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*Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá's Riddle Commentary*

IN HIS 2013 MONOGRAPH Jeffrey Love informs us that the *fornaldar-saga* generally referred to as *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* has not always been a highly appreciated constituent member of the Icelandic literary canon. Despite being one of the earliest sagas to appear in print, edited by Olof Verelius at the end of the seventeenth century, a downturn came after 'academic interest in Heiðrekr's exploits diminished some time during the early twentieth century'.<sup>1</sup> But recent work suggests that the saga's fortunes are on the up again, and of particular interest for the purpose of this article are several recent scholarly contributions which focus on the verbal contest of wits between Heiðrekr and Óðinn. This takes place in Chapter 9 of the R-version (see below for the relevance of the R-version with regards to the commentary discussed here) where 30 riddles are presented interspersed with prose dialogue.<sup>2</sup> The enigmatic charm of the interlocutors' exchange, sometimes called the 'Gátur Gestumblinda' [Riddles of Gestur the Blind] has spurred interest in the connections of the riddles to Eddic poetry, the balance maintained between education and entertainment, and the epistemological and heuristic value of the defamiliarising worldview which the riddles present.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Jeffrey Scott Love, *The Reception of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Munich: Herbert Utz Verlag, 2014), 13. On Verelius' edition of 1672 see also Love, *The Reception of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, 245–53, and Kay Busch, "Grossmachtstatus und Sagainterpretation – die schwedischen Vorzeitsagaeditionen des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts" (PhD diss., Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg) (available online, accessed 20 August, 2015, <https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-fau/frontdoor/index/index/docId/45>), 56–65.
- 2 The same chapter numbering is used in Christopher Tolkien, trans., *The Saga of King Heiðrek the Wise* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1960).
- 3 Also called the 'Getspeki Heiðreks'. As well as chapter 4 of Love's book, the following can be mentioned as touching upon these themes: Hannah Burrows, "Enigma Variations:

*Gripla XXVI (2015): 229–273*

One piece of the puzzle which remains to be put in place, however, harks back to that previous period of intense interest in the saga, namely the seventeenth century. Hannah Burrows mentions the ‘intriguing reception history’ of the riddles, one aspect of which is a ‘little-known seventeenth-century commentary’.<sup>4</sup> The commentary referred to was produced by Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá (1574–1655), an important figure on the Icelandic intellectual scene of his day, in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. With reference to the different witnesses of that work, Love, too, opines that ‘a future edition of Björn’s commentary would help facilitate a more detailed study’.<sup>5</sup> The present article is a direct response to this stated absence. Moreover, by making Björn’s commentary more accessible it is hoped that it will be easier to juxtapose it with the various other seventeenth-century musings on medieval Scandinavian poetry and language, as part of the ongoing attempt to understand the noteworthy developments of that period.

In what follows, I present a text and translation of Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá’s riddle commentary. The introduction to this edition comprises a consideration of Björn’s life and works and the conditions under which he produced his commentary, a discussion of the various manuscript witnesses of the commentary and how they relate to each other and, finally, a delineation of the techniques and approaches which are made use of within the commentary.<sup>6</sup>

*Hervarar saga’s Wave-Riddles and Supernatural Women in Old Norse Poetic Tradition,* *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 112 (2013); Hannah Burrows, “Wit and Wisdom: The Worldview of the Old Norse-Icelandic Riddles and Their Relationship to Eddic Poetry,” in *Eddic, Skaldic and Beyond: Poetic Variety in Medieval Iceland and Norway*, ed. Martin Chase (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014); and Aurelijus Vijūnas, “On the Old Icelandic Riddle Collection *Heiðreksgáttur*,” in *Fun and Puzzles in Modern Scandinavian Studies*, ed. Ērika Sausverde and Ieva Steponavičiūė (Vilnius: Vilnius University, 2014).

4 Burrows, “Wit and Wisdom,” 114.

5 Love, *The Reception of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, 234.

6 The introduction is brief, containing only as much information as is deemed relevant to orientate the reader with regard to a reading of the commentary. Much more could be said of Björn’s works and the role they played in the cultural and intellectual circles of the seventeenth century, but that must wait until another occasion.

## Notes about Björn's Life and Other Works, and a Consideration of the Circumstances of Production

We are not in possession of Björn's autograph of his riddle commentary (see below in the section on Manuscript Witnesses), but we know, nevertheless, a lot about its author and the circumstances of its production.<sup>7</sup> Björn Jónsson lost his father at an early age and was taken under the wing of Sigurður Jónsson at the farm of Reynistaður in the northern part of Iceland. He stayed there for twenty years (that is, until about 1602), and it is presumably there that he came into contact with Icelandic learned and textual culture. Soon after leaving Reynistaður, Björn Jónsson was living at Skarðsá and in 1616 became a *lögréttumaður* [member of the public court of law].<sup>8</sup> There seems to have been no love lost between Bishop Guðbrandur Þorláksson of Hólar (not too far from where Björn lived) and Björn, but on the death of the former (1627), Björn's fortunes looked up as the much more positively-disposed Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason took office. From that time on, Björn's written production seems to have been fairly prolific: Jón Þorkelsson characterises it as embracing 'skáldskap, sagnafræði, lögfræði, málfræði og fornfræði' [poetical, historical, juridical, linguistic and mythological works].<sup>9</sup>

Unsurprisingly this wide-ranging output appears not wholly to have been undertaken on Björn's own initiative. A number of the works attributed to him were written at the behest of his patrons, namely Bishops Þorlákur Skúlason (1597–1656) and Brynjólfur Sveinsson (1605–75).

- 7 A good account of Björn's life, from which most of the details presented here are taken, is Jón Þorkelsson, "Þáttur af Birni Jónssyni á Skarðsá," *Tímarit hins íslenska bókmenntafjelags* 8 (1887). See also Einar G. Pétursson, *Eddurit Jóns Guðmundssonar lærða: Þættir úr fræðasögu 17. aldar*, 2 b., Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit, vol. 46 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1998), particularly 1:30–36, on the connections between Björn Jónsson and Jón lærði, and the intellectual milieu they were part of.
- 8 Einar G. Pétursson, *Eddurit Jóns Guðmundssonar lærða*, 1:39–41. Björn is mentioned participating in the *lögrétta* [public court of law] up until 1646.
- 9 Einar G. Pétursson, *Eddurit Jóns Guðmundssonar lærða*, 1:46. Note however that Stefán Karlsson says that earlier writers may have been overly zealous in ascribing works to Björn, and thus his oeuvre may not be as extensive as at one time believed. See "Skrifarar Þorláks biskups Skúlasonar," in *Stafrókar: Ritgerðir eftir Stefán Karlsson gefnar út í tilefni af sjötugsafmæli hans*, 2. desember 1998, ed. Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, Rit, vol. 49 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 2000), 386.

This is clearly the case, for example, with some of his annals, such as *Skarðsárannáll*, and others of his commentaries, such as that on Egill Skallagrímsson's *Höfuðlausn*.<sup>10</sup> Stefán Karlsson terms Björn Jónsson a 'sjálfstæður fræðimaður' [independent scholar], one of few if not the only such in the Iceland of his time.<sup>11</sup> Thus in the particular case of the riddle commentary, we may speculate that it was the result of a request by a learned superior, although no mention is made of it being commissioned in the introduction or conclusion to any of the extant manuscripts.<sup>12</sup> A letter written by Sveinn Jónsson (1603–87), a close colleague of Bishop Þorlákur at Hólar, to the noted Danish polymath Ole Worm, dated September 15th 1641, states that a series of explanations pertaining to Icelandic riddles by an 'industrious Oedipus have still not been finished to perfection' [Oedipo industrio ad perfectionem nondum sint elaborata].<sup>13</sup> Later correspondence reveals that these riddles are those from *Hervarar saga* ('Ænigmata Heidrico', ['Heiðrekur's riddles']), and we may guess that the Oedipus referred to, the man capable of laying bare the sphinxian conundrum, is Björn Jónsson.<sup>14</sup> Ole Worm's interest in the riddles certainly shows that there was a market for this work, but the letters do not speak of direct commissioning as such. We must thus balance out this learned interest with the statement (Björn's own?) which precedes the commentary in most of the extant manuscripts that it is 'almenningi til frekari skilnings' [to aid the common man in deeper comprehension].<sup>15</sup>

If this commentary is not just a commissioned work, but also one stemming from personal engagement and a desire to educate the common man, then to a certain extent we may take the commentary itself as

10 Jón Þorkelsson, "Þáttur af Birni Jónssyni," 65, 85.

11 Stefán Karlsson, "Skrifrar Þorláks biskups," 385.

12 In Björn Jónsson's autograph text (AM 552 r 4to) of his commentary on *Höfuðlausn* from *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*, on the other hand, we read (under the heading 'Um afsakanir útfýðingar vísanna' [On the justification of the interpretation of the verses] at f. 1v) that the commentary was carried out at the request of Þorlákur Skúlason.

13 *Ole Worm's Correspondence with Icelanders*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1948), 250.

14 *Ole Worm's Correspondence with Icelanders*, 251 (letters 143 and 144).

15 The fact that the introduction to the commentary refers to Björn in the third person may lead us to see this statement on composition as a later addition and not representative of the author's intentions, but in any case it would reveal an almost contemporary view of its significance.

reflecting Björn Jónsson's interests and aims. It is noteworthy that certain riddles are the object of extremely scant attention while others receive extensive treatment. Yet the length of the commentary for each individual riddle might not directly correlate with interest or lack of interest: while a short or almost non-existent explanation could reveal a lack of interest in a dull riddle, it could alternatively be a respectful deferral to a conundrum which had already been well posed and explained. The longer expositions on riddles would seem to allow us to infer pleasurable intellectual engagement, but they could also be necessitated by shoddy or over-obscure style. Moreover, these explanations do not exist in a vacuum: by explaining the esoteric wisdom behind the riddles, Björn Jónsson is not only distinguishing himself from the confused common man, but also engaging, as mentioned, with learned circles, both Icelandic and foreign, either intentionally or otherwise, and thus this piece of writing can be seen as an act of intellectual self-fashioning.

## Manuscript Witnesses

The edition presented here makes use of seven manuscripts, in all of which Björn's commentary appears alongside a text of the *Hervarar saga* riddles. As already mentioned, none of them appear to be Björn's autograph. Love discusses five of these, all from the seventeenth-century: AM 203 fol., AM 192 fol., AM 202 k fol. (the manuscript is in two parts, I and II, each of which contains a text of the commentary, although that found in part I is now only partially visible), AM 591 k 4to and AM 167 b III 8vo.<sup>16</sup> Within the Arnarnagnæan collections and those at the National Library of Iceland I have been unable to locate any further witnesses.<sup>17</sup> A further copy (the seventh) of the commentary is, however, present in NKS 1891 4to at the

16 Love, *The Reception of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, 234. Due to the two versions in AM 202 k fol. these five manuscripts can be said to contain six texts of the commentary.

17 Einar G. Pétursson, in his article "Akraþók: Handrit með hendi Árna Böðvarssonar á Ökrum og hugleiðingar um handritarannsóknir á Eddunum," *Gripla* 18 (2007), states, alongside his discussion of the riddles from *Hervarar saga*, that 'til eru skýringar á gátum Gestumblinda eftir Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá' [there are also explanations of the riddles by Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá], 151. However he does not, and rightly so, state that they are present in *Akraþók* (now with the shelfmark SÁM 72). I am grateful to him for his helpful clarification on this point (private correspondence).

Shelfmark	Scribe	Date	Sources
AM 202 k II fol.	Jón Gissurarson	1641–48 (scribe died in 1648)	Kristian Kälund, <i>Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske haandskriftsamling</i> (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1889–94), I:167. See also handrit.is.
AM 203 fol.	Jón Erlendsson	1641–72 (scribe died in 1672)	<i>Ibid.</i> , I:167–68. See also handrit.is.
AM 192 fol.	Jón Erlendsson	1641–72 (scribe died in 1672)	<i>Ibid.</i> , I:159. See also handrit.is.
AM 202 k I fol.	?	1641–1700	<i>Ibid.</i> , I:167. See also handrit.is.
AM 167 b III 8vo	?	1650–1700 (dating based on Kälund)	<i>Ibid.</i> , II:429. See also handrit.is.
AM 591 k 4to	Ólafur Gíslason á Hofi í Vopnafirði	1674–1710 (the years during which the scribe was active)	<i>Ibid.</i> , II:759. See also handrit.is, and Agnete Loth, “Sønderdelte arnamagnæanske papirhåndskrifter,” <i>Opuscula</i> 1 (1960): 139.
Papp. 4to nr. 34	Jón Rugman	1695 (date given on f. 14v)	Vilhelm Gödel, <i>Katalog öfver Kongl. bibliotekets formländska och formorska handskrifter</i> (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1897–1900), 306–08.
NKS 1891 4to	Thorlákur Magnússon Ísford	1771–76 (scribe worked as copyist in Copenhagen for only 5 years)	Kristian Kälund, <i>Katalog over de oldnordiske-isländske håndskrifter i det store kongelige bibliotek</i> (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1900), 260. See also Peter A. Jorgensen, “ <i>Hafgeirs saga Flateyings</i> : An Eighteenth-Century Forgery,” <i>Journal of English and German Philology</i> 76 (1977): 158–59.

Table 1: The manuscripts containing texts of Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá's commentary on the riddles in *Hervarar saga* (or, in the case of Papp. 4to nr. 34, a Latin commentary derived from Björn's Icelandic one), along with information, where known, about the scribe and the date on which the copy was made. The manuscripts appear in roughly chronological order.

