Orms þáttr Stórólfsissonar

Edited by Peter Jorgensen

Introduction

Orms þáttr Stórólfsissonar ‘The Tale of Ormr Stórólfsisson’ (OStór) was composed possibly as early as the late thirteenth century, but more probably in the second or third quarter of the fourteenth (Faulkes 2011b, 35-6). It deals with the exploits of an historically attested hero, Ormr, son of Stórólfr Høengsson, who lived in the south of Iceland in the tenth century. Both father and son are mentioned in Ldn (ÍF 1, 348, 353, 355) and are said there and in the þáttir to belong among the descendants of the settler Ketill hœngr ‘Salmon’. As a child Ormr proves to be both extremely strong and very unruly. After his Danish sworn brother Ásbjörn prúði ‘the Gallant’ Virflisson is tortured and slain by the monster Brúsi on the island of Sauðey off the coast of Møre (ON Mørr) in Norway, Ormr receives aid from the half-troll Mengloð (Brúsi’s half-sister, whose mother was human) and slays Brúsi and Brúsi’s mother in a cave encounter. The first four chapters of OStór are similar in style to sagas of Icelanders and recount the hero’s youthful feats in Iceland, while the remaining six, which take place abroad, mainly in Norway, are reminiscent of förnaldarsögur. All the stanzas occur in the second, förnaldarsaga-like section of the þáttir.

Whoever composed OStór appears to have borrowed extensively from literary works that were probably already in existence, including Gr, Eg, Orv and the poem Krákmál ‘The Speeches of the Crow’ (Anon Krm (Ragn)), as well as from existing oral traditions. Faulkes (2011b, 21-32) gives a detailed analysis of these borrowings. He also offers the opinion (2011b, 34) that ‘there is little to suggest that [the stanzas in the þáttir] are older than the prose, or that they are not by the author of the prose. Both prose and verse use the same sources (Grettis saga and Órvar-Odds saga)’.

OStór is preserved in three medieval manuscripts. The oldest is Flateyjarbók (GKS 1005 fol, Flat), where the þáttir forms part of Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar (ÓT), in a section of the ms. thought to have been written between 1382-7. Flat is the base ms. for this edition. The other medieval mss are GKS 2845 4º (2845), a collection mainly of förnaldarsögur and þáttir of c. 1450, and the fragmentary AM 567 V 4º (567V) of between 1450-1500 which contains no stanzas. The þáttir is also in AM 554 h ß 4ºx (554h ß3) of 1600-1700, a ms. that also contains Krók and Pórd, and in at least twenty-five other paper mss. Both 2845 and 567V go back to a ms. closely related to Flat, but 567V is quite corrupt, while 2845, despite a large number of obviously incorrect readings, contains in a few instances readings preferable to those in Flat. Because 554h ßx contains so many obviously corrupt readings, especially in the lists of heroes’ names in sts 9-10, not all of its variants in those stanzas are included here.
OSTór contains twelve eight-line stanzas, rather clustered, the first in ch. 5, the second in ch. 6, and the remainder in ch. 7, with no intervening prose between sts 4-12. All lines end in a trochee, and sts 2, 4-8, and 11 are in an irregular dróttkvætt, with three stressed syllables per line, two alliterating staves in odd lines and one in even lines; however, only sts 7 and 8 contain the full complement of internal consonance and rhyme. Stanzas 1, 3, and 12 contain two stressed syllables per line, with each pair of lines sharing two alliterating staves (fornyrðislag). Stanzas 9 and 10 (except for the initial pair of lines, which are identical to those in sts 5-8 and 11), contain two stressed syllables per line, with l. 5 evidencing consonance and l. 8 full rhyme. Stanzas 4-12, often referred to as 'Ásbjörn’s Death Song', reveal a number of stylistic and thematic parallels with Kvn, supposedly the death song of Ragnarr loðbrók.

