou sit on an eagle's hill' A 2-3 horfa heimi ór; snugga hēljār til 'turn out of the world; hanker after Hell'] horfa ok snugga hēljār til 'turn and hanker to hell' A

---

<sup>a</sup>Presumably her food will be as disgusting as the Middenyardsworm (for its disgusting nature see Note to *Hymer* 22). The threat seems to be that Gird will be forced to sit alone on an eagle's nest, deprived of food and longing for death.

- 28 At undrsjónum verðir · es út of kømr, [R 11v/32]  
 2 á þik Hrímnir hari  
 á þik hotvetna stari,  
 4 víðkunnari verðir · an vqrðr með goðum,  
 gapi þú grindum frá.

A wondrous sight [wilt] thou become, when out thou comest; at thee [will] Rimner ogle; at thee [will] anyone stare. More widely known [wilt] thou become than the ward among the Gods [= Homedall]; thou [wilt] gape from the gates.

- 29 Tópi ok ópi, · tjøsull ok óþoli, [R 12r/2]  
 2 vaxi þér tór með trega;  
 sezk þú niðr · en mun'k segja þér  
 4 sváran súsbreka,  
 ok tvinnan trega.

Toop and oop, tessel and impatience; may thy tear grow with grief! Sit thyself down, and I will tell thee a severe roaring-breaker, and a twined grief.

- [R 12r/3]      **30**      Tramar gneypa · þik skulu gerstan dag  
                          2      jǫtna gǫrðum í,  
                          til hrímþursa hallar · þú skalt hverjan dag  
                          4      kranga kostalaus;  
                          kranga kostavǫn;  
                          6      grát at gamni · skalt í gogn hafa  
                          ok leiða með tǫrum trega.

Thee shall fiends torment at the dismal day, in the yards of the Ettins. To the halls of the Rime-thurses shalt thou every day creep choiceless; creep choice-lacking. Weeping for joy shalt thou have in exchange, and nurse grief with tears.

- [R 12r/7]      **31**      Með þursi þríhǫfðuðum · þú skalt é nara  
                          2      eða verlaus vesa,  
                          þitt geð grípi;  
                          4      þik morn morni  
                          ves þú sem þistill, · sá's þrunginn vas  
                          6      í ofanverða ónn.

With a three-headed thurse shalt thou ever live, or be husband-less. Thy senses grasp; murrain mourn thee; be thou like the thistle that was pressed in the uppermost working season!

- [R 12r/9]      **32**      Til holts ek gekk · ok til hrás viðar  
                          2      gambantein at geta  
                          gambantein ek gat.

To the wood I went, and to the young tree, the ʀgombentoe<sup>C</sup> for to get; the gombentoe I got.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Presumably the "taming-wand" in 26.

- [R 12r/10]      **33**      Reijör 's þér Óðinn, · reijör 's þér Ásabragr,  
                          2      þik skal Freyr fiask,  
                          hin firinilla mér, · en fingit hefð  
                          4      gambanreijði goða.



Wroth with thee is Weden; wroth with thee is Bray of the Ease ⟨\*⟩= Thunder?; thee shall Free come to hate, O horrible maiden, if thou hast earned the gomben-wrath of the gods.

- 34      Hęyri jętnar, · hęyri hrímþursar, [R 12r/12]  
       2      synir Suttunga, · sjalfir áslíðar,  
             hvé fyrir býð'k, · hvé fyrir banna'k  
       4      manna glaum mani,  
             manna nyt mani.

Hear may Ettins, hear may Rime-thurses, sons of Sutting [ETTINS], the os-retinues [= Ease] themselves: how I forbid, how I forban the company of men from the maiden; the use of men from the maiden.

- 35      Hrímgrímnir hęitir þurs, · es þik hafa skal [R 12r/14]  
       2      fyr nágrindr neðan,  
             þar þér vílmęgir · á viðarrótum  
       4      gęitahland gefi;  
             óðri drykkju · fá þú aldrigi,  
       6      męr, af þínum munum,  
             męr, at mínum munum.

Rimegrimner is called the thurse, who shall have thee, down beneath Nawgrind—where the lads of toil [THRALLS], on the roots of the tree, goat-piss [will] give thee. A better drink mayst thou never get, O maiden, of thy liking; O maiden, to my liking!

- 36      Þurs ríst'k þér · ok þría stafi, [R 12r/16]  
       2      ęrgi ok óði ok óþola,  
             svá ek þat af ríst · sem ek þat á ręist,  
       4      ef gęrvask þarfar þess.“

「Thurse<sup>G</sup> I carve for thee, and three staves: 「degeneracy<sup>C</sup> and madness and impatience. So I carve it off as I carved it on, if need arises of that.<sup>a</sup>」

1 þurs 'thurse'] Thurse is the name of the þ-rune (þ); it is carved as part of the curse.

1 þría stafi 'three staves'] Three runic letters, possibly representing each of the three following words (*ęrgi* 'degeneracy' etc.). This formula also appears on the C7th Gummarp stone: **hþuwołf sđte stđbđ þriđ fff** 'Hathwolf placed three staves: fff', where the f-rune (ƿ) is standing for its name, 「fee<sup>C</sup> (i.e. wealth, cattle).

2 ęrgi ok óði ok óþola 'degeneracy and madness and impatience'] Both *ęrgi* 'degeneracy' and *óþoli* 'impatience' (here probably with a sexual connotation), are found in the love magic charm on the rune stick B257 from Bryggen, here edited under Charms and Spells. *ęrgi* is found in the curse-formula on the C7th Proto-Norse runestones from Stentofen and Björketorp.

<sup>a</sup>Shirner has carved the curse (which will realize all the threats from 26–35), but tells Gird that he will scrape it off if she will accept his demands. She then responds:

[Gird quoth:]  
 [R 12r/19] **37** „Heill ves þú heldr, sveinn, · ok tak við hrímkálki  
                   2 fullum forns mjaðar,  
                   þó hafða’k étlat, · at mynda’k aldri  
                   4 unna vaningja vël.“

“Be thou rather hale, O swain, and receive the rime-chalice, full of ancient mead<sup>a</sup>—although I had intended that I never would love the Waning [= Free] well.”

---

4 vaningja ‘Waning’] A rare word, lit. ‘descendant of the †Wanes<sup>G</sup>’, it only occurs at one other place in the corpus, namely in the †thule<sup>C</sup> of boar-names. Boars were sacred to Free, TODO.

---

<sup>a</sup>Occurs identically in *Lock* 52.

[Shirner quoth:]  
 [R 12r/21] **38** „Ørendi mín · vil’k ǫll vita,  
                   2 áðr ríða’k heim heðan,  
                   nér á þingi · munt hinum þroska  
                   4 nenna Njarðar syni.“

“My errands all I wish to know, before I might ride home hence; when on the †Thing<sup>C</sup> thou wilt with the vigorous son of Nearth [= Free] be joined?”

[Gird quoth:]  
 [R 12r/23] **39** „Barri heitir, · es vit bæði vitum,  
                   2 lundr lognfara,  
                   en ept nêtr níu, · þar mun Njarðar syni  
                   4 Gørðr unna gamans.“

“Barrey is called—as we both know—a grove of calm rushes, and after nine nights there will to the son of Nearth [= Free] Gird her pleasure grant.”

[R 12r/24] **P3** Þá reið Skírnir heim. Freyr stóð úti ok kvaddi hann ok spurði tíðenda:  
 Then Shirner rode home. Free stood outside and greeted him and asked him for the tidings:

- 40 „Seg mér, Skírnir, · áðr verpir sǫðli af mar [R 12r/25]  
 2 ok stígir feti framarr,  
 hvat árnaðir · í Jǫtunhēima  
 4 þíns eða míns munar?“

“Say me, O Shirner, before thou throwest the saddle off the steed, and takest a step further: what thou earnedst in the ʀ Ettinhomes<sup>L</sup>, to thy or my liking?”

[Shirner quoth:]

- 41 „Barri hēitir, · es vit báðir vitum, [R 12r/27]  
 2 lundr lognfara,  
 en ępt nętr níu, · þar mun Njarðar syni  
 4 Gęrðr unna gamans.“

“Barrey is called—as we both know—a grove of calm rushes, and after nine nights there will to the son of Nearth [= Free] Gird her pleasure grant.”

[Free quoth:]

- 42 Lǫng es nǫtt, · langar ’u tvęr, [R 12r/28, G]  
 2 hvé of þręyja’k þrjár?  
 opt mér mánaðr · minni þótti  
 4 an sjá hǫlf hýnǫtt.

Long is a night; long are two; how can I yearn for three? Oft a month to me seemed less, than this half wedding-night.<sup>a</sup>

---

1 langar ’u tvęr ‘long are two’ ] thus R; *lǫng es ęnnur* ‘long is another’ G

---

<sup>a</sup>The wedding-night (TODO: it’s a hapax so explain the etymology?) is presumably half in that it is not consumated.



# The Thule of Rígh (*Rígsþula*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): early C11th (0.240), late C11th (0.204), late C12th (0.195),  
C13th (0.280)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

Dumezil hypothesis. Irish influence? Many interesting things to write here!

---

**P1** Svá segja menn í fornum sǫgum, at einnhvęrr af ǫsum, sá es Heimdallr  
2 hét, fór ferðar sinnar ok framm með sjóvarströndu nokkurri, kom at einum  
húsabó ok nefndisk Rígr; ęptir þęiri sǫgu es kvęði þetta.

Thus say men in ancient ʀsaws<sup>C</sup>, that one of the ʀEase<sup>G</sup>—he who was called ʀHomedall<sup>P</sup>—  
went on his journey forth along some lakeshore, came upon a lone homestead and called  
himself Rígh. According to that saw is this poem.

1 Ár kvǫðu ganga · grónar brautir  
2 ǫflgan ok aldinn · ǫs kunnigan,  
ramman ok rǫskvan · Rígr stíganda.

Of yore they said did walk the green paths, a mighty and aged ʀos<sup>G</sup>, cunning; the strong  
and brisk Rígh, striding.

2 Gekk hann męir at þat · miðrar brautar,  
2 kom hann at húsi, · hurð vas á gętti;  
inn nam at ganga, · ęldr vas á golfi,  
4 hjón sǫtu þar · hǫr at arni,  
Ái ok ędda · aldinfalda.

Went he further at that, on the middle of the road; came he to a house; the door was  
wide open. He took to go inside; fire was on the floor. A couple sat there, hoary by the  
hearth: Great Grandfather and Great Grandmother, old-fashioned.

- 3 Rigr kunni þeim · rǫð at sęja;  
 2 męir sęttisk hann · miðra flętja  
 en á hlið hvára · hjón salkynna.

Righ knew to tell them counsels; he further set himself down on the middle of the floor-bench, but on either side [sat] the couple of the hall.

- 4 Þá tók Edda · økkvinn hleif,  
 2 þungan ok þykkvan, · þrunginn sǫðum,  
 bar hǫn męir at þat · miðra skutla,  
 4 soð vas í bolla · sętti á bjóð;  
 vas kalfr soðinn · krása bęztr;  
 6 ręis hann upp þaðan, · réðsk at sofna;

Then took Great Grandmother a lumpy loaf, heavy and thick, stuffed with chaff. She carried it further at that on the middle of a trencher—broth was in the bowl—she set it on a plate; a cooked calf was the best dainty; he rose up thence, resolved to sleep.

- 5 Rigr kunni þeim · rǫð at sęja;  
 2 męir lagðisk hann · miðrar rękkju,  
 en á hlið hvára · hjón salkynna.

Righ knew to tell them counsels; he further laid himself down in the middle of the bed, but on either side [lay] the couple of the hall.

- 6 Þar var hann at þat · þrjár nętr saman;  
 2 gekk hann męirr at þat · miðrar brautar;  
 liðu męirr at þat · mǫnuðr níu.

There was at that for nine nights in all; went he further at that, on the middle of the road; passed further at that nine months.

- 7 Jóð ól Edda · jósu vatni  
 2 hǫrundsvartan, · hétu Þręl.

Great Grandmother begot a child, they poured it with water<sup>a</sup>—swarthy of skin—they called him Thrall.

2 hǫrundsvartan 'swarthy of skin'] *emend.*; hǫrvi svartan 'swarthy with flax' W

<sup>a</sup>A reference to the Heathen naming ceremony, wherein water would be poured on a newborn (quite similar to the Christian baptism). Cf. *Higb* 156.

- 8 Hann nam at vaxa · ok vël dafna;  
 2 vas þar á höndum · hrokkit skinn,  
 kropnir knúar, · [...]  
 4 fingr digrir, · fúlligt andlit,  
 lotr hryggr, · langir hëlar.

He took to grow, and thrive well; there on his hands was skin wrinkled, knuckles crooked, [...], fingers thick, a face foul, back stooping, heels long.

- 9 Nam hann męirr at þat · magns of kosta,  
 2 bast at binda, · byrðar gërva;  
 þar hann hęim at þat · hrís gęrstan dag.

Took he further at that to try his power; bast to bind, burdens to make; he carried home at that brushwood on a dismal day.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The thrall had to work in even the most hostile weather.

- 10 Þar kom at garði · gęngilþęina,  
 2 aurr vas á iljum, · armr sólbrunninn,  
 niðrbjúgt vas nęf, · nęfndisk þír.

There came to the farm a gangleboned woman; mud was on her footsoles, her arm sun-burnt; downturned was her face; she called herself Thew.

1 'gangleboned woman'] Derogatory term for somebody that only travels on their legs.

3 þír 'Thew'] The name probably means 'maid-servant' or 'female slave'. Unlike Thrall, it is not attested in any prose texts, but probably corresponds to OS *thiwi* 'maid(-servant)', being further root-related to *þéa* -*þjá* 'to enthrall', Proto-Norse *þewar* 'servant', OE *þéow* 'slave, servant',.

- 11 Męir settisk hön · miðra flętja,  
 2 sat hjá hęnni · sonr húss,  
 róddu ok rýndu, · rękkju gęrðu  
 4 Þręll ok þír · þrungin dógr.

She further set himself down on the middle of the floor-bench; beside her sat the son of the house [= Thrall]. They spoke and whispered; made a bed—Thrall and Thew—on hard-pressed days.

- 12 Börn ólu þau, · bjuggu ok unðu;  
 2 hyggr at hėti · Hręimr ok Fjósniir,  
 Klúrr ok Klęggi, · Kęfsir, Fúlnir,

- 4     Drumbr, Digraldi, · Drøttr ok Hōsvir,  
       Lútr ok Leggjalði; · lögðu garða,  
 6     akra tōddu, · unnu at svínum,  
       gęita gęttu, · grófu torf.

Children they begot, they settled and were content. I judge that they were called Ream and Feasner, Clour and Cleg, Chafser, Foulner, Drumbr, Dighrald, Draught and Hazer, Lout and Leggald, they laid yard-fences, dinged fields, fed swine, tended to goats, dug turf.

- 13    Dótr vōru þēr · Drumba ok Kumba,  
       2    Økkvinkalfa · ok Arinnęfja,  
       Ysja ok Ambótt, · Eikintjasna,  
       4    Tōtrughypja · ok Trōnubęina;  
       þaðan eru komnar · þræla ættir.

The daughters were Drumb and Cumb; .

14     VERSE.

Translation.

15     VERSE.

Translation.

16     VERSE.

Translation.

17     VERSE.

Translation.

18     VERSE.

Translation.

19     VERSE.



Translation.

**20** VERSE.

Translation.

**21** VERSE.

Translation.

**22** VERSE.

Translation.

**23** VERSE.

Translation.

**24** VERSE.

Translation.

**25** VERSE.

Translation.

**26** VERSE.

Translation.

**27** VERSE.

Translation.

**28** VERSE.

Translation.

**29** VERSE.

Translation.

**30** VERSE.

Translation.

**31** VERSE.

Translation.

**32** VERSE.

Translation.

**33** VERSE.

Translation.

**34** VERSE.

Translation.

**35** VERSE.

Translation.

**36** VERSE.

Translation.

**37** VERSE.

Translation.

**38** VERSE.

Translation.

**39** VERSE.

Translation.

**40** VERSE.

Translation.

**41** VERSE.

Translation.

**42** VERSE.

Translation.

**43** VERSE.

Translation.

**44** VERSE.

Translation.

**45** VERSE.

Translation.

**46** VERSE.

Translation.

**47** VERSE.

Translation.

**48** VERSE.

Translation.

**49** VERSE.

Translation.

**50** VERSE.

Translation.

**51** VERSE.

Translation.

**52** VERSE.

Translation.

**53** VERSE.

Translation.

**54** VERSE.

Translation.

**55** VERSE.

Translation.

**56** VERSE.

Translation.

**57** VERSE.

Translation.

**58** VERSE.

Translation.

**59** VERSE.

Translation.

**60** VERSE.

Translation.

**61** VERSE.

Translation.

**62** VERSE.

Translation.

**63** VERSE.

Translation.

**64** VERSE.

Translation.

**65** VERSE.

Translation.

**66** VERSE.

Translation.

**67** VERSE.

Translation.

# The Leed of Hindle (*Hyndluljóð*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.428)–early C11th (0.475)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

- 
- 1 „Vaki mér meýja, · vaki mín vina,  
2 Hyndla systir, · es í helli býr;  
nú 's røkr røkra, · riða vit skulum  
4 til Valhallar · ok til vés heilags.

Frow quoth: “Wake, maiden of maidens; wake my friend, sister Hindle, who lives in the rock-face! Now is the twilight of twilights; we two shall ride to Walhall, and to the holy ʀwigh<sup>C</sup>!

- 2 Biðjum Hęrjaǫðr · í hugum sitja,  
2 hann geldr ok gefr · gull verðugum,  
gaf hann Hęrmóði · hjalm ok brynju,  
4 en Sigmundi · sverð at þiggja.

Let us bid Harryfather (= Weden) in good spirits to remain; he rewards and gives gold to the worthy: He gave ʀHeremod<sup>P</sup> helmet and byrnie, but ʀSighmund<sup>P</sup> a sword to receive.

---

2 verðugum] emended to *verðungu* ‘to the retinue’ by Finnur Jónsson (1932), Guðni Jónsson (1954)

- 3 Gefr hann sigr sonum, · en svinnum aura,  
2 męlsku mǫrgum · ok manvit firum,  
byri gefr brǫgnum, · en brag skǫldum,  
4 gefr hann mannsęmi · mǫrgum rekki.

He gives victory to sons, but to the wise silver; speech to many, and ʀmanwit<sup>C</sup> to men. Fair wind he gives to noble ones, and poetry to ʀscolds<sup>C</sup>; he gives valour to many a champion.

- 4 Þór munk blóta, · þess munk biðja,  
 2 at hann é við þik · einart láti;  
 þó 's hǫnum ótitt · við jotuns brúðir.

To Thunder I will 'bloot<sup>C</sup>, of this I will bid: that he always show friendliness to thee, although he dislikes the brides of the ettins.

- 5 Nú taktu ulf þinn · einn af stalli,  
 2 lát hann rinna · með runa mínum.“  
 Hyndla kvað:  
 „Seyinn es gǫltr þinn · goðveg troða,  
 4 vil'k-at mar minn · méttan hlóða.

Now take thy single wolf from the stable; let him run with my boar.” [Hindle quoth:] “Slow is thy boar to tread the Godways; I wish not load my noble steed.”

- 6 Fló ert Freyja, · es fręistar mín,  
 2 visar þú augum · á oss þannig,  
 es hafir ver þinn · í valsinni  
 4 Óttar unga · Innsteins bur.“

Deicitful art thou, Frow, as thou temptest me; thou showest thy eyes on us this way as thou hast thy man on the Walways; the young Oughter, Instone's offspring.”