Royal Library in Copenhagen. At the start of that manuscript (p. 1), the scribe has written ‘Collecta Kvadam Ex Manuscr: antiqvo et Lacerō Num: 167 Biblioth: A: M:’ [A collection of poems from an ancient and damaged manuscript, number 167 in Árni Magnússon’s collection], which provides us with a clear statement of its provenance. For the sake of completeness, it is worth mentioning that the Latin notes accompanying the riddles in Papp. 4to nr. 34 at the Royal Library in Stockholm also make use of Björn Jónsson’s commentary (see Table 1).<sup>18</sup>

The text of *Hervarar saga* in all of the manuscripts containing the commentary are, according to Jón Helgason, descended primarily from GKS 2845 4to (R, fifteenth century), and more specifically from a hypothesised descendant of R which contains additions from other branches and which he designates r<sup>2</sup>.<sup>19</sup> While it is certainly possible that the commentary could have been transmitted independently and thus been copied into manuscripts with versions of *Hervarar saga* descending from other branches of the stemma (for example H or U), such does not seem to have been the case, and the commentary was either copied along with the corresponding text of *Hervarar saga* text or not at all. Jón Helgason speculates that r<sup>2</sup> was written by Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson and was a copy of another text r<sup>1</sup>,

- 18 Papp. 4to nr. 34 seems to be the only remaining manuscript based on Sveinn Jónsson’s copy of the riddles and commentary, which he sent to Ole Worm (as mentioned in the former’s letter to the latter, see above). On f. 14v ‘S.J. Isl’ [Sveinn Jónsson, the Icelander] appears, apparently confirming the scribal source, and in the same year as Jón Rugman made his copy (1665), Peder Hansen Resen (1625–88) mentions having seen the manuscript, then in the possession of Ole Worm’s son. See Jón Helgason, introduction to *Heiðreks saga: Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks konungs*, ed. Jón Helgason, Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur, vol. 48 (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1924), xv–xvi. The notes are at times verbatim copies of the Icelandic text (e.g. the commentary for riddle 5 states ‘patrem diei vocat Edda delling, idem diei synonymum est dellings bur = filius delling’, f. 9v, cf. ‘Dellingur hét Dags faðir. Les Eddu. Því heitir dagurinn Dellings bur eður sonur’), but at other points there are omissions and alterations.
- 19 Jón Helgason, introduction to *Heiðreks saga*, xii–xiii. His *sigla* are referred to throughout. While AM 202 k II fol. and AM 203 fol. are initially discussed by Jón Helgason under the manuscripts descended from R, he later takes up the discussion of these manuscripts and their descendants again in the section on ‘haandskrifter med blandet tekst’ [manuscripts with a mixed text] (xxix *passim*). This is because the sources of the text in these manuscripts can be divided into roughly three parts: (1) the majority and main body of the text, descended from R; (2) R’s missing ending supplemented by that present in the U-text, as well as the U-text’s distinctive opening included prior to the R-text’s version; (3) modifications in the riddle section, apparently based on a non-extant H-branch text.

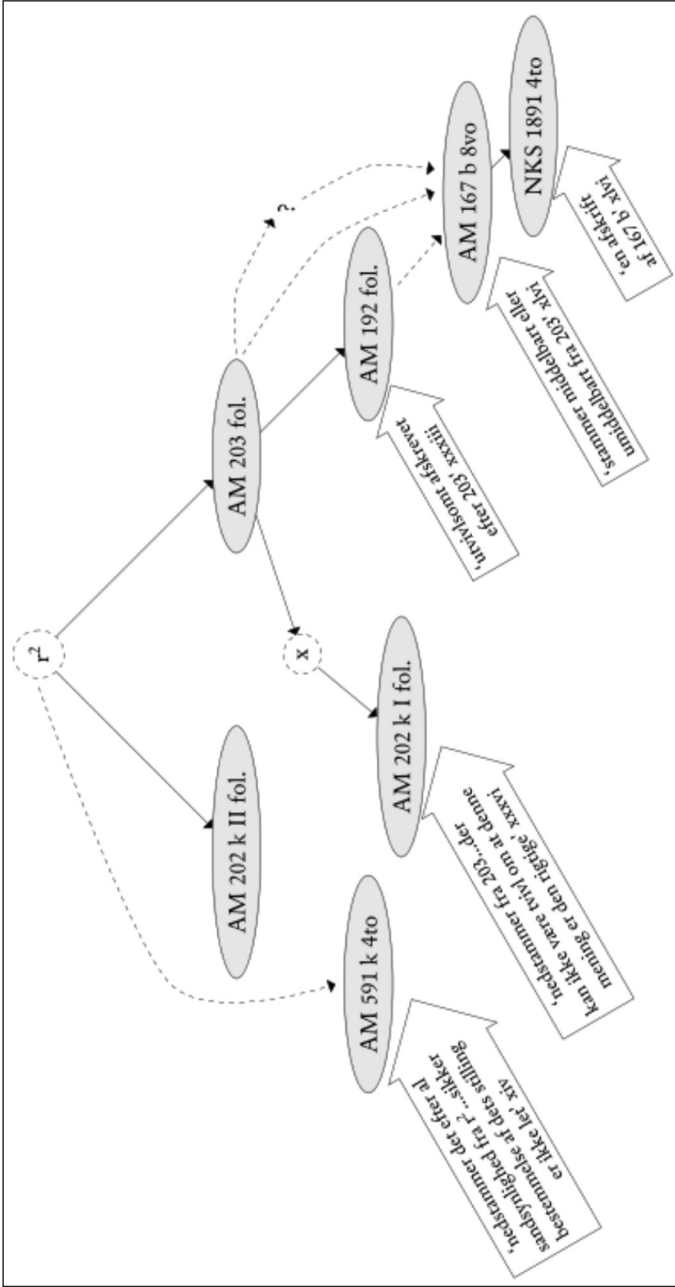


Figure 1: The relationship, as defined by Jón Helgason (1924), between Hervarar saga texts found in the manuscripts where it is accompanied by Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá's commentary to the 'Gátur Gestumblinda'. Translations: AM 591 k 4to, 'most likely a descendant of r² ... a definitive decision on its position is not easy'; AM 202 k I fol., 'a descendant of 203 ... there can be no doubt that this is an accurate assessment'; AM 192 fol., 'without doubt a copy of 203'; AM 167 b III 8vo, 'either directly or indirectly descended from 203'; NKS 1891 4to, 'a copy of 167 b'.



which may have been written by Björn Jónsson himself. This must remain speculation: what we do know is that AM 202 k II fol. was written by Jón Gissurarson (d. 1648) and AM 203 fol. by Jón Erlendsson (fl. 1625–1672). Since the commentary is dated to 1641, AM 202 k II fol. stands a fair chance of being the earliest extant witness, with a 7-year window within which it may have been copied. We cannot rule out, however, the possibility that the text in AM 203 fol. is chronologically anterior, since Jón Erlendsson was also active in the 1640s. AM 192 fol. is also in the hand of Jón Erlendsson and is, as Jón Helgason states, clearly a direct copy of AM 203 fol. Due to Jón Helgason's diminished interest in manuscripts which he deemed to be 'værdiløse for tekstkritiken' [worthless for textual criticism], however, the precise location of dependent manuscripts within the stemma is not always given (see figure 1).<sup>20</sup>

The two areas of ambiguity in the stemma revolve around the provenance of the texts of AM 591 k 4to and that present in AM 167 b III 8vo. The former is in the hand of Ólafur Gíslason (c. 1646–1714) and presents problems mainly because of that author's extremely idiosyncratic copying style.<sup>21</sup> The text shows omissions, additions and shifts in word-order which confound traditional stemmatic approaches. Since many of Ólafur Gíslason's texts show similar abberant formulations, it would seem not to stem from and reflect his sources, but rather may be a consequence of that individual's particularly free approach to scribal practice. It may be that he simply chose not to abide by the somewhat slavish approach to textual transmission as adopted by many of his contemporaries, or that larger-than-average chunks of text were memorised by him in order to be copied and thus more variation crept in accidentally. Jón Helgason is certain that AM 591 k 4to is related to r<sup>2</sup> but admits that a precise and definitive statement of its source is difficult to provide.<sup>22</sup>

Despite these problems, in the sections of the commentary which are most faithfully copied, several small shared readings suggest that AM 591

20 Jón Helgason, introduction to *Heiðreks saga*, ix.

21 On Ólafur Gíslason's manuscripts see Agnete Loth, "Sønderdelte arnamagnæanske papirhåndskrifter," *Opuscula* 1 (1960). Another example of Ólafur Gíslason's free copying style is a text of *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra* in AM 591 g 4to. See Philip Lavender, "Whatever Happened to *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*? Origin, Transmission and Reception of a *Fornaldarsaga*" (PhD diss., University of Copenhagen, 2015), 60–64.

22 Jón Helgason, introduction to *Heiðreks saga*, xiv.

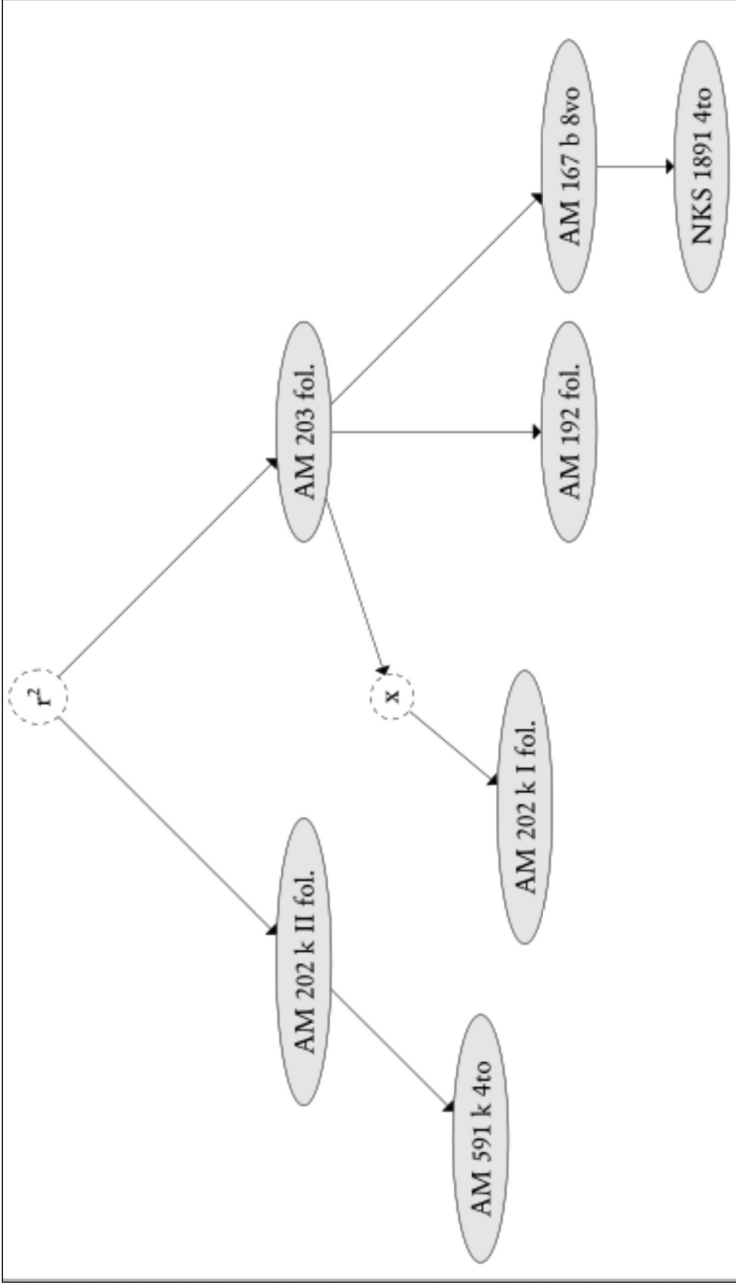


Figure 2: The relationship between the witnesses of Björn Jónsson á Skarðsdá's commentary to the 'Gátur Gestumblinda', based on work by Jón Helgason (1924), but with corrections and additions.

k 4to could be (loosely) based on AM 202 k II fol.: in riddle 6 both have ‘fyrir Dellings dyrum’, in riddle 9 both state ‘hann kallar brúðir’ in place of ‘er hann kallar svanbrúðir’, and both shift the etymological commentary on the word ‘vættur’ in riddle 26 to the end of the note.<sup>23</sup> AM 167 b III 8vo, written by an unknown scribe in the late seventeenth century, is stated to descend either directly or indirectly from AM 203 fol. (hence AM 192 fol. or a lost manuscript could also be the direct source).<sup>24</sup> In this case, after comparison of the texts, there seems to be good reason to affirm that what we are dealing with is a direct copy of AM 203 fol.: the commentary for riddle 11 cuts out in AM 167 b III 8vo at the precise point where it crosses from the recto to the verso of a leaf in AM 203 fol. (the text break is different in AM 192 fol.); in riddle 30 an error where ‘kóngur Heiðrekur’ is written as ‘kóngur Viðrekur’ in AM 167 b III 8vo could be the result of an eyeskip when copying from AM 203 fol. (on the same page ‘kóngur verið’ appears lower down but with an abbreviation of ‘verið’ to ‘við’ with a small diacritic over the ‘v’; the same words appear unambiguously as ‘kóngur vered’ in AM 192 fol.). With such matters considered we are as close to a complete and accurate stemma as we are likely to get.