Even though OSTór is probably a product of the fourteenth century, and the stanzas may also date from that period, at least in their present form, the orthography of the text has been normalised to that of the period c. 1250-1300 in accordance with the policy of this edition (see Introduction to this volume). The text printed in Faulkes 2011b offers a partial normalisation to fourteenth-century conventions (see Faulkes 2011b, 36-7 for details).

The editio princeps of OSTór is in an appendix (pp. 5-19) to the 1689 Skálholt edition of Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar (ÓT 1689). In the same year Thomas Bartholin published the Icelandic text of 'Ásbjörn’s Death Song' with a Latin translation on pp. 158-62 of his Antiquitates Danicae. OSTór has been edited in Fms 3, 204-28, Flat 1860-8, 1, 521-32, Porleifur Jónsson (1904, 199-222), Guðni Jónsson (1935, 169-93) and (1946-9, 11, 447-72) and Faulkes (2011b, 57-78). In addition, the stanzas but not their prose contexts appear in Skj A and B and Skald.

Introduction to st. 1

Both the prose text of OSTór ch. 5 and this fornyrðislag lausavísa are indebted to Qrv ch. 2, where a sibyl similarly prophesies that Oddr will die in a particular place on an island off the Norwegian coast. In both cases, the protagonists are hostile to the prophetess and scoff at her prediction. Aside from the prophetess's stanzas in Qrv 1-3, there is one other instance in a fornaldarsaga of a sibyl's prophecy in Hrölf 2-5.

Anonymous völva (Anon OSTór 1)

1. Þó at þú lárir yfir lögú breiða
   byrhest renna ok beriz víða,
   nær mun þat liggja, at norðr fyrir Mæri
   þú bana hljóтир; bezt mun at þegja.

Þat mun liggja nær, at þú hljóтир bana norðr fyrir Mæri, þó at þú lárir byrhest renna yfir breiða
lögu ok beriz víða; bezt mun at þegja.
Even though you let the wind-horse [SHIP] run over the broad seas and roam afar, it [the fate] will be at hand, that you will meet your death in the north off the coast of Møre; it is best to be silent.

Mss: Flat(70ra), 2845(22e), 554h β'(60v) (OStór).


Editions: Skj: Anonyme digte og vers [XIII], E. 18. Vers af Fornaldarsagaer: Af Orms þáttir Stórolfssonar I: All, 342, BII, 364, Skald II, 197; ÓT 1689, 10, Fns 3, 212; Flat 1860-8, I, 525; Þorleifur Jónssson 1904, 207; Guðni Jónsson 1935, 177 (ch. 5), Guðni Jónsson 1946-9, 11, 455 (ch. 5), Faulkes 2011b, 64 (ch. 5) (OStór).

Context: On a farm in Denmark, a sibyl utters this prophecy, that young Ásbjørn Virflisson is destined to die in the north, off the coast of Møre (ON Mærr) in Norway.

Notes: [All]: This stanza may echo Heiðr Lv 2/1-4 (Orv 2): Ferr þu eigi svá | fjördu breiða | né lítir yfir | langa våga ... ‘You will never travel thus over broad firths or sail across long bays ...’. The import of the stanza is that, however far Ormr travels, he will not avoid his destiny back in Norway. — [2] yfir breiða lægu ‘over the broad seas’: Skj B and Skald have preferred the reading of 554h β, yfir læg breiðan ‘over the broad sea’ but cf. Orv 2/2 where the pl. fjördu breiða ‘broad firths’ occurs. — [5] pat mun liggja nær ‘it [the fate] will be at hand’: Lit. ‘it will lie close’. — [6] norðr yfir Mari ‘in the north off the coast of Møre’: Faulkes (2011b, 91) notes that the geographical location of the islands where Ásbjörn is to die is somewhat vague, both in the stanza and the prose of OStór. In the prose the sibyl threatens him with death á Norðmæri ‘in Nordmøre’, and I. 6 may refer to this district, in contrast with Sunnmør (Sunnmøre), the more southerly of the two Møre districts.

Introduction to sts 2-3

Two lausavísur are attributed to Ásbjørn prúði in OStór, the first in ch. 6, and the second in ch. 7. The first is in an irregular dróttkvætt metre and the second in fornyrðislag.

Ásbjørn (Ásb Lv 1)

2.  Sagði mér á seidí,  Vætki vissi völva;
    söng um þat lóngum, vera mun ek enn með mönnum
    at ek á feigum fæti  glaðr í Gautaveldi;
    færir norðr á Mæri.  gramir eigi spá hennar.

Sagði mér á seidi, söng um þat lóngum, at ek færir norðr á Mæri á feigum fæti. Völva vissi vætki; ek mun enn vera glaðr með mönnum í Gautaveldi; gramir eigi spá hennar.
She told me through magic rites, sang of it at length, that I would travel north to Møre on feet fated to die. The seeress knew nothing; I will still be glad among men in the realm of the Gautar; may trolls take her prophecy.

**Mss:** Flat(70rb), 2845(22v), 554h β²(62r) (OStórv).


**Context:** After harrying together for two years, Ormr and Ásbjörn spend the winter with Jarl Herrod or in Gautland, Southern Sweden. While drinking one day Ásbjörn refers to the sibyl's prophecy with this stanza.

**Notes:** [1] á seíði ‘through magic rites’: Seíðr was a form of sorcery said to have been employed by women and a few men (as well as the god Óðinn) to bring about some change, usually for the worse, in a human being, or to predict whether the forthcoming season or harvest would be good or bad. Descriptions of the rituals accompanying seíðr indicate that the practitioners usually sat on a platform of some kind, and that chants were sung either by the seeress or her female assistants. The locus classicus in Old Norse literature is Eir ch. 4 (ÍF 4, 206-9). See further Strömberg (1935) and Meulengracht Sørensen (1983, 19). — [2] söng um þat lóngum ‘sang of it at length’: The version of Flat, which is adopted here, is in málabátr. The lines of this stanza are metrically irregular, though most have six metrical positions. Skj B adopts ok söng from 2845 to give a six-syllable line, but this is unmetrical. As Faulkes (2011b, 93 n.) points out, 5-syllable lines are found elsewhere in the stanzas of OStórv, viz. in st. 11/2 and 11/4. Kock (NN §2620) discusses other ways of regularising the line, and in Skald chooses to emend to the metrically acceptable söng um þat fyr lóngu ‘sang of it a long time ago’. — [3] á feigum fæti ‘on feet fated to die’: Lit. ‘on a doomed foot’. — [7] í Gautaveldi ‘in the realm of the Gautar’: Probably here intended to refer to the inhabitants of Gautland, the region of Southern Sweden now encompassing the provinces of Västergötland and Östergötland. — [8] gramir ‘trolls’: Lit. ‘furious, angry ones’, a substantival adj. often used in the pl. to refer to trolls or other fiends.
Ásbjörn (Ásb Lv 2)

3. Sinni má engi íprótt tresyta;
   aldri er hann svá sterkr né stórr í huga.
   Svá bregz hverjum á banadægri
   hjarta ok megin, sem heill bilar.

Engi má tresyta íprótt sinni; hann er aldri svá sterkr né stórr í huga. Svá bregz hjarta ok megin hverjum á banadægri, sem heill bilar.

No one may trust in his own accomplishent; he is never so strong or courageous. Thus to every man on his death-day heart and strength fail as good fortune fails.

Mss: Flat(70va), 2845(23r-v), 554h β'*(63r) (OSþór).


Context: Ormr returns to Iceland after he has heard news of his father’s death, but Ásbjörn becomes eager to go north to the Sauðeyjar off the coast of Møre. Leaving his men on the coast of the outer of the two islands, Ásbjörn goes inland to the giant Brúsi’s cave, where the giant snatches him up and dashes him to the ground as soon as he enters. After having been effortlessly overpowered by Brúsi, Ásbjörn utters this stanza.

Notes: [3-4]: These two lines are unmetrical in their present state, unless l. 3 sterkr is desyllabified to sterkur and l. 4 is treated as málaháttur. — [4] stórr í huga ‘courageous’: Lit. ’great in mind’. — [8] heill ‘good fortune’: This noun could be a personification in the sense ‘guardian spirit’; cf. Faulkes (2011b, 93-4 n.).

Introduction to Ásbjörn Áevikviða 1-9 (OSþór 4-12)

The following nine stanzas have conventionally been termed ‘Ásbjörn’s death song’ and have similarities to a sub-group of long poems attested mostly from fornaldarsögur, termed áevikviður ‘life poems’ or (erroneously, because they have no conventional refrain) áвидræpur ‘life lays’ in Modern Icelandic, that purport to be the dying words of a hero, usually composed and recited in extremis (see further Introduction to Volume VIII, Sections 7.1 and 7.2). The sub-group is characterised by its autobiographical review of salient events in the hero’s life and, often, as here, by the speaker’s request that the poem be sent as a final greeting to a relative, in this case Ásbjörn’s mother. Other
poems of this kind are Hildibrandr Lv 1-6 (Ásm 1-6), Hjálmar Lv 4-19 (Orv 14-29), Órvar-Oddr Ævidrápa 1-71 (Orv 71-141), Anon Kim (Ragn), Hallmundr, Hallmundarkvida 1-6V (Halkv 1-6 (Gr 51-6)) and Grettir Ásmundarson’s avvikður (Grett Ækv 1 1-3V (Gr 22-4) and Grett Ækv 2V (Gr 39-42)), the three last-named occurring in Grettis saga, which, although usually classed among the sagas of Icelanders, bears a strong resemblance to fornaldrarøgur in this and many other respects.

It is likely that the composer of Ásb Ækv knew and imitated other poems of this type, and possible verbal and metrical parallels are pointed out in the Notes. The metre of most of the stanzas is an irregular drottkvætt (for details, see Introduction and Notes to the stanzas).

According to OStör, Ásbjorn delivered his avvikða while the giant Brúsi tore out his intestines and wound them round an iron pillar (for a discussion of this method of torture and death, see Faulkes 2011b, 94 n.). After he had finished the poem, he is said to have died ‘with great courage and nobility’ (með mikilli breysti ok drengskap). The stanzas are presented one after the other in the saga text without any intervening prose.

Ásbjorn (Ásb Ækv 1)

4. Segiz þat minni módur; Hafði ek henni heitit, 
mun hon ei syni kemba at ek heim koma munda; 
svardar lág í sumri nú mun segg á síðu 
svanhvit í Danmörku. sverðs egg dregin verða.

Segiz þat minni módur; hon, svanhvit, mun ei kemba láð svarðar syni í sumri í Danmörku. Ek hafði heitir henni, ar ek munda koma heim; egg sverðs mun nú verða dregin á síðu segg.

Let it be told to my mother; she, swan-white, will not comb the land of the scalp [HEAD] of her son this summer in Denmark. I had promised her that I would come home; now the sword’s edge will be drawn against the warrior’s [my] side.

Miss: Flat(70va), 2845(23v), 554h β³(63r) (OSTör).


Context: The first of nine stanzas spoken by Ásbjorn after the giant Brúsi has torn out Ásbjorn’s intestines and wound them round an iron pillar. The stanzas are introduced with the words Ásbjörn kvæð þá visur pessar jafnframmi ‘Ásbjorn spoke these verses at the same time [as his intestines were being wound round the pillar]’.
Notes: [4] svanhvit ‘swan-white’: Taken as an adj. here, but it could be the name of Ásbjörn’s mother, to whom the poem is to be conveyed. In Völ 2/5 Svanhvit is the name of one of the three swan-maidens who are said in the poem’s prose introduction to appear to Völundr and his brothers, although in this introductory prose (NK 116) the word is used both as an epithet and a pers. n. — [5]: This line has three alliterating staves.

Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 2)

5. Annat var, þá er inni.  Drukkum mjöð ok mæltum
Ölkátir vér sátum  mart orð saman forðum;
ok á fleyskipi fórum  nú emk einn í öngvar
fjörd af Hörðalandi.  jötna þröngvar genginn.

Annat var, þá er inni. Vér sátum ölkátir ok fórum fjörd af Hörðalandi. Drukkum mjöð forðum ok mæltum mart orð saman; nú emk einn genginn í öngvar þröngvar jötna.

It used to be different, when inside. We would sit merry with ale, and sail the fjord on a fast ship away from Hörðaland. We drank mead in days gone by and spoke many a word together; now I have come alone into the confining straits of giants.

Ms: Flat (70va), 2845 (23v), 554h βv (63r-v) (ll. 1-6) (OStór).


Notes: [1]: The first line of sts 5-11 is unvarying, constituting a kind of initial line refrain, similar to the practice of another avikviða, Anon Krín’s Hjuggu vör med hjörvi ‘We hewed with the sword’. The purpose of these refrains is to draw attention to the contrast between the speaker’s present situation and his former heroic life. This edn, along with Skj B, adopts 2845’s version of l. 1, which is also found verbatim in Gr (IF 7, 52; Grett Lv 6/1V (Gr 14)), where inni ‘inside’ is definitely used adverbially. Kock (NN §2495A and Skald) emends to þat er inni ‘which I relate’ (following Flat’s ek inni), treating inni as 1st pers. sg. pres. indic. of inna ‘tell, relate’ on the ground that the adverbial sense of inni does not suit five of the seven stanzas (6-8, 10 and 11) in which it occurs. However, if one assumes imitation from Gr, or even a general imitation of the practice of other avikviður, the loose fit of this refrain line is probably acceptable (cf. Faulkes 2011b, 94-5 n.). Ms. 554h βv has the same alternative reading of l. 1 in sts 7-11 as here. — [3] á fleyskipi ‘on a fast ship’: The precise nature of a fley or fleyskip is not clear. Fritzner: fleyskip identifies it as a type of larger vessel, but one smaller than a
longship. Others (CVC: fley) consider it a type of fast ship, possibly a merchant ship. — [6] emn ‘I have’: Lit. ‘I am’. The ms. reads er ek, which reflects C14th usage, when the 3rd pers. sg. form of the pres. tense of vera ‘be’ was often generalised to the 1st pers. sg. (cf. ANG §531.1). The non-cliticised form of the pron. ek has also been normalised here to give a metrically regular line. — [7-8]: These lines are omitted in 554h B², which follows l. 6 with two lines that correspond loosely to OSþr 6/3-4. The rest of OSþr 6 is missing in 554h B². — [7-8] í öngvar þröngvar jötna ‘into the confining straits of giants’: It is assumed here that öng ‘narrow, cramped, confining’ is an adj. and þröng is a f. pl. noun ‘narrowing, straits’ (as with LP: þengr, þröng f., 2), but it is possible, as Faulkes (2011b, 95 n.) points out, that the reverse is the case, with öngvar as a f. pl. noun, and þröng as an adj. The meaning would be the same in both cases.

Ásbjörn (Asb Ævkv 3)

6.  Annat var, þá er inni.
    Allstórir saman fórum;
    stóð þar upp í stafni
    Stórólfs burt inn frækní,
    þá er langskipum lagði
    lundr at Eyrasundi;
    nú mun ek tældr í tryggðum
    trolfa byggðir kanna.

Annat var, þá er inni. Allstórir fórum saman; inn frækní burt Stórólfs stóð þar upp í stafni, þá er lundr lagði langskipum at Eyrasundi; ek, tældr í tryggðum, mun nú kanna byggðir trolfa.

It used to be different, when inside. We mighty ones travelled together; the brave son of Stórólfr [= Ormr] stood up there at the prow when the tree <warrior> sailed the warships towards the Óresund; I, betrayed under truce, will now explore the dwellings of trolls.

Miss: Flät(70va), 2845(23v), 554h β²(63v) (ll. 3-4) (OSþr).


Notes: [1]: See Note to OSþr 5/1. — [2] fórum ‘we ... travelled’: The reading of 2845 has been chosen here over Flät’s förú ‘they travelled’, because it accords better with the 1st pers. pl. verbs at OSþr 5/3, 9/2, 10/2 and 11/2. — [3] stóð þar upp í stafni ‘stood up there at the prow’: Cf. Egill Lv 3/5V (Eg 7), standa upp í stafni ‘stand up in the prow’. — [6] lundr ‘the tree <warrior>’: Commonly the base-word of a kenning for ‘man’ or ‘warrior’, here a half-kenning for ‘man, warrior’. Finnur Jónsson (Skj B) emends þá er (l. 5) to bjórsp ‘of the sword’ to give a two-part warrior-kenning lund bjórsp ‘tree of the sword’, but this is unjustified both palaeographically and from the point of view of late
skaldic diction, where such half-kennings are common (cf. Meissner 78-80; NN §184 and Faulkes 2011b, 95 n.). — [6] *at Eyrasundi* ‘towards the Øresund’: The strait that separates the Danish island of Sjælland from the present-day Swedish province of Skåne. — [7] *tældr í tryggðum* ‘betrayed under truce’: The reference of this phrase is unknown and does not match the prose context, which gives no indication that Brúsi has lured Ásbjǫrn to his cave on any pretext whatsoever.

Ásbjǫrn (Ásb Ævku 4)

7.  Annat var, þá er inni.
    Ormr at Hildar stormi
    gekk enn gráðgum blakki
    Geitís sylg at veita.

    Rekk at rómu dökkri
    raunmargan gaf vargi
    seggr ok sár nam höggva
    svinnr at Ífu minni.

Annat var, þá er inni. Ormr gekk enn at stormi Hildar at veita gráðgum blakki Geitís sylg. Svinnr seggr gaf vargi raunmargan rekk at dökkri rómu ok nam höggva sár at minni Ífu.

It used to be different, when inside. Ormr went again to the storm of Hildr <valkyrie> [BATTLE] to give a drink to the greedy horse of Geitir <giant> [WOLF]. The swift warrior gave very many a man to the wolf in dark battle and dealt hard blows at the mouth of the Ífa.

*Mss:* Flat(70va), 2845(23v), 554h β8(63v) (OSTór).


*Notes:* [2-3] *gráðgum blakki Geitís* ‘to the greedy horse of Geitir <giant> [WOLF]’: Usually determinants of wolf-kennings of this type are names for giantesses rather than male giants. Geitir is given as the name of one of Ásbjǫrn’s companions in OSTór 10/8. It appears as a giant name in *Pul Jóna I 3/3III* and as a sea-king name in *Pul Sákonunga I 1/7III*. — [5] *rekk* ‘man’: Skj B and Skald emend *rekk* to *rókk* ‘it grew dark’, producing an *adhabending*, though in an odd line. — [8] *at minni Ífu* ‘at the mouth of the Ífa’: The river Ífa is unknown and is otherwise only mentioned in Anon *Krýmr* 4/5. The form *minni* ‘mouth, estuary’ is a late alternative to *mynni*, with the same meaning.
Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 5)

8. Annat var, þá er inni.
   Ek veitta ferð sveittri
   högg með hvassri tuggu
   Herjans suðr í skerjum
   Elfar. Opt nam kölf
   Ormr hagliga at forma
   mest, þá er Miðjungs traustir
   mágar eptir lágu.

   Annat var, þá er inni. Ek veitta sveittri ferð högg með hvassri tuggu Herjans suðr í skerjum Elfar. Ormr nam opt at forma kölf hagliga mest, þá er traustir mágar Miðjungs lágu eptir.

   It used to be different, when inside. I dealt blows with the sharp mouthful of Herjan \(<\text{Fenrir(?)}>\) [sword] to the bloody host down south among the skerries of the Götaälvé. Ormr often aimed with the arrow skillfully mostly when the trusted kinsmen of Miðjungur <giant> [giants] were left lying.

   Ms: Flat(70va), 2845(23v), 554h β²(63v) (OStó).  


   Notes: [3–4] með hvassri tuggu Herjans ‘with the sharp mouthful of Herjan <Fenrir(?)> [sword]’; What makes this kenning problematical is the use of Herjan, normally a name for the god Óðinn (cf. LP: Herjan(n)), within a kenning whose other elements suggest a reference to the wolf Fenrir, and the myth, recounted in Gylf (SnE 2005, 27-9), of how the gods wedged a sword between Fenrir’s open jaws when they were binding him. It seems that the poet either thought Herjan was an alternative name for Fenrir or had forgotten the myth to which sword-kennings of the type ‘mouthful, mouth-prop of the wolf’ conventionally refer. Cf. Meissner 150, who suggests hergarmr, ‘war-Garmr <monstrous dog>’. Kock (NN §2495B) understands the kenning to mean ‘Óðinn’s biter’, i.e. ‘Óðinn’s sword’. — [4–5] í skerjum Elfar ‘among the skerries of the Götaälvé’: Although its two parts are separated across the end of the first helmingr and the beginning of the second helmingr for metrical reasons, í skerjum Elfar is to be understood as the cpd p. n. Elfarsker, name of a group of skerries at the mouth of the Göta river in present-day Sweden. Separation of cpd elements across helmingr boundaries is otherwise always avoided in skaldic poetry. The name Elfarsker occurs in several mythical-heroic sagas, including three times in Órv, once in verse (ÓrvOdd Lv 16/2 (Órv 49), FSG/2, 348). Kock (NN §2495) proposes elfar as the object of the verb forma ‘create, bring about, do’ in the sense ‘create rivers (of blood)’. — [5] kölf ‘with the arrow’: This noun has several meanings, including ‘club’, ‘tongue of a bell’, ‘pole’
and ‘arrow with a blunt head’ (cf. ONP: kölfr). — [6] nam ... forma ‘aimed’: Forma (a variant of forma, with the same sense) is a late loan into Old Norse, ultimately from Lat. formare (cf. AEW: forma, forma), found mostly in ecclesiastical contexts (cf. ONP: forma). The verb’s usual meaning is ‘form, fashion’, so the sense here is unusual, and Finnur Jónsson translates it as skød ‘shot’ with a question mark in Skj B. — [7-8] traustrir mágar Midjungr ‘the trusted kinsmen of Midjungr <giant> [GIANTS]’: Midjungr is a giant name (cf. Díóð Hausl 8/8 [ii]), although it can also function as the base-word of kennings for ‘men’ where it appears to designate some unspecific supernatural being (cf. LP: midjungur). Whatever its reference here, the kenning as a whole appears to allude to an episode inOrm’s career that is no longer known.

Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 6)

9. Annat var, þá er inni. Allir saman várum,
Gautr ok Geiri, Glúmr ok Starri,
Sámr ok Sæmingr, synir Oddvarar,
Haukr ok Háma, Hrókr ok Tóki.

Annt var, þá er inni. Várum allir saman, Gautr ok Geiri, Glúmr ok Starri, Sámr ok Sæmingr, synir Oddvarar, Haukr ok Háma, Hrókr ok Tóki.

It used to be different, when inside. We were all together, Gautr and Geiri, Glúmr and Starri, Sámr and Sæmingr, the sons of Oddvör, Haukr and Háma, Hