



ICELANDIC SAGAS AROUND 1600. RECEPTION, INTERPRETATION AND CONTEXT

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In this article I will be almost exclusively concerned with the figure of Arngrímur Jónsson the Learned, who was the key figure in the interpretation of the sagas in the period around 1600 and the first half of the 17th century, and their introduction to in Europe at the time.

I will begin with the context, writing first about the general social and intellectual context of Arngrímur's activity. Then the Icelandic saga sources Arngrímur used will be reviewed, and lastly the reception and interpretation of the sagas will be discussed as it appears in the pages of Arngrímur Jónsson's *Crymogæa*, which was written in the period 1593-1603 and published in 1609. A number of problems appeared during the writing of the article that could not be investigated on this occasion, but the subject matter is interesting and highly relevant to the present.

1. CONTEXT

In 1600 Iceland had recently been through immense social changes. In 1550 the official doctrine of faith was changed by intervention of the Danish King. Lutheranism replaced Catholicism as the religion of the Icelanders. In the process, all monasteries became the property of the crown, and as they owned around 15% of the landed property in the country, the crown for the first time, acquired a substantial presence as a landowner in Iceland. The landed property of the bishoprics, comprising another ca 20% of the total, also came under the influence of the king, but the episcopal estates remained formally independent and were managed by the Icelandic Lutheran bishops¹.

In 1602 the King introduced the infamous monopoly trade in Iceland. Icelanders were unhappy with it at the time, but in essence it was a continuation of former policies introduced by the Icelandic elite in its dealings with foreign merchants in the 15th and 16th centuries. Too much has been made of the detrimental effects of the monopoly trade in Iceland – the effects were in fact very limited, not touching in any way the interests or the hegemony of the Icelandic landowning elite or gentry.



This hegemony was based on the peasantry's land rent, cow rents and corvée, and on the official ideology of the Lutheran faith. The form of the exploitation of the peasantry achieved its definite early modern form in the period around 1500, and the latter asserted itself in the reformation revolution in 1550.

Iceland was a part of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, which also comprised parts of Germany. Iceland was one fief, one of the three largest fiefs in the kingdom, the other two being in Norway. The fiefholder was the governor, usually a Danish noble from an important family. Iceland was organized into counties, about 17 or 18 in number, which were ruled by sheriffs, and the size of these counties was similar to ordinary fiefs in Denmark.

The Icelandic gentry increased its power considerably during the reformation, because it was entrusted to manage the estates acquired by royal power in the reformation. That is to say, all the estates of the former monasteries and nunneries, nine in all, became a new source of income for the Icelandic landowning elite, except for the estate of Viðey, which became the estate of the royal *lensman* (governor) in Iceland. All of the income from Viðey estate went to the crown, but only between a quarter and a half of the income from the other nine estates went to the crown. The difference between the three quarters and a half was pocketed by the Icelandic gentry. This same gentry owned most of the farms not owned by the crown or the church. The large majority of Icelanders were tenants or subtenants on land belonging to the gentry, the crown or the church.

INTELLECTUAL/CULTURAL CONTEXT

The reformation led to the establishment of schools at the bishoprics, schools that were later called Latin schools. These schools' main aim was the education of the clergy, but soon they also began to educate sheriffs and other officials for the expanding state.

There had been educational activity at the bishoprics in Catholic times, and the great tradition of the writing of Sagas and other medieval Icelandic literature originated with the writing skills introduced by the church in the 11th century. The Catholic Church in Iceland was only fully established as an independent power in the 13th century, and from that time it had direct relations with and was controlled by the Roman Catholic Church with headquarters in Rome.

With the reformation the centre of the Icelandic church moved to Copenhagen, and was directly in the hands of the crown. In practice this meant that the highest authority in the



matters of the Icelandic Church lay in the hands of the theologians at Copenhagen University. The reformation was of course primarily a rejection of the power of the pope, and secondly a rediscovery of the power of the word of God as it appeared in the Bible. Part of the strength of the Reformation resulted from the fact that it had at its hands a new technology, i.e. printing. This eased the task of spreading the word of the new faith, and the rise of Martin Luther to fame, influence and power has been pointed out as the first media event (see Dixon).

In Iceland a printing press had been set up by the Catholic bishop Jón Arason in the north of Iceland in about 1540. This was taken over by the powerful Guðbrandur Þorláksson, who became bishop in the Hólar diocese in Northern Iceland in 1571. Guðbrandur began printing books in Icelandic on religious matters, spreading the word of the Lutheran faith and providing priests with religious literature. His crowning glory was the first publication of the Bible in Icelandic.

The reformation was accompanied by the humanist movement. In addition to reformation and humanism, a third term defining the new intellectual and cultural currents appearing in the 15th and 16th centuries is the Renaissance. This was a time of relative intellectual freedom, and new institutional circumstances such as the establishment of the new Protestant faiths were also important influences in the intellectual climate at the time. This intellectual freedom soon gave way to a harsher, more severe and more repressive intellectual climate in the late 16th and 17th century.

THE STATUS OF THE SAGAS IN THE 16TH CENTURY

At the time Arngrímur the Learned began his writings, medieval Icelandic literature was unknown in Denmark, except for some sagas of Norwegian kings, which had become known to the Danes through Norway. The Danes were unaware that these sagas were Icelandic in origin. Some Danes who had been to Iceland might have known of the sagas, but the learned community in Copenhagen did not, and for the early and medieval history of the kingdom it relied on the Latin history written by Saxo. Neither the Danes nor the Norwegians were any longer able to read the sagas in the Old Norse language it was written in (without specially learning it), because both the Danish and Norwegian languages had undergone radical changes in the late Middle Ages. Meanwhile, the language had changed little in Iceland. Thus in the 16th century nobody outside Iceland seems to have known that the great heritage of the



Germanic peoples had been preserved there in the writings of the Icelandic medieval school of literature and scholarship.

It is, however, unclear if this was the case. I have not found any discussion of the reception of sagas outside Iceland in the period 1400-1600. It would be interesting to know if either the English, the Germans or the Scandinavians knew about them in this period, and whether they were interested or not. It seems very unlikely that the English, who were very active in Western Iceland, had no knowledge of the sagas, because they were in close contact with the social groups that preserved the sagas, the Icelandic landed gentry (see below).

In Iceland the Sagas, Eddas and other ancient literature had seemingly gone out of fashion in around 1400. Few manuscripts of Sagas, either family sagas or the sagas of the kings, exist from the period 1400-1600, and the majority of literary activity was in the field of verse or poetry (see Jakob Benediktsson). The subject matter of this literature was not the family sagas of Icelanders or the sagas of Norwegian kings, but romances, fairytales and fables. This development was formerly interpreted as a part of the decline of Icelandic society in the wake of the loss of independence in 1262-4, but this view has now been refuted (see Glauser). No new family sagas were written in the period 1400-1600, and few new manuscripts of the old sagas were written. But the old saga manuscripts, primarily from the 14th century, existed and were preserved, and even on a few occasions copied.

It is well known that the bishop Guðbrandur, whom Arngrímur worked for, was not enamoured of worldly literature, sagas, fables and such. So why did Arngrímur become interested in medieval literature? Jakob Benediktsson rejects the view put forward by Páll Eggert Ólason, that it was the Icelander's anger at foreign libel that first introduced foreigners to Icelandic literature². Instead Jakob is of the opinion that the reason was interest in Copenhagen intellectual circles, at first the interest of Arild Huitfeldt, the royal historian and chancellor. Arngrímur the Learned went on an errand to Copenhagen for Bishop Guðbrandur³ in the winter of 1592-1593, and was introduced to or befriended a number of Danish scholars. Huitfeldt was writing the history of Denmark, and Arngrímur introduced him to Icelandic sources on the history of Denmark. Huitfeldt was very interested and hired Arngrímur to help collecting Icelandic sources for the history of Denmark. Because of this, the king issued a letter asking Icelanders to help in the writing of the history of Denmark by providing



manuscripts and other material of interest in this connection, and provided Arngrímur with the economic means to study the sagas.

In addition to Huitfeldt, Arngrímur met other scholars, but only later did he become acquainted with Ole Worm, who was instrumental in creating interest in saga literature in Scandinavia and further abroad in the 17th century.

2. SOURCES

It is possible to discern the sources Arngrímur the Learned used, for example in the writing of *Crymogæa*. This was done by a man no less learned himself, Jakob Benediktsson, who worked and published at the Arnmagæan Institute in Copenhagen, before the manuscripts were moved to Iceland in the seventies. Arngrímur began his work before any centralized scholarly activity had touched medieval Icelandic literature. He says himself that he used 26 manuscripts, many of them on loan.