## Content of the Commentary

Björn Jónsson’s commentary on individual riddles can perhaps be broken down into three main component parts. Firstly, there are a number of value judgements regarding the construction of the riddles. In addition to this, we find some description of the participants in the riddle contest and analysis of the contest’s dynamics in the context of the narrative frame. Finally, the primary content is explanations of material from the riddles (this can be subdivided into explanations of general poetic theory, of *heiti*, of kennings, of etymology and sound symbolism, and of historical/traditional/mythological content).

Taking these three aspects in the order mentioned, the subjective judgements tend to be on skill of composition, rather than revealing direct pleas-

23 Translations of phrases cited here and below can be found in below in the edition.

24 Jón Helgason, introduction to *Heiðreks saga*, xlvii.

ure or enjoyment in the reading.<sup>25</sup> Some riddles appear to be considered easy or transparent (e.g. 4 ‘greinileg getspeki’; 13 ‘ómyrk’), which could well be construed as a negative judgement for a riddle. Others have the less ambiguous praise of being well-devised or at least well-explicated (e.g. 2 ‘vel og skýrlega ráðin’; 23 ‘vel tilfundið og ráðið’). In yet other cases we have clear statements of doubt about the way the riddle is composed (e.g. 11 ‘og held ég merkilega getið svo óglöggra samlíkinga sem hér eru framsettar’; 22 ‘er þessi gáta mjög merkilega ráðin’) and assertions that the comparison is unnatural (e.g. 10 ‘það er óeiginleg líking’, as opposed to 17 ‘eiginleg líking’). Based on all of these comments it seems that Björn is fond of paradoxes (such as the obsidian which is both black and white (8), or the dew which has sated one’s thirst although one has not ‘drunk’ (3)), and particularly unimpressed by riddles which have complex solutions (such as the dead horse on the ice floe (11) and the duck’s nest in an ox’s skull (22)). Personification riddles can go either way: angelica figured as women (10) is deemed strained and unnatural, whereas the animalistic shield (17) is said to make good sense. The latter makes no use of ancient references or turns of phrase (‘fornyrðalaus’), but a good riddle which also does so, such as that of the suckling piglets (25), seems to be Björn’s favourite type.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps even more interesting than Björn’s own preferences are the clear signs that there was disagreement over this matter: in AM 591 k 4to there are three occasions where Björn’s evaluations are altered to contrary ones: first (8) in the case where Björn says that many people would have found the obsid-

25 It is worth bearing in mind that for large swathes of intellectual writing it is atypical to allude to affective responses concerning the object of study, and thus absence of mention of pleasurable reading may be generically dictated rather than a sign of no affective response. We should also not overstress a false dichotomy between the ‘intellectual’ pleasure of marvelling over a well-constructed conundrum and the immediate ludic pleasure of a witty riddle.

26 It is perhaps worth mentioning that Björn’s likes and dislikes do not seem to be divided along lines of the different types of riddle which Burrows identifies (natural world, manmade objects, mythological allusions). See Burrows, “Wit and Wisdom,” 120. Burrows mentions Hilda Ellis Davidson’s earlier suggestion that mythological riddles had already become outmoded at the time of *Hauksbók*’s production (c. 1300; the text of *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks konungs* in *Hauksbók* is in the AM 544 4to part of the manuscript), but going by Björn Jónsson’s willingness to read mythological explanations into superficially non-mythological riddles we may state unequivocally that there was nothing outmoded about mythological (or mythologised) poetry in the seventeenth century. See Burrows, “Wit and Wisdom,” 122.

ian riddle difficult to solve ('mörgum' is altered to 'fáum', f. 6r), and later (10 and 11) where Björn expresses bewilderment at the construction of the angelica and dead horse on ice-floe riddles, yet Ólafur Gíslason adds that both riddles are actually 'vel (úr) ráðin' (ff. 6r and 6v).

While the commentary for the most part looks at the riddles as atomised units for evaluation or explication, Björn does spare a few words for the narrative frame and dynamics of the contest, such that they cannot be relegated to purely formal structuring devices. Heiðrekur himself is said to be 'einn frábærlega vitur maður með yfirburða skilning, svo trautt hefur verið hans líki' [an extremely wise man with the utmost perspicuity, such that his equal has scarcely existed], and we are told that those riddles which were easy for him to solve would seem extremely complex to most people (e.g. riddle 8). In the commentary to riddle 26 on the pregnant sow we are told of Heiðrekur's suspicions about the identity of his opponent (as in the riddles proper), and on a couple of occasions we are also informed that the complexities being explained are the result of Gestumblindi's desire to flummox Heiðrekur (e.g. 25 'til að villa fyrir honum hvort hann heldur tali um menn eður dýr'). In the conclusion to the commentary we are also informed of Heiðrekur's historical existence: he was apparently a known king of Reiðgótaland (here meaning Jutland), as can be corroborated by Danish regnal lists. While no more precise source is given on that occasion, a number of intertextual references are made in the course of Björn's comments which emphasise the historical groundedness of his analysis. Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* is referred to on more than one occasion (5, 25), and quotations are presented from *Hávamál*, *Víga-Glúms saga* and *Bjarkamál hin fornu* as recited by Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld in *Ólafs saga hins helga*.<sup>27</sup> The insertion of these latter excerpts stresses the discursive continuity between the riddles and events and circumstances which are said, in the referenced narratives, to have taken place in the pre-settlement, post-settlement and conversion periods: *Víga-Glúmur* in the tenth century,

27 The verse from *Hávamál* (verse 90) appears in riddle 25; cf. David A. H. Evans ed., *Hávamál* (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1986), 57. The verse from *Víga-Glúms saga* appears in riddle 5; cf. *Víga-Glúms saga*, ed. G. Turville-Petre (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 47. The lines from the verse from *Ólafs saga hins helga* appear in riddle 25; cf. *Saga Ólafs konungs hins helga: Den store saga om Olav den hellige; Efter pergamenthåndskrift i Kungliga biblioteket i Stockholm nr. 2 4to med varianter fra andre håndskrifter*, ed. Oscar Albert Johnsen and Jón Helgason, 2 vols. (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1933–41), 1:547.

Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld around the year 1000 and Óðinn back in the mists of time can all be evoked in the explication of the formulations in the riddles and the underlying worldview which they imply (as expressed in the fifth/sixth century?).<sup>28</sup>

The references to *Snorra Edda* and *Skálda* (apparently a reference to the *Third Grammatical Treatise*) also reveal Björn's grounding in the traditional study of metrics and rhetorical devices. In riddle 11 the seven branches of allegory are mentioned, amongst which can be found 'enigma'. The source of this wisdom is almost certainly Ólafur Þórðarson hvítaskáld's *Third Grammatical Treatise*, which in turn has its roots in Priscian and Donatus.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore the list of *heiti* for Óðinn in the conclusion to the commentary can be found in collections of *þulur* traditionally attached to *Snorra Edda* texts.<sup>30</sup> Further explanation of poetic synonyms or periphrasis is sporadic (e.g. riddle 5 'því heitir dagurinn Dellings burr eður sonur'). But while *heiti* and kennings are to be expected from an author so well-versed in traditional Icelandic poetics, it is perhaps more surprising when in riddle 24 it is explained that words can have yet further meanings which can be intuited through their pronunciation and the sounds which they contain.

The many cases where words are subdivided into morphological or phonemic units and related to others fall broadly into two categories: those where an etymological connection appears to be asserted and those where the relationship is ambiguous, but may be one of simple sound symbolism (see Table 2 where this information is laid out). An example of the first case is riddle 26 where we are told that 'vættur' 'hefur uppruna af "vo-" eður "voða-" vættur' [has its origins in "terrible-" beast].<sup>31</sup> Etymology

28 No statement is made on the date of the poem (or of any of the sources referenced), but the author's mentions of Danish regnal lists and *Snorra Edda* might imply that he subscribed to the view that the Scandinavian royal dynasties came from Trojan roots in the earliest period, which can then be traced up to the present day, linking a historical Óðinn to King Heiðrekur and Ólafur hinn helgi.

29 See *Dritte Grammatiscbe Abbandlung*, ed. Thomas Krömmelbein (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 1998), 231–33. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this work was also a key source for Ole Worm in his *Literatura Runica*. See Tarrin Wills, "The *Third Grammatical Treatise* and Ole Worm's *Literatura Runica*," *Scandinavian Studies* 76 (2004).

30 Such as that found in AM 757 a 4to. See *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar*, ed. Jón Sigurðsson, 3 vols. (Copenhagen: J. D. Quist, 1848–52), 2:556.

31 It is also possible to read the development here as one of abbreviation from 'voðavættur' to

also appears to be alluded to with the phrase ‘að hafa nafn af’, as in riddle 9: ‘svanbrúðir hafa nafn af breiðingu’ [swan-brides have their name from spreading]. The second group may imply etymological connections, but they could just as well be examples of words where, without any shared linguistic history, similar sounds are used to evoke certain concepts. Such may be the case in riddle 19 where we are told of the ‘snótir’ that they ‘snúa sér margvíslega’. The author’s phrasing does not necessarily imply that ‘snótir’ is derived from ‘snúa’, but could merely be emphasising that the ‘sn-’ sound could elicit the writhing of these feminine wave personifications to an attentive ear. Björn’s assessments do not generally coincide with contemporary ideas on the etymology of words (e.g. drykkur < drög, dráttur), and some of his connections are difficult to interpret (e.g. naður < ár (?)), yet it is also the case that he does not always appear to be stating his own convictions but those which he believes the authors of the riddles would have held (e.g. riddle 25 ‘heldur hann öl komi af alning’).<sup>32</sup> Ultimately, it seems clear that for a seventeenth-century scholar like Björn, these poems from the medieval past were deemed to be swarming with hidden meanings on many different levels, not only hiding objects in a wrapping of misleading words (as is the nature of riddles), but also hiding clues to those objects in the hidden pasts of words and their sonorous associations.

Björn’s commentary may seem somewhat strange by today’s standards. While his appreciation of the riddles may coincide with a modern audience’s in many aspects, his strong focus on lexical derivation or convergence is not what the same audience might automatically expect to be the focus of an excursus on riddles. For a seventeenth-century audience, however, without access to the reference materials which are at the disposal of a modern scholar, such observations may have been much more welcome than more philosophical or literary-critical expositions on the nature of the riddling comparisons and the worldview which they express. We know, moreover, that Björn had been engaged in the copying of a number of key

simply ‘vættur’, although based on Björn’s comments elsewhere it seems more likely that he is suggesting a common etymological origin of these to ‘v-’ words.

32 See Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, ed., *Íslensk orðsifjabók* (Reykjavík: Orðabók Háskólans, 1989) for some contemporary interpretations of the etymology of the relevant words. ‘Drykkur’ for example, is naturally related to ‘drekka’ and an earlier Germanic form ‘\*drunki-’, with no connection to ‘dráttur’, which is related to ‘draga’ and an earlier form ‘\*dhrago’.

Riddle no.	Word taken from riddle	Associated word	Type of relationship
5.	Dellingur	deila	Sound symbolism (?)
5.	dur/dyr	dvergar	Sound symbolism (?)
6.	kóngurvoða	kring (keyng?), vofri	First words derived from the second ones (hún hefur naf af ...), latter part presumably from 'váfa' [to swing, quiver]
9. and 4.	(svan)brúðir	breiðing	First word derived from the second (hún hefur nafn af ...)
9.	haddur	hæð	First word derived from the second
9.	öl	elur (ala)	Sound symbolism (?)
10.	rygur, reginfjall	rýr	Sound symbolism (?)
11.	naður, ormur	ár, or-	First words derived from same root (?)
14.	(ós)grúi	grúfir, greyfist	Sound symbolism (?)
16.	tenningur	tönn	First word derived from the second
16.	bíming	berast um	First word derived from the second
17.	gumi	geymir	Sound symbolism (?)
18.	skjöldur	skýlir	Sound symbolism (?)
19.	snötir	snúa sér	Sound symbolism (?)
21.	ekkjja	ökur (aka)	Sound symbolism (?)
22.	skálm	skilja, skera i sundur	Sound symbolism (?)
22.	drykkur	drög, dráttur	First word derived from the second
24.	konur	kyn, keyngvöxtur	Sound symbolism (?)
25.	vilgi	villigöltur, Víla-gotar	Sound symbolism (?)
25.	járl	ári, erjan	First word derived from the second
25.	öl	alning	First word derived from second
28	vættur	vo-, voða-	First word derived from the second

Table 2: Examples of words which are explained in terms of their derivation from or similarity to other words. 'Sound symbolism' is followed by a question mark because the precise nature of the relationship imagined by Björn Jónsson cannot be intuited from his non-specific way of referring to it. For example, there is an inherent ambiguity in the set phrase 'x kallast y þvi (að) hann/þeir etc. z' (where z is normally a verb), since 'þvi (að)' ('because') only gives a general sense of cause and effect.



medieval works and in his capacity as scribe must have frequently come upon lexicographic conundrums due to the gap between the Icelandic language in the seventeenth century and that of centuries past. In light of this, an emphasis on synchronic perspectives over lexical development in the heart of the ‘Icelandic renaissance’ in manuscript copying should thus come as no particular surprise to us.<sup>33</sup>

### Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá’s Commentary to the *Gátur Gestumblindi*, Taken from AM 203 fol.

In the text below, the commentary to each individual riddle is transcribed from AM 203 fol. (in Jón Erlendsson’s hand) and presented diplomatically, accompanied by the normalised text in square brackets and a translation in italics.<sup>34</sup> AM 203 fol. was chosen as the base text because it is one of the two manuscripts closest to the top of the stemma (and thus Björn’s own copy), and because Jón Erlendsson is generally credited with being a careful and precise scribe.<sup>35</sup> Variants taken from other witnesses are presented beneath the translation of each individual riddle. In the apparatus, both the base text and the variants have been normalised. In the main text, abbreviations have been expanded, but where this is done the completion is given in italics. Jón Erlendsson has a tendency to include nasal strokes over all nasal consonants, irrespective of whether the word has been abbreviated. Expansions are thus only made where they can be logically inferred. In a couple of places, letters at the end of a line are not legible due to strips being placed over them during the binding of the manuscript. In such cases, the letters are supplied as they appear in AM 192 fol., and this is indicated by their being placed in square brackets. Catch words are placed in triangular brackets. In AM 203 fol., the layout of the page is in two col-

33 For the use of the term ‘renaissance’ in this context see Peter Springborg, “Antiqvæ Historiæ Lepores - Om renæssancen i den islandske håndskriftsproduktion i 1600-tallet,” *Gardar* 8 (1977).

34 Presenting the diplomatic text in a single block (without the intrusion of the normalised text and translations) was not deemed necessary, on the basis that the text as it appears in the manuscripts frequently has large gaps between the commentary for one riddle and the next, as well as presumably never having been read as a continuous whole, but rather piece by piece as one arrived at the relevant riddles while reading *Hervarar saga*.

35 See, for example, Jakob Benediktsson, introduction to *Íslendingabók, Landnámabók*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson, Íslenzk fornrit, vol. 1 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1968): xliv–xlv.

umns with the riddles and solutions always to the left and the commentary to the right. Thus the line numbers given refer to the right-hand column, which, it should be mentioned, frequently contains large blank spaces as a result of the commentary in places not being as extensive as its object, and thus they do not refer to a unbroken and continuous text-block. On each leaf Björn Jónsson's name appears uppermost in the column as a kind of running header of authorship. This has been omitted in what follows and is not counted in the line numbering.

[101r] |<sup>1</sup> Útlegging Biarna Jónssonar |<sup>2</sup> uppa þessar gátur Gestz ens |<sup>3</sup> Blinda Almenninge til frek |<sup>4</sup> are Skilnings.

Útlegging Bjarna Jónssonar uppá þessar gátur Gestz ins blinda, almenningi, til frekari skilnings.

[Bjarni (sic) Jónsson's excursus on the riddles of Gestur the Blind to aid the common man in deeper comprehension.]

1: Útlegging Bjarna Jónssonar ] Útlegging Björn Jónssonar að Skarðsá *AM 202 k II fol.* 1–4: Útlegging...skilnings ] Björn Jónsson hefur gjört útlegging uppá þessar gátur og... *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 189I 4to; ÷ AM 59I k 4to.* 3: almenningi ] almenning *AM 202 k II fol.*

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|<sup>5</sup> I Gata vm mungatid, |<sup>6</sup> fornirda laus getspeke

1. Gáta. Um mungátið. Fornyrðalaus getspeki.

1<sup>st</sup> riddle, about the small beer, a brainteaser devoid of ancient wisdom.

[5–6: 1. Gáta...getspeki ] ...er þessi gáta fornyrðalaus *AM 167 b III 8vo; ...er þessi gáta þarfindalaus NKS 189I 4to.*]

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|<sup>7</sup> 2 Gata, vm weg |<sup>8</sup> una, vel og skyrliga |<sup>9</sup> Ráðinn

2. Gáta, um veguna, vel og skýrlega ráðin.

[2<sup>nd</sup> riddle, about the paths, well and clearly explained.]

7–8: 2. gáta...ráðinn ] ÷ NKS 1891 4to. 8: og skýrlega ] ÷ AM 591 k 4to.

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 [101v] |<sup>1</sup> 3. Gäta wm vppruna daggar |<sup>2</sup> drigkinn, var og vel ur leijst. |<sup>3</sup> vrleýst.

3. Gáta, um uppruna daggar, drykkinn, var og vel úr leyst.

[3<sup>rd</sup> riddle, about the origin of dew, the drink, was likewise well explained.]

1: Gáta ] ÷ AM 192 fol. 1–3: 3. gáta...leyst ] ÷ NKS 1891 4to. 2: var og ] ÷ AM 591 k 4to.

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 [102r] |<sup>1</sup> 4 Wm Gullsmýðar |<sup>2</sup> hamarinn, er greinileg |<sup>3</sup> Getspeke.

4. Um gullsmíðar hamarinn, er greinileg getspeki.

[4<sup>th</sup>, about the hammer used in working gold, is a transparent brainteaser.]

1: Um ] Gáta um AM 202 k II fol., AM 591 k 4to. 2: er greinileg ] ÷ AM 591 k 4to.

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 |<sup>4</sup> 5. Gäta wm smid belgina |<sup>5</sup> er Gestum *blindi* qvedst *hafa* sied |<sup>6</sup> vndur ute *fyrer* dellings *durum* |<sup>7</sup> *Dellingur* hiet dags fader, |<sup>8</sup> les eddu, því heitir dagurinn |<sup>9</sup> dellings bur *edur sonur*, en nott |<sup>10</sup> er Nór-va döttir *edur Nordra*, j |<sup>11</sup> þa merking, ad dagurinn rennur |<sup>12</sup> upp j austri hia þeim dvergnum |<sup>13</sup> er austri heitir *edur dellingur*, *fyrer* |<sup>14</sup> þui þad er og dvergs heiti. Og er |<sup>15</sup> sa *framburdur* Gestum *blinda hann* hafi |<sup>16</sup> *geingid* *austurdur Borgarinnar* |<sup>17</sup> *jnn*. Og skuli þetta nafn *dellingur* |<sup>18</sup> *rett* þyðast. þa heitir hann *deylingur* |<sup>19</sup> þui þeir dvergar 4. sem under |<sup>20</sup> *hinnenum* skilldu standa, *deýla* |<sup>21</sup> j sundur atternar, en þad. [102v] |<sup>1</sup> heiter dur ä millum þeirra, en þeir |<sup>2</sup> dur-gar, edur duergar, *Derlijngar* |<sup>3</sup> *deil-ingar*, edur *dellingar*. En þar |<sup>4</sup> sverdid neffnist *Sära laukur*, er *Laukur* |<sup>5</sup> *vidar naffn*, og suo *fært til*

mäls, |<sup>6</sup> eptur þui sem Rekit er kallad, Ad |<sup>7</sup> sverdid er nefnt vondur, edur widur |<sup>8</sup> wýgs edur sára. sem wijga Glumur |<sup>9</sup> qvad. Rudda eg sem jarlar, ord liek |<sup>10</sup> a þui forðum, meður wedurstófum |<sup>11</sup> Vidris-vandar mier til landa. wid |<sup>12</sup> ris vedur er hier kollud orusta, En |<sup>13</sup> vöndur wijgs sverdid, En menn staffer |<sup>14</sup> sverdsinz

5. Gáta, um smiðbelgina, er Gestumblindi kveðst hafa séð, undur, úti fyrir Dellings durum. Dellingur hét Dags faðir. Les Eddu. Því heitir dagurinn Dellings burr eður sonur (en nótt er Nörfa dóttir eður Norðra) í þá merking að dagurinn rennur upp í austri hjá þeim dvergnum er Austri heitir, eður Dellingur, fyrir því það er og dvergs heiti. Og er sá framburður Gestumblinda hann hafi gengið austurdur borgarinnar inn. Og skuli þetta nafn Dellingur rétt þýðast, þá heitir hann Deylingur, því þeir dvergar fjórir sem undir himninum skyldu standa deila í sundur áttirnar, en það heitir dur á millum þeirra, en þeir dur-gar eður dvergar: Derlingar, Deilingar eður Dellingar. En þar sverðið nefnist sára laukur. Er laukur viðar nafn. Og svo fært til máls eptir því sem rekið er kallað, að sverðið er nefnt vöndur eður viður vígs eður sára, sem Víga-Glúmur kvað: 'Rudda ég sem jarlar, orð lék á því forðum, með veðurstöfum Viðris vandar, mér til landa.' Viðris veður er hér kölluð orusta, en vöndur vígs sverðið, en menn stafir sverðsins.

[5<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the smith's bellows, which Gestumblindi says that he has seen, a marvel, outside Dellingur's doors. Dellingur is the name of the father of Dagur. Read the *Edda*. Thus 'the day' is called the offspring of Dellingur (and 'nótt' is the daughter of Nörfi or Norðri) in the sense that the day breaks in the east in the home of that dwarf whose name is Austri, or Dellingur, since that is also the name of a dwarf. And Gestumblindi states that he has entered through the eastern door of the stronghold. And if one should accurately interpret this name, Dellingur, then he is called Deylingur, because those four dwarves who must stand beneath the firmament divide the four points of the compass, and what is between them is called doors, and they 'door-ves' or dwarves: Derlings, Deilings or Dellings. And there the sword is called leek of wounds. Leek is the name of a tree. And the mode of expression, accordingly, with regard to how one refers to its wielding, leads the sword to be called the wand or the tree of battle or of wounds, as Víga-Glúmur said: 'Like earls I cleared land for

myself, people spoke about that back in the day, with staves of the wand of the weather of Viðrir.’ Battle is here called the weather of Viðrir, and the sword the wand of battle, and men staves of the sword.]

4: gáta ] ÷ *AM 168 b 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 5: hafa séð, undur ] séð hafa *AM 591 k 4to.* 7: hét ] heitir *AM 591 k 4to.* 8: les Eddu ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 11: rennur ] kemur *AM 202 k II fol.* 12: dvergnum ] dverg *AM 591 k 4to.* 13: fyrir ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol., AM 591 k 4to.* 14: og (first) ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 14–15: er sá framburður Gestumblinda ] merkir sá framburður Gestu það að *AM 591 k 4to.* 16–17: austurdur borgarinnar inn. Og ] inn austurdur borgarinnar. En *AM 591 k 4to.* 21: sundur ] + (það er skipta) *AM 591 k 4to.* [102v] 1: heitir ] ÷ *AM 192 fol., heita AM 202 k II fol., AM 591 k 4to.* 1: þeir ] + heita *AM 591 k 4to.* 3: eður Dellingar ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 8–9: sem Víga-Glúmur kvað ] svo kvað Víga-Glúmur *AM 591 k 4to.* 13: sverðið ] er sverð *AM 591 k 4to.* 13: menn ] + er kallaðir *AM 591 k 4to.* 14: sverðsins ] + og er þetta þýðing þeirrar fimmtu gátu Gestumblinda *AM 591 k 4to.*

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[<sup>15</sup> 6 Gata ad hann seigist haffa |<sup>16</sup> sied fyrer derlings, *edur austur durum* |<sup>17</sup> kongur vofuna. hun hefur |<sup>18</sup> nafn aff krijng fötana, og |<sup>19</sup> þeirra wófre

6. Gáta að hann segist hafa séð fyrir Dellings eður Austurdurum: kóngur-  
vofuna. Hún hefur nafn af kring fótanna og þeirra vofri.

[6<sup>th</sup> riddle, that he says he has seen before Dellingur’s or East’s doors: the  
spider. It has its name from the ring of the feet and their quivering.]

15–16: Gáta...eður ] Gáta hann segist séð hafa fyrir Dellings durum *AM 591 k 4to.* 15–19: Gáta...vofri ] Björn Jónsson segir hún hafi nafn af kring fótanna *AM 168 b 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 16: Dellings ] + durum *AM 202 k II fol.*

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|<sup>20</sup> 7 Wm Gata wm lauk |<sup>21</sup> inn, sienan fyrer austur durum |<sup>22</sup> Laukur heijter og eitt Gras |<sup>22</sup> sem einr widur

7. Um gáta um laukinn, sénan fyrir Austurdurum. Laukur heitir og eitt gras sem einn viður.

[7<sup>th</sup>, about a riddle about the leek, seen before East's doors. Leek is the name of both a herb and a tree.]

20–23: Um...viður ] ÷ *AM 168 b 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 20: um (*first*) ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.*, *AM 591 k 4to*. 22: heitir og eitt gras sem ] er eitt gras sem og *AM 591 k 4to*.

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[103r] |<sup>1</sup> 8. Gata wm Hrafn |<sup>2</sup> tinmuna. er heidreke |<sup>3</sup> konge þokti liett og aud |<sup>4</sup> radin. munde morgum |<sup>5</sup> ey so þoktt hafa.

8. Gáta um hrafntinnuna, er Heiðreki kóngi þótti létt og auðráðin. Mundi mörgum ei svo þótt hafa.

[8<sup>th</sup> riddle about the obsidian, which King Heiðrekur thought was simple and easy to solve. It wouldn't have seemed so to many people.]

1–5: gáta...hafa ] ÷ *NKS 1891 4to*. 2–3: er Heiðreki kóngi þótti létt og ] þykir Heiðreki kóngi *AM 591 k 4to*. 4: mörgum ei ] fáum *AM 591 k 4to*.

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|<sup>6</sup> 9 Gata um Elpturnar |<sup>7</sup> er hann kallar Suan-bruder |<sup>8</sup> hafa nafn aff Breidingu |<sup>9</sup> haddar aff hæd. Suo heiter |<sup>10</sup> har og fidur. Öl nefner |<sup>11</sup> hann, af þui það elur suo kallar |<sup>12</sup> hann loginn edur ströpann j egginu |<sup>13</sup> en skiemmu, stutt og krijnglott |<sup>14</sup> hreidur. Og er Gatan vel |<sup>15</sup> til fundin

9. Gáta, um Elpturnar, er hann kallar svanbrúðir – hafa nafn af 'breidingu', haddur af 'hæð' – svo heitir hár og fiður. Öl nefnir hann af því það 'elur'. Svo kallar hann löginna edur stropann í egginu, en skemmu stutt og kringlött hreiður. Og er gátan vel tilfundin.

