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RMN Newsletter is a medium of contact and communication for members of the Retrospective Methods Network (RMN). The RMN is an open network which can include anyone who wishes to share in its focus. It is united by an interest in the problems, approaches, strategies and limitations related to considering some aspect of culture in one period through evidence from another, later period. Such comparisons range from investigating historical relationships to the utility of analogical parallels, and from comparisons across centuries to developing working models for the more immediate traditions behind limited sources. *RMN Newsletter* sets out to provide a venue and emergent discourse space in which individual scholars can discuss and engage in vital cross-disciplinary dialogue, present reports and announcements of their own current activities, and where information about events, projects and institutions is made available.

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Editor's Note

The activities within and related to the Retrospective Methods Network (RMN) have continued to increase and there has been a growing awareness of and interest in *RMN Newsletter* internationally. This multidisciplinary platform for discussion has become a vital site for current information relevant to members of the RMN and it has become a valued venue for opening dialogues through the presentation and negotiation of research, methods and theoretical perspectives.

The daughter networks of the RMN have been particularly vital centers of academic activity. The Austmarr Network, which is concentrated on cultural contact and interaction in the Baltic Sea region before ca. 1500, organized a fruitful stream at the Yale Conference on Baltic and Scandinavian Studies (13th–15th March 2014, New Haven, Connecticut): the ten sessions gave the impression of a symposium within the conference. This branch is now organizing the fourth Austmarr Symposium in Sundsvall, Sweden (see p. 93). The Old Norse Folklorists Network, which is concentrated on the relevance and relationship of later folklore for Old Norse research, advanced from the workshops of past years to their first major international conference, "Sagas, Legends and Trolls: The Supernatural from Early Modern back to Old Norse Tradition" (12th–14th June 2014, Tartu, Estonia). These networks have provided nexuses of academic activity and also fostered international cooperations which are presently being developed for more expansive projects in the future.

In addition to events, a number of significant publications are nearing fruition from within the RMN and its branches. The volume from the first RMN event, "New Focus on Retrospective Methods" (13th–14th September 2010, Bergen, Norway) should appear by the end of this year. The first two volumes from the Viking Age in Finland project (2011–) are also expected at the end of this year, one concentrated on territories of Finland and Karelia, the other on Åland. A volume based on the 2011 and 2012 workshops of the Old Norse Folklorists Network is also expected in the none-too-distant future. A volume based on the first three Austmarr symposia (2011–2013) is also in preparation. In addition, the recent special issue of *RMN Newsletter* (№ 7, December 2013), *Limited Sources, Boundless Possibilities*, has drawn particular attention while the earlier special issue *Approaching Methodology* (№ 4, May 2012) has recently appeared in a second edition. On top of these centralized outcomes, a great variety of work is being done by the many members of the RMN on an individual basis, announcements and examples of which can be found in the pages of the present issue.

The current issue of *RMN Newsletter* appears situated at an intersection of diverse discussions connecting especially with the roots of the RMN in Old Norse scholarship and philology. These link with and continue discussions from earlier volumes and also anticipate discussions to come. They connect with diverse aspects of diachronic study, from reception to historical reconstruction, and they highlight the dynamism of cultures and cultural change on the one hand while exploring method-logical questions and challenges on the other. At the same time, the plethora of topics and perspectives of other contributions underscore the diversity of research currently being done, with something of interest for all of our widespread readership.

When speaking of the interest stimulated by *RMN Newsletter* through the richness of perspectives and works it introduces, it is necessary to observe that a journal such as *RMN Newsletter* is a venue, not a producer of research, methods or theories *per se*. It is a site of information and discussions that are carried by many voices representing a variety of fields. That variety and the acuity, innovativeness and quality of work behind those voices is what gives life and richness to a venue. *RMN Newsletter* is enabled through you, its readership, whom it also seeks to represent, and we are very pleased that we can reciprocally enable the discussions in this venue.

Frog
University of Helsinki

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The 'Viking Apocalypse' of 22nd February 2014: An Analysis of the Jorvik Viking Centre's *Ragnarǫk* and Its Media Reception

Joseph S. Hopkins, University of Georgia

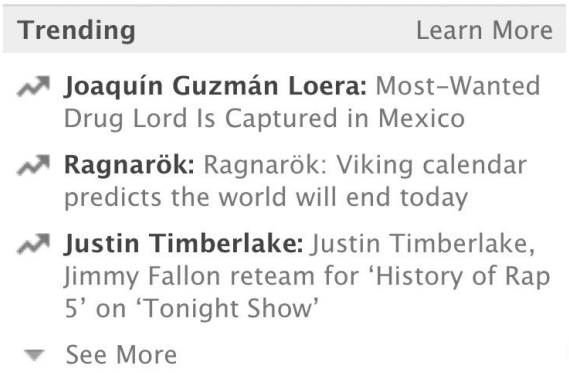

Figure 1. A screenshot of Facebook's "trending" feed on 22nd February 2014.

> Þá mælir Gangleri: 'Hver tíðindi eru at segja frá um ragnarøkr? Þess hefi ek eigi fyrr heyrt getit.' (Faulkes 2005: 49.)
>
> Then said Gangleri: 'What tidings are there to say about Ragnarøkkr? That I have not heard tell of.'

If one signed on to a social media site, checked a news website or, in some cases, even watched one's local evening news during mid- to late February 2014, one may have encountered some surprising news: as predicted by "scholars" or "experts", perhaps "according to Norse mythology" or even according to a mysterious "Viking calendar", a "Viking apocalypse" was to occur on Saturday, 22nd February 2014. Viking Age specialists who encountered these reports were likely to have been particularly surprised; no such "Viking calendar" is known to have existed and, while an event that could loosely be described as a "Viking apocalypse", *Ragnarǫk*, is foretold in various Old Norse texts, it is nowhere said to occur at a specific time. The present article serves as an analysis of the dissemination of this misinformation and briefly examines its context in modern popular culture.

Old Norse Ragnarǫk

What *do* the Old Norse sources say about *Ragnarǫk*? A fair amount; references to *Ragnarǫk* are scattered among several key texts in the Old Norse corpus. While these references at times contradict one another and comparative material from other Germanic cultures is lacking,[1] these limited sources make it possible to construe an image of this 'apocalypse' rich in details. The sources we have today, especially as compiled in the *Gylfaginning* section of the *Prose Edda*, form something of a cohesive, albeit often mysterious, narrative.

The foretelling of *Ragnarǫk* in *Gylfaginning* may be summarized (with a bit of color) as follows: At its onset, humanity will meet a fate of six harsh and long winters, greed among mankind will lead to world war and social breakdown. A wolf will swallow the Sun and another will catch the Moon. The stars will disappear. Great earthquakes will topple mountains, uproot trees, and snap all fetters and binds, including those of the monstrous wolf Fenrisúlfr and apparently those of the grotesque ship Naglfar, and the bound Loki. The enormous serpent Miðgarðsormr will burst from the churning sea. The earth, sea, and darkened sky will be polluted with poison, and after the sky rips open to reveal the fiery Surtr and his retinue, mankind will endure encroaching flames. Amidst their trail of devastation, all of these beings and more, including the combined wrath of all the "*hrímþursar*" (cf. Frog, this volume), will assemble at the vast plain Vígríðr. The cryptic god Heimdallr will blow his horn, the gods will themselves come together for a *þing*, a traditional Germanic

assembly, and the wisdom-seeking god Óðinn will ride to the well Mímisbrunnr for counsel. The cosmic ash tree Yggdrasill, central to all things, will shudder (perhaps in fear) (Faulkes 2005: 49–53).

At least several of the gods and an army of the chosen dead, Óðinn's *einherjar* ['?one-time/lone/united -warriors'], will dress for war and ride to Vígríðr to engage their gathered foes. This will lead to more or less mutual death in spectacular fashion. The world, after being consumed in flames, will sink into water. Yet, like a plant that requires fire for germination or a sprout bursting from the fertile, post-forest-fire soil, the aftermath of these processes will not simply be destruction and death but also renewal and rebirth; after the earth is no longer submerged, two human beings – in an echo of their mythic wooden ancestors Askr and Embla – will emerge from a grove and repopulate the world, and various gods will come together as before on a newly green and fertile earth to recount the deeds of those who came before them. The shining god Baldr and his brother and (unwitting) murderer, the blind Hǫðr, even return from the land of the dead, reconciled (Faulkes 1998: 53–54). All comes full circle.

The *Ragnarǫk* narrative has been celebrated in a variety of ways since its repopularization by way of modern era translations of Old Norse texts. Perhaps the most famous example of this is Richard Wagner's creative take on the narrative in his 19th century opera *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The title of the fourth and final opera of the cycle, *Götterdämmerung*, is a modern German calque of the unique Old Norse form *Ragnarøkkr* ['twilight of the gods'] that is found in the *Poetic Edda* poem *Lokasenna* and in the *Prose Edda* (Árni Björnsson 2003: 223). Wagner was so taken by his Old Norse source material that he had his final residence, Wahnfried, fitted with a panel depicting *Wotan* (a modern German form ultimately cognate with Old Norse *Óðinn*) and his ravens accompanied by two muses (Árni Björnsson 2003: 55–56). Wagner's work was influential enough that the German noun *Götterdämmerung* has since been directly loaned into English with the semantic value of 'a cataclysmic downfall or overthrowal of a ruling entity or society'. It sees use now and then where deemed appropriate, memorably by journalists when a foreign 'regime' meets a less than peaceful end.

The Jorvik Viking Centre's Prediction

The Jorvik Viking Centre is a museum located in York, England. It opened its doors in 1984 on a site excavated by the York Archaeological Trust that yielded a variety of Viking Age finds, including Viking Age structures.[2] One of several 'projects' of the York Archaeological Trust,[3] the museum focuses on Viking Age, Norse-dominated York (thus the Anglicized use of Old Norse *Jórvík*). The Jorvik Viking Centre takes an unconventional approach to presenting its material, including an on-track ride through exhibitions that feature mechanically dispersed scents and animatronic figures.

Every year, the museum holds an event, the 'Jolablot',[4] and for the 2014 version of the event, *Ragnarǫk* was chosen as a theme by the museum. To market the event, the museum published a website press release with the title *"THE WORLD WILL END IN 100 DAYS": Ragnarok – the Viking Apocalypse – predicted for 22 February 2014* (Jorvik Viking Centre 2013). "According to experts in Norse mythology from the JORVIK Viking Centre," the press release reads, "the sound of an ancient horn heard reverberating across the rooftops of York this evening is a portent of doom and the beginning of a countdown to the Norse apocalypse," and "experts are predicting the end of the world will take place on 22nd February 2014, coinciding with the grand finale of the 30th JORVIK Viking Festival in the city of York" (*ibid*.). The article contains statements attributed to Danielle Daglan, "Head of Events & Hospitality" at the York Archaeological Trust,[5] in which Daglan claims that this prediction trumps 2012 phenomena such as the so-called "Mayan apocalypse" (*ibid*.). An image of a chainmail-clad, Bronze Age lur-blowing male standing before the York Minster accompanies the press release.

That same day, an article covering the Jorvik Viking Centre's claim was published

by MailOnline, the online extension of Daily Mail, a British tabloid. Bearing the headline "Will the World End in 100 Days? – Sounding of Ancient Trumpet in York Warns of Viking Apocalypse on 22 February 2014", the article includes statements made by Daglan, including those that appear in the Jorvik Viking Centre's press release (Zolfagharifard 2013). These statements, often noncommittal, are likely to appear rather non-serious or tongue-in-cheek to specialists. For example:

> While not a scientific conclusion, they claim that Vikings loved to feast and wouldn't want to miss this event. For this reason, they argue that Vikings would believe the world would end in 100 days [.... And] following a study published in 2010 that bearded men are more trustworthy than those without, we're also looking for fantastic displays of facial hair, so that we can identify those with the potential to take us into the brave new world that is foretold to follow Ragnarok. (Zolfagharifard 2013.)

However, with the air of authority granted by association with a museum focused on the Viking Age, they are likely to appear to general readers as if they are rooted in some sort of historical source. From these statements, MailOnline concludes that "Danielle Daglan from the Norvik [*sic*] Viking Centre told MailOnline that a number of recent events spoken about in the legends of Ragnarok led them to believe that the end of the world may well be imminent" and "Norse mythology experts have calculated that [Ragnarok] is due to take place on February 22, 2014" (*ibid.*). As of late March, 2014, the article had been 'shared' nearly 29,500 times (*ibid.*).

On 16th February 2014, NPR, formally National Public Radio, published both an article on the topic on its website and aired an "All Things Considered" piece discussing the museum's prediction (NPR Staff 2014a, NPR Staff 2014b). In the piece, Daglan is presented by Arun Rath, host of the program, as one of a group of "scholars" who have made predictions about *Ragnarǫk*.[6] Perhaps sensing something was amiss, NPR decided to follow up Daglan's comments with an interview with another source, Gísli Sigurðsson (Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies). Gísli refutes Daglan's statements; "there is nothing in our sources to indicate that any of this is upon us now. This seems to be the result of marketing policy in the Viking center in York" (NPR Staff 2014b). Rath asks if Daglan's date of February 22nd "is kind of pulled out of the air," to which Gísli responds: "No. It's the last day of the festival, so they're just going to have a big party at the end of it" (NPR Staff 2014b). Gísli's comments are omitted from the text article accompanying the "All Things Considered" audio (NPR Staff 2014a).

A day later, February 17th, Smithsonian.com, an internet extension of the Smithsonian Institute (and therefore ultimately an extension of the government of the United States), published a short article on the story (Eveleth 2014). Although the article links to both the MailOnline and NPR articles, the Smithsonian Magazine online attributes the claims directly to Norse mythology: "According to old Norse mythology, we're 100 days into the end of the world" (*ibid.*).

On February 19th, the online arm of the American magazine *Time*, Time.com, published a short article with the title "The Apocalypse Starts Saturday, at Least According to the Vikings" that further attributed this prediction to a Viking Age source (Knibbs 2014). The article explains that "believers in the United Kingdom are holding a festival called Jorvik to celebrate but for Viking lovers who can't make it to York, eating a lot of Nordic smoked salmon and rocking back and forth crying hysterically is a perfectly acceptable way to join the festivities" (*ibid.*).

Express, the online extension of the British tabloids the *Daily Express* and the *Sunday Express*, took things a step further with an article on February 21st: "people who believe in Viking mythology have already begun preparing for Ragnarok by gathering in York to celebrate the JORVIK festival" (Dassanayake 2014). By way of online news website Newser, FoxNews.com, the online extension of the major American media company Fox News, also ran a story on February 21st on the topic, albeit in a tone that seems less than convinced by the Jorvik

Viking Centre's "claim that the end of times as predicted in Norse mythology will be upon us tomorrow" (Quinn 2014).

The fateful day of February 22nd saw a frenzy of articles and reports on the topic from a variety of media outlets. The online extension of US newspaper *USA Today* published an article under the title "Viking Calendar Predicts the World Will End Saturday". The article itself is not as sensationalistic as the title would lead one to believe. A staff member of USA Today appears to have dug a little further, resulting in Scandinavian humor:

> Reached at [the major Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*] news desk Saturday afternoon, editor Lars Axelsson confirmed that Stockholm was still there and no gods had so far appeared for the world ending battle. 'I think if the world were going to end, it would probably start in the United States, don't you?' he asked a USA TODAY reporter. 'Nothing like that would happen here in Stockholm.' (Weise 2014.)

Regardless, social media giant Facebook's "trending" feed displayed "Ragnarök: Viking calendar predicts the world will end today" (see Figure 1) for much of the day. That day the English Wikipedia *Ragnarök* article saw a significant spike in page views, reaching a peak of 44,000 views. In the month of February 2014, the article was viewed around 190,166 times, over twice the number of views in January.[7] People were interested.

This sampling does not account for local news stations or various other forms of media reporting on this topic. On February 22nd, KARE 11 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, featured an (apparently heavily spliced) interview with Lena Norrman (University of Minnesota) and some of her students (Seavert 2014). The article makes no mention of the Jorvik Viking Centre but rather says that "As part of Ragnarok, believers in York, England will hold a festival Saturday" (*ibid*.).

Outside of evident skepticism in some of these reports, criticism of the Jorvik Viking Centre's marketing campaign appears to have been limited to blog sites, tweets, and article comments. Eleanor Parker (University of Oxford), who maintains a blog by the name of *A Clerk of Oxford*, wrote an entry on the topic on 21st February 2014 that saw substantial internet attention and received a response from the Jorvik Viking Centre. In her entry, Parker says:

> [The Jorvik Viking Centre's] publicity worked – it got them lots of coverage, and I'm helping them by posting about it. But I don't think that makes it OK; it's not just a bit of fun. I really don't have a problem with popularising history – the British Museum are currently doing a great job publicising their upcoming 'Vikings' exhibition with etymology-themed posters, a nice illustration that you can promote history without having to condescend or lie to the general public. (Parker 2014.)

Parker reports that she was thereafter contacted by the Jorvik Viking Centre "to assert that they thought *I* was misleading people in this blog post. Naturally I disagree, and feel the irony of this complaint requires no further comment from me." Parker also notes that "In contacting me, they did not mention whether they have made similar complaints to any of the numerous international news organisations who reported their campaign as a genuine prediction." (*Ibid*.)

On February 23, the museum issued a second press release, "Apocalypse Not: Relief as Prediction for Ragnarok Passes!" (Jorvik Viking Centre 2014). The press release promotes next year's festival and makes no mention of the media reception of the museum's 'prediction'.

North Germanic Mythology in Modern Media

Over the past several years, media depicting or transparently influenced by Viking Age (or, as the case may be, directly post-Viking Age) material has proven to be both extremely popular and highly profitable, not only in the Anglosphere but throughout the world, resulting in billions in U.S. dollars of revenue. International blockbusters such as *Thor* (2011), *Marvel's The Avengers* (2012), *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012), *Django Unchained* (2012), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* (2013), and even Disney's *Frozen* (2013) borrow core and crucial elements from Norse mythology, including characters,

settings, and plot lines.[8] History's *Vikings* (2013–present) television series has proven to be extremely successful, recently beginning a second season. This is not a phenomenon limited to film or television; video games featuring strong inspiration and references to Norse mythology, such as such *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* (2011) and *World of Warcraft* (2004; 2007; 2008; 2010; 2012), appear year after year.

Other forms of the arts are also replete with references to the subject; particular genres of music show a consistent fascination with the topic, with numerous musical groups such as Amon Amarth (Sweden) and Wardruna (Norway) drawing almost exclusive inspiration from this material. American companies such as ODIN New York (upscale clothing, New York) and Loki (active and outdoor wear, Colorado) directly reference Norse gods not only in name but also in aesthetic and conceptual approach. In the Nordic countries, a list of active companies that take their name from Norse mythology would extend far beyond the length of this article and would include, for example, Odin Fund Management (Norway) and the bicycle company Loke (Denmark). This is just a small sample; references such as these are, at the time of writing, common in western media in general.

At the same time, as a new religious movement, Germanic Neopaganism (or Germanic Heathenry) appears to remain relevant if not growing. A form of Germanic Neopaganism, the Ásatrúarfélagið, now constitutes a significant religious minority in Iceland[9] and forms appear to continue to grow in North America, where the first openly Germanic Neopagan politician, Dan Halloran, came into office in Queens, New York in 2009 as a member of the New York City Council from the 19th district (Pillifant 2009). United States military veterans may now choose the "Hammer of Thor" (emblem #55) – inspired by archaeological finds of Viking Age pendants worn by Norse polytheists – among a list of nearly 60 religious (or, as the case may be, non-religious) emblems to appear on their tombstone as offered by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (National Cemetery Administration 2014).

The institution of North Germanic paganism was, by various means, deleted under the process of Christianization and, upon that dismantling, absorbed into folklore or, in the enigmatic case of Icelanders, preserved in text form and revered. Although in a different form, it may be said from a diachronic perspective that Norse mythology has again appeared as a substantial cultural component in a variety of ways in Western society and beyond; millions of viewers marvel in movie theaters at echoes of the once-popular motif of a thunder god losing his hammer, just as an audience for the ancient oral tradition that became the Old Norse poem *Þrymskviða* surely once did.

It appears that the Jorvik Viking Centre has used its status as a museum to promote a commercial event. However, in doing so, the museum misled the public, whether or not this was initially the museum's intention. Yet, that ethical problem aside, another point may be considered: were the public not interested in Viking Age material, it is unlikely that this 'news' would have received the attention it did. While highly problematic from an academic perspective, these reports were motivated by website traffic or viewer attention. The popularity of the Jorvik Viking Centre's "prediction" appears to be an element of a larger picture, a sort of revival of modern popular culture interest in all things Viking Age occurring at this time.

Acknowledgements: The author would look to thank Lauren Fountain and Frog for their comments and suggestions while preparing this article for publication.

Notes

1. However, evidence of understanding of the event, or an event like it, known among other Germanic peoples may be found in the Old High German poem *Muspilli*, recorded in a 9th century manuscript. For discussion, see Simek 2007: 222–224.
2. For discussion of medieval York and the Coppergate site, see Palliser 2014.
3. This is the York Archaeological Trust's terminology. A list of the York Archaeological Trust's attractions can be found on the York Archaeological Trust website: http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk (Accessed 7th March 2014).
4. Regarding this event, Julian Richards (2005) writes "The festival promoters claim that the event harks back to Jolablot, a midwinter festival held by 'the original vikings', although in fact it was invented in

1985, and marks the annual downturn in visitor figures in Jorvik [...]" (Richards 2005: 1). The noun itself appears to be a compound of the Old Norse nouns *jól* ['Yule'] and *blót* ['sacrifice'].

5. This is information is taken from Danielle Daglan's public LinkedIn profile: http://uk.linkedin.com/pub/danielle-daglan/50/433/188 (Accessed 7th March 2014)
6. Rath introduces the program with "according to some scholars, the world will come to an end this Saturday. Ragnarok is upon us." (NPR 2014b.)
7. Wikipedia article statistics may be viewed online at "Wikipedia article traffic statistics": http://stats.grok.se/en/201402/Ragnarök (Accessed 21st March 2014).
8. For example, *Marvel's The Avengers*, itself a sequel to *Thor* and focused on interactions between the Marvel adaptation of the North Germanic gods Thor and Loki, alone maintains a gross international lifetime revenue of over 1.5 billion USD, making it one of the highest grossing films of all time. This figure is derived from the box office revenue-tracking website Box Office Mojo: http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=avengers11.htm.
9. For a statistical breakdown of religious groups in Iceland, see Statistics Iceland: http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Population/Religious-organizations (Accessed 20th March 2014).

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Motifs and Folktales: A New Statistical Approach

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On his way home from Troy, Odysseus and his twelve ships are captured by the cyclops Polyphemus while visiting his island. The monster moves a massive stone to cover the door of the cave so that the men cannot escape, and then he eats many of them. The hero brings the cyclops a barrel of wine and says his name is 'Nobody'. When the cyclops falls into a drunken sleep, Odysseus and his men blind the monster with a wooden stake. The monster calls for his brothers, who come, but they leave when they hear that 'Nobody' has caused the harm. Later, Odysseus ties himself and his men to the bellies of sheep and they escape, despite the blind Polyphemus feeling the backs of animals to ensure that the men are not getting out with his herd.

This famous story of Homer has been recorded in modern times among the folklore of many widely separated European groups (Hackmann 1904). In some variants, the giant tries to recapture the man using a magic ring that raises alarm and reveals where the fugitive is. The man needs to cut off his finger to escape.

Stith Thompson (1961) numbered five traditional elements or motifs in this tale-type:

> G100. Giant ogre, Polyphemus
> K1011. Eye-remedy. Under pretence of curing eyesight the trickster blinds the dupe. (Often with a glowing mass thrust into the eye.)
> K521.1. Escape by dressing in animal (bird, human) skin
> K602. "Noman"
> K603. Escape under ram's belly

Uther (2004) adds five additional motifs:

> F512. Person unusual as to his eyes.
> F531. Giant.
> K1010. Deception through false doctoring.
> K521. Escape by disguise.
> D1612.1. Magic objects betray fugitive. Give alarm when fugitive escapes.

The term *motif* has commonly been used by folklorists to refer to distinguishable and consistently repeated story elements used in the traditional plot structures of many stories and folktales. Stith Thompson developed a *Motif-lndex of Folk-Literature* (1932–1936; revised and enlarged second edition appearing in 1955–1958). However, Thompson's (1955: 7) criteria for identifying and delineating motifs were unsophisticated: "It makes no difference exactly what they are like; if they are actually useful in the construction of tales, they are considered to be motifs." The present analysis raises a number of questions related to the identification of motifs and the assessment of their uniformity and coherence as socially and historically circulating narrative elements. Here, I will explore potential tools and methods that may enable researchers to control these assessments in a statistical and more objective way. Developing a systematic means of doing this would be new and potentially very useful.

Applying different software to textual corpora in order to identify narrative elements like motifs presents a number of methodological issues. Once the sample corpus used here has been introduced, I will thus discuss the application of two different software programs. First, the corpus was treated using Treecloud. Treecloud was applied with the hypothesis that the software had the potential to present evidence of narrative motifs when applied to a textual corpus of variants as raw data. Rather than a positive outcome, this pilot study instead produced information that illustrates a number of problems that arise when using software of this type. The program Iramuteq 0.6 alpha 3 was then applied to the same corpus with an ability to account for additional parameters in the data-set. The ways to identify motifs with Iramuteq are also tested on both the raw text of the corpus and also with tagging of essential elements. With regard to identifying motifs in the classic sense of Thompson, the use of these programs proved better suited to identifying certain motifs rather than others, and the pilot studies show that these and similar programs are not well-suited to identifying motifs in a text corpus. These pilot

studies therefore have significance for revealing methodological problems in the use of software for narrative analysis that may help point the way to future innovations. More significantly, the analyses had an unexpected outcome of providing a new model for approaching tales in terms of semantic networks of elements. Rather than revealing 'motifs', the pilot studies present new ways of looking at tale-types.

The Test Corpus

In order to test the hypothesis that software could identify the main topics of a tale-type on the basis of the lexical surface of a text, we chose to analyze the tale-type of Polyphemus (AT 1137) on the basis of the test-corpus of the 36 versions of the tale published *in extenso* in English in a chapter of James Frazer's *Apollodorus: The Library II* (1921: 404–455). The text of each narrative was embedded in Frazer's critical introduction and conclusion, which have been excluded from the present analysis. The fact that these tales were translated (when necessary) by the same scholar allows a relative uniformity in the text's lexical field. It is assumed that the analysis will work best when using material translated by the same individual. The impact of lexical variation according to translator and its implications of the tree produced from the data would be worth exploring.

It must be acknowledged that the examples collected in *Apollodorus* are drawn from diverse published sources that Frazer had available. These texts were not selected according to modern source-critical standards. Some of these source texts have potentially been subject to significant editing for the earlier publication, or they may reflect summaries and paraphrases of, for example, early 19th century scholars. In addition, Frazer's translations are, in a number of cases, based on, for example, earlier German translations of the narrative from another language – although Lévi-Strauss claims that a mythical message is preserved even through the worst translation (Levi-Strauss 1958: 232). Additionally, it is not clear that Frazer was interested in critically reflecting the lexical field of these sources rather than the narrative content, and especially that narrative content which he considered relevant for comparative discussion. The lexical field of his translations is nevertheless anticipated to be more uniform than texts by multiple translators would be, and this thus increases the probability that the pilot study will yield positive results. Consequently, in terms of the international Polyphemus tradition, the findings of this pilot study necessarily remain conditional on the quality of the data to which the software is applied. Methodological issues surrounding the source-critical quality of source-texts and translations in a data-set remains distinct from the focus here, which is on the potential of Treecloud and Iramuteq 0.6 Alpha 3 as methodological tools in the motif analysis of a body of texts.

The Treecloud Pilot Study

The software Treecloud (Gambette & Veronis 2009) allows the most frequent words of a text to be arranged on a tree that reflect their 'semantic proximity', i.e. the co-occurrence of distinct semantic elements according to the text. The size and the color of each word reflects its individual frequency. The length of the path between two words in the tree represents the distance between them on the basis of their linear word proximity (i.e. analyzing the text as a linear sequence in which each semantically tagged word equates to one unit of distance). Such a tool may help to identify the main topics of a tale-type on the basis of recurring concentrations of words associated with plot patterns. This software analyzes the lexical surface of texts, and therefore the analysis of multiple texts is subject to a degree of language dependence. In addition, variation in the lexical surface (e.g. owing to synonymy, phraseology or alternation between common noun and an agent's proper name) are not accounted for by the software. Yet, it may offer a general path for motif analysis.

For the purposes of this initial pilot study, no attempt was made to tag texts' lexica according to number or categories of semantic equivalence. This avoided the possibility that the researcher-interpretation might conflate narrative elements which otherwise maintained patterns of use associated with certain motifs and not others (e.g. 'ram' and

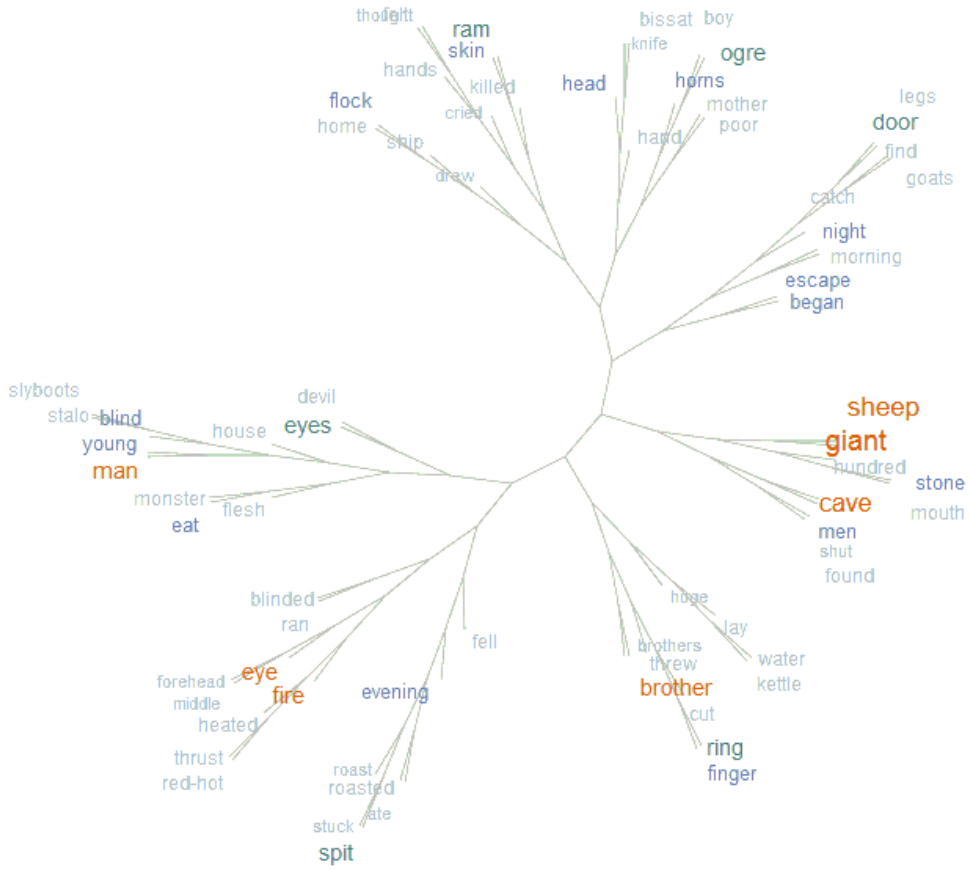

Figure 1. Treecloud analysis of our corpus.

'sheep', or 'ram', 'sheep', 'goats' and 'flock'). Of course, the critical standards of the source texts and their stadial translation have already problematized the validity of such distinctions, but they will remain distinguished here on a methodological principle for the present test. Similarly, nominal designations for agent roles were not tagged to standardize within a text (e.g. 'monster' and 'giant'), nor across different texts (e.g. 'giant', 'devil' and untranslated vernacular beings such as Sámi *stalo*). The decision 'to tag or not to tag' agentive roles across texts from different cultures presents methodological issues that shape the outcome of the analysis in either case. On the one hand, not doing so avoids the problems already mentioned, and the effect of treating only agentive roles in this way could have unpredictable consequences for the data. On the other hand, not doing so may make motifs associated with redactions linked to certain terms more observable, but also affect the reflection of the common agentive role identifiable with Homer's Polyphemus in connection with clusters of other semantic elements within the data-set as a whole. As an initial test, it was here preferred to analyze the test corpus with as little impact from the present researcher as possible and as a more automated outcome of applying the tool to the raw data. Further work will be able to identify and measure the fluctuation due to the standardization – if any – of the vocabulary.

Treecloud was first used to explore our data with the following parameters: english stoplist, NJ tree, number of words: 75; width of the sliding window: 20; distance: Jaccard's co-occurrence. 'Neighbor joining' is a bottom-up clustering method for the creation of phylogenetic trees (NJ tree); the branch lengths as well as the topology of a parsimonious tree can quickly be obtained by using this method. I retain the 75 most frequent words from which the tree is formed (number of words: 75). This portion studied corresponds to a sliding window, with a width of 20 words and 1 as the size of the sliding steps between two consecutive windows (width of the sliding window: 20). The

statistical tool of the Jaccard index is used for comparing the similarity and diversity of sample sets. The Jaccard coefficient measures similarity between finite sample sets, and is defined as the size of the intersection divided by the size of the union of the sample sets. The Jaccard distance measures dissimilarity between sample sets and is obtained by subtracting the Jaccard coefficient from 1. Results were found to be robust to changes in co-occurrence distance formula and number of words; all distance formulas perform approximately equally well and the number of words including in the sliding window did not affect our results.

The program reflects the relative frequency of words by the font size and color in which these appear in the tree, where larger words can be inferred to be more significant. The result is shown in Figure 1, which reveals five primary clusters. These five groups match to varying degrees with motifs identified by Thompson and Uther.

Cluster (1) presents the prominent words 'skin', 'killed', 'ram' and 'flock', as well as 'ship' and 'hands' in a lighter colour and smaller size. This cluster appears to correlate quite strikingly to the hero's escape under the skin or the belly of a ram and can be interpreted as referring to the relevant narrative sequence (motifs K521, K521.1. and K603).

In cluster (2), 'cave', 'giant' (motif F531 and the largest word of the cluster) and 'sheep' are prominent, with 'stone' and 'men' somewhat lighter and not far from 'escape', 'begin' and 'door'. The words 'begin' and 'sheep' appear ambiguous, but this cluster otherwise appears to correlate strongly with the narrative element of the cave of the giant as a locked place from which human beings want to escape. Between cluster (1) and cluster (2), it is also interesting to observe that the words 'ram' and 'flock' group separately from the word 'sheep', which may be associated with this cluster as the word most frequently co-occurring with the giant's activity of housing or caring for the animals, or opening the cave to let out the animals.

In cluster (3), the words 'ring', 'finger', 'cut' and 'kettle' all correlate with the episode concerning the magic ring. The word 'brother' appears peculiar here. This could suggest a correlation between the ring episode, described as motif D1612.1 Magic Objects Betray Fugitive, and the presence of brothers at the beginning of the story. This correlation appears centrally in Frazer's sixth and seventh examples (Frazer 1921: 415–418) and a 'brother' is mentioned in connection with a magic ring possessed by the giant in a different motif (i.e. not motif D1612.1) in a medieval example from *The Book of Dede Korkut* (Frazer 1921: 453, 455). Frazer's sixth example refers to characters as 'brother' rather than 'man' etc. or a personal name, while the seventh treats 'Little Brother' as the name of the protagonist. Together, these two versions account for the majority of occurrences of the word 'brother' in the data set and have led to its disproportionate association with the motif with the ring.

Cluster (4) centers on the words 'fire' and 'eye' with a number of minor words. The subgroup 'middle', 'forehead' and 'eye' points to the unique eye of the monster found in several variants. The subgroup 'fire', 'heated', 'roast', 'roasted', 'red-hot', 'spit', 'stuck', and 'thrust' correlate with the weapon used by the protagonist (a spit or hot water), while the words 'eye' and 'blinded' correlate with the weapon's target and the resulting blindness of the giant. This cluster presents a striking correlation with narrative elements of the tale-type; the words 'eye' (used in the singular), 'forehead', 'middle' involve F512, i.e. 'person unusual as to his eye'. 'Heated', 'red-hot', 'roast', 'roasted', and 'thrust' point toward the 'glowing mass thrust into the eye' of K1011; 'spit' is included in both K1010 (deception) and K1011 (blinds the dupe); finally, 'blinded' involves K1011.

Cluster (5) centers on 'monster', 'eat', 'flesh', 'devil' and 'man'. This cluster can be correlated with the fact that the monster eats human flesh. Again it is noteworthy that 'giant' appears associated with cluster (2), separate from 'monster' and 'devil' here as well as from 'ogre' in still another group, although all of these fill the same role or function in a set of motifs in this tale-type or might be identified with motif F531 Giant. Note that a bias can occur because Treecloud will not, for example, identify a giant at the

level of narrative content if it is identified through description (e.g. as a man many times the size of other men) without using a word that is tagged as indicating 'giant'.

'Giant' is linked to the sealed cave, with the word 'sheep' potentially linked to the motif of releasing the animals from the sealed cave while blind. Similarly, the word 'eyes' appears here at the root of this cluster while the singular 'eye' appears in cluster (4) linked to blindness and the motif of blinding in the form 'blinded', while here the form 'blind' appears. The plural 'eyes' may cluster with 'devil' as one of the only monsters that possesses two eyes. A second analysis could reveal that this cluster groups more particular data that only occur in some versions of the story (such as '*stal*o', 'Sly-Boots', 'devil').

The overall impression of the result is that the lexical surface of the examples analyzed in this way does produce some evidence of motifs. However, this statement must be nuanced: motif words associable with G100 Giant Ogre, Polyphemus, are divided between the first and the fifth clusters. Moreover, 'ogre' appears as an important word between the first and the second clusters, noting that this term, however, is only used in Frazer's examples twenty-one, twenty-four and twenty-five and then once in the translation of the example from *The Book of Dede Korkut*. Motif K602 "Noman" does not appear, nor is this motif mentioned in Uther's revised classification. However, the software would only reveal the presence of this sort of name-disguise if *a*) multiple texts used the same 'No Man' / 'Noman' / 'No One' / 'Nobody' as a word, and *b*) the name would be recurrent within a text rather than only used once.

Viewed uncritically from the perspective of broad motifs mentioned by Thompson and Uther in their descriptions of the narrative, statistics provide a largely positive correlation between motifs (although sometimes as groupings of motifs) and the clusters of lexical items (85% of the whole motif; 75% when we take into account and delete the duplicated motifs F512, F531, K1010, K21). Lexicometic tools could potentially open up new areas for research and may be able to reconstruct large numbers of motifs automatically.

This pilot study also reveals certain problematic aspects of the use of Treecloud. First, exceptional features of certain narratives may significantly impact the lexical surface of individual examples, producing a concentration of a particular word. This is the case with 'brother' in cluster (3), where two examples account for significantly more than half of the examples of the word. This concentration appears directly connected to the appearance of 'brother' as a high-frequency word in the overall corpus and also offsets the relative frequency with which 'brother' co-occurred with other narrative elements by linking it especially to those elements prominent in the two particular examples. In this case, the word 'brother' was seen as linked to the motif of the magic ring (or D1612.1), which was prominent in those two examples but was not a motif found throughout the corpus. This type of problem can be moderated in the future by increasing the number of examples of the tale studied. The number and the way to treat multiple cultures and periods remains to be investigated. Nevertheless, it also highlights that information generated by applications of the software cannot be taken at face value and it is the responsibility of the researcher to consider the information in dialogue with the material being analysed.

Another problematic aspect of this use of the lexicometric software is that it reveals only the highest degree of co-occurrence of each word singly throughout the whole diagram. When words are equated with semantic elements and the clusters of elements are identified with motifs, this means that any single word can only appear in one cluster, and thus any single element will only be correlated with one motif in the whole of the narrative. The relevance of words to multiple clusters is highlighted by the distribution across clusters of words that can be considered synonyms or potentially equivalent variations in different versions, such as 'blind'–'blinded', 'eye'–'eyes', 'man'–'men'–'boy'–'brother', 'giant'–'ogre'–'monster' and so forth. When compared with the example of 'brother' above, the clusters in which some of these terms appear may potentially also be influenced by unusual uses

in the lexical surface of a few particular texts. This dispersal would be eliminated if all of the terms for the monster were tagged 'giant', but this would also consolidate that role as appearing linked to only a single cluster. This difficulty can also be linked to the issue of motifs as narrative elements. For example, cluster (2) appears associated with the men trapped in the cave by the giant. The word 'mouth' appears here owing to the recurrent expression 'mouth of the cave'. This appears equivalent to 'door' in the adjacent cluster, where 'legs' is found, linked to the door by the motif of the giant letting his sheep and goats out of the cave between his legs. Yet 'giant' appears with 'sheep' and 'cave' while 'legs' appears with 'door' and 'goats'. These two clusters could be interpreted as reflecting narrative elements of the trapping of the men and their escape, respectively. However, it becomes questionable how accurately individual clusters may represent motifs if some of their key elements do not appear linked to them because their relative frequency is slightly higher in connection with a different cluster. Treecloud effectively reduces the whole lexical surface of the corpus into exclusive clusters of elements. What it does not do is reveal the concentrated open clusters of co-occurring elements recurrent through the corpus which would enable, for example, acknowledging multiple clusters in which 'giant' was a key element.

The Iramuteq Pilot Study

Iramuteq 0.6 alpha 3 (Ratinaud 2009; 2012; see additional material in Schonhardt-Bailey 2013) allows for statistical analysis of the corpus text (width of the sliding window: 40; for a good synthesis). The classification done by this software is based on lexical proximity and the idea that words used in similar contexts are associated with the same lexical and mental worlds. Iramuteq assumes that as the speaker speaks, he is investing in a succession of different worlds, which each successively impose their properties and a specific vocabulary. The software could also be very useful for the reconstruction of the successive 'lexical worlds' that a folktale teller successively inhabits. By classifying together the co-occurring words, we may understand what semantic territories were behind the construction of the observed folktales.

Each text of the corpus (all the different texts collected) was individualized during the lexical analysis (vs. other software like Treecloud, which treats all the texts together). This individualization accounts for an additional variable in the analysis. This method also eliminates the largest bias of over-represented words that may exhibit a remarkably high frequency in only a few texts and thereby off-set the data, such as 'brother' (59 occurrences; see Figure 2).

Iramuteq software constructs a dictionary of 'lexical forms' which are lemmatized, i.e. Iramuteq automatically reduces words to their root forms and grammatical classification to eliminate function words. This includes the conversion of verbs to their infinitive, plurals to singular, and so forth. The lemmatization deletes the impact of synonyms terms such as 'blind'–'blinded', 'eye'–'eyes', 'man'–'men' and to some degree makes the lexical field more uniform. This is already an advantage of Iramuteq over other pieces of software such as Treecloud.

Table 1. Number of the most widespread occurrences (only nouns and verbs) in the untagged and tagged corpus. In the data set "Tagged texts 1", 'devil', 'ogre', 'stalo', 'monster', 'cyclops', 'Basa-Jaun', 'Tartaro' and 'Depe Ghoz' have been tagged as 'giant'; 'ram', 'flock' and 'goat' have been tagged as 'sheep'; 'hatchet' as 'ring'; and 'myself' as 'nobody'. The data set "Tagged text 2" differs from Tagged text 1 by not tagging 'cyclops' as 'giant' and tagging 'one-eyed' as 'cyclops' (which appears reflected in the number of occurrences of 'eye' in the present table).

Lexical unit	**Instances in Corpus**		
	Untagged	**Tagged text 1**	**Tagged text 2**
giant	184	312	305
eye	110	172	172
sheep	109	102	102
man	84	84	84
cave	73	73	73
fire	60	60	60
brother	59	59	59
ogre	53	= 'giant'	= 'giant'
day	48	48	48
skin	47	47	47
eat	46	46	46
find	46	46	46
ring	45	45	45

Each text is cut into segments. The segmentation is automatically obtained as sentences or parts of sentences cut by natural punctuation and sometimes as somewhat larger units made by the concatenation of several succeeding sentences. Within each segment, the software maps the distribution of the forms selected by the researcher for analysis (nouns, verbs, etc.). The results are then collated and brought together to be analysed. The software aims to cluster forms according to similarity and differences in the distribution of the vocabulary. The analysis is based on a series of bi-partitions calculated from the binary table (presence / absence) crossing lexical forms and segments. The set of partitions that maximizes the inter-classes inertia leads to the first set of partitions. Then the software tests whether each unit is exchangeable from one class to another to control the robustness of the result. After all the text segments have been partitioned into two classes, the algorithm repeats the operation at every step for the larger of the remaining classes until the required number of iterations have been done.

When applying Iramuteq to the corpus, I first applied the software to the raw, untagged text, and then to the corpus with lexica tagged according to number or categories of semantic equivalence. It should be noted that the Iramuteq software's distinction of each text as

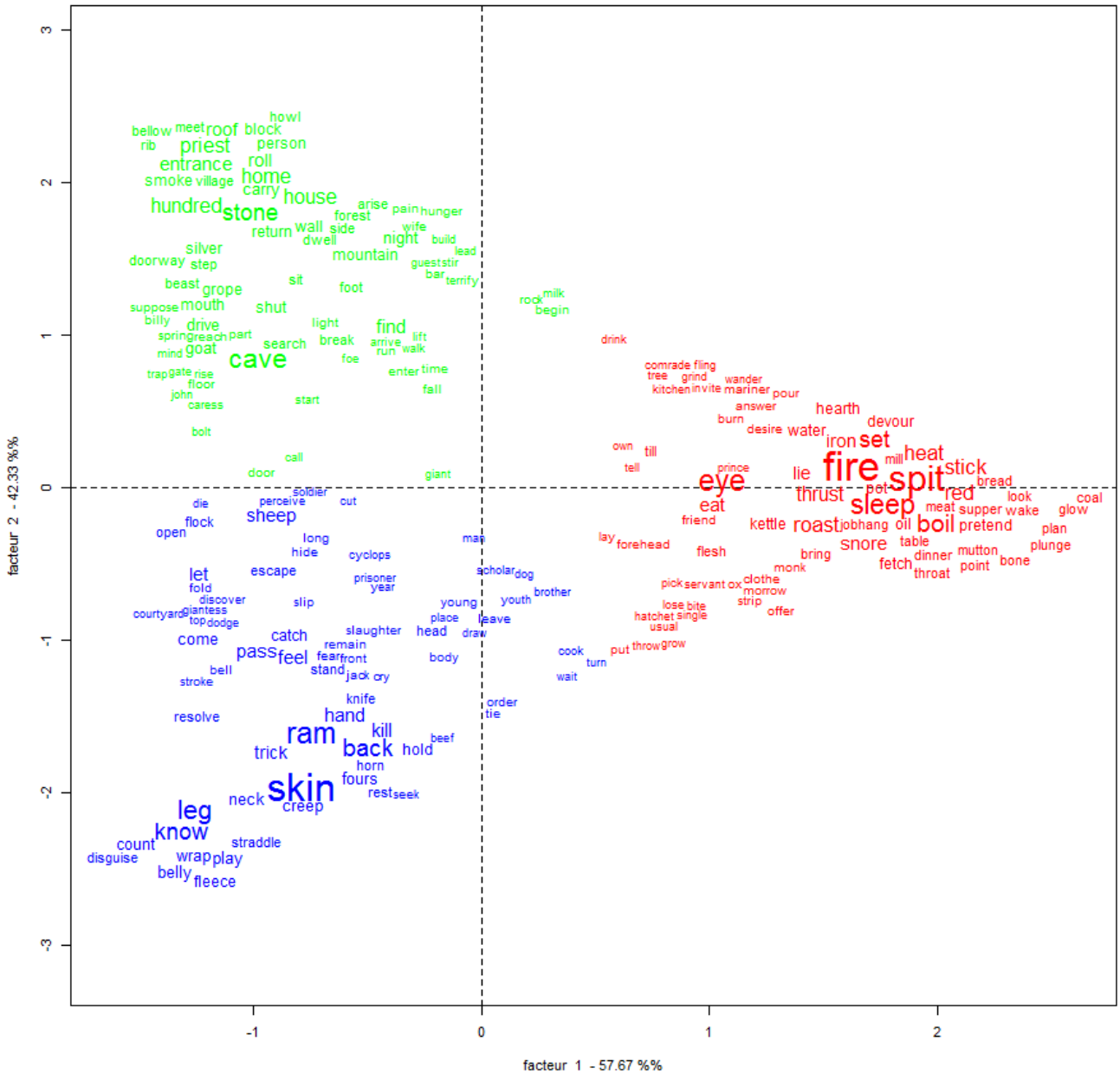

Figure 2. Principal Component Analysis of the untagged corpus.

a factor in analysis has implications, especially for analyzing agent roles. When the term for the adversary is consistent within each text but varies between texts, that agent will not appear to the software as consistently co-occurring with other elements of a motif. In other words, the variation between texts could produce interference in the data so that the agent would not appear as an element of the motif. To test for this problem, I therefore analyzed the sample corpus with both untagged and tagged texts in order to identify and measure the fluctuation – if any – resulting from this standardization of the vocabulary.

Iramuteq Correspondance Factorial Analysis

The most common nouns and verbs have been classified with a correspondence factorial analysis (method GNEPA, formerly called ALCESTE; factor 1: 57.67%; factor 2: 42.33%). This factorial analysis is based on calculations of inertia (or of variance) – i.e. of differences between the classes. It specifically reveals the contrasted use of vocabulary in the different lexical groups and the proximity of lexical items inside each of them.

The default options values of the program were maintained (size of rst 1 = 12; size of the rst 2 = 14; number of terminal classes during the first phase 1 = 10; minimum number of segments of text per class = automatic; minimum frequency of an analysed form: 2; maximum number of analysed form 3000; method of the singular value decomposition: irlba). The classification obtained is based on lexical proximity; it is not a matter of counting occurrences, but of relations among words, consequently 'giant' does not appear prominently in the principal component analysis shown in Figure 2 (untagged text), although it is the noun most frequently appearing in the corpus (184 instances including all morphological inflections), nor does 'giant' appear in Figures 3 or 5, which show the result with tagged text. Instead, the word appears floating in the center of the multiple groupings. It should be noted immediately that, as in the Treecloud analysis, each element occurs only once in a diagram, which means that semantic clustering of elements in any one group necessarily requires their exclusion from other groups.

Iramuteq's Principal Component Analysis found three classes, covering 38,4% (red), 32,3% (green) and 29,3% (blue) of segments in the untagged text, as seen in Figure 2. The first lexical group includes essentially the house of the giant and its lexical field ('home', 'house', 'stone', 'wall', 'mountain', 'arrive', 'enter', etc.) and the lexical field of the village ('house', 'home', 'entrance', 'smoke', etc.) Neither Thompson nor Uther address this as a motif. The second lexical group can be associated with the moment when the giant is blinded ('fire', 'spit', 'sleep', 'eye', 'roast', 'boil', 'forehead', etc. – K1010 and K1011). The third lexical group can be interpreted as reflecting the flight of the hero under the skin or the belly of a ram ('skin', 'ram', 'back', 'trick', 'disguise', etc. – K521, K521.1. and K603). The magic ring episode does not appear and might not be an essential motif, which is to be defined not in terms of the number of occurrences of the motif in the corpus, but rather by belonging to a core lexical group that appears constitutive of the tale. In order to prevent a circular representation of 'motif' (i.e. circularity as the method of text analysis circularly defining the phenomenon that is its object of study according to the parameters through which it is identified), the data obtained should be carefully re-analysed with other algorithms. Furthermore, our result should be reproduced with a larger database.

With the first tagged text (cyclops = giant), represented in Figures 3 and 4, the scores of the factors are far worse than those obtained with the untagged data (Factor 1: 31.02%; factor 2: 27.39%, for a total of 58.41% versus a total of 100% for the untagged data); this Principal Component (Figure 3) explains fewer things from a statistical point of view and so appears less reliable. Five categories were found. Whereas the untagged data presented three groupings on a more or less evenly distributed grid, the tagged data presented two groupings as outliers on the grid, while three are interpenetrating to varying degrees. Group (1), which appears here in red, covers 22.72% of the segments in the text, and presents a

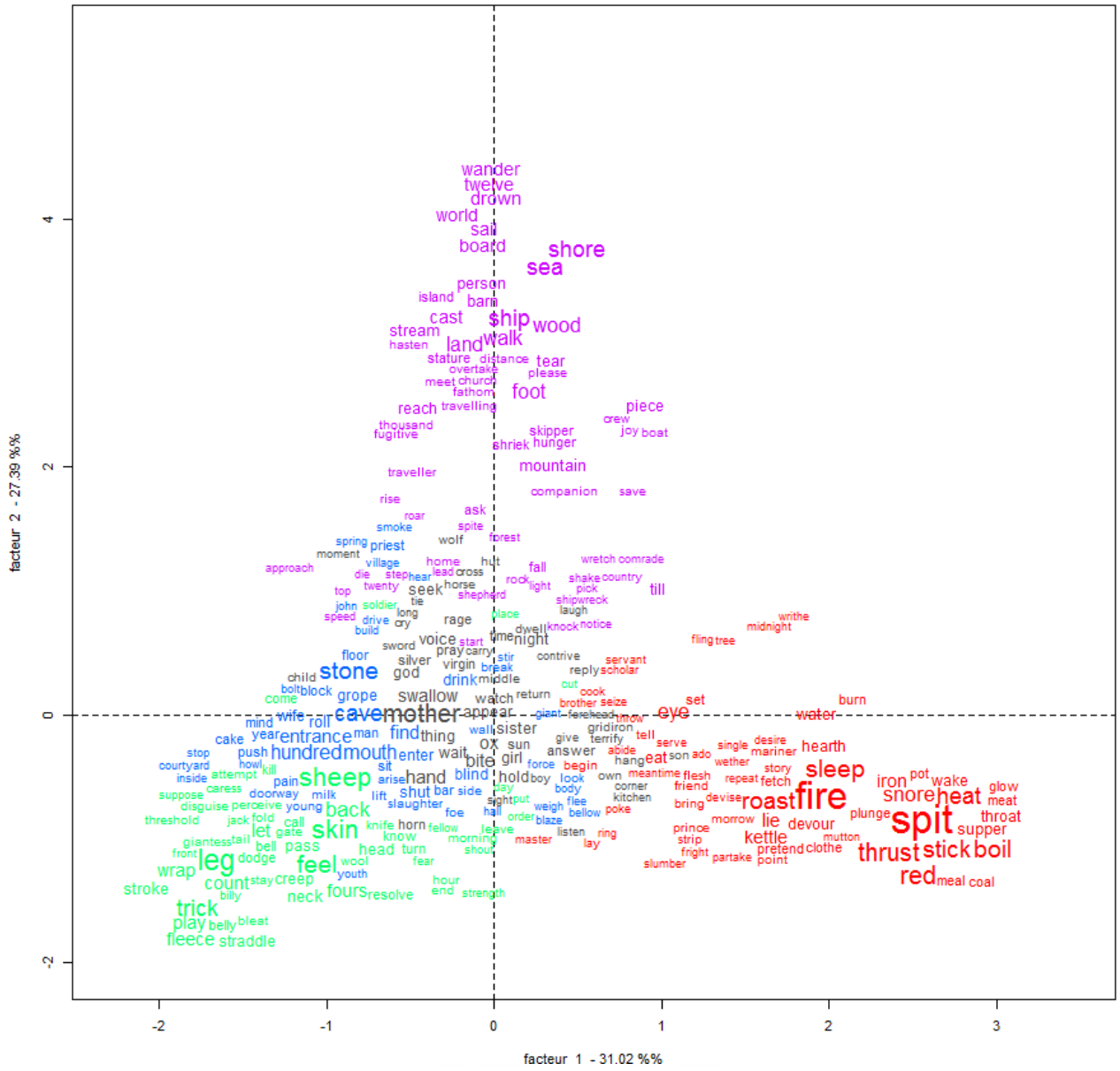

Figure 3. Principal Component Analysis of the Tagged texts 1 corpus (all terms for monster = 'giant').

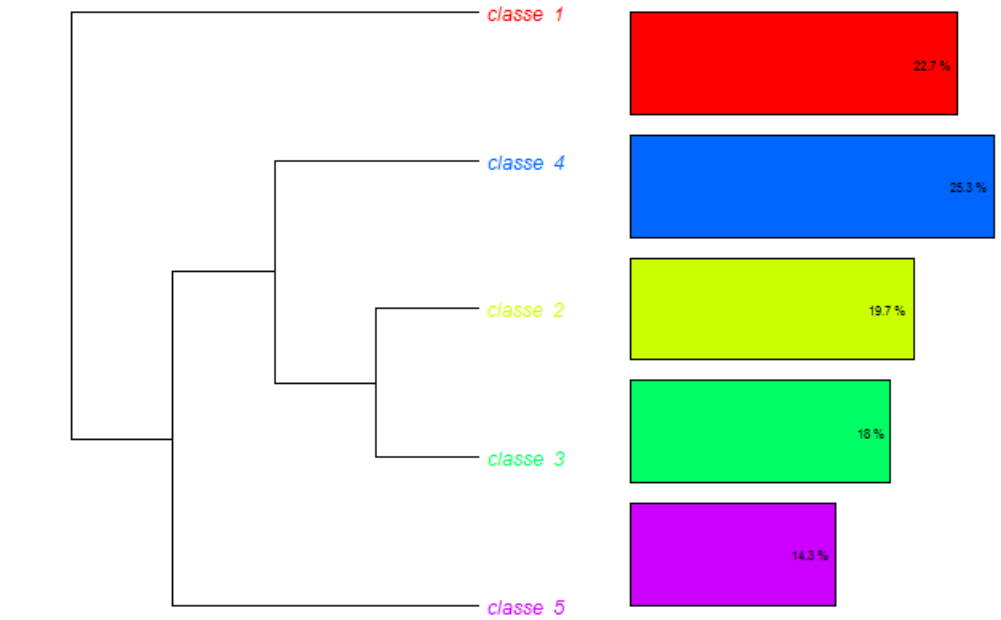

Figure 4. Dendrogram of the Principal Component Analysis in Figure 3. Percentages represent the percentage of segments of the texts.

fairly cohesive grouping that centers on the words ‘fire’, ‘spit’, ‘eye’, ‘thrust’, ‘boil’, ‘stick’, ‘red’, ‘roast’, ‘heat’, ‘snore’, ‘sleep’, with a number of minor words. This group was also one of the three groups in the analysis of the untagged corpus, although here with a slightly different concentration. The appearance of ‘single’ near ‘eye’ may here point to the unique eye of the monster found in several variants and the way used by the protagonist to blind him (‘thrust’ points toward the ‘glowing mass thrust into the eye’ of K1011). Group (2) only appears distinguished as a group for the Tagged texts 1 corpus. It covers 19.67% of the segments and is presented here in black at the center of the chart, interpenetrating all other groups while lacking any words more prominent than ‘mother’. This scattered group appears connected to human relations (‘mother’, ‘voice’, ‘sister’, ‘girl’, ‘son’ ‘man’, ‘virgin’, ‘boy’, ‘child’) and interactions (‘voice’, ‘laugh’, ‘answer’, ‘pray’, ‘reply’). Group (3) in green and covering 18,03% of the segments, presents the words ‘sheep’, ‘skin’, ‘leg’, ‘back’, ‘trick’, ‘count’, ‘belly’, ‘kill’, and so forth. ‘Sheep’ and ‘skin’ appear as quite pronounced elements, with ‘sheep’ the more prominent element here, in contrast to ‘ram’ in Figure 2, where the corresponding group is set apart. This cluster appears to correlate quite strikingly with the hero’s escape under the skin or the belly of a ram and can be interpreted as referring to the relevant narrative sequence (motifs K521, K521.1. and K603). Group 4 centers on the words ‘stone’, ‘cave’, ‘mouth’, ‘entrance’, ‘roll’, ‘enter’, ‘block’, ‘house’ and so forth, which are represented in a somewhat larger size. The group lacks particularly centralized elements although it was a clearly distinct group in the analysis of the untagged data, where it also exhibited more prominent words. This group points towards the home of the giant. In group (5), covering 14.29% of the segments here shown in pink, the larger words ‘ship’, ‘sea’, ‘shore’, ‘walk’, ‘wood’, ‘walk’, ‘land’, ‘board’ belong to the lexical field for travel.

Although the extensive interpenetration of Groups (3) and (4) may be because of a more regular co-occurrence of their constituents overall, this does not explain why these would have appeared as clearly distinguished groupings in Figure 2. The tagging of the agent adversary seems to have led to a much more distinctive clustering of elements that appear associated with the blinding. This has produced a shift in the grid and distribution in it. At the same time, tagging elements associated with the giant’s livestock has also affected the outcome: in Figure 2, ‘ram’ is associated with ‘skin’, ‘sheep’ is at the periphery of the grouping close to the cluster linked to the cave, and ‘goat’ is grouped with the cave cluster (with implications for the identification of the lexical item ‘goat’ with the giant’s livestock but not with the escape of the hero). Thus the tagging of the data has increased the potential representation of two motifs, one of which was not reflected in the untagged data, while situating the distinct groupings associable with the escape and location together.

The second tagged corpus is identical to the first except that ‘cyclops’ (= ‘one-eyed’) is separated from other terms for monster. The result (factor 1: 51,37%; factor 2: 48,63%) is similar to the analysis of the untagged corpus in the sense that it produces three groups on an evenly distributed grid. The first (31,07%) includes the words ‘sheep’, ‘skin’, ‘leg’, ‘pass’, ‘hand’, ‘back’, ‘horn’, ‘belly’ and points towards the hero’s escape. In contrast to both the untagged data and the Tagged texts 1 corpus, the elements associated with the escape do not exhibit a coherent grouping: for example, ‘cave’ (and ‘village’) group with ‘sheep’ while ‘home’ appears with the second cluster. In the second cluster, ‘wood’, ‘land’, ‘ship’, ‘walk’, ‘sea’, ‘shore’, ‘foot’, ‘drown’, ‘board’, and ‘home’ seem linked with the journey of the hero, which was not distinguished in the untagged data which also appeared in a slightly different configuration in the Tagged texts 1 corpus. Class 3 shows the words ‘fire’, ‘spit’, ‘eye’, ‘boil’, ‘stick’, ‘heat’, ‘thrust’, ‘red’, and so forth, pointing towards the blinding of the monster.

Across the three tests, groups associable with the blinding of the adversary and with the escape of the hero can be observed in all three cases. Tagging the terms for the livestock of the adversary appears to have

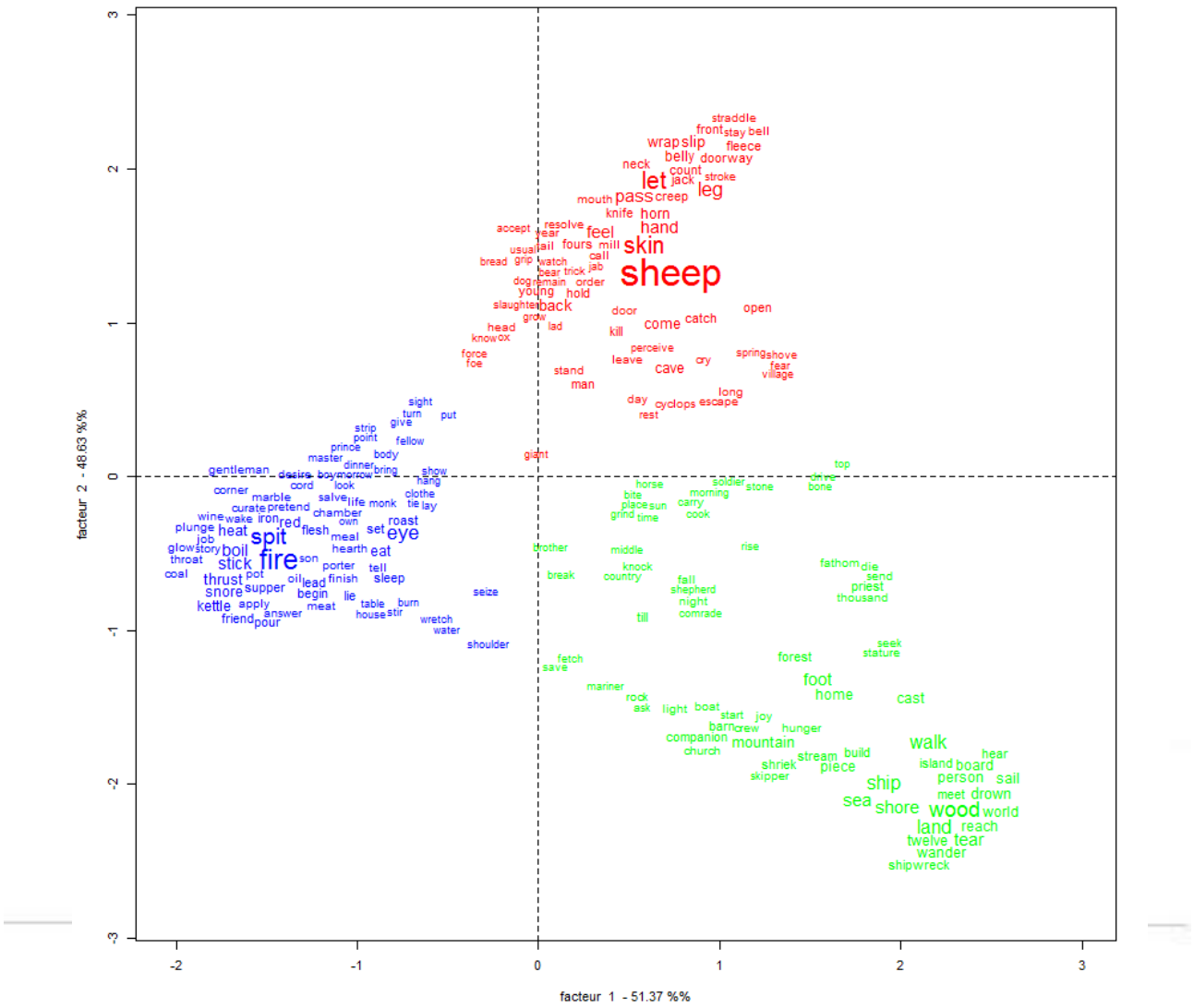

Figure 5. Principal Component Analysis of Tagged texts 2 corpus ('cyclops' = 'one-eyed'; all other monsters = 'giant').

Table 2. Chart of results comparing motifs identified with ATU 1137 by Thompson and Uther against those which appear identified by the Iramuteq Correspondance Factorial Analysis. (G100: Giant ogre, Polyphemus; F531: Giant; F512: Person unusual as to his eyes; K1011: Eye-remedy. Under pretence of curing eyesight, the trickster blinds the dupe. (Often with a glowing mass thrust into the eye.); K1010: Deception through false doctoring; K602: 'Noman'; K521.1: Escape by dressing in animal (bird, human) skin; K603: Escape under ram's belly; K521: Escape by disguise; D1612.1: Magic objects betray fugitive. Give alarm when fugitive escapes; PROPOSED MOTIF 1: Hero's habitat and relationship; PROPOSED MOTIF 2: Monster habitat; PROPOSED MOTIF 3: The journey; PROPOSED MOTIF 4: The monster owns sheep.)

Motif	**Untagged text**	**Tagged text 1**	**Tagged text 2**
G100/ F531	*Not found*	*Not found*	*Not found*
F512	Group 2 (forehead?)	Group 2 (forehead?)	*Not found*
K1011/K1010	Group 2	Group 1	Group 3
K602	*Not found*	*Not found*	*Not found*
K521.1/K603/K521	Group 3	Group 4	Group 1
D1612.1	*Not found*	*Not found*	*Not found*
PROPOSED MOTIF 1	Group 1	Group 2	*Not found*
PROPOSED MOTIF 2	Group 1	Group 3	Group 2 ?
PROPOSED MOTIF 3	Group 1 ?	*Not found*	Group 2
PROPOSED MOTIF 4	Group 3 ?	Group 4 ?	Group 1 ?

been significant in the intermingling of groups associated with the hero's escape and the place of habitation. The dissolution of the group associated with the place, when 'cyclops' (grouping closer to 'sheep') is distinguished from 'giant' while 'ogre' and other terms are not, is rather surprising.

To sum up, Table 2 offers an overview of the motifs for which potential evidence could be identified in the data using Iramuteq's Principle Component Analysis.

These analyses of tagged texts confirms the three categories found in the untagged data, but only two of these consistently, and they added three additional ones. The results seem robust and the variation in the lexical surface texture of texts may affect much less than what was initially expected in the outcome of analysis, although significant variations in some areas were clearly evident. However, it is noteworthy that, for example, G100: Giant ogre, Polyphemus / F531: Giant does not appear as a prominent element, but is rather represented in small font near the center of the three distributed groupings in Figures 2 and 5, suggesting a more or less equal association with each of these groups.

Iramuteq Similarities Analysis

A similarities analysis has also been done (index: co-occurrence; layout: fuchterman reingol; maximum tree; size of text: 10). This approach is based on properties of the connectivity of the corpus. The result is the graphic tree shown in Figure 6 (untagged text) and in Figure 7 (tagged text), where nodes are

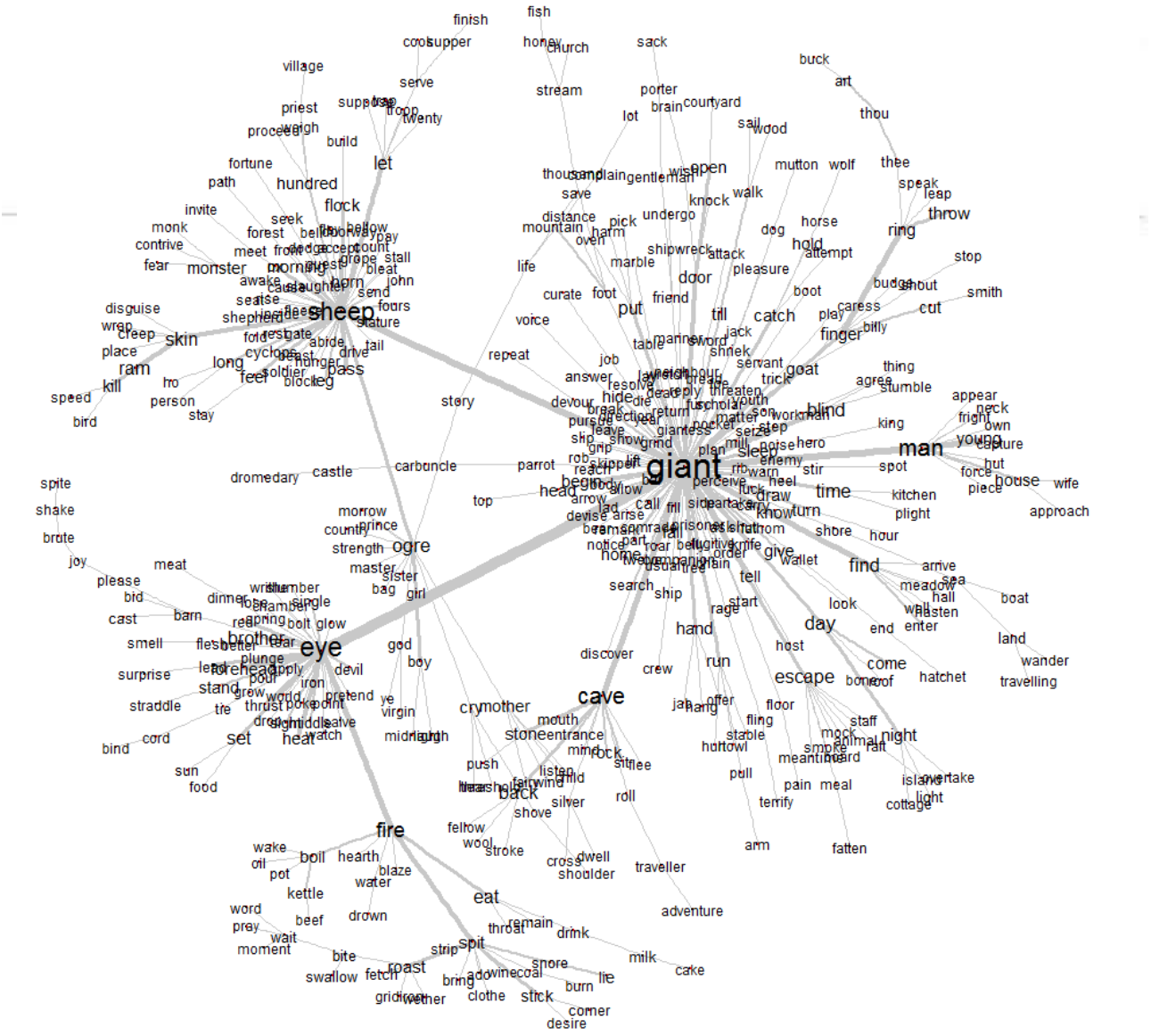

Figure 6. Similarities Analysis of the untagged corpus.

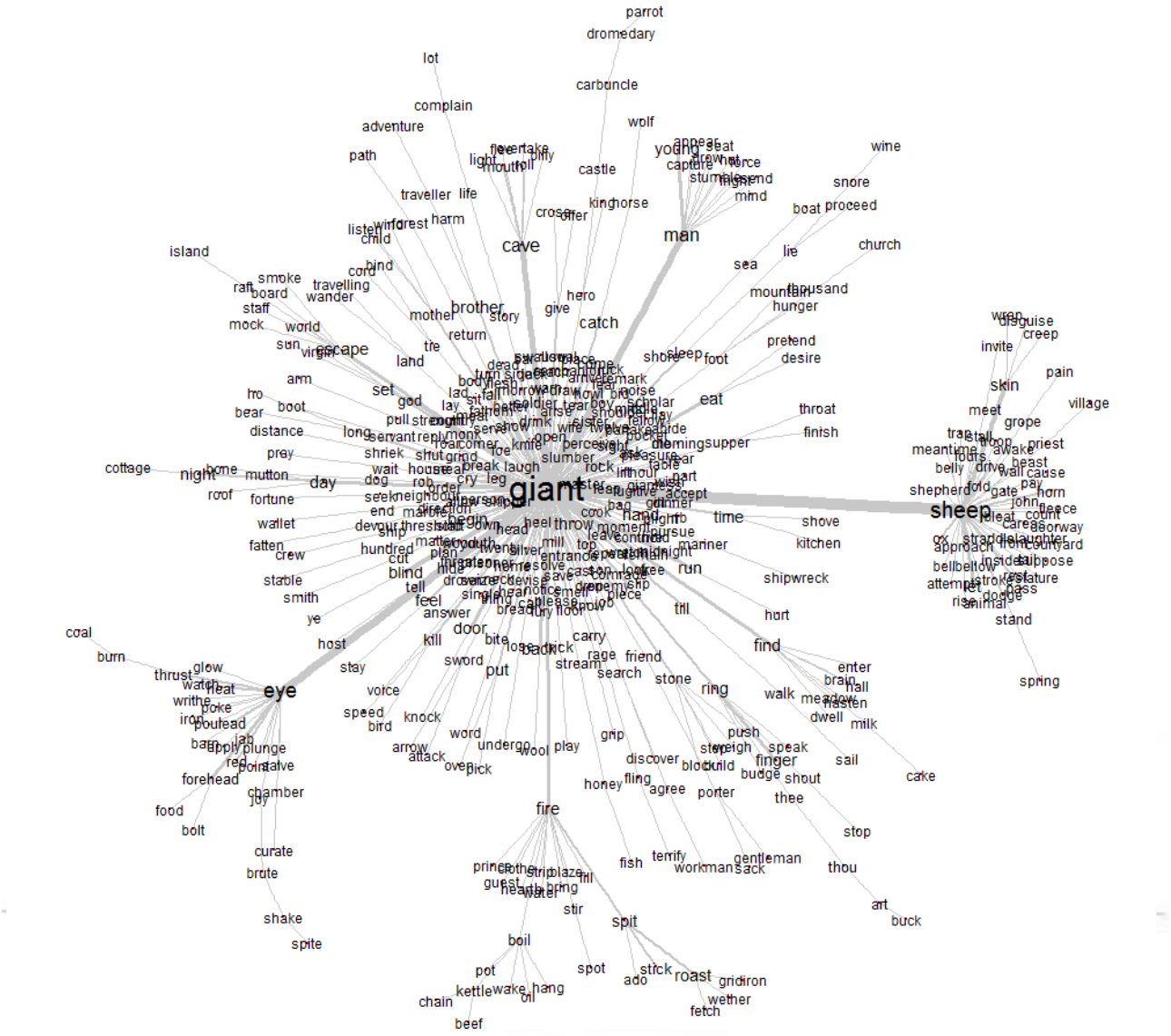

Figure 7. Similarities Analysis of the Tagged text 1 corpus (all terms for monster = 'giant').

lexically based elements revealed in the form of lexical communities.

This algorithm shows the proximity between the elements (co-occurrence). With the untagged data, the 'giant' (F.531) is the central figure, according to the fact that he should be associated with all essential motifs of the tale-type. Tree 6 allows the word 'giant' to be connected to many lexical groups, and it is linked to many important groups, organized around the words 'eye' (singular; F512), 'sheep', 'man' and 'cave'. These words, bigger than the others, could be the most important categories of being, around which less important beings, actions or objects could be organized. Only two groups seem to be very important: the cluster surrounding 'eye' is linked to two small groups: 'fire' and 'spit' (K1010 and K1011); the cluster surrounding 'sheep' is linked with the smaller groups 'ogre' (G100) and 'skin' (K521, K521.1. and K603). These results generally correspond to the group 2 and the group 3 found with the principal component analysis shown in Figure 2. It is noteworthy that 'ogre' appears in a position centered among the smaller clusters but connected to 'sheep' rather than to 'giant'. On the one hand, 'ogre' and 'giant' appear to function as mutually exclusive terms in the corpus, thus 'ogre' would not be linked as co-occurring with 'giant'. On the other hand, 'ogre' is associated with the same motifs but only links to one of these. The Iramuteq Similarities Analysis only allows each element to appear once in the tree and only allows semantic relations to branch outward, thus 'ogre' cannot be linked to elements in other branches from 'giant' although its position in the tree seems otherwise to reflect its relationship to them. A small group around the words 'finger' and 'ring' can be associated with the

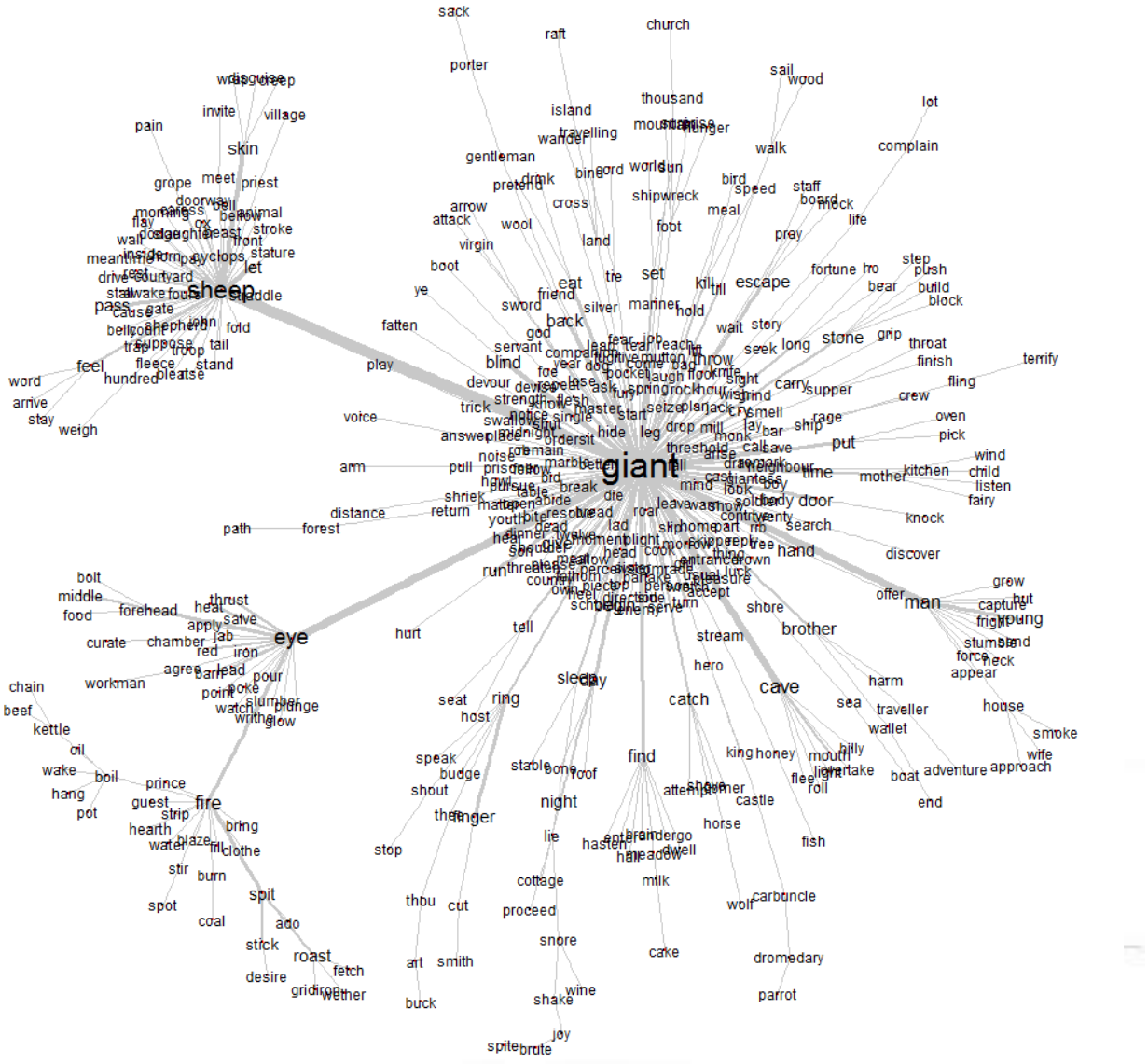

Figure 8. Similarities Analysis of the Tagged text 2 corpus ('cyclops' = 'one-eyed'; all other monsters = 'giant').

motif B1612.1. Another small group points toward the ogre's habitat (around 'cave').

The degree to which these can be seen as unambiguously linked to motifs in narration is problematized by words that appear fundamental to the motif but are dispersed elsewhere in the diagram. A striking example is precisely the linkage of 'eye', 'fire' and 'spit' that we are likely to associate with the motif of blinding the adversary (especially K1011) on the basis of our previous knowledge of the tale. However, the word 'blind' is distantly removed from these elements on another side of the cluster around 'giant'. Put another way, the key semantic element of the motif is absent from the prominent lexical cluster with which it seems most readily identifiable.

The program was relaunched with the same tagged texts as in Figures 3 and 5; significantly. The results are shown in Figures 7 and 8, which show less detailed yet similar clusters.

An overview of comparisons is surveyed in Table 3.

The untagged corpus produced a tree with wider dispersal and many more smaller branches in Figure 6 than the tagged corpora in Figures 7 and 8, as was expected. Tagging the term for the adversary and his livestock significantly tightened the groupings around each lexical-semantic center. This did not, however, significantly impact the centers for 'giant', 'sheep', 'eye' or 'fire', although the smaller centers 'cave' and 'man' were reduced in relative prominence while the center of 'ogre' was eliminated entirely.

Our results show that statistical tools can be placed productively in dialogue with motifs already claimed to be present by Thompson and Uther (e.g. K1011 / K1010, K521.1. / K521 / K603). More significantly,

Table 3. Chart of results comparing motifs identified with ATU 1137 by Thompson and Uther against those which appear identified by Iramuteq Similarities Analysis. (G100: Giant ogre, Polyphemus; F531: Giant; F512: Person unusual as to his eyes; K1011: Eye-remedy. Under pretence of curing eyesight the trickster blinds the dupe. (Often with a glowing mass thrust into the eye.); K1010: Deception through false doctoring; K602: 'Noman'; K521.1: Escape by dressing in animal (bird, human) skin; K603: Escape under ram's belly; K521: Escape by disguise; D1612.1: Magic objects betray fugitive. Give alarm when fugitive escapes; PROPOSED MOTIF 1: Hero's habitat and relationship; PROPOSED MOTIF 2: The Capture of the hero; PROPOSED MOTIF 3: Monster habitat PROPOSED MOTIF 4: The journey; PROPOSED MOTIF 5: The monster owns sheep.)

Motif	**Untagged text**	**Tagged text 1**	**Tagged text 2**
G100/F531	Around 'giant'	Around 'giant'	Around 'giant'
F512	Around 'eye' ('forehead', 'middle')	Around 'eye' ('forehead')	Around 'eye' ('forehead', 'middle')
K1011/K1010	Around 'fire' & 'spit'	Around 'fire', 'spit' & 'boil'	Around 'fire'
K602	*Not found*	*Not found*	*Not found*
K521.1/K603/K521	Around 'sheep' & 'skin'	Around 'sheep' & 'skin'	Around 'sheep' & 'skin'
D1612.1	Around 'ring' (small cluster)	Around 'ring' (small cluster)	Around 'ring' (small cluster)
PROPOSED MOTIF 1	Around 'man' (small cluster)	Not found	*Not found*
PROPOSED MOTIF 2	*Not found*	Around 'man' (small cluster)	Around 'man' (small cluster)
PROPOSED MOTIF 3	Around 'cave'	Around 'cave' (?)	Around 'cave' (?)
PROPOSED MOTIF 4	*Not found*	*Not found*	*Not found*
PROPOSED MOTIF 5	Around 'sheep'	Around 'sheep'	Around 'sheep'

these tools also makes it possible to consider new motifs, such as 'the home of the giant is a cave' (around the word 'cave'), 'a giant owns sheep' (around 'sheep'), 'a young man is captured' (around 'man').

Conclusion

When comparing the Iramuteq analysis to the the classical motifs identified with this tale by Thompson and Uther, it was possible to propose good correspondences with many of them, as shown in Table 4.

As one can see, the software remains far from fully satisfactory. It only found K1010/K1011 (the blinding event) and K521.1./ K.603 / K.521 (escape under the skin). In more than 50% of cases, one can accept the detection of F512 (Person unusual

Table 4. Chart comparing results from Tables 2 and 3.

Motif	**Correspondence factorial analysis (% of the results)**	**Similarities analysis (% of the results)**
G100/ F531	*Not found*	100 %
F512	66%	100 %
K1011/K1010	100 %	100 %
K602	*Not found*	*Not found*
K521.1/K603/K521	100 %	100 %
D1612.1	*Not found*	100 %
PROPOSED MOTIF 1	66 %	33 %
PROPOSED MOTIF 2	*Not found*	66 %
PROPOSED MOTIF 3	100 %	100 % (?)
PROPOSED MOTIF 4	33 %	*Not found*
PROPOSED MOTIF 5	100 %	100 %

as to his eyes), even if it remains questionable (to find the lexical cluster linking to each motif, see above). D1612.1 (the ring episode) and G100 were found in only 50% of the results. To explain this difference, we must remember first that tests on the corpus were problematic. Certain classic motifs such as the 'Noman' false name may reduce to a single lexical item according to this approach. Similarly, Iramuteq automatically reduces words to their root forms, and thus cannot distinguish between 'eye' and 'eyes', which might be relevant for the cyclops having one eye as opposed to two (F512). These elements have highlighted problems of identifying all the elements purely on the basis of the lexical surface of the text because the single term may vary from text to text and also vary with other lexica such as personal names and pronouns, as well as being rendered through description as opposed to a keyword.

Our method may have detected two new motifs: 'the monster's habitat is a cave' and 'the monster has sheep'. However, when considering comparison with Thompson's motif index, it is necessary to observe that Thompson was concerned with motifs that could be found across tale-types, and consequently motifs as quite abstract or general elements. In contrast, the present study analyzes only a single tale-type in order to identify recurrent elements characteristic of that type at the lexical surface of texts in translation. Of course, the findings using this corpus necessarily remain conditional on the degree to which this corpus is representative of the tradition addressed, and the quality of information produced is dependent on the quality of the sources. However, if we imagine for the sake of experiment that these texts ideally render English lexical equivalents of the sources of the tradition, it is not clear whether these studies reveal 'motifs' as conventional units of this particular tale-type or 'motifs' at the more abstract level of Thompson's types. Additional research in this field is certainly needed. Similar studies across narratives of different types are required to confirm the new motifs preliminarily identified here and to find others. Moreover, the use of multiple types of software and algorithms is highly recommended to compare the results. Additionally, if, following the present study, we define a motif as a semantic attractor, a central point which underpins a set of related words, it is also necessary to observe that a constellation of lexica such as 'skin', 'ram', 'back', 'trick' and 'disguise' cannot necessarily be reconstituted as a single, coherent motif. Similarly, the constellation 'fire', 'spit' and 'eye' might be interpretable as a blinding motif, but this constellation begins to appear chaotic when it is accompanied by 'sleep', 'roast' and 'boil'. At the present state of research, it is interesting to apply these tools in research on motifs, but it is not possible to reconstitute motifs from the information produced without presupposing narrative elements (as already described motifs) and placing these as well as the information produced by analysis in dialogue with the source data.

This pilot study initially set out to use software to demonstrate 'motifs', which proved highly problematic in a number of respects. However, the outcome did produce a new model for approaching tales in terms of semantic networks of elements. The graphic representations in Figures 2–3 and 5–8 are not representations of motifs *per se*, but of whole tales. Given a particular tale, forthcoming software programs may determine if this story belongs to a particular tale-type (previously determined as a certain cloud of words) and if it could be brought closer to other tales belonging to the same group on the sole basis of the shared semantic elements.

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The U Version of *Snorra Edda*

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Snorra Edda has been preserved in four independent manuscripts. Codex Regius, Codex Wormianus and Codex Trajectinus are close to each other and can – in spite of certain differences – be said to represent one version, RTW. The text of Codex Upsaliensis is at several points very different from the other manuscripts and is usually seen as the sole representative of another version, U. What distinguishes the two versions is mainly the length and style of the narrative sections. The U version is, as a whole, remarkably shorter than RTW. Its style and narrative technique is terse and panoramic, mentioning only details necessary for the plot or the purpose of the story, while the style and narrative technique of RTW is broad, scenic, and full of rhetorically effective but factually irrelevant details (a fuller analysis is given in Sävborg 2012: 13–16).

Scholars have long argued about which version is closest to the original. Scholars such as Finnur Jónsson (1898: 306–355) and D.O. Zetterholm (1949: 46–54) argued for the priority of RTW, while e.g. Eugen Mogk (1879: 510–537) and Friedrich Müller (1941: 146) argued that U best represents Snorri's original version. Recently, Heimir Pálsson has revived the arguments in favor of U's priority in the introduction to his edition of U (Heimir Pálsson 2012: cxvii). The main scholarly overviews describe the matter as unsolved (e.g. Lindow 1988: 352; Faulkes 1992: 601).

So far, scholars have used criteria such as the degree of quality, accuracy and logic to determine the priority. Just a few examples will be mentioned. Eugen Mogk points to details where U, according to him, has the better text ("Dass dieser lesart die von A [= U] […] vorzuziehen ist, unterliegt wol keinem zweifel" ['That this reading in A (= U) [...] is preferable, there can indeed be no doubt'], etc.; Mogk 1879: 528), while RTW, in contrast, has elements – absent in U – that are "störend" ['disturbing'] (1879: 508). He also mentions alleged contradictions, inconsequences and illogical features in RTW, which in the corresponding parts of U are consequent and logical (1879: 511–514). For him, these are strong arguments for the priority of U. Finnur Jónsson, on the other hand, comes to a conclusion opposite to Mogk by arguing in exactly the same way. He points to cases where "det eneste logiske" ['the only thing that is logical'] is found in RTW but not in U (Finnur Jónsson 1898: 335). Friedrich Müller turned the discussion upside-down in 1941. He argued in favor of Mogk's conclusion that U represents the original version, and that RTW is a reworking of it, but his arguments were exactly opposite to Mogk's. For Müller, U can be established

Table 1. Comparison of narrative sections of U and RTW based on the relative proportion of U text in comparison to the Codex Regius text (R).

U is 23–85 % of R		U is 89–100 % of R	
Prologue	(58 %)		
Frame narrative Gylfi	(69 %)		
Creation	(63 %)		
		Bifrǫst	(97 %)
		Ásgarðr and environs	(96 %)
		Æsir	(98 %)
		Loki and his family	(99 %)
		Ásynjur	(89 %)
Freyr and Gerðr	(34 %)		
Valhǫll	(67 %)		
Wind	(66 %)		
Giant masterbuilder	(66 %)		
Skiðblaðnir	(74 %)		
Þórr and Útgarðaloki	(63 %)		
Þórr and Hymir	(47 %)		
Baldr's death	(47 %)		
Loki's punishment	(64 %)		
Ragnarǫk	(64 %)		
Frame narrative Gylfi (end)	(31%)		
Frame narrative Ægir and Bragi	(36 %)		
Þjazi	(47 %)		
Skaldic mead	(43 %)---		
		Hrungnir	(100 %)
		Geirrøðr	(100 %)---
		Hjaðningavíg	(93 %)---
		Dwarf smiths	(99 %)---
		Otrgjǫld	(91 %)
Fáfnir and the gold	(23 %)		
Hrólfr kraki	(85 %)---		
Grotti	(23 %)		

as the original version, *not* because it is the better one, the most logical, etc., but because it is inferior, less logical, and so forth in comparison to RTW. He agrees with Finnur Jónsson's judgment about U's more illogical and worse style, but for him, in contrast to Finnur, these are arguments in favor of U's priority, and the higher quality of RTW at these points bears witness to that version's secondary status, since, according to Müller, it has been improved through revision and the illogical and failed features have been deleted. In short: different scholars have come to different conclusions in spite of similar criteria, and they have not been able to agree whether lack of quality, accuracy and logic should be criteria for primary or secondary status. Other methods are therefore needed, and the differences between the versions have to be explained.

Eiríks saga rauða is also preserved in two versions, in which the text also diverges in terms of length and style. Here, we know that the Hauksbók text is a reworking of a text that was close to the version found in Skálholtsbók; and we also know that it is in the Hauksbók manuscript itself that the revision takes place (see Jansson 1944). By analyzing the relation between U and RTW in light of the relation between Hauksbók and Skálholtsbók, new knowledge can be gained about the revision and transmission of *Snorra Edda*.

In 1879, Eugen Mogk made an important observation which has remained unnoticed in scholarship on *Snorra Edda*. He observed that, on the one hand, U and RTW certainly *are* very different in most sections, mainly by U's significantly shorter text and terser, fact-oriented style – which is the well-known main

Table 2. Relative proportions of sections of Eiríks saga rauða in Hauksbók in comparison to the Skálholtsbók text.

Hand	H is 98–120% of S		H is 71–94% of S	
Secretary 1	Ch. 1	(101 %)		
	Ch. 2	(102 %)		
	Ch. 3	(98 %)		
	Ch. 4	(105 %)		
	Ch. 5	(101 %)		
	Ch. 6	(105 %)		
	Ch. 7 (main part)	(112 %)		
Haukr			Ch. 7 end + Ch. 8	(71 %)
			Ch. 9+beginning of 10	(86 %)
Secretary 2	Ch. 10 end	(104 %)		
	Ch. 11	(115 %)		
	Ch. 12 + end of ch. 13	(120 %)		
Haukr			Ch. 13	(78 %)
			Ch. 14	(94 %)

difference mentioned above – but that, on the other hand, they in some other sections are very close to each other and of equal length (Mogk 1879: 500–501). This observation is correct, and in my research, I have examined more closely these two types of relation between the versions (similar vs. non-similar). Usually, the shift from one type of relation to the other (between similar and non-similar text) is sharp and comes between two sentences (see Sävborg 2012: 35–37). Mogk saw no pattern in this, but when all sections in U's narrative parts are directly compared to RTW regarding the length, it is clear that these two types of relation (similar vs. non-similar) between the versions form five distinct blocks in U, as shown in Table 1 (for a full explanation and discussion of this figure, see Sävborg 2012: 40–43).

In my opinion, this pattern should be interpreted in the light of a similar pattern of blocks in Hauksbók's version of *Eiríks saga rauða* in its relation to Skálholtsbók. In Hauksbók, the text is reproduced by three different scribes (Haukr Erlendsson and the so-called 1st and 2nd secretaries), one of which significantly shortens and reworks the text (Haukr) whereas the other two reproduce their source more faithfully (especially the 1st secretary, but also the 2nd secretary); as a consequence, the two types of relation between the versions form blocks in the text, dependent on the scribe in Hauksbók, as shown in Table 2.

In my view, the explanation for the shift between the types of relation is the same in the case of U–RTW as in Hauksbók–Skálholtsbók: we have to do with more than one redactor, and they have followed different principles, one faithfully reproducing the model, the other strongly reworking it. From these findings, the old problem should be taken up again: has the revision taken place in the U or in the RTW version?

Here I wish to make two important premises:

1. The RTW and U versions each generally has its own distinctive style, *one distinctive style in RTW and another in U* (it is not only a matter of a relative difference in length).
2. The sections with a similar text in RTW and U must bear witness of a common source; thus *these sections provide us with knowledge about the common source of the U and RTW versions*.

If we combine these two points we have a new tool with which to solve the old problem of which of the two versions that best represents the common source. We should look at the sections with similar text in RTW and U – i.e.: those texts which bear witness of the common source – and see which of the two distinctive styles we have there – that style must reasonably be the distinctive style of the common source.

If we now look at sections where U and RTW have a similar text (and thus bear witness of the common original), such as the Hrungnir story or the story about Loki and his children, we get a clear picture of the stylistic tendency (for a close analysis of this, see Sävborg 2012: 29–31, 45–47). The style of these sections corresponds perfectly with the typical style of RTW (broad, scenic, full of

rhetorically effective but factually irrelevant details) but diverges significantly from the typical style of U (terse, panoramic, mentioning only details necessary for the plot or the purpose of the story). The explanation is reasonably that the U version is created by (at least) two different redactors, both of which are reproducing a text close to RTW. One reproduces this source faithfully, while the other reworks it, and shortens it, strongly. The conclusion is that the U version, at least for the narrative prose, represents a revision of a text of RTW type.

Elaborated texts on this subject are found in Sävborg 2012 (in Swedish) and Sävborg 2013 (in English).

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Goddesses Unknown II: On the Apparent Old Norse Goddess Ilmr

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The present article focuses on the figure of Ilmr, obscurely referred to in a *þula* (plural *þulur*) or metrical list preserved in the *Prose Edda* as an *ásynja* (plural *ásynjur*, often glossed as 'goddess') but the subject of very little examination. This article acts as a thematic sequel to "Goddesses Unknown I: Njǫrun and the Sister-Wife of Njǫrðr", published in *RMN Newsletter* 5 (Hopkins 2012).

The *þula* in question, preserved in versions of *Skáldskaparmál*, presents a list of names of *ásynjur*:

> Nú skal Ásynj[ur] allar nefna:
> Frigg ok Freyja
> Fulla ok Snotra
> Gerðr ok Gefjun
> Gná Lofn Skaði
> Jǫrð ok Iðunn
> Ilmr Bil Njǫrun.
>
> Hlín ok Nanna
> Hnoss Rindr ok Sjǫfn
> Sól ok Sága
> Sign ok Vǫr.
>
> Þá er Vár, ok Syn
> verðr at nefna,
> en Þrúðr ok Rán
> þeim næst talið
> (Faulkes 1998:113–114).
>
> Now shall all *ásynjur* be named:
> Frigg and Freyja,
> Full and Snotra,
> Gerðr and Gefjun,
> Gná, Lofn, Skaði,
> Jǫrð and Iðunn,
> Ilmr, Bil, Njǫrun.
>
> Hlín and Nanna,
> Hnoss, Rindr, and Sjǫfn,
> Sól and Sága,
> Sign and Vǫr.
> Then are Vár and Syn
> to be named,
> but Þrúðr and Rán
> tallied next to them.

As mentioned in the first entry in this series, the Old Norse names *Ilmr* and *Njǫrun* are unique and alike in that, while both names appear in the above list of *ásynja* names in the

þulur of the *Prose Edda*, no narrative exists in the corpus featuring either of them. Both appear in the skaldic record, yet neither name has left an echo in the *rímur* record. However, unlike *Njǫrun*, the name *Ilmr* receives neither employment in eddic poetry nor any mention in the *Prose Edda* beyond her two attestations in *Skáldskaparmál*. Moreover, the two occurrences in *Skáldskaparmál* are both in *þulur* that may have been attached to the text in manuscript transmission rather than reflecting the knowledge or understanding of the individual responsible for writing or compiling the body of the *Prose Edda*. One of these attestations is in the list of *ásynjur* presented above and the second is in a list of base-words for woman-kennings. As a result, further information must be gained by philological analysis.

As in the case of Njǫrun, recent scholarship on the topic of Ilmr is all but silent. Like Njǫrun, Ilmr receives no entry (nor, it would seem, any other mention) in either the handbooks of John Lindow (2002) or Rudolf Simek (2007 [1993]). The *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde* (1973–2007) also appears to have nothing to say on the name. Andy Orchard (1997: 96) features a brief entry on Ilmr that simply states that she is listed as an *ásynjur* in the *þulur*. Perhaps the most coverage that this topic has received is from a (rather mysterious[1]) 1989 entry in an Icelandic handbook by Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (1989: 419).

The present article is therefore intended to act as a substitute for the missing English language handbook entries on Ilmr and engages in dialogue with the threads of inquiry raised by Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon.

Ilmr: 'Sweet-Scent'?

Ilmr did not entirely escape the analysis of earlier scholars. For example, in the postscript notes of his *Deutsche Mythologie*, Jacob Grimm observes that he has neglected to include Ilmr in his discussion of Germanic goddesses. Grimm says that the feminine Old Norse proper noun *ilmr* appears to be related to the masculine Old Norse common noun *ilmr* ['sweet scent']. (Grimm 1888: 1374.) This observation appears to have carried with it some currency; it seems to be the most frequently repeated proposal for the name thereafter.

Comparatively speaking, 'pleasant scent' (or, perhaps semantically, 'the pleasant-scented one') is a somewhat unexpected name for a goddess in the Old Norse record. No other Old Norse *ásynja*-name employs the element of scent or any other comparable sensory experience. Of course, the notion of a sweet-smelling goddess is hardly unheard of in comparative material. For example, the Greek goddess Aphrodite "is well known for her fragrance in literature and in cult" (Faulkner 2008: 143), and the role of scent in culture should not be underestimated (cf. McHugh 2012: 3–19). It would therefore not be surprising if this interpretation reflected, say, a (hypothetical) cult practice. However, while the two nouns are similar enough to posit an etymological relationship (or at least a perceived relation by then-contemporary speakers), morphologically *Ilmr* (accusative *Ilmi*, genitive *Ilmar*) and *ilmr* (accusative *ilm*, genitive *ilms*) are certainly two separate nouns. This separation combined with a lack of internal comparative material raises questions about accepting this interpretation at face value, and alternate explanations ought to be weighed.

Ilmr: A Valkyrie?

Rather than being attested in only one to three examples in skaldic poetry, there are nine occurrences of the name *Ilmr* in verses by seven different poets. This indicates that the name held an integrated position in the lexicon of skaldic poetry. Eight occurrences, however, are found in verses by 10th and 11th century poets (one undatable). Thus, the name is not simply absent from the mythography of *Edda* and its review of skaldic diction but also does not appear used in contemporary or later composition. In at least six cases, the name is used as a component of a kenning meaning 'woman'. Three of those instances are found in the love poetry attributed to the mid-10th century Kormákr Ǫgmundarson. He refers to his beloved Steingerðr once as *Ilmr sǫrva* ['Ilmr of necklaces'] (*Skj* B$_I$: 79), and twice as *Ilmr erma* ['Ilmr of sleeves'] (*Skj* B$_I$: 71, 76). A similar instance from love poetry is

attributed to Hallfrøðr Óttarsson (late 10th century and early 11th century), who refers to a woman as *Ilmr unnar dags* [‘Ilmr of the day of the wave’ > ‘Ilmr of GOLD’] (*Skj* B_I: 161). In a rather different context, the early 11th century skald, Bjǫrn *hítdœlakappi*, refers to a *dís* portending his death as *Ilmr armleggjar orma* [‘Ilmr of arm-serpents’ > ‘Ilmr of BRACELETS’] (*Skj* B_I: 282). Finally, an undated fragment quoted in the 13th century *Third Grammatical Treatise* refers to an unidentified woman as *Ilmr lýskála bála* [‘Ilmr of the fires of the fish-halls’ > ‘Ilmr of GOLD’] (*Skj* B_I: 600).

In two additional instances, the interpretation of the stanzas is less straightforward. In one of Kormákr’s stanzas and in one stanza in the early 11th century *Liðsmannaflokkr*, the name *Ilmr* appears to be used to mean ‘woman’ without any further qualifier, something known as a ‘half-kenning’ (on which see e.g. Meissner 1921: 74–78). Other interpretations have also been suggested: Finnur Jónsson interprets both of these stanzas as having true kennings. In Kormákr’s stanza, he suggests the kenning *hall-Ilmr* [‘stone-Ilmr’ > ‘Ilmr of JEWELRY’], invoking tmesis although *hall* is in the preceding couplet (*Skj* B_I: 73). In *Liðsmannaflokkr*, he suggested *ár-Ilmr* [‘food-Ilmr’], again involving tmesis across lines (*Skj* B_I: 393) and in this case producing a kenning with few or no parallels (Poole 2012: 1028).

Kennings for women of the form ‘(MYTHOLOGICAL NAME) of GOLD/ ORNAMENT/CLOTHING’ are a very common type (cf. Meissner 1921: 413–418). Often, the mythological name is that of an *ásynja*, whether the particular *ásynja* is well-attested or only poorly attested. In Kormákr Ǫgmundarson’s woman-kennings, we have examples of the *ásynja* names *Bil*, *Eir*, *Freyja*, *Frigg*, *Fríðr*, *Fulla*, *Gerðr*, *Gná*, *Gefn*, *Hlín*, *Hǫrn*, *Rindr*, *Sága*, *Sif*, *Nanna*, *Njǫrun*, and *Vár*. Less commonly, valkyrie names are used for this purpose. In Kormákr’s poetry, there are instances of *Gunnr*, *Hildr*, *Hrist*, and *Skǫgul*. Thus, if we see a mythological name used in woman kennings, we cannot know if the poet conceived of the being in question as an *ásynja* or as a valkyrie.

The final instance of Ilmr in skaldic poetry is in a stanza preserved in *Landnámabók*, pertaining to a narrative taking place in the mid-10th century. The poet’s name is given as Hrómundr *halti*. The stanza is lucid and appears well-preserved and it clearly contains the kenning *jalmr Ilmar* [‘racket of Ilmr’ > BATTLE], where *Ilmr* carries both alliteration and rhyme. This is closely analogous to other battle kennings formed with valkyrie names, such as *dynr Skǫglar* [‘din of Skǫgul’], *þrima Hildar* [‘noise of Hildr’], g*nýr Gǫndlar* [‘roar of Gunnr’], and *glaumr Gunnar* [‘din of Gunnr’]. Kennings of this type do not appear to have been formed with *ásynja*-names (cf. Meissner 1921: 176–202). We must conclude that the poet who composed the stanza in *Landnámabók* conceived of Ilmr as a valkyrie.

The above observation, that *Ilmr* is presented as a valkyrie in *Ilmar jalmr*, has led to the proposal that *Ilmr* may therefore have been the name of a valkyrie (beyond Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989: 419, cf. Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson 1931: 319). *Ilmr* would be a curious name for a valkyrie if the name is understood as ‘pleasant scent’ – one might expect something more of a *duann* [‘bad smell’] when death is involved. With few exceptions, valkyrie names consist of transparently martial characteristics with rather straightforward etymologies, sometimes in a compound. However, Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon raises the possibility that the name *Ilmr* may be etymologically connected with the aforementioned kenning element *jalmr* [‘noise’] (Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989: 419). In this case, *Ilmr* would be more in line with the valkyrie name *Hlǫkk* [‘noise, battle’] and therefore not atypical.[2]

It is notable that Ilmr, as both *ásynja* and apparent valkyrie, is not the only such being to fall within more than one ‘supernatural female’ parameter. Other examples include *Eir*, *Þrúðr*, and *Skuld*. Although *Eir* is curiously absent in the *þula* quoted at the beginning of this article, *Eir* is listed among a group of goddess-like beings in *Fjǫlsvinnsmál*, is explicitly listed as an *ásynja*

in *Gylfaginning*, and yet appears in a list of valkyrie names in a *þula* (Faulkes 2008: 176, but cf. Simek 2007 [1993]: 71–72). Like *Ilmr*, *Eir* does not fit the 'usual' valkyrie naming conventions: the noun is generally derived from the poetic common noun *eir* ['peace, clemency, mercy, help']. When used as a proper name in skaldic poetry, *Eir* is used as a name in woman-kennings as well as in a valkyrie-kenning but does not seem to have been used as a valkyrie-name (Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson 1931: 104). The name *Þrúðr*, identifiable as the name of Thor's daughter, appears in the aforementioned *þula* of *ásynjur* that leads this article, and yet she too appears among a list of valkyries, in this case in *Grímnismál* (st. 36). Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson (1931: 648 and cf. 178) also find this name as predominantly used in woman-kennings but also functioning as a valkyrie-name in battle-kennings in a few instances. The situation with *Skuld* is also interesting for comparison. While Skuld is nowhere attested as an *ásynja*, Skuld is described as a shield-wielding valkyrie in a valkyrie list in the poem *Vǫluspá* (st. 30) and appears in valkyrie lists in both *Gylfaginning* (referencing and adding to the aforementioned *Grímnismál* list) and in the same valkyrie *þula* as *Eir* (Faulkes 2007: 176). *Gylfaginning* also describes Skuld as a norn in a few instances (cf. also *Vǫluspá* 20 and also the use in *Grógaldr* 4), one of which occurs while explicitly also describing Skuld as a valkyrie (Faulkes 2007: 176). According to Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson's lexicon of skaldic poetry, however, this name does not appear to have had a place in skaldic diction in any capacity: they list only one use in a woman-kenning and observe that the reading is uncertain (Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson 1931: 514).

This situation of a female being belonging to multiple categories has not sat well with some scholars. Some have attempted to find an 'original' category or they have concluded that membership of these multiple categories should be seen as an invention or synthesis on the part of Snorri, or they have proposed that multiple, identically-named female supernatural beings who each fit more neatly into the category of norn, valkyrie, or *ásynja* were more likely than cross-category membership.[3]

On the other hand, the identification of names with different categories is also found in other contexts where cross-category membership seems unlikely, such as the use of *Þrór* as a name for Odin in skaldic kennings whereas it appears as a dwarf-name in a list in *Vǫluspá* (st. 12) (Sveinbjörn Egilsson & Finnur Jónsson 1931: 647), the Odin-name *Grímnir* appearing separately in *þulur* for *jǫtunn* and for goat names (*ibid*.: 205), or the name *Fjalarr* appearing identified with both dwarfs and *jǫtnar* (*ibid*.: 135). It should not be underestimated that some mythological names may have become attached to different categories over time and in different language areas, or that they may even have had different referents in different discourses, especially where they were less central or dropped out of use in areas of cultural practice that linked them to narration or ritual (as seems to have been the case with the common noun *þurs* as discussed in Frog 2013). Thus the use of *Ilmr* as a component in a battle-kenning in the manner of a valkyrie-name could be a symptom of the name's links to mythology weakening and shifting to a practical resource for meeting alliteration and/or rhyme in composing poetry.

A simpler explanation is that these various categories of female supernatural beings were not exclusive to one another. Freyja, for example, the most widely attested *ásynja*, oversees an afterlife field of the dead, bears the name *Valfreyja* ['Lady of the Slain'], and rides to choose among the dead in battle. Indeed, Freyja is described very much like an extremely powerful valkyrie (see, for example, Näsström 1995: 86–89). Among the valkyries, norns, *dísir*, and among at least some of the *ásynjur*, the general concept seems to be roughly the same. These female supernatural beings may collectively be described as strongly associated with death, *wyrd*, and prophecy. Perhaps these categories should be understood more as a point of emphasis of their function or character rather than as iron-clad parameters.

Ilmr: 'Elm' / 'Tree dís'?

In his entry on *Ilmr*, Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon most favors an interpretation of *Ilmr* as a 'tree *dís*' by way of an etymological connection between *Ilmr* and the common noun *almr* ['elm'] (Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989: 419). If the word is connected to *almr*, then a variety of new potential associations opens up, and subsequently some diachronic discussion regarding the landscape of Iceland is in order.

Although Iceland is now notably barren of trees, during the time of settlement, Þröstur Eysteinsson (2013) notes that: "birch forest and woodland covered 25–40% of Iceland's land area," and he observes:

> sheep were important as a source of wool from the outset, but by 1300 they had become a staple source of food for Icelanders as well. At the same time, the Catholic Church (also the political power at the time) started obtaining woodland remnants, a clear indication that they had become a rare and valuable resource. Sheep grazing prevented regeneration of the birchwoods after cutting and the area of woodland continued to decline. (Þröstur Eysteinsson 2013.)

The *Poetic Edda* and the *Prose Edda* were both compiled in the 13th century, which means that woodlands were already being displaced from the ecology of Iceland. While trees disappeared from the Icelandic landscape, tree names became semantically blurry in Old Icelandic texts. Thus although Old Norse *eik* is cognate with English *oak*, this term came to refer to any tree at all – a development that is so striking that Richard Cleasby & Guðbrandur Vigfússon (1874: 119) comment that "wherever found it is a sure test of Icelandic authorship." Whereas cult practices centred around sacred trees and holy groves are commonly attested among the Germanic peoples in records beginning as early as Tacitus's *Germania*, the relatively few traces of such practices in the written records of Iceland are likely also connected to the limited variety of trees in the local ecology at the time of settlement and the subsequent deforestation.[4]

If this line of inquiry is considered valid, later comparative North Germanic evidence lends support to it. In folklore recorded in Scandinavia, England, and what is now Northern Germany, folk belief regarding tree beings is documented up until at least the mid-19th century. Historically, trees remained comparatively plentiful in these regions and the names and customs associated with these beings often explicitly reveal that their identities are defined by their association with various tree types. These figures, alternately benevolent and malicious, are referred to by the name of a tree type accompanied by an honorific or title; for example, 'mother' or a cognate to Old Norse *freyja* ['lady']. Such trees include the elder (cf. Danish *Hyldemor* ['elder tree mother'] and *Hyldekvinde* ['elder woman'], German *Frau Ellhorn* ['lady elder tree'], compare also the English *Old Girl*), and the ash (cf. Swedish *Askafroa* ['ash wife']), the alder (Danish *Ellefru* ['alder lady']).[5]

While these figures appear to make no appearance in our records of the pagan period, these concepts are comparatively plentiful elsewhere and do seem ancient. As widely and vividly attested as these figures are, it is curious that similar beings are not attested in the Icelandic folk record. The answer to this may be found in the history of biota on Iceland: a treeless island is not likely to sustain recognition of tree goddesses or tree spirits, and so a lack of these beings in the Icelandic folklore record may be explained by the Icelandic landscape and changes in it caused by human habitation. A faded belief in an 'elm lady' dimly preserved in the skaldic record is not out of the question and would fit well with the broader folk belief pattern.

In this sense, an 'elm lady' as 'chooser of the slain' may also be supported by a broader folklore pattern. An association between death and the elm is widely attested in England, where it is "seen as a treacherous tree, hostile to human beings" (Watts 2007: 134). This is at least in part due to a healthy-looking elm's tendency to suddenly and without warning shed branches, which may injure or kill anyone unfortunate enough to be beneath; Watts (2007: 135, cf. Richens 1983: 121) cites an instance (after Leather 1912) of a large elm "in Credenhill Court, in Herefordshire, [that] used to be called the

Prophet Tree; it was said to foretell each death in the family of the Eckleys, who used to own the place, by flinging off a limb". Elms have also been traditionally employed for coffins since the medieval period. In medieval England, "elm was used for coffins at any level, from royalty downwards, where it could be afforded", fading in popularity after the death of Elizabeth I, yet, as R. H. Richens (1983: 101–102; cf. 155–1567) notes, "the association of elm with burial has become irrevocable". Like the yew, elms are traditionally used in graveyards (Richens 1983: 119). The association between the elm and death is mirrored in the ancient world; for example, a shadowy and massive elm of great age stands before the entrance to Orcus in the *Aeneid* (for discussion, see Watts 2007: 134–135).

The elm's association with death appears to be both culturally well-established and, given the unpredictable, potentially lethal limbs of the tree, likely to develop independently. Such behavior may give rise to the notion of the elm as a gatekeeper to the afterlife that chooses its victims without warning, a concept not far removed from the throngs of prophetic, death-associated supernatural female beings in the Old Norse corpus discussed above.

Making Sense of the Sources

As far as we are removed from 13th century Old Norse sources today, it appears that the name *Ilmr* was nearly forgotten by the time it entered the record. It is possible that the name was semantically bleached to the point that it retained nothing but its usefulness in skaldic poetry. If an etymology of 'elm' may be demonstrated, then this could explain the goddess's narratives disappearing or changing with the adaptation of Norse culture to the landscape of Icelandic flora and changes of that flora in the wake of rapid settlement. On the other hand, there do not appear to be other *ásynja*-names linked to trees attested in the lexicon of skaldic poetry and Ilmr may never have had such an association at all. Instead, she may have been thought to be either a particularly noisy valkyrie and *ásynja* or even particularly pleasant-scented, and perhaps even all of these, as her links to religion and myth became opaque and her identity was interpreted through folk etymology of the name alone.

All of these possibilities raise intriguing questions about our understanding of North Germanic religion as it existed in Iceland. A more extensive linguistic analysis combined with a broader comparative approach, such as a new comparative survey of tree beings in culturally connected regions and beyond, may yield more detail on what has thus far been an otherwise largely undiscussed goddess name in the Old Norse corpus.

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Notes

1. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon's entry seems to imply that earlier discourse along these lines has occurred somewhere. I have, however, unfortunately been unable to find evidence of this discourse.
2. For more recent discussion regarding the kenning *Ilmar jalmr* and its use as a valkyrie kenning and *dróttkvæt* formulae in general, see Frog 2014.
3. For example, see discussion regarding *Eir* in Lindow (2002: 105) and in Simek (2007 [1993]: 71–72), discussion regarding *Þrúðr* in Lindow (2002: 291) and in Simek (2007 [1993]: 329), and discussion regarding *Skuld* in Orchard (1997: 151).
4. For extensive and fairly recent discussion of the roles of trees and groves in the pre-Christianization religion of the Germanic peoples and their neighbors, see Dowden 2000.
5. For scattered discussion regarding these figures, see for example Watts 2007: 29–133, Simpson & Roud 2000: 108, Radford & Radford 1969: 151–154, Hyltén-Cavallius 1864: 310, and Thorpe 1851: 167–168.

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The (De)Construction of Mythic Ethnography II: *Hrímþurs* and Cosmogony (A Contribution to the Vanir Debate)

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The first article in this series addressed the use of the Old Norse term *þurs* (pl. *þursar*), often translated 'ogre', as attested in various registers of poetry (or in language as used in the different genres). The compound *hrím-þurs* ['rime-*þurs*, frost-*þurs*'] was left aside from that discussion to be attended to here. The discussion of *þurs* argued that *þurs* was an archaism that had developed conventions of use as a poetic synonym especially connected with meeting *þ*-alliteration in the registers of conservative eddic poetry while it appeared to have become a vague synonym for 'monster' in, for example, saga prose and later *rímur* poetry. Today, *hrímþursar* – often translated as 'frost giants' in English texts or '*Reifriesen*' in German works – are not infrequently addressed as a clear and distinct category of mythic being. Some scholars may even seem to treat the use of *þurs* in poetry as a variation on *hrímþurs* (Heinrichs 1997: 26). This handling of *hrímþurs* follows the usage of the term in Snorri Sturluson's mythography presented in his treatise known as *Edda* (*Snorra Edda*). In the poetry, however, *hrímþurs*, like *þurs*, may be a poetic synonym rather than refer to a distinct mythic ethnos, and some scholars take for granted that *hrímþurs* is a variation on *þurs* (e.g. Hall 2009). Indeed, *hrímþurs* invariably carries alliteration on the element prefixed to *þurs*, which can be compared to, for example, *ginn-regin* ['magic-powers (gods)'] as a variation of *regin* ['powers (gods)'] accomplishing alliteration in /g/ (Frog 2011a: 33). The present article first reviews the uses of *hrímþurs* in poetry, where it is shown to be highly formulaic and most likely a conventionalized variation on *þurs*. The range of discourses in which the term is *not* attested will then be briefly outlined before reviewing the uses of the term in *Snorra Edda*. It is

argued that in *Snorra Edda*, Snorri consciously developed the term as an ethnonym. The article concludes by situating these findings in relation to the Vanir Debate – i.e. the current discussion concerning whether the 'Vanir' as a category of Old Norse gods is a construct of Snorri's mythography.

Þurs *in the Background of* hrímþurs

In the first article of this series (Frog 2013, referred to as DME I hereafter), *þurs* was shown to refer to different categories of mythic being in different genres rather than designating a distinct ethnos (whether viewed genetically or in terms of culturally constructed belongingness and identity).

The discourses of saga prose and of *rímur* present registers which became conventionalized to those genres emerging especially in the 13th and 14th centuries.[1] Use of *þurs* in these registers suggests that, at least in Iceland, *þurs* may have had a capacity to index certain associations or had some potential for connotative significance, but the term in general seems to have been peripheral and was not clearly distinguished from other terms for threatening anthropomorphic supernatural agents (like *trǫll* and so forth) – it was simply another word for 'monster'.

In eddic genres (with the exception of heroic death-songs, where the semantics of *þurs* aligned with saga prose), the term generally exhibited narrower and more formalized patterns of use: *þurs* had a functional role in accomplishing *þ*-alliteration. *Þurs* mainly appeared in third person narration on mythological subjects, where *þurs* was consistently used as a poetic synonym or *heiti* for *jǫtunn* (pl. *jǫtnar*) ['giant'] (DME I: 57–59) – i.e. the category of being interacting with gods in the cosmological sphere. Uses in runic charms were also highly formulaic and clearly associated with alliteration: *þurs* appears identifiable with mythic agents suspected of harming humans in the present world order (DME I: 59–62). Use in the *fornyrðislag* meter in these genres (but not death-songs) appeared remarkably formulaic across both narrative and charms: of twelve examples (two in charms), eleven appear in the half-line formula *þursa X* ['X of *þursar*', in which X is disyllabic], ten times as a b-line, once as an a-line. The twelfth example can be viewed as a b-line variation: *þurs* is a genitive singular monosyllable followed by a trisyllable (which makes a four-syllable half-line). This exception is a kenning for Þórr, and it is possible to construe the others as kennings as well (e.g. *þursa meyjar* ['maidens of *þursar*' > GIANTESSES]; *þursa dróttinn* ['lord of *þursar*' > GIANT; although in runic charms this formula could also translate 'lord of *þurs*-runes' > WITCH, SORCERER]). (DME I: 57–61.) In *ljóðaháttr*, the term *þurs* appeared in speech-acts attributed to a character that could be described as 'registral irruptions': the direct speech constitutes a shift in register identifiable with a different genre or its epic imitation (DME I: 62–64, 66–68). This was the case in the long curse of Skírnir in *Skírnismál*, where it consequently remained unclear whether *þurs* referred to *jǫtnar* of the mythological sphere or aligned with use of *þurs* in charms; in one case in this curse, *þurs* was also used with reference to the runic letter of that name. (DME I: 62–65.) In addition, the alliterative collocation *þrír–þurs* ['three–þurs'] occurs across both meters a sufficient number of times to be considered conventional (DME I: 58, 61–62, 67). Overall, it appeared that *þurs* had once been a culturally significant category, a view which finds additional support in use of *þurs* as a name for a letter of the runic alphabet alongside *maðr* ['man'], *áss* ['god'] and the archaic *týr* ['god']. However, it does not appear used to designate a particular category of being 'þurs' when used in poetry or elsewhere. Whatever category of being this term had historically referred to, it had been marginalized or superseded by one or more others. *Þurs* was most likely some type of archaism that had been built into different oral-poetic registers where it was clearly linked to accomplishing *þ*-alliteration.

These patterns of use of *þurs* are important to consider when turning to the question of the semantics of *hrímþurs* in verse. Semantically, if *hrímþurs* were a designation of a category of being, we would expect that category to be similar to 'þurs' or a sub-class of 'þurs' somehow associated with *hrím*

['rime']. However, *þurs* is attested only as an alliterative poetic synonym rather than designating a category 'þurs' of which there could be a subclass. Thus, for *hrímþurs* to be established as a term for an ethnos, it would seem to imply either that it was established before usage of *þurs* changed, or that a poetic expression became lexicalized as a designation for an existing or new mythic category. Either is possible in theory. However, *hrímþurs*, like *þurs*, is only found carrying alliteration. This 100% alliterative rank is a relevant indicator that its occurrences, too, may be motivated by metrical-poetic reasons rather than by a semantic distinction.

Hrímþurs *in* ljóðaháttr

In Old Norse poetry, the noun *hrímþurs* is found only in eddic verse. Of the seven examples, the five that appear across four poems in the *ljóðaháttr* meter will be addressed first (sg. *Vm* 33.2; pl. *Hv* 109.2, *Gm* 31.5, *Skm* 30.4 and 34.2).[2] Of these five uses, four examples occur in the same metrical position, at the end of a long line with other elements preceding it in the half-line (*Vm* 33.2; pl. *Hv* 109.2, *Gm* 31.5, *Skm* 34.2; cf. also *Bb* 8.5 in example (5) below). This is found once in each poem where the term is attested, which suggests that the use is socially conventionalized and can be considered formulaic. Thus, four of the five examples appear to follow a consistent formulaic pattern. It is striking that the formulaicity found for *þurs* in *fornyrðislag* is paralleled by formulaicity of *hrímþurs* in *ljóðaháttr*.[3] In any case, these formulaic expressions indicate that the term *þurs* was predominantly maintained in eddic poetry as a historically suspended element within a larger compositional unit. The formula unit could be used and appropriately interpreted without resolving the precise semantics of *þurs* as one of its constituents (cf. Frog 2014a).

It was noted above that the magical speech-act of Skírnir in which the uses of *hrímþurs* are found in *Skírnismál*,[4] affects use of the register. Within this speech, *hrímþurs* appears once in a series of parallel lines and once in a similar series of lines where parallelism is more flexible. The first of these is the looser parallelism:

(1) Tramar gneypa þic scolo gerstan dag
iotna gǫrðom í;
til hrímþursa hallar þú scalt hverian dag
kranga kosta laus,
kranga kosta vǫn;
(*Skm* 30.1–7.)

Monsters shall humiliate you all day
in the realms of giants;
to the hall of *hrímþursar* you shall every day
creep without choice,
creep lacking choice;

There seems to be no clear semantic distinction between the three terms for monstrous beings here – *tramar* ['monsters'], *jǫtnar*, *hrímþursar* – which all are named in a-lines or *Vollzeilen*: the *tramar* seem to be situated in the realms of the *jǫtnar* where the hall of the *hrímþursar* also seems to be and in which the *tramar* seem to be located. Both *jǫtnar* and *hrímþursar* carry alliteration and all three terms may be synonyms motivated by lexical variation when repeating the same semantic element within the stanza. There is nothing to indicate that *hrímþurs* is here used as an ethnonym, noting especially that, parallel to *jǫtunn*, it is in the genitive plural indicating the location of the *tramar* rather than designating the *tramar* themselves.

In the second example from *Skírnismál*, the parallelism is more structurally pronounced while the interpretation is more problematic. This is the stanza in which Skírnir summons beings to witness the curse:

(2) Heyri iotnar, heyri hrímþursar,
synir Suttunga, siálfir ásliðar,
(*Skm* 34.1–4.)

Hear giants, hear *hrímþursar*,
sons of Suttungr, men of the gods yourselves,

The expression *synir Suttunga* ['sons of Suttungi (Suttungr)'] is a kenning for GIANT known from other contexts (Egilsson & Jónsson 1931: 547). Here, it is unambiguously parallel to *jǫtnar* as a poetic semantic equivalent filling the corresponding half-line in the following long-line (Frog 2014c: 14; Roper 2014: 172–173). *Hrímþursar* is found between these half-lines and could also mean 'giant'. On the other hand, the half-line is grammatically parallel to *heyri jǫtnar*

[‘hear giants’] marked by the repetition of the verb. Rather than semantically repeating the first unit, *jǫtnar–hrímþursar* could be paired as the rhetorical figure known as a merism: two (or more) nominal elements that together function metonymically to refer to a third, broader category (Watkins 1995: 15). In this case, rather than being semantically parallel to *jǫtnar* and *synir Suttunga*, *hrímþursar* would then be parallel to *sjálfir ásliðar* [‘god-men themselves’]. The term *ás-liði* is normally interpreted as a compound of *áss* in the sense of ‘god’ and *liði* [‘man, member of a troop’] and thus the *áss*-men would be a poetic term for ‘gods’. This then produces the series GIANTS–*hrímþursar*–GIANTS–GODS. This series can be interpreted in three ways: *a*) three parallel expressions of ‘giants’ followed by a fourth variation ‘gods’; *b*) a parallelism of the merism in which *hrímþursar* is semantically equivalent to *ásliðar*; or *c*) the parallelism of two merisms so that *hrímþursar* is neither equivalent to ‘giants’ nor to ‘gods’ but the merism of each long line equates to ‘all mythic beings’.

A fourth possibility is that *ásliðar* does not refer to gods, but to giants: if *áss* is interpreted as the noun meaning ‘rocky ridge’, ‘ridge-man’ would be a giant-kenning. In this case, the four elements would all be semantically parallel in parallel long lines. Contextually, Skírnir mentions that the gods are growing angry in the preceding stanza, in which case they seem already aware of the transpiring events. An interpretation of *ásliðar* as a kenning for giants thus has the appeal of consistency with this awareness and also entails a contrastive parallel between that awareness among the gods in the preceding stanza and the need to alert the giants, who do not share that awareness, here. On the other hand, the choice of *áss* here is not motivated by alliteration (i.e. any term for ‘giant’ not carrying *s*-alliteration could be used) and this b-line could be completely omitted: *Suttunga synir* would be a metrically well-formed self-alliterating *Vollzeile*, which is metrically expected here. The use of *ásliði* therefore seems motivated by semantics or the formation of a rhetorical figure, but neither its conventional interpretation nor that of *hrímþursar* can be determined on the basis of the preserved text of the poem alone.

The term *hrímþurs* also occurs in the short, allusive account of the theft of the Mead of Poetry found in *Hávamál*. The beings that come to inquire about Suttungr’s death are referred to in stanza 109.2 as *hrímþursar*. Suttungr himself is referred to as *inn aldni jǫtunn* [‘that old giant’] in *Hv* 104.1. In Snorri’s account of this adventure in *Skáldskaparmál*, both Suttungr’s father and his brother are identified as *jǫtnar* (Faulkes 1998: 4), which suggests he also considered Suttungr to belong to that category (as opposed to being a *hrímþurs*). Suttungr also does not appear distinguishable from *jǫtnar* in kennings for poetry.[5] As noted above, ‘sons of Suttungr’ is a giant-kenning. It can be reasonably inferred that *hrímþurs* in this passage is simply a poetic equivalent to *jǫtunn*.

In *Grímnismál*, *hrímþursar* is used to identify the group of inhabitants under one of the three roots of the world-tree Yggdrasill’s ash:

(3) Hel býr undir einni, annarri hrímþursar,
þriðio mennzcir menn.
(*Gm* 31.1–3.)

Hel lives under the first, [under] the second, *hrímþursar*,
[under] the third, human men.

This verse describes mythic topography. The first root is unambiguously identified with the realm of Hel [‘Death’] while the third root is readily identifiable with Miðgarðr, the realm identified with human beings (the creation of which is referred to in stanza 40–41 of the poem). Within the cosmography, the only additional realms that are prominent are *jǫtunheimar* [‘giant-realms’] and Ásgarðr [‘God-Realm’], although mentions are also found of realms such as Vanaheimr [‘Realm of the Vanir’] (*Vm* 39) and a realm to which one dies out of the realm of death (*Vm* 43). However, no distinct realm of *hrímþursar* (or simply of *þursar*) is otherwise attested. The symbolically unifying role of the world-tree as the connector of different parts of the cosmos suggests that the realm of *hrímþursar* should have a significant position in the cosmology. When this is considered in

relation to the formulaicity of *hrímþurs* here and its use in alliteration with *Hel*, this seems most likely to be as a poetic equivalent to *jǫtunn* (which appears nowhere in this poem) and to refer to *jǫtunheimar* as a third essential site in the cosmography.

The final use of *hrímþurs* in *ljóðaháttr* is found in *Vafþrúðnismál* with reference to the primal being Aurgelmir. This is in the series of dialogic question and answer about mythological knowledge. Following initial questions about the creation of the world (space), and about the moon, day, night, winter and summer (time), Óðinn asks the wise giant Vafþrúðnir *hverr ása elztr / eða Ymis niðia* (*Vm* 28.4–5) [‘who was the eldest of the gods / or of Ymir’s kin/descendants’]. ‘Ymir’s descendants’ appears to be a giant-kenning. When describing the creation of the world from this prime being, Vafþrúðnir refers to Ymir as *inn hrímkaldi jǫtunn* (*Vm* 21.5) [‘that rime-cold giant’], and a corresponding idea is found in a list of the mythic genealogies in *Hundluljóð* 33.7–8: *jǫtnar allir / frá Ymi komnir* [‘all giants / from Ymir come’]. To Óðinn’s question about the oldest of beings, Vafþrúðnir answers that it is Bergelmir, son of Þrúðgelmir, heir of Aurgelmir (*Vm* 29). It is unclear whether this is a roundabout way of identifying Aurgelmir as the oldest or whether it identifies Bergelmir as establishing the lineage or lineages pertinent to the question while simultaneously demonstrating knowledge of the origin of Bergelmir himself.[6] Viewed in the latter way, the response could potentially produce questions of the category to which Þrúðgelmir and Aurgelmir belong, if they precede the oldest of gods or giant kin. This point can be borne in mind when we later turn to Snorri’s mythography.

Óðinn then asks *hvaðan Aurgelmir kom / með iotna sonom* [‘Whence came Aurgelmir / with the sons of giants’] (*Vm* 30.4–4) and Vafþruðnir replies that he grew out of venom, referring to him as a *jǫtunn* (*Vm* 31). Óðinn responds by asking how *inn baldni jǫtunn* [‘that unruly giant’] begot children (*Vm* 32), to which Vafþrúðnir replies:

(4) Undir hendi vaxa qváðo hrímþursi
mey oc mǫg saman;
fótr við foti gat ins fróða iotuns
sexhǫfðaðan son.
(*Vm* 33.)

Under the arm grew, it is said, of the *hrímþurs*
a maiden and lad together;
leg with leg begot of the wise giant
a six-headed son.

The use of *hrímþurs* in this stanza again appears formulaic. The half-line *inn fróði jǫtunn* can be seen as a parallelism in the corresponding line-position within the larger parallelism between the two half-stanzas. When considered in relation to the number of times that *jǫtunn* has already been used with reference to Aurgelmir in this text, there is no reason to believe that *hrímþurs* in this stanza is anything other than a poetic equivalent of *jǫtunn* capable of *h*-alliteration and avoiding lexical repetition of *jǫtunn* (which could not be done by using *jǫtunn* with an otherwise appropriately alliterating adjective).[7]

Hrímþurs in fornyrðislag

The noun *hrímþurs* is found only twice in *fornyrðislag*, where it carries *h*-alliteration in both cases. One of these is in a *þulr* list of *heiti* for *jǫtunn* preserved in *Snorra Edda* (Faulkes 1998: 111). Although the list contains a few terms that could be interpreted as common nouns (e.g. *eldr* [‘fire’], *kǫttr* [‘cat’], *hvalr* [‘whale’]), the overwhelming majority of the list is comprised of proper names; and all other two-element *heiti* are unambiguously proper names. The list contains no transparent poetic synonyms for *jǫtunn* such as *þurs*, *bergbúi* [‘mountain-dweller’], *bergrisi* [‘mountain-giant’], *hraunbúi* [‘wasteland-dweller’], etc. The appearance of *hrímþurs* in this list should most likely be regarded as a personal name ‘Hrímþurs’ rather than as a common noun. This in itself is interesting because giants do not receive basic terms for other categories of being as proper names, which supports viewing *hrímþurs* as a conventionalized compound of *þurs*. On the other hand, it also supports some type of semantic alignment of *þurs* with *jǫtunn* as the only such term for a category of being that appears as a name element.

The second use in *fornyrðislag* is the curse known as *Buslubœn* (Jiriczek 1893: 15–20). It must immediately be stressed that *Buslubœn*

cannot be taken as an accurate rendering of the oral genre of curses or other verbal magical art. Like the corresponding section of *Skírnismál*, this is a representation of one genre from within the framework and conventions of another genre.[8] Such irruptions may represent, for example, the register of metrical incantations quite directly, although it does not follow that these will be complete and conventional charms (e.g. DuBois 1995: 150–154; cf. 2003: 235–238). The framing discourse may also have quite regular conventions for rendering these registral irruptions. Thus the irruption of the register of incantations produces an 'incantation' as a generic product *only within the models of genre of the framing discourse* – an 'incantation' which may not at all correspond to incantations as generic products in living practice (cf. Frog 2014d: 196–197). Moreover, a generic discourse may even maintain models of other registers that have little or no connection to the corresponding registers in living practice, such as the conventionalized representations of verbal magic in legends and tales (cf. af Klintberg 2010: N1–5). When approaching *Buslubœn*, it is necessary to consider the framing discourse in which it appears.

Buslubœn is an integrated part of *Bósa saga ok Herrauðs* ['The Saga of Bósi and Herrauðr']. This saga appears to be a parody of traditional mytho-heroic sagas generally, while it also engages a remarkable range of other traditions as referents for humorous effect.[9] Use of eddic verse has a strong link to the genre of mytho-heroic sagas (Leslie forthcoming). *Buslubœn* is the only poetry contained in this saga, where it is presented as selections from a longer text (seven stanzas followed by two more and a series of runes interspersed in subsequent prose). However, the specific narrative of the saga is fairly unambiguously a parodic invention. The identification of *Buslubœn* with the saga is therefore a process of that authorship, and the poem is most likely a construction of the author. This does not mean that individual verses or whole sequences of text were not socially circulating as part of the tradition, only that these are unlikely to have circulated as a long poem called *Buslubœn*. The metadiscursive presentation of the verses as from a longer poem is thus most probably a rhetorical device of the author in his manipulation of the generic strategies of *fornaldarsögur* that work to frame the reception of the text.

The curse is presented by Busla as a threat to compel a king to release the hero, a threat which succeeds without the threats of the curse ever being realized. The prominent poem is thus a functional constituent in a narrative pattern that corresponds directly to that found in *Skírnismál*, where Skírnir's curse is a threat used to compel the giantess Gerðr to comply with his demands (Thorvaldsen 2010: 258–259; cf. also McKinnell 2003). In addition, the nine-stanza text dominates the episode with a length comparable to 11 of 42 stanzas of the curse in the extant version of *Skírnismál* (26–36). It even culminates in runes like in the final stanza of Skírnir's charm performance – although rather than carving runes for magical effect like Skírnir, Busla recites (!?) a *mistill–þistill–kistill* cryptographic runic formula that she poses as a riddle. This curious climax of *Buslubœn* in a magical formula dependent on writing does not appear to accurately represent performance practice (Thompson 1978; Leslie 2013: 302–304).

Vésteinn Ólason (1994: 119–120) has described *Buslubœn* as "a parody of traditional curses and charms," and Lorenzo Lozzi Gallo (2004: 120) observes that the text "contains elements that may be linked to different genres of religious or magical rites" (cf. Thorvaldsen 2010); he describes it as "a sort of *pot pourri*" of different formulae (2004: 235). This does not mean that *Buslubœn* has no value as a source – for example, it demonstrates that the *mistill–þistill–kistill* runic formula was known and associated with magic in Iceland (by at least one person) and, as probably the latest example of that formula, also that it was still circulating at that time. At the same time, great caution is needed when assessing *Buslubœn*'s significance as a source.

The term *hrímþurs* appears in the penultimate stanza quotation, which threatens the king with misery. Only the first three of the five long lines will be quoted here (with standardized orthography):

(5) Trǫll ok álfar ok tǫfrnornir,
búar, bergrisar brenni þínar hallir,
hati þik hrímþursar, hestar streði þik,
(Jiriczek 1893: 18.)

May trolls and elves and sorcery-norns,
dwellers, mountain-giants burn your halls,
May *hrímþursar* hate you, horses violate you,

The first two lines present five terms for categories of mythic beings. These include references to *álfar* [‘elves’] and *nornir* [‘norns’] “invoked to cause misfortune, interestingly alongside various monstrous beings which in earlier evidence seem distinct from *álfar* and *nornir*” (Hall 2007: 133). This was also met with in a runic charm in which *álfar–trǫll–þursar* were in series alliterating with *einfalt–tvífalt–þrífalt* [‘once–twice–thrice’] (DME I: 61; also Hall 2007: 133–134). The form *tǫfr-nornir* (with the ms. variant *tǫfra-nornir*) [‘sorcery-norns’] is otherwise unique. The compound could be interpreted as a kenning for ‘witch’ (cf. *taufra-maðr* / *taufr-maðr* [‘sorcery-man’]; Cleasby & Vigfússon 1898: 626) but the element *tǫfr* also clearly has a functional role of carrying alliteration comparable to *ginn-* in *ginn-regin*, and may therefore be semantically light or void (cf. Frog 2011a: 33). Also worthy of observation is the alliterative use of *búar* [‘dwellers’], which could be described as a half-kenning – i.e. a base-word which lacks a complementing determinant element otherwise necessary for it to be interpreted (Meissner 1921: 74–80). In other words, the term *búi* [‘dweller’] would not normally refer to a mythic being on its own, although it can be used as a base for forming expressions (kennings) for ‘giant’, such as *fjall-búi* [‘fell-dweller’] and *hamars búi* [‘dweller of a cliff’]. Alaric Hall (2007: 133) also mentions another possible semantic field from *haug-búi* [‘mound-dweller’] for the animated dead (i.e. rather than two terms for ‘giant’ in the same line). This use of *búi* as a half-kenning appears to be unique (cf. Egilsson & Jónsson 1931: 71). It seems to be motivated by alliteration, but it is questionable whether such half-kenning use has a basis in tradition.[10] The listing of five terms for beings with a single verb and without formal structuring through parallelism appears more like a *þulr* or versified list than what would be expected from an incantation. In addition, it is peculiar (particularly for eddic verse) that the third long line of this series of references to mythic agents juxtaposes *hrímþurs* in alliteration with *hestar* [‘horses’] rather with than an agent of mythic status. The phrase ‘may horses violate you’ indeed seems more colourful than magical, and more consistent with the contrastive juxtapositions of parody than a reflection of traditional magical practice.

Alliteration appears to play a significant role in the lexical surface of this passage. In light of the compound *tǫfrnornir* and the peculiar use of *búar*, the appearance of *hrímþursar* can reasonably be ascribed to alliteration and was quite probably viewed as an alliterating alternative to *þurs* (which does not otherwise appear in the poem). Use of *hrímþurs* in this composition as a general term for ‘monster’ rather than to refer to one type of mythic being as opposed to others is consistent with the use of *þurs* in the so-called death-songs, also composed in *fornyrðislag*, which appears to correspond to or be an extension of the rather loose use of *þurs* in *fornaldarsögur*, within which these death-songs are preserved (DME I: 65). Although use of *hrímþurs* in this passage may be traditional in the sense of being formulaic, the particular use appears likely to be a variation of *þurs* to accomplish *h*-alliteration. Its semantics appear non-specific and likely informed by use of *þurs* in the *fornaldarsaga* tradition rather than being an accurate indicator of use of *hrímþurs* in curses and charms.

Hrímþurs *Outside of* Snorra Edda

The seven examples of *hrímþurs* in the eddic corpus exhibit a 100% alliterative rank – i.e. it is always used in meeting *h*-alliteration. There is no evidence of the term in skaldic verse (Egilsson & Jónsson 1931: 285). The term *þurs* was rare in *dróttkvætt* or skaldic composition generally (DME I: 56–57). The relative frequency of *þurs* and *hrímþurs* in eddic poetry to skaldic poetry is consistent, with no examples of *hrímþurs* in relation to two examples of *þurs* preserved in *dróttkvætt* and other skaldic meters. This could therefore simply reflect that *þurs* held no significant position in the skaldic register, noting that the overwhelming majority of examples of *þurs*

and *hrímþurs* in eddic poetry appear to be suspended in meter-specific formulaic constructions. *Hrímþurs* is not attested at all in *rímur* poetry (following Jónsson 1926–1928), of which the register was deeply indebted to skaldic diction (see Þórólfsson 1934: 86–204), but which nevertheless employed *þuss* (< *þurs*) as a determinant in kennings like in the *þursa X* formula of *fornyrðislag* (Jónsson 1926–1928: 414; DME I: 65–66). This suggests that *hrímþurs* was not assimilated by the register of *rímur* when this register emerged in the 14th century, which makes it less likely that it held any significant role in compositional strategies at that time (i.e. for the production of new verses). Of the seven uses in eddic verse, four appear unambiguously formulaic at the end of a long line of *ljóðaháttr* (and cf. the use in *Buslabœn* at the end of a *fornyrðislag* a-line) whereas one appears used as a proper name. Although the compound was conventional, there is no indication that it was perceived as anything other than a variation of *þurs* capable of a different alliteration, except when used as a personal name.

According to the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* (*DONP*), the term *hrímþurs* does not appear in any prose works other than *Snorra Edda* (confirmed by Bent Chr. Jacobsen, e-mail 10th December 2012). This is more remarkable in light of the fascination with the fantastic especially in the *fornaldarsögur* as well as in the closely related *Barðar saga*, where a variety of terms for monstrous beings appear (cf. Schulz 2004: 37–41), and where such variety sometimes seems to simply comprise part of the texture of narration. Negative evidence of *hrímþurs* in other prose works is thus consistent with a general perception of the term as a poetic equivalent or variation of the more widely encountered *þurs*. The negative evidence in prose and the survey of uses in poetic discourse together provide a frame against which to consider Snorri Sturluson's uses of *hrímþurs* in *Edda*.

Hrímþurs *in* Snorra Edda

The term *hrímþurs* occurs 16 times in *Snorra Edda*, although not all are present in the Upsaliensis redaction (U, where the spelling *hrímþuss* is used throughout: Pálsson 2012: 14n), and one of which is only found in the Codex Regius text. The term is used almost exclusively in the dialogue between Gylfi and the Odinic Trinity[11] of Hár, Jafnhár and Þriði. Uses of the term are found primarily either in connection with the primordial giant Ymir and description of the world tree or in what looks like a formulaic pairing with *bergrisi*. Once these have been reviewed, the two remaining examples can be addressed.

The main concentration of *hrímþurs* is in eight uses surrounding the origin and death of the prime being Ymir: this accounts for half of the total 16 examples. The first use of *hrímþurs* appears in response to Gylfi's question of where the supreme god Alfǫðr (also a name of Óðinn) was before the creation of heaven and earth: *Þá var hann með hrímþursum* (Faulkes 1982: 9; Pálsson 2012: 14) ['Then was he among the *hrímþursar*']. The story of the creation then proceeds to the origin of the prime being Ymir, where it is commented: *En hrímþursar kalla hann Aurgelmi, ok eru þaðan komnar ættir hrímþursa* (Faulkes 1982: 10; U omits *hrímþursa* following *ættir*: Pálsson 2012: 16) ['And *hrímþursar* call him Aurgelmir, and thence have come the kin of *hrímþursar*']. The reference to Aurgelmir as a *hrímþurs* is found in *Vafþrúðnismál* 33, discussed as example (4) above, where it was observed that the use was not only formulaic but also only occurred once among several references to the same being as a *jǫtunn*. Snorri then supports his claim through the quotation of a stanza of authenticating verse from *Vǫluspá inn skamma* (preserved in *Hyndluljóð* as quoted above) containing the line *allir jǫtnar / frá Ymi komnir* ['all *jǫtnar* / are come from Ymir'], followed by stanzas from *Vafþrúðnismál* on Aurgelmir, who is mentioned first as *með jǫtna sǫnum* (*Vm* 30.5) ['among the sons of *jǫtnar*'] and then referred to directly as a *jǫtunn* (*Vm* 31.3). The term *hrímþurs* is absent from the verses quoted. In the immediately following dialogue, Hár states that Ymir/Aurgelmir's kin *kǫllum vér hrímþursa* (Faulkes 1982: 10; rephrased in U: Pálsson 2012: 16) ['we call *hrímþursar*'] followed by a summary of the content of *Vafþrúðnismál* 33 without verse quotation and concluding with: *Þat eru hrímþursar. Hinn*

gamli hrímþurs, hann kǫllum vér Ymi. (Faulkes 1982: 11; not in U: cf. Pálsson 2012: 16.) ['Those (i.e. the children of Aurgelmir's arms and legs) are *hrímþursar*. That old *hrímþurs*, we call him Ymir.'] Then, in the flood of blood from the slaying of Ymir by Óðinn and his brothers, *drektu þeir allri ætt hrímþursa, nema einn*... ['drowned all of the kin of *hrímþursar* except one...'], whom the *jǫtnar* (?!) call Bergelmir, and from Bergelmir and his wife *komnar hrímþursa ættir* ['come the kin of *hrímþursar*'] (Faulkes 1982: 11; cf. Pálsson 2012: 18). This is authenticated by the quotation of *Vafþrúðnismál* 35, in which Bergelmir is referred to as *inn fróði jǫtunn* ['that wise *jǫtunn*']. Snorri's use of *hrímþurs* here can be directly connected to its appearance with reference to Aurgelmir in *Vafþrúðnismál*, and may have been reinforced by reference to Ymir as *inn hrím-kaldi jǫtunn* (*Vm* 21.5) ['that rime-cold giant']. A distinction between *hrímþursar* and *jǫtnar* is nevertheless not discernible from the text of that poem nor is it supported by verses quoted by Snorri. Indeed, the slaying of Ymir is opened with the sentence: *Synir Bors drápu Ymi jǫtun* (Faulkes 1982: 11) ['The sons of Borr killed the *jǫtunn* Ymir']. The dialogic presentation adds a degree of ambiguity with distinctions such as 'we call' as opposed to '*hrímþursar* call'. These distinctions present the possibility of referencing mythic 'languages' such as those surveyed in *Alvíssmál*.[12] Nevertheless, *hrímþurs* is here clearly treated as an ethnonym.