According to Jakob Benediktsson⁴, the following manuscripts were used by Arngrímur in his work.

THE SAGAS OF THE KINGS

The main source for these, and also for other categories, was the *Flateyjarbók*. This was at the time the property of a man called Jón bóndi Björnsson in Flatey in Breiðafjörður. At the time, the title bóndi meant a privileged or highly placed person, a gentleman. *Flateyjarbók* is, of course, one of the most famous of the medieval Icelandic manuscripts, and is still in existence.

Arngrímur probably used the version of *Heimskringla* preserved in manuscript AM 39 fol., which most likely originated in the Breiðafjörður area. Manuscript AM 53 fol. was the manuscript he used as the source for *Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar hin meiri*. Árni Magnússon thought that this manuscript had originated from Skarð in Skarðsströnd, which according to Jakob Benediktsson is not improbable. The source for *Ólafs saga hins helga* was probably manuscript AM 325 V 4to. At the close of the 16th century this manuscript was in the hands of Jón Magnússon the elder, who was a member of the most powerful and important aristocratic family in Iceland in this period, the Svalbarðsmenn.

Another manuscript which was a source for Arngrímur was the one called *Hulda* (AM 66 fol.), which at the time was in the hands of lawman Gísli Þórðarson. A manuscript containing the



Hemings rímur, which was one of Arngrímur's sources, had its origins at Staðarhóll in Dalasýsla. In addition to this, Arngrímur used two manuscripts found in Copenhagen at the time.

THE FAMILY SAGAS

The main source for the family sagas was a manuscript that is now lost except for some fragments, the Vatnshyrna. This manuscript probably bears the name of the farm Vatnshorn in Dalasýsla, where it was probably kept for some time, or it may even have been written there. In addition to this, Arngrímur used the Reykjabók (AM 468 4to) as a source for Njáls saga, but this was a book named after the farm Reykir in Miðfjörður in Húnavatnssýsla, where Ingjaldur Illugason, Arngrímur's brother-in-law, lived and kept the book.

OTHER SOURCES

Sources for the Sturlunga saga Arngrímur used were two manuscripts, which both were located in the Breiðafjörður area in around 1600. Some, but very few, sources were probably in the library and archive at Hólar.

The most important part of the source material of Arngrímur the Learned, then, originated with or was kept by the Icelandic gentry. Most of the manuscripts used by Arngrímur seem to have originated in West Iceland, especially in the Breiðafjörður area. It is clear that Arngrímur was not aware of some of the most important manuscripts, even 14th century manuscripts still in existence, such as the Möðruvallabók (see Jakob Benediktsson). The manuscripts are said not to have been easy to obtain, their owners guarding them and even seemingly keeping them secret. It is rather remarkable that a volume like Möðruvallabók was not known to Arngrímur.

As to the social context of these sources, it is known that in the late Middle Ages some of the richer aristocratic or noble families in Iceland continued the tradition of writing, even keeping scholars as tenants at tenant farms to study and copy sagas and other literature and written material. At least two such schools are known from the late Middle Ages, one at the Skarð in Skarðsströnd, already mentioned as the original location for one of Arngrímur's sources, and Möðruvellir (see Árni Daníel Júlíusson 1997). It seems that the late medieval Icelandic aristocracy continued the tradition of saga writing that had begun in the 12th century and flourished in the 13th and 14th centuries. The social context of the production and preservation of saga literature in the period ca. 1400-1600 is, however, poorly researched.



3. RECEPTION AND INTERPRETATION IN CRYMOGÆA

The interpretation of the saga material in *Crymogæa* has been very influential, even now providing the backbone of the most widely accepted narrative of the history of Iceland. It is only in the 20th century that any serious doubts about the main themes in the interpretation of the history of Iceland provided by Arngrímur the Learned have surfaced. Its influence in Iceland in the 17th century was immense, awakening a new interest for saga literature, culminating in the work of Árni Magnússon, who collected a large number of manuscripts to be preserved for posterity.