[9<sup>th</sup> riddle about the swans, whom he calls swan-brides. They have their name from ‘spreading’, the mane from high [‘haddar/hæð’]. In such a way hair is referred to, as well as feathers. He mentions beer because it gives birth/nourishes [‘öl/ellur’]. In this way he refers to the liquid or white in the egg, and with chamber [to a] small and round nest. And the riddle is well devised.]

6: gáta um ] ÷ *NKS 1891 4to*. 7: er ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *AM 202 k II fol.*, *AM 591 k 4to*. 7: svanbrúðir ] brúðir *AM 202 k II fol.*, *AM 591 k 4to*. 8: breiðingu ] + eður breidd *AM 591 k 4to*. 10: fiður ] + haddur er og faldur, er nú er kallaður skautafaldur *AM 591 k 4to*. 10–11: nefnir hann ] nefnist *AM 591 k 4to*. 11: elur ] + mann *AM 591 k 4to*. 12: eður stropann ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to*. 13: en ] + þar hann segir til *AM 591 k 4to*. 13: skemmu stutt og ] skemmu er dregið af skömmu, því skammt er stutt meinandi þar *AM 591 k 4to*. 13–14: stutt og kringlótt hreiður ] stutt og breitt hreiður kringlótt *AM 202 k II fol*. 14: og ] ÷ *NKS 1891 4to*. 14–15: vel tilfundinn ] vel fundinn *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*; bæði vel tilfundin og ráðin *AM 591 k 4to*.

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[103v] |<sup>1</sup> 10. Gáta wm hvannernar |<sup>2</sup> þeirra elde og vppvogst er hann kallar |<sup>3</sup> ríjgjar a reijgin fialle. hier skal |<sup>4</sup> ga ad fyrra atkvædi ordanna, |<sup>5</sup> ad ry og reý merker hæð edur |<sup>6</sup> leingd. Hvanner eru hatt gras |<sup>7</sup> og opttast langtt frá bygðum. |<sup>8</sup> en það er oeiginleg lijking |<sup>9</sup> a mille konu og hvannar.

10. Gáta um hvannirnar – þeirra eldi og uppvöxt – er hann kallar rýgjar á reginfjalli. Hér skal gá að fyrra aðkvæði orðanna, að ‘rý-’ og ‘rei-’ merkir hæð eður lengd. Hvannir eru hátt gras og optast langt frá bygðum. En það er óeiginleg líking á milli konu og hvannar.

[10<sup>th</sup> riddle, about angelica roots - their rearing and growth - which he calls giantesses on the mighty mountain. One should pay attention here to the first sound of the words, that ‘rý-’ and ‘rei-’ means ‘height’ or ‘length’. Angelica roots are a tall plant and most often far way from inhabited areas. But it is an unnatural comparison between a woman and an angelica root.]

1: gáta ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to*. 1: hvannirnar ] + og *AM 202 k II fol*. 2: eldi ] eðli *AM 167 b III 8vo, AM 591 k 4to, NKS 1891 4to*. 5: hæð ] + optast *NKS 1891 4to*. 6: lengd ] + 'regin' merkir 'stóran', 'sterkan', 'háan'. 'Regingóð' það er 'mættug': þaðan kemur 'regn', 'rógn', 'ragn' og 'að ragna' *AM 591 k 4to*. 7: bygðum ] + því segir hann á reginfjalli, það er háu fjalli *AM 591 k 4to*. 8: hvannar ] + en svo sem barn verður af samkomu karls og konu, svo vex og upp hvannarkálfurinn eða sú unga hvönn milli tveggja annarra stærra, eptir því það er í náttúruna skapað, og er þessi gáta með mikilli speki og klókskap upp borin og af stórri vitsku vel ráðin *AM 591 k 4to*.

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<sup>10</sup> 11 Gáta. hana færir til mál <sup>11</sup> og ítrekar sa wyse mann, sem <sup>12</sup> samsett hefur þann Bækling er vier <sup>13</sup> kaullum Skálldu. þar hann talar <sup>14</sup> vm 7 kyn kvísler Allegoría <sup>15</sup> meðal huorra hann nefnir eina æn- <sup>16</sup> igma, og seiger það sie mijrkt <sup>17</sup> mál vm leinda lyking lutanna <sup>18</sup> sem hier seiger fara eg sa folldar <sup>19</sup> molldbua a sat nadur a nai <sup>20</sup> þess konar figuru kollum wier <sup>21</sup> Gátu, og er hun iafnan sett j skalldskap <sup>22</sup> hier kallar jsinn folldar rak molldbua <sup>23</sup> huad þo forn skalldin hafa ecke til máls [104r] <sup>1</sup> færtt, jtem nadur ormina. huad þeir <sup>2</sup> kalla ormsins eitt heite. Og tekst það <sup>3</sup> af þui, ad ein er vnderrót beggia <sup>4</sup> nafnanna Ar-i og or-mur. hier kallar <sup>5</sup> brimreydi sioinn. Og held eg merki <sup>6</sup> liga gietid suo ogloggra samlikinga <sup>7</sup> sem hier eru framsettar j þessari Gátu.

11. Gáta. Hana færir til máls og ítrekar sá vísimann sem samsett hefur þann bækling er vér köllum Skáldu, þar hann talar um sjö kynkvíslir allegoría, meðal hvorra hann nefnir eina, ænigma, og segir það sé myrkt mál um leynda líking hlutanna. Sem hér segir: 'Fara ég sá foldar moldbúa, á sat naður á náí.' Þess konar figúru köllum vér 'gátu', og er hún jafnan sett í skáldskap. Hér kallar ísinn 'foldar rak moldbúa', hvað þó fornskáldin hafa ekki til máls fært. Item naður, ormina, hvað þeir kalla ormsins eitt heiti, og tekst það af því að ein er undirrót beggia nafnanna: 'ár-i' og 'or-mur'. Hér kallar 'brimreiði' sjóinn. Og held ég merkilega getið svo óglöggra samlikinga sem hér eru framsettar í þessari gátu.



[11<sup>th</sup> riddle. It is expressed and repeated by that wise man who put together the book which we call 'Skálda', in which he talks about seven branches of allegory, amongst which he names one, 'enigma', and says that it is obscure speech about the hidden similarities of things. As here: 'I saw the one who dwells in the soil of the earth, an adder sat on the corpse.' We call this kind of trope 'riddle', and it is always versified. Here the ice is called 'jetsam of the soil-dweller of the earth', which the poets of old, however, have not used as an expression. Also 'adder' for the snakes, which they call a poetic synonym of the snake, and that functions on the basis that both of the terms have a single root: 'ár-i' and 'or-mur'. Here the sea is called the 'surf-steed'. And I find it strange that such unclear comparisons are mentioned as those presented in this riddle.]

10: gáta. Hana ] Þessi gáta *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 10–21: gáta... skáldskap ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 11: vísimann ] vísimaður *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 22: rak ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 22–[104r] 1: hér...fært ] í henni kallar hann foldar moldbúa isinn, sem situr á jörðinni og vatninu *AM 591 k 4to.* [f. 104r]1–2: item...og ] en 'naður' kallar hann ormina, en naður er þó ormur, en *AM 591 k 4to.* 1–7: fær...gátu ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 2: það ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 4–7: hér...gátu ] en 'brimreiði' kallar hann sjóinn, og er vel úr ráðið *AM 591 k 4to.* 7: í þessari gátu ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.*

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¶<sup>8</sup> 12 Gäta. Talar um tafl þeirra ¶<sup>9</sup> Qndoddz og Jtrekz. Það var þeirra syfelled idia ¶<sup>10</sup> ad tefla Skæk. Þing kallar hann mätat ¶<sup>11</sup> edur mötat j skákinne, allt er sátt ¶<sup>12</sup> folkid, þa í punginn kiemur. En þa ¶<sup>13</sup> byggja þeir bolstade a Reitunum þegar skak ¶<sup>14</sup> mönnum er komit j stöðuna. sem wier ¶<sup>15</sup> so nefnum. So skilst mier Rad ¶<sup>16</sup> ning þesse.

12. Gáta. Talar um tafl þeirra Andaðs og Ítreks. Það var þeirra sífelled iðja að tefla skák. Þing kallar hann mátið edur mótið í skákinni. Allt er sátt fólkið, þa í punginn kemur. En þa byggja þeir bólstaði á reitunum þegar skákmönnum er komið í stöðuna, sem vér svo nefnum. Svo skilst mér ráðning þessi.

[12<sup>th</sup> riddle, speaks about Andaður and Ítrekur's board game. They are continuously engaged in playing chess. He calls the 'checkmate' or 'check-moot' in the game of chess an assembly. All the people are reconciled once they are placed in the bag. And they build their homestead on the chess-squares once one has come into position, as we call it, with one's chessmen. I understand the interpretation in this way.]

8–9: gáta...var ] Björn Jónsson segir að það hafi verið *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 11: eður mótið ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to*. 11–12: allt er sáttt fólkið ] en allt fólkið er sáttt *AM 591 k 4to*. 13: þeir ] þau *AM 591 k 4to*. 13: þegar ] þá *AM 591 k 4to*. 13–14: skákmönnum ] skákinni *NKS 1891 4to*. 14: komið ] + á reitina *AM 591 k 4to*. 15: svo (*first*) ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to*. 15–16: svo (*second*)...þessi ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to*.

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|<sup>17</sup> 13. Gäta wm kvotru |<sup>18</sup> tafflid. Omýrk.

13. Gáta, um kvotrutaflid. Ómyrk.

[13<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the board game. Not obscure.]

17: gáta ] ÷ *AM 192 fol*. 17–18: gáta...ómyrk ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*.

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|<sup>19</sup> 14 Gata, wm Elldinn, er hann |<sup>20</sup> seiger sofa j osgrua. os merkir |<sup>21</sup> osku, en gru hennar orninn sem og |<sup>22</sup> offan yfer gruer edur greyvist.

14. Gáta, um eldinn, er hann segir sofa í ösgrúa. 'Ös' merkir 'ösku', en 'grú' hennar 'arinn', sem og ofan yfir grúfir eður greyfist.

[14<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the fire, which he says sleeps in the 'ös-grú'. 'Ös' means 'ash', and 'grú' is its hearth, which hangs over or bends down to it.]

19–20: gáta...ösgrúa ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 21: ösku ] + segir Björn Jónsson *NKS 1891 4to*. 21–22: ösku...greyfist ] fjölda, en af því mjög korn eru í ösku, því er ös og aska sama, en grúa kallar hann arinn (vér köllum nú öskustó), en grúi heitir, því hann greyfist yfir *AM 591 k 4to*.

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[104v] |<sup>1</sup> 15 Gata wm myrkrid edur |<sup>2</sup> þokuna. hier neffner vindinn |<sup>3</sup> glug, sem vier kollum gly |<sup>4</sup> er hann seiger þokan öist vid |<sup>5</sup> edur hrædist. en hun vinne |<sup>6</sup> a Sölina suo hun sie asok |<sup>7</sup> ud fyrer það

15. Gáta um myrkrið eður þokuna. Hér nefnir vindinn ‘glygg’, sem vér köllum ‘gler’, er hann segir þokan óist við eður hrædist. En hún vinni á sólina svo hún sé ásökuð fyrir það.

[15<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the darkness or the fog. The wind is called here ‘glygg’ [‘wind(ow)’], which is the name we give to ‘glass’, which he says the mist dreads or fears, but it has an effect on the sun as if it (i.e. the sun) were censured for that.]

1–2: gáta...þokuna ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 2: hér nefnir ] hann kallar *AM 591 k 4to*. 3: sem ] eður ‘glyg’. Nú er ambaga, er *AM 591 k 4to*. 3–4: gly er ] gler *AM 202 k II fol*. 4–5: er...hrædist ] við hún segir hann þokuna óast, það hræðast *AM 591 k 4to*. 5–6: vinni á sólina ] hrær sólskinið *AM 591 k 4to*. 6–7: ásökuð ] + (sólin) *AM 591 k 4to*.

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|<sup>8</sup> 16 Gata wm Tenniginn. er vier |<sup>9</sup> neffnum suo, þui hann er ur Tonn, og |<sup>10</sup> heiter þui. Ten–nigur. En hier nefn |<sup>11</sup> ist hann hune. kemur af þui að þeir gom |<sup>12</sup> lu hafa kallad hann Bjrning, þui hann velltur |<sup>13</sup> og berst wm, en sama nafn er |<sup>14</sup> Birningur Björn og hune.

16. Gáta um tenniginn, er vér nefnum svo, því hann er úr tönn, og heitir því ten-nigur. En hér nefnist hann ‘huni’. Kemur af því að þeir gömlu hafa kallað hann ‘birning’, því hann veltur og berst um. En sama nafn er ‘birningur’, ‘björn’ og ‘huni’.

[16<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the die, which we call thus, because it is made of walrus-tusk, and thus is called a die ['approx. tusker']. And here it is called a 'huni'. People in the past called it a 'birningur' as a consequence of the fact that it rolls and passes around. And 'birningur', 'björn' and 'huni' designate the same object.]

8: gáta ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 9: er ] + gjör *AM 591 k 4to.*  
 9–10: og...tenningur ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 11: huni ] + og *AM 591 k 4to.*  
 11–12: að...því ] ÷ *AM 192 fol.* 12: hafa kallað ] kölluðu *AM 591 k 4to.* 14:  
 huni ] + það köllum vér þessu; bjarndýr = bjarnardýr *AM 591 k 4to.*

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[105r] |<sup>1</sup> 17. Gäta er eiginlig líking |<sup>2</sup> mille dijrs og Skialldar (so sem |<sup>3</sup> og ä mille dijrs og tenningsins) |<sup>4</sup> Skiolddur hlífir bæde Donum |<sup>5</sup> og audrum þjóðum, þeim sem |<sup>6</sup> með hann kunna að fara. hier |<sup>7</sup> kallast hann gume, þui hann geijmir |<sup>8</sup> þann sem hann ber fyrir sig.

17. Gäta er eiginleg líking milli dýrs og Skjaldar (svo sem og á milli dýrs og tenningsins). Skjöldur hlífir bæði Dönum og öðrum þjóðum, þeim sem með hann kunna að fara. Hér kallast hann 'gumi', því hann geymir þann sem hann ber fyrir sig.

[The 17<sup>th</sup> riddle is a natural comparison between an animal and a shield [Skjöldur] (just as between an animal and a die). A shield [Skjöldur] protects both the Danes and other peoples, those who know how to bear it. Here it is called a 'warrior' ['gumi'] because it protects ['geymir'] anyone who carries it in front of himself.]

1: gáta er ] Björn Jónsson segir að þessi gáta sé *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 1: eiginleg líking ] samlíking *AM 591 k 4to.* 2–3: svo...tenningsins ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 5: þeim ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.* 5–6: þeim...fara ] en *AM 591 k 4to.*

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[<sup>9</sup> 18 Gata vm Riupurnar |<sup>10</sup> er kallast hier Lejkur, En |<sup>11</sup> Skiolldur fiadrer og fidur |<sup>12</sup> þeirra. þui það skjiler þeim

18. Gáta, um rjúpurnar, er kallast hér leikur, en skjöldur fjaðrir og fiður þeirra, því það skýlir þeim.

[18<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the ptarmigans, who are called here play-sisters, and their feathers and plumage a 'shield', because it protects them.]

9–10: rjúpurnar...hér ] rjúpur er hér kallast *AM 591 k 4to.* 9–12: gáta... þeim ] skjöldur kallast fiður og fjaðrir af því það skýlir *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 10: leikur ] + af leik eða fleygi *AM 591 k 4to.* 11: fjaðrir og ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.*

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[<sup>13</sup> 19 Gáta vm edlisbrud |<sup>14</sup> ernar sem neffnast hier Snóter |<sup>15</sup> þær snua sier margvíslega |<sup>16</sup> fader þeirra er sa sem edl |<sup>17</sup> ed heffur skapað.

19. Gáta um edlis brúðirnar, sem nefnast hér 'snótir'. Þær snúa sér margvíslega. Faðir þeirra er sá sem eðlið hefur skapað.

[19<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the brides of Nature, who are called here 'fine ladies'. They twist and turn in many directions. Their father is the one who has formed Nature [*or*: Their father is the one whom Nature formed].]

13–17: gáta...skapað ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 14: sem ] er *AM 202 k II fol.* 14: sem...snótir ] það kalla latíni affectus (tillhneigingar) *AM 591 k 4to.* 15–16: margvíslega...er ] ýmislega og er þeirra faðir *AM 591 k 4to.* 17: skapað ] + 'íviði' meina ég *Völuspá* kalli það, þar hún segir 'nú man ég heima, níu íviðjur' *AM 591 k 4to.*

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[105v] |<sup>1</sup> 20 Gata wm bylgiurnar |<sup>2</sup> fader þeirra er ægi-sjorinn. þær |<sup>3</sup> haffa bleikar hæðer edur |<sup>4</sup> hadda. þeim verdur ecke |<sup>5</sup> vared.

20. Gáta um bylgjurnar. Faðir þeirra er Ægir-sjórinn. Þær hafa bleikar hæðir eður hadda. Þeim verður ekki varið.

[20th riddle, about the waves. Their father is Ægir-Sea. They have pale peaks or hair. They are not defended.]

1: gáta...bylgjurnar ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to*. 1–3: bylgjurnar... Ægir-sjórinn ] Ægis brúðir. Sjór heitir Ægir, og er hann bylgnaða faðir *AM 591 k 4to*. 3–4: bleikar hæðir eður hadda ] bleika hadda eður hæðir *AM 591 k 4to*. 4: hadda ] + það er hvítþræð í þeim *AM 591 k 4to*. 5: varið ] + eigut = eiga ekki ; varðir = vörn; vera = mannana *AM 591 k 4to*.

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¶<sup>6</sup> 21 Gáta um öldurnar ¶<sup>7</sup> er hann kallar ægirs ekkjur ¶<sup>8</sup> edur ökur. Þær vaka j wind ¶<sup>9</sup> inum, geffa sig þá fram.

21. Gáta, um öldurnar, er hann kallar Ægis ekkjur eður ökur. Þær vaka í vindinum, gefa sig þá fram.

[21<sup>st</sup> riddle, about the waves, which he calls the widows of Ægir or ‘drivers’. They are wakened by the wind and then manifest themselves.]

6–9: gáta...fram ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to*; um öldur. Þær kallar hann ekkjur = ökur, því þeir akast, líða fram og eru uppi í vindinum *AM 591 k 4to*. 8–9: vindinum ] + og *AM 202 k II fol*.

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¶<sup>10</sup> 22 Gáta um öndina. huer ¶<sup>11</sup> sig haffde hreidrad j nautz hoffd ¶<sup>12</sup> inu. Nqs gas, edur Nasa fugl ¶<sup>13</sup> neffnist hier ondin edur ándin, sem ¶<sup>14</sup> fram lydur vm witinn. og sama ¶<sup>15</sup> er fugls heite ándarinnar, Butjm ¶<sup>16</sup> kur edur Buteym kallar hann hrejdred ¶<sup>17</sup> Halms bit skálmir, suo kallar hann ¶<sup>18</sup> nautz kialkana. Halmur er gras ¶<sup>19</sup> en skalm er það sem skilur edur skier ¶<sup>20</sup> j sundur annan hlut fra odrum ¶<sup>21</sup> dryn hrøn, edur dryn røn edur ¶<sup>22</sup> Rane kallast nautz hausinn, En ¶<sup>23</sup> drýgkur hefur naffn aff drogum ¶<sup>24</sup> edur drætte. hausinn var dreiginn ýfer. ¶<sup>25</sup> Og er þesse Gáta miok merkiliga ¶<sup>26</sup> Radin.

22. Gáta, um öndina, hver sig hafði hreiðrað í nauts höfðinu. ‘Nösgás’ eður ‘nasafugl’ nefnist hér öndin eður andin, sem fram líður um vitin. Og sama er fugls heiti andarinnar. ‘Bútimbur’ eður ‘búteim’ kallar hann hreiðrið. ‘Hálms bitskálmir’: svo kallar hann nautskjálkana. Hálmur er gras, en skálm er það sem skilur eður sker í sundur annan hlut frá öðrum. ‘Drynhraun’ eður ‘drynrönn’ eður ‘rani’ kallast nauts hausinn. En drykkur hefur nafn af ‘drögum’ eður ‘drætti’. Hausinn var dreginn yfir. Og er þessi gáta mjög merkilega ráðin.

[22<sup>nd</sup> riddle, about the duck, which has nested in the head of an oxen. The duck is called here a ‘nose-goose’ or ‘bird of noses’, since it proceeds around its nose and mouth. And that is an avian synonym for a duck. ‘Building-beams’ or ‘building-pull’ (?) is the name he gives to the nest. ‘The biting swords of straw’: in this way he refers to the jawbones of oxen. Straw is grass, and a sword is that which divides or cuts one piece off from another. ‘Bellowing rock’ or ‘resounding halls’ or ‘snout’ is the name given to the ox’s skull. And drink has its name from ‘dragged goods’ or ‘pull’. The skull was dragged over. And this riddle is solved in a very strange way.]

10: gáta ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.* 10: hver ] sem *AM 591 k 4to.* 13: hér öndin eður andin ] öndin *AM 591 k 4to.* 14–15: sama er fugls ] er sama fuglsins *AM 591 k 4to.* 16: eður búteim ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 16: hreiðrið ] + það er búsgagn samandregið *AM 591 k 4to.* 17: svo ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 18: nautskjálkana ] + því *AM 591 k 4to.* 19–20: skálm...öðrum ] með skálminum, það er kjálkinum, sem jaxlarnir standa í, sker nautið grasið. Drykkur *AM 591 k 4to.* 21: eður (*first*) ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 22: kallast ] er *AM 591 k 4to.* 24: drætti ] + því *AM 591 k 4to.* 25–26: og... ráðin ] hreiðrið, sem kallar gat *AM 591 k 4to*; og er gátan vel ráðin, *NKS 1891 4to.*

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[106r] |<sup>1</sup> 23 Wm Ackerid. forn |<sup>2</sup> jrdalaus. vel tilfund |<sup>3</sup> ed og Raded.

23. Um akkerið. Fornyrðalaus. Vel tilfundið og ráðið.

[23<sup>rd</sup>, about the anchor. Lacking ancient allusions. Well-conceived and explained.]

1: um ] gáta um *AM 202 k II 4to*, *AM 591 k 4to*. 1–3: um...ráðið ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 2–3: vel...ráðið ] skýr *AM 591 k 4to*.

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[<sup>4</sup> 24 Gáta wm barur ]<sup>5</sup> nar og bed þeirra sem eru skier ]<sup>6</sup> og urder. Og er su Gáta næsta ]<sup>7</sup> liös. þær neffnast hier bruder ]<sup>8</sup> þui þær breijdast opt vid. Jtem ]<sup>9</sup> konur aff kijnium þeim og keing ]<sup>10</sup> vexti er a þeim er. þui allvijda ]<sup>11</sup> er það ad ordin merkia annad ]<sup>12</sup> en einfalldliga aheijrist j slijk ]<sup>13</sup> um Maals framburðum, sem ]<sup>14</sup> hier eru uppborner.

24. Gáta um bárunar og bed þeirra, sem eru sker og urðir. Og er sú gáta næsta ljós. Þær nefnast hér brúðir, því þær breiðast opt við. Item konur af kynjum þeim og kengvexti, er á þeim er. Því allvíða er það að orðin merkja annað enn einfalldlega: á heyrast í slíkum máls framburðum sem hér eru uppbornir.

[24<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the waves and their bed, which is the skerries and piles of rocks. And this riddle is fairly transparent. They are called here 'brides', because they spread themselves 'broadly'. Also women, due to their nature and the curved proportions which they display. Thus is it very common that the words have multiple significations: this can be noted in the pronunciation of the language, as in the examples laid out here.]

4–6: Gáta...Gáta ] Björn Jónsson segir þessi gáta sé *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 4–14: bárunar...uppbornir ] bárunar. Hann kallar brúðir, því þær breiða sig víða, item konur af kengvexti *AM 591 k 4to*.

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[106v] ]<sup>1</sup> 25 Gáta er med mikilli slæg- ]<sup>2</sup> vitsku saman sett og aff diupre skyns[emd] ]<sup>3</sup> Ráðin sem hlýðir vm Grýsa suguna, [edur] ]<sup>4</sup> dryckiuna. hann seigist hafa sied a ]<sup>5</sup> sumre sölbjörg. suo nefnir hann ]<sup>6</sup> husa gardenn edur stadinn epter ]<sup>7</sup> þui sem Skald mälín hliöda ]<sup>8</sup> ad neffna so husin, þui hvijtbjörg ]<sup>9</sup> hiet bijgd Suttungs. þar Odinn ]<sup>10</sup> komst ad mióðnum dyra (les Eddu ]<sup>11</sup> þar wm). En þar hann seigir Solbjörg ]<sup>12</sup> ofa. það merker yfer og a sem ute og ]<sup>13</sup> inne, til ad villa fyrir honum, huort ]<sup>14</sup> hann tale helldur vm menn eda dýr ]<sup>15</sup> suo sem enn frammar talast vm. Bad ]<sup>16</sup> eg wel



liffa vil-ge-teiti. þetta ord. <sup>17</sup> vil-ge er með mikille slægd fram <sup>18</sup> sett, og er tuirædt, suo kongurinn <sup>19</sup> skule ecke rädid gieta. Nu heijter <sup>20</sup> Svijnid Wal-gylltner, edur wil <sup>21</sup> gjlltner. Og stiller hann suo ordid <sup>22</sup> j nidur læginu og kallar Wilge <sup>23</sup> þar heita og willigyllter, sköga <sup>24</sup> svijn, sem og ma skiliast j þessu orde <sup>25</sup> Wilge, En j annan mäta hefur sa sem Gat <sup>26</sup> una frambar, wiliad ordid läta <sup>27</sup> merkia menn (til villu vid hann, suo <sup>28</sup> sem hann giörer vm jarla naffnid <sup>29</sup> Wili hefur kongur heitid. hann var brödír <sup>30</sup> Odins. þar hefur og sydar heited Vili <sup>31</sup> kongur a Reidgota lande. og merker <sup>32</sup> orded j þessu effne Vil-geta edur Vil- <sup>33</sup> gota. til dæmiß sem þa þor mödur <sup>34</sup> kolbrunarskälld nefnir mennina. Vil-megi <sup>35</sup> þad er, Wila syne, j kuædinu huskarl[a] <sup>36</sup> huöt, er hann kuad epter tilsogn Olaffs <sup>37</sup> kongs. þar hann seiger Mäl er Wilmogum <ad vinna> [107r] <sup>1</sup> ad vinna erf-fide. En þar hann seigir <sup>2</sup> Wil-ge teite, er og tuiskilid <sup>3</sup> merker opt kiæte, edur feiginleika, <sup>4</sup> og seigist hann haffa beded vel ad <sup>5</sup> liffa, edur vara kiæte edur teite <sup>6</sup> þeirra wil-gauta. suo sem vier <sup>7</sup> kollum öl teite. og suo eirinn heffur kongur mätt skilia þetta <sup>8</sup> Teitz naffn edur ord, uppa skyn-<sup>9</sup> lausa skiepnu suo sem wyda <sup>10</sup> ma lesa j gomlu Malfære <sup>11</sup> sem stendur, einkum j þeim dimmu <sup>12</sup> Havamälum, suo er fridur <sup>13</sup> kuenna þeirra er flätt hyggia sem <sup>14</sup> ake jör obryddum a yse halum <sup>15</sup> teit tuæ vetrum, og sie tambdur <sup>16</sup> illa. hier ma skilia þad vnga <sup>17</sup> ákneytid kallast Teitur, vier <sup>18</sup> neffnum vngnejte tit-maga. <sup>19</sup> Nu fylger eptir Jarla naffnid <sup>20</sup> þar hann seiger drucku jarlar <sup>21</sup> öl þeygiande) og þar hier er <sup>22</sup> hafft sama naffn jarl, þeirra uppar <sup>23</sup> ligu hoffdingia er þad naffn bäru <sup>24</sup> forðum. Og þotti mikill tignar <sup>25</sup> litill. og grijsanna þeirra saurugu <sup>26</sup> oþecktar dyra. skulum vier mejna, <sup>27</sup> ordid sie ei so upparligt j merk <sup>28</sup> ingunne. þuiat ordid kie-mur aff Ári <sup>29</sup> edur Erian þuiat sa raddarstaffur <sup>30</sup> j, þa hann stendur fyrer framán nockurn radd <sup>31</sup> ar staff verdur optast ordfull epter <sup>32</sup> þo aff sie tekinn, edur fräskilinn <sup>33</sup> taker þu, j hier fra er epter árl. [107v] <sup>1</sup> þui þeir Erla med wmsjon, undergefin[s] <sup>2</sup> lyds og landz. og suo lyka svyninum <sup>3</sup> þria og erla sifelliliga med synum rana <sup>4</sup> og röte. En þar neffnist öl Gilttu <sup>5</sup> miölkinn. en hun ölkier, heldur hann <sup>6</sup> öl kome aff álning. og eriarar <sup>7</sup> haffe soged edur dreiged álning syna <sup>8</sup> ür eldis sänum Gilttunne. Og eru hier <sup>9</sup> wel bæde hulmæle bundin og Rade[n]

25. Gáta er með mikilli slægvisku samansett og af djúpri skynsemd ráðin, sem hlýðir, um grísa suguna eður drykkjuna. Hann segist 'hafa séð á

sumri sólbjörg'. Svo nefnir hann húsagarðinn eður -staðinn, eptir því sem skáldmálin hljóta að nefna svo húsinn, því Hvítbjörg hét bygð Suttungs, þar Óðinn komst að mjöðnum dýra (les Eddu þar um). En þar hann segir 'sólbjörg ofá', það merkir 'yfir' og 'á', sem 'úti' og 'inni', til að villa fyrir honum hvort hann tali heldur um menn eður dýr, svo sem enn framar talast um. 'Bað ég vel lifa vil-gi-teiti': þetta orð 'vil-gi' er með mikilli slægð framsett, og er tvírætt, svo kóngurinn skuli ekki ráðið geta. Nú heitir svinið 'valgyltirnir', eður 'vil-gyltirnir'. Og stillir hann svo orðið í niðurlaginu og kallar 'vilgi'. Þar heita og 'villigyltir' skóga svín, sem og má skiljast í þessu orði 'vilgi'. En í annan máta hefur sá sem gátuna fram bar viljað orðið láta merkja 'menn' (til villu við hann, svo sem hann gjörir um jarla nafnið). 'Vili' hefur kóngur heitið. Hann var bróðir Óðins. Þar hefur og síðar heitið Vili kóngur á Reiðgotalandi. Og merkir orðið í þessu efni 'Vil-geta' eður 'Vil-gota'. Til dæmis sem þá Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld nefnir mennina 'vil-megi', það er 'Vila-syni', í kvæðinu 'Húskarahvöt', er hann kvað eptir tilsögn Ólafs kónigs. Þar hann segir 'mál er vílmögum að vinna erfiði'. En þar hann segir 'vil-gi teiti', er og tvískilið: merkir opt 'kæti' eður 'feginleika', og segist hann hafa beðið vel að lifa, eður vara kæti eður teiti þeirra Vil-gota. Svo sem vér köllum ǫl 'teiti', og svo einninn hefur kóngur mátt skilja þetta teits nafn eður orð uppá skynlausa skepnu, svo sem víða má lesa í gömlu málfæri sem stendur, einkum í þeim dimmu 'Hávamálum': 'svo er friður kvenna, þeirra er flátt hyggja, sem aki jó óbryddum á ísi hálum, teit tvévetrum, og sé tamur illa.' Hér má skilja það unga ákneytið kallast 'teitur'. Vér nefnum ungneyti 'titmaga'. Nú fylgir eptir jarla nafnið, þar hann segir 'drukku jarlar öl þegjandi.' Og þar hér er haft sama nafn jarl þeirra upparlegu höfðingja er það nafn báru fordum (og þótti mikill tignarlítill) og grísanna þeirra saurugu óþekktardýra. Skulum vér meina orðið sé ei svo upparlegt í merkingunni, því að orðið kemur af 'ári' eður 'erjan', því að sá raddarstafur 'j', þá hann stendur fyrir framan nokkurn raddarstaf, verður optast orðfull eptir, þó af sé tekinn, eður fráskilinn. Takir þú 'j' hér frá er eptir 'árl', því þeir erla með umsjón undirgefins lýðs og lands, og svo líka svíninum þrá og erla sífellilega með sínum rana og róti. En þar nefnist 'öl' gyltumjólkin, en hún 'ölker': heldur hann 'öl' komi af 'alning', og 'erjarar' hafi sögið eður dregið alning sína úr eldissánum gyltunni. Og eru hér vel bæði hulmæli bundin og ráðin.

[The 25<sup>th</sup> riddle is composed with a great deal of ingenuity and solved in a profoundly logical way, as can be heard, about pigs suckling or drinking. He says that he 'has seen on a certain sun-shelter'. That is his term for farm buildings or the site of a building, given that poetic speech must name houses in this way, as Suttungur's house, where Óðinn comes upon the precious mead, was called Hvítbjörg (read the *Edda* concerning this). And where he says 'sun-shelter up-on', that means 'over' and 'on', as in 'outside' and 'inside', in order to confuse him with regard to whether he is talking about men or animals, as will be discussed further on. 'I greeted them wishing much joy': this word 'much' ['vilgi'] is presented in a very smart way, and it is ambiguous, in order that the king might not solve it. Now the pig is called 'slaughter-piglets' or 'will-piglets'. But he alters the word at the end and thus applies the term 'vilgi'. Another name for pigs of the forests is 'wild boar' ['villi-gyltir'], which can also be perceived in this word 'vilgi'. But in another way the person who set out the riddle has wanted to suggest 'men' with the word (in order to mislead, as he likewise does with the name of the earls). There has been a king by the name of Vili. He was Óðinn's brother. At a later time there has also been a king named Vili in Jutland. And in this respect the word means 'Vili-Geats' or 'Vili-Goths'. For example when Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld calls the men 'vîl-youths', that is 'sons of Vili', in the poem 'Húskarlahvöt' ['The Exhortation of the Household Retainers'], which he composed at the request of King Ólafur. There he says 'it is time for the warriors to put in hard work'. And when he says 'vil-gi teiti' there is also a double meaning: it often means 'cheerfulness' or 'joyfulness', and he says that he has wished them well, or that they may preserve the cheerfulness or joyfulness of those Vili-Goths. Just as we call beer 'joyfulness', so likewise a king has been able to understand this name or word 'joyfulness' as referring to a non-rational being, as can be read frequently in old pronouncements, as is witnessed particularly in the obscure 'Hávamál' ['Sayings of the High One']: 'thus is the love of women, of those who are deceitful, who would drive a horse without hoof-spikes onto slippery ice, a spirited two-year-old and hardly broken.' Here one can note that the young riding-steed is called 'spirited'. We call a young steed 'glad-belly' (?). Now follows the name of the earls, where he says 'the earls drank beer silently.' And 'earl' is given here as the term for both the uppermost chieftains who bore that title in bygone days (and it seemed

undignified) and also of the pigs, those shitty disgusting animals. And we might think that the word is not so distinguishing in meaning, because the word comes from ‘ári’ or ‘erian’, because the vowel ‘j’, when it comes before another vowel, becomes often filled out into a whole word, even though it may be removed or separated afterwards. If you take ‘j’ away, you are left with ‘arl’, because they ‘busy themselves’ [‘erla’] diligently for the common subjects and the land. And thus like pigs they persevere and work constantly with their snout and rummaging. And the sow’s milk is called there ‘beer’, and she a ‘beer-barrel’: he thinks ‘beer’ [‘öl’] comes from ‘nourishment’ [‘alning’], and the ‘scratchers’ have sucked or drawn their nourishment from the feeding-wounds on the sow. And these obscure utterances are both well-constructed and solved.]

1: gáta er ] Björn Jónsson segir að gátan sé *AM 168 b 8vo, NKS 1891 4to.*  
 2–3: og...hlýðir ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 4: hann...sumri ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 5: svo nefnir ] þar með meinar *AM 591 k 4to.* 7–9: eptir...Suttungs ] í Eddu eru nefnt svo Hnitbjörg, sem var bygð Suttungs jötuns *AM 591 k 4to.* 8: Hvítbjörg ] Hnitbjörg *NKS 1891 4to.* 10–11: les...um ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.*  
 12: merkir yfir og ] er yfir, um *AM 591 k 4to.* 15: svo...um ] ÷ *AM 591 k 4to.* 15: framar ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.* 18: er ] + það *AM 591 k 4to.* 19: ráðið geta ] ráða *AM 591 k 4to.* 20: svínið ] svín *AM 591 k 4to.* 23: og ] ÷ *AM 192 fol.* 23–25: þar...máta ] og *AM 591 k 4to.* 25: sá ] hann *AM 591 k 4to.* 26: orðið láta ] láta orðið *AM 591 k 4to.* 27: hann ] hinn *AM 591 k 4to.* 28: gjörir ] gjörði *AM 591 k 4to.* 29: hefur..var ] hét kóngur *AM 591 k 4to.* 32–33: orðið...Vil-gota ] Vilgi-gota *AM 591 k 4to.* 33–37: til...segir ] svo segir í Húskarlahvöt *AM 591 k 4to.* [107r] 1: erfiði ] + Vilmögum, það er sonum Vila eður kóngssonum *AM 591 k 4to.* 2: tvískilið ] tvírætt *AM 591 k 4to.* 3: opt ] öl *AM 591 k 4to.* 4: segist...beðið ] er svo mikið hann bað *AM 591 k 4to.* 5–6: eður (first)...Vil-gota ] það er vara lengi kæti, teiti vilganna *AM 591 k 4to.* 6–11: sem...dimmu ] er kveðið í *AM 591 k 4to.* 10: málfæri ] máltæki *AM 202 k II fol.* 12: friður ] hugur *AM 591 k 4to.* 13: kvenna þeirra ] þeirra kvenna *AM 202 k II fol.* 13: er ] + fagurt mæla en *AM 168 b 8vo, NKS 1891 4to;* sem *AM 591 k 4to.* 14: á ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.* 15 teit ] eður teit enn *AM 591 k 4to.* 15–[107v] 4: og...róti ] = tvévetri nauti. Og sem nautið er með sínum drætti, svo er svínið með sínum rana jörðina *AM 591 k 4to.* 16: unga ] vega *NKS 1891 4to.* 28:

þvíað ] því *AM 202 k fol.* 28–29: ‘ári’ eður ‘erjan’ ] árl’ eður ‘grjár’ (+ari eður erjan) *NKS 1891 4to.* [107v]4–9: en...ráðin ] en hann nefnir mjölkina ‘öldrykkju’ af alning, en ‘ölkerið’ gyltuna sjálfa *AM 591 k 4to.* 2–3: svínum þrá og erla ] svíninu erla og erla *NKS 1891 4to.* 6: erjarar ] greyarar (+erijarar) *NKS 1891 4to.*

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<sup>10</sup> 26. Gäta wm Gilltuna <sup>11</sup> neffner *hamn* enn dellings dur, og <sup>12</sup> kallar hana vættur. Það ord *hefur* <sup>13</sup> uppruna aff *vo-* eður *voda* <sup>14</sup> vættur *það* er *voda* skiepna. og <sup>15</sup> aff *þeirre* gätu fieck kongurinn <sup>16</sup> grunn, nu monde brögð, og <sup>17</sup> þetta monde ödinn vera er við[e] <sup>18</sup> huad innan til *med* skiepnunni va[r]

26. Gáta, um gyltuna. Nefnir hann enn Dellings dyr, og kallar hana ‘vættur’. Það orð hefur uppruna af ‘vo-’ eður ‘voða’ vættur, það er voða skepna. Og af þeirri gátu fekk kóngurinn grunn nú mundi brögð, og þetta mundi Óðinn vera er vissi hvað innan til með skepnunni var.

[26<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the sow. He names Dellingur’s doors again, and calls her a ‘monster’. That word has its origins in ‘evil’ or ‘terrible’ monster, that is to say a fantastic creature. And from that riddle the king came now to suspect subterfuge, and that this must be Óðinn who knew what was borne inside the creature.]