[Frow quoth:]

- 7 „Dulið ert Hyndla, · draums étlak þér,  
 2 es kveðr ver minn · í valsinni.

Deluded art thou, Hindle; I think thee dreamy as thou sayest that my man is on the Walways.

- 8 Þar's gǫltr glóar · Gullinbursti,  
 2 Hildisvíni, · es mér hagir gęřðu,  
 dvergar tvęir · Dáinn ok Nabbi.

There where the boar glows, Goldenbristle; the Hildswine, which for me the two skillful dwarfs Downen and Nab made.

---

2 Hildisvíni 'Hildswine'] Presumably an alternative name of Goldenbristle.



- 9      Senn í sǫðlum · sitja vit skulum  
 2      ok of jǫfra · ęttir dǫma,  
          gumna þęira, · es frá goðum kómu.

Soon in the saddles we two shall sit, and converse about the lineages of princes; [the lineages] of those men who came from the gods.

- 10     Þęir hafa vęðjat · vala malmi  
 2      Óttarr ungi · ok Angantýr;  
          skylt 's at vęita, · svá't skati hinn ungi  
 4  
          fǫðurlęifð hafi · ępt fręndr sína.

They have wagered the Welsh ore [GOLD], young Oughter and Ongenthew; it must be divulged,<sup>a</sup> so that the young prince may have the fatherly inheritance left behind by his kinsmen.

---

<sup>a</sup>Hindle must reveal what she knows

- 11     Hǫrg hann mér gęrði · hlaðinn stęinum;  
 2      nú 's grjót þat · at glęri orði;  
          rauð hann í nýju · nauta blóði;  
 4      ę trúði Óttarr · á ǫsynjur.

A ʀ harrow<sup>C</sup> he made for me, loaded with stones; now that stone-pile is become into glass. He reddened [it] in fresh blood of oxen; Oughter ever trusted on the ʀ Ossens<sup>G</sup>.

- 12     Nú lát forna · niðja talða  
 2      ok uppbornar · ęttir manna  
          hvat 's Skjǫldunga, · hvat 's Skilfinga,  
 4      hvat 's Ǫðlinga · hvat 's Ylfinga  
 6      hvat 's hǫldborit, · hvat 's hęrsborit  
          męst manna val · und Miðgarði.“

Now let ancient ancestors be counted, and the high-born lineages of men: What is of the Shieldings? What is of the Shilvings? What is of the Athlings? What is of the Wolvings? What is born of hero? What is born of chief, the mightiest choice of men in Middenyard?”

- 13     „Þú ert Óttarr · borinn Innstęini,

- 2 en Innsteinn vas · Alfi inum gamla,  
 Alfr vas Ulfi, · Ulfr Sǣfara,  
 4 en Sǣfari · Svan inum rauða.

Hindle quoth: "Thou<sup>a</sup> art, Oughter, born to Instone, but Instone was born to Elf the old, Elf to Wolf, Wolf to Seafare, but Seafare to Swan the red.

<sup>a</sup>Hindle, maybe in a trance-like state, speaks straight to Oughter.

- 14 Móður átti faðir þinn · męnjum gǫfga,  
 2 hygg at hęti · Hlędis gyðja,  
 Fróði vas faðir þęirar, · en Fríund móðir;  
 4 ęll þótti ęt sú · með yfirmęnnum.

Thy father had thy mother, beautiful with neck-rings, I think that she was called Leedise the ʀgidden<sup>C</sup>. Frood was her father, but Friend her mother; all her lineage seemed to be among ʀovermen<sup>C</sup>.

3 Friund] emend. from meaningless ʀfriaufʀ F

- 15 Auði vas áðr · ęflgastr manna,  
 2 Halfdanr fyrri · hęstr Skjöldunga,  
 fręg vǫru folkvíg, · þau's framir gęrðu,  
 4 hvarfla þóttu verk · með himins skautum.

Ead was before [that] the mightiest of men, Halfdane earlier the highest of Shieldings. Renowned were the troop-conflicts [wars] which the famous ones performed; his (= Halfdane's) works seemed to travel around the corners of heaven.

- 16 Eflðisk við Eymund · ózta manna  
 2 en vá Sigtrygg · með svǫlum ęggjum,  
 ęiga gekk Almvęig, · ózta kvinna,  
 4 ólu þau ok ętta · átján sonu.

He (= Halfdane) became the in-law of Iemund<sup>a</sup>, the noblest of men, but he slew Sightrue with cool edges. He went on to have Elmwey, the noblest of women; they begot and had eighteen sons.

<sup>a</sup>Lit. "[he] was strengthened by". Parallelism of "noblest of men/women" makes the meaning yet clearer. Elmwey was Iemund's daughter or sister.

- 17 Þaðan eru Skjöldungar, · þaðan eru Skilfingar,

- 2 þaðan eru Qðlingar, · þaðan eru Ynglingar,  
 þaðan es hqldborit, · þaðan es hersborit,  
 4 mest mannaval · und Miðgarði;  
 alt 's þat ett þín, · Óttarr heimski.

Thereof are the Shieldings! Thereof are the Shilvings! Thereof are the Inglings!<sup>a</sup> Thereof is born of hero! Thereof is born of chief, the mightiest choice of men in Middenyard! That is all thy lineage, foolish Oughter!"

<sup>a</sup>Note the contradiction with v. 12. Since the Inglings have already been mentioned (under the name Shilvings, for the difference between the two see Encyclopedia), it seems likely that Wolvings is the original reading.

- 18 Vas Hildigunnr · hennar móðir,  
 2 Svófu barn · ok sękonungs;  
 alt 's þat ett þín, · Óttarr heimski.  
 4 varði at viti svá, · viltu enn lengra?

Hildguth was her mother, the child of Swabe and Seaking; that is all thy lineage, foolish Oughter!—It is meaningful that one might know thus; wilt thou [go] yet further?

- 19 Dagr átti Þóru · dręngjamóður,  
 2 ólusk í ett þar · óztir kappar,  
 Fraðmarr ok Gyrör · ok Frekar báðir,  
 4 Ámr ok Jqsurmarr, · Alfr hinn gamli.  
 varðar at viti svá, · viltu enn lengra?

Day had Thure, the mother of valiant men; in that lineage were begotten the noblest champions: Fradmer and Yird, and both Frecks; Ame and Essirmer; Elf the old.—It is meaningful that one might know thus; wilt thou [go] yet further?

- 20 Kętill hét vinr þęira · Klypps arþęgi,  
 2 vas hann móðurfaðir · móður þinnar;  
 þar vas Fróði · fyrr enn Kári,  
 4 en Hildi vas · Hóalfr of getinn.

Kettle, the inheritor of Clip, was their friend; he was the father of thy mother's mother. There was Frood, yet earlier Keer, but Highelf was by Hild begotten.

...



# The Lay of Wayland (*Völundarkviða*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.428)–early C11th (0.475)

Meter: *Firnwörðslaw*

The **Lay of Wayland** (*Wayland*) is a story of immense psychological complexity, one of the masterpieces of Norse poetry.

The poem begins with a prose introduction, which survives in both **R** and **A**.

Wayland gets his revenge on the whole royal household. He murders Nithad's two young sons (affectionately, his "bear-cubs") and thus ends his male lineage. Likewise he defangs Nithad's "cunning wife" (she is never called anything else) by reducing her once powerful counsels to cold words; and finally he rapes Beadhild, depriving her of her maidenhood and value in marriage. They are thus reduced to the same state of complete powerlessness as he himself experienced, something clearly seen in the repetition of the adjective *viljalauss* 'powerless'; in v. 12 it describes Wayland after he wakes in shackles, but in v. 31 Nithad uses it to refer to his own mental state after the deaths of his sons. This sense of hopelessness is also seen in Beadhild's haunting concluding speech. "I knew by naught struggle against him; I could by naught struggle against him."

From the other versions of the story it is known that Beadhild gave birth to a son, Woody (OE *Wudga*, *ThedS Viðga*, in Danish ballads *Vidrik Verlandson*). He went on to become a great hero, and in the later heroic ballads by far eclipses his father. His birth seems heavily foreshadowed by Wayland forcing Nithad to swear an oath in v. 33, but he is nowhere directly mentioned in the poem, probably for artistic reasons.

Apart from this lay there is one other telling of the full story, namely the Strand of Wayland the Smith in *ThedS*. While written in Old Norse, it is clear from the proper names and content that it is based on German sources (probably heroic ballads). Thus the native form *Völundr* is replaced with *Velent* [*sic*], *Niðuðr* with *Niðungr*. Interestingly there is a note within it showing that the native form was still known, namely about "Velent, the excellent smith, whom Warrings (*Væringjar*) call Wayland (*Völundr*)". Apparently Wayland was so famous that "all men seem to praise his workmanship so, that the maker of any smith's work which is made better than other works, is called a Wayland (*Völundr*) with regards to workmanship."

Far more stark than minor differences of language is that of tone. The psychological complexity and tension of the older redaction is almost entirely gone: Wayland is no longer a mysterious wild man, but a chivalrous knight who can escape from any peril through his ingenuity and craftsmanship. He is not kidnapped out of Nithad's greed, nor hamstrung out of the suspicion of his cruel wife, but rather a loyal servant of Nithad's,

banished from the kingdom after defending himself against the king's corrupt steward, and hamstrung after being caught attempting to poison the king's food in revenge.

Most frustratingly the personality of Beadhild is entirely expulged. She is the anonymous "king's daughter", an unnamed maiden (*jungfrú*, a borrowing from Low German) who is peacefully seduced by Wayland and quickly falls in love with him. Likewise the person of Nithad's cunning wife is completely gone, and the murder of his sons no longer ends his lineage, since he has another, older son who survives him and takes over the kingdom. Wayland still flies away laughing after telling Nithad what he has done, but only four years (his son with Beadhild is three years old) later reconciliates with Nithad's son, retrieves Beadhild and their son and lives a long life as a famous craftsman.

With this it is clearly seen that the story by the time of the *ThedS* had been heavily distorted, a tragic victim of medieval romantic sensibilities. It does not have any high literary value, but is of interest since it shows the wide reception and variation of the narrative.

Finally there are also traces of the story in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, where it is alluded to in both *Walder* and *Dear*, the latter of which particularly emphasising the powerlessness felt by Wayland and Beadhild (thus being much closer in spirit to the present poem than to *ThedS*). Parts of the narrative are depicted on the early C8th Frank's casket, where it is as prominent as the depiction of the Adoration of the Magi—a true testament to the weight with which it was regarded within that culture.

To illustrate the narrative correspondences and differences of the various redactions, I present the following table:

| Person                             |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Wayland                            |  |
| Wayland's brothers                 |  |
| Father of the brothers             |  |
| Nithad                             |  |
| Nithad's daughter (Beadhild)       |  |
| Nithad's sons                      |  |
| Wayland and Beadhild's son (Woody) |  |
| Wives of the brothers              |  |
| —                                  | Wayland and his brothers ski and hunt animals. They settle in Wolfdales, |
| —                                  | Nithad learns that Wayland   |
| —                                  |  |

### Regarding Wayland (*Frá Völundi*)

- P1 Níðuðr hét konungr í Svíþjóð. Hann átti tvá sonu ok eina dóttur. Hon  
 2 hét Bǫðvildr. Bræðr váru þrír, synir Finnakonungs. Hét einn Slagfiðr, an-  
 narr Egill, þriði Völundr. Þeir skriðu ok veiddu dýr. Þeir kómu í Úlf dali  
 4 ok gerðu sér þar hús. Þar er vatn, er heitir Úlfsjár. Snemma of morgin  
 fundu þeir á vatnsströndu konur þrjár, ok spunnu lín. Þar váru hjá þeim

- 6 álfarhamir þeira. Þat vǫru valkyrjur. Þar vǫru tvær dǫtr Hlǫðvés konungs,  
 Hlaðguðr svanhvít ok Hervǫr alvitr, in þriðja var Qlrún Kjársdóttir af Val-  
 8 landi. Þeir hǫfðu þér heim til skála með sér. Fekk Egill Qlrúnar, en Slagfiðr  
 Svanhvítrar, en Vǫlundr Alvitrar. Þau bjuggu sjau vetr. Þá flugu þér at vitja  
 10 víga ok kómu eigi aftr. Þá skreið Egill at leita Qlrúnar, en Slagfiðr leitaði  
 Svanhvítrar, en Vǫlundr sat í Úlfdǫlum. Hann var hagrastr maðr, svá at  
 12 menn viti, í fornum sǫgum. Níðuðr konungr lét hann hǫndum taka, svá  
 sem hér er um kveðit:

Nithad was named a king in Sweden. He owned two sons and one daughter; she was called Beadhild. There were three brothers, the sons of a king of the Finns. One was called Slayfinn, another Agle, the third Wayland. They travelled on skis and hunted wild animals. They came into the Wolfdales and made for themselves houses there. There is a water there, called Wolfsea. Early in the morning they found on the lake-shore three women, and they were spinning linen. By them were their swan-<sup>C</sup>hames<sup>C</sup>; they were Walkirries. Two of them were the daughters of king Ladwigh: Ladguth Swanwhite and Harware Allwit, the third was Alerune, daughter of <sup>P</sup>Kear of <sup>Ga</sup>Walland. The brothers brought the maidens with them to their halls. Agle got Alerune, but Slayfinn Swanwhite, but Wayland Allwit. They lived there for seven winters, then they left to attend battles, and did not return. Then Agle left on skis to look for Alerune, but Slayfinn sought out Swanwhite; but Wayland stayed in the Wolfdales. He was the most skilled craftsman, as men know, in the ancient saws. King Nithad had him captured, about which this has been sung:

<sup>a</sup>The Roman emperor; see Encyclopedia.

- 1 Męyjar flugu sunnan · Myrkvið í gǫgnum  
 2 alvitr ungar, · ǫrlǫg drýgja;  
 þér á sévarstrǫnd · settusk at hvílask  
 4 drósir suðrónar, · dýrt lín spunnu.

Maidens flew from the south through Mirkwood<sup>a</sup>—young allwits<sup>b</sup>—to fulfill <sup>C</sup>orlay<sup>C</sup>. They on the lake-shore set down to rest; the southern ladies span expensive linen.

<sup>a</sup>Mirkwood is surely referenced for its association with the war-ravaged lands of the Gots and Huns; a natural environment for Walkirries.

<sup>b</sup>Maybe look at what this means. TODO.

- 2 Eın nam þeira · Eıgil at vęrja  
 2 fǫgr męr fira · faðmi ljósum;  
 ǫnnur vas Svanhvít, · svanfjaðrar dró,  
 4 [...]

en hin þriðja · þeira systir  
 6 varði hvítan · hals Völundar.

One of them began—the fair maiden of men—to embrace Agle in her light bosom. Another was Swanwhite—her swan-feathers she pulled; but the third sister warded the white throat of Wayland.

---

4 [...] A line mentioning the name of Slayfinn has certainly gone missing here.

3 Sótu síðan · sjau vetr at þat,  
 2 en hinn átta · allan þrýðu,  
 en hinn níunda · nauðr of skilði,  
 4 meýjar fýstusk · á myrkvan við,  
 alvitr ungar · ørlög drýgja.

Then they stayed for seven winters at that, but all the eighth they yearned, but the ninth did need divorce them: the maidens longed for the mirky wood: the young allwits, to fulfill orlay.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>As Walkirries the *orlay* of the sisters is to preside over battles for Woden. Remembering this duty they become increasingly anxious, until they one day decide to finally leave, as seen from the next verse without telling their husbands. For the significance of Mirkwood, see note to v. 1.

4 Kom þar af veiði · veðreygr skyti  
 2 Völundr líðandi · of langan veg,  
 Slagfiðr ok Egill, · sali fundu auða,  
 4 gingu út ok inn · ok umb sǫusk.

Came there from the hunt the weather-eyed shooter: Wayland passing over a long way. Slayfinn and Agle found the halls deserted; they walked out and in, and looked about.

5 Austr skreïð Egill · at Qlrúnu,  
 2 en suðr Slagfiðr · at Svanhvítu,  
 en einn Völundr · sat í Ulfdǫlum.

East skied Agle for Alerune, but south Slayfinn for Swanwhite; but alone Wayland stayed in the Wolfdales.

6 Hann sló goll rautt · við gim fastan,  
 2 lukði hann alla · linnbaugum vǽl;  
 svá beïð hann · sinnar ljóssar  
 4 kvánar, ef hǫnum · of koma gǣrði.



He struck the red gold by fastened gemstone, enclosed he all the serpent-<sup>C</sup>ighs well;  
thus awaited he his bright wife, if to him she might come.

---

<sup>a</sup>Armlets, torcs resembling serpents, perhaps even literally shaped like them; cf. the Viking age armlet found in a hoard in Undrom, Ångermanland, northern Sweden. Museum ID 108822 HST. TODO: Maybe include photo?

7 Þat spyrr Níðuðr, · Níara dróttinn,  
2 at einn Völundr · sat í Ulfdölum;  
nóttum fóru seggir, · næglðar vóru brynjur,  
4 skildir bliku þeira · við hinn skarða mána.

It learns Nithad, lord of the <sup>G</sup>Nears, that alone Wayland stayed in the Wolfdales. By night travelled warriors—nailed were their byrnies;<sup>a</sup> their shields gleamed by the waning moon.

---

<sup>a</sup>The soldiers had plated armour.

8 Stigu ór sǫðlum · at salar gaffi,  
2 gingu inn þaðan · endlangan sal,  
sǫu þeir á bast · bauga drægna,  
4 sjau hundruð allra, · es sá seggr átti.

They stepped out of the saddles, towards the hall's gables; went inside thence, through the endlong hall. Saw they on a bast-rope bighs drawn up: seven hundred in all, which that man owned.

9 Ok þeir af tóku · ok þeir á létu  
2 fyr einn útan, · es af létu;  
kom þar af vęiði · veðreygr skyti  
4 Völundr líðandi · of langan veg.

And they took off and they put back on; but for one, which away they put.<sup>a</sup>—Came there from the hunt the weather-eyed shooter: Wayland passing over a long way.

---

<sup>a</sup>That this is the bigh mentioned by itself in vv. 17 and 26 seems likely. Finnur Jónsson (1932) writes: “The ring which Nithad kept must have had special properties, and distinguished itself before others. There is no doubt that the ring is a flight ring; whether this was clear to the poet is however questionable. This much is certain, that Wayland seems to be able to fly away only after he has got back the ring; that is, the one which Beadchild brings him.” (*My translation from the Danish.*)—The reader may for himself judge the plausibility of this, but it seems that Wayland, being an exceptionally handy craftsman, may just as well have crafted wings for himself without need for magical rings. This agrees with the Low German verison and the Daedalus myth, for both of which see the introduction to the poem.

- 10      Gekk brúnni · beru hold steikja,  
           2      ár brann hrísi · allþurru fura,  
                  víðr hinn vindþurri, · fyr Völundi.

Went he the brown she-bear's hull to roast; early burned the twigs of all-dry pine—the wind-dry wood—before Wayland.

- 11      Sat á berfjalli, · bauga talði,  
           2      alfa ljóði · eins saknaði.  
                  hugði at hefði · Hlōðvés dóttir,  
           4      Alvittr unga, · vęri aptr komin.

Sat he on the bear-skin, bighs he counted—the prince of elves was missing one! Thought he that Ladwigh's daughter might have it; that the young Allwit might be come back.

