



THE POETIC EDDA

A Dual-Language Edition

EDWARD PETTIT



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Back cover image: The god Heimdallr blowing his horn, from a seventeenth-century Icelandic manuscript (AM 738 4to, fol. 35v)

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Grípisspá

Grípisspá (*Grp.*) ‘The Prophecy of Grípir’ survives in **R** (fol. 27r–28v). It is a pedestrian work in *fornyrðislag*, but it serves a useful purpose as a synoptic preface to subsequent poems in **R** concerning the hero Sigurðr. It reminds the audience—most or all of whom were probably familiar with some stories about Sigurðr—of what is to come. It was probably composed in the thirteenth century.

Chapter 16 of *VS*, another major Old Norse source for Sigurðr’s life, also mentions his visit to his maternal uncle, Grípir, and the latter’s prophecy. In contrast to the sequence of events indicated by the order of poems in **R**, however, the saga has Sigurðr meet his foster-father, Reginn, before hearing Grípir’s prophecy.

As a *spá* ‘prophecy’, *Grp.* merits comparison with *Vsp.* and *Hdl.* 29–44.

Synopsis

Prose: An introductory passage records that Sigurðr arrived at the hall of his maternal uncle, Grípir, who was the wisest of men and prescient. He met a man called Geitir outside and they conversed.

Verse: Sigurðr learns from Geitir that Grípir lives there (1), and asks to speak with him (2). Sigurðr identifies himself (3), and Geitir informs Grípir that a visitor wishes to meet him (4). Grípir welcomes Sigurðr (5), who asks him how his life will turn out (6). Grípir informs him that he will be the greatest man (7).

In response to further questions from Sigurðr, Grípir informs him that he will avenge his grandfather, Eylimi (8–9); slay Reginn (his foster-father) and Reginn’s brother Fáfnir (10–11); take Fáfnir’s treasure (12–13); waken an armoured woman (Brynhildr) on a mountain (14–16), who will teach him runes (17); and arrive at the home of Heimir, Brynhildr’s foster-father (18–19).

Sigurðr then persuades a reluctant Grípir to continue, even if the future he sees is unpleasant (20–26). Grípir tells him of Brynhildr (27).

In response to further prompting from Sigurðr, Grípir tells him that he will fall deeply in love with Brynhildr (28–29); betroth himself to her, and she to him (30–31); fall victim to the treacheries of Grím(h)ildr (mother of Gunnarr, Högni and Guðrún) (32–33); ask for Brynhildr on Gunnarr’s behalf (34–35); swear oaths with Gunnarr and Högni, and exchange appearances with the former (36–37); disguised as Gunnarr, betroth himself to Brynhildr (38–39); sleep beside her, albeit without sexual contact

(40–41); celebrate his wedding (to Guðrún), along with Gunnarr's (to Brynhildr) (42); give Guðrún a good marriage, though Brynhildr will feel deeply aggrieved and use trickery to avenge herself (43–45); be accused of oath-breaking by Brynhildr (46–47); be harmed by Brynhildr (48–49); be killed by Guðrún's brothers (50–51); be the worthiest man ever born (52).

Sigurðr and Grípir then part on good terms (53).

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Grípisspá

Grípir hét sonr Eylima, bróðir Hjördísar. Hann réð lönðum ok var allra manna vitrastr ok framvís. Sigurðr reið einn saman ok kom til hallar Grípis. Sigurðr var auðkendr. *Hann* hitti mann at máli úti fyrir hollinni. Sá nefndisk Geitir. Þá kvaddi Sigurðr hann máls ok spyrr:

1. ‘Hverr byggir hér borgir þessar?
Hvat þann þjóðkonung þegnar nefna?’
 ‘Grípir heitir gumna stjóri,
 sá er fastri ræðr foldu ok þegnum.’

2. ‘Er horskr konungr heima í landi?
Mun sá gramr við mik ganga at mæla?
 Máls er þarfi maðr ókunnigr,
 vil ek fljótliga finna Grípi!’