With *Crymogæa*, Arngrímur undertook to write the history of Iceland in the humanist tradition, tracing the origin of the people of Iceland as far back as possible and with all the means of scholarship at the disposal of learned men in Europe at the time. This was by no means negligible, but it is perhaps more important that for the first time Icelandic medieval literature was treated by one who was in touch with the university culture of Europe. Even if many of the most learned Icelanders in the period 1400-1600 studied abroad, and even if universities had existed from the 13th century⁵, they were only just coming into existence in Scandinavia in the 16th century (the University of Copenhagen established in 1479 (Scocozza and Jensen 110)). From then on, the tradition and continuity of the study of Icelandic medieval literature in the international scholarly community has been unbroken.

Arngrímur starts by declaring that the book was presented to Dr. Hans Resen, rector of Copenhagen University, in 1603 (see Arngrímur Jónsson 62). The purpose of the work is to glorify god, who „lét birtast eða rísa úr sæ á miðju úthafi heppilegan bústað og sá þeim þar á dásamlegan hátt fyrir öllum lífsnauðsynjum.“⁶ That is to say, Iceland. This is an interesting sentence, as it seems to indicate that Iceland was not created at the creation, but some time after God created the ocean. This is, however, not expanded on, but it could be interesting to speculate on the ideas behind this formulation.

The work is also written to the glory of the kings of Denmark, „Fyrir velgerðir þeirra hefur kirkja guðs á Íslandi endurheimt skærara ljós fagnaðarerindisins“, and on whose initiative printing and schooling was begun in Iceland, and access to university opened to Icelandic youth.⁷



The following passage is interesting⁸:

Ég veit að sumum mun mislíka að ég nota orð og heiti eins og þjóðveldi, höfðingjaveldi, konungsríki, stórhöfðingjar og lögmenn um menn og samfélag af svo lágum stigum [sem Ísland].. menn verða að þola að þau séu notuð um Ísland.

[I know some people will not like that I use words like republic, aristocracy, kingdom, chieftains and lawmen about men and society of such humble stature [as Iceland]...people will have to suffer that this is used of Icelanders.]

It should be noted here that the word Arngrímur uses in the original Latin version for what is translated here (by Jakob Benediktsson) as *þjóðveldi* is *res publica*. I am not familiar with the etymology of *res publica*, but in the 20th century *þjóðveldi* has had a specific connotation in the nationalistic ideology of the 20th century Icelandic republic.

PRESERVING THE LANGUAGE

Arngrímur rejects the view that Iceland is the Thule mentioned in some Roman sources. This he does with considerable emphasis (see Arngrímur Jónsson 78ff). The reason for this might be that if it could be argued that Iceland had never been visited before the Norwegians came there, it could strengthen the legitimacy of the Scandinavian or Icelandic ownership of the island. Arngrímur is of the opinion that the Icelandic language is the old Norwegian, i.e. the old and unspoiled Norwegian (see Arngrímur Jónsson 96). He knew, however, that this language had been called Danish, „enda hafa þeir ávallt metið Dani mikils“⁹. Arngrímur argues that it should now be called Icelandic, because the Icelanders were then the only ones who use it unchanged.

Arngrímur had a program to preserve Icelandic unchanged. He saw value in doing so, in accordance with his humanist views. Arngrímur saw two main ways to keep Icelandic unchanged. One was to read and publish the old manuscripts containing the pure language, and the other was to limit interaction with foreigners. Arngrímur was namely of the opinion that the main reason the language in Norway changed or was spoiled was due to too much communication with foreigners. He is also against copying or imitating the Danes or Germans in speech or writing (see Arngrímur Jónsson 103-4). It can be seen that the roots of Icelandic linguistic puritanism are old and deep. One could be justified in calling Arngrímur somewhat xenophobic, but an investigation into the roots of his xenophobia might reveal some surprising connections.



After this discussion of language, Arngrímur the Learned begins telling the story of the origins of Icelanders, beginning with a discussion of the origins of Scandinavians. Arngrímur firmly believed that Scandinavians were the descendants of giants, and supported this view by quoting the Bible. It should be noted that in the mid 20th century, Jakob Benediktsson was none too pleased with this argumentation, probably thinking that it revealed a primitive and unscientific side of Arngrímur the Learned¹⁰. Considering that the great astronomer Tycho Brahe himself engaged at almost the same time in both astrology and astronomy (see Wittendorff), Arngrímur's position should not be criticized from this point of view; he was perfectly justified in making this argument.

Arngrímur was familiar with the writings of Tacitus. He points out that Tacitus' description of the dwellings of the Germans from about 120 AD, that they did not have buildings of stone, accurately describes the state of Icelandic architecture in his own time, i.e. about 1600. One of the strongest threads in Arngrímur's interpretation of the sagas is the constant comparison with antiquity, which is of course a very strong sign of humanism (see Arngrímur Jónsson 134, 169).

THE HISTORY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Arngrímur the Learned uses arguments from Bodin to establish that Icelandic society after the settlement was a state. According to Arngrímur, Bodin said that a state is nothing but a multitude of families or social groups subject to a single government, and to a single law and system of courts. This applies to the Icelandic commonwealth (*þjóðveldi, res publica*), says Arngrímur, even if he defines this commonwealth as the rule of chieftains (*aristocracia*) (see Arngrímur Jónsson 152-53).

Then Arngrímur told the life stories of some famous Icelanders from the saga period, in order to „þagga niður í þeim sem vanir eru að brigsla þjóð vorri um að hún sé ekki annað en ræningjafélag og samansafn af hrakmennum.¹¹“ These stories are excerpts from various sagas. He says that it is necessary to tell the story of individuals because there exists no history of Iceland as a whole, it has never been at war or had major disputes with other peoples. He is convinced that the originators of the Icelandic nation were of noble Norwegian families (see Arngrímur Jónsson 2020, 206-7).



In an interesting passage, Arngrímur the Learned describes how the Norwegians did not dare invade Iceland because of the „considerable number of armed men in Iceland.“ In those times, strength of body and good bodily condition had been of great importance, and Icelanders were not lacking in these qualities, and gunpowder, guns and bombs had not yet been invented. Arngrímur regards these inventions as „glötunardjúp mannkyns,“ or the ruinous abyss of humanity.

In Arngrímur’s view, the sagas are believable, and there is very little in them that cannot be found in the history of other peoples.

A key passage in Crymogæa is the following¹²:

Höfðingjavelði stóð meðal Íslendinga í nær fjórar aldir (eða 387 ár) ...Á þessu tímabili litu Noregskonungar ekki á þá sem þegna heldur virtu þá sem bandamenn og vini. En þó höfum vér fundið að Noregskonungar hafa á ýmsum tímum beitt ásælni gegn farsæld Íslendinga, en hún byggðist framar öðru á sjálfstæði þeirra.

[Aristocracy reigned among Icelanders for almost four centuries (387 years)...In this period the kings of Norway did not regard them as subjects but as allies and friends. Even so, we have felt that Norwegian kings in various periods have made claims on the wellbeing of Icelanders, but it was primarily based on their independence.]

Attempts by the Norwegians to subdue the Icelanders were originally rejected by Einar Þveræingur and others at the Althing, but then came the dark fate of constitutional change. The aristocracy developed into an oligarchy of ill repute, and the legal and judicial system of the preceding 400 years was rejected. Disorder ruled and the oligarchy fought among itself. Bishop Guðmundur góði was driven from Hólar. The result was¹³:

Þegar þjóðveldið var með þessum hætti tætt í sundur kom Noregskonungur því til leiðar sem hann hafði lengi ætlað sér. Landsmönnum virtist ekki heldur önnur leið greiðari né annað ráð öruggara til þess að friða þjóðfélagið en að bæði höfðingjar og alþýða lytu valdi eins konungs.

When the commonwealth was torn apart in this way, the King of Norway succeeded in what he had long had in mind. The Icelanders saw no clearer or safer way to pacify society than to ensure that both chieftains and public be subject to the power of one king.]

Arngrímur then goes on to describe developments from the fall of the commonwealth to the execution of Jón Arason. He is of the opinion that the new lawbook dating from 1281, Jónsbók, was far too lenient and soft, compared to the old Grágás. The lack of will to punish



with decapitation is something Arngrímur regards as dangerous or bad for morale (see Arngrímur Jónsson 173, 222).

However, one execution was not justified in the eyes of Arngrímur. He says that the execution in 1550 of Catholic bishop Jón Arason, was not well received and became a source of hatred. The execution of Jón and his sons without law and order was not justified, he says, and not regarded as justified by the Icelandic community. Arngrímur says this because the activities of Bishop Jón Arason caused Iceland to acquire the reputation of being a rebellious province or country.