- 12      Sat hann svá lengi, · at hann sofnaði,  
           2      ok hann vaknaði · viljalauss;  
                  vissi sér á hōndum · hōfgar nauðir,  
           4      en á fótum · fjōtur of spēntan.

Sat he so long that asleep he fell, and he awoke, powerless. He knew on his hands tortuous restraints, and on his feet were fetters tightened.

[Wayland quoth:]

- 13      „Hvērir 'ru jōfrar · þęir's á lōgðu  
           2      þętisíma · ok bundu mik?“

“Which are the princes, those that laid on thick bast-ropes, and bound me?”

- 14      Kallaði nú Níðuðr, · Níara dróttinn:  
           2      „Hvar gatz Vōlundr, · vísi alfa,  
                  óra aura, · í Ulfðōlum?  
           4      Goll vas þar ęigi · á Grana lęiðu,  
                  fjarri hugða'k vart land · fjōllum Rínar.“

Out called Nithad, lord of the Nears: “Where gottest thou, Wayland, leader of elves, *our* ounces in the Wolfdales? Gold was there not on ‘Grane’<sup>P</sup>’s path; far I thought our land from the fells of the Rhine.<sup>3</sup>”

<sup>3</sup>Grane was the horse of the legendary hero ‘Sward’<sup>P</sup>, slayer of the dragon ‘Fathomer’<sup>P</sup>. These events were thought to have taken place in Germany. The sense of the is thus sarcastic: “Where did you get that gold? A dragon’s hoard?”

[Wayland quoth:]

- 15 „Man’k at meiri · mēti ǫttum,  
 2 es vér heil hjú · heima vǫrum.  
 Hlaðguðr ok Hervǫr · borin vas Hlǫðvé,  
 4 kunn vas Qlrún · Kíars dóttir.“

“I remember that we owned greater wealth, when we a whole household were at home: Ladguth, and Harware was born to Ladwigh; known was Alerune, Kear’s daughter.”<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Wayland responds rather cryptically. It seems that by asserting the noble lineage of the three swan-wives he gives a legitimate reason for his wealth, although he seems to be aware, judging by the tone, that the greedy Nithad neither cares nor believes him.

- 16 Úti stóð kunnig · kvön Níðaðar,  
 2 hón inn of gekk · ęndlangan sal,  
 stóð á golfi, · stilti rǫddu:  
 4 „es-a sá nú hýrr, · es ór holti fęrr.

Outside stood the cunning wife of Nithad; she inside did walk across the length of the hall; stood she on the floor, steered her voice: “That one<sup>a</sup> is not mild now, who comes out of the wood.

---

<sup>a</sup>The abducted Wayland.

- 17 Tęnn hǫnum tęygjask · es hǫnum’s tęt sverð  
 2 ok hann Bǫðvildar · baug of þękkir.  
 Ǫmun eru augu · ormi hinum frána,  
 4 sníðið ér hann · sina magni,  
 ok sętið hann síðan · í Sęvarstöð.“

His teeth are bared when he is shown the sword, and he recognizes Beadhild’s bigh. Reminiscent are the eyes to the gleaming snake’s. Cut ye from him the might of his sinews, and set him thereafter on Seastead!”

- P Svá var gǫrt, at skornar vǫru sinar í knésfótum ok settr í holm einn, er þar var fyrir landi, er hét Sęvarstaðr. Þar smíðaði hann konungi allskyns gǫrsimar; engi maðr þorði at fara til hans, nema konungr einn. Vǫlundr kvað:

Thus was done, that the sinews in his houghs were cut, and he was placed on a lonely islet which there lay before the land, which was called Seastead. There he smithed for the king all manner of jewels. No man dared journey to him, save for the king alone. Wayland quoth:

- 18 „Sé'k Níðaði · sverð á linda,  
 2 þat's ek hveṣta · sęm hagast kunna'k  
 ok ek hęrða'k · sęm hógst þótti;  
 4 sá's mér fránn mékir · ę fjarri borinn.  
 sé'kk-a þann Völundi · til smiðju borinn.

“I see a sword on Nithad's belt, that one I sharpened as most handily I knew, and hardened as most pleasingly seemed. Now that gleaming blade is ever far from me carried; I see it not for Wayland to the smithy carried.

- 19 Nú berr Bøðvildr · brúðar minnar,  
 2 bíð'k-a þess bót, · bauga rauða.“

Now Beadhild bears my bride's—I get no bettering for that—red bighs.”

- 20 Sat né svaf ávalt · ok sló hamri;  
 2 vél gęrði hęldr · hvatt Níðaði;  
 drifu ungir tveir · á dýr sea  
 4 synir Níðaðar · í Sévarstöð.

He sat—never slept—and struck the hammer; he very boldly planned wives for Nithad.—  
 Two young ones hurried to look at precious things: Nithad's sons, to Seastead.

- 21 Kvómu til kistu, · krøfðu lukla,  
 2 opin vas illúð, · es í sǫu,  
 fjǫlð vas þar meina, · es mǫgum sýndisk  
 4 at vęri goll rautt · ok gǫrsimar.

Came they to the chest, demanded the keys; open was the evil when inside they looked.  
 A great deal was there of harms, which to the lads seemed like were it red gold and jewels.

[Wayland quoth:]

- 22 „Komið ęinir tveir, · komið annars dags;  
 2 ykkur lét'k þat goll · of gefit verða;  
 sęgið-a meyjum · né salþjóðum,  
 4 manni ęngum, · at mik fyndið.“

“Come alone ye two, come another day; to you I will let that gold be given. Say not to maidens, nor to the people of the hall; to no man, that ye met me.”

- 23 Snimma kallaði · seggr á annan,  
 2 bróðir á bróður: · „göngum baug séa!“  
 Kómu til kistu, · kröfðu lukla,  
 4 opin vas illúð · es í litu.

Early called one youth to another, brother to brother: “Let us go see the bighs!”. Came they to the chest, demanded the keys; open was the evil when inside they looked.

- 24 Snęið af hofuð · húna þęira  
 2 ok und fęn fjoturs · fóttr of lagði,  
 ęn þęr skálar, · es und skorum vóru,  
 4 svęip útan silfri, · sęldi Níðaði.

He sliced off the heads of those bear-cubs<sup>a</sup> [BOYS], and under the fetter’s fen<sup>b</sup> their feet did lay; but the bowls<sup>c</sup>, which were under their curls, he coated with silver and gave to Nithad.

<sup>a</sup>An affectionate term for the young boys. TODO: Relate to Bearserks?

<sup>b</sup>Very unclear. TODO.

<sup>c</sup>Their skulls.

- 25 En ór augum · jarknastęina  
 2 sęndi kunnigri · kvęn Níðaðar;  
 en ór tęnnum · tvęggja þęira  
 4 sló brjóstkringlur, · sęndi Bęðvildi.

But out of the eyes, earkenstones he sent to the cunning wife of Nithad; but out of the teeth of the two, he struck breast-brooches, sent to Beadhild.

- 26 Þá nam Bęðvildr · baugi at hrósa  
 2 [...] · es brotit hafði,  
 „þori’k-a’k sęgja, · nema þęr ęinum.“

Then Beadhild began to praise the ring,<sup>a</sup> [...] which she had broken, “I dare not tell it, save to thee alone.”

2 [...] ] The meter requires a half-line here, likely containing a more specific description of the bigh.

<sup>a</sup>The verse is without doubt incomplete, but the story can be gleaned: Beadhild breaks the bigh she has been given by her parents (previously mentioned in vv. 10 (see note there) and 17), and is afraid that her parents may become upset. She thus goes to Wayland in secret, asking him to repair it.

[Wayland quoth:]

- 27 „Ek bóti svá · brest á golli,  
 2 at fęðr þínum · fęgri þykkir,  
 ok móðr þinni · miklu bętri,  
 4 ok sjalfri þér · at sama hófi.“

“I mend such the crack on the gold, that to thy father it fairer seems, and to thy mother far better, and to thyself of the same rank.”

- 28 Bar hann hána bjóri, · þvíat hann bętr kunni,  
 2 svát hón í sessi · of sofnaði.  
 „Nú hęfk hęft · harma minna  
 4 allra nema ęinna · íviðgjörnum.“

He overcame her with beer—for he was more cunning—so that she in the seat asleep did fall. “Now have I avenged my harms—all but one—on the insidious ones.”<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>King Nithad and his wife.

- 29 „Vęl ek,“ kvað Vǫlundr, · „verða’k á fitjum,  
 2 þeim’s mik Níðaðar · nǫmu rekkar.“  
 Hlęjandi Vǫlundr · hófsk at lopti,  
 4 grátandi Bǫðvldr · gekk ór ęyju.  
 tregði fǫr fríðils · ok fǫður vreiði.

“Well I”, quoth Wayland, “fall on my paddles; those which Nithad’s men bereaved me of!” Laughing Wayland threw himself in the air; weeping Beadhild went from the island: she grieved the lover’s flight, and the father’s fury.

---

<sup>a</sup>*C-V: fit* ‘the webbed foot of water-birds’, the reader may picture for himself. Wayland has crafted a mechanism to take flight, regaining his mobility which he lost when he was hamstrung.

- 30 Úti stóð kunnig · kvǫn Níðaðar,  
 2 ok hón inn of gekk · ęndlangan sal,  
 en hann á salgarð · settisk at hvílask,  
 4 „Vakir þú Níðuðr, · Níara dróttinn?“

Outside stood the cunning wife of Nithad; she walked inside across the length of the hall—but he, on the courtyard, set down to rest. “Art thou awake, Nithad, lord of the Nears?”

[Nithad quoth:]

- 31 „Vaki’k ávalt · viljalauss,  
 2 sofna’k minst, · síz sonu dauða,  
 kęll mik í hęfuð, · kęld erumk ręð þín,  
 4 vilnumk þess nú, · at við Vęlund dóma’k.“

“I am always awake, powerless; I fall asleep the least, since the death of my sons. My head freezes; cold are thy counsels—I wish now but that: to speak with Wayland.”

[Nithad quoth:]

- 32 „Seg mér þat Vęlundr, · vísi alfa,  
 2 af hęilum hvat varð · húnum mínum?“

“Say it to me, Wayland, leader of elves: what became of my healthy bear-cubs [BOYS]?”

[Wayland quoth:]

- 33 „Eiða skalt mér áðr · alla vinna,  
 2 at skips borði · ok at skjalдар ręnd,  
 at mars bógi · ok at mękis egg  
 4 at þú kvęlj-at · kvęn Vęlundar,  
 né brúði minni · at bana verðir,  
 6 þótt kvęn ęigim, · þá’s ér kunnið,  
 eða jóð ęigim · innan hallar.

“Before that shalt thou swear to me all oaths:—by the deck of the ship and the rim of the shield, by the bough of the steed and the edge of the sword—that thou wilt not torment the wife of Wayland, nor of my bride become the bane, though a wife we might own, which ye know; or a babe might own, inside of the hall.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Wayland has Nithad swear an oath that he will not harm Beadhild, nor their (yet unborn) child.

- 34 Gakk til smiðju, · es gęrðir þú,  
 2 þar fiðr þú bęlgi · blóði stokna,  
 snęið’k af hęfuð · húna þinna  
 4 ok und fęn fjęturs · fętr of lagða’k.

Go to the smithy, which thou madest; there wilt thou find bellows, sprinkled with blood. I sliced off the heads of thy bear-cubs [BOYS], and under the fetter’s fen their feet did I lay.

- 35 En þér skálar, · es und skorum vǫru,  
 2 sveip'k útan silfri, · selda'k Níðaði,  
 en ór augum · jarknasteina,  
 4 senda'k kunnigri · kvón Níðaðar.

But the bowls, which were under their curls, I coated with silver and gave to Nithad. But out of the eyes, earthenstones I sent to the cunning wife of Nithad.

- 36 En ór tǫnnum · tveggja þeira  
 2 sló'k brjóstkringlur, · senda'k Bǫðvildi;  
 nú gengr Bǫðvildr · barni aukin,  
 4 eingadóttir · ykkur beggja.“

But out of the teeth of the two, I struck breast-brooches, sent to Beadhild. Now walks Beadhild, swollen with child; the only daughter of you both.”

[Nithad quoth:]

- 37 „Méltir-a þú þat mál, · es mik meir tregi,  
 2 né þik vilja'k Vǫlundr · verr of níta;  
 es-at svá maðr hǫr, · at þik af hęsti taki,  
 4 né svá ǫflugr, · at þik neðan skjóti.  
 þar's þú skollir · við ský uppi.“

“Thou spokedst not that speech which might grieve me more; nor could I worse wish, Wayland, to deny thee. There is no man so high that he from horse might take thee, nor so mighty that he might shoot thee down, there where thou jeerest against the cloud-cover above!”

- 38 Hléjandi Vǫlundr · hófsk at lopti,  
 2 en ókátr Níðuðr · þá ęptir sat.

Laughing Wayland threw himself in the air, but gloomy Nithad thereafter stayed.

[Nithad quoth:]

- 39 „Upp rís Þakkráðr, · þręll minn bazti,  
 2 bið Bǫðvildi, · mey hina bráhvítu,  
 gangi fagrvarið · við fǫður róða.“

“Rise up Thankred, my best thrall; ask Beadhild—the brow-white maiden—to go fair-clothed, with her father to counsel.”



[Nithad quoth:]

40 „Es þat satt Bøðvildr, · es soggðu mér,  
2 sǫtuð it Vǫlundr · saman í holmi?“

“Is it true, Beadchild, as they said to me: stayed thou and Wayland together on the island?”

[Beadhild quoth:]

41 „Satt ’s þat Níðuðr · es sagði þér:  
2 sǫtum vit Vǫlundr · saman í holmi  
eina qgurstund, · éva skyldi;  
4 ek vétr hǫnum · vinna kunna’k,  
ek vétr hǫnum · vinna máttu’k.“

“’Tis true, Nithad, as *he* said<sup>a</sup> to thee: I and Wayland stayed together on the island, for one burdensome hour—it should never [have been]! I knew by naught struggle against him; I could by naught struggle against him.<sup>b</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>Beadhild, knowing that the only one who is aware of what happened is Wayland, makes the subtle change in the conjugation, from her father’s general plural (“what *they* said”), to the specific singular (“what *he* said”).

<sup>b</sup>She was both mentally (*kunna* ‘to know, understand’) and physically (*mega* ‘to have strength to do, avail’) incapable of struggling against him. — As Finnur Jónsson (1932) comments, an unsurpassed final verse.



# Eddic fragments from Snorre's Edda

TODO: Go through Snorre's Edda and gather the fragments thence.

---

The Galder of Homedall

1 „Níu em'k móðra mōgr,  
2 níu em'k systra sonr.“

“Of nine mothers am I a lad, of nine sisters am I a son.”

---

This passage is closely paralleled in Saxo (TODO). See Hopkins (2021).

P1 Inn þriði áss er sá, er kallaðr er Njörðr. Hann býr á himni, þar sem heitir  
2 Nóatún. Hann ræðr fyrir göngu vinds ok stillir sjá ok eld. Á hann skal heita  
til sáfara ok til veiða. Hann er svá auðigr ok fésæll, at hann má gefa þeim  
4 auð landa eða lausafjár. Á hann skal til þess heita. Eigi er Njörðr ása ættar.  
Hann var upp fæddr í Vanaheimi, en Vanir gísluðu hann goðunum ok tóku  
6 í mót at gíslingu þann, er Hænir heitir. Hann varð at sætt með goðum ok  
Vönum. Njörðr á þá konu, er Skaði heitir, dóttir Þjaza jötuns. Skaði vill  
8 hafa bústað þann, er átt hafði faðir hennar, þat er á fjöllum nökkurum, þar  
sem heitir Þrymheimr, en Njörðr vill vera nær sæ. Þau sættust á þat, at  
10 þau skyldu vera níu nætr í Þrymheimi, en þá aðrar níu at Nóatúnum. En  
er Njörðr kom aftr til Nóatúna af fjallinu, þá kvað hann þetta:

The third Os is that one who is called Nearth. He lives in heaven, there as is called Nowetowns. He rules the motion of the wind and calms sea and fire. Upon him shall one call for sea-faring and for hunting. He is so wealthy and blessed with cattle that he may give them a wealth of lands or loose cattle. Upon him shall one call for that. Nearth is not of the lineage of the Ease. He was brought up in Wanehome, but the Wanegave him as a hostage towards the gods and received as a hostage that one who is called Heener. He was used for reconciling the gods and the Waneg. Nearth owns that woman who is called Shede, the daughter of the ettin Thedse. Shede wishes to have the dwelling place which her father had owned, that is on some fells, there as is called

Thrimham, but Nearth wishes to be near the sea. They agreed to it that they would be for nine nights in Thrimham, but the other nine at Nowetowns. But when Nearth came back to the Nowetowns from the fell, then he quoth this:

„Leið erumk fjöll, · vas'k-a lęgi á,  
 2        nętr ęinar niu;  
       ulfar þytr · mér þótti illr vesa  
 4        hjá songvi svana.“

“The fells are loathsome to me; I was not long on them, only for nine nights. The howling of the wolves thought me bad to be, held against the song of the swans.”

## P2 Þá kvað Skaði þetta:

Then Shede quoth this:

„Sofa né māt'k-a'k · sęvar bęðjum á  
 2        fugls jarmi fyrir;  
       sá mik vękr · es af víði kōmr  
 4        morgun hverjan már.“

“I could not sleep on the beds of the sea, due to the bleating of the bird. That one wakes me when from the wide sea it comes, every morning, the mew.”

---

„Vax-at-tu nú, Vimur, · alls mik þik vaða tíðir  
 2        jotna garða í;  
       vęizt, ef þú vęx · at þá vęx mér ósmęgin  
 4        jafnhátt upp sem himinn.“

“Grow thou not now, Wimbre, as I wish to wade through thee into the yards of the ettins; know that if thou growest, that my os-might then grows as high as heaven.”

## Heroic poetry of the Codex Regius



# First Lay of Hallow Hundingsbane (*Helgakviða Hundingsbana fyrsta*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): early C11th (0.103), late C12th (0.805)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

Here begins the lay regarding the men of Hallow Hundingsbane and Hathbrod. A lay of the Walsings.

- 1     Ár vas alda · þat's arar gullu [R 20r/21]  
2     hnigu heilög vötn · af Himinfjöllum;  
     þá hafði Hēlga · inn hugumstóra  
4     Borghildr borit · í Brálundi.

It was the beginning of ʀelds<sup>C</sup>, as eagles shrieked; holy waters poured down from the Heavenfells; then Burhild in Browlund gave birth to Hallow the Great-hearted.

- 2     Nött varð í bō, · nornir kvómu, [R 20r/23]  
2     þér's qðlingi · aldr of skópu;  
     þann bōðu fylki · frégstan verða  
4     ok buðlunga · þęztan þykkja.

It turned night in the settlement; norns came, those who shaped the age of the nobleman [= Hallow]. They bade the battle-arrayer be the noblest, and among princes seem the best.

- 3     Sneru þęr af afli · ørløgbøttu [R 20r/25]  
2     þá's borgir braut · í Brálundi;  
     þęr um greiddu · gullinsímu  
4     ok und mána sal · miðjan fęstu.

They turned mightily orlay-strands, when castles were broken in Browlund. They arranged a golden band, and beneath the moon-hall [sky] fastened it in the middle.

[R 20r/27]        4      Þér austr ok vestr · enda fōlu,  
                      2      þar átti lofðungr · land á milli,  
                                  brá nipt Nera · á norðrvega  
                      4      ęinni fęsti, · ęy bað hon halda.

They in the east and west hid its ends; there the praised one owned land in between. The kinswoman of Nare <unknown person> [NORN] tugged onto the northern ways a single cord; she bade it hold forever.



# The Lay of Hallow Harwardson

## (*Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): early C11th (0.385)–late C11th (0.550)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

Heroic poem.

### Regarding Harward and Sighlind (*Frá Hjörvarði ok Sigrlinn*)

- P1 Hjörvarðr hét konungr. Hann átti fjórar konur. Ein hét Alfhildr; sonr  
2 þeira hét Heðinn. Önnur hét Sereifr; þeira sonr hét Humlungr. In þriðja  
hét Sinrjóð; þeira sonr hét Hymlingr. Hjörvarðr konungr hafði þess heit  
4 strengt at eiga þá konu er hann vissi vænsta. Hann spurði at Sváfnir ko-  
nungr átti dóttur allra<sup>a</sup> fegrsta; sú hét Sigrlinn. Þömundr hét jarl hans; Atli  
6 var hans sonr er fór at biðja Sigrlinnar til handa konungi. Hann dvalðisk  
vetrlangt með Sváfni konungi. Fránmarr hét þar jarl, föstri Sigrlinnar; dót-  
8 tir hans hét Álf. Jarlinn réð, at meyjar var synjat, ok fór jarlinn heim.  
Atli jarls sonr stóð einn dag við lund nokkurn, en fugl sat í limunum uppi  
10 yfir hánun ok hafði heyrt til, at hans menn kǫlluðu vænstar konur þær, er  
Hjörvarðr konungr átti. Fuglinn kvakaði, en Atli hlýddi, hvat hann sagði.  
12 Hann kvað:

TODO. He quoth:

---

<sup>a</sup>‘vænallra’ *corr.* R

- 1 „Sáttu Sigrlinn, · Sváfnis dóttur,  
2 meyna fęgrstu · i munarheimi?  
þó hagligar · Hjörvarðs konur  
4 gumnum þykkja · at Glasislundi.“

2 „Munt við Atla · Iðmundar son  
 2 fugl fróðhugaðr · fleira mēla?“  
 „Mun’k ef mik buðlungr · blóta vildi  
 4 ok kys’k þat’s ek vil · ór konungs garði.“  
 2

3 Kjós-at-tu Hjörvarðr TODO  
 3

4 Hof mun ek kjósa, TODO  
 4

5 Hqfum erfiði · ok ekki ørendi;  
 5

6 6  
 6

7 7  
 7

8 Sverð veit’k liggja · i Sigarsholmi,  
 2 fjórum fēra · enn fimm tōgu;  
 eitt es þeira · ǫllum bētra  
 4 vígnesta bǫl · ok varið golli.

Swords I know lying, in Sigarsholm, four less than fifty. One of them is better than all—the ʀ bale<sup>C</sup> of war-neededles<sup>a</sup> [SPEARS?]<sup>a</sup>—and inlaid with gold.

<sup>a</sup>The kenning *vígnest* also appears in

9 Hringr ’s i hjalti, · hugr ’s i miðju,  
 2 ógn ’s i oddi, · þeim’s eiga getr;

liggr með eggju · ormr dreyrfáiðr  
 4 en á valbøstu · verpr naðr hala.

A ring is in the hilt; courage is in the middle; fear is in the point, for the one who gets to own it; along the blade lies a serpent painted in blood, but on the walbast<sup>a</sup> an adder chases its tail.

---

<sup>a</sup>An unclear part of the sword-hilt; see *Sigðrive* 7.



# Second Lay of Hallow Hundingsbane (*Helgakviða Hundingsbana aðra*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): early C11th (0.346)–late C11th (0.587)

Meter: *Firnwörðslaw* (TODO)

TODO: Introduction.

- 
- P1** Helgi fekk Sigrúnar ok áttu þau sonu; var Helgi eigi gamall. Dagr Høgna  
2 sonr blótaði Óðin til fǫðurhefnda. Óðinn léði Dag geirs síns. Dagr fann  
Helga, mág sinn, þar sem heitir at Fjoturlundi. Hann lagði í gognum  
4 Helga með geirnum. Þar fell Helgi en Dagr reið til fjalla ok sagði Sigrúnu  
tíðindi:

Hallow got Sighrun, and they owned sons; Hallow was not old. Day, son of Hain,  
「blooted<sup>C</sup> to Weden to take revenge for his father. Weden lent Day his spear. Day found  
Hallow, his brother-in-law, at a place called Fetterlund; he laid the spear through Hallow.  
There fell Hallow, but Day rode to the fells and told Sighrun the news:

- 1 „Trauðr em ek, systir, · trega þér at segja  
2 þvíat ek hefí nauðigr · nipti grétta:  
Fell í morgun · und Fjoturlundi  
4 buðlungr sá's vas · þeztr í heimi  
ok hildingum · á halsi stóð.“

“Regretful am I, sister, to grieve thee by saying—for, forced must I cause my kinswoman  
to cry: This morning fell, 'neath Fetterlund, that prince who was in the world the best,  
and on the throats of rulers stood.”

...

- 2 „Fyrr vil'k kyssa · konung ólífðan  
2 an þú blóðugri · brynju kastir;

hár es þitt, Helgi, · hélu þrungit,  
 4 allr es vísi · valdogg slæginn,  
 hendr úrsvalar · Høgna mági;  
 6 hvé skal'k þér, buðlungr, · þess bót of vinna?“

“Sooner would I kiss the unliving king, than thou the bloody byrnie mightst cast away.  
 Thy hair is, Hallow, with hoarfrost thick: the prince is all with corpse-dew whipped:<sup>a</sup>  
 the hands wet-cold on the kinsman of Hain. How shall I for thee, lord, remedy that?”

---

<sup>a</sup>For the formulation cf. *Dreams* 5.

3 „Eín veldr þú, Sigrún · frá Sefafjöllum,  
 2 es Hęłgi es · harmdogg slæginn:  
 Grętr þú, gullvarit, · grimmum tǫrum,  
 4 sólbjǫrt suðrón, · áðr þú sofa gangir,  
 hvęrt fęllr blóðugt · á brjóst grami,  
 6 úrsvalt, innfjalgt · ękka þrungit.“

“Thou alone causest, Sighrun from the Sevefells, that Hallow be by harm-dew whipped;  
 thou criest, gold-covered, bitter tears, sun-bright southern lady, before thou to sleep  
 mightst go. Each one falls bloody on the breast of the ruler, wet-cold and stifled, pressed  
 forth by grief.”

# The Speeches of Fathomer (*Fáfnismól*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.442), early C11th (0.402), late C11th (0.155)

Meter: *Leed-meter* (TODO)

---

[Fathomer quoth:]

- 1 „Sveinn ok sveinn! · Hverjum estu sveini of borinn?  
2 Hverra estu manna mögr?  
es þú á Fáfni rautt · þinn hinn frána mēki;  
4 stöndumk til hjarta hjörr!“

“Swain and swain! To which swain art thou born; of which men art thou the son? As thou on Fathomer hast reddened thy gleaming blade, the sword stands to my the heart!”

BPG BPA Sigurðr dulði nafns síns fyr því at þat var trúa þeira í forneskju at orð feigs manns métti mikít ef hann þolvaði óvin sínum með nafni. Hann kvað:EPA

BPB Siward concealed his name, because it was their belief in ancient times that the word of a <sup>fey</sup>C man could do much if he baled his enemy by his name. He [= Siward] quoth:EPB EPG

- 2 „Göfugt dýr ek heiti · en ek gengit hef”k  
2 hinn móðurlausi mögr,  
föður ek á’kk-a · sem fira synir,  
4 geng ek einn saman.“

“Noble beast I am called, but I have walked as the motherless lad. A father I own not, like the sons of men do; I walk alone.”

[Fathomer quoth:]

- 3 „Veizt, ef föður né átt-at · sem fira synir,  
2 af hverju vastu undri alinn?“

“Knowest thou, if thou haddest not a father like the sons of men, by which wonder thou wast born?”

[Siward quoth:]

4 „Ætterni mitt · kveð’k þér ókunnigt vesa  
2 ok mik sjalfan hit sama:  
Sigurðr ek heiti · Sigmundr hét minn faðir  
4 es hef’k þik vápnum vegit.“

“My lineage I say is unknown to thee, and my self the same.<sup>a</sup> Siward I am called—Sigmund was called my father—who with weapons have struck thee.”

---

<sup>a</sup>The meaning is that Fathomer would not recognize Siward’s lineage (i.e. his father) or name, since he is an orphan who up until this point has not won any glory. He is not saying that he is lineage is unknown even to himself, since *sjalfan mik* ‘my self’ is accusative, not dative.

[Fathomer quoth:]

5 „Hvęrr þik hvatti, · hví hvętjask lézt,  
2 mínu fjorvi at fara?  
Hinn fráneygi sveinn, · þú áttir fęður bitran,  
4 ábornu skjór á skęið.“

“Who goaded thee—why didst thou let thyself be goaded—my life for to destroy? Gleaming-eyed swain, thou haddest a sharp father; inborn traits show quickly.<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>The original is unclear. *á skęið* means roughly ‘rapidly, quickly’; thus *ríða á skęið* CV: ‘to ride at full speed’, but the other words are uncertain. La Farge and Tucker (1992) read ‘your innate qualities show quickly’, suggesting two unattested words: an adjective *\*áborinn* ‘innate, inborn’ and a verb *\*skjóa* ‘to show’. Yet the lack of i-umlaut in the supposed 3rd sg. pres. ind. *skjór* is difficult. We would expect *\*\*skýr*, as in *skjóta* ‘to shoot,’ with 2nd/3rd sg. pres. ind. *skýtr*. A solution here would be reading a 2nd sg. pres. subj. *skjóir*, with a vowel TODO

TODO: More verses...



# The Speeches of Sighdrive (*Sigrdrífumól*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.961)

Meter: *Leed-meter*

Many of the verses are quoted in *WalsS*, but notably the two prayer-verses are missing; possibly an instance of Christian censorship. TODO

---

[Sighdrive quoth:]

1 „Lengi ek svaf, · lengi ek sofnuð vas,  
2 long eru lýða lé;  
Óðinn því veldr · es eigi máttak  
4 bregða blundstofum.“

“Long I slept, long was I asleep, long are the deceits”

P1 Sigurðr settisk niðr ok spyrr hana nafns. Hón tók þá horn fullt mjaðar ok  
2 gaf hönnum minnisveig.

Siward set himself down, asking for her name. Then she took a horn full of mead, and gave him a mind-draught:

2 Heill Dagr, · heilir Dags synir,  
2 heil Nött ok nipt!  
Óreiðum augum · lítið okkr þinig  
4 ok gefið sitjendum sigr!

“Hail ‘Day’! Hail the sons of Day!<sup>a</sup> Hail Night and [her] kinswoman [= Earth]!<sup>b</sup> With unwrathful eyes look ye upon us two, and give the sitting ones [= us] victory.

---

<sup>a</sup>TODO. Who?

<sup>b</sup>According to *Ylför* 10 Earth is the daughter of Night and ‘Aner’.



4 ok nefna tysvar Tý.

Victory-runes shalt thou know, if thou wilt have victory, and carve on the hilt of the sword; some on weight-rims;<sup>a</sup> some on wallbasts<sup>b</sup>, and name ʀTue<sup>P</sup> twice.

<sup>a</sup>Unclear.

<sup>b</sup>Possibly the sword-pommel, the word also occurs in *HHarw* 9.

6 Qlrúnar skalt kunna · ef þu vilt annars kvén  
2 velli t þik i trygd ef þú trúir.  
á horni skal þér rísta · ok á handar baki  
4 ok merkia a nagli næþ.

Ale-runes shalt thou know, if TODO

7 Full skal signa · ok við fári séa  
2 ok verpa lauki í lög;  
þá þat veltk, · at þér verðr aldri  
4 meini blandinn mjöðr.

TODO

3–4 þá ... mjöðr] *thus WalsS, om. R*

...  
8 Þá mælti · Míms höfuð  
2 fróðligt it fyrsta orð,  
ok sagði sanna stafi.

Then spoke the head of Mime learnedly the first word, and said true staves:

9 Á skildi kvað ristnar · þeim's stendr fyr skínanda goði,  
2 á eyra Árvakrs, · ok á Alsvinns hófi,  
á því hvéli es snýz · undir reið Hrungnis,  
4 á Sleipnis tönnum · ok á sleða fjotrum,  
á bjarnar hrammi · ok á Braga tungu,  
6 á ulfs klóm · ok á arnar nefi,  
á blóðgum vengjum · ok á brúar sporði,  
8 á lausnar lófa · ok á líknar spori,  
á glæri ok á gulli · ok á gumna heillum,  
10 í víni ok virtri · ok vilisessi.

Á Gungnis oddi · ok á Grana brjósti,  
 12 á nornar nagli · ok á neði uglu;

On a shield it said were carved [runes]—[the shield] that stands before the shining god<sup>a</sup> [SUN]—[also] on the ear of Yorewaker, on the hoof of Allswith,<sup>b</sup> on that wheel which turns beneath the chariot of Rungner, on the teeth of Slopner, and on the fetters of sleds, on the paw of the bear, and on the tongue of Bray, on the claws of the wolf, and on the beak of the eagle, on bloody wings, and on the supports of the bridge, on the palm of release, and the track of grace, on glass and on gold, and on the good healths of men, in wine and beerwort, and on the comfortable seat, on the point of Gungner, and on the breast of Grane, on the nail of a norn, and on the beak of an owl.

<sup>a</sup>According to *Grimner* 39 the sun is covered by a shield, protecting the earth from its heat. Without it, the whole world would burn up.

<sup>b</sup>The two horses that pull the sun across the heavens; cf. *Grimner* 38.

10 Allar vǫru af skafnar, · þér es vǫru á ristnar,  
 2 ok hverfðar við inn hēlga mjǫð  
 ok sendar á víða vega.

All were shaven off—those that were carved on—and thrown into the holy mead, and sent on wide ways:

11 Þér 'ru með ósum, · þér 'ru með ǫlfum,  
 2 sumar með vísu sum vǫnum,  
 sumar hafa męnskir męnn.

They are among the Ease, they are among the Elves; some among wise Waners; some manly men have.

...

[Sighdrive quoth:]

12 ...

“Now shalt thou choose, as the choice is offered to thee, maple-tree of sharp weapons [WARRIOR]! Speech or silence have thou in thy own heart; all the harms are measured [by the Norns].”

[Siwrd quoth:]

13 ...

“I shall not flee, although thou know me to be fey; I am not born with softness.<sup>a</sup> Thy loving counsels all will I have, for as long as I live.”

[Sighdrive quoth:]

“That I counsel thee first: that thou against thy kinsmen defend thyself faultlessly. Late ought thou to take revenge, although they incur charges; that they say befits the dead.

That I counsel thee second: that thou not swear an oath, save for that one which is true.  
Grim strands befall the troth-breaker; wretched is the outlaw of vows.

That I counsel thee third: that thou on the Thing bandy not with foolish men; for an unwise man often lets be spoken worse words than he ought to know.

All is missing if thou shut up towards it; then thou seemest born with softness, or truthfully accused. Risky is the verdict of neighbours, unless one gets himself a good one.

At another day make his breath go away, and thus repay the people for the lie.



# The Third Lay of Guthrun

## (*Guðrúnarkviða þriðja*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.731), early C11th (0.178)

Meter: *Firnwordslaw*

A very short narrative poem, depicting a single minor legendary event. It is especially notable for its depiction of a trial by ordeal and the mention of a woman being drowned in a bog.

Herch, one of Attle's concubines tells Attle that she has seen his wife Guthrun sleeping with Thedric. Attle becomes distressed upon hearing this (P1). Guthrun asks him what is wrong (1), and he responds that Herch has accused her of sleeping with Thedric (2). Guthrun promises to prove her innocence through a trial by ordeal involving picking up a white stone from boiling water (3). She further says that while she and Thedric did sit down together, they did so in mutual grief over the deaths of her brothers (4–5). She tells Attle to summon a German lord named Saxe, who knows how to carry out the trial. Seven hundred men arrive to witness the event (6). Before picking up the stone, Guthrun laments over her brothers' deaths, saying that they would have disputed the accusation through violence, but that she must now prove her innocence by herself (7). She then puts her hand in the boiling water, and unscathed takes out the stones. She holds it up and shows it to the witnesses (8). Attle laughs, knowing that his wife has been faithful, and orders Herch to pick up the stone (9). She does so, but her hands are horribly scorched, and men lead her to a "foul bog", presumably to be drowned (see above). The poet ends by laconically stating that Guthrun in such a way was "reconstituted for her affronts".

---

P1     Herkja hét ambótt Atla; hón hafði verit frilla hans. Hón sagði Atla at hón  
2     hefði sét Þjóðrek ok Guðrúnu bæði saman. Atli var þá allókátr. Þá kvað  
      Guðrún:

Herch was named the female thrall of Attle; she had been his concubine. She told Attle that she had seen Thedric and Guthrun both together. Attle was then wholly displeased. Then Guthrun quoth:

- 1 „Hvat ’s þér, Atli? · é, Buðla sonr,  
 2 es þér hryggt í hug; · hví hlér þú éva?  
 Hitt myndi óðra · jörlum þykkja  
 4 at við menn mēltir · ok mik séir.“

“What is with thee, Attle? Always, son of Bodle, art thou sad at heart; why laughest thou never? TODO.”

- 2 „Tregr mik þat, Guðrún, · Gjúka dóttir,  
 2 mér í hollu · Herkja sagði  
 at þit Þjóðrekr · undir þaki svéfið  
 4 ok léttliga · líni verðið.“

“It troubles me, Guthrun, Yivick’s daughter, as in the hall Herch has said me: that thou and Thedric beneath thatched roof slept, and ye lightly warded the linen.<sup>a</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e., they threw off their clothes and slept together.

- 3 „Þér mun’k alls þess · eiða vinna  
 2 at inum hvíta · hēlga steini,  
 at ek við Þjóðmar · þat-ki átta’k,  
 4 es vörðr né verr · vinna knátti,—

“To thee I will swear oaths regarding all of that—by the white, holy stone—that I did not do such a thing with Thedmar,<sup>a</sup> which neither watchman nor warrior has been able to swear upon,—<sup>b</sup>”

---

<sup>a</sup>Historically, Thedmar was the father of Thedric, who took over the kingdom after his father’s death (see Encyclopedia). Thedmar may here be a scribal error for Thedric, a scribal error for “Thedmar’s son”, or a nickname due to conflation of the father and son.

<sup>b</sup>Guthrun says that she will prove her innocence through a trial by ordeal (that is, by lifting “the white holy stone” out of boiling water; see v. 8). She further strengthens her position by pointing out that no reliable man has sworn an oath attesting to her guilt.

- 4 Nema ek halsaða · herja stilli,  
 2 jöfur ónēisinn, · einu sinni;  
 aðrar vóru · okkrar spēkjur  
 4 es vit hōrmug tvau · hnigum at rúnum.

Unless I embraced the stiller of hosts [RULER = Thedmar]—the unshamed prince—a single time. Different were our dealings, when we two distressed ones [Guthrun and Thedric] reclined in private conversation.



- 5 Hér kom Þjóðrekr · með þrjá tǫgu,  
 2 lifa þeir né einir, · þriggja tega manna;  
 hrinktu mik at bróðrum · ok at brynjuðum,  
 4 hrinktu mik at ǫllum · á hǫfuðniðjum.

Here came Thedric with thirty; not one of those thirty men still live. Surround<sup>a</sup> me with my brothers, and with byrned men; surround me with all my close kinsmen.

---

<sup>a</sup>*brinktu* consisting of *bring*, 2nd sg. imper. of *bringja* 'surround, encircle' + *þú* 'thou'. The clitic form *-tu* has caused devoicing.

- 6 Send at Saxa, · sunnmanna gram;  
 2 hann kann hēlga · hver vellanda;  
 sjau hundruð manna · í sal gingu  
 4 áðr kvēn konungs · í kētil tóki.

Send for Saxe, lord of the southmen; he knows how to hallow a swelling cauldron!" Seven hundred men went into the hall, before the wife of the king might touch the kettle.

- 7 „Kemr-a nú Gunnarr, · kalli'k-a Hǫgna,  
 2 sé'k-a síðan · svása bróðr;  
 sverði myndi Hogni · slíks harms reka,  
 4 nú verð'k sjölf fyr mik · synja lýta.“

"Now Guthur comes not, I can not call on Hain; I see not thereafter [my] beloved brothers. With a sword would Hain avenge such an affront; now I will for myself disprove the slanders."

- 8 Brá hón til botns · bjǫrtum lófa  
 2 ok hón upp of tók · jarknastēina:  
 „Sé nú sēggir · —sykn em ek orðin  
 4 hēilagliga— · hvé sjá hverr velli.“

Brought she the bright palms to the bottom, and she up did take the earthenstones: "See now, men—I am proven innocent, through holy means—how this cauldron boils!"

- 9 Hló þá Atla · hugr í brjósti  
 2 es hann hēilar sá · hēndr Guðrúnar:  
 „Nú skal Hērkja · til hvers ganga,  
 4 sú's Guðrúnu · grandí vēnti.“

Then laughed the heart in Atle's chest, when he saw unscathed the hands of Guthrun:  
"Now shall Herch go to the cauldron, she who to Guthrun hoped to cause harm."

10 Sá-at maðr armligt, · hveṛr es þat sá at,  
2 hvé þar á Hęrkju · hęndr sviðnuðu;  
lęiddu þá meṡ · í mýri fúla,  
4 svá þá Guðrún · sinna harma.

Each man saw not something so pitiful, who saw that: how there on Herch the hands  
were scorched. Led they the maiden into the foul bog; thus was Guthrun reconstituted  
for her affronts.

# The Lay of Attle (*Atlakviða*)

Dating (Sapp, 2022): C10th (0.719)–early C11th (0.212)

Meter: *Speech-meter, Firnwordslaw*

A famously archaic poem.

Attle sends his messenger Kneefrith to Guthur (1). He arrives at Guthur's hall, where the mood is one of unease, and addresses Guthur (2). Kneefrith invites him and his brother Hain to Attle's court (3), offering them treasures, weapons and land (4–5). Guthur asks his brother Hain for advice, since he has not heard of Attle having gold to give away (6).

---

## The Death of Attle (*Dauði Atla*)

P1 Guðrún Gjúkadóttir hefndi brøðra sinna, svá sem frégt er orðit. Hon drap  
2 fyrst sonu Atla, en eptir drap hon Atla ok brendi hollina ok hirðina alla;  
um þetta er sjá kviða ort.

Guthrun Yivicksdaughter avenged her brothers, as has become famous. She first killed the sons of Attle, and after that she killed Attle, and burned the hall and the whole hird. Regarding that this lay is wrought.

---

1 Atli sændi · ár til Gunnars  
2 kunnan segg at ríða, · Knéfrøðr vas sá heitin;  
at gørdum kom hann Gjúka · ok at Gunnars hollu,  
4 bækkjum aringreypum · ok at bjóri svósum.

Attle sent early to Guthur a well-known messenger to ride; Kneefrith that one was called. To the estates of Yivick he came, and to the hall of Guthur; to the hearth-surrounding benches, and to the lovely beer.

- 2     Drukku þar dróttmęgir · —ęn dyljędr þęgþu—  
 2     vín í valhęllu, · vręiði sęusk þęir Húna;  
      kallaði þá Knęfręðr · kaldri ręddu,  
 4     sęggr inn suðręni · sat hann á bękk hęm:

There the dright-lads [WARRIORS] drank—but the concealed ones shut up—wine in the walhall; they feared the wrath of the Huns. Then called Kneefrith with cold voice; the southern messenger sat on a high bench:

1 dyljędr ‘concealed ones’] Finnur Jónsson (1932) reasonably interprets this as referring to Atle’s spies at Guthr’s court.

2 valhęllu ‘the walhall’] The interpretation of this compound is difficult in context. The first element *val-* could be (1) *valr* ‘falcon’, referring to the aristocratic hunting practice; (2) *valr* ‘<sup>r</sup>Wale<sup>G</sup>’, cognate with ‘Welsh’ but in ON referring to the French or Romans, stressing the southern location or appearance of the hall; or (3) *valr* ‘(collective) the battle-slain’, foreshadowing the inevitable death (<sup>r</sup>feyness<sup>C</sup>) of the <sup>r</sup>Yivickings<sup>G</sup>. In this case it is linguistically identical to <sup>r</sup>Walhall<sup>L</sup>, Weden’s hall, whither the battle-slain go.

- 3     „Atli mik hingat sęndi · ríða ęręndi,  
 2     mar inum męlgreypa, · Myrkvið inn ókunna  
      at biðja yðr, Gunnarr, · at it á bękk kómið  
 4     með hjęlmum aringreypum · at sękja hęim Atla.

“Atle sent me hither to ride an errand, with the bit-champing horse through the uncharted Mirkwood—to ask you, Guthr, that ye two [= Guthr and Hain] on the bench might come, with hearth-surrounding helmets, to seek the home of Atle.

- 4     Skjęldu knęguð þar vęlja · ok skafna aska,  
 2     hjęlma gullroðna · ok Húna męngi,  
      silfrgyllt sęðulklęði, · sęrki valrauða,  
 4     dafar, darraða, · dręsla męlgreypa.

There ye might choose shields, and smooth ash-spears, helmets gold-reddened, and the multitude of the Huns, silver-gilt saddle-cloth, walred serks, dafs, standards, bit-champing steeds.

- 5     Vęll lęzk ykkir ok myndu gefa · víðrar Gnitahęiðar  
 2     af gęiri gjallanda · ok af gylltum stęfnum,  
      stórar męiðmar · ok staði Danpar,  
 4     hrís þat it męra · es meðr Myrkvið kalla.“

TODO

- 6 Hǫfði vatt þá Gunnarr · ok Hǫgna til sagði:  
 2 Hvat rēðr þú okkr, sēggr inn óri, · allz vit slíkt heyrum?  
 Gull vissa’k ekki · á Gnitahęði,  
 4 þat’s vit ęttim-a · annat slíkt.

His head turned Guthur then, and to Hain said: “What counselest thou we two do, younger man, as we such things hear? I knew of no gold on the Gnitheath, that we did not own as much of.

- 7 Sjau ęigu vit salhús · sverða full,  
 2 hverju ’ru þęira · hjǫlt ór gulli;  
 mín vęit’k mar bęztan · en męki hvassastan,  
 4 boga bękksóma · en brynjur ór gulli.

We own seven hallhouses, filled with swords—on each of them is a golden hilt; I know my horse to be the best, and my sword the sharpest; my bow bench-fit, and my byrnies of gold.

- 8 Hjalm ok skjǫld hvítastan, · kominn ór hǫll Kjárs;  
 2 ęinn ’s mín bętri · en sé allra Húna.

A helmet and the whitest shield, taken out of the hall of Chear; alone is mine better, than [those] of all of the Huns.”

- 9 Hvat hyggr þú brúði bęndu · þá’s hón okkr baug sęndi,  
 2 varinn váðum hęðingja? · Hykk at hón vǫrnuð byði!  
 Hár fann’k hęðingja · riðit í hring rauðum;  
 4 ylfskr es vęgr okkarr · at ríða ǫręndi.

“What does thou think the bride meant, when she us two an armlet sent, wrapped with the cloth of a heath-dweller [WOLF]? I think that she bid us a warning! I found the hair of a heath-dweller wrapped round the red ring; wolver is our way, to ride that errand.”

- 10 Niðjar-gi hvǫttu Gunnar · né náungr annarr,  
 2 rýnęndr né ráðęndr, · né þęir’s ríkir vǫru;  
 kvaddi þá Gunnarr · sęm konungr skyldi,  
 4 męrr í mjǫðranni · af móði stórum:

No kinsmen urged Guthur, nor any other close one, nor counselors nor advisors, nor those who mighty were. Guthur then announced—as a king should, renowned in the mead-house—out of great courage:

- 11 Rís-tu nú, Fjörnir, · lát-tu á flet vaða  
2 greppa gullskálir · með gumna höndum!

“Rise now, Ferner; let on the floorboards wade forth the golden bowls of warriors, along the hands of men!

- 12 Ulfr mun ráða · arfi Niflunga,  
2 gamlir granvarðir, · ef Gunnars missir,  
birnir blakkfjallir · bíta þreftönnum,  
4 gamna greystóði, · ef Gunnarr né kómr-at.

The wolf will rule the inheritance of the Niflings: the old grey guardians, if Guthur is missing. Bears black-furred bite with wrangling teeth, amusing the pack of bitches, if Guthur comes not.”

- 13 Leiddu landrögni · lýðar óneðsir,  
2 grátendr, gunnhvatan, · ór garði Húna;  
þá kvað þat inn óri · erfivörðr Högna:  
4 Heilir farið nú ok horskir · hvar's ykkur hugr tægir!

TODO

- 14 Fetum létu fróknir · um fjöll at þyrja  
2 marina mælgreypu, · Myrkvið inn okunna;  
hristisk öll Húnmörk · þar's harðmóðgir fóru,  
4 vröku þeir vannstyggva · völlu algróna.

TODO

- 15 Land sýu þeir Atla · ok liðskjalfar djúpar  
2 Bikka greppar standa · á borg inni há  
sal of suðrþjóðum, · slæginn sessmeiðum,  
4 bundnum røndum, · blækum skjöldum,

The land of Attle saw they, TODO

- 16 dafar, darraða; · en þar drakk Atli  
2 vín í valhöllu; · verðir sōtu úti  
at varða þeim Gunnari · ef þeir hér vitja kómi

4 með geyri gjallanda · at vekkja gram hildi.  
 TODO but there drank Atle wine in the wale-hall<sup>a</sup> ...

---

<sup>a</sup>TODO: this is not Weden's hall, rather 'the Roman hall'.

17 Systir fann þeira snemmst · at þeir í sal kvómu,  
 2 bróðr hennar báðir, · bjóri var hón lítt drukkin:  
 Ráðinn ert-u nú, Gunnarr, · hvat munt-u, ríkr, vinna  
 4 við Húna harmbrögðum? · Hóll gakk þú ór snemma!

Their sister found earliest they they had come into the hall, both of her brothers—on beer was she lightly drunk—“Betrayed art thou now, Guthur; why wilt thou, mighty one, struggle against Hunnish harm-tricks? Go early out of the hall!”<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>Before anything evil might happen.

18 Bætr hefðir þú, bróðir, · at þú í brynju fórir,  
 2 sém hjólmum aringreypum · at séa heim Atla;  
 sétir þú í sǫðlum · sólheiða daga,  
 4 nái nauðfólva · létir nornir gráta.

Better hadst thou, brother, if thou in byrnie travelled, and with hearth-surrounding helmets, to see the home of Atle.

19 Húna skjaldmeyjar · herfi kanna  
 2 en Atla sjalfan · létir þú í ormgarð koma;  
 nú 's sá ormgarðr · ykkir of folginn.

TODO

20 Sęinað 's nú, systir, · at samna Niflungum,  
 2 langt 's at leita · lýða sinnis til,  
 of rosmufjöll Rínar, · rekka óneýssa.

TODO

21 Fengu þeir Gunnar · ok í fjotur settu,  
 2 vinir Borgunda, · ok bundu fastla;  
 sjau hjó Hogni · sverði hvóssu

4 en inum átta hratt hann · í ęld heitan.

Caught they Guthur, and in fetters set him—the friends of the Burgends—and bound them tightly. Seven Hain hewed down with sharp sword, and the eighth one threw he into the hot fire.

22 Svá skal frókn · fjándum verjask;  
2 Hogni varði · hendr Gunnars.  
frógu fróknan · ef fjor vildi  
4 Gotna þjóðann · gulli kaupa.

Thus shall the bold against fiends ward himself; Hain warded the hands of Guthur. They asked the bold one if to buy he wished—the ruler of the Gots—his life with gold.<sup>a</sup>

---

1 Svá ... verjask] Line moved from the last verse to this one since it seems to connect semantically with the immediately following line, and also creates a regular line distribution of 4-4 instead of 5-3.

---

<sup>a</sup>The Huns ask Guthur (it is clear that “ruler of the Gots” refers to him, cf. 1, 3, 10) if he wishes to ransom Hain. He instead responds with the following:

[Guthur quoth:]

23 „Hjarta skal mér Hogni · í hendi liggja  
2 blóðugt, ór brjósti · skorit baldriða,  
saxi slíðrþeitu, · syni þjóðans.“

“The heart of Hain shall lie me in the hands: bloody from the breast—cut from the bold rider with a slide-biting sax<sup>a</sup>—of the son of the sovereign.”

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. a short-sword with a blade so sharp that it draws blood when one slides the finger across it.

24 Skóru þeir hjarta · Hjalla ór brjósti  
2 blóðugt ok á bjóð lögðu · ok bōru þat fyr Gunnar.

They cut the heart of Helle out of the breast; bloody on a platter they laid it, and carried it before Guthur.

25 Þá kvað þat Gunnarr, · gumna dróttinn:  
2 Hér hefi'k hjarta · Hjalla ins blauða,  
ólíkt hjarta · Hogni ins frókna,  
4 es mjök bifask · es á bjóði liggr;  
bifðisk hōlfu meirr · es í brjósti lá!



Then quoth that Guthur, the lord of men: “Here have I the heart of Helle the soft—unlike the heart of Hain the bold!—which much trembles, when on the platter it lies; it trembled twice as much, when in the breast it lay.”

- 26 Hló þá Hogni · es til hjarta skóru  
 2 kvikvan kumblasmið · klökkva hann sízt hugði;  
 blóðugt þat á bjóð lögðu · ok bǫru fyr Gunnar.

Hain laughed then, when to the heart they cut on the living wound-smith [WARRIOR]; he thought least of sobbing. Bloody on a platter they laid it, and carried it before Guthur.

- 27 Mérr kvað þat Gunnarr, · Geir-Niflungr:  
 2 Hér hefi’k hjarta · Hogna ins frókna,  
 ólíkt hjarta · Hjalla ins blauða,  
 4 es lítt bifask · es á bjóði liggr;  
 bifðisk svági mjök · þá’s í brjósti lá!

Renowned quoth that Guthur, the Gore-Nifling: “Here have I the heart of Hain the bold—unlike the heart of Helle the soft!—which little trembles, when on the platter it lies; it trembled not as much, when in the breast it lay.

- 28 Svá skaltu, Atli, · augum fjarri  
 2 sęm munt · menjum verða;  
 es und ęinum mér · ęll of folgin  
 4 hodd Niflunga: · Lifir-a nú Hogni!

Thus shalt thou, Attle, be as far from the eyes, as thou wilt from the neck-rings. ’Tis by me alone all concealed, the hoard of the Niflings—now Hain lives not!

- 29 Eę vas mér týja · meðan vit tveir lifðum,  
 2 nú ’s mér ęngi · es ęinn lifi’k;  
 Rín skal ráða · rógmalmi skatna,  
 4 svinn, óskunna · arfi Niflunga.

I was ever in doubt when we two lived; now I am not when alone I live. The Rhine shall rule the strife-ore of princes [GOLD], swift, the os-born inheritance of the Niflings.

- 30 Í veltanda vatni · lýsask valbaugar  
 2 heldr an á hǫndum gull · skíni Húna bǫrnum.

In tumbling water the Welsh bighs gleam, rather than gold might shine on the hands of the children of Huns.”

...

- 31    Ełdi gaf hón alla · es inni vǫru  
       2    ok frá morði þeira Gunnars · komnir vǫru ór Myrkheimi;  
       forn timbr fellu, · fjarghús ruku,  
       4    bór Buðlunga, · brunnu ok skjaldmeyjar,  
       inni aldrstamar, · hnigu í ęld heitan.

To the fire she gave all those who were inside, who from their murder of Guthen were come out of Mirkham. Ancient timbers fell, great houses smoked—the settlement of the Buthlungs—burned the shield-maidens likewise; inside aged trunks bowed into hot fire.

- 32    Fullrǫtt's umb þetta; · fęrr ęngi svá síðan  
       2    brúðr í brynju · bróðra at hefna;  
       hón hefir þriggja · þjóðkonunga  
       4    banorð borið, · bjǫrt, áðr sylti.

'Tis fully told of this; none hence fares so, a bride in byrnie, her brothers to avenge. She has of three great kings borne the bane-word,<sup>a</sup> bright woman, before she may die.

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. 'She has slain three great kings.' This expression and its Germanic and Indo-European relatives is discussed in detail in Watkins (1995)[417–422].

- 33    Enn segir gleggri í Atlamálum inum grónlenskum.

Yet this is told more clearly in the Greenlendish Speeches of Attle.

## Other heroic poetry



# The Lay of Hildbrand

Dating: C8th

Meter: Germanic alliterative meter

For the text of original poem I generally present the manuscript text. I have found it impossible to produce a normalization without too heavily distorting the received text, being as it is, a blend of several dialects. I have, however, added acute accents to signify long vowels, capitalized proper names, consistently replaced *p* (wynn) and *uu* with *w*, and made minor corrections where the manuscript is clearly in error—these are noted in the critical apparatus. The punctuation of the original, entirely consisting of interpuncts, at times representing line breaks and *cæsuræ* and at others sporadically placed, has not been retained.

Where they appear in *cæsuræ*, the words *quad Hiltibrant* ‘Hildbrand quoth’ (found in ll., 30, 49, and 58) replace the usual interpunct. I had originally planned to remove these as hypermetrical, instead indicating the speaker above the verse, but after comparison with *Rein* 3, wherein the words *kvað Loki* ‘Lock quoth’ appear in the first *cæsura* of the verse, I have come to believe that these represent an ancient oral indication, seemingly going back as far as the Migration Period (as it seems incredulous to think that the scribe of *Hild ms.* would have influenced the scribe of *R* four centuries later in such a minor point.)

---

Ik gihórta dat seggen  
2    dat sih urhettun · aenon muotín  
     Hiltibrant enti Hadubrant · untar heriun twém  
4    sunufatarungo · iro saro rihtun  
     garutun se iro gúðhamun · gurtun sih iro swert ana  
6    helidos ubar hringa · dó sie to dero hiltiu ritun

I heard it said, that two contenders alone did meet: Hildbrand and Hathbrand, under two hosts.<sup>a</sup> Son and father ordered their armour, readied their war-cloth, girded their swords on, the heroes over the mail, when to that battle they rode.

---

6 hringa] ringa *Hild ms.*

---

<sup>a</sup>i.e. each man was a champion of his respective army.

- Hiltibrant gimahalta · her was héróro man  
 8 f<sup>er</sup>ahes frótóro · her frágén gistuont  
fóhém wortum · hwer sín fater wári  
 10 fireo in folche · [...]  
 [...] · „eddo hwelíhhes cnuosles dú sís  
 12 ibu dú mí enan sagés · ik mí de odre wét  
chind in chunincríche · chúd ist mín al irmindeot“

Hildbrand spoke—he was the hoarier man, more learned in life—he began to ask, with few words, who his father might be, of men in the troop, [...] “or of which lineage thou be; if thou me one say, I the others will know; child, in the kingdom, known to me are all great men.”

7 gimahalta] add. *heribrantes sunu* ‘Harbrand’s son’ *Hild ms.* 9 hwer] *wer Hild ms.* 11 hwelíhhes] *welíbbes Hild ms.* 13 chunincríche] *chunnincriche Hild ms.*

- Hadubrant gimahalta · Hiltibrantes sunu  
 „dat sagetun mí · úsere liuti  
 16 alte anti fróte · dea erhina wárun  
 dat Hiltibrant haetti mín fater · ih heittu Hadubrant  
 18 forn her óstar giweit · flóh her Ótachres níd  
hina miti Theotríhhe · enti sínero degano filu  
 20 her fur<sup>l</sup>aet in lante · luttila sitten  
brút in búre · barn unwahsan  
 22 arbeolaosa · her raet óstar hina  
 det síd Detríhhe · darba gistuontum  
 24 fateres mínes · dat was só friuntlaos man  
 her was Ótachre · ummet tirri  
 26 degano dechisto · unti Deotríhhe  
 her was eo folches at ente · imo was eo feh<sup>t</sup>a ti leop  
 28 chúd was her · chóném mannum  
 ni wániu ih iu líb habbe“

Hathbrand spoke, Hildbrand’s son: “It told me our people—the old and learned, those who earlier lived—that Hildbrand was called my father—I am called Hathbrand. Long ago he hurried east—he fled Edwaker’s hate—thither with Thedrich and his many thanes. He abandoned in the land a little one to stay; a bride in the bower, a bairn ungrown, without inheritance; he rode east thither, as Thedrich was in great need of my father—that was so friendless a man! He was to Edwaker exceptionally hostile, the dearest of thanes under Thedrich. He was ever at the front of the troop, ever did the fight gladden him, known was he among keen men; I ween not that he have life.”

18 giweit] *gibueit Hild ms.* 21 brút] *prut Hild ms.* 22 her raet] *beraet Hild ms.* 24 fateres] *fatereres Hild ms.* 26 Deotrichhe] add. *darba gistontun Hild ms.* 27 feh<sup>t</sup>a] *pebeta Hild ms.* 28 chóném] *chonnem Hild ms.*

---

15 dat ... liuti] this l. breaks no rhythmic rules (cf. l. 42), but the needed alliteration is missing.

- 30 „wettu irmingot (quad Hiltibrant) obana ab hebane  
 dat dú neo dana halt mit sus sippan man  
 32 dinc ni gileitós“  
want her dó ar arme · wuntane bauga  
 34 cheisuringu gitán · so imo sie der chuning gap  
huneo truhtin · „dat ih dir it nú bí huldí gibu“

“I call on Ermin-god as witness, above in heaven, that thou never with such a close man once more lead dispute.” Unwound he then from his arm some twisted <sup>C</sup>highs, made from imperial coin, which the king once gave him, the lord of the Huns—“This I now give thee for [thy] <sup>C</sup>holdness.”<sup>a</sup>

---

30 hebane] *beuane Hild ms.*

---

<sup>a</sup>The giving of *highs* (armlets, torcs) in exchange for loyalty among warriors is well attested; see Encyclopedia. This encounter is particularly reminiscent of *Hoarbeard* 42.

- 36 Hadubrant gimahalta · Hiltibrantes sunu  
 „mit geru scal man · geba infáhan  
 38 ort widar orte · [...] dú bist dir altér hun · ummet spáhér  
 40 spenis mih mit díném wortun · wili mih dínu speru werpan  
 bist alsó gialtét man · só dú éwín inwit fórtós  
 42 dat sagetun mí · séolidante  
westar ubar Wentilséo · dat man wíc furnam  
 44 tót ist Hiltibrant · Heribrantes suno“

Hathbrand spoke, Hildbrand's son: “With spear shall one earn gifts, point against point! Thou art, old Hun, exceptionally clever; thou lurest me with thy words, wilt thou at me thy spear hurl! Thou art thus old, though thou ever deceit didst work.—It told me seafarers, heading west o'er the Wendle-sea<sup>a</sup>, that war took that man: dead is Hildbrand, Harbrand's son!”

---

41 bist] *pist Hild ms.*

---

<sup>a</sup>The Mediterranean, referring to the Vandals in North Africa.

- Hiltibrant gimahalta · Heribrantes suno  
 46 „wela gisihu ih · in díném hrustim  
 dat dú habés héme · hérron góten

48      dat dú noh bí desemo ríche · reccheo ni wurti“

Hildbrand spoke, Harbrand's son: "I see well on thy equipment, that thou hast a good lord at home, that thou still in this reign didst not become an exile."

„welaga nú waltant got (quad Hiltibrant) wéwurt skihit  
 50      ih wallóta sumaro enti wintro · sehstic ur lante  
          dar man mih eo scerita · in folc sceotantero  
 52      só man mir at burc énigeru · banun ni gifasta  
          nú scal mih swásat chind · swertu hauwan  
 54      bretón mit sínu billiu · eddo ih imo ti banin werdan  
          doh maht dú nú aodlíhho · ibu dir dín ellen taoc  
 56      in sus héremo man · hrusti giwinnan  
          rauba birahanen · ibu dú dar énig reht habés“

"Well now, wielding God! woeful Weird<sup>a</sup> comes to pass. I wallowed for summers and winters sixty out of the land, where one ever set me in the troop of shooters; thus one at no fortress my bane did inflict. Now shall my own child hew at me with sword; beat down with his blade, or I his bane become. Yet canst thou now easily—if thy zeal avail thee—from such a hoary man win the equipment; bear away the booty, if thou thereto have any right."

---

57 birahanen] *bibrahamen Hild ms.*

---

<sup>a</sup>The personification of fate, in this case most likely just a noun. OE *Wyrð* (*Beowulf* 455: *Gæð á Wyrð swá hío scel* "Ever goes Weird as she must"), ON *Urðr* 'one of the norns'.

58      „der sí doh nú argósto (quad Hiltibrant) óstarliuto  
          der dir nú wíges warne · nú dih es só wel lustit  
 60      gúdea gimeinun · niuse de mótti  
          hwedar sih hiutu déro hregilo · hruomen muotti  
 62      eddo desero brunnóno · bédero waltan“

"He be now the weakest of the eastern peoples, who refuse thee the fight, when thou so greatly cravest to struggle together.—Try he who might, which one of us today of these garments may boast, or both of these byrnies wield!"

---

61 hwedar] *werdar Hild ms.*    61 hiutu déro] metr. emend.; *dero biutu Hild ms.*    61 hruomen] *brumen Hild ms.*    62 eddo] *erdo Hild ms.*

dó lettun se aerist · asckim scrítan  
 64      scarpén scúrim · dat in dem sciltim stónt  
          dó stóptun tosamane · staimbort hlúdun



- 66    hewun harmlicco · hwítte scilti  
       unti imo iro lintún · luttilo wurtun  
 68    giwigan miti wábum · [...]

Then let they first their ash-spears glide, in sharp showers, that in the shields they stuck.  
 Then charged they into each other—the war-boards [SHIELDS] resounded—struck they  
 bitterly the white shields, until for them their lindens [SHIELDS] became little, worn down  
 by the weapons, [...]

---

65 hlúdun] chludun *Hild ms.*



# Ancient Germanic Charms and Spells



I have here gathered sundry charms spells; galders and leeds, assembled from sources across the ancient Germanic world. I have generally only included those with clear Heathen elements or contexts, though a few are of Christian origin. The Old Saxon baptismal vow, while explicitly anti-pagan, has also been included due to its mention of Germanic Heathen deities.



# Continental Germanic spells

## The two Merseburg charms

- 1 Eiris sázun idísi · sázun hera dóder;  
2 suma hapt heptidun · suma heri lezidun  
suma clubodun · umbi cóniowidi  
4 insprinc haptbandun · infár fígandun .H.

Of yore stayed dises, stayed here and there: some fastened fetters, some hindered hosts, some cleaved shackles.—Break the fetter-bonds, flee the fiends! .H.<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup>TODO: note about this strange mark in the ms.

- 2 Fol ende Wódan · fórun zi holza  
2 dú wart demo Balderes folon · sín fóz birenkit  
thú bigól en Sinthgunt · Sunna era swister  
4 thú bigól en Frija · Folla era swister  
thú bigól en Wódan · só hé wola conda  
6 sóse bénrenkí · sóse blótrenkí  
sóse lidirenkí  
8 bén zi béna  
blót zi blóda  
10 lid zi geliden · sóse gelimida sín.

Phol and Weden journeyed to the woods; then was the foot of Balder's foal sprained. Then ʀbegaled<sup>C</sup> him ʀSithguth<sup>P</sup>, ʀSun<sup>P</sup> her sister; then begaled him ʀFrie<sup>P</sup>, ʀFull<sup>P</sup> her sister; then begaled him Weden, as he well knew: “Like bone-sprain, like blood-sprain, like joint-sprain! Bone to bone, blood to blood, joint to joints, like were they glued together!”

---

1 Fol] *Phol* ms.

**Against worms (Contra vermes)**

- 3    Gang út, nesso, · mid nigun nessiklínon,  
 2    ut fana themo marge an that b́en,  
      fan themo b́ene an that flesg,  
 4    ut fan themo flesgke an thia h́ud,  
      ut fan thera h́ud an thesa strála.  
 6    Drohtin, werthe só.

Go out, Nesse, with nine small Nesses! Out from the marrow onto the bone, from this bone onto the flesh, out from the flesh onto the skin, out from the skin onto these arrows. Lord, may it be so.

**The Old Saxon Baptismal vow**

P1    „Forsachistu diabolę?“ *et respondeat*: „ec forsacho diabolę“  
 “Forsakest thou the Devil?” and he should respond: “I forsake the Devil.”

P2    „end allum diabol geldę?“ *respondeat*: „end ec forsacho allum diabol geldę.“  
 “And all Devil-yields?” he should respond: “I forsake all devil-yields.”

P3    „End allum dioboles wercum?“ *respondeat*: „end ec forsacho allum dioboles  
 2    wercum and wordum, Thunęr ende Wóden ende Saxnóte ende allēm them  
      unholdum the hira genótas sint.“

“And all the works of the Devil?” he should respond: “and I forsake all the works and words of the Devil; Thunder and Weden and Saxneet and all those unhold ones who are their fellows.”

P4    „Gelóbistu in got alamehtigun fader?“ „Ec gelóbo in got alamehtigun fader.“  
 “Believest thou in God, the almighty father?” “I believe in God, the almighty father.”

P5    „Gelóbistu in Crist godes suno?“ „Ec gelóbo in Crist gotes suno.“  
 “Believest thou in Christ, God’s son?” “I believe in Christ, God’s son.”



**P6** „Gelóbistu in hálogan gást?“ „Ec gelóbo in hálogan gást.“  
“Believest thou in the Holy Ghost?” “I believe in the Holy Ghost.”



# Old English spells

## Against a dwarf

### Wið færstice

Attested in *Lacnung*.

- Hlúde wæran hý, lá, hlúde, · ðá hý ofer þone hlæw ridan,  
2 wæran ánmóde, · ðá hý ofer land ridan.  
Scyld ðú ðé nú, þú ðysne nið · genesan móte.  
4 Út, lýtel spere, · gif hér inne sie!

Loud were they, lo, loud, when they rode over that mound; they were steadfast, when they rode over land. Shield thyself now; thou mayst escape this evil! Out little spear, if here within it be!

- Stód under linde, · under leohtum scylde,  
2 þer ðá mihtigan wíf · hýra mēgen berēddon  
and hý gyllende · gáras sēndan;  
4 ic him óðerne · eft wille sēndan,  
fléogende fláne · forane tógéanes.  
6 Ut, lytel spere, · gif hit her inne sy!

Stood under the linden [SHIELD]—under the light shield—where those mighty wives their might arrayed, and they yelling spears did send. I to them another will afterwards send: a flying arrow, back against [them]. Out little spear, if here within it be!

- Sæt smið, · sloh seax  
2 lytel iserna, · wund swiðe.  
Ut, lytel spere, · gif her inne sy!

Sat the smith, struck the sax; a little iron-thing; a wound severe. Out little spear, if here within it be!

- Syx smiðas sætan, · wēlspera worhtan.  
 2 Ut, spere, · neþ in, spere!  
 Gif her inne sy · isenes dēl,  
 4 hegtessan geweorc, · hit sceal gemyltan.

Six smiths sat, wrought slaughter-spears; out, spear; be not in, spear! If here within be a part of iron, a work of a <sup>†</sup>hag-tess<sup>C</sup>—it shall melt.

- Gif ðu wære on fell scoten · oððe wære on flēsc scoten  
 2 oððe wære on blod scoten · [...]  
 oððe wære on lið scoten, · neþre ne sy ðin lif atēsed;

If thou wert shot in the skin, or wert shot in the flesh, or wert shot in the blood, [or wert shot in bone], or wert shot in the limb—never be thy life injured.

- gif hit wære esa gescot · oððe hit wære ylfa gescot  
 2 oððe hit wære hegtessan gescot, · nu ic wille ðin helpa:  
 þis ðe to bote esa gescotes, · ðis ðe to bote ylfa gescotes,  
 4 ðis ðe to bote hegtessan gescotes; · ic ðin wille helpa.

If it were the shot of Ease, or it were the shot of elves,<sup>a</sup> or it were the shot of a hag-tess—now I will help thee. This for thee as remedy to the shot of Ease; this for thee as remedy to the shot of elves; this for thee as remedy to the shot of a hag-tess—I will help thee.

<sup>a</sup>Formulaic; see <sup>†</sup>Ease and Elves<sup>F</sup>. That they are held in the same category as the hag-tess—a witch—indicates Christian influence. Among the Germanic peoples the elves and Ease were originally beneficial, something shown by numerous names like Alfred (OE *Ælfréd* ‘Elf-counsel’), Oswald (OE *Ósweald* ‘Os-power’), Elfwin (Lomb. *Alboin* ‘Elf-friend’), Oshelm (Lomb. *Anselm* ‘Os-helmet’).

- Fleo þær on · fyr-gen-hefde,  
 2 hal westu, · helpe ðin drihten,  
 nim þonne þæt seax, · ado on wetan.

TODO.

### Nine herbs charm

- Gemyne ðú mugwyrht · hwæt þú ámeldodest  
 2 hwæt þu renadest · et Regenmelde?

Rememberest thou, Mugwort, what thou madest known; what thou arrangedest at Rein-meld?

Una þú hattest · yldost wyrta  
 4 þú miht wið III · and wið XXX  
 þú miht wiþ attre · and wið onflyge  
 6 þú miht wiþ þám láþan · ðe geond lond fērð

thou availest against three and against thirty; thou availest against the venom and against the onflier; thou availest against the loathsome one that goes through the lands.

+ Ond þú wegbráde · wyrta módor  
 8 éast[a]n op[e]ne · inn[a]n mihtigu  
 ofer ðy crēte curran · ofer ðy cwéne réodan  
 10 ofer ðy brýde brýodedon  
 ofer ðy fearras fnerdon.

And thou, Waybread, mother of worts, open from the east, mighty from within. Over thee TODO.

Eallum þu þon wiðstóde · and wiðstunedest  
 8 swá ðú wiðstonde attre · and onflyge  
 and þæm láðan · þe geond lond fereð.

Them all withstoodest thou then, and stoppedst; so may thou withstand the venom and the onflier, and the loathsome one that goes through the lands.

Stune hette þeos wyrta, · héo on stáne geweax  
 8 stond héo wið attre, · stunað héo werc  
 Stiðe héo hatte, · wiðstunað héo attre  
 10 wreceð héo wráðan, · weorpeð út attor

Ston is this wort called; she grew on stone; she withstands venom, she stops aches. Stithe is she called; she stops venom; she drives away the wroth one; she casts out the venom.

+ Þis is séo wyrta · séo wiþ werm gefeaht  
 8 þeos mæg wið attre, · héo mæg wið onflyge  
 héo mæg wið ðám láþan · ðe geond lond fereþ

This is the wort which fought against the worm; this one avails against the venom; she avails against the onfler; she avails against the loathsome one that goes through the lands.

Fleoh þú nú attorláðe, · séo lāsse ðá máran  
8 séo máre þá lássan, · oððet him beigra bót sý

TODO

Gemyne þú, meğðe, · hwet þú ámeldodest  
8 hwet ðú geęndadest · et Alorforda  
þet náfre for gefloge · feorh ne gescalde  
10 syþðan him mon meğðan · tú mete gegyrede

TODO

Þis is séo wurt · ðe wergulu hatte  
8 ðás onsende seolh · ofer sás hrygc  
ondan attres · ópres tó bóte

TODO

Ðás VIII magon · wið nygon attrum.

TODO

+ Wyrn cóm snícan, · toslát hé man  
8 ðá genam Wóden · VIII wuldortánas  
slóh ðá þá náddran · þet héo on VIII tófléah  
10 þær geęndade eppel · and attor  
þet héo náfre ne wolde · on hús búgan

A ʀWorm<sup>C</sup> came crawling; he tore apart a man. Then took Weden nine glory-twigs; slew then that adder, that it TODO into nine [parts]. There ended apple and venom, that he would never come into a house.

+ Fille and finule, · felamihtigu twá  
8 þá wyrte gesceop · wítig drihten

- hálig on heofonum, · þá hé hongode  
 10 sette and sēnde · on VII worulde  
 earmum and éadigum · eallum tó bóte

Fill and Fennel, many-mighty two; those worts shaped the wise lord, holy on heaven,  
 when he hung. He set and sent them onto seven worlds; to the wretched and the wealthy,  
 to all for healing.

- Stond héo wið wērcē, · stunað héo wið attre  
 8 séo mēg wið III · and wið XXX  
 wið [fēondes] hond · and wið fērbregde  
 10 wið malscrunge · manra wihta

against three and against thirty

---

8 wið III and wið XXX ‘against three and against thirty’] Formulaic; an uncountable amount; “snakes” are probably understood. This oral formula appears in many folk ballads, viz. (Child) 4EFG, 18B, 20C, 30, 53BCDEIKM, 63EFH, 73I, 97AC, 100AG, 110BGH, 156G, 185A, 187A, 187C, 190A, 192A, 193B, 203C, 211A, 217GHLN, 244A, 268A, 269C, 281ABC. Things described include horses, heads of cattle, warriors, days, years, winters.

- + Nu magon þás VIII wyrta · wið nygon wuldorgeflogennum  
 8 wið VIII attrum · and wið nygon onflygnum  
 wið ðý réadan attre, · wið ðý runlan attre  
 10 wið ðý hwitan attre, · wið ðý [hēwe]nan attre  
 wið ðý geolwan attre, · wið ðý grénan attre  
 12 wið ðý wonnan attre, · wið ðý wedenan attre  
 wið ðý brúnan attre, · wið ðý basewan attre  
 14 wið wyrmegeblēd, · wið wētergeblēd  
 wið þorngēblēd, · wið þystelgeblēd  
 16 wið ýsgeblēd, · wið attorgeblēd

Now these nine worts avail against glory-onfliers: against nine venoms and against nine onfliers; against the red venom; against the TODO venom; against the white venom; against the TODO venom; against the yellow venom; against the green venom; against the TODO venom; against the TODO venom; against the brown venom; against the TODO venom; against worm-TODO; against water-TODO; against thorn-TODO; against thistle-TODO; against ice-TODO; against venom-TODO.