The term *hrímþurs* disappears from the discourse until the description of the three roots of the world-tree:

> *Ein er með Ásum, en ǫnnur með hrímþursum, þar sem forðum var Ginnungagap. In þriðja stendr yfir Niflheimi....* (Faulkes 1982: 17; cf. Pálsson 2012: 28.)
>
> One is among the gods, and another among the *hrímþursar*, there where before was Ginnungagap. The third stands over Niflheimr....

This description corresponds more or less to that of *Grímnismál* 31 in example (3) above: it is either based on that stanza or on one very similar to it.[13] The term *hrímþurs* appears in connection with the second root as in *Grímnismál*, although Snorri adds that this was formerly the site of Ginnungagap, the great void in which Ymir originated and where the world was subsequently created from his corpse. Niflheimr is the realm of Hel in Snorri's cosmography and thus also corresponds directly to the *Grímnismál* verse, although presented first rather than third in the verse source, and rather than identifying the third root with men, Snorri identifies the first with the gods. Snorri then immediately situates the well of Mímir *undir þeiri rót er til hrímþursa horfir* (Faulkes 1982: 17; cf. Pálsson 2012: 28) ['under that root which belongs to the *hrímþursar*']. Use of the term *hrímþurs* in this passage can be directly associated with its occurrence in *Grímnismál*, which was observed to be formulaic in forming an alliteration with *Hel*. However, Snorri links this use back to the world-creation and death of Ymir at the beginning of the world, connecting it to the construction of *hrímþurs* as an ethnos there.

The description of the roots of the world-tree leads to mentioning the assembly of the gods at that location and how the gods travel to it on the bridge Bifrǫst. In the Codex Regius manuscript (R), this presents the first of four examples of a different type of use in a pairing of *hrímþursar* and *bergrisar*. The bridge Bifrǫst is said to burn with fire, otherwise *hrímþursar ok bergrisar* ['*hrímþursar* and *bergrisar*'] would climb to heaven (Faulkes 1982: 18; only *bergrisar* in the other three main manuscripts: Sigurðsson 1848: 73; van Eeden 1913: 16; Pálsson 2012: 28). This use then appears with the introduction of Þórr's hammer Mjǫllnir, *er hrímþursar ok bergrisar kenna*... (Faulkes 1982: 23; cf. Pálsson 2012: 38) ['which *hrímþursar* and *bergrisar* know...'], followed by the guarantee of Smiðr that he can build a wall around Ásgarðr that *ørugg væri fyrir bergrisum ok hrímþursum* (Faulkes 1982: 34; only *bergrisar* in U: Pálsson 2012: 44) ['would be secure against *bergrisar* and *hrímþursar*'], and finally, when describing attendance at Baldr's funeral, it is said: *Þar kømr ok mikit fólk hrímþursa ok bergrisar* (Faulkes 1982: 47) ['There came many people of the *hrímþursar* and *bergrisar*']; in U: *Þar vóru ok hrímþussar* (Pálsson 2012: 76) ['There were also *hrímþursar*'].

The terms in this collocation do not alliterate and therefore *hrímþursar–bergrisar* is unlikely to reflect a collocative pair or merism associated with a single poetic line comparable to *æsir–álfar* [‘gods–elves’] (cf. Giurevič 1982: 41–43; Hall 2007: 34–39; Frog 2011a: 30–32). At the same time, the collocation is unlikely to be a conventional formula of prose narration of myth and legend, otherwise we should expect to find some evidence of *hrímþurs* in thematically relevant saga narration. If the collocation reflects a tradition of social practice rather than being an invention of Snorri, one possibility is that it reflects use of these terms in parallelism, much as the opaque term *vanir* seems to appear with *æsir* [‘gods’] in a *Vollzeile* of *ljóðaháttr* following a long line (Frog & Roper 2011: 32–33: Frog 2011a: 32). Although the *Buslubœn* stanza in example (5) is problematic as a source, these terms are paired there in corresponding positions in long lines, a pattern of use that could at least potentially reflect a canonical parallelism. The appearance of the first examples of this series only in R could be an interpolation under the influence of the repeating collocation familiar from the later parts of the text.

Before turning attention to the two remaining examples of *hrímþurs*, it may be observed that the term *bergrisi* is used independent of *hrímþurs* in *Edda* in three instances. (*Bergrisi* is also found three times within the eddic poem *Grottasǫngr*,[15] which is preserved in *Skáldskaparmál* but here considered an interpolation: cf. Faulkes 1998: xxiv.) This is more striking because the terms *risi* and *bergrisi* do not appear in eddic poetry on mythological subjects and are rare in eddic poetry generally: *risi* does not seem to be a term linked to the mythological sphere of gods, although it is possible that e.g. *bergrisi* could have been used under quite specific circumstances in parallelism or for *b*-alliteration. *Risi* is otherwise used with reference to the world of heroes and peripheral spaces in the present created world.

Such non-eddic phraseology in Snorri’s narration is not unique to *bergrisi*: the use of *trǫll* is similarly found especially in what appears to be a formulaic expression referring to Þórr’s journeys *í austrvega at berja trǫll* [‘into the east(-roads) to smite trolls’] (Faulkes 1982: 35; 1998: 20, 40, cf. 24; Frog 2011b: 14n). On the other hand, *bergrisi* is only found in *Gylfaginning* within *Edda*. In addition to collocative use with *hrímþurs*, the term *bergrisi* is found in the narration of the founding of the walls of Ásgarðr: when Smiðr goes into a giant-rage after being refused payment for his work, the gods know *at þar var bergrisi kominn* (Faulkes 1982: 35; omitted from U: 62) [‘that a *bergrisi* had come there’]. This narrative is closely linked to legend traditions (Harris 2004) and use of *bergrisi* here could result from the register of the genre with which the narrative was conventionally associated. The term is also found in the statement that Heimdallr *sitr þar við himins enda at gæta brúarinnar fyrir bergrisum* (Faulkes 1982: 25; Pálsson 2012: 44) [‘sits there are the end of heaven to guard the bridge against *bergrisar*’]. The alliteration of *brú* [‘bridge’] and *bergrisi* presents at least the possibility that this use could reflect a poetic source in the background, which might find support in its use without *hrímþurs* outside of R when introducing *Bifrǫst*. However, Snorri seems elsewhere to employ alliteration as a device in his prose without necessary dependence on a poetic exemplar (see Abram 2006), noting that the rephrasing of U makes *bergrisar* and *Bifrǫst* adjacent words with pronounced alliterative effect (Pálsson 2012: 28; cf. Sävborg, this volume). The third example is the most striking: Snorri states that Aurboða, mother of Freyr’s beloved Gerðr, *var bergrisa ættar* (Faulkes 1982: 30–31; Pálsson 2012: 54) [‘was kin of *bergrisar*’]. This statement seems to project *bergrisi* as an ethnonym of the mythological sphere and contrasts with all other evidence of the term, making it seem probable that this is Snorri’s invention.

The term *risi/bergrisi* does not seem to belong to the register of mythological poetry, yet appears a total of seven times in *Gylfaginning*. These uses may therefore reflect interference from other discourses and Snorri’s own narrative rhetoric. This also makes the juxtaposition of *hrímþurs* and *bergrisi* more striking: *bergrisi* is not attested in mythological poetry and *hrímþurs* is only otherwise attested in *Buslubœn* or as a

personal name. If the *hrímþurs–bergrisi* pairing derives from parallelism in the poetic tradition, this may have been quite limited in where it was used.

In *Skáldskaparmál*, an isolated use of *hrímþurs* is found with the origin of Þórr's hammer, which is said to be *mest vǫrn í fyrir hrímþursum* (Faulkes 1998: 42; Pálsson 2012: 238) ['the best defence against *hrímþursar*']. This context is directly comparable to the occurrence of the *hrímþursar–bergrisar* collocation with reference to Þórr's hammer in *Gylfaginning*. It is customary to regard *Skáldskaparmál* as written before *Gylfaginning* (since Wessén 1946). In this case, it is at least possible that Snorri formulated the expression before taking up use of the collocation in *Gylfaginning*. However, the motivation behind this example remains mysterious (and doubly so when neither *hrímþurs* nor *þurs* are mentioned in relation to poetic diction). The final use of *hrímþurs* in *Snorra Edda* is found in the prose narration of *Ragnarǫk*, where it is said that the *jǫtunn* called *Hrymr ok með honum allir hrímþursar* ['Hrymr and with him all the *hrímþursar*'] will come to the battle (Faulkes 1982: 50; changed omitting *hrímþurs* in U: Pálsson 2012: 80). This use of *hrímþurs* is not echoed in the verse quotation of *Vǫluspá* where Hrymir is mentioned. It is tempting to consider the possibility that the *Hrymr–hrímþurs* alliteration could reflect a poetic verse known to Snorri. This is possible, observing that Snorri was quite restrictive on his use of eddic quotations from all but three poems (Frog 2009: 274–276). However, the *Hrymr–hrímþurs* alliteration faces the same problem as *brú–bergrisi*, which looks particularly suspicious in light of identifying Freyr's mother-in-law as a *bergrisi*. Here, too, there may simply be alliteration as an aspect of prose style.[14] In either case, the choice of *hrímþurs* with *Hrymr* is potentially motivated by alliteration, whether by a verse model or by Snorri's own style preferences.

Of the 16 uses of *hrímþurs* in *Snorra Edda*, 15 are found in *Gylfaginning* and of these, 10 or two thirds are found surrounding the story of Ymir or the description of the world-tree that links back to that story. An additional four uses in *Gylfaginning* are found in the *hrímþursar–bergrisar* collocation, and the final use is likely either motivated by alliteration or by an unknown verse text. This one isolated use contrasts with three isolated uses of *bergrisi*, one linking with alliteration, a second perhaps with the register of belief legends, and the third a rather surprising use with reference to Freyr's mother-in-law. A perspective can be gained by comparing the 15 uses of *hrímþurs* and 7 uses of *bergrisi* in *Gylfaginning* with the total of only 18 uses of *jǫtunn*. This contrasts sharply with the relative frequency of these terms in eddic poetry: 93 examples of *jǫtunn* (69% alliterative rank); 7 examples of *hrímþurs* (100% alliterative rank); 4 examples of *bergrisi* (75% alliterative rank; three of these appear formulaically in *Grottasǫngr* and the fourth in *Buslubœn*, quoted above).[15] This reinforces the impression that use of *bergrisi* is drawn from outside of poetic discourse. On the other hand, in spite of the impact of *Snorra Edda*'s reception on Old Icelandic poetry and prose (cf. Frog 2011b), there is no evidence that the term *hrímþurs* was taken up by either poets or saga authors. *Hrímþurs* thus appears to have remained not just a poetic term, but a fairly register-specific term in spite of Snorri's use.

The prominence of *hrímþurs* in *Gylfaginning* nevertheless remains high in comparison with *Skáldskaparmál*. This suggests that something changed between the development of these two texts whereas, for example, the *berja trǫll* formula exhibits continuity across them. The ratio of *jǫtunn* : *hrímþurs* : *bergrisi* in *Skáldskaparmál* narration is 21:1:0 (following the text in R), which is proportionately close to the larger data-set of eddic poetry with a ratio of 93:7:4. In *Gylfaginning*, the ratio is 18:15:7. The relative shift from predominant use of *jǫtunn* to the use of a purely poetic term *hrímþurs* can be compared to the fact that *goð* was the conventional term in non-poetic discourse for 'god' whereas *Snorra Edda* more frequently uses *áss* (pl. *æsir*) – an otherwise predominantly poetic term rather than the main-stream noun (Frog & Roper 2011: 30–31, 35–36; cf. de Vries 1956–1957 II: 1–10). In his prose, Snorri foregrounds the poetic term *áss* over the term more common to aesthetically unmarked discourse. The prominence of *hrímþurs* (and its collocation

with *bergrisi*?) mirror that foregrounding in terms for *jǫtunn*.

The shift to *hrímþurs* in *Gylfaginning* is not evenly distributed. More than half of the examples are connected to the story of Ymir. This cannot be sufficiently explained by the use of *hrímþurs* in only one of the several stanzas of *Vafþrúþnismál* behind this section of Snorri's cosmogony, and it is certainly not attributable to a 'misunderstanding' of one word through which other verses in this and other poems were reinterpreted. The high frequency of *hrímþurs* co-occurs with the point in *Edda* where *hrím* ['rime'] is significant to the narrative. It is reasonable to consider this as a potentially relevant factor.

Snorri's cosmogony proposes an initial void called *Ginnungagap* in which *hrím* becomes the prime element. This element (associated with *eitr* ['venom'], and thus evil) produces the first anthropomorphic being Ymir and the primal cow Auðhumla, which nourishes him (Faulkes 1982: 9–11). The first mention of *hrímþursar* is in answer to the question of where the main god was prior to creation. This answer leads to the account of the formation of *hrím* and the emergence of Ymir and the cow from the *hrím*. This account presents six uses of *hrím* in addition to the first six examples of *hrímþurs*, while the final two uses of *hrímþurs* describe what happens to the kin of *hrímþursar* following the slaying of Ymir. Within this section, Snorri constructs for the reader a connection between *hrím* in *hrím-þurs* and *hrím* as the primal substance of creation.

Fjodor Uspenskij (2001) has shown that the image of rime and a cow was used in different contexts in Old Norse culture to reference the world-creation. The referential use of this image collocation attests to the social recognisability and significance of these images, and thus suggests that Snorri is not inventing this motif but rather connecting *hrím-þurs* with an established symbol. Constructing that connection would also explain why Snorri would subsequently foreground the example of *hrímþurs* from (or paralleling) *Grímnismál* when describing the roots of the world tree, and why he would explicitly connect this mention of *hrímþursar* back to *Ginnungagap*. The *hrímþursar–bergrisar* collocation does not appear marked by this cosmological sense, but the recurrence of *hrímþurs* in the vocabulary of *Gylfaginning* produces a greater degree of cohesion through the text, for which the last use, alliterating with the giant-name Hrymr, may be the final link, making the destruction of the world resonant with the prime creation. Although the use of *hrímþurs* in *Skáldskaparmál* remains obscure, its use in *Gylfaginning* appears to be by design.

Constructing Cosmological hrímþursar

Snorri appears consciously to construct *hrímþurs* as a category of being associated with the earliest stage of creation. It is possible that a basic aspect of cultural competence was the recognition of a subtle but implicit link between *hrím* in this term and the cosmogony, which offers a potential explanation for its appearance in some giant-names (cf. Sveinbjörn & Jónsson 1931: 284). However, the poetic corpus does not seem to support such a link. The expression *inn hrímkaldi jǫtunn* ['that rime-cold giant'] is indeed used with reference to Ymir (*Vm* 21.5), but according to Hugo Gering's concordance (1903: 462), it is otherwise only used with reference to Reginn, foster-father of Sigurðr the Dragon-Slayer (*Fm* 38.2). Rather than reflecting an association between *hrím* and cosmogony, this may suggest the adaptation of *hrím* as an alliterating element when referring to *jǫtnar* under influence from the more common *hrímþurs*. The epithet *hrímkaldr* is otherwise found only with reference to the son of Loki, with whose intestines Loki will be bound (*Ls* 49.5, 50.2) – which may index the son's death rather than the cosmogony. The only other context of use listed is in *hrímkálkr* ['rime-cup'], which seems to refer the froth forming on the surface of the drink without discernable negative connotations (*Skm* 37.2, *Ls* 52.2 and *Lokasenna*'s associated passage in prose).

The term *hrím* of *hrímþurs* is normally translated 'frost', which may be in large part because Snorri connects *hrím* quite directly with ice in his cosmogony (e.g. Faulkes 1982: 10), complemented by the fact that this semantic field resonates with the epithet *hrím-kaldr* as an epithet. However, the term *hrím*

was also used in some contexts to refer to soot (e.g. *ketil-hrím* [‘kettle-rime’]) or dirtiness (see Uspenskij 2001: 127–129, esp. n.15). This is presumably the semantic field motivating its use in proper names related to cooking for the *einherjar* – Óðinn’s chosen slain warriors (*Gm* 18.1–3). Fjodor Uspenskij (2001: 128) traces the etymology back to Proto-Indo-European **qrei* [‘to touch’], “[s]o that the initial etymological meaning of the word *hrím* might be probably reconstructed as a ‘(self-forming) deposit’.” This aligns with its use in *hrímkálkr* with reference to mead. This leaves the associations of *hrím* in the compound *hrímþurs* and in other references to giants opaque and very likely open to interpretation – whether as ‘frost’, ‘soot’, or a link to the origins of giants from *hrím* as a mythic ‘(self-forming) deposit’. It is possible that the term *hrímþurs* was historically rooted in ‘rime’ as a prime element of the cosmogony, but if so, there is no evidence that this was current. Insofar as *hrímþurs* otherwise appears to have been an unmarked poetic synonym for ‘giant’, it appears that Snorri was actively constructing *hrímþurs* as an ethnos of primal beings associated with the creation of the world.

The construction of *hrímþurs* as an ethnos is never fully resolved in relation to *jǫtunn*, and Snorri (whether intentionally or not) uses the latter term in the common construction *Ymir jǫtunn* [‘the giant Ymir’] in the midst of foregrounding *hrímþursar* (Faulkes 1982: 11). Although the distinctions remain undeveloped, there is the impression that *hrímþursar* and *bergrísar* are being imagined as categories within the broader class of *jǫtunn*, much as *æsir* and *vanir* were being imagined as distinct ethnic groups in the broader category of *goð* [‘gods’]. That said, the strategy may not have been so sophisticated: the construction of *hrímþurs* as an ethnos was centrally focused on the era of primordial time, and it was for that era that the image of the ethnos was significant. In other contexts, links of the ethnonym may have had a functional relevance of connecting the adversaries of the gods rather generally with that primordial time, while the distinctive identity of *hrímþurs* as opposed to other categories of giants ceased to be significant in the present of narratives about Þórr and other gods.

Hrímþursar *and the Vanir Debate*

The findings concerning the use of *hrímþurs* in *Snorra Edda* have significant implications for discussions of Snorri’s mythic ethnography more generally. It has a direct bearing on the Vanir Debate – the ongoing discussion of whether the Old Norse term *vanir* was an ethnonym designating a specific category of being, and if so, the degree to which Snorri’s representations of that category accurately reflect the social tradition.

In the pilot issue of *RMN Newsletter*, Rudolf Simek ignited this discussion with his “Vanir Obiturary” (2010 [2005]; cf. 2006). This discussion has resonated through the pages of this journal since that time (Tolley 2011; Frog & Roper 2011; Hopkins & Þorgeirsson 2011; Słupecki 2011; Hopkins 2012). The spark that set discussion ablaze was the assertion that the Old Norse term *vanir* was not conventionally identified with a distinct category of gods, contesting the position maintained by scholarship on the basis of *Snorra Edda* and the so-called *Ynglinga saga* (of the compendium *Heimskringla*), also attributed to Snorri Sturluson. Simek asserts that the ethnic category of gods called ‘Vanir’ was invented by Snorri, and Snorri’s image of this category, contrasted with the category of *æsir*, has provided a lens through which scholarship has subsequently viewed and interpreted the broader corpus and mythology. The problem of the ‘Vanir’ in Snorri’s mythic ethnography is complicated by the fact that potential sources outside of Snorri’s works relevant to the Vanir or the semantic field of the noun *vanir* are not only limited, but also ambiguous. The present analysis of *hrímþurs* presents new information with which the questions surrounding the Vanir and the term *vanir* can be placed in dialogue.

The idea that Snorri may have invented and regularized ethnic groups in his mythography is not new. Such an invention is generally recognized in Snorri’s distinction of two categories of *álfar* [‘elves’] (e.g. Holtsmark 1964; Gunnell 2007). These are *ljósálfar* [‘light elves’], who are said to inhabit *Álfheimr* [‘Elf-Realm’] in the celestial sphere, and the ugly *døkkálfar* [‘dark elves’], who live under the earth (Faulkes 1982:

19–20). These terms do not seem to have been used outside of a single chapter of *Edda* (cf. *DONP*: *s.v.* 'døkkálfr', 'ljósálfr').[16] They seem to mirror the description of celestial and fallen angels in the Christian text known as the *Elucidarius* and to have been shaped on that model (e.g. Holtsmark 1964: 37; Bonnetain 2006: 36–43; Hall 2007: 24–25).[17] However, this adaptation differs from the questions surrounding Snorri's representation of Vanir as an ethnos: the distinction and description of *ljósálfar* and *døkkálfar* is an adaptation of a Christian model or the creation of a reflection of Christianity in terms of vernacular mythology. However Snorri's use of *ljósálfar* and *døkkálfar* may be interpreted, *it is motivated by a Christian discourse in relation to vernacular mythology*. The case of the Vanir differs by lacking any clear relation to other discourses or ideological motivation. Quite simply, if Snorri constructed the Vanir as an ethnos, it remains unclear why he would do so – what use or interest would it have? Of course, such motivations would likely be impossible to determine with any precision, yet the example of *hrímþurs* becomes interesting because it constructs a distinct ethnos from a vernacular poetic synonym independent of discernible Christian models. This shows that Snorri could be motivated by factors other than Christian models in developing such a term into a distinct ethnos.[18] In addition, the foregrounding of *hrímþurs* in *Gylfaginning* is accompanied by paring it with the term *bergrisi*. Interestingly, this pairing of categories of *jǫtnar* parallels the *ljósálfr–døkkálfar* pairing of elves and the pairing of *æsir–vanir* as categories of gods. Whether this is significant or accidental remains opaque, but it warrants observation when considering the problem of the Vanir. The case of *hrímþurs* thus testifies to Snorri's construction of ethnic categories in his mythography, with the possibility that he may have been advancing binary distinctions within three major categories of being.

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Notes

1. It may be noted that the review of *þurs* did not extend to later evidence in DME I. It therefore did not include uses in *Hrafnagaldur Óðins* or the *sagnakvæði* (for a general introduction to which, see Guðmundsdóttir 2012). *Hrafnagaldur Óðins* was once considered part of the medieval corpus but appears likely to be a post-medieval work (see Lassen 2011: 9–26; cf. also Þorgeirsson 2010). This poem contains three uses of *þurs*, one of which may warrant mention here as a collocation of *þurs* and *hrím* – the line *þurs hrímkalda* ['rime-cold *þurs*'] (st. 13.4; Lassen 2011: 88). However, this line is peculiar because, although *þurs* carries alliteration and *hrímkaldi* is appropriate for use with giants, this epithet appears selected for alliteration in earlier eddic verse (*Vm* 21.5, *Fm* 38.2), *hrímkaldi*'s use here appears more or less ornamental. This combination of *hrím* and *þurs* links two traditional elements of the eddic register in an unconventional way that appears disconnected from their use in compositional strategies of earlier poetry. (The two additional occurrences of *þurs* in this poem appear in lists of different types of beings, carrying alliteration in st. 1.7 but not in st. 25.6; Lassen 2011: 82, 94). Use of *þurs* in the *sagnakvæði* is more interesting owing to potential continuity in the register of *fornyrðislag* eddic poetry and thus of its formulaic expressions (cf. Þorgeirsson 2010; 2011; 2013). Some *sagnakvæði* may date back to around the time of the early *rímur*, such as *Þóruljóð*, which Haukur Þorgeirsson (2011) has suggested could potentially date from the 14th century. In this poem, the use of the expression *þussa modur* in *Þóruljóð* (st. 8.4; Þorgeirsson 2011: 214) is fully consistent with the eddic *þursa X* formula (DME I: 57–61; see also below). However, this material requires a separate review with consideration of the probable dating of each individual poem and has thusfar not been searched exhaustively for evidence of *þurs* and *hrímþurs*.
2. All eddic poems cited according to Neckel & Kuhn 1963 except *Buslubæn* according to Jiriczek 1893 and *þulur* according to Faulkes 1998; skaldic verses are cited by sigla according to the Skaldic Database.
3. The formulaic uses in both *fornyrðislag* and *ljóðaháttr* are predominantly linked to the second half-line, which may manifest a form of what John Miles Foley (1993 [1990]: 96–106, 178–196) calls "right justification" in a line. In addition, *þursa X* and *hrím-þurs* also both formally correspond to kenning constructions, although the significance of this is obscure, especially as these would constitute kennings of quite different types: *þurs* would be the determinant in a genitive kenning construction in *fornyrðislag* but the base-word in a compound kenning construction in *ljóðaháttr*.
4. It might also be mentioned that, in addition to two uses of the common noun *hrímþurs* in the charm section of in *Skírnismál* (30.4, 34.2), the term *þurs* co-occurs with *hrím-* as an element in a giant's name in another line (*Skm* 35.1). However, this may

reflect a structuring device of this part of the poem. The element *hrím* may be used as an 'echo-word' (Beaty 1934) or 'responsion' (Foley 1993 [1990]) that is recurrent through the series of stanzas and creates cohesion (cf. Frog 2014c: 20–21). The element occurs first in the name of the giant *Hrímnir*, who will stare at Gerðr in her state (*Skm* 28.3), then in *hrímþursar* as the owners of the hall to which she will go (*Skm* 30.4) and again in summoning of giants to hear his curse (*Skm* 34.2) before stating that *Hrímgrímnir heitir þurs* ['Rime-Mask is called the *þurs*'], who is the one who will have her. Finally, the element is found in the first long line of the threatened Gerðr's response to the curse, in which she concedes to Skírnir's threats and offers him a *hrímkalkr* ['rime-cup', i.e. frothing cup of mead] (*Skm* 37.2).

5. I.e. expressions equivalent to *jǫtna mjǫð* ['mead of giants'] are not paralleled by a complementary construction in which a category of beings distinct from *jǫtnar* and identifiable with Suttungr appear (on kennings of this type, see further Potts 2012; cf. Faulkes 1998: 5, 11 and Potts 2012: 156 and note).
6. It might be pointed out that *eða* ['or'] in Óðinn's question can also be interpreted as inquiring about which lineage is oldest, that of gods or that of giants, noting that Bergelmir is referred to as *inn fróði jǫtunn* ['the wise giant'] in *Vm* 35.5.
7. Cf. *inn hrímkaldi jǫtunn* (*Vm* 21.4–5; *Fm* 38.1–2) ['the rime-cold giant'], *hundvíss jǫtunn* (*HHv* 25.4–5) ['hound-wise giant'], *harðr jǫtunn* (*Hrbl* 20.4–5) ['harsh giant'].
8. This is similar to Bakhtinian dialogism (e.g. Bakhtin 1981) and Julia Kristeva's 'transposition' (Kristeva 1984 [1974]: 59–60; the phenomenon she had previously termed 'intertextuality' in Kristeva 1969 [1980]). However, models based in Bakhtinian theories of texts and genres have not been equipped to address how the environment of one genre may shape and condition such 'transpositions' either formally or in relation to social conventions. The formal aspect is particularly significant for consideration in oral-poetic discourse (cf. Frog 2012: 52–54). Another shortcoming of these models is their inclination to project texts and their signification in relation to other texts independent of users, as though referentiality had an objective existence rather than being a process of engagement by individuals producing and receiving texts.
9. E.g. Naumann 1983: 133, 137; Tómasson 1989: 218–220; Ólason 1994: 116–122; van Wezel 2006; Frog 2011b: 25–27.
10. It may be noted that the term *berg-búi* ['mountain-dweller'] could carry alliteration here, but this would require repeating the element *berg* in the short line. The choice may nevertheless be connected to poetic conventions, which warrants note in this line with *bergrisar* ['mountain-giants'] because the latter term will become relevant when we turn to Snorri's text. Although inverting the word order, placing *bergrisar* at the onset of the line would allow for the first noun to carry alliteration and *búar* to be compounded by a non-alliterating element, the present line may conform to formulaic use of *bergrisi* at the end of a short line paralleling predominating uses of *hrímþurs*. The term *risi* ['giant'] is rare in the extant eddic corpus, but this use corresponds directly with that in *Grottasǫngr* (9.7, 10.6, 24.1), where the appearance of *risi* rather than *jǫtunn* may have a relation to the mytho-heroic rather than purely mythological context, especially striking in the expression *garðr risa* (*Grt* 12.2) ['realm of *risar*']. (The potential formulaic positioning of *bergrisar* in the line can also be compared to the *jǫtunn*-kennings *berg-búi* in *Hm* 2.1 and *berg-Danir* ['mountain-Danes'] in *Hm* 17.7).
11. The three agents are presented as deceiving Gylfi with illusion and narratives, presenting themselves and the other representatives of Germanic mythology as gods. The three names used are all names of Óðinn, which is unambiguously acknowledged within the text when all three names appear in the list of Odin-names provided by Þriði (Faulkes 1982: 21–22). Within the framing Christian discourse, which advocates a euhemerized interpretation of pagan mythology, this tripling of Óðinn as part of the illusion of authority and act of deception invites interpretation as an imitation of the Christian Trinity. (See Klingenberg 1986: 637–641; on the relationship of *Gylfaginning* to conversion discourse, see Abram 2009.)
12. On the different 'languages' of mythic beings as potentially rooted in an Indo-European heritage, see Toporov 1981: 201–214; Watkins 1995: 38–39; West 2007: 160–162. However, on the problematics of the value of *Alvíssmál* as representing a tradition of such mythic languages in Old Norse, see Frog 2011a.
13. A perspective on the potential for variation suggested here can be gained by comparing, for example, the description of the creation of the world from the body of Ymir in *Vafþrúðnismál* 5 and *Grímnismál* 40, and also comparing *Alvíssmál* 20 and the variation of it quoted in *Snorra Edda* (discussed in Frog 2011a: 54–57). From Snorri's use of *hrímþurs*, it may be inferred that this term was at the end of the second half-line and carried alliteration as in *Grímnismál* 31.
14. Such a proposal is therefore no less speculative than suggesting that an alliterative verse motivated the other isolated use in *Skáldskaparmál* – e.g. alliterating Þórr's *hamarr* ['hammer'] and the *hrímþursar* against which it is effective, although the words have been separated from one another in the adaptation of verse to prose.
15. On alliterative rank and *jǫtunn* in relation to other terms for mythic being, see Frog 2011a: 45, Table 1. The kenning(-like) *bergrisi*-formula is *X bergrisa* ['X of *bergrisar*'] always referring to the giantesses in *Grottasǫngr* (9.7, 10.6 and inverted in 24.1); an additional example of *bergrisi* is also found in a skaldic *dróttkvætt* stanza, where it carries neither rhyme nor alliteration, although the lexical choice may be motivated by avoiding other lexical repetition (Anon (Ldn) 2^{IV}.1).

16. This term is also found once in *Hrafnagaldur Óðins* (st. 25.7), which appears to be a post-medieval work which draws directly on *Snorra Edda* for terms and names see Lassen (2011: 9–26). It appears in a series of terms for being where it is used in the long line *náir, dvergar / og dökkálfar* [‘corpses, dwarves and dark-elves’] (Lassen 2011: 94, 105–106). I would like to thank Joseph S. Hopkins for drawing this example to my attention.
17. It is uncertain whether *døkkálfr* should be regarded as a synonym for *svartálfr* [‘black elf’]. In *Skáldskaparmál*, Loki travels to see *svartálfar* (*svarta álfar* in U) and meets *dvergar* (Faulkes 1998: 41; Pálsson 2012: 236); in a different narrative, he also meets a *dvergr* when travelling to a place called *Svartálfaheimr* [‘realm of the black elves’] (Faulkes 1998: 41) as Skírnir does on his journey to *Svartálfaheimr* in *Gylfaginning* (Faulkes 1982: 28). In *Edda*, *svartálfr* thus appears to simply be a synonym for *dvergr* (e.g. Holtsmark 1964: 37). It is impossible to tell whether, like *hrímþurs*, this term has some background in poetic discourse. The *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* (*s.v.* ‘svartálfr’, ‘svartálfs sonr’) also shows examples of *svartálfr* in *Hektors saga*. Although this use has been thought to be dependent on *Snorra Edda* (Hall 2007: 24), this is difficult to assess. What is most interesting is that the term is used across the different parts of *Edda*, and the noun as well as the place name appear in *Skáldskaparmál*, whereas the place name only is found in *Gylfaginning*, where the noun *døkkálfr* appears.
18. Coincidentally, *hrímþurs* and *vanir* also share a parallel that the both terms are found in eddic verse predominantly or near-exclusively as formulaic expressions in the *ljóðaháttr* meter (Frog & Roper 2011: 31–34).

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Abstracts of Articles and Author Information

The 'Viking Apocalypse' of 22nd February 2014: An Analysis of the Jorvik Viking Centre's *Ragnarǫk* and Its Media Reception

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Abstract: This article investigates recent discussions in the media concerning purported predictions of a Viking apocalypse. The media attention is contextualized in relation to current trends in modern culture linked to the Viking Age and early Germanic religion.

Motifs and Folktales: A New Statistical Approach

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Abstract: Lexicometric software is applied to a test corpus of tale-type ATU 1137 as a pilot study to assess whether such software can be used for the identification of traditional motifs. Rather than a tool for identifying motifs, the pilot study revealed a new way of looking at tales, viewing them in terms of semantic networks.

The U Version of *Snorra Edda*

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Abstract: The four main manuscripts of *Snorra Edda* group into two main versions, RTW and U. Scholarship has not been able to resolve which of these versions is closer to the earliest form of the text. This article offers a concentrated presentation that shows how the differences of U from RTW are attributable to scribal practice.

Goddesses Unknown II: On the Apparent Old Norse Goddess Ilmr

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Abstract: The goddess Ilmr, attested only in Icelandic sources, has been almost completely neglected by scholarship. This article offers a comprehensive review of the evidence and discusses the possible interpretations. It proposes that ecological conditions in Iceland could be a factor in why this name seems to become increasingly obscure following the settlement period.

The (De)Construction of Mythic Ethnography II: *Hrímþurs* and Cosmogony (A Contribution to the Vanir Debate)

Frog *(mr.frog@helsinki.fi): Folklore Studies / Dept. of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki, PL 59 (Unioninkatu 38 A), University of Helsinki, Finland.*

Abstract: This article shows that the term *hrímþurs* was a poetic term employed for *h*-alliteration, but that it was elevated by Snorri Sturluson to a mythic ethnos. This construction of a category in Snorri's mythography is placed in dialogue with the question of whether he has done the same with the category of gods called 'Vanir' in the so-called Vanir Debate.

Events

Alliterativa Causa

18th–19th January 2013, London, U.K.

Jonathan Roper, University of Tartu

In January of 2007, a group of researchers met at the Warburg Institute in London for a colloquium on alliteration. Some papers from this event eventually formed around half of the chapters in the work *Alliteration in Culture* (Palgrave, 2011). Although there was a long gap between the meeting and the book, when it did finally see the light of day, it was apparent that there was continued interest in the topic. Thus it was that in January 2013 the Warburg Institute hosted another colloquium on alliteration, once again sponsored by the [British] Folklore Society. This time the event spanned two days, and fell into seven sections.

The first of the sections dealt with *Alliteration in Nordic Verse*, and found Frog (University of Helsinki) 'reading alliteratively' in the paper "Lexical Semantics in a Dead Language" (the language in this case being Old Norse). For him, reading alliteratively meant being aware of the shaping influence of alliteration on word choice in Old Norse verse traditions, and for the modern reader to be ready to "de-mine" that alliteration. In a sense, 'reading alliteratively' was then to read *against* alliteration. The second speaker, Ragnar Ingi Aðalsteinsson (Reykjavik), addressed vocalic alliteration in Icelandic over a very long time frame (ten centuries). He suggested that initial vowels were formerly preceded by a mandatory glottal stop, and that this was in fact the sound being alliterated on. Ragnar was a returnee from the first alliteration colloquium and his paper this time was a pendant to his previous paper, which concentrated on the rules regarding alliterations involving another set of difficult sounds: clusters involving *s*-.

The second of the sections offered us *Broad Perspectives on Alliteration*. This involved Seth Lindstromberg presenting a multi-authored paper ranging over a wide amount of cognitive research on the role of sound repetition in human memory, especially in the case of learning foreign languages. This research suggested that consonance may be less helpful than alliteration in learning multi-word phrases in English, and one explanation proffered for this was that consonance may in fact be too common to have an impact. Daniel Abondolo of the University of London gave the paper "Synchronic Means, Diachronic Ends", which usefully problematized many of the assumptions we might make in dealing with alliteration by drawing on a wide range of examples from often little-known Eurasian poetic traditions. Abondolo was also one of several speakers to invoke Alison Wray's notion of 'chunks' of preformed language units in their discussions of alliteration. The session was concluded by Will Abberley, speaking the day before he was awarded his PhD at Exeter, on 19th century understandings of alliteration, under the title: "'This Barbaric Love of Repeating the Same Sound': Alliteration and 'Primitive' Speech in the Victorian Evolutionary Imagination". As the title suggests, alliteration was often poorly received – Robert Louis Stephenson finding it childish, and H.G. Wells thinking it vulgar. Tennyson, apparently, removed the naturally occurring alliteration from his poems for fear his audience would laugh.

In the first session after lunch, *Alliteration in Eastern Europe*, Eila Stepanova (University of Helsinki) discussed the role of alliteration in Karelian Laments, and adumbrated the complex systems of traditional synonyms and circumlocutions that support the lamenter's alliterative word choices. Jonathan Roper (University of Tartu) spoke about the fate of alliteration when translated in a variety of popular and high cultural forms. The paper was a last-minute

addition to cover the unfortunate absence of our Georgian colleague Mari Turashveli, who unexpectedly was unable to be with us, but it did not entirely break with the advertised content of this session as it contained as many Eastern European examples as it did English ones. The final session of the first day was on *Alliteration in English Verse*, where Jeremy Scott Ecke (University of Arkansas, Little Rock) drew upon his archival research on *Piers Plowman* manuscripts to think about alliteration and innovation in Middle English, arguing that scribal practice can show us innovation in tradition. This led him to question how justified certain editors' 'corrections' of scribal forms might be. Ad Putter (Bristol) also approached Middle English alliterative verse from a questioning angle, suggesting that the heteromorphicity discussed by Cable and Duggan might be more constitutive of Middle English alliterative verse than alliteration. He examined the interaction of rhyme and alliteration in the poem, *The Awntyrs off Arthure*, noting how rhyme-alliterators, such as the author of this poem, think in couplet units, rather than in the single line units of earlier tradition. Discussions then continued at a wine reception at the Institute.

On the morning of the second day, the focus moved back to eastern Europe, with three papers on *Alliteration and Translation*. Tuomas Lehtonen of the Finnish Literary Society (SKS) looked at the presence of alliteration in early Finnish translations of German Lutheran hymns. While a figure such as Jacobus Finno was clear that rhyme should be introduced to Finland as part of the civilizing process, later antiquarian priests engaged with the alliterative Kalevalaic idiom in their hymn writing. Māra Grudule (Riga) had a similar focus in her paper, entitled: "Adapting Luther to the Baroque: Sound Effects in Seventeenth-Century Latvian Poetry". She noted that alliteration could often make its way into the verses via devices such as reduplication and etymological figures. Finally in this session, Mihhail and Maria-Kristiina Lotman (representing the Universities of Tallinn and of Tartu) spoke on "Alliteration, Its Form and Functions in Original and Translated Poetry", contrasting, for example, the fate of alliteration in translations into Russian and Estonian of *Beowulf* and the *Kalevala*.

After an early lunch, we heard papers on *Alliteration and Proverbs*, with Marcas Mac Connigh (Belfast) discussing alliteration (and other signs of proverbiality) in Gaelic proverbs in Ireland, and Susan Deskis (DeKalb) speaking on alliterative proverbs in the Old and Middle English period, more specifically the role alliteration might play in granting them their sense of authority. This provided a nice segue into the final section *Alliteration and Authority*, in which Helena Halmari (Huntsville) spoke on "Alliterative Patterns and Language Switching in Oxford, MS Bodley 649". This was quite a change from her paper at our first meeting on alliteration in the inaugural addresses of U.S. Presidents, but she succeeded in showing that macaronic Middle English sermons were a markedly alliterative genre. The final speaker, Kristin Hanson of Berkeley, concluded proceedings by speaking about how Seamus Heaney attempted to provide a variety of equivalents to Old English alliteration in his translation of *Beowulf*, running the gamut from the shadowy to the substantial.

All in all, the two days of papers and discussions, during which the speakers addressed an impressively wide variety of text-types, periods, and languages, showed once again that the phenomenon of alliteration possesses more facets than might first be imagined. If we were to be critical, we might notice that while the scholars were successful in presenting their chosen traditions and concerns to one another, the study of alliteration has not yet advanced to a stage where there is a more or less shared set of terms for them to use when speaking to each other (the study of rhyme is far more developed in this regard). Furthermore, typological comparisons remain largely unexplored and generalizations undrawn. In any event, there is much still to talk about, and it is to be hoped that there will be another such meeting of minds.

The Yale Conference on Baltic and Scandinavian Studies

13th–15th March 2014, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Maths Bertell, Mid-Sweden University

Representing the Austmarr Network (www.austmarr.org), I had, along with Christine Ekholst from the Medieval Gender Network, been given the task to arrange one of the streams for The Yale Conference on Baltic and Scandinavian Studies, organized by the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS), the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS), and the European Studies Council at Yale University. The conference had the impressive ambition to cover almost every aspect of Scandinavian and Baltic Studies within the humanities, and accordingly to achieve a well-filled list of participants. The *Austmarr* session planned in advanced for 20+ papers but ended up with 10 sessions with a total of 32 papers! Added to this were the sessions *The Vikings*, *The Sagas* etc., all within panel A: Early Histories, which inevitably led to a number of clashes of interest that made a lot of participants miss out on many interesting papers. The organizers also had underestimated the power of the early European history contributions, with Vikings, Sagas, Myth and Archaeology. Small venues were crowded with people lining the walls, while others were half empty. All though the organizors seemed to have been overwhelmed by their task and appeared somewhat invisible, the papers delivered and the discussions held, both formal and informal, mirrored the participants' scholarly achievements. Once again, the field of the Viking Age and the early Middle ages proved itself to be a vibrant and interdisciplinary field. The conference also held hopes for the future with up and coming scholars like Johnny Therus from Uppsala University with the paper "Abandoning the Ancestors? – Conflict and Acculturation, the Changing Burial Customs of Viking-Age Uppland, Sweden", Colin Gioia Connors from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, with "Google Mapping *Hrafnkels Saga*: The Pitfalls and Promise of Geolocating the Sagas", Maja Bäckvall from Harvard University with "Erring on the Side of the Reader: Scribal Errors as Part of the Text", and Michael Meichsner from the University of Greifswald with "Constituting Space in the Baltic Sea Area: A Case Study of Gotland, Bornholm and Rügen". All took different perspectives, but presented new angles and results for the common field for a variety of disciplines. The schedule may be found here: http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/balticstudies/ybss/schedule.html.

The conference program is available here: https://yale.app.box.com/s/0c01huhvcdmo0tje3bdp.

Julius ja Kaarle Krohn juhlasymposium – Julius and Kaarle Krohn Anniversary Symposium

6th September 2013, Helsinki, Finland

Karina Lukin and Kendra Willson (University of Helsinki)

As of May 2013, 150 years had elapsed since the birth of Professor Kaarle Krohn. On this occasion, the Folklore Studies at the University of Helsinki organized a symposium in collaboration with the Finnish Literary Society. On the shoulders of Krohn *père* and *fils* rests a heavy load from the point of view of Finnish and international folkloristics: the Historical-Geographic Method, developed by Kaarle and Julius Krohn together, justified the aim of folkloristics and in practice created it as an academic discipline. Kaarle Krohn's life work is remarkably broad and significant – as a researcher and professor, and also as the initiator of many institutions of tradition research, such as the publication of *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* ['Ancient Songs of the Finnish People'] and the Folklore Fellows. The presentations at the symposium, held in

Finnish and English, similarly covered a broad area both in relation to Krohn's own time and to the present day.

The symposium opened with Pertti Lassila's (University of Helsinki) "Julius Krohn, kansa ja kirjallisuus" ['Julius Krohn, the Folk and Literature'], a sharp-eyed view of Julius Krohn's intellectual historical background and conceptions of the *Kalevala*. Lassila emphasized that Krohn was a patriotic Fennomaniac, focused on cultural activities, for whom research on folk poetry comprised a part of Finnish literary history. Krohn viewed the *runo* tradition as unique and valuable, a heritage that made possible both contemporary and future literature, within which the Finns' aesthetic education had been preserved. Julius Krohn was a contemporary of Elias Lönnrot – Lönnrot was in fact his teacher – who had a clear view of the multiplicity of the materials in the *Kalevala*. Lassila's presentation and the ensuing discussion nicely foregrounded how quickly the symbolic significance of the *Kalevala* left in its wake and hid from view other Kalevala-meter poetry and other work by Lönnrot. Although the discussion was not conducted publicly, researchers contemplated the relationship between Lönnrot's epic and the 'original *Kalevala*'. Even though Krohn, too, regarded the *Kalevala* as just one possible way of presenting the idea of Finnish epic as it might possibly have been in the past, he did not want to question the value of Lönnrot's work: the *Kalevala* was 'natural and beautiful'. In his presentation, Lassila concentrated on investigating Julius Krohn first and foremost as a literary historian.

Kaj Häggman's (University of Helsinki) "'Tämä paikka on meillekin pyhä': SKS, punakaarti ja Kaarle Krohn" ['This Place Is Holy to Us as Well': The Finnish Literary Society, the Red Guard and Kaarle Krohn'], by contrast, addressed Kaarle Krohn's position as the director of the Finnish Literary Society during a political crisis in the spring of 1918, when Helsinki was controlled by the Reds. According to Krohn's account, the Red Guard, searching for an underground printing press, stated at SKS, "This place is holy to us as well," for which reason the house was preserved "as an island in the center of Red Helsinki." Later in the spring of 1918, Krohn thanked the Red Guard for not tampering with the SKS collections, in what was, according to Häggman, a remarkable speech for its time. During this time of intense polarization, Krohn made gestures of reconciliation; this can be traced to a belief, inherited from his father, in the holiness of the Finnish people. Häggman also discussed other of Kaarle Krohn political principles, including monarchism, notions of the unity of the Finno-Ugric peoples and Greater Finland (suur-Suomi). He continued along the same lines as Lassila in stating that, while the position of folklore as a national discipline inhibited certain discussions from arising – for instance, it was necessary to study *Kalevala* and the ancient history of Finland, not folk poetry in the Kalevala-meter – at the same time, it was part of an effective publication strategy, which was beneficial to the discipline.

Satu Apo's (University of Helsinki) "Suullisen runouden historia – fakta vai fiktio" ['The History of Oral Poetry – Fact or Fiction?'] addressed the dating of the Kullervo poem. According to Apo, Lönnrot's extensive role in the compilation of the Kullervo poem specifically was kept as inside knowledge, while publicly the image of Lönnrot as the last *runo* singer was maintained. Apo divided those who have dated the Kullervo poem into two camps: the matter-of-fact Kaarle Krohn and Martti Haavio left its age ultimately an open question. By contrast, the thoughts of E.N. Setälä, Matti Kuusi, and Jouko Hautala, among others, were characterized, according to Apo, by the boldness of their hypotheses. Later in the discussion, this was referred to as 'gay science' (*iloinen tiede*), in which the researcher lets his spirit fly and leaves verification as a task for others. Apo drew attention to a series of hypotheses, beginning with E.N. Setälä, according to which the Kullervo poems were dated and situated as part of medieval Nordic literature. At the end of her presentation, she posed the question of how and why great historical leaps in the construction of the histories of the poems were accepted, and why precisely the

Scandinavian Middle Ages attracted Finnish researchers.

Roger D. Abrahams' (University of Pennsylvania) "Folklore: From Krohn to Holbek and beyond – The Many Promises of Comparatism" was a wide-ranging tour of the history of folklore scholarship and Abrahams' personal research history. He began with the antiquarian roots of folklore scholarship; Francis Child benefitted immeasurably from his Scandinavian and Scottish correspondents, preferred written to oral sources, and discovered that many ballads could not be traced to a single origin. Abrahams described his own work with Alan Dundes in Yugoslavia in the 1960s, expanding Carl von Sydow's biological metaphor to cover "tropism" in oikotypes. This journey led to a visit to Bengt Holbek in Copenhagen and discussion with Holbek of the antiquarian "brotherhood" of Early Modern Scandinavia and specifically whether questionnaires distributed by the Danish and Swedish kings at the instigation of Ole Worm were related to a similar investigation in the Castillian court of Ferdinand II, a question later taken up by Valdimar Tr. Hafstein. The Krohns were part of a trans-Atlantic network of scholars and central in professionalizing the discipline of folklore as a science of high purpose, bringing it out of the shadow of antiquarianism and nationalism. Abrahams' own research has not focused on the types of single-voiced tradition that can be investigated based on motifs and tale-types, but looks more at community practices, such as the roles of outsider groups in performing traditions on the Atlantic littoral impacted by the slave trade. Comparative work need no longer be based on a search for *Urform*s and the basis for comparison has expanded greatly. Not all folklore is antique or antique-like. The folklore studies of the present and future focus on this deeply situated behavior, art that grows out of interaction.

Jamie Tehrani (Durham University), in "Folktale Phylogenetics: A Modern Evolutionary Approach to Historical-Geographic Studies in Folklore", introduced the application of phylogenetic methods from computational biology to cultural phenomena. He illustrated this approach using the examples of ATU 333 (Little Red Riding Hood) and ATU 123 (The Wolf and the Kids). Tales from Asia (The Tiger Grandmother) and Africa (involving an ogre) share some characteristics with both these predominantly European and Near Eastern types, but it has been unclear whether they belong to one of the two types or should be regarded as separate.

Tehrani coded 58 variants of these stories according to 72 different variables. He mapped the variants against geographical space and analyzed them using three statistical methods: cladistics (maximum parsimony tree, minimizing the total number of changes needed to produce the leaves), Bayesian MCMC (which allows rates of evolution to vary across characters and tree branches and produces a probability distribution of relationships under a range of plausible evolutionary models) and NeighborNet (agglomerative clustering that can accommodate incompatible splits). These produced visual representations which clearly distinguished among the types but placed the Asian and African tales in slightly different relations to ATU 333 and 123. The African tales are closer to 123. He first interpreted these results as indicating that the tale had originated in Asia and diversified into the other types as it spread west. However, indications of the likely ages of traits suggests that the similarities were not present in the last common ancestor of all these types, but evolved separately or were borrowed. The Asian tale may be a hybrid that arose through blending between the western types and native tales.

Tehrani concluded that tale types are amenable to phylogenetic analysis and that this method can help to resolve debates about the classification and origins of types. Understanding the stability and modification of tales provides a rich point of contact for anthropology, literature, psychology and biology. Tehrani's paper has since appeared (Tehrani 2013.).

In "Kaarle Krohn and Historical-Geographic Method(s) in the Light of Folklore Studies Today", Frog (University of Helsinki) discussed different meanings attributed to the term "Historical-Geographic

Method" (HGM) and argues that there are in fact several HGMs. In Finland, the term HGM refers narrowly to Kaarle Krohn's school, which defined the discipline of folklore as necessarily historical and comparative, and the sole research question as the search for the original form of a text. The HGM is viewed as a complete package, comprising methods, research tools, theories and research questions, which enjoyed hegemonic status for a long time but which modern scholarship has rejected. In North America, by contrast, the term HGM is used interchangeably with the term "Finnish Method". It is understood more broadly as a toolkit that comprises a number of methods and can be used in conjunction with other methods in addressing a range of research questions. The classic HGM was central to the establishment of folklore as an academic discipline with its own method and in defining the boundaries of folklore as an object of research. HGMs understood more broadly provide flexible tools for studying continuity and variation. An article related to Frog's presentation recently appeared in print (Frog 2013).

Valdimar Tr. Hafstein's (University of Iceland) presentation "The Opposite of Property: How the Grimms Helped to Create the Public Domain (and How the Krohns Carried on Their Work)" discussed the development of the concept of public domain, closely linked to the definition of folklore, as part of the evolution of the notion of intellectual property, linked to concepts of authorship. Folklore was defined as texts without authors, which were therefore available for anyone (typically members of the bourgeoisie) to use as "raw material", to adapt, publish and seek to profit from. The legal apparatus for protecting intellectual property has no way to deal with traditional knowledge that is created collectively and incrementally. The assumption underlying the HGM that a folkloric text originates with an individual creator and is subsequently "zersungen" or sung apart (as described by Friedrich von Schlegel) – that oral transmission is destructive to tradition – is also based on the Romantic ideal of the poet as solitary genius.

Valdimar framed his talk with the example of an Icelandic folk song (commonly known as *Vísur Vatnsenda-Rósu*) that was recorded in the late 19th century, published in Bjarni Þorsteinsson's 1906 compendium *Íslensk þjóðlög* and performed in 1925 "dressed up for the drawing room" by composer Jón Leifs, a founder of STEF, the Icelandic organization for musical copyright. A 1960 arrangement of the song by Jón Ásgeirsson became immensely popular in the 1990s, appearing *inter alia* in a Ford commercial, sung by Björk Guðmundsdóttir, and as the theme of Hilmar Oddsson's 1995 film (*Tár úr Steini* ['Tears of Stone']) about the life of Jón Leifs. Jón Ásgeirsson accused the music arranger for the film (Hjálmar H. Ragnarsson) of theft, and through out-of-court settlements and the judgement of two experts appointed by STEF, *Vísur Vatnsenda-Rósu* was declared "effectively" Jón Ásgeirsson's composition in 1997, a century after it was collected by Bjarni Þorsteinsson.

Overall the seminar illustrated the richness and continued vibrancy of the Krohns' multifaceted legacy.

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Discourses of Belief and Genre: A Nordic–Baltic Workshop at the Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society

16th–19th October 2013, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A.

Irina Sadovina, University of Toronto, and Heidi Haapoja, University of Helsinki

The 2013 American Folklore Society (AFS) Annual Meeting was held in the beautiful city of Providence, Rhode Island, where over 700 folklorists from all over the world were welcomed. The theme for the meeting was "Cultural Sustainability", which in this

context was understood broadly. The concept refers to the agreement of sustainable development that the UN World Commission on Environment and Development ratified in 1987. As the AFS Call for Papers announcement describes it, cultural sustainability is seen in relation to the UN agreement but also more widely in all arenas where folklorists work:

> While most often discussed in relation to development, planning, economics, and the environment, this perspective on sustainability is readily applicable to the goals, strategies, and outcomes achieved through folklore research as an academic and applied practice.[1]

The discipline of folkloristics has at its heart an unresolved, and perhaps irresolvable, tension. On the one hand, there is the commitment to approaching 'folklore', however we understand the term, as a phenomenon of importance and inherent value. A commitment reflected in the very name of the discipline is, after all, hard to get away from. Yet the focus on tradition is not just a disciplinary peculiarity: with global-ization, the threat to certain cultural forms is certainly quite real. Even folklorists who might be uncomfortable with straightforward calls for heritage preservation undeniably believe that their object of study is valuable enough to merit a quest for greater understanding.

On the other side, we find a strong discomfort with the excessive valorization of folklore. Contemporary folkloristics is critical of its own origins in the Romantic nationalist search for an authentic 'voice of the people'. As the discipline strives for a more reflexive and rigorous scholarly practice, it continues to question the meaning and value with which we invest phenomena designated as 'folklore' and 'tradition'.

The practice of folkloristics, therefore, demands that we figure out how to negotiate this tension between valuing tradition and critically analysing processes of valuation. Banishing the ghost of collectors' Romanticism to the 19th-century will only result in glossing over this internal contradiction. At the "Discourses of Belief and Genre" workshop organized by the University of Helsinki and the University of Tartu at the 2013 meeting, these issues were tackled with openness and rigor.

The sessions opened with Frog's (University of Helsinki) stimulating challenge to received notions of tradition and its preservation. Contemporary calls for heritage preservation imply a threat to cultural resources that requires an urgent response. These calls, however, contain echoes of Romanticism and should be examined carefully. Frog's excursion into the history of *longue durée* questioned the myopia of anti-globalization and preservationist ideas. Far from being the first homogenizing threat in history, globalization is the latest installment of profound changes that have affected cultures and lifestyles: the 19th century, for example, saw the gradual disappearance of peasant culture; even earlier, the spread of Indo-European languages involved the obliteration of other linguistic, and thereby cultural, systems. Human history is a history of mutating traditions. Attempts to preserve 'cultures' for their own sake seeks to resist these processes of change, investing cultural forms with artificial sustainability. As a result, these forms serve to create new distinctive symbolic identities that replace the pre-preservation tradition.

This problem of perceiving traditions from inside or from the outside and interpreting and valuating them on the basis of those perspectives was then taken up from quite a different angle by Ergo-Hart Västrik (University of Tartu). He illustrated the complexity of belief discourses by presenting an analysis about the narratives of the Estonian Seto Peko Cult, giving perspectives of both devotees and non-devotees. This fertility god cult is one of the most documented examples of late 19th century vernacular Seto religion. Wooden statues of Peko were worshipped in secret celebrations, and those who questioned the cult were threatened with different kinds of punishments. By looking at how these narratives were represented from different perspectives on the cult, Västrik showed that narration played a vital role in the social negotiation of this cult and associated beliefs.

Frog's provocative question: "whose culture do we sustain, and for whom?" was also addressed in the historical inquiries of Lotte Tarkka (University of Helsinki). In her paper, Tarkka traced the life story of a Karelian peasant, Riiko Kallio, and his career as "the last male rune-singer". During the social upheavals of the early 20th century, rune-singing was indeed a disappearing tradition. Tarkka examined how Kallio himself expressed his experience of the last days of rune-singing in the nostalgic imagery of his songs that were written in exile. At the same time, other groups with various political interests invested Kallio's songs with an urgent quality of 'lastness'. When Kallio's work fit their vision of authenticity, these groups elevated it; whereas they dismissed it when it did not.

Kristel Kivari (University of Tartu) then returned to the themes of discourses surrounding beliefs. She advanced the discussion of earlier periods to the modern day, concentrating on connections between traditional place legends and vernacular theories of geology. Her analysis was based on fieldwork among Estonian dowsers, and she found that traditional images and motifs were being translated through modern concepts and images, such as radiation – i.e. interpreting how dowsing works through radiation rather than supernatural abilities. In this way, dowsers connected their discussions with the discourse of geologists.

This movement into the modern was continued by Heidi Haapoja (University of Helsinki), who shared her in-depth analysis of contemporary practices of tradition in a paper on Finland's New Wave folk music. Situating this development within the professional field of international folk music, Haapoja contrasted the liberal and transnational culture of the folk music community with the traditionalist rhetoric of its treatment by the media. New Wave musicians themselves, as Haapoja's research has shown, seek a solid grounding in the tradition by studying old recordings. At the same time, they emphasize the general human relevance of these songs and welcome creativity and innovation.

Whereas the Finnish folklorists explored mostly Finno-Ugrian themes, the Tartu researchers extended their studies much more widely through the world, with as many as three of the papers addressing India-related themes which provided the bridge between sessions. Irina Sadovina (University of Toronto) carried forward Haapoja's discussion of adaptations of historically or culturally remote traditions into modern environments with her fascinating paper on how the Hare Krishna movement and the Vedic family values it offers have become part of popular psychology in Russia. Sadovina examined the controversial tension that this has produced between vernacular interpretations of Vedic-based ideas and the Russian Krishna society that prefers to hold to institutional doctrines. She very effectively drew together the different themes that had so far been brought forward in an insightful discussion of two complementary sides. The first being the vernacularization of traditions and beliefs that acquire their authority in large part from the prestige and antiquity of the heritage that they represent for modern societies today, and the second being the dynamics of discourse through which these are negotiated in societies and cultures.

The theme of India was continued by Ülo Valk (University of Tartu) and Margaret Lyngdoh (University of Tartu), who built their discussions on their fieldwork on vernacular religious life in Assam, a state in north-eastern India. Valk introduced narratives about shape-shifting and other magical transformations, offering an insightful discussion of Assamese notions of 'black magic' in narratives and their controversial relationship with magic's social uses. Lyngdoh added a complementary perspective to Assamese religious life and studied the interaction between indigenous religious practices and the dominant Christian culture in connection with funerary rites. Her discussion of the social controversy of corpse reanimation and its position in the changing cultural environments provided a dynamic counterpoint to several other papers in the workshop.

The theme of funerary rituals and interactions with the dead was then picked up by Eila Stepanova (University of Helsinki). In her paper on Karelian laments and their

collectors, Stepanova linked purely historical studies with an inquiry into contemporary folklore practices. Organizing the history of Karelian laments into a chronology, Stepanova discussed how the practice and collection of folklore was organized in different periods, influenced by different ideologies, be it Finnish nationalism, Soviet propaganda, scholarly interest or contemporary spirituality. Her treatment of this rich material provided a valuable site to reflect on the many aspects of historical change being addressed in different papers.

Whereas contemporary Finnish musicians and lamenters draw on old songs to express their creativity within new systems of practices, for individuals who are exiled, tradition takes on a very different meaning. Ulla Savolainen's (University of Helsinki) paper on Karelian child evacuees addressed the intense emotional investment in maintaining an image of the lost home as the ultimate seat of tradition. For those who grew up in exile, Karelia becomes a mythical place of Finnishness. Through telling stories and bringing mementos to and from the places they were forced to abandon, people elaborate and engage with the nostalgic vision of a Golden Karelia. Anastasiya Astapova (University of Tartu) then turned the theme of discourses and the construction of images to questions of power relations. Her inspiring paper considered narratives about elaborate preparations of villages or cities that are meant to present idyllic images or false façades – what she called "window dressing" – for a visiting official. Astapova described how narratives of Vitebsk citizens in Belarus about a visit by the president of Belarus were structured with humorous and government-critical elements. She further addressed how these elements function in the broader context of mass media, literature and folklore.

Karina Lukin (University of Helsinki) brought the workshop to a close by returning to issues of the preservers of traditions and their intended audiences. Lukin took up the case of one of the most important early researchers of Finno-Ugric languages and cultures. The investment of different interested actors in the process of folklore performance and transmission is made clear in Lukin's investigation into the collecting practices of M.A. Castrén, who made several research trips to the Nenets in Northern Russia and Siberia. Castrén's Nenets language epic poems collections offer an interesting channel to consider how the role between the collector and the informants was formed and how the textualization process reflects the collector's understanding of folklore.

These many papers representing Estonian and Finnish scholarship proved remarkably complementary when they were brought together. Interestingly, the contributions of Finnish scholars highlighted the fact that the history of folkloric forms involves more than just gradual diachronic change. Viewed synchronically, traditions are always in the process of change, imagined, practiced and sustained in different ways by different actors. An ethnographic angle on these processes was brought to the theme of the panel especially by the Estonian scholarship. Contributions of the Estonian scholars tended to turn attention from genre to the concept of belief approached from the emic point of view and offered strong discussions on the interconnection between processes of believing and discourse surrounding beliefs. Together, these many papers presented both empirically based studies and theoretically oriented discussions. They included studies based on fieldwork in contemporary cultures and work with archival materials, which variously had orientations to the synchronic contexts of those materials or to diachronic processes through which they changed or of which they were outcomes.

The fresh perspective offered by each paper prompted looking back at the preceding papers in new ways while simultaneously developing an increasingly multidimensional frame within which to view each paper that was still to come. This Finnish and Estonian panel brought methods and approaches of European folklore studies to stimulate a trans-Atlantic dialogue with North American folklorists – and it certainly did stimulate lively discussion. Approaching the conceptual knot of tradition and change from different temporal and contextual angles, these papers brought forth a fascinating discussion, a

discussion that stimulated exchange and collaboration which has continued beyond that significant AFS meeting.

Notes

1. AFS website "2013 Annual Meeting Theme Statement: Cultural Sustainability", available at: http://www.afsnet.org/?2013AMTheme.

Projects, Networks and Resources

Translating the Medieval Icelandic Romance-Sagas

Alaric Hall, University of Leeds

This note is to advertise ongoing work on a series of free-access translations of medieval Icelandic romance-sagas, and to promote the collaborative and free-access model of research and publishing which my collaborators and I have been using.

Icelandic romance-sagas, currently thought to have flourished particularly in the 14th century, arose in direct response to medieval French and Latin romances transmitted to Iceland via Norway. They have received relatively little attention, largely because the National-Romantic historiography which we still, to a large extent, inhabit has seen them as foreign – both to Iceland and to the Germanic-speaking cultures which Iceland is taken to represent – and of poor literary quality. But, as with so-called 'popular romance' of medieval Europe generally, researchers are increasingly seeing the value of Icelandic romance-sagas both as literary texts and as historical sources. They comprise a body of literature in many ways outward-looking, international, and scholarly, demonstrating the intellectual vigour of Iceland under Norwegian rule, with its Europeanising outlook. Yet they also represent the first appearance in the Nordic literary tradition of a range of narratives and motifs that must have been well rooted in the region: they include, for example, the first attestations of what Oddr Snorrason dismissed in the twelfth century as:

> stjúpmæðrasögur er hjarðarsveinar segja, er engi veit hvert satt er, er jafnan láta konunginn minnztan í sínum frásögnum. (normalised from Finnur Jónsson 1932: 2.)
>
> stepmother-stories which shepherd-boys tell, whose truth no-one knows, and which always give the king the smallest role in his own saga.

Some attest to similarities between the narrative traditions of medieval Iceland, Ireland and Wales which are much less apparent in other sources. Finally, these romances underpinned a long tradition of further composition of sagas, and recomposition as *rímur*, which themselves deserve further study. Thus romance-sagas are an important resource for understanding oral literature and early-historic traditions in the medieval North. (For further discussion and references see Hall et al. 2010; Hall, Richardson & Haukur Þorgeirsson 2014.)

Along with various colleagues and friends (particularly Sheryl McDonald Werronen, Haukur Þorgeirsson, Steven Richardson, and Gary Harrup), I have been working to bring more medieval Icelandic romances to a wider audience, primarily through collaborative translations into English; but also by providing these with facing normalised editions; by digitising existing editions and translations; and by undertaking research on Icelandic romances' manuscript transmission. Most Icelandic romance sagas were edited by Agnete Loth (1962–1965), in editions which were never intended to be definitive but which I have so far found to be impressive in their judgement; with the help of Gillian

Fellows-Jensen, Loth provided extensive English paraphrases for each of these. Loth's work, therefore, is invaluable, but complete translations of these romances are important for making them accessible to less specialist audiences. Our work also, of course, builds particularly on the foundational bibliographical work of Marianne E. Kalinke and P.M. Mitchell (1985) and the recent English translations by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards (1985) and Ralph O'Connor (2002). It stands alongside the recent major translations of romance-sagas and *fornaldarsögur* into German (Glauser, Kreutzer and Wäckerlin 1998) and Finnish (Helga Hilmisdóttir, Kirsi Kanerva, & Sari Päivärinne 2013). My own work, based at the University of Leeds (though always indebted to the Arnamagnaean institutes in Reykjavík and Copenhagen), itself stands in a tradition of previous Leeds editions and/or translations of romance-sagas: *Bragða-Ölvis saga* (Hooper 1932, edition only), *Nikulás saga leikara* (Wick 1996), *Nítíða saga fræga* (McDonald 2009) – all now available free-access – along with *Kirjalax saga* (Divjak 2009) and *Úlfs saga Uggasonar* (Wawn 2010, translation only).

My work so far has led to completed facing-page editions and translations of *Sigurðar saga fóts* (Hall et al. 2010) and *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* (Hall, Richardson & Haukur Þorgeirsson 2014). The translation of *Sigurðar saga fóts* was undertaken in collaboration with my undergraduate Old Norse students of 2008–2009. While publications with twenty-two named authors are not common in humanities publishing (and I haven't found the energy to undertake a similar project every year!), I can recommend this process as a way to give students a sense of purpose in learning Old Norse; as a way to emphasise their role, even at undergraduate level, as researchers; and as an external motivation to complete the tedious process of finishing off a translation and getting it through the press!

Meanwhile, the University of Leeds Old Norse Reading Group is producing a translation of *Jarlmanns saga og Hermanns*. At the time of writing, a complete draft translation on Google Docs can be found via http://www.alarichall.org.uk/jarlmannssaga. It needs quite a lot of work before it is finished, but we are making our draft work public both in the hope that it will even at this stage be useful to some researchers, and that people consulting the draft will leave us helpful comments. (In due course, this URL will be redirected to the final publication.) Likely future targets over the next few years include *Dínus saga drambláta*, *Bærings saga fagra*, and *Sigurðar saga turnara*. If anyone is interested in being involved, with these or other sagas, feel free to email me: alaric@cantab.net. In due course, my collaborators and I will probably collect up these translations as a book; either the book itself will be a free-access publication or we will publish the translations individually as free-access articles before republishing them in book form.

My work on the manuscript transmission of the romance-sagas has so far appeared as Hall and Parsons 2013, which focuses on *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, but I have made working papers available on *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* and (with Sheryl McDonald Werronen) *Nikulás saga leikara* at http://www.alarichall.org.uk/sigurgards_saga_stemma_article/ and http://www.alarichall.org.uk/nikulas_saga_stemma_article/, respectively. Work on these is proceeding incrementally; again, the URLs given here will be updated eventually to point to final publications. Meanwhile, Sheryl McDonald has published similar work on *Nítíða saga* (2012; 2013).

Finally, a plea: the UK inter-library loan service has found no copies of the translation of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar* by Otto Zitzelsberger (1980): if anyone can send me a scan, I would be very grateful!

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PEOPLE

Research Reports

Hippocrates, *Epid*. 5: 86, an Ancient 'Simple' Story from Antiquity? – A Comparative and Contextual Folkloric Approach

Davide Ermacora, University of Turin

Paper presented at the Premodern Seminar organized by the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu, held 9th December 2013 in Tartu, Estonia.

A short, problematic and seldom discussed passage to be found in one Hippocratic text gives us a chance to discuss some aspects of folklore in Ancient Greece. A comparative and contextual folkloric approach to the text in question, in fact, reveals that the passage constitutes what is possibly one of the earliest variants of the well-known narrative and experiential theme of a snake or other similar small animal entering the human body (e.g. motif B784; tale-type AaTh/ATU 285B*). This was already perfectly understood by Renaissance commentators, students and interpreters of Hippocrates. This paper aims to throw light on this ancient textual source through a combination of folklore and philological analysis, also in the light of modern and contemporary interpretations.

Degrees of Well-Formedness: The Formula Principle in the Analysis of Oral-Poetic Meters

Frog, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the conference Frontiers in Comparative Metrics II, held 19th–20th April 2014 in Tallinn, Estonia.

This paper presents an argument that the value of formulaic language is qualitatively different from other verbalization in the metrical analysis of oral poetry. This is a three-part argument:

1. Formulaic language in oral poetry develops in relation to the metrical environments of the poetic system in which it is realized.
2. Metrical well-formedness in oral poetry is a perceived quality of text that can vary by degree in 'better' or 'worse' lines rather than being assessed in terms of absolute binary categories of 'metrically well-formed' versus 'not metrically well-formed'.
3. If points (1) and (2) are accepted, it follows that *metrically entangled formulae are more likely to reflect metrically 'better' lines* – what I call the Formula Principle.

Formulaic language is a broad linguistic category (see Wray 2002), and a wide range of formulaic language can be realized in an oral poetic tradition. The Formula Principle is concerned with 'metrically entangled' expressions as units of utterance or integers of a poetic lexicon that have become historically linked to particular metrical environments. Linkages between oral-poetic formulae and meter have long been recognized: this is the foundation of Oral-Formulaic Theory (cf. Parry 1928; Lord 1960). I take a usage-based approach to oral-poetic systems. Oral-poetic meters can be abstracted in analysis, but they are inevitably realized and communicated through language by embodied individuals in situated social activity. An oral-poetic linguistic register (i.e. language as used in the poetry) thus develops in a "symbiotic" relation to meter through social practice (Foley 1996). Consequently the precise degrees and varieties of flexibility that formulaic language evolves will be tradition-dependent (see e.g. Foley 1990), but that evolution will nonetheless be interfaced with

the metrical environment in which poetic discourse is verbalized.

Approaching oral poetry as a form of language practice requires recognizing that oral-poetic meter is assessed and communicated 'by ear'. A working hypothesis follows that metrical well-formedness is perceived like grammatical correctness: although many variations may be classed as 'correct' versus 'incorrect', many simply sound 'better' or 'worse' – and in practice, many little things simply go unnoticed in the flow of language. It is customary to abstract a meter analytically as an ideal and absolute model and assess expressions as either well-formed or not in relation to that model. The present approach suggests that meters are characterized by sets of conventions interfaced with one or more modes of expression (on which, see Frog 2012: 52–54) and that individual conventions are opened to varying degrees of flexibility in relation to one another. Without denying that some lines may be considered metrically 'bad', approaching metrical well-formedness as a perceived quality of text allows it to be viewed in terms of varying degrees within the grey area of 'sounding right' within the flow of performance.

The hypothesis that well-formedness may be a matter of degree is supported by the corpus of kalevalaic epic. Kalevala-meter is an alliterative trochaic tetrameter with rules governing the placement of long and short syllables. The syllable-based rhythm resists variations perceivable as disrupting the rhythm of the mode of expression, whereas formulaic lines that are metrically less well-formed in terms of alliteration or the placement of long and short syllables can become socially established. However, these variations are managed through social practice and better-formed lines exhibit wider social circulation and significantly greater long-term stability.

Two complicating factors in particular require mention. First, expressions that are less well-formed metrically may find a degree of social sustainability through less conventional means of integration into the flow of text. This may occur internally to a line, such as through alliteration on metrically stressed rather than lexically stressed positions (e.g. *vuorehen teräsperähän* ['into a steel-bottomed mountain']). Also, metrically weaker lines may be 'suspended' in a larger textual unit such as a couplet united by parallel alliteration (e.g. *Tuonen mustahan jokehen,* / *Manalan ikipurohon* ['into Death's black river / Death-land's eternal stream']) or in a textual sequence within which e.g. other forms of parallelism create text cohesion. Formulaic language may therefore be maintained as 'sounding right' owing to additional factors than that it converges with ideals of metrical well-formedness.

Second, formulaic expressions may become highly crystallized or advance to lexicalization while conventions of the poetry change around it. Consequently, formulaic language may reflect ideals of metricality from an earlier period. This happened in kalevalaic epic traditions where established formulaic expressions were maintained while the conventions for producing new lines were formed on the basis of slightly different standards (Tarkka 2013: 527n.356). The crystallization of formulaic expressions into extremely fixed forms may also lead them to become metrically 'worse' lines owing to phonetic changes in the meter (e.g. Leino 2002: 224). In this case, rather than 'sounding right', such expressions might simply be accepted as metrically idiomatic as an integrated part of internalizing the poetic system.[1] In any case, the social sustainability of such expressions in these different types of cases is linked to both the conservatism of the poetic system and the perceivability of their integration into the texture of composition. In general, metrically weaker formulaic expressions appear historically more susceptible to alteration or alternation with metrically 'better' alternatives.

The Formula Principle is as follows:

> *As socially shaped expressions, metrically entangled formulae are more likely to reflect metrically 'better' lines than expressions that are formulated by poets on an individual basis, making such formulae of a qualitatively different value in metrical analysis.*

This principle does *not* claim that formulaic expressions are *necessarily* metrically perfect. This approach acknowledges that other (tradition-dependent) factors may affect the

ability for formulaic expressions to 'sound right' in the flow of poetic discourse. The qualitative assessment of a formula as reflecting ideals of metricality therefore requires consideration of contextual and historical factors (N.B. – metrical variation could, in theory, function as e.g. a discourse marker). Nevertheless, the more socially established formulaic expressions are, the more probable that they reflect ideals of realizing the meter. In metrical analysis, such formulae are therefore more likely to yield qualitatively better data than lines situationally composed by one individual.

Notes

1. An extreme case of this type of lexical conservatism in the wake of historical change can be observed in lines of Old Norse *dróttkvætt* poetry in which words that had lost a syllable owning to historical phonetic change were described as 'slow' (*seinn*), presumably because in performance they continued to be maintained rhythmically across two metrical positions (cf. Árnason 1991: 90–91).

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'Parallelism' versus 'Not Parallelism'

Frog, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the seminar-workshop Parallelism in Verbal Art and Performance organized by Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki, and the Finnish Literature Society, held 26th–27th May 2014 in Helsinki, Finland.

Parallelism is normally conceived of as a phenomenon at the level of language, most often approached in terms of equivalence or contrast between adjacent lines of poetry. This paper returns to the much broader conception of parallelism as conceived by Roman Jakobson, who proposed that "on every level of language the essence of poetic artifice consists in recurrent returns" (Jakobson 1981 [1966]: 98).

'Parallelism' is an etic term that functions as a research tool to describe a phenomenon in human expressive behaviours. The broader the range phenomena that this term is used to describe, the more abstract that the tool will become. Any research tool will be better suited to certain materials and research questions than others. As a tool, parallelism can be calibrated to the research material and the questions posed by the researcher. The phenomenon of parallelism appears "under-therorized" (Nigel Fabb, p.c.). My goal in this paper was to interrogate the abstract phenomenon of human poetic expression.

First, parallelism is not exclusive to poetry. 'Oral poetry' can be defined as a conventional system for expression that is aesthetically marked and unambiguously differentiated from conversational speech within a community. Poetics is here conceived in terms of perceivable qualities of text (following Tsur 1992). The differentiation of oral poetry from aesthetically unmarked discourse is realized in part already at the level of elocution, which appears directly connected with making the poetic qualities of a text perceivable. Ethnopoetics (e.g. Hymes 1981) extends the analysis of poetics of discourse from 'poetry' as opposed to 'not poetry' (e.g. owing to a formalized meter) to forms of discourse that are recognizable and qualitatively evaluatable according to its conventional strategies and formal features, whether this is a sermon, lecture, political

speech (cf. Bauman 1984 [1977]), or potentially even the poetics discernible in co-produced conversation (cf. Silverstein 1984). From this view, oral poetry is centrally distinguished by the degree of foregrounding poetic features (cf. Jakobson 1960) rather than their presence or absence *per se*. Units of utterance in poetry are thus most often more regular and disambiguated from one another in elocution throughout a text. Corresponding features may more subtly (and unconsciously) structure other forms of discourse formulated in more flexible units with only irregular foregrounding of poetics for rhetorical effect.

Seen as a feature of poetics (Jakobson 1981 [1966]: 98), I approach parallelism as a perceivable quality of text that connects units of utterance. The connection implied by parallelism thereby suggests some form of relatedness between parallel units and creates cohesion. The implied relation between units could either be of correspondence/equivalence or opposition/contrast). 'Parallelism' tends to be differentiated from repetition: even if it is viewed as a form of repetition, repetition can describe an identity of elements in all respects (except context), whereas parallelism is qualified by some form of difference. Jakobson's (1981 [1966]: 133) description of negative parallelism as "concurrence of equivalence on one [...] level with disagreement on another level" can thereby be considered to describe parallelism as a phenomenon more generally.

This leads to the question: where is parallelism situated? Jakobson did not limit parallelism to the verbal level of words as signs. The surface texture of signals (sounds) through which language is communicated could also exhibit parallelism of "recurrent returns" in the form of alliteration and rhyme, and by extension even in the recurrent rhythms of meter and phrases of melody. On the other hand, words can communicate signs at the next order of signification (images and motifs etc. as symbols) just as signals communicate words. If parallelism is a general phenomenon of signifying elements, then these, too, may exhibit parallelism. Images and motifs can, in their turn, be used to communicate larger distinct units (themes, narrative sequences) that can equally function as discrete meaningful units – i.e. as signs – at still higher orders of signification. If parallelism is possible at all of these levels of signification, it raises the question of how the phenomenon can best be approached.

In his address of parallelism in co-produced conversational discourse, Michael Silverstein (1984: 183) proposed that a unit of utterance presents a "metered frame" in relation to which subsequent co-occurring utterances are perceived.[1] Silverstein's model is complemented by considering units of utterance in light of Reuven Tsur's (1992: 150) emphasis on the etymological background of 'articulation' as "jointed, separated into well-shaped pieces". These combine into a basis for conceptualizing parallelism. Entextualization construes utterance as units – the units are 'articulated', distinguishing them as units from one another. This may be done through a formalized meter with regularly repeating rhythms (e.g. Kalevala-meter), quite flexible units such as the alliterating 'strings' of Karelian laments, or units may be ethnopoetically marked by e.g. pauses, breaths, expletives, syntax, melodic phrases and so forth. Each such unit presents a metered frame allowing its cohesive correlation with co-occurring units.

From this perspective, the formalized recurrence of rhythms, melodic phrases or phonic patterning of many oral-poetic discourses can be viewed as parallelism at the level of signals that simultaneously construe cohesion for each unit and also highlight that unit as a metered frame to be correlated with preceding and subsequent units of utterance. This same process may occur at the level of verbalization: syntax, lexical or semantic repetitions etc. at the level of language may correspondingly construe units of utterance as metered frames to be correlated with preceding and subsequent units. Parallelism then emerges as "a grouping structure in which parallel forms [are perceived] as parallel parts of groups" (Cureton 1992: 263). This may be reinforced by parallelism at the level of signals, but is not dependent on it. Nevertheless, insofar as parallelism is a perceivable quality of text and articulation makes that quality perceivable, some type of correlation between marking units at the level

of signals and at the level of verbalization is anticipated.

Parallelism can be approached through the same model at the next order of signification – i.e. at the level of signs communicated through language. These signs also form units of utterance although perceivable at that higher order of representation.[2] Their recognisability *as* units construes a metered frame at that order of representation. Whether this is the level of motifs or a repeating narrative structure, these units manifest parallel forms where they are perceivable as parallel parts of groups. In this case, they are both interpreted in relation to one another and also create cohesion between larger textual units. Parallelism at these orders of representation may be reinforced by parallelism in verbalization. However, the metrical frame adds a structural aspect to parallelism that becomes distinguishable from other deixis that refers to co-occuring utterances without either *a*) constructing a metrical frame as an ordered grouping in relation to other groupings (as with alliteration or rhyme); or *b*) making a correlation between metrical frames as ordered groupings (as wirh parallel lines of verse).

Language is a single medium of communication and in spoken language these signs necessarily follow one another sequentially in time. Conceptualizing parallelism through verbalization has led the phenomenon to be subject to this same constraint of sequentiality. The approach to parallelism above indicates that parallelism may be synchronized across signals and higher orders of signification co-occurring with verbalization. Verbal expression is viewed as only one medium among a range of potential media in performative expression. Gesture and choreography can equally present equivalent semantic or symbolic units (e.g. correlating these with verbal descriptions). When these media are viewed in terms of metrical frames of expression, it becomes possible to observe parallelism across media, especially where their co-occurring metered frames are synchronized by the unifying rhythms of performance. This produces parallelism of "concurrence of equivalence on one [...] level with disagreement on another level" (Jakobson 1981 [1966]: 133) which may be described as *multimedial parallelism*. Parallelism across media and orders of representation exhibit a variety of potential relationships and raise a number of questions that require concentrated study in the future.

A version of the working paper for this event was published in the pre-print volume for the seminar-workshop (Frog 2014a). The approach to units of utterance outlined here has been refined from the working paper. Questions and problematics of these topics were also reviewed in the introduction to the workshop materials (Frog 2014b).

Notes

1. Silverstein did not develop his approach to 'units': the role of the 'metered frame' moves to the background of his discussion and what he addresses as parallelism seems to converge with deixis.
2. This can be compared to John Miles Foley's (e.g. 1999: 83–87) address of theme and story pattern as integers or vernacular 'words' of the poetic tradition.

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On the Dating and Nature of "Eddic Poetry" with Some Considerations of the Performance and Preservation of *Grímnismál*

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Paper presented at Interpreting Eddic Poetry: Investigating Interdisciplinary Perspectives organized by the Interpreting Eddic Poetry project, held 4th–6th July 2013 in Oxford, U.K.

This paper briefly discussed what we mean by an 'eddic poem', whether 'eddic poetry' can be considered to be a genre, and if so what kind of genre it is (if there was a single 'eddic' genre). Emphasis was placed on the apparent fact that this material was originally designed for oral performance rather than for reading on paper, and that it appears to have been passed on orally, perhaps for centuries. These features underline that when considering eddic poetry, we must first of all consider how oral works are created; and how they function in space (as opposed to written works) in association with their audience and the space in which they were performed. We must also be highly wary of making decisions about dating them (or assigning their origins) on the basis of single lines (especially if we consider how oral works are passed on). Furthermore, we need to be aware that these oral poems had functions (related to their performance), and that their functions (like those of all oral works) may change over time: they are created for one purpose, but sometimes remembered for another, somewhat like objects in a museum; their meanings may also alter as a result of new social circumstances in which they are performed, even in our own times. In this paper, the above ideas were be applied in particular to *Grímnismál*, alongside other eddic poems.

The Soundscape of Karelian Laments

Eila Stepanova, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the conference Song and Emergent Poetics: Oral Traditions in Performance organized by the Runosong Academy, the Academy of Finland project Song and Singing as Cultural Communication of the University of Tampere, the Folk Music Department of the Sibelius Academy and the Academy of Finland Project Oral Poetry, Mythic Knowledge and Vernacular Imagination of University of Helsinki, held 21st–24th November 2013 in Kuhmo, Finland.

This paper addresses the soundscape of traditional Karelian funeral lament and the lamenters' notions of what is most important in lamenting. In studying the soundscape of laments, scholars are restricted concerning materials available for research: quite often we have only archival texts without notations of melodies; since the 1960s, laments have been recorded on audio tape, which helps us to study melodies as well as relations between verbal and melodic expressions. Finally, there are video recordings of lament performances, but these are very rare. This discussion of the soundscape of laments therefore applies a range of retrospective methods in order to reconstruct a possible soundscape of traditional funeral laments by using different sources, such as audio recordings, photographs, and the comments of lamenters that are available. In my paper I focus on laments from the Seesjärvi region.

Laments in general and Karelian laments in particular are sung poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follow conventionalized rules of traditional verbal and non-verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also performed on non-ritual grievous occasions. Karelian laments are here approached as women's sung improvised poetry with its own conventional traditional register. This traditional lament register includes a special grammar (diminutive and plural forms), special syntax (e.g. inversed word order), special stylistic features (alliteration and parallelism), a special lexicon (circumlocutions, epithets, formulaic expressions) and non-verbal features. These non-verbal features include melody and voice,

e.g. the "icons of crying" described by Greg Urban (1988) – "cry breaks", voiced inhalation, creaky voice and falsetto vowels – as well as body language, touch, use of space, clothes etc. (See further Stepanova E. 2012; forthcoming; Wilce 2005; 2009; Wilce & Fenigsen forthcoming.)

The key findings of this investigation are that, in addition to verbal expression of sadness, the most important aspect of laments is also to show emotions, especially in a way that makes them audible. The icons of crying symbolically transmit an intense emotional participation in the ritual event, the close connection to the object of the lament as well as the weakness and physical suffering of the lamenter. All of these are shown or transmitted in the performance of lament in four ways – audibly, through the icons of crying; through the verbal expressions (circumlocutions and themes of laments); with the help of grammatical features, such as diminutive forms; and visually with body language, such as leaning toward the object of the lament or swinging back and forth while lamenting.

While studying the soundscape of laments, one has to take into consideration the audience of a lament performance, because the lamenting does not happen in an environment of silence like in a concert today. On ritual occasions, such as at funerals and weddings, the interaction between a lamenter and her audience is obvious. The lamenter shows her intense emotional state in the four ways just listed and participants of the ritual engage with her sadness. For example, crying and even wailing at funerals are natural parts of the ritual. From these grievous expressions of emotion, a lamenter's voice rises up and clearly leads the ritual process. The special language of laments is mostly directed to the deceased and to the dead members of the family in the otherworld, but the soundscape of laments supports this communication which guarantees the successful outcome of these ritual events – i.e. to successfully get the dead to the otherworld and to satisfy the deceased.

An article based on this presentation will be appearing in the forthcoming collection of conference proceedings published by the Runosong Academy.

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Lectures

The Creation of Sacred Place out of Empty Space During the Settlement of Iceland

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Lecture presented at Placing Texts: Folk Narrative and Spatial Construction, graduate seminar organized by the Estonian Graduate School of Culture Studies and Arts, University of Tartu, held 3rd–7th June 2012 in Tartu, Estonia.

This paper considered the fact that sacred spaces have always been created in one way or another, their sacredness being underlined by the nature of story, myth and legend which, told through the generations, break up the landscape into areas with different degrees of meaning; into places where we can go or cannot go, places where we can build homes, and places which are seen as offering access to other higher or lower mythical worlds. In addition to discussing how we move through and mark out spaces, turning them into places in our own world, the lecture moved on to consider the fact that before the settlement of Iceland, the island was a space without any meaning. As they settled, cleared land, and started dying, the settlers started actively creating sacred spaces that have lived on into our own time: spaces where the dead live, where there are trolls and where there are water beings that threaten children. To do this, we reach back into the cultural vocabulary that we bring with us wherever we go.

The Uses of Performance Studies for the Study of Old Norse Religion: The Performance of *Eiríksmál* and *Hákonarmál*

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Lecture presented for the University of Aberdeen, Department of Scandinavian Studies, held 22nd February 2013 in Aberdeen, U.K.

This paper gave a brief introduction to the field and approaches of Performance Studies, and the value this field has for the study of Old Nordic Religion, not only with regard to mythology (and the necessity of considering mythological texts as oral works presented in living context) but also archaeological finds (which can be viewed as essentially the remains of a performance of some kind). As a case study, a consideration was made of *Eiríksmál* and *Hákonarmál* from the viewpoint of performance, as works that took place in (now archaeologically demonstrated) space and time, involving both sound and movement, and interacting with both space and audience. The suggestion will be that, as with many of the dramatic eddic poems, these works in performance would have transformed not only the meaning of the hall space, but also the audience's views of themselves. Furthermore, in performance, it is possible that the works in question formed the final part of a 'rite of initiation' into death.

Published Articles

From One High One to Another: The Acceptance of Óðinn as Preparation for the Acceptance of God

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Paper published in Conversions: Looking for Ideological Change in the Early Middle Ages, *edited by Leszek Słupecki and Rudolf Simek, Studia Medievalia Septentrionalia 23, Vienna: Fassbaender (2013), pp. 153–178.*

This article examines the nature of the Christianisation of the Nordic countries, underlining the necessity of understanding that such a process was something that did not take place overnight, and essentially came from the top down rather than being a grass-roots religion. It also suggests that the process was facilitated by an earlier change of religious approach which was taking place (very generally) ca. 500 AD, whereby warrior rulers in Denmark, Norway and Sweden were adopting the fashionable cult of Óðinn as part of their move to create new, large nation states. This change seems to have occurred at around the same time as depositions at natural sites on the periphery of settlements was coming to an end and the hall of the ruler was becoming the new site of worship. Centring around the male ruler himself (in the role of the god), this new movable religion placed more emphasis on rewards in the next world (very useful for armies), buildings, personification and an initiated elite. Moving from the cult of Óðinn to Christianity was a comparatively easy move (and even more temporarily advantageous) for rulers, not least because it granted them access to Christian markets and political alliances. When it comes down to it, it was less radical a change than that which had taken place c. 500 AD.

The Relationship Between Icelandic *Knattleikur* and Early Irish Hurling

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Paper published in Béaloideas *80 (2012): 52–69.*

This article contains a collection of all the Icelandic saga accounts of *knattleikur* in translation (and the original) along with a review of earlier arguments about the nature of the sport, and a list of the key features that come out of these accounts, the aim being to allow English-speaking readers (and especially Irish scholars, such as Daíthí Ó hÓgáin) to make their own judgement about whether these accounts contain some of the earliest accounts of a sport that later turned into hurling (and shinty in Scotland). Indeed, the sport in question seems to have died out in Iceland as the climate worsened but clearly never took on in the other Nordic countries, suggesting that it was something that was brought from the Gælic area to Iceland.

Skotrarar, Skudlers, Colloughs and Strawboys: Wedding Guising Traditions in Norway, Shetland and Ireland, Past and Present

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Paper published in Atlantic Currents: Essays on Lore, Literature and Language: Essays in Honour of Séamas Ó Catháin on Occasion of His 70th Birthday, 31.12.2012, *edited by Bo Almqvist, Críostóir Mac Cárthaigh, Liam Mac Mathúna, Séamas Mac Mathúna and Seosamh Watson, Dublin: University College Dublin Press (2012), pp. 241–268.*

This article contains a review of all the available accounts of wedding guising in Ireland (in both English and Irish) past and present, noting their distribution, names and

individual features. It also places these traditions in an international context, and especially in the context of wedding guising traditions from the Nordic countries and especially in those from Shetland, which contain a number of very close similarities in terms of costume, the nature of the participants, and the ways in which their ritual visits took place. It raises the open question of how these particular similarities can be explained, since similar traditions are not known in the other Scottish islands, England or Scotland (to the best of my knowledge), and there is a close relationship existing between Shetland and Norwegian culture. Connections (and direct importation of traditions from Ireland to Shetland) are much less common.

Vǫluspá in Performance

Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland

Paper published in The Nordic Apocalypse: Approaches to 'Vǫluspá' and Nordic Days of Judgement, *edited by Terry Gunnell and Annette Lassen, Brepols: Turnhout (2013), pp. 63–77.*

This article focuses on the fact that *Voluspá* was originally a work that was created with oral performance in mind, and passed on as an oral poem, rather than in print. The article therefore considers the work from this viewpoint, analysing the sounds and rhythms of the poem and the way they interact with the poem's visual aspects, noting that there are large differences between the soundscapes accompanying the creation (and recreation) of the world; the scenes of construction, and the end of the world at *Ragnarök* (especially if one considers the consonants stressed by alliteration. This underlines the fact that the poet(s) were considering the use of sound. Part of the paper considers how the poem might have functioned in a probable performance in a hall, the effects it might have had on its medieval listeners and the ways in which it might have interacted with the mythical aspects of the hall environment.

The Peripheral at the Centre: The Subversive Intent of Norse Myth and Magic

Clive Tolley, University of Turku

Paper to be published in a special number of Arv: Nordic Yearbook of Folklore *appearing later this year.*

In this paper on pagan Scandinavian witchcraft, , I attempt to show that, within traditions inferred from the extant written sources, magic (with a focus on *seiðr*) was a peripheral activity, more like witchcraft than most forms of shamanism, and yet was a central part of the practice of ritual/belief. Placing the peripheral at the centre gives it a subversive character, in a way that can be traced in mythological traditions concerning particularly Óðinn and Freyja, the two great divine practitioners of magic in Norse myth. *Seiðr* was a particularly female practice, and this gender-bias was part of its subversiveness; I look at ways its particularly female aspects may have been realised, making use of anthropological gender studies. I emphasise throughout the problem of unwarranted systematisation and selectiveness inherent in any attempt to use later sources to read back into the past, but suggest that consideration of anthropological materials may at least give reasonable ideas of ways to look at the Norse materials. This paper is intended to be an adumbration of a larger study, which I hope to produce some time in the future.

The *Kalevala* as a Model for Our Understanding of the Composition of the Codex Regius of the *Poetic Edda*

Clive Tolley, University of Turku

Paper published in Viisas matkassa, vara laukussa: Näkökulmia kansanperinteen tutkimukseen, *edited by T. Hovi, K. Hänninen, M. Leppälahti and M. Vasenkari, Turun Yliopiston Folkloristikan Julaisuja 3, Turku: Turun Yliopisto (2013), pp. 114–143.*

In this paper, I consider the composition of the *Kalevala* in the 19th century as a model for the composition of the Codex Regius in the 13th century, in the context of 'nationalism' (what that means in medieval and modern terms being considered briefly) – and this, I think, adds a new dimension to retrospective methodology. In particular, the composition of the Codex Regius is considered against the growing Norwegian political take-over of Iceland, and questions of how cultural independence can be maintained in such circumstances are considered. Some tentative suggestions are made about those likely to have been responsible for the composition of the Codex Regius. This paper is available in electronic form on my page at Academia.edu.

Essay Collections

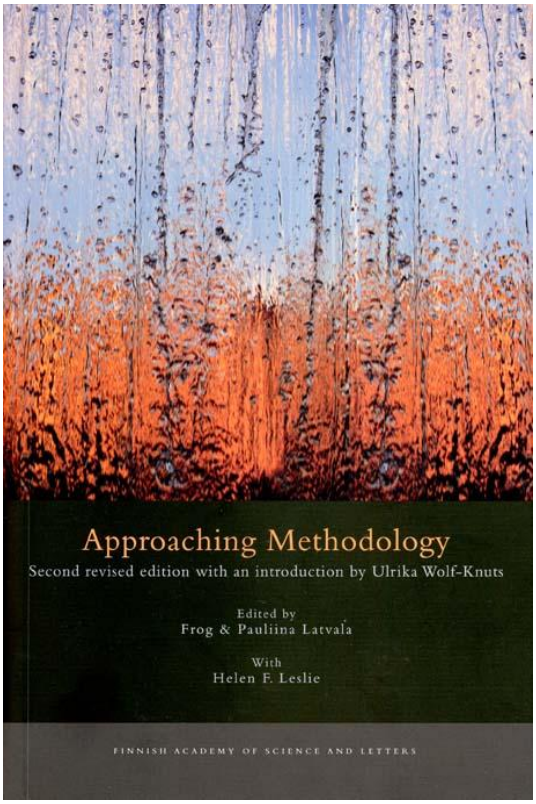
Approaching Methodology, 2nd revised edition with an introduction by Ulrika Wolf-Knuts

Frog and Pauliina Latvala, University of Helsinki, with Helen F. Leslie, University of Bergen

A collection of scientific articles edited by Frog and Pauliina Latvala with Helen F. Leslie, Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Humaniora368, Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica (2013), 349 pages.

Approaching Methodology appeared as a special issue of *RMN Newsletter* in May 2012 (№ 4). This volume has now appeared in a revised second edition with a new introduction by Ulrika Wolf-Knuts. For those unfamiliar with the collection, the eighteen articles of *Approaching Methodology* open broadly international and cross-disciplinary discussions on different aspects of methods and methodology. This volume brings many complementary perspectives on approaching and analyzing aspects of culture and cultural expression into dialogue, especially from fields of folklore studies, ethnology, philology, medieval studies, linguistics and semiotics. The introduction will be valuable for students and young scholars who are trying to orient themselves amid the questions, challenges and potentials associated with methods and methodologies.

For more information, see: http://www.tiedekirja.fi/detail.php?id=83-264-32579.



PhD Projects

Of Fire and Water: The Old Norse Mythical Worldview in an Eco-Mythological Perspective

Mathias Nordvig, Aarhus University

Thesis defended for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Nordic Languages and Literature at Aarhus University, Denmark, 14th March, 2014.
Supervisors: Pernille Hermann (Aarhus University), Agnes S. Arnórsdóttir (Aarhus University) and Terry Gunnell (University of Iceland).
Examiners: Judy Quinn (University of Cambridge), Gísli Sigurðsson (University of Iceland) and Jens Peter Schjødt (Aarhus University).

My doctoral thesis focused on Old Norse mythology as a source for knowledge about the relationship between Scandinavians and the Scandinavian environment and ecosystems from the Viking Age to the High Middle Ages, when the mythology was codified. I propose that another way to approach the discussion of worldview and cosmology in Old Norse mythology is to examine the evidence for knowledge of specific ecological and environmental aspects in key cosmological myths. It is typically so that the local environment inspires people to draw conclusions about the cosmos in the creation of cosmological tales. My analyses of the eco-mythological aspects of Old Norse mythology therefore concerned the sea and the land in the myth of Þórr's Fishing Expedition, the Creation Myth and the myth of the Mead of Poetry.

The dissertation is divided in three chapters followed by a conclusion: "Introduction"; "Confronting the Sea", and "The Creation Myth, the Myth of the Mead of Poetry and Volcanism". The first chapter establishes the methodical and theoretical background of an *eco-mythological* approach to the myths of Þórr's Fishing Expedition, the Creation Myth and the myth of the Mead of Poetry as central mythic narratives of conceptualizations of land and sea in the Old Norse-Scandinavian worldview. The second chapter is an analysis of Þórr's Fishing Expedition as a Scandinavian cultural myth of the sea and its relationship to society. This perspective encompasses a developmental history of the Fishing Myth as a cultural narrative from an early stage in the Viking Age to later creative interpretations in Christian narratives of Iceland and Scandinavia. The third chapter concerns the Creation Myth and the myth of the Mead of Poetry as two types of myths, which conceptualize the land and cosmos in a specifically Icelandic context as reinterpreted key myths of the Scandinavian mainland in connection with the volcanic phenomena particular to the Icelandic underground. These eco-mythological interpretations of some of the most important myths of Old Norse-Scandinavian mythology argue that in the mythical worldview, the natural and peripheral space of the sea and the strange and often life-threatening phenomenon of volcanism in fact take a central position. As such, the sea and the most destructive aspect of the land, volcanoes, function as cultural identifiers of the ecosystems to society. Their prominence as cultural identifiers suggest a different conceptualization of the dualism of land and sea, center and periphery, culture and nature, and not least life and death in the Old Norse mythical worldview: the gods act as enforcers and mediators in the cycle of life.

Problem and Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to address the subject of worldview in Old Norse mythology by asking: *What is the constitution of the Old Norse worldview according to the literary mythological sources in terms of man's relationship with nature? What is the relationship between the conceptual categories of culture and nature, civilized and wild (*byggð *and* óbyggð, innangarðs *and* útangarðs*) as it is expressed in the* æsir*'s*

dealings with the surrounding world in the myth of Þórr's Fishing Expedition, the Creation Myth and the myth of the Mead of Poetry in the Edda version? How do the actions of the gods in these narratives express man's mythical notions of his relationship with the land and sea in the Scandinavian and North Atlantic ecosystems?

Since Gurevich's (1969), Meletinskij's (1973) and Hastrup's (1981; 1985; 1990) publications on Old Norse cosmology and worldview, this subject has been a recurring theme in scholarly discussions of the mythology. The discussion has focused mainly on the relationship of the *æsir* to the various other supernatural beings in a cosmic scheme that is divided in a vertical and a horizontal axis (Schjødt 1990; Clunies Ross 1994; Løkka 2010). A different approach is proposed by Stefan Brink in his article *Mytologiska rum och eskatologiska föreställningar i det vikingatida Norden* (2004). This approach suggests the involvement of the ecosystems particular to specific cultural groups in the discussion of the Old Norse mythical worldview.

This dissertation advances from that approach and devises a method for analyzing the Old Norse mythical worldview that is designated *the eco-mythological approach*. This method has as its theoretical background the concept of the Mythical Charter of Tradition in indigenous cultures. The Mythical Charter of Tradition is described as the sum of all oral narratives, which relay knowledge of the mythical past, the genealogies of culturally important people and myths of technical wisdom, which are preserved as magical knowledge, often in formulaic form. This theoretical background is developed on the basis of Jacques Le Goff's (1992) and Jan Assmann's (2006) theories of Collective and Cultural Memory, which are seen as supplementing each other. With reference to the long life of certain narratives associated with cultural events and specific sites in the Scandinavian ecosystems (Dejbjerg in West Jutland and the Urebø Ridge in Telemarken), Assmann's concept of Memory Spaces is expanded from a term pertaining to literary activities to one that can be applied to eco-spaces too. This is done in concert with the realizations of Åke Hulkrantz in a series of articles on *eco-religion*, which establish a theory of ecosystems as a central and highly important factor in the way religions and cultures develop: "Ecology of Religion: Its Scope and Methodology" (1979), "An Ideological Dichotomy: Myths and Folk Beliefs Among the Shoshoni" (1984), and "Rock Drawings as Evidence of Religion" (1986).

By treating the Old Norse myths and related historical narratives as a Mythical Charter of Tradition that combines a cultural unit with its surrounding ecosystems, this dissertation represents a different view on the source value of Old Norse mythology and literature as historical texts. The discussions of genres and the critical discussion of the aspects of indigenous ingenuity and tradition as opposed to foreign or Latin-learned medieval influence on the narratives becomes secondary to one that is focused on cultural exchange between southern and northern Europe. With this, the schism of 'Christian versus pagan' in terms of the content of the Old Norse mythology also becomes secondary, and the focus on the sources shifts towards one that acknowledges the sources as texts with multiple cultural influences at many levels over a long period of time, from their oral form in the Viking Age to the Medieval Era when they were committed to written form.

The Analyses

Þórr's Fishing Expedition is analyzed as a myth of primary cultural significance. The earliest expressions of the myth are found on picture-stones in England, Denmark and Sweden. These pictorial expressions are interpreted as the act of fishing as an iconic event of Scandinavian culture. In concert with *Hymiskviða*, they seem to relate a tale of how the anthropomorphic god went fishing and conquered the sea by catching its very spirit, embodied in the Miðgarðsormr. The myth in its earliest form is associated with the Viking Age as a narrative that transmits technical knowledge about fishing. This knowledge is articulated in the dynamics of differences between Þórr and Hymir: Þórr is young, courageous and incautious, while Hymir is

old and scared of going too far out at sea. The myth favors neither extreme but emphasizes the successfulness of a middle ground. It essentially addresses the subject of too much, too little or just enough fear in the fishing situation, and favors the last option. Fear in this respect relates to the fear of dying at sea and the fear of dying of hunger. This is an eco-mythological interpretation of the myth, which acknowledges the significance of the sea as an important resource for food everywhere in Viking Age Scandinavia.

Since the sea takes such prominence with regard to food resources, it is argued that the Fishing Myth develops with the Scandinavian expansions in the North Atlantic, and particularly with the *landnám* in Iceland and Greenland. Þórr becomes the primary god of the settlement and his myth becomes a foundation narrative of the *landnám*, but also in connection with finding new land in Vínland. Þórr becomes the god that ensures safe passage, fair winds and sustenance on journeys, and the narrative structure of his Fishing Myth is reconfigured as a myth of exploration, which leaves traces in such narratives as *Landnámabók*, *Eiríks saga rauða* and *Flóamanna saga*. With this popularity of the myth, the need arises in the early Christian period to deconstruct Þórr and his narratives as significant pagan foundation myths. Þórr is demonized or a fallibility of his is portrayed in some of these very same tales. The tenets of the Fishing Myth are re-appropriated in the story of his Journey to Útgarðaloki, Saxo's Thorkillus Journeys and *Þorsteins þáttr bœjarmagns*, and the *Gylfaginning* version of the Fishing Myth seems to purposely associate the events with Ragnarǫk. The most interesting aspect of this widespread narrative re-appropriation of the Fishing Myth is Saxo's euhemerized Þórr-figure in Thorkillus's Journeys. He represents the final stage of reinterpretation of the Fishing Myth as an eco-myth, because, regardless of how the largely Christianized tradition may review Þórr and paganism, the sea is still the central force of the narratives. In Thorkillus's Journeys it is by way of a sea journeying Icelander that Christianity finally finds its way to Denmark. The narratives use the aspects of the old Fishing Myth in a new context. The fear of hunger, the fear of the sea and the problems of procuring food and drink at sea are very much represented in these tales. But as much as they are there, they are also used to indicate a shift in concerns: the concerns of the stomach have moved to the concerns of the soul. Saxo understands the old Viking tradition in the Fishing Myth and associates it with his primary critique of paganism: that it is a gluttonous, materialist religion with no spiritual insight. Using the most popular Þórr-myths of Scandinavia, he introduces this spiritual hunger by way of a euhemerized pagan god.

The eco-myth of Þórr's Fishing Expedition thus evolves with the developing realizations of the Scandinavians as they live and exist with the sea as a formidable force in their world. The Fishing Myth develops from a myth that conceptualizes the sea as the primary source of food and wealth, to one that recognizes it as a space of exploration and power, social structures and the foundation of society itself, and finally to a perspective on it as a space that expands human and religious horizons in late Christian narratives. The eco-mythological interpretation of the myth in this presentation restructures the conceptual schemas, which often dominate the research tradition of Old Norse cosmology and worldview. The sea in the Old Norse-Scandinavian worldview is not the *Úthaf*, it is not the periphery: it is a cultural epicenter.

In the case of the Creation Myth, attention is given to the description of the events in *Gylfaginning*, where certain aspects of the conflation of fire and ice have seemed opaque to older scholarship. It is demonstrated that the inconsistencies in the description of how the *eitr* flows from its ice-cold source in Niflheimr and hardens when it has entered the mild climate of Ginnungagap originate in a volcanic image. On the whole, in the description of the creation as one that involves ice, rime and water, there are several aspects of the processes which do not respond to the usual behavior of ice and water. How can rime exist in climates that are 'mild as a windless sky?' Why are the Élivágar described as rivers that 'harden like the cinders that flow from a furnace?' The answer is that these inconsistencies occur when an

original description of a low discharge effusive volcanic eruption is described in analogies of water, ice, snow and rime. There is plenty of comparable evidence from cultures around the world to suggest that the early Icelanders actually did describe volcanism in such analogies, and certain aspects of the early Norse language also indicate this. The language was surprisingly poor in terminology for volcanism and lacked even a word for 'volcano.' However, the key word that is employed in the Creation Myth – *hrím* – had the double meaning of 'rime' and 'soot', and thus indicates that the early Icelanders sought to relate tales of volcanism in the same manner as it has been observed that many other pre-Scientific Era peoples have done: by analogies and in mythic narratives.

Rather than an image of ice and fire, it seems more probable that the early image of the Creation Myth was one of Surtr and the Fire People of Muspell creating fires and poisonous *eitr* flows (lava) that built up land in Ginnungagap, which subsequently turned into inhabitable space for humans by the civilizing power of the fertility gods, the *æsir*, who arranged the cosmos by killing the evil Ymir, who was created from this fire. To describe these events, the analogies of water and ice were used, and they were later re-interpreted in a learned literary discourse to fit the neoplatonic teachings that are also a mark of *Edda*. This explains why Surtr and Muspell, the great forces of volcanic destruction in Ragnarøkkr, are involved in the Creation Myth: it has been observed by generation upon generation of Icelanders that after the Volcano Spirit and his Fire People send the poisonous Stormy Waves (the Élivágar), and these harden like the cinder from a smelter, the ground is regrown. This explains why the tradition of *Gylfaginning* insists that Ymir and Aurgelmir are the same being, even though they are not associated in the original source of *Vafþrúðnismál*. The description of Aurgelmir coming to life from the *eitr* that is ejected by the Élivágar seems to be the oldest version of the Icelandic volcanological interpretation of the Creation Myth. The myth of the creation of Aurgelmir and the myth of the creation of Ymir both originate in the same tradition from the continent to account for genealogies and the creation of life from a chthonic being. The version in *Gylfaginning* is an attempt to align the Icelandic interpretation of that myth with the continental tradition, and still account for the creative aspect of the observable phenomena of *jarðeldr* ['earth-fire'] there. In that way, the Creation Myth of *Gylfaginning* associates the creation of the cosmos directly with the destructive, apocalyptic forces and incorporates the volcanic phenomena in the heart of existence.

In the myth of the Mead of Poetry in its version in *Skáldskaparmál*, the explosive aspect of volcanism is relayed in analogies to supernatural beings and the Mead of Poetry as bodily fluid on the same terms that the world's waters are the bodily fluids of Ymir. This myth compiles several images that can be found in other narratives, and it distances itself from the myth of the Mead of Poetry in *Hávamál* by focusing on landscape, cosmos and death, while the former is focused on the primary site of the chieftain's hall, social rules and marriage. Both are myths about the primary aspects of culture, and it seems reasonable to consider the version in *Hávamál* to be the oldest. This version retains aspects of ancient Germanic cults of fertility, which seem to have their origins in the same complex as the Roman Liberalia and the Bacchanalia. As its primary aspect, this complex retains the chthonic association of the intoxicating drink of life and wisdom. In the Icelandic tradition in *Skáldskaparmál*, the added experience of the ecosystem, volcanism, demands a reformulation and reconceptualization of the chthonic association of the mead. The Mead of Poetry is, by virtue of its comparability with lava as a yellow, thick substance, associated with volcanism. However, this is not the only reason to associate the Mead of Poetry with lava. As the mead is the memory drink and its myth holds cultural primacy – this is why it has its place in the cultural charter of *Hávamál* – it is also the ideal candidate for an object or substance with which to associate the memory of massive volcanic eruptions that could potentially destroy society as a whole. One such event was experienced by

the early Icelanders at the end of the *landnám* period in 934, when the Katla-system opened up in the Eldgjá eruption and shrouded the Northern Hemisphere in ashes for months, maybe even a whole year. This was one of the biggest eruptions in modern human history.

The associations of the myth of the Mead of Poetry with volcanism do not seem to stop here. The Mead Myth of *Skáldskaparmál* incorporates a motif of volcanism that combine gods, *jǫtnar* and dwarfs with supernatural boats of stone and iron, the flight of eagles, beer or mead and sometimes Surtr. Shortly after the Eldgjá eruption, around 985, Eyvindr skáldaspillir composed *Háleygjatal* in which he asserted that Óðinn flew out of Surtr's sinking valleys with the Mead of Poetry. The Mead of Poetry is also referred to in the circumlocution of 'kettle liquid'. The association of the volcanic caldera with a kettle is a frequent one in other cultures, but, more importantly, the stanza of *Háleygjatal* has structural parallels in *Bergbúa þáttr*, *Vǫluspá* and *Skáldskaparmál*. Certain conceptions relating to this complex also occur in *Landnámabók*, *Konungs Skuggsjá* the annals of Flatey and Saxo. In *Landnámabók* there is an eruption caused by a *jǫtunn* sailing in a boat. This motif of the boat reappears in *Bergbúa þáttr*, where, in the course of describing the events of a volcanic eruption, the *bergbúi* says that he sent Aurnir an iron-braced stone boat. In *Vǫluspá*, the supernatural boat Naglfar comes sailing with the Muspell People and Loki (the god who creates earthquakes). *Naglfar* may mean 'Spike-boat' when not directly associated with the tradition of *Gylfaginning* that claims it is a ship made of the fingernails of the dead – it is in fact a common Scandinavian notion that the Devil makes ships from fingernails. In the myth of the Mead of Poetry in *Skáldskaparmál*, there is the strange scene of the two dwarfs Fjalarr ['Hider'] and Galarr ['Screamer'] sailing with Gillingr ['Noisy']. Notably, right after Gillingr has drowned on this trip, his wife cries loudly out of the door of the dwarfs' home. This sequence seems to reflect the scene in *Vǫluspá* where all of Jǫtunheimar groans and the dwarfs howl before their stone doors. The eagle or the birds reappear in several of these narratives, too. In *Bergbúa þáttr*, the *bergbúi* says he expects the eagles to come flying after he has sent this boat and he tells how he flies from world to world; in *Vǫluspá* the ash-pale beaked eagle rips up corpses before the Muspell People and Loki come sailing; and of course in the myth of the Mead of Poetry, Óðinn – named *Evildoer* – bursts out of Hnitbjǫrg, the Mountain of Clashing Rocks, in the guise of an eagle, who flies straight towards Ásgarðr and explodes in yellow liquid. Interestingly, it is mentioned in the annals of Flatey that some men once saw birds flying in the ejecta of an eruption in Hekla. This seems to come from the same idea as is expressed in *Konungs Skuggsjá*, where the Northern Wind is said to create earthquakes and eruptions by rushing through caverns in the underground – an idea that ultimately originates in the classical myths of, among others, Ovid. To add to this image in *Skáldskaparmál*, Óðinn blows in the hole that he is making with Baugi in Hnitbjǫrg, and rocks fall out. Similarly, references to the Mead of Poetry or a chthonic – volcanic – alcoholic drink are made in several of these narratives. The *bergbúi* equates the eruption with his poetry and associates it with the Well of Aurnir – that is the Mead of Poetry. Both Saxo and *Konungs Skuggsjá* relate that there are (volcanic) wells in Iceland that taste of beer, and, finally, there is the association of the Mead of Poetry with volcanism in *Skáldskaparmál*.

All these motifs are indiscernible in their singular form, but together they form a sequence that associate with the descriptions of a volcanic eruption. The initial characteristic rumbling of an earthquake swarm, venting gasses and tumbling rocks before an eruption is expressed in the *jǫtnar*, Fjalarr, Galarr, Gillingr, the groaning Jǫtunheimar, the howling dwarfs and drilling in the mountain. The flight of birds and eagles; Óðinn in *Skáldskaparmál* and *Háleygjatal*, the ash-pale beaked eagle, the *bergbúi* and the eagle in his poem, symbolize the ash-plume. The image of the iron/stone boat, however, is not fully discernible. It may link up with ideas of high speed as the ejecta comes rushing down a mountainside. Several of these images are found in other cultures –

the most frequent of which is the eagle as an ash-plume. In many cases of myths of volcanism in other cultures, there is also a connection to important cultural artifacts or elements. As such, the Mead Myth seems to follow a pattern of human cultural response to volcanism that is worldwide. It is a myth that plots the cultural upon the peripheral and strange phenomena of volcanism – with their destructive capabilities, and as such potential anti-cultural entities – and appropriates it to consign it to a human-cultural function. It is also a myth that enhances human resilience to volcanism insofar as it prescribes certain acts of caution and preparation in the face of these phenomena while combining it all in a myth about the memory drink of the Mead of Poetry.

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The Construction of Anglo-Saxon Legendary History

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Research project undertaken for completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds; thesis scheduled for submission in 2015.
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Since this is an ongoing PhD project, the following conclusions are bound to be preliminary. However, I hope they will be helpful to any reader interested in Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards history, or, more generally, Old English (and British Latin) legendary historical sources, and even the philosophy of history, including medieval vernacular theories thereof. In very broad terms, my research looks at how people in early medieval Britain conceptualized their past. My project aims to go beyond looking at sources (historical, in very broad terms) for clues to reconstruct the 'real events' behind them, and casts an anthropological eye at the texts in order to see the network of beliefs and attitudes which underlie them (and which are thus otherwise invisible, but always implicit in the texture of the sources). As such, my thesis is inscribed in an approach described by John D. Niles as "the anthropology of the past" (Niles 1999).

While scholars generally agree that medieval historiography is inseparable from rhetoric and that its literariness should be embraced and understood on its own terms rather than deplored, there is less agreement on the precise nature and rhetoric manifested by alternative modes of medieval history (Kempshall 2012). For, apart from what is

usually considered to be 'proper medieval historiography' (that is, from Bede to Geoffrey of Monmouth and beyond), there was also 'the open sea' of orally transmitted memory, fictions (representations of a collective past), legends that carried the meaning of history and other forms of commemoration which were more likely to be vernacular – though not exclusively so (Danielsson 2002: 385–395). It is one of these alternative modes of history-making that my research attempts to bring into focus.

A considerable amount of research has been done on the kind of Anglo-Saxon historiography of which Bede is the foremost representative, on the one hand, and on vernacular texts like *Beowulf*, treating them as literary artifacts with little if any historical relevance, on the other. Meanwhile, legendary history as a constellation of legendary fictions which, for certain textual communities, *was* history, is comparatively understudied. In the course of this thesis, I seek neither to extract the 'real' historical events from heroic legendary epics, nor to associate these texts with certain political or historiographical agendas conceivable during the time of their (re)writing. While the former approach has long been deemed too contentious to be useful (although its reflexes are strong to this day), the second is quite active and has produced helpful (though not always easy to agree upon) results. Instead, my goal is to describe the workings of this alternative type of understanding and making history – what it meant to different textual and oral cultural communities at different times, how it was used by them, how it was constructed; finally, to understand the mentalities and conceptualizations of the people who created, listened to / read or disseminated the variety of texts (in the broadest sense of the term) which make up 'legendary history'.

Accordingly, I investigate the construction of legendary history in Old English literature and on this basis, reconstruct a vernacular theory of legendary history and historical memory that is silently at work in Anglo-Saxon literary texts. More precisely, I am looking at how the Anglo-Saxons take over narrative cores from the common Germanic stock of heroic epic and rework them into something specifically Anglo-Saxon. I am interested in what this remodeling of stories common to all Germanic literary traditions tells us about how the Anglo-Saxons saw themselves in the context of the greater Germanic cultural community and on the peripheries of the Roman world.

My focus is not so much on Anglo-Saxon 'historiography proper', as on 'legendary' texts, such as *Beowulf* and the minor heroic poems, and even some of the elegies (especially *Deor* and *The Ruin*). Still, I always come back to the former, at least for terms of comparison, although the interplay between the two is much more complex than a mere dichotomy. Chronologically, I am less interested in late Anglo-Saxon texts (after the 9th century) and the building of a national identity in the context of the Danish attacks and growing centralization. Rather, I am looking at reworkings of the common Germanic core epic narratives within Old English literature. Since my approach requires a fair amount of comparative study, I will also be looking at early texts from other Germanic literary traditions. I will be examining two Germanic narratives: the legendary nucleus focusing on Sigfried/Sigurðr the Dragon-Slayer and the conflicts between the Goths, the Huns and the Burgundians (in the Latin Germanic text *Waltharius*, the Old English *Waldere* and *Widsith* and the Old Norse *Atlakviða*, *Þiðrekssaga*, the Icelandic *Vǫlsunga saga* and the Middle High German *Nibelungenlied*) and secondly, the narratives concerning the dynasties of the Scylfings and the Scyldings and the relationships between the Swedes, the Danes and the Geats (in the Old English *Beowulf* and the Old Norse *Ynglinga saga*).

Finally, considering that history, be it modern or medieval, is fiction, inasmuch as the making of history is the making of a verbal artifact, a narrative trying to make sense of the Brownian Motion of people(s), their actions and their ideas, I also assess the legitimacy of Anglo-Saxons constructing narratives of their legendary past (White 1978). I also reassess the 19th century model of historiography – which remains quietly influential in Anglo-Saxon studies – whereby historical truth was distorted in legends but it

can be reconstructed by carefully eliminating all 'poetic' or 'legendary' elements. Since the dichotomy between history and legend, between the real and the imaginary, is not workable in Old English (and indeed in most early medieval) texts, I attempt to reveal the elements of a non-Aristotelian, non-Classicist model (or vernacular theory) of legendary history within which the Anglo-Saxons were working.

My theoretical framework is bound to be eclectic. The bases of my research project involve studying intellectual history, ethnic identity formation and the evolution of mentalities and imagination (in Jacques Le Goff's terms, *l'imaginaire*), where I build on current research regarding the construction of Germanic identities in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages and the role of cultural memory therein (le Goff 1988: 1–13). Into this main direction of study, I integrate insights from the latest developments in research on cultural memory (within cognitive linguistics, semantics and anthropology), the construction of social identities and even postcolonial studies (since Anglo-Saxons were forging their history in a post-colonial space, in the void left by the withdrawal of the Roman Empire). In the endeavour to identify the elements of an Anglo-Saxon vernacular theory of legendary history making, I will be employing reader-response theory, treating the fictional world of literature as hypothetically concrete, whereby the reader suggests models of actual experience and reconstitutes them using poetic means.

Since I am making a plea for the necessity of seeing legendary history as a separate mode of manifestation of Anglo-Saxon historiography, which did not get the chance to develop so much in other early medieval Western European cultural communities, I begin by reassessing the definitions of terms used very often, but whose exact signifiers are unclear: 'historical', 'legendary', 'heroic', 'Germanic' – to what extent do they reflect the actual way Anglo-Saxons conceptualized their historical fictions. Related to these theoretical considerations is the necessity to avoid modern projections on Old English texts, especially the sharp dichotomy between history and fiction/legend, but also the 'Great Divide' between orality and literacy (Amodio 2004).

The first chapter, dealing with *The Semantics of History in Old English*, explores the variety of lexical means used to express the idea of history and its many embodiments. The goal is to look at the actual words (or more broadly, means of expression) used by the Anglo-Saxons to refer to the many embodiments of what we call *history*. Concretely, I chart the meanings of all individual Old English words translatable as 'history' used in verse, prose, and glosses, and thus I explore the mental conceptual-izations they are based on. This offers a novel perspective on the complex and sophisticated attitudes different Anglo-Saxon cultural communities had towards history and the dialectic between the preservation and reenactment of the past. In spite of this variety of ideas, this lexicographical study / semantic analysis inspired by cognitive linguistics argues that the basic conceptualizations of history are essentially the same across the boundaries of genre, culture and literacy/orality.

The second chapter, dealing with what has often been termed *The 'Germanic Heroic' Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England*, explores the connection of Anglo-Saxon legendary history to the early (and later) continental Germanic tradition. First of all, I will investigate to what extent there was a Germanic heroic tradition in the first place. The very notions of 'Germanic' and 'heroic' poetry are vague and ideologically charged terms, and their use is rightfully disputed by some: the former, because there is no evidence that early medieval ethnic groups speaking Germanic languages had any notion of their being somehow related in a supraethnic 'Germanic community'; the latter, since the sources of the *Völkerwanderung* contain little proof for the 'heroic ethos' that Germanic heroic poetry projects on this period; furthermore, they both carry the Romanticist and nationalistic baggage of 19th century scholarship. Nowadays, although scholars still use these terms, no one attempts to (re)define them, treating them as ahistorical notions which seem to refer to something

everyone presumably agrees upon. Was the 'Germanic heroic tradition' to which the makers of Anglo-Saxon legendary history appealed a cache of narrative materials for history-building or was it a construct, forever in the making, a poetic image which Anglo-Saxon poets never finished to retouch? Did writing epic poetry have any 'Germanic' subtext? In other words, did the Anglo-Saxon poets feel themselves a part of a Germanic poetic tradition? Or did they try or did they try perhaps to create such a supraethnic identity? Both arguments have been made before, but the evidence is tenuous. Also, what did the heroism of 'heroic poetry' consist of? Instead of the image of the 'Germanic strongman' that is usually associated with 'Germanic heroic poetry' (even if subliminally), I will propose that the Old English texts (from *Beowulf* to *The Battle of Maldon*) evince a much subtler understanding of the various consequences of martial prowess for society and politics.

In order to answer these questions, apart from critical readings of past scholarship, I focus on the protean embodiments of the legend of Siegfried/Sigurðr the Dragon-Slayer throughout Germanic-language cultural and literary traditions. The earliest attestations of this narrative core, tied to Anglo-Saxon England (*Beowulf* contains the earliest reference, but surprisingly it refers to Sigemund, usually taken to be Siegfried's father and a secondary figure, as the epitomic dragon-slayer and 'hero'). The evolution of the narrative evinces a disjunction between the Continental 'Germanic tradition' and the Anglo-Saxon legendary tradition which could be indicative of a lack of interest on the Anglo-Saxon side in belonging to a 'Germanic' supraethnic community. I also interrogate the usefulness of concentrating on linear series of textual evolution, proposing instead a refocusing of scholarly effort on the forces that shape these narratives, as well as on their structure as a flux of narratives extant in the same space and time, rather than as layers of narrative.

The third chapter, *Old English Legend and Anglo-Saxon History*, attempts to assess to what extent the categories 'history' and 'fiction/legend' have been imposed by an Aristotelian worldview on a very different way of conceptualizing history and fiction (an issue previously discussed in the first chapter from a different angle). I will look at the way the early medieval Latinate tradition of historiography operates distinctions between different types of fiction and history. I will trace the conception of history shared by 'the narrators of barbarian history' back to its classical roots and then I will discuss the relevance of that normative model of what history is and how it should be written throughout late antique and early medieval historiography (Goffart 1988). The evolution seems to be towards progressively blurring the borders between the three compartments of the Ciceronian (and Isidorian) model of narrative: *fabula – argumentum – historia* (Isidore of Seville: 67). On the other hand, vernacular legendary histories originate in an understanding of history, common to many other pre-modern cultures, which is alien to this classical model (this matter falls outside the scope of the present paper). However, I will argue that the tripartite model (which the narrators of 'barbarian history' had in mind, although they did not strictly follow it) is a useful point of entry for a study of the understanding of history in Old English vernacular legendary historical narratives. The modern reification of the past as the object of study of the academic discipline of history is responsible for the numerous and lasting misunderstandings of the ways in which pre-modern societies thought and spoke about the past (Schiffman 2011). This attitude towards history and the past naturally leads to the very modern distinction between (historical) fiction and history proper which traditional pre-modern communities do not share. In an oral or oral-derived culture, there is no 'history' separate from the oral, communal forms of memory that preserve it. These vehicles of the past, or better said, these forms of recording, remembering and handing down past events, were constructed according to very specific cultural encodings, most of which have been labeled by modern scholars as 'fictional' (legend, heroic poem etc.). Yet they were in no way fictional for the societies in which they were composed and handed down – they *were* the past, and thus

history was inextricably linked to the form in which it was preserved. Ultimately, the classically-influenced 'barbarian histories' and the vernacular oral legendary historical narratives are not two diametrically opposed ways of seeing history, but complementary sets of attitudes towards historical truth and fiction which are strangely resonant with those prevalent in postmodernity (compare Hayden White's [1978] understanding of history). I will thus look at *Beowulf* and *Widsith* as representatives of vernacular theories of history – to what extent would they have been seen as history or legend, and by whom?

The final chapter, *The Fragmentary Poetics of Legendary History*, explores the various ways in which Anglo-Saxon legendary history is constructed, from the fragmentary and allusive renderings of the Franks Casket (which could be seen as the carrier of visual legendary histories, built from fragments of biblical, legendary Germanic and Roman history), to the scraps of history and legend gathered and turned into something new in *Beowulf*, *Widsith*, (but also elegies like *Deor* and even Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*). *Beowulf* can be a very rich case-study of the way in which historical-legendary truth is probed from different perspectives, never allowing for a unitary narrative to emerge. I propose an Anglo-Saxon poetics of the fragment as a way to conceptualize these different phenomena whereby disjunction and allusiveness are used to create a sense of history that is greater than the sum of its fragments – a poetics which refuses straightforward grand narratives and favours instead narrative atoms which allow only glimpses into the past. The resulting texts are neither wholly historical, nor legendary/fictional, but coagulate into a category of their own, which throughout time has been put to different uses (political, such as *The Battle of Maldon* or *The Battle of Brunnanburh*, authority-legitimizing, identity-forging, and/or enhancing a sense of community). Although sometimes the uses of legendary history are inextricably linked to the very nature of some of these texts – memorial traditions, passed on in ceremonial events (though not necessarily in any institutional way), which guaranteed the truthfulness of the historical account. This chapter on poetics will also discuss the nature of orality and literacy, memory and textuality and the effects they had on the nature of legendary histories.

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Post-Doctoral Projects

Narrative Transformations of Heroic, Autobiographical Poetry in the Medieval North

Helen F. Leslie, University of Bergen

At the end of December 2013, I began a four year postdoctoral fellowship in medieval languages and literature at the Department of Literary, Linguistic and Aesthetic Studies at the University of Bergen in Norway, as a member of the Research Group for Medieval Philology. As part of my work for the department, the first six months of my fellowship has been spent completing the first translation of the *Landslov* into English (the Norwegian national law code of 1274). I will spend the latter six months of 2014 beginning my personal postdoctoral project. In the following brief project description, I will introduce this work, which will continue for a total of three years.

Theme

My research programme treats the creation, remembrance and transformation of the hero in the medieval pan-Germanic heroic legends. Offering a synthetic analysis of these legends using Icelandic, Faroese, English, German, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish poetic and prose sources, it will contribute to an understanding of the way in which vernacular legends disseminated across the medieval north and how the heroic autobiography found in Old Icelandic sources was transformed to suit local literary demands. Obviously of interest to Germanic literary and philological scholars, the results will also be of use to historians, since the texts are used as historical sources, and to scholars of culture studying the distribution of ideas across extended networks of communities in large linguistic-cultural areas.

Background and Aims

The pan-Germanic medieval heroic legends are our most significant source of shared narratives of early medieval northern Europe. This importance stems from both the history to which they are connected and the eminent figures which these legends represent. Seldom, however, are the legends examined with this shared heritage in mind. This project explores how heroes of the remote Germanic past are remembered in cognate sources and how their stories manifested in the related vernacular communities of the medieval north in different ways. As story begat story, autobiography, reportage, biography and speculation about great heroes were spun into ever denser webs. These took both prose and poetic narrative forms, first in oral tradition and later rendered in written genres, as well as being represented iconographically on pictures stones carved with scenes from their lives and probably also on tapestries woven with scenes from their adventures. These interrelated Germanic heroic legends have received much scholarly attention in terms of individual national literatures (Danish, English, Faroese, German, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish). However, they generally remain researched and taught piecemeal, on the basis of preferred versions (whether personally, disciplinarily or nationally). However, there have been no attempts to develop an overarching perspective on the cognate synchronic and diachronic traditions in the medieval Germanic world as a whole for a number of decades. In that intermediate period, there have been tremendous advances and revolutionary changes in understanding the transmission and variation of both the specific Germanic traditions and also the establishment and spread of heroic epics as emblematic of shared history and as iconic of social values (for recent relevant work on specific genres, see e.g. Jonsson 1991; Mitchell 1991; 2003; Driscoll 1997; Soberg 2008).

This project returns to the neglected question of the relationship of diverse Norse materials to collective tradition and its variations. This is approached from a current theoretical and analytical frame that enables a more balanced view of sources in different media of expression – not just poetry versus prose, but also equipped to consider symbolic uses of these narratives and their episodes carved in wood or stone. The extensive pieces of the wider medieval Germanic heroic tradition will be juxtaposed for comparison, exploring conventions and contrasts of handling Germanic legendary material across the well-known Old Icelandic traditional alliterative poems and legendary-heroic sagas. These sources will be brought into dialogue with the iconographic renderings of the stories and referential uses of them in other contexts such as skaldic verse as well as in later oral-poetic traditions such as ballads.

This project develops around three complementary areas of research that build upon one another. The first of these is the examination of the autobiographical aspect of the Old Icelandic material. The contours of first-person narrative consciousness will be explored as part of the mechanism of remembrance by examining the construction and role of heroic autobiography in medieval and late-medieval northern vernacular legendary texts. The second is the exploration of the historical background of interest in the individual in the medieval north. This area presents two sites of central concern. On the one hand, this holds the question of whether this interest is historically linked with the spread of the pan-Germanic narrative traditions through the linguistic-cultural areas of the north, in whatever era this occurred. On the other hand, this contains the historical question of whether interest in the individual is rooted in *a*) the cultural environment of the Migration Period, when many of the major cycles have their roots; *b*) the cultural environment of the Viking Age, characterized by the mobility and diaspora in which Iceland was settled and to which the earliest references in skaldic verse are dated; or *c*) the post-conversion period, which eventually produced the major written sources through which these traditions are known especially in Iceland. The third part will complement discussions of continuity and change in tradition through the exploration of the late-medieval and post-medieval maintenance of this Germanic heroic material in oral traditions of ballads, which have generally been neglected from this discussion. The relationship of these traditions to earlier sources will be considered. I will discuss the potential of these later sources to shed additional light on earlier forms of the heroic tradition (or the lack thereof). This ballad material also as an analogue for continuity and change, capitalizing on the fact that sources are available for the earlier traditions as frame of reference. The study sets out to provide a much needed analytical synthesis of the Germanic heroic tradition and bring together prose, pictorial and metrical sources (including ballads) from the whole of the Germanic north.

The Autobiographical Aspect in the Old Icelandic Material

This part of the project is a comparative endeavour intended to analyse how autobiographical material is transformed in cognate traditions and what this can tell us about the rise and spread of the first person point of view. The main sources of autobiography in the northern European metrical material are sustained retrospective monologues delivered by heroic characters on the point of death (the so-called Germanic 'death song'). Evidence of this autobiographical mode is particularly present in Old Icelandic sources, in Old English (*Beowulf*) and in Old High German material (*Das Hildebrandslied*). In narration of this type, a character identifies himself in verse, and offers an autobiographical account of himself. This aspect of the study will analyze sources according to rhetorical mode of discourse (e.g. death songs) embedded in different genres (epic poetry, saga prose).

Analysis by mode of discourse will be complemented and contrasted with analytical surveys of sources by narrative material, grouped according to Germanic hero. Heroic legends are told in prose as well as in verse, and heroic scenes are preserved carvings in different materials and possibly rendered on

at least one tapestry, and skaldic poetry suggests such scenes were also painted on shields. These will be placed in dialogue with the textual sources. For example, once the autobiographical aspect of the Icelandic *Vǫlsunga saga* has been analyzed, I will continue with an analysis of the relationship between the material in the relevant Icelandic poems, the Old High German epic poem the *Nibelungenlied* and related ballads: the Danish *Sivard Snarensvend*, *Sivard og Brynhild*, *Frændehævn*, and *Grimhilds Hævn*, the Faroese *Sjúrðar kvæði*, the Norwegian *Sigurð svein*, and the Swedish *Sivert Snarensvend*. The heroic content of such diverse sources is interrelated in a way that will not necessarily conform to a neat evolutionary model. This comparative project in textual medieval studies will therefore rely on a combination of methods appropriate to the diversity of sources. Among these, manuscript studies provide essential tools for deciphering the versions of the texts. Theoretical models are taken from Oral Theory, which is suitably equipped for approaching 'oral-derived texts', or written texts that are adapted from an oral tradition, even if potentially mediated by an extended history of manuscript transmission. In addition, the theoretical model of 'intertextuality' is adapted from its development in Literature Studies as a tool for approaching the interconnections of heroic sources.

Interest in the Individual in the Medieval North

A working hypothesis of this project is that sustained first-person narrative may have played a strong role in the wider narrative culture of the north. This hypothesis is novel because attention to such monologues in earlier scholarship has not been concerned with its pervasiveness and such the question was not raised until a recent arguement was put forward that first-person poetry in a prose narrative could have become fashionable as a device to strengthen the authority of the narrator in the Icelandic material only in the 12^{th}–14^{th} centuries (Clunies Ross 2006). This argument asserts that older, inherited poetic material was fashioned to fit this mould. By taking into account the necessary oral prehistory of the material and its cultural context, my study will test the alternative hypothesis that autobiographical discourse in Germanic material points towards an early interest in establishing the individual within larger group discourses and identities. This hypothesis finds immediate support in, for example, the occurrence of the oral genre of the Germanic death song in *Beowulf*. The development of the autobiographical validation of prehistory can only be tested by comparing autobiographical references with cognate ballad and poetic traditions as multiple manifestations of the same heroic material, making my contribution to discussion both timely and necessary.

The Relationship of Old Icelandic Material to the Late-Medieval Nordic Ballad Tradition

By studying how autobiographical material may be transformed into another type of narrative expression in cognate vernacular traditions, we gain an insight into the construction and development of the literary forms of the sources. Previous research reveals that Icelandic prosimetric *fornaldarsögur* (legendary prose sagas containing verse) are associated with the wider Nordic medieval ballad tradition, while the non-prosimetric legendary sagas tend to provide material for *rímur* (late medieval Icelandic rhymed, alliterative epic poems). This particular pattern has never been thoroughly investigated. By focussing on the transformations of the heroic *fornaldarsögur* material and using the autobiographical pronouncements of heroes as a limiting factor, this project has the potential to make a significant contribution to Nordic ballad studies.

Another significant gap in the research of Germanic heroic material that my project fills concerns the *kæmpeviser*, a Scandinavian and Faroese heroic ballad type not found in Iceland. The content of *kæmpeviser* is closely related to the legendary saga and epic tradition. This has never been examined in detail but is particularly pertinent to my study since, as noted, the poetic aspect of the *fornaldarsögur* material is not well

represented by the Icelandic *rímur* tradition, only by the Nordic ballads. The transformations of autobiography in these metrical forms can thus be studied in conjunction with the connection between the material in Icelandic prosimetric *fornaldarsögur* and the ballad traditions in the Nordic countries. This approach makes my project relevant to different disciplines.

Outcome

To have all these different forms and languages in conversation forms an unusual and highly productive dialogue relevant to current academic concerns. The present project will contribute to this dialogue by producing a monograph. The monograph will enhance our understanding of the development of the first person and of literary forms in the medieval north, and will make a solid contribution to the field of medieval vernacular literature. Most immediately of interest to scholars of Germanic literature and philology, this culminating work will also be of use to historians, since such sources are also considered historical, and to scholars studying anthropology and culture in terms of the areal spread and use of narratives.

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CALLS FOR PAPERS

Austmarr IV – The Plurality of Religions and Religious Change around the Baltic Sea, 500–1300: Methodological Challenges of Multidisciplinary Data

4th–5th December 2014, Sundsvall, Sweden

The Austmarr Network is an international, interdisciplinary network of scholars investigating historical and prehistoric contacts among peoples in the circum-Baltic region. We aim to reconstruct the development of the Baltic Sea region, viewed as a trans-ethnic cultural area that played a central role in the emergence of modern Germanic, Slavic, Finnic and Sámi ethnicities. We will focus on the pre-Hanseatic period, up to the High Middle Ages.

The Baltic region has been populated by humans since the end of the last Ice Age, ca. 10,000 years ago. In modern times, the Baltic is bounded by the states Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland and Germany. Both Finno-Ugric languages and the Germanic, Baltic and Slavic branches of the Indo-European family are well represented. Other languages, such as Romani and Classical written languages, have also had a presence in the region. Areal features in the languages, pre-Christian religions and folkloric traditions of the Baltic region have long been recognized, and the material cultures also show commonalities of many types and ages. The directions of influence are complex and in many cases indeterminate. Whereas the Mediterranean has long been recognized as a *mare nostrum* of multicultural, multilingual contacts for southern Europe, we turn attention to the Baltic Sea as the *mare nostrum* of the north.

Understandings of the ways in which languages and populations (separately) move and how ethnic groups form and recombine are rapidly evolving. The assumption of stable language areas and the association between aspects of material culture (e.g. pottery styles) and language groups or populations has been questioned. Improved methods in place-name studies and rapid developments in population genetics are providing new data on migrations and prehistoric language shifts. It is high time to revisit the Baltic region in an integrated and systematic way.

Each year since 2011, the Austmarr Network has organized a multidisciplinary symposium. These symposia have targeted different topics and themes relevant to understanding the dynamic history of cultures in the Baltic Sea region, and how research on the Baltic Sea region may inform approaches to historical investigation of cultures elsewhere in the world. The circum-Baltic region, with its rich (pre)history involving several well-studied groups with comparatively deep historical records, provides a robust case study for developing methods that can be applied to other cases of interdisciplinary cultural reconstruction.

We are now organizing our fourth event at Mid Sweden University in Sundsvall, Sweden. The thematic topic is the multiplicity of religions that existed and interacted within and across cultures in this part of the world with a methodological focus. History, archaeology, folklore, philology, comparative religion, historical linguistics, onomastics and population genetics all share an interest in reconstructing the human past, but the methods employed in these different disciplines lead to divergent pictures of the history of the region. Attempting to relate the types of sources of even two of these disciplines poses tremendous methodological difficulties. We are therefore inviting scholars of all disciplines to bring their own perspectives and the perspectives of their disciplines to engage in discussion on this common problem in order to nurture shared understandings and produce more knowledge

than the perspective of any one discipline could do alone.

Whereas many events are organized to allow researchers to *present* their own work with little time for discussion, we have adapted the seminar model of the Viking Age in Finland project in order to foster *discussion* and intellectual exchange across the perspectives of different disciplines: each paper will be allowed 30 minutes for presentation followed by 30 minutes for discussion. We therefore invite scholars of all disciplines to propose papers on themes such as the following:

- Distinguishing 'variance' from 'difference' in religion and religious practices
- How different categories of source materials may reflect different types of information or different aspects of religion
- Overcoming problematics of variation in religion or mythology according to cultural practice within a community
- How to assess and interpret impacts of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural contacts on religion and mythology
- How to distinguish variation in the outcomes of practices reflected in the archaeological record from variation in religion
- How to relate 'religion' to language, ethnicity and to archaeological cultures where the language spoken may be uncertain
- How to relate (Christian) medieval written sources from Iceland to (vernacular) Germanic or other cultures in the Baltic Sea region
- How to relate folklore from the 19th and 20th centuries to cultures and cultural practices in the Iron Age

If you are interested in presenting a paper in this venue or otherwise attending the event to participate in discussion, please send a proposal of up to 500 words to Maths Bertell at maths.bertell@miun.se by Monday, 15th September 2014.

We look forward to seeing you in Sundsvall!

Mytologia ja runous – Mythology and Poetry

A Special Issue of Elore *(May 2015)*

The intersection of vernacular mythology and oral poetry is a rich and fascinating locus for investigation. The history of research in different disciplines has tremendously advanced our understandings in many areas, such as how these phenomena interrelate and are interconnected in different cultural practices; how they function in meaning generation and power relations; how their interfaces adapt and transform over time; and how they have been taken up and manipulated by our own cultures, especially since the era of Romanticism. At the same time, both mythology and oral poetry have also been displaced from their earlier centrality and prestige status in research, although that status remains inevitably in the background of discussions today. This displacement has also led the diversity of discussions to be scattered across different fields without necessarily opening dialogue with one another. We are therefore organizing a special issue of the open-access electronic journal *Elore* (http://www.elore.fi/ elore/in-english/) as a nexus for discussion of mythology and oral poetry and questions of their relationships in practice, synchronically, diachronically and in reception. We therefore invite contributions on any of the following or related themes:

Synchronic perspectives

- Formal connections between mythology and poetry in synchronic practice, in cultural competence or in cultural perceptions of empirical and social realities
- Traditional referentiality and intertextuality in synchronic use or contemporary 'mythic discourse'
- The relationship between oral-poetic or ethnopoetic genres and the transmission and internalization of mythology and mythic knowledge
- The relationship between oral poetry and 'reality orientation' in ritual practice
- The role of poetry as a verbal component in performance practices for interacting with the unseen world
- Local and regional co-variation of mythology and poetry or "dialects of

mythology" (Anna-Leena Siikala, *Itämeren-suomalisten mytologia*, Helsinki, 2012)
- Co-variation of mythology and genre of oral poetry or cultural practice within a community

Diachronic perspectives

- How institutionalized social roles and cultural practices affect diachronic variation in the transmission of mythology, poems or genres
- The *longue durée* of mythology and oral-poetic systems and their changing intersections with one another
- What happens to poetry linked to vernacular mythology in the wake of religious changes such as Christianization
- The historical stratification of mythology, mythic images and symbols and how these function and vary synchronically within a tradition of oral-poetry
- The development of the lexicon and diction of an oral-poetic register in relation to historical interfaces with mythologies and ideologies
- The relationship of diachronic processes to variation between dialects of mythology and/or to variation in mythology by genre or cultural practice
- The role of cross-cultural or cross-community contacts in the development of the use or interface of mythology and oral poetry

Romantic and current reception and reinvention

- Traditional mythology and oral poetry in the discourse of Romanticism and its objectification as heritage
- Etic uses of mythological poetry as resources for nation-building, constructing ethnic identities or ideologies and/or for social manipulation in political discourse and advertising
- Etic uses of mythological poetry in popular entertainments, mass media and social media
- Adaptations of traditional mythological poetry and/or the (re)creation of modern equivalents in revivalist movements associated with particular genres (e.g. laments, charms, prayers) or religions (neo-paganism, Wicca, Ásatrú)
- How the construction of mythology and oral poetry as research objects in the era of Romanticism and/or later nationalist and political discourses affected the development of research in different disciplines and national scholarships
- How or whether popular culture (e.g. *The Lord of the Rings* movies or lyrics of Finnish and Scandinavian black metal music) impacts attention to and research on traditional mythological poetry and in what ways
- How academic research on mythology and mythological poetry does or does not feed back into other areas of culture (popular entertainment, alternative religions, etc.) and whether this is changing in the wake of the internet and social media

We invite proposals for papers that address these topics in different cultures, cultural traditions and across traditions. Contributions may be empirically based or oriented to theoretical discussions and methodology. They may be proposed either as a research article, which will be subject to peer-review, or as a research report*****.

The volume *Mytologia ja runous* ['Mythology and Poetry'] is organized by the Academy of Finland research project "Oral Poetry, Mythic Knowledge and Vernacular Imagination: Interfaces of Individual Expression and Collective Traditions in Pre-Modern Northeast Europe". *The special issue will be in the Finnish language*, edited by Karina Lukin, Frog and Eila Stepanova (University of Helsinki). For contributors weak in Finnish, the editors can recommend competent translators and will also check that translations accurately reflect the author's original language text (if in English, Swedish, Russian or German).

If you are interested in contributing an article or research report to *Mytologia ja runous*, please submit an abstract of up to 500 words by **1st October 2014** to Petja Kauppi (petja@tekstihuoltamo.com). Please include information about your affiliation, position and contact information with the abstract.

The deadline *for papers in languages other than Finnish* is **1st December 2014**; the deadline *for Finnish language papers* is **15th January 2015**. Our timeline will be quite strict because the journal will be published in May 2015.

***** *A research report is shorter than an article and is not subject to peer review, although it will*

still be subject to Elore*'s strict editorial process before being accepted for publication. The format of a research report is recommended especially for thematic reviews and presentations of research still in progress.*

Would You Like to Submit to *RMN Newsletter*?

RMN Newsletter in an open-access biannual publication that sets out to construct an informational resource and discourse space for researchers of diverse and intersecting disciplines. Its thematic center is the discussion and investigation of cultural phenomena of different eras and the research tools and strategies relevant to retrospective methods. Retrospective methods consider some aspect of culture in one period through evidence from another, later period. Such comparisons range from investigating historical relationships to the utility of analogical parallels, and from comparisons across centuries to developing working models for the more immediate traditions behind limited sources. *RMN Newsletter* welcomes and encourages its readership to engage in this discourse space and it also promotes an awareness that participation will support, maintain and also shape this emergent venue.

The publication is organized according to four broad sections: Comments and Communications, People, Places and Calls for Papers:

– *Comments and Communications*
- Short-article (discussion oriented)
  – preferred length, 3–8 pages body text (plus images, tables, list of works cited)
- Conference report / announcement
  – preferred length, 2–5 pages
- Project announcements
  – preferred length, 1–5 pages

– *People*
- Research report (abstract / summary of conference paper or unpublished research)
  – max. 1–2 page body text
- Published article announcement
  – 1 page
- Edited volume summary
  – 1–5 pages body text
- Monograph summary
  – 1–5 pages body text
- PhD project summary
  – 2–5 pages body text
- MA project summary
  – 1–2 page body text

– *Places*
- Outline of programmes, projects and other activities or research associated with an institution, organization or network of organizations
  – preferred length, 1–5 pages

– *Calls for Papers*
  – preferred length, 1–2 pages

The orientation of *RMN Newsletter* is toward presenting information *about* events, people, activities, developments and technologies, and research which is ongoing or has been recently completed. Rather than presenting conclusive findings, short-article contributions for the Comments and Communications section are generally oriented to discussion and/or engaging in discourse opened in earlier issued of *RMN Newsletter* or in other publications.

The success of this publication as both a resource and discourse space is dependent on the participation of its readership. We also recognize the necessity of opening contact with and being aware of the emerging generation of scholars and welcome summaries of on-going and recently completed MA and PhD research projects.

If you are interested in making information about your own work available or participating in discussion through comments, responses or short-article contributions, please send your contributions in *.doc, *docx or *.rtf format to Frog at *editor.rmnnewsletter@gmail.com*.

For more information and access to earlier issues of *RMN Newsletter*, please visit our web-page at www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/English/RMN/.