10–12: gáta...og ] Björn Jónsson, hann *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to.* 10–18: gáta...var ] og 27 eru auðráðnar og fornyrðalausar. Vættur er ‘vo-’ eða ‘voða’ skepna etc. *AM 591 k 4to.* 12–14: það...er ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol.* 15: kóngurinn ] kóngur *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to.* 16: grunn ] + og vissi *AM 202 k II fol.*; + um að *NKS 1891 4to.* 16: nú mundi brögð ] sem mun þessi brögð í tafla *AM 202 k I fol.*; + í *AM 202 k II fol.* 18: var ] + því það orð hefur uppruna af *vo-* eður *voða* vættur *AM 202 k II fol.*

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<sup>19</sup> 27. Gata wm kuna þarf <sup>20</sup> ecke epter tekta

27. Gáta, um kúna, þarf ekki eptirtekta.

[27<sup>th</sup> riddle, about the cow, needn't be dealt with.]

(19–20: Gata...eptirtekta ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *AM 591 k 4to* (the note for this verse is combined with that for verse 26 in this manuscript), *NKS 1891 4to*).

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[108r] |<sup>1</sup> 28. Gata eptter lykindum skil |<sup>2</sup> ianligum, wel Ráðin, vm |<sup>3</sup> weigin, walinn, ædurena |<sup>4</sup> og biorgin.

28. Gáta, eptir líkindum skiljanlegum vel ráðin, um veginn, valinn, æðurina og björgin.

[28<sup>th</sup> riddle, well explained according to intelligible similarities, about the wall, the hawk, the duck and the crags.]

1–4: gáta...björgin ] ÷ *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*; Gáta um valinn. Eggdauða menn kallar hann valinn *AM 591 k 4to*.

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|<sup>5</sup> 29. Gata, vm hest odins |<sup>6</sup> Sleipinn, sem vijda slæptist |<sup>7</sup> vm lönd og lög. sem hafa skillde |<sup>8</sup> vijj fætr. En Óðinn sialffur |<sup>9</sup> vera Einsjinn, þui hann sellde |<sup>10</sup> augad fyrir dryckinn ur |<sup>11</sup> minniß brunne.

29. Gáta, um hest Óðins, Sleipinn, sem víða slæpist um lönd og lög, sem hafa skyldi viii fætur, en Óðinn sjálfur vera einsýnn, því hann seldi augað fyrir drykkinn úr Mímis brunni.

[29<sup>th</sup> riddle, about Óðinn's horse, Sleipnir, who wanders widely across land and sea, who is supposed to have eight feet, and Óðinn himself to be one-eyed, because he sold his eye in exchange for a drink from Mímir's well.]

5–6: 29. Gáta...slæptist ] Björn Jónsson: Sleipnir slæptist víða *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 5–10: Gáta...brunni ] Um reið Óðins á Sleipnir, er víða sleiptist eður slæptist. Sleipnir, hestur hans, hafði viii fætur, en Óðinn var einsýnn, síðan hann leit auga sitt fyrir mjöðinn dýra úr Minnis brunni *AM 591 k 4to*. 6: Sleipinn ] Sleipnir *AM 202 k I fol.*; Sleipni *AM 202 k II fol.* 9: vera ] var *AM 202 k I fol.* 10–11: augað...brunni ] fyrir drykkinn úr Minnis brunni augað *AM 202 k I fol.*

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<sup>12</sup> 30. Gata, wm Eintal <sup>13</sup> Odinz vid Balldur áður hann á <sup>14</sup> Bal för, matte einnge vita, <sup>15</sup> nema þeir. og þar endast Gaturnar <sup>16</sup> Og heffur þesse Danmerkur kongur <sup>17</sup> verid eirn frábærlega vitur madur <sup>18</sup> med yffer burda skilning, <sup>19</sup> Suo traudt heffur verid hans <sup>20</sup> lijke. Til marks vm <sup>21</sup> þessa Historiu þa hafa þeir hiner <sup>22</sup> gomlu fræde menn Sæmundur <sup>23</sup> Fröde og adrer sett Eddu. þar þeir <sup>24</sup> saman telia og skriffa þau geijse <sup>25</sup> morgu noffn sem þeir gefa Odin [108v] <sup>1</sup> þetta eitt hans kienningar heiti Giestum <sup>2</sup> blinde j þeim liöda læge naffna hans <sup>3</sup> er so stendur (medal annara orda) <sup>4</sup> Þolverkur, Eyludur Bruner. San <sup>5</sup> getall, þeckur, þjldur Ömi, þrundur <sup>6</sup> og ofner, udur, jölner, wakur. <sup>7</sup> Jalkur, og langbardur, Grymur <sup>8</sup> og Londungur, Gestum Blinde. Og <sup>9</sup> þeir greina hann haffe feingid þesse nofn <sup>10</sup> flest aff ferdalage synu. so sem og <sup>11</sup> þetta eitt. þesse kongur Heidrekur <sup>12</sup> heffur verid miók vitur madur og lofflegur <sup>13</sup> spekingur á weralldar Hatt. sem <sup>14</sup> heijra mæ j urlausnum þesara margra <sup>15</sup> huorra hulmæla j Gatum þeim er <sup>16</sup> hier standa. huad Ártal er hans <sup>17</sup> kongstiornar mæ uppleijta j <sup>18</sup> Danskra konga tale. þui Historian <sup>19</sup> seiger hann haffe kongur verid j Reid- <sup>20</sup> gotalande. Og lyktar suo þesse <sup>21</sup> fröde mann utleggingar yfer <sup>22</sup> fornirde Gatna Gestum ens <sup>23</sup> Blinda sem sa wyse danske kongur <sup>24</sup> heidrekur rogsamliga riede. <sup>25</sup> Bjorn Jonsson undirskrifar naffn, á <sup>26</sup> Skards á j Skagafirde 14 Junij <sup>27</sup> Anno 1641.

30. Gáta, um eintal Óðins við Baldur áður hann á bál fór: mátti einginn vita nema þeir. Og þar endast gátur. Og hefur þessi Danmerkur kóngur verið einn frábærlega vitur maður með yfirburða skilning, svo trautt hefur verið hans líki. Til marks um þessa historíu, þá hafa þeir hinir gömlu fræðimenn Sæmundur fróði og aðrir sett Eddu, þar þeir samantelja og

skrifa þau geysimörgu nöfn sem þeir gefa Óðinn. Þetta eitt hans kennin-  
garheiti, Gestumblindi, í þeim ljóðalagi nafna hans er svo stendur, meðal  
annara orða: 'Bölverkur, Eylúður, Brúnir, Sanngetal, Þekkur, Þýður, Ómi,  
Þrundur og Ófnir, Uður, Jólnir, Vakur, Jálkur og Langbarður, Grímur og  
Löndungur, Gestumblindi'. Og þeir greina hann hafi fengið þessi nöfn  
flest af ferðalagi sínu, svo sem og þetta eitt. Þessi kóngur Heiðrekur hefur  
verið mjög vitur maður og loflegur spekingur á veraldarhátt, sem heyra má  
í úrlausnum þessara margra hvorra hulmæla í gátum þeim er hér standa.  
Hvað ártal er hans kóngsstjórnar má uppleita í danskra kóngatali, því his-  
torían segir hann hafi kóngur verið í Reiðgotalandi. Og lyktar svo þessi  
fróði maður útlekkingar yfir fornryði gátna Gestum ins blinda, sem sá vísi  
danski kóngur Heiðrekur rógsamlega réð. Björn Jónsson undirskrifar nafn  
á Skarðsá í Skagafirði, 14 Júnii, Anno 1641.

[30<sup>th</sup> riddle, about Óðinn's private conversation with Baldur prior to his  
funeral on the pyre: no one but they can know it. And with that the rid-  
dles end. And this king of Denmark was an extremely wise man with the  
utmost perspicuity, such that his equal has scarcely existed. As a context  
for this story the old learned men, Sæmundur and others, established the  
*Edda*. There they retell and write in one place the extremely large number  
of names which they give to Óðinn. This [is] one of his epithets, Blind-  
Stranger, in this song-metre of his names, among other words: 'Harm-  
worker, Island-Box, Brown, Sheaf-Counter, Delight, Kind, Resounding  
One, Thunderer, and Inciter, Beloved, Yule-Man, Wakeful, Gelder and  
Longbeard, Mask and Cloaked, Blind-Guest.' And they record that he  
received most of these names from his travels, as is also the case with this  
one. This king Heiðrekur was a very wise man and and a much-lauded  
sage in worldly matters, as may be heard in the solutions of each of these  
many concealed utterances in the riddles which are presented here. What  
the years of his reign were can be looked up in the list of Danish kings,  
since the story says that he was king in Reiðgotaland [Jutland]. And thus  
this wise man ends the explanations of the ancient sayings of the riddles  
of Gestumblindi, which the intelligent Danish king Heiðrekur solved  
through logic. Björn Jónsson signs his name, at Skarðsá in Skagafjörður,  
14<sup>th</sup> June, Anno 1641.]



12: 30. gáta ] Björn Jónsson *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 12–27: eintal...1641 ] einmæli Óðins við Baldur. Þau veit einginn maður, og því reiddist kóngurinn. Og hefur þessi kóngur verið manna vítrastur í sinni tíð, sem sjá má af úrlausn þessara gátna og af þessu. Er það eitt kenningarnafn Óðins að hann heitir Gestumblindi, það er 'deli' fyrir alþýðu, er Gestur kallast, því skynsemin sem merkir Óðinn er hulin, blind fyrir alþýðufólki. Og endast svo útleggju þessara hulmæla *AM 591 k 4to*. 17: einn ] ÷ *AM 202 k I fol*. 20: marks ] merkis *AM 202 k I fol*. 23: sett ] + í *AM 202 k II fol*. [108v] 1: þetta eitt hans ] þetta er eitt hans *AM 192 fol*; og er þetta eitt hans *AM 202 k I fol*; þetta hans eitt *AM 202 k II fol*. 1: kenningarheiti ] kenningarnafn *AM 202 k I fol*. 4: Brúnir ] Heimir *NKS 1891 4to*. 4–5: Sanngetal ] Sigtryggur *AM 202 k I fol*. 5–6: Þrundur og Ófnir, Uður ] Þrundur, Ófni, Uður og *AM 202 k II fol*. 7: og ] ÷ *AM 202 k II fol*. 8: og Löndungur ] Löndungur og *AM 202 k II fol*. 9: þeir greina ] greina þeir *AM 202 k II fol*. 9–10: fengið...flest ] þessi nöfn flest fengið *AM 202 k I fol*; fengið þessi flest nöfn *AM 202 k II fol*. 11: kóngur Heiðrekur ] Heiðrekur kóngur *AM 202 k II fol*; kóngur Viðrekur *AM 167 b III 8vo*. 11: þetta ] + nafn *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 15: hulmæla ] dulmæla *AM 202 k I fol*. 20: lyktar ] lýkur *AM 202 k I fol*. 22: Gatna ] ÷ *AM 192 fol*. 23: danski ] Danmerkur *AM 202 k I fol*. 24: rogsamlega ] ÷ *AM 202 k I fol*. 25: undskrifar nafn á ] að *AM 202 k II fol*. 25–27: undirskrifar...1641 ] á Skarðsá *AM 167 b III 8vo*, *NKS 1891 4to*. 27: 1641 ] + hefur útleggingarnar gjört yfir þessar gátur *AM 202 k II fol*.

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## SUMMARY

In this article a text and translation of Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá's (1574–1655) commentary to the riddles from *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* is presented. Björn was one of the most respected scholars of his day, and his works were commissioned by leading scholars and churchmen. Such may also be the case with his idiosyncratic commentary on the 'Gátur Gestumblinda', which soon after its completion in 1641 was sent to Ole Worm in Copenhagen. In the introduction to the text an analysis of their various witnesses is presented, resulting in a stemma (filling out certain ambiguities left over from Jón Helgason's work on *Hervarar saga*). A discussion of the circumstances of production is then given, followed by an assessment of the techniques adopted within the commentary. Of particular interest is Björn's penchant for locating etymological connections and identifying sound symbolism in the choice of lexis used, an interpretative approach to medieval Icelandic poetry which remains for the most part unconsidered today.

## EFNISÁGRIP

**Lykilorð:** fornaldarsögur, fræðilegar/lærðar skýringar vísa, gátur, *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks konungs*, viðtökur fornrits á 17. öld.

Í þessari grein birtist texti og ensk þýðing á skýringum Björns Jónssonar á Skarðsá (1574–1655) á gátum í *Hervarar sögu og Heiðreks konungs*. Björn var einn virtasti fræðimaður sinnar tíðar og vann ýmis lærdómsverk að beiðni mikilsvirtra fræðimanna og klerka. Sú gæti vel verið raunin með sérkennilegar skýringar hans á *Gátum Gestumblinda*, sem sendar voru Ole Worm í Kaupmannahöfn skömmu

eftir að Björn lauk við þær árið 1641. Í inngangi að textanum er sett fram greining á þeim handritum sem til eru og úr henni unnið stemma (og fyllt upp í ákveðin vafamál sem eftir standa frá vinnu Jóns Helgasonar í tengslum við *Hervarar sögu*). Því næst er fjallað um aðstæður þær sem leiddu til ritunar skýringanna, sem og mat á þeim aðferðum sem notast er við í þeim. Sérstaklega athyglisverð er tilhneiging Bjarnar til að sjá orðsifjatengsl og bera kennsl á hljóð-táknræna framsetningu í þeim orðaforða sem valinn er, en allt til þessa dags hefur lítið verið hirt um þá túlkunaraðferð á íslenskum miðaldakveðskap.

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