- Gif ęnig attor cume · éastan fleógan  
 8 oððe ęnig norðan cume  
 oððe ęnig westan · ofer werðeóde

If any venom come from the east, flying; or any come from the north; or any from the west, over man-kind.

+ Críst stód ofer ádle · ángan cundes  
 8 Ic ána wát · ea rinnende  
 þær þá nygon náðran · néan behealdað

TODO

Motan ealle wéoda · nu wirtum áspringan  
 8 sás tóslúpan, · eal sealt weter  
 ðonne ic þis attor · of ðé gebláwe

TODO

PROSE SECTION. Mucgwyr, wegbrade þe eastan open sy, lombescyrse, attorlaðan, mageðan, netelan, wudusureppel, fille & finul, ealde sapan. Gewyrc ða wyrta to duste, męgc wiþ þa sapan and wiþ þęs ępples gor.

wyrc slypan of weter and of axsan, genim finol, wyl on þere slyppan and beþe mid ęggemongc, þonne he þa sealfe on do, ge ęr ge ęfter.

\* Sing þet galdor on ęcre þara wyrta, :III: ęr he hy wyrce and on þone ęppel ealswa; ond singe þon men in þone muð and in þa earan buta and on ða wunde þet ilce gealdor, ęr he þa sealfe on do :.



# Old Norse spells

## Ribe rune charm

- Jorð bið ak varðe · ok uphimen  
2 söl ok santē María · ok salfen Guð dróttēn  
þet han lē mik lēkneshand · ok lyftunge  
4 at lyfe þifjandē · þer bótē þarf.  
Ór bak ok ór bryst ór líkē ok ór lim  
6 ór ofen ok ór ore  
ór alle þe þer illt kann í atkume.  
8 Svart hétet sténn · han stét í hafē úte,  
þer liggert á þe níu nauðer;  
10 þer skule hverki sötēn sofe;  
eð varmen vake;  
12 fœrr en þú þessa bót biðer, þer ak orð atkvæðe ronti.

I ask earth to ward, and up-heaven, sun and saint Mary—and lord God himself, that he lend me a healing-hand and curing tongue, to cure the trembling one who needs remedy. Out of back and out of breast; out of body and out of limb; out of eyes and out of ears; out of everything where evil which might come in! Swart is called a stone—he stands out in the ocean—there lie on it nine needs; they will not [let thee] sleep sweetly nor wake warmly—until thou prayest this remedy, where I tried the words of the charms.

## Charms from Bryggen

These charms are found inscribed on medieval pieces of wood found at Bryggen in the city of Bergen, Norway.

---

A stick with four sides, dated to c. 1335. It is clearly a love-charm and—as seen by the feminine dative adjective *sjalfri* ‘self’ on side C—addressed to a woman. The

[B380]            Heill sé þú · ok í hugum góðum;  
                        2      Þórr þik þiggi,  
                                 Óðinn þik egi.

Be thou hale, and in good spirits;<sup>a</sup> may Thunder receive thee, may Weden own thee.

---

3 Óðinn þik eigi “may Weden own thee” ] See note to *Wallow* 23.

---

<sup>a</sup>A formula also attested in *Hymner* 41; see there for parallels.

## Runic plates



**Encyclopedia (INCOMPLETE!)**



NOTE: This encyclopedia is both incomplete and inconsistently formatted. New entries will be added, and old ones be corrected and expanded in the future.

## Cultural and religious expressions (C)

**ape** (ON *api*, OE *apa*, OS *apo*, OHG *affo*, PNWGmc. *\*apó*) In the Old Norse the word seems to mean ‘fool, buffoon’, in the other old languages apparently ‘monkey’, though this sense should be a later development of the former; why would the early Germanic tribes have a word for an animal that they had never encountered?

**aught** (ON *étt*, OE *éht* ‘possession, property’) The Nordic (paternal) clan or family line.

**begale** (OHG *bigalan*) To affect, bewitch something using ᚱgalders<sup>C</sup>. See also ᚱgale<sup>C</sup>.

**bigh** (ON *baugr*, OE *béag*, OHG *boug*) Armlets used as currency during the Migration Period. — The giving of rings and armlets in exchange for loyalty (ᚱholdness<sup>C</sup> being the word used for a warrior’s loyalty towards his lord, and of a lord’s grace towards his servants) was common across all of Germanic Europe, as seen in the many poetic ruler-kennings of the type “breaker of rings” (e.g. *béaga brytta* ‘the breaker of bighs’ in *Beowulf* ll. 35, 352, 1487). An illustrative example of this is *Hildbrand* 33–35. This is also connected with the oath-ring, and the famous ring-swords. TODO? reference some literature on this.

**bloot** (ON *blót*, OE *blót*, OHG *bluoz*) A sacrifice or a sacrificial feast, one of the best attested Germanic pagan practices. The animals would be sacrificed by the host, cooked in large kettles and eaten communally.

**bloot-kettle** The large pots used for cooking the bloot-stew.

**Doom** (ON *dómr*, OE *dóm*) Commonly ‘judgement, verdict’ (whence Doomsday, ‘Judgement Day’), in the Norse and Anglo-Saxon poetry often specifically referring to one’s fame or good reputation (that is, how others will judge one’s character and deeds), especially after death. It is clear that this verdict was of utmost importance to the ancient Germanic people. The clearest examples are *High* 77 (see there): *I know one that never dies: the Doom o’er each man dead.* and *Beowulf* 1384–1389, where Beowulf consols king Rothgar after Grendle’s mother has slain his trusted advisor Asher (*Æschere*):

*Ne sorga, snotor guma! · Sélre bið éghwém, // þæt hé his fréond wrece, ·  
þonne hé fela murne. // Úre éghwylc sceal · ende gebídan //  
worolde lífes; · wyrce sé þe móte // dómes ér déape; · þæt  
bið drihtguman // unlífendum · æfter sélest.*

‘Sorrow not, wise man! ’Tis better for each one that he avenge his friend, than that he mourn much. Each one of us shall suffer the end of worldly life—win he who might **Doom** before death: that is for the warrior, unliving, afterwards the best.’

Other illustrative examples in *Beowulf* include 884b–887a: [...] *Sigemunde gesprong // æfter deaðdæge · dóm unlytel // syððan wiges heard · wrym ácwæalde // hordes byrde* [...] ‘For † Sighmund<sup>P</sup> sprang up after his day of death an unlittle [= great] **Doom**, since hard in conflict he defeated the † Worm<sup>C</sup>, the herder of the hoard.’ and 953b–955a: [...] *þú þé self hafast // dēdum gefremed · þæt þín dóm lyfað // áwa tó aldre* [...] ‘Thou hast for thyself by deeds accomplished that thy **Doom** lives for ever and ever.’

**fee** (ON *fé*, OE *fēoh*) Originally ‘cattle’, however also used in a broader sense to refer to one’s mobile wealth. For this cf. particularly *High* TODO.

**feel-cunning** (ON *fjolkunnigr*) Literally ‘much-cunning, cunning in many ways’. Skilled with sorcery.

**fey** (ON *fēigr*, OE *fēge*, OHG *feigi* ‘cowardly’) Being doomed or fated to die, with a sense of predestination and inevitability. Its earliest use is on the Rök stone: *aft uamuþ stanta runar þar + n uarin faþi faþir aft faikiā sunu Apt Vámóð standa rúnar þár, en Varinn fáði, faðir aft feigjan sonu* ‘After Woemood (*Vámóðr*) stand these † runes<sup>C</sup>, but Warren (*Varinn*) painted, the father after the **fey** son.’ It was believed that one’s TODO. See PCRN HS II:35, p. 928 ff. (TODO)

**feyness** (ON *fēigð*) The state of being † fey<sup>C</sup>.

**fimble-** (ON *fimbul-*) The ultimate, final, greatest. See † Fimblethyle<sup>P</sup>, † Fimble-winter<sup>L</sup>.

**five days** (ON *fimm dagar*) That the old Scandinavian week was **five days** long is well attested. According to the *Goll* there were six weeks in a month, and the expression **five days** is used as the equivalent of *week* in *High* 51 and 74, in the second of which it is contrasted with *month*. Related to this is the legal term *fifþ* (ON *fimmt*, OSw. *femt*), a meeting or gathering set to be held at a five-day notice. See *fimt* in CV, Love et al. (2020) for further discussion.

**galder** (ON *galdr*, OE *gealdor*, OHG *galdar*) A magical spell or song. See the Merseburg charms (TODO?) for examples. See also † gale<sup>C</sup>.

**gale** (ON *gala*, OE *galan*, OHG *galan*) To sing † galders<sup>C</sup>.

**gand** (ON *gandr*, Latin *gandus*) A witch’s familiar, a spirit sent out to do her bidding. See PCRN HS I:17, p. 361 and II:26, p. 656. TODO

**gid** (ON *goði*, OE *Gydda* masc. nom. prop.) A heathen priest or master of ceremonies.

**gidden** (ON *gyðja*, OE *gyden* ‘goddess’) The feminine equivalent of † gid<sup>C</sup>.

**gin-** (ON *ginn-*) A rare augmentative prefix. TODO.

**gin-holy** (ON *ginnheilagr*) Sacrosanct, highest holy.



**good of meat** (ON *matar góðr*) An old expression, appearing not just in *High* 39 (“I found not a generous man, or so **good of meat**, that a gift were not accepted;”) but also several Viking Age Runic inscriptions, such as Sm 39: *mildan orða · ok matar góðan* ‘mild of words and **good of meat**’, U 805: *bónða góðan matar* ‘a farmer **good of meat**’, U 703: *mandr matar góðr · auk máls risinn* ‘a man **good of meat** and proud in speech<sup>TM</sup>’; compare also U 739: *hann var mildr matar · auk máls risinn* ‘he was **mild of meat** and proud in speech’. — See ‘meat-nothing<sup>C</sup>’ for its opposite.

**hame** (ON *hamr*) A skin, shape. Individuals can through magic “shift hames” (ON *skipta þomum*), and leave their human *hames* behind, instead entering into the shapes of wolves, bears, birds. During this process the original hame would be sleeping in a vulnerable state, as described in the *Saw of the Walsings*, chap. TODO: . See also ‘feather-hame<sup>P</sup>’, ‘town-riders<sup>C</sup>’, ‘evening-riders<sup>C</sup>’.

**harrow** (ON *hǫrgr*, OE *hearg*, PNWGmc. *\*harugar*) A cairn constructed for ritual purposes. *Hindle* 10 describes one: “A ‘harrow<sup>C</sup>’ he made for me, loaded with stones; now that stone-pile is become into glass. He reddened [it] in fresh blood of oxen; ‘Oughter<sup>P</sup>’ ever trusted on the ‘Ossens<sup>G</sup>.’” See also ‘wigh<sup>C</sup>’.

**hold** (ON *hollr*, OE *hold*, OS *hold*, OHG *hold*) ‘Favourable, loyal, gracious’, often of a ruler towards his subject (in the sense of ‘gracious, benevolent’) or the reverse (in the sense of ‘loyal, devoted’). Mirroring these earthly relations, it is likewise often used to refer to divine grace, both of the Christian God—thus in the *Ecclesiastical Laws of King Cnut* ALIE I (p. 372): *Ðam byþ witodlice God hold þe bið his bláforde rihtlice hold* ‘Indeed God is **hold** towards him who is rightly **hold** towards his lord’—but in the oldest Scandinavian material likewise of the Heathen gods. Thus *Lock* 4: *holl rēgin ‘hold* ‘Reins<sup>G</sup>’, and *Ordrun* 10 (TODO: Numbering is very uncertain): *Svá hjalpi þér · hollar véttir, Frigg ok Frēyja · ok flēiri goð* ‘So help thee **hold** ‘wights<sup>C</sup>; ‘Frie<sup>P</sup> and ‘Frow<sup>P</sup>, and more gods [...]’.

The word is also used in this way several medieval oath-formulæ, for instance in the Elder West-Geatish Law: *Svá sé mér goð holl* ‘So may the gods(!) be **hold** towards me,’ in medieval Norwegian laws (NgL 2[197,397]) and Grey-Goose (TODO: cite): *Guð sé mér hollr ef ek satt segi, gramr ef ek lýg* ‘God be **hold** towards me if I speak truly, wroth if I lie,’ in Grey-Goose (TODO) also: *Sé guð hollr þeim er heldr griðum, en gramr þeim er grið rýfr* ‘God be **hold** towards him who keeps the truce, but wroth against him who breaks the truce’. I refer to Löffler (1895) for further discussion on these formulæ.

**holdness** Closely connected to this is of course the abstract noun **holdness** (ON *hylli*, OE *hyldu*, OHG *buldī*) ‘favour, loyalty, grace,’ with the same semantics as the adjective. Notably, this word appears three times in connection with the grace of gods in the poetry, namely in *Grimner* 43, where (according to my interpretation) the preparer of food at the bloot is said to earn the “**holdness** of ‘Woulder<sup>P</sup> and of all the gods;” and *Grimner* 53 where the disgraced king Garfrith is said to have been bereft of “my [= Weden’s] support; of all the Ownharriers (see note to the v.), and of Weden’s **holdness**”. Weden’s holdness (*Óðins hylli*; the phrase is identical in

From all these citations the Germanic view on divine favour is clear: the gods are **hold** towards those who do good works, which in the aforementioned instances include swearing true oaths, faithfully observing truces, partaking in the blood, following rules of hospitality and composing poetry—and **ꝥgram<sup>C</sup>** ‘wroth’ towards those who do the opposite.

**leat** (ON *blaut*) Sacrificial blood (that is, taken from the animal), especially when used for auguries.

**leed** (ON *ljōð*, OE *lēod*) A magical chant or incantation. See also ʀgalder<sup>C</sup>, ʀgale<sup>C</sup>, ʀbegale<sup>C</sup>.

**niþe** (ON *níð*, OE *nīþ*, OHG *níd*) Originally probably ‘hatred, emnity’, in the Norse a sort of ritual libel that brought great dishonor.

**rest** (ON *rōst*) The distance between two rest-stops, a geographical mile (about 1850 metres). See especially CV.

**rune** (ON *rún*, OE *rūn*, OS *rúna*, OHG *rúna*, Got. *rúna*, PNWGMc. *rūnu*) An (esoteric) secret message or formula. That this—rather than ‘letter (of a Runic alphabet)’—is the original and proper sense is apparent from among others the Finnish borrowing *runo* ‘poem; poetry; a division of a poem (specifically of the *Kalevala*)’, and its use in the singular in the earliest Runic inscriptions (e.g. Noleby Vg 63, which contains the linguistically indecipherable string of letters ᚱᚢᚷᚰᚦᚳᚲᚾᚱᚱᚴᚩᚼᚪᚫᚻ[—]ᚠᚵᚩᚸ, a *rune* in the proper sense or the recently discovered Svingerud fragment.) Thus, Weden’s taking of the *runes* should not be interpreted as merely a myth for the invention of profane writing, but rather the origin of esoteric incantations, not at all unlike Indian *mantras*. The word for letter was instead <sup>C</sup>stave, see also there.

- scold** (ON *skald*) A Scandinavian poet. The name probably comes from their ability to slander with words.
- simble** (ON *sumbl*, OE *symbol*) A banquet.
- soo** (ON *sóa*) To ritually waste, to slay (especially in a sacrificial context).
- thill** (ON *þylja*) To chant poetry or lists (so called 「thules<sup>C</sup>」 acquired by rote memorization. See 「thyle<sup>C</sup>」.
- Thing** (ON, OE *þing*, OS *thing*, OHG *ding*) The legal assembly and gathering place where matters would be settled and the law recited.
- thule** (ON *þula*) A poetic list, typically of various items of a category (e.g. gods, legendary horses) or poetic synonyms (e.g. for swords, men, Weden). Decoratively also a ditty, poorly composed poem. See 「thyle<sup>C</sup>」.
- thyle** (ON *þulr*, OE *þyle*, PNWGmc. *\*þulir*) A sage who through rote learning has acquired a large amount of mythological lore (cf. 「thule<sup>C</sup>」 'a list in poetic form; a ditty, bad poem' and 「thill<sup>C</sup>」 'to recite, to chant'). Thus 「Weden<sup>P</sup>」 is the 「Fimblethyle<sup>P</sup>」, being the unbeaten master of lore, as can be seen in his wisdom contests (like *Webthrithner*). Runic inscription DR 248 (Snoldelev) suggests the thyle may have tied to a specific place, and in *Beowulf* it seems to have been a court position, with the poet Unferth being described (l. 1456) as the “thyle of Rothgar”.
- wale** (ON *vǫlr*) The staff or sceptre, especially of a wallow. TODO: archeological finds, mention Sutton Hoo.
- wallow** (ON *vǫlva*, OE *\*wealwe* (cf. ON *svǫlva*, OE *swealwe* ‘swallow’)) A sibyl, seeress, oracle. The word derives from the 「wale<sup>C</sup>」, a staff or sceptre probably used for ritual purposes.
- wigh** (ON *vé*, OE *wéoh*, *wih*, PNWGmc. *\*wihq*) A holy shrine or sanctuary. It seems that where the 「harrow<sup>C</sup>」 was a pile of stones or cairn used for carrying out rituals, the **wigh** was an enclosed space. The earliest Norse attestation is the runic inscription Ög N288 (Oklunda), which reads: “Guthar <= Gunnarr> painted these runes, and he fled, guilty. Sought this wigh, and he fled into this clearing. And he bound. [...]” The implication seems to be that the wigh was considered so sacred that Guthar could not be apprehended or punished for his crime while in it. — In OE the word means ‘pagan idol’. It is not immediately clear which meaning is the original one, but in the present edition the Norse sense has been adopted, since the Anglo-Saxon sources are all of a Christian nature. The *Beowulf* name *Wighstone* (*Wih-* or *Wēohstān*) in any case suggests it is the Norse meaning, since ‘idol-stone’ makes little sense.
- wode** (ON *óðr*, OE *wód*, PNWGmc. *\*wóþur*) 「Heener<sup>P</sup>」’s gift to men, though the name would suggest it be from 「Weden<sup>P</sup>」. The word has several related meanings: ‘poetic inspiration, madness, rage’.

### Persons and objects (P)

**Attle** (*Attila*, ON *Atli*, OE *Ætla*, MHG. *Etzel*, PNWGmc. *\*Attilō*) The ruler of the ʀHuns<sup>G</sup> (historically from 434–453). Husband of ʀGuthrun<sup>P</sup>, and with her father of ʀEarp and Oatle<sup>P</sup>. and murderer of I HHb 54, SiL 11, I Gr 23, ShS 28, 29, 33, 37, 54, 56, 57, II Gr 26, 38, 45, III Gr 1, 9, BnOr 0, OdW A, 2, 22, 23, 25, 26, 30, 31, AtD 0, AtL 1, 3, 15, 17, 18, 27, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 41, 43, B, AtS 2, 4, 21, 22, 44, 52, 60, 64, 71, 73, 77, 80, 86, 87, 97, 98, 108, 113, 117, FG 0, GrB 12, Ham 6.

**Balder** (ON *Baldr*, OE *Bældæg* (not directly cognate), OHG *Balter*, PWGmc. *\*Baldrar*) The beautiful son of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, slayed by his brother ʀHath<sup>P</sup>, avenged by his other brother ʀWonnell<sup>P</sup>.

**Earp and Oatle** (ON *Erpr ok Eitill*) The sons of ʀAttle<sup>P</sup> and ʀGuthrun<sup>P</sup>.

**Earth** (ON *ǣrð*, OE *eorþe*, OHG *erda*, PNWGmc. *\*erþu*, PGmc. *\*erþō*) The personified Earth. Through ʀWeden<sup>P</sup> the mother of ʀThunder<sup>P</sup>.

**feather-hame** (ON *ǣðrhamr*) A ʀhame<sup>C</sup> owned by the Ease, by which it wearer flies like a bird, more specifically a falcon, between the ʀHomes<sup>C</sup>.

**Free** (ON *Frēyr*, OE *frēa* 'lord', PNWGmc. *\*Frawjar*) Son of ʀNearth<sup>P</sup>, brother of ʀFrow<sup>P</sup>. See also ʀIng<sup>P</sup>.

**Frie** (ON *Frigg*, OE *\*Frige*, OHG *Frija*, PNWGmc. *\*Friju*) Wife of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, mother of ʀBalder<sup>P</sup>. Related to ʀFull<sup>P</sup>, who is either her sister (Second Merseburg Charm, though this may be metaphorical, as in *Hindle* 1) or her maid-servant (the Norse sources).

**Frow** (ON *Frēyja*) Cat-goddess, daughter of ʀNearth<sup>P</sup>, sister of ʀFree<sup>P</sup>, wife of ʀWode<sup>P</sup>. Promised to the Ettin. Possibly = Easter?

**Full** (ON *Fulla*, OHG *Folla*) Maid-servant (or sister?) of ʀFrie<sup>P</sup>; see there.

**Guthrun** (ON *Guðrún*) Daughter of king ʀYivick<sup>P</sup>, sister of ʀGuth<sup>P</sup> and ʀHain<sup>P</sup>. The wife of ʀAttle<sup>P</sup>.

**Hain** [Hain 1] (ON *Hogni*, OE *Haguna*, *Hagena*, OHG *Hagano*, Ger. *Hagen*, PNWGmc. *\*Hagunō*) A ʀNifling<sup>G</sup> and ʀYivicking<sup>G</sup>, son of king ʀYivick<sup>P</sup>, brother of ʀGuth<sup>P</sup> and ʀGuthrun<sup>P</sup>. In *AtL* he defeats seven warriors before being captured by ʀAttle<sup>P</sup>, who has his heart cut out at the request of Guth<sup>P</sup>.

**Hain 2** [2] A petty king of ʀEast Geatland<sup>L</sup>, contemporary with ʀGranmer<sup>P</sup>, the king of ʀSouthmanland<sup>L</sup> and Ingeld Illred, the ʀIngling<sup>G</sup> king of ʀUpland<sup>L</sup>.

**Hath** (ON *Hǫðr*) The blind son of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, the slayer of his brother ʀBalder<sup>P</sup>.

- Heener** (ON *Hónir*, PNWGmc. *Hónijar* ‘the little swan(?)’) An obscure god. Rydberg (1886)[552] has convincingly argued that he is connected with the stork, connecting his name with the Greek κύκνος ‘swan’ and Sanskrit *śakuna* ‘bird of omen’, and noting that his epithets *langi fōtr* ‘long foot’ and *aurkonungr* ‘mud-king’ (both found in *Scold* 22) accurately describe the stork. He gives ʀwode<sup>C</sup> TODO.
- Hindle** (ON *Hyndla*) A witch awoken by ʀFrow<sup>P</sup> in *Hindle*.
- Homedall** (ON *Hēimdallr*, OE *\*Hámdall*) Ward of the gods, whitest of the ʀEase<sup>G</sup>.
- Hymer** (ON *Hymir*) ʀTue<sup>P</sup>’s father according to *Hymer*.
- Ing** (ON *Yngvi*, OE *Ing*) Probably an older name of ʀFree<sup>P</sup>. The legendary ancestor of the ʀIngling<sup>G</sup>. Cf. the Old English Rune Poem.
- Lothar** (ON *Lóðurr*, OS *Logaþore*, PNWGmc. *\*Logaþorjar* ‘Flame-darer(?)’) Gives three gifts to man. The Old-Saxon attestation is a bit uncertain.
- Millner** (ON *Mjöllnir*, OE *\*Meldne*, PNWGmc. *\*Meldunjar*) Powerful hammer owned by Thunder.
- Nearth** (ON *Njörðr*) The father of ʀFree<sup>P</sup> and ʀFrow<sup>P</sup> by ʀShede<sup>P</sup>.
- Nithad** (ON *Níðuðr*, OE *\*Hámdall*) The Swedish king that imprisons ʀWayland<sup>P</sup> in *Wayland*. Father of ʀBeadhild<sup>P</sup>.
- Oughter** (ON *Óttarr*, OE *Óththere*, PNWGmc. *\*Óhtaharjar*) Legendary Swedish king.
- Rotholf** (ON *Hrólfr kraki*, OE *Hrópulf*, PNWGmc. *\*Hróþiwulfar*) A king of the ʀShieldings<sup>G</sup> (see family tree). As foreshadowed in *Beowulf* 1017–9, 1180–90, he betrays the sons of ʀRothgar<sup>P</sup>, his cousins ʀRethrich and Rothmund<sup>P</sup>, in order to take the throne for himself. In the later Icelandic tradition this has been forgotten, and he is consistently portrayed as a heroic king.
- Rothgar** (ON *Hróarr*, OE *Hrǫþgár*, PNWGmc. *\*Hrǫþigairar*) A king of the ʀShieldings<sup>G</sup> (see family tree), one of the main characters in *Beowulf*.
- Shield** (ON *Skjöldr*, OE *Scyld*) Legendary Danish king, founder of the ʀShieldings<sup>G</sup>.
- Sighmund** (ON *Sigmundr*, OE *Sigemund*, MHG. *Siegmund*) A hero of the ʀWalsings<sup>G</sup>, in *Beowulf* attested as the slayer of the dragon along with his nephew ʀSinfittl<sup>P</sup>. In the Norse tradition however, it is his half-brother ʀSiward<sup>P</sup> that slays the dragon instead.
- Sithguth** (OHG *Sinthgunt*, PNWGmc. *\*Sinþagunþiz*) Only known from *Mers II* as the sister of ʀSun<sup>C</sup>.
- Sun** (ON *Sól*, OHG *Sunna*) The personified sun (see also ʀMoon<sup>P</sup>). In *Mers II*, described as the sister of ʀSithguth<sup>C</sup>.
- Thrim** (ON *Þrymr*) The ettin responsible for stealing Thunder’s hammer in *Thrim*.

**Thunder** (ON *Þórr*, OE *Þunor*, OHG *Donar*, PNWGmc. \**Þonarar*) Son of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup> and ʀEarth<sup>P</sup>.

**Tue** (ON *Týr*, OE *Tiw*) Son of ʀHymer<sup>P</sup>. One-handed god. TODO.

**Webthriðner** (ON *Vafþrúðnir*) The ettin defeated by Weden in the wisdom contest in *Webthriðner*.

**Weden** (rhymes with *leaden*; ON *Óðinn*, OE *Wóden*, *Wéden*, OHG *Wuotan*, PNWGmc. \**Wóðanar*) Chief of the ʀEase<sup>G</sup>, his name is clearly related to ʀwode<sup>C</sup>, referring to his role as the patron of ʀscolds<sup>C</sup> and ʀbearserks<sup>C</sup>. Husband of ʀFrie<sup>P</sup>, and by her father of ʀBalder<sup>P</sup>. Also father of ʀThunder<sup>P</sup> by ʀEarth<sup>P</sup>. Brother of ʀHeener<sup>P</sup> and ʀLother<sup>P</sup>.

**Wider** (ON *Viðarr*, OE \**Widhere*) A son of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, who avenges him at the ʀRakes of the Reins<sup>L</sup>.

**Wode** (ON *Óðr*, OE *Wód*) Husband of ʀFrow<sup>P</sup>. His name looks to be the same word as ʀwode<sup>C</sup>.

**Wonnell** (ON *Váli*, OE \**Wonela*, PNWGmc. \**Wanilô* ‘the little ʀWane<sup>G</sup>?’) The son of ʀWeden<sup>P</sup>, who one-night old avenged his brother ʀBalder<sup>P</sup> through slaying ʀHath<sup>P</sup>, his half-brother.

**Woulder** (ON *Ullr*, \**Wuldor*, PNWGmc. \**Wulþuz*) A rather obscure god. He is mentioned in connection with oath-rings (TODO) and the setting of ritual fires (*Grimner* TODO). These obscure references are likely related to the interesting finds at Lilla Ullevi (‘the small ʀwigh<sup>C</sup> of Woulder’) in Upland, Sweden, consisting of several dozen fire striker-shaped iron amulet rings dating to 660–780 (for a detailed description see (af Edholm, 2009)).

**Yimer** (ON *Ymir*, OE \**Yime*) The first ettin, probably equivalent to ʀEaryelmer<sup>P</sup>.

**Yivick** (ON *Gjúki*, OE *Gifca*, OHG *Gibicho*, MHG. *Gibeche*) King of the ʀBurgends<sup>G</sup> (historically from late 300s–407) of the Nifling dynasty, ancestor of the ʀYivickings<sup>G</sup>. Father of ʀGuthrun<sup>P</sup>, ʀGuther<sup>P</sup> and ʀHain<sup>P</sup>.

## Groups and tribes (G)

TODO: Map of rough tribal areas. Genealogies.

**Danes** (ON *danir*, OE *dene*, PNWGmc. \**danír*) A tribe in eastern modern-day Denmark and southern Sweden. They probably originated in Scania in southern Sweden, before moving westwards into the Danish isles and eventually Jutland, driving out the ʀEarls<sup>G</sup> and ʀJutes<sup>G</sup>. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO

**Dwarfs** (ON *dvergar*, OE *dweorgas*, OHG *twerca*, PNWGmc. \**dvergór*) Earthly (chthonic) supernatural beings, often referred to as living in rocks and mountains. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO

- Ease** (rhyming with *geese*; ON *ésir*, OE *ése*, PNWGmc. *\*ansiwir*; sg. *os*, ON *áss*, OE *ós*, PNWGmc. *\*ansur*) A group of Gods, though the word can also refer to all the Gods. See 「Gods<sup>G</sup>, 「Tues<sup>G</sup>, 「Wanes<sup>G</sup>, 「Reins<sup>G</sup>. Noted members: 「Weden<sup>P</sup>, 「Thunder<sup>P</sup>, 「Frie<sup>P</sup>, 「Hath<sup>P</sup> and 「Balder<sup>P</sup> Attestations: TODO
- Elves** (ON *alfar*, OE *ielfe*, PNWGmc. *\*alþír*) Earthly (chthonic) supernatural beings. Possibly ancestral spirits? Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Ettins** (ON *jǫtnar*, OE *eotenas*, PNWGmc. *\*etunór*) The fundamental enemies of the Gods, the agents of chaos and disorder. See 「Rises<sup>G</sup>, 「Thurses<sup>G</sup>. Noted members: 「Hymer<sup>P</sup>, 「Thrim<sup>P</sup>, 「Webthrithner<sup>P</sup>, 「Yimer<sup>P</sup> Attestations: TODO
- Geats** (ON *gautar*, OE *géatas*, PNWGmc. *\*gautór* from *\*geut-* ‘to pour’, perhaps ‘the libators’) A tribe in what is today southern-central Sweden. See also 「Geatland<sup>L</sup>, 「Swedes<sup>G</sup>. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- gin-Reins** (ON *ginnrëgin*) 「gin-<sup>C</sup> + 「Reins<sup>G</sup>. The sacrosanct, highest divine powers.
- Gods** (ON *goð*, OE *godu*, OHG *gota*, PNWGmc. *\*godu*) TODO. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Huns** (ON *húnir*, OE *Húne*, OHG *Húni*, *Hunni*, PNWGmc. *\*húnir*) An invading Asiatic tribe in the Migration Period. In the legendary material their cultural and ethnic foreignness is not seen. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Inglings** (ON *ynlingar*, PNWGmc. *\*ingwalingór* ‘the descendants of 「Ing<sup>P</sup>’) Difference between this term and 「Shelvings<sup>G</sup> is a bit unclear. They seem to be used synonymously in the Norse sources, whereas the English only use the later.
- Nears** (ON *níarar* -*njárar*) A Swedish tribe, only mentioned in *Wayland*, where it is ruled by king 「Nithad<sup>P</sup>. The name and location may allow us to connect them with the Swedish province of Närke, cf. Old Swedish: *Nerikjar* ‘inhabitants of Närke’, *Nerisker* ‘belonging to Närke; Nearish’, in which case the Old Swedish stem *nær-* (with unclear vowel length, though it is probably long) would be a reduced form of *níar-*, *njár-*.
- Norns** (ON *nornir*) A group of supernatural women responsible for declaring the fates of men.
- Ossens** (ON *ósynjur*) The women of the 「Ease<sup>G</sup>, see there.
- Ownharriers** (ON *einherjar*, OE *\*ánbergas*) Earthly (chthonic) supernatural beings, often referred to as living in rocks and mountains. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Reins** (ON *rögn*, *regin*) The divine powers. Based on *Webthrithner* (TODO) the term may be more closely associated with the 「Wanes<sup>G</sup> than the 「Ease<sup>G</sup>.
- Saxons** (ON *saxar*, OE *Seaxan*, *Seaxe*) TODO. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO

- Shieldings** (ON *skjöldungar*, OE *Scyldingas*, PNWGmc. \**skeldungór*) The descendants of †Shield<sup>P</sup>; the legendary †Danish<sup>G</sup> royal dynasty. With †Harward<sup>P</sup>'s death after his slaying of †Rotholf<sup>P</sup> their rule ended. TODO Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Shelvings** (ON *skilfingar*, OE *scilfingas*, PNWGmc. \**skilþingór*) The descendants of †Shelf<sup>P</sup>; the legendary †Swedish<sup>G</sup> royal dynasty. The exact difference between the terms Shelvings and †Inglings<sup>G</sup> is unclear, but the first may have referred to the old royal family in Sweden, while the latter to the Norwegian branch which claimed descent from the former. TODO Noted members: TODO Attestations: *Hindle* 15, 20
- Swedes** (ON *svíar*, OE *swéon*, PNWGmc. \**swibanír*) The tribe around the Mälar valley in eastern Sweden. Noted members: TODO Attestations: TODO
- Thurses** (sg. Thurse; ON *þurs*, OE *þyrs*, OS *thuris*, OHG *duris*, PNWGmc. \**þurisar*) Possibly a poetic synonym for †Ettins<sup>G</sup>. See also †Rime-Thurses<sup>G</sup>. Noted members: TODO Attestations: *Wal* 8, *Shr* 31, 35, 36, *Hyme* 17, *Thr* 5, 10, 21, 24, 29, 30, *Alw* 2, I *HHb* 40, *HHw* 27.
- Tues** (ON *tívar*, PNWGmc. \**tíwór*) A poetic synonym for †Gods<sup>G</sup>. Attestations: TODO
- Wanes** (ON *vanir*, OE *wan*?) A subgroup or tribe of the gods, associated with fertility, harvests and fishing. Noted members: †Nearth<sup>P</sup>, †Ing<sup>P</sup>, †Frow<sup>P</sup> Attestations: TODO
- Yivickings** (ON *gjúkungar*) The descendants of †Yivick<sup>P</sup>, including †Guther<sup>P</sup>, †Guthrun<sup>P</sup> and †Hain<sup>P</sup>. Attestations: TODO

### Place names, locations and events (L)

- Eastern Way** (ON *Austrvegr*) The eastern lands of the †Ettins<sup>G</sup> (probably identical in meaning to †Ettinham<sup>L</sup>), whither †Thunder<sup>P</sup> goes to fight.
- Ettinham** (ON *Ǫtunheimr*, *Ǫtnaheimr*) The ‘†Ettin<sup>G</sup>-†Home<sup>C</sup>’ or ‘home of the Ettins’; the eastern realm of chaotic and inhospitable beings. See also †Eastern Way<sup>L</sup>, †Outyards<sup>L</sup>.
- Fimble-winter** (ON *fimbulvetr*) The great winter, which kills all humans apart from †Life and Lifethrasher<sup>P</sup>.
- Hell** (ON *hēl*, PNWGmc. \**halju*, Got. *halja*) The underworld, personified as and formally identical with †Hell<sup>P</sup>. After Christianity the word came to refer to the Christian hell (= Gehenna), as is the case in all attested languages apart from the Old Norse. See also †Nivelhell<sup>L</sup>.
- Middenyard** (ON *Miðgarðr*, OE *Middangeard*, OS *Middilgard*, OHG *Mittilgart*, Got. *midjungards*) The ‘middle enclosure’; the realm of men. See also †Osyrd<sup>L</sup>, †Outyards<sup>L</sup>.
- Nivelhell** (ON *niflhel*) ‘Mist-Hell’, from the poetic evidence it seems like it may originally have been a synonym for †Hell<sup>L</sup>. In poetry it is attested in *Webbithner* TODO: *nú kom’k heima |hld fyr Niflhel neðan,*



*hinig deyja ór helju halir.* ‘into nine homes I came, beneath Nivelhell; thither die men out of Hell’, the second by *Dreams 2: reið niðr þaðan |bld niðflæjar til; mótti hvelpi, |bld þeim’s ór helju kom.* ‘[Weden] rode down thence to Nivel-hell; met the whelp that out of Hell came.’ Possibly the distinction was held by the first poet but not the second.

**Osyard** (ON *Ásgarðr*) The ‘enclosure of the †Ease<sup>G</sup>’; the heavenly realm. See also †Middenyard<sup>L</sup>, †Outyards<sup>L</sup>.

**Outyards** (ON *Útgarðar*) Not eddic. The ‘outer enclosures’, described in *Ylfir*. See also †Ettinham<sup>L</sup>, †Middenyard<sup>L</sup>, †Osyard<sup>L</sup>.

**Rakes of the Reins** (ON *ragna røk*) The ‘fates of the †Reins<sup>G</sup>’, euphemism for the destruction of the world.

**Rakes of the Tues** (ON *tíva røk*) The †Rakes of the Reins<sup>L</sup>.

**Up-heaven** (ON *Upphiminn*, OE *Upheofon*, OS *Upphimil*, OHG *úfbimil*) Highest heaven. See also †Earth and Up-heaven<sup>F</sup>.

**Walhall** (ON *Valhöll*, OE *Wælbeall*) The hall of the slain, held by †Weden<sup>P</sup> and inhabited by the †Ownharriers<sup>G</sup>.

### Poetic formulæ (F)

All formulæ are given in English translation, their attested forms and a Proto-Germanic rendition. For those consisting of two words bound together by a conjunction, & is written in its place.

**Earth and Up-heaven** (ON *ǵrðr & upphiminn*, OE *eorpe & upheofon*, PGmc. *\*erþō & upbiminaz*) ON: Ribe charm *Wallow 3*, *Webthritner 20*, *Thrim 2*, *Ordrun 17*, OE: *Acreboot*

**Ease and Elves** (ON *ésir & alfar*, OE *ése & ielfe*, PNWGmc. *\*alþír & ansiwīr*) A merism; both heavenly and earthly spiritual beings. Notably the two words always occur in this order (never ‘Elves and Ease’), even in OE.

**words and works** (ON *orð & verk*, OE *word & weorc*, PGmc. *\*wurdó & werkō*) *Beewolf 289*, 1100, 1833