3. ‘Þess mun glaðr konungr Geiti spyrra:
hverr sá maðr sé er máls kveðr Grípi.’
 ‘Sigurðr ek heiti, borinn Sigmundi,
 en Hjördís er hilmis móðir.’

4. Þá gekk Geitir Grípi at segja:
‘Hér er maðr úti, ókuðr, kominn;
 hann er ítarligr at áliti;
 sá vill, fylkir, fund þinn hafa.’

5. Gengr ór skála skatna dróttinn
 ok heilsar vel hilmi komnum:
‘Þiggðu hér, Sigurðr! Væri sœmra fyrr!
En þú, Geitir, tak við Grana sjálfum!’

6. Mæla námu ok mart hjala,
 þá er ráðspakir rekkar fundusk:
‘Segðu mér, ef þú veizt, móðurbróðir,
 hvé mun Sigurði snúna ævi?’

7. ‘Þú munt maðr vera mæztr und sólu,
 ok hæstr borinn hverjum jöfri,
 gjöffull af gulli, en glöggr flugar,
 ítr áliti ok í orðum spakr!’

8. ‘Segðu, gegn konungr, gerr en ek spyrra,
 snotr, Sigurði, ef þú sjá þikkisk:
 hvat mun fyrst gærask til farnaðar,
 þá er ór garði emk genginn þínum?’

The Prophecy of Grípir

Grípir,¹ brother of Hjórdís,² was the name of a son of Eylimi. He ruled lands and was the wisest of all men and prescient. Sigurðr rode alone and came to the hall of Grípir. Sigurðr was easily recognized. He met a man to speak to outside the hall. He³ named himself Geitir.⁴ Then Sigurðr asked to speak with him and enquired:

1. ‘Who inhabits these strongholds here?
What do thanes call the people-king?’
 ‘The steerer of men is called Grípir,
he who rules firm ground and thanes.’
2. ‘Is the wise king at home in the land?
Will the leader come to talk with me?
An unknown man is in need of speech,
I want to meet Grípir at once!’
3. ‘The glad king will ask Geitir this:
who the man is who asks to speak with Grípir.’
 ‘I am called Sigurðr, born to Sigmundr,
and Hjórdís is the ruler’s⁵ mother.’
4. Then Geitir went to speak to Grípir:
‘An unknown man has arrived outside here;
he is lordly in appearance;
he wants, marshal, to meet you.’
5. The lord of warriors walks from the dwelling
and greets well the [newly] arrived ruler;
‘Accept [our hospitality] here, Sigurðr! Sooner would
have been better!
And you, Geitir, take care of Grani himself!’⁶
6. They began to speak and to chat at length,
when the counsel-wise men met each other:
‘Tell me, if you know, maternal uncle,⁷
how will life turn out for Sigurðr?’
7. ‘You will be the most glorious man under the sun,
and the highest born of any boar,⁸
generous with gold, but stingy of flight,
stately in appearance and wise in words!’
8. ‘Tell Sigurðr, just [and] wise king,
more fully than I may ask, if you think you see:
what will happen first to my advantage,
when I am gone from your court?’

9. 'Fyrst muntu, fylkir, fœður um hefna
ok Eylima alls harms reka;
þú munt harða Hundings sonu,
snjalla, fella — mundu sigr hafa!'
10. 'Segðu, ítr konungr, ættingi, mér,
heldr horskliga, er vit hugat mælum:
sérðu Sigurðar snqr brögð fyrir,
þau er hæst fara und himinskautum?'
11. 'Mundu einn vega orm inn frána,
þann er gráðugr liggr á Gnitahiði;
þú munt báðum at bana verða,
Regin ok Fáfni — rétt segir Grípir!'
12. 'Auðr mun ærinn, ef ek eflik svá
víg með virðum, sem þú víst segir;
leið at huga ok lengi seg:
hvat mun enn vera ævi minnar?'
13. 'Þú munt finna Fáfnis bæli
ok upp taka auð inn fagra,
gulli hlœða á Grana bógu;
ríðr þú til Gjúka, gramr vígrisinn.'
14. 'Enn skaltu hilmi í hugaðsrœðu,
framlyndr jöfurr, fleira segja;
gestr em ek Gjúka, ok ek geng þaðan:
hvat mun enn vera ævi minnar?'
15. 'Sefr á fjalli fylkis dóttir,
björt í brynju, eptir bana Helga;
þú munt hoggva hvössu sverði,
brynju rísta með bana Fáfnis.'
16. 'Brotin er brynja, brúðr mæla tekr,
er vaknaði víf ór svefni;
hvat mun snót at heldr við Sigurð mæla,
þat er at farnaði fylki verði?'
17. 'Hon mun ríkjum þér rúnar kenna,
allar þær er aldir eignask vildu,
ok á manns tungu mæla hverja,
líf með lækning — lífðu heill, konungr!'

9. ‘First, marshal, you will avenge your father
 and entirely avenge Eylimi’s harm;⁹
you will fell the hard, bold sons of Hundingr —
 you will have victory!’¹⁰
10. ‘Tell me, noble king [and] kinsman,
 rather wisely, since we’re speaking agreeably:
 do you foresee Sigurðr’s strong, swift deeds,
those that will journey highest under heaven’s corners?’¹¹
11. ‘You will alone slay the shining snake,
 the one which lies greedy on Gnitaheiðr;¹²
 you will become the killer of both,
Reginn¹³ and Fáfnir¹⁴ — Grípir speaks rightly!’¹⁵
12. ‘Wealth will be abundant, if I accomplish
such a killing among men, as you say with certainty;
put your mind to it and speak at length:¹⁶
 what more will be in my life?’
13. ‘You will find Fáfnir’s lair
 and take up the fair treasures,
 load gold on Grani’s shoulders;¹⁷
you will ride to Gjúki’s,¹⁸ battle-proud prince.’¹⁹
14. ‘Still you must in confidential speech,
 high-minded boar,²⁰ say more to the ruler;
I’m a guest of Gjúki, and I go from there:
 what more will be in my life?’
15. ‘A marshal’s daughter²¹ sleeps on a mountain,
 bright in a mail-coat, after Helgi’s death;²²
 you will strike with a sharp sword,
 cut the mail-coat with Fáfnir’s bane.’²³
16. ‘Broken is the mail-coat, the bride starts to speak,
 when the wife²⁴ awoke from her sleep;
what will the woman say rather [soon] to Sigurðr
 that will be to the marshal’s benefit?’
17. ‘She will teach you, powerful one, runes,²⁵
 all those that people want to possess,
 and to talk in every human tongue,
[and] medicines with healing art — live healthily, king!’

18. 'Nú er því lokit, numin eru fræði,
ok em braut þaðan búinn at ríða;
leið at huga ok lengra seg:
hvat mun meirr vera minnar ævi?'
19. 'Þú munt hitta Heimis byggðir
ok glaðr vera gestr þjóðkonungs;
farit er, Sigurðr, þats ek fyrir vissak;
skala fremr enn svá fregna Grípi!'
20. 'Nú fær mér ekka orð þatstu mæltir,
þvíat þú fram um sér, fylkir, lengra;
veiztu ofmikit angr Sigurði —
því þú, Grípir, þat gerra segja!'
21. 'Lá mér um æsku ævi þinnar
ljósast fyrir líta eptir;
rétt emka ek ráðspakr taliðr,
né in heldr framvís — farit þats ek vissak!'
22. 'Mann veit ek engi fyr mold ofan,
þann er fleira sé fram en þú, Grípir;
skalattu leyna, þótt ljótt sé,
eða mein gørisk á mínum hag!'
23. 'Era með lǫstum lǫgð ævi þér —
láttu, inn ítri, þat, qðlingr, nemask!
Þvíat uppi mun, meðan ǫld lifir,
naddéls boði, nafn þitt vera!'
24. 'Verst hyggjum því, verðr at skiljask
Sigurðr við fylki at sógǫru;
leið vísaðú — lagt er allt fyrir —
mœrr, mér, ef þú vilt, móðurbróðir!'
25. 'Nú skal Sigurði segja gerva,
allz þengill mik til þess neyðir;
mundu víst vita at vætki lýgr:
dægr eitt er þér dauði ætlaðr.'
26. 'Vilkat ek reiði ríks þjóðkonungs,
góðráðs, at heldr, Grípis, þiggja;
nú vill víst vita, þótt viltki sé,
hvat á sýnt Sigurðr sér fyr hǫndum.'

18. ‘Now that’s finished, the lore has been learnt,
 and I’m ready to ride away from there;
 put your mind to it and speak more fully:
 what more will be in my life?’
19. ‘You’ll come upon Heimir’s settlements²⁶
 and be the glad guest of the people-king;
 it’s at an end, Sigurðr, that which I foresaw;
 you shouldn’t question Grípir still further like this!’
20. ‘Now the words you speak cause me sorrow,
 because you [do] see further [ahead], marshal;
 you know of extreme anguish for Sigurðr —
 that’s why, Grípir, you don’t say it!’
21. ‘The youth of your life lay before me
 most clearly to look upon;
 not rightly am I reckoned counsel-wise,
 nor any the more prescient — what I knew is ended!’
22. ‘I know no one above ground²⁷
 who sees further ahead than you, Grípir;
 you mustn’t hide it, even if it is hideous,
 or if harm may come to my condition!’
23. ‘Life is not laid out for you with shame —
 let that be learned, glorious nobleman!
 Because, announcer of the point-shower,²⁸
 your name will be remembered as long as men live!’
24. ‘I think this the worst [thing],
 that Sigurðr must part from the marshal in such circumstances;
 show me the way — all is laid out in advance —
 if you will, famed maternal uncle!’²⁹
25. ‘Now I shall speak to Sigurðr in full,
 since the prince forces me to this;
 you will surely know that he³⁰ does not lie:
 one day is appointed for your death.’
26. ‘I don’t want [to incur] the wrath of the powerful people-king,
 but would rather receive Grípir’s good counsel;
 now he wants³¹ to know for certain, even if it’s unpleasant,
 what Sigurðr plainly has in store.’³²

27. 'Fljóð er at Heimis, fagrt álitum —
hana Brynhildi bragnar nefna —
dóttir Buðla, en dýrr konungr,
harðugðíkt man, Heimir, fœðir.'
28. 'Hvat er mik at því, þótt mær sé,
fögr álitu, fœdd at Heimis?
Þat skaltu, Grípir, gøva segja,
þvíat þú ǫll um sér ǫrlög fyrir!'
29. 'Hon firrir þik flestu gamni,
fögr álitu, fóstura Heimis;
svefn þú né sefr, né um sakar dæmir,
gáraðu manna, nema þú mey sér!'
30. 'Hvat mun til líkna lagt Sigurði?
Segðu, Grípir, þat, ef þú sjá þikkisk;
mun ek mey ná mundi kaupa,
þá ina fögru fylkis dóttur?'
31. 'It munuð alla eiða vinna,
fullfastliga — fá munuð halda;
verit hefir þú Gjúka gestr eina nótt,
mantattu horska Heimis fósturu.'
32. 'Hvart er þá, Grípir? Get þú þess fyr mér!
Sér þú geðleysi í grams skapi,
er ek skal við mey þá málum slíta,
er ek alls hugar unna þóttumk?'
33. 'Þú verður, siklingr, fyr svikum annars,
mundu Grímhildar gjalda ráða;
mun bjóða þér bjarthaddat man,
dóttur sína — dregr hon vél at gram!'
34. 'Mun ek við þá Gunnar gøva hleyti
ok Guðrúnu ganga at eiga?
Fullkvæni þá fylkir væri,
ef meintregar mér angraðit.'
35. 'Þik mun Grímhildr gøva véla;
mun hon Brynhildar biðja fýsa
Gunnari til handa, Gotna drótni;
heitr þú fljótliga fər fylkis móður!'

27. 'There's a woman at Heimir's, fair in appearance —
men call her Brynhildr³³ —
daughter of Buðli, and the worthy king, Heimir,
brings up a hard-minded maiden.'
28. 'What's it to me, even if the maiden is
fair in appearance, brought up at Heimir's?
You must tell it, Grípir, in full,
since you foresee all fates!'
29. 'She, Heimir's fosterling, fair in appearance;
will deprive you of most delight;
you won't sleep a sleep, nor judge lawsuits,
you won't heed men, unless you see that maiden!'³⁴
30. 'What will be laid down as comfort for Sigurðr?
Speak, Grípir, if you seem to see it;
will I manage to buy the girl with a bride-price,
that fair daughter of a marshal?'
31. 'You two will swear all oaths,³⁵
very firmly — few will hold;
[when] you have been Gjúki's guest for one night,
you won't recall Heimir's clever fosterling.'³⁶
32. 'What's [this], then, Grípir? Explain it for me!
Do you see capriciousness in the prince's character,
since I shall break my contract with the maiden,
whom I thought I loved with all my heart?'
33. 'You'll fall victim, prince, to the treacheries of another,
you'll pay for Grímhildr's counsels;³⁷
she'll offer you a bright-haired girl,
her daughter³⁸ — she'll plot against the prince!'
34. 'Will I, then, become an in-law to Gunnarr³⁹
and go to marry Guðrún?⁴⁰
The marshal⁴¹ would then be well-married,
if outrage-sorrows didn't cause me anguish.'
35. 'Grímhildr will trick you entirely;
she'll urge you to ask for Brynhildr
on behalf of Gunnarr, lord of the Gotar;⁴²
you'll immediately promise the journey to the marshal's mother!'⁴³

36. 'Mein eru fyr hǫndum, má ek líta þat;
ratar gǫrliga ráð Sigurðar
ef ek skal mærrar meyjjar biðja
ǫðrum til handa, þeirar ek unna vel.'
37. 'Ér munuð allir eiða vinna,
Gunnarr ok Hogni, en þú, gramr, þriði,
þvíat litum víxla, er á leið eruð,
Gunnarr ok þú — Grípir lýgr eigi!'
38. 'Hví gegnir þat? Hví skulum skipta
litum ok látum er á leið erum?
Þar mun fláræði fylgja annat,
atalt með ǫllu: enn segðu, Grípir!'
39. 'Lit hefir þú Gunnars ok læti hans,
mælsku þína ok meginhyggjur;
mundu fastna þér framlundaða
fóstru Heimis — sér vætr fyr því!'
40. 'Verst hyggjum því, vándr munk heitinn,
Sigurðr, með seggjum, at sógǫru!
Vilda ek eigi vélum beita
jöfra brúði, er ek æzta veitk!'
41. 'Þú munt hvíla, hers oddviti,
mærr, hjá meyju, sem þín móðir sé!
Því mun uppi, meðan ǫld lifir,
þjóðar þengill, þitt nafn vera!
- 42 [43]. 'Saman munu brullaup bæði drukkin,
Sigurðar ok Gunnars, í solum Gjúka;
þá hǫmum víxlið, er it heim komið,
hefir hvárr fyr því hyggju sína!'
- 43 [42]. 'Mun góða kván Gunnarr eiga,
mærr, með mǫnnum — mér segðu, Grípir! —
þóat hafi þrjár nætr þegns brúðr hjá mér,
snarlynd, sofit? Slíks erut dæmi!
44. 'Hvé mun at yndi eptir verða
mægð með mǫnnum? Mér segðu, Grípir!
Mun Gunnari til gamans ráðit
síðan verða, eða sjálfum mér?'

36. 'Misfortunes are before me,⁴⁴ I can see that;
Sigurðr's decision-making will fall down entirely
if I have to ask for the excellent maiden,
whom I love well, on behalf of another.'
37. 'You'll all swear oaths —
Gunnarr and Hǫgni, and you, prince, third —
as you'll exchange appearances, when you're on the way,
Gunnarr and you — Grípir does not lie!'⁴⁵
38. 'What does that mean? Why shall we exchange
appearances and manners when we're on the way?
There will be another deception accompanying [this one],
entirely dreadful — speak on, Grípir!'
39. 'You'll have Gunnarr's appearance and his manner,
[but] your eloquence and great understanding;
you'll betroth yourself to the high-minded
fosterling of Heimir — you'll think nothing of it!'⁴⁶
40. 'I think this the worst [thing, that] I, Sigurðr,
will be called evil among men, in such circumstances!
I wouldn't use tricks against
the boars'⁴⁷ bride, whom I know to be the noblest!'
41. 'You will sleep, army's point-wise one,⁴⁸
glorious, beside the maiden, as if she were your mother!⁴⁹
For that, nation's prince, your name
will be remembered as long as humanity lives!
- 42 [43].⁵⁰ 'Both weddings will be drunk⁵¹ together,
Sigurðr's and Gunnarr's, in Gjúki's halls;
when you exchange skins, when you come home,
each will have his own mind about this!'
- 43 [42]. 'Will glorious Gunnarr have a good wife,
among people — tell me, Grípir! —
even though for three nights the thane's bride
has slept, bold-spirited, beside me? There are no precedents for such!
44. 'How will this marital kinship between people
turn to happiness? Tell me, Grípir!
Will pleasure be assigned to Gunnarr
then, or to me myself?'

45. 'Minnir þik eiða, máttu þegja þó,
antu Guðrúnu góðra ráða;
en Brynhildr þikkisk, brúðr, vargefin,
snót fiðr vélar sér at hefndum!'
46. 'Hvat mun at bótum brúðr sú taka,
er vélar vér vífi gerðum?
Hefir snót af mér svarna eiða,
enga efnda, en unað lítit!'
47. 'Mun hon Gunnari gørva segja,
at þú eigi vel eiðum þyrmdir,
þá er ítr konungr af öllum hug,
Gjúka arfi, á gram trúði.'
48. 'Hvat er þá, Grípir? Get þú þess fyr mér!
Mun ek saðr vera at sögu þeiri?
Eða lýgr á mik lofsæl kona
ok á sjálfa sik? Segðu, Grípir, þat!'
49. 'Mun fyr reiði rík brúðr við þik
né af oftrega allvel skipa;
viðr þú góðri grand aldregi,
þó ér víf konungs vélum beittuð.'
50. 'Mun horskr Gunnarr at hvötun hennar,
Guthormr ok Hogni, ganga síðan?
Munu synir Gjúka á sífjugum mér
eggjar rjóða? Enn segðu, Grípir!'
51. 'Þá er Guðrúnu grímt um hjarta —
bræðr hennar þér til bana ráða —
ok at öngu verðr yndi síðan
vitru vífi — veldr því Grímildr.
52. 'Því skal hugga þik, hers oddviti,
sú mun gípt lagið á grams ævi:
munat mætri maðr á mold koma,
und sólar sjöt, en þú, Sigurðr, þikkir!'
53. 'Skiljumk heilir! Munat sköpum vinna!
Nú hefir þú, Grípir, vel gørt, sem ek beiddak;
fljótt myndir þú fríðri segja
mína ævi, ef þú mættir þat!'

45. ‘You’ll recall your oaths, but be able to keep quiet,
 you’ll grant Guðrún a good marriage;
but Brynhildr, the bride, will think herself badly married,
 the woman will find tricks to avenge herself!’⁵²
46. ‘What will that bride accept as compensations,
 when we have worked tricks on the wife?
 The woman has sworn oaths from me,
 none kept, and little contentment!’⁵³
47. ‘She’ll say clearly to Gunnarr,
 that you didn’t keep the oaths well,⁵⁴
 when the noble king, with his whole heart,
 Gjúki’s heir,⁵⁵ trusted in the prince.’
48. ‘What will happen then, Grípir? Explain this for me!
 Will I truly be as in the tale?
 Or will the famous woman lie about me
 and about herself? Tell me that, Grípir!’
49. ‘Out of wrath, from excessive grief,
the powerful bride will not treat you altogether well;
 you’ll never do harm to the good woman,
 though you deceived the king’s wife with tricks.’
50. ‘Will wise Gunnarr, Guthormr⁵⁶ and Hogni
 accede to her incitement then?
Will the sons of Gjúki redden their sword-edges
 on me, their in-law? Speak on, Grípir!’
51. ‘Then, for Guðrún, there will be grimness of heart⁵⁷ —
 her brothers will bring about your death⁵⁸ —
 and contentment will then come to nothing⁵⁹
 for the wise wife — Grím(h)ildr will cause this.
52. ‘You shall console yourself with this, army’s point-wise one,
 [that] this gift will be laid down in the prince’s life:
 a worthier man than you seem, Sigurðr,
 won’t come on [this] earth, under the sun’s seat!’⁶⁰
53. ‘Let’s part in good spirits! One can’t resist fate!
 Now, Grípir, you’ve done well, as I asked;
 you would soon have spoken more favourably
 of my life, if you could have [done] that!’

Textual Apparatus to *Grípisspá*

Grípisspá] This poem is untitled in **R**; the title *Grípisspá* comes from later, paper manuscripts

Hann] Absent from **R**; supplied from later, paper manuscripts

3/1 *konungr*] **R** *konvng*

18/1 *Nú*] **R** *þa* (the emendation supplies alliteration)

22/7 *eða*] **R** *ep*

26/6 *viltki*] **R** *vilkít*

40/7 *brúði*] **R** *brvþr*

46/8 *unað*] **R** *vnat*

47/4 *þyrmðir*] **R** *þyrmir*

Notes to the Translation

- 1 This name appears related to *grípa* ‘to grasp’.
- 2 Grípir is the maternal uncle of Sigurðr, the hero of this and subsequent poems. The bond between maternal uncle and nephew was traditionally strong in early Germanic societies.
- 3 The man.
- 4 A name apparently based on *geit* ‘she-goat’.
- 5 Sigurðr refers to himself.
- 6 Grani is Sigurðr’s horse; the name derives from *grøn* ‘moustache’ or ‘lip’. This reference is a chronological anachronism in **R** because Sigurðr does not acquire Grani until the prose introduction to *Rm.*; in *VS*, however, Sigurðr does have Grani before visiting Grípir.
- 7 Literally, ‘mother’s brother’.
- 8 When not denoting an actual boar, *jǫfurr* is, as here, a common metaphor for ‘warrior’, ‘prince’.
- 9 I.e., the killing of Eylimi, Sigurðr’s grandfather, by Hundingr’s son Lyngvi with assistance from Óðinn. Lyngvi was Sigmundr’s rival for the hand of Hjǫrdís (*VS* 11–12, 17).
- 10 Cf. *Rm.* 15–26.
- 11 I.e., become most widely known across the world.
- 12 Perhaps ‘Scree Heath’ and maybe identifiable as Knetterheide, Germany. The snake is Fáfnir.
- 13 ‘Ruler’, ‘Powerful One’ (cf. *regin* ‘divine powers’, ‘ruling gods’). He is Sigurðr’s foster-father.
- 14 ‘Embracer’, Reginn’s brother. Fáfnir, who became a giant snake, certainly embraced treasure; perhaps he also constricted his prey.
- 15 See the accounts of *Rm.* and *Fm.*
- 16 Alternatively, ‘longer’, ‘at greater length’, if *lengi* ‘at length’ is emended to *lengra* (cf. *Grp.* 18).
- 17 Cf. the concluding prose to *Fm.*

- 18 Gjúki is the father of Gunnarr, Högni and Guðrún, key figures in Sigurðr's story. The name *Gjúki* equates to *Gibica*, the name of an early Burgundian king.
- 19 This visit is mentioned in neither **R** nor *VS*, but cf. *Fm.* 41.
- 20 Grípir.
- 21 Brynhildr, as in *VS* 20 (*Sigrdrífa* in *Fm.* 44 and *Sd.*). The link later in this stanza with Helgi (*Hundingsbani*?) might also suggest a connection with Sigrún; alternatively, perhaps this Helgi is equivalent to the Hjálmr-Gunnarr whom Brynhildr/*Sigrdrífa* slew in violation of Óðinn's command, as described in *Sd.* 4 pr. and in *Hlr.* 8.
- 22 The identity of this Helgi is uncertain (see previous footnote).
- 23 I.e., the sword. Cf. the initial prose to *Sd.*
- 24 Or 'woman'.
- 25 Cf. *Sd.*
- 26 Heimir is Brynhildr's foster-father. He is not named in subsequent poems in **R**, but cf. *Hlr.* 7. His name is based on *heimr* or *heima* 'home'.
- 27 I.e., living, not dead and buried.
- 28 A 'point-shower' is a hail of spears or arrows, a metaphor for 'battle'; its 'announcer' is a warrior.
- 29 Literally, 'mother's brother'.
- 30 Grípir refers to himself.
- 31 Sigurðr speaks of himself in the third person. Alternatively, emend *vill* to *vilk* 'I want'.
- 32 Literally, 'what Sigurðr plainly has before his hands.'
- 33 'Mail-Coat Battle'.
- 34 Cf. Sigurðr's visit to Heimir and sight of Brynhildr in *VS* 24–25.
- 35 Cf. *VS* 25.
- 36 Cf. *VS* 28.
- 37 In Eddic poems and *VS* Grímhildr (a name usually spelt *Grímildr* in **R**) is the wife of Gjúki and the mother of Gunnarr, Högni, Guthormr and Guðrún. Her name means either 'Grim/Fierce Battle' or 'Face-Mask Battle'. For her treachery, cf. *VS* 28.
- 38 Guðrún.
- 39 'Battle Army'. He is a reflex of a fifth-century Burgundian king called *Gundaharius*.
- 40 'Battle Rune' or 'God Rune'.
- 41 Sigurðr speaks of himself.
- 42 'Goths', or humans in general.
- 43 Cf. *VS* 28.
- 44 Literally, 'before (my) hands'.
- 45 Cf. *VS* 29.
- 46 Cf. *VS* 29.
- 47 Warriors, princes.
- 48 An honorific for a leader skilled with the points of weapons.
- 49 Cf. *Sg.* 4 and *VS* 29.

- 50 In this and the following stanza, the bracketed numbers reverse the manuscript order to indicate a more logical flow.
- 51 I.e., celebrated by drinking at a feast.
- 52 Cf. *VS* 30–32.
- 53 Or ‘... and is hardly contented.’
- 54 Cf. *VS* 31.
- 55 *Gunnarr*.
- 56 ‘God/Good/Battle Snake’.
- 57 Cf. *Gðr. I* and *Gðr. II*.
- 58 *Sigurðr*’s death is described in *VS* 32; see also *Br.* 4–6 and *Sg.* 20–29.
- 59 I.e., there will be no contentment.
- 60 I.e., under heaven, the sky.