Lastly, Arngrímur takes the side of Guðbrandur against the Icelandic gentry he quarrelled with in his time as a bishop.

ARNGRÍMUR'S INTERPRETATION

In *Crymogæa* Arngrímur undertakes to use the sagas as sources for a national history. It is quite clear that he regards Icelanders as a special people or nation equal to any other in Europe. He is of the opinion that he is entirely justified in this belief, with the authority of the sagas on one hand and the theoretical frame of interpretation provided by Bodin on the other. He also uses the sagas to make claims for the origin and status of the Icelandic language, asserting that it needs to be preserved in as pure a condition as possible.

The meeting of the saga tradition and the system of centralized monarchy with its appendages – university and all – was an explosive moment in the development of the saga tradition. The saga tradition from the high Middle Ages proved resilient and powerful enough to meet the learned world of the 16th century renaissance and humanism face to face. It subsequently it produced a whole school of Icelandic medieval studies.

In writing the history of Iceland, Arngrímur the learned made claims for Iceland that eventually led to Icelanders regaining their country's formal political independence. The extent and boldness of these claims is surprising. The political conditions for the regaining of independence were, however, far from ripe, and these conditions did not come about until the 19th century. Humanism seems to have been pregnant with the development of rationalism and secularisation in the 17th and 18th centuries, eventually producing the nationalist movements of the 19th century, but the latter needed time to grow.



The interpretation of the history of the commonwealth provided by Arngrímur the Learned has been very influential. In Arngrímur's eyes the loss of political independence was a catastrophe and the reason for the country's decline. One cannot, however, entirely escape the thought that to some extent Arngrímur's interpretation of the fall of the commonwealth was coloured by the recent historical experience of the Reformation revolution in Iceland. These events led to much deeper changes in the social fabric of Iceland than did the fall of the commonwealth. The advancement of royal power in the late 13th century was to all intents and purposes rejected by the Icelandic gentry in the early 14th century, and social and economic conditions changed little, except that the church continued to strengthen its position and acquired immense amounts of landed wealth.

With the Reformation revolution, however, the culture of the Icelandic gentry changed radically, from being a culture of violence and honour, to being a culture of peaceful royal officials. The strengthening of central power in the 16th century was far more effective than in the 13th century, and this might have coloured the interpretation of history provided by Arngrímur. The often subconscious interpretation of history in the light of the times in which latter-day historians live is a well-known phenomenon in all times.

A MEETING OF TRADITIONS

The meeting of the saga tradition from the 12th-14th centuries and the tradition of humanism that developed in the 15th and 16th centuries is highly interesting. The intellectual history of mediaeval and early modern Europe could be very much enriched by a systematic comparison of the two traditions.

NOTES

¹ Landed property was at the time almost the only source of wealth and power in Iceland, and besides agriculture the fisheries were organized on the basis of the landed property.

² *Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana* XII. Kh. 1957: 70

³ In connection with a dispute between Guðbrandur Þorláksson and Jón Jónsson the lawman.

⁴ *Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana* XII. Kh. 1957: 82-106



⁵ The first „modern“ university seems to have been established in 1215, that is to say it was at that time that the basic rules for the independence of universities were established. [finna bók]

⁶ See Arngrímur Jónsson: 66. This sounds like this in the original Latin version: ..., and in English translation might sound something like: „made to appear or rise out of the sea in the middle of the ocean a fitting abode and provided them there in a wonderful way with all the necessities of life.“ The version used here is a translation into modern Icelandic by Jakob Benediktsson from 1985. There does, however, exist an Icelandic version from the 17th century, by priest Jón Erlendsson, who died in 1672. This is preserved as Ny kgl. saml. 1281 fol. I haven't had the opportunity to consult it, but it would be interesting to compare the two translations.

⁷ See Arngrímur Jónsson: 68. on whose initiative the church of god in Iceland reclaimed a brighter light of salvation.

⁸ Arngrímur Jónsson: 70.

⁹ Arngrímur Jónsson: 102 „and they have always held a high opinion of the Danes“

¹⁰ Jakob Benediktsson in the prologue to *Crymogæa*.

¹¹ See Arngrímur Jónsson: 201: „silence those who are used to charging our nation with being only a society of robbers and a collection of evil men.“

¹² Arngrímur Jónsson: 213.

¹³ Arngrímur Jónsson: 214-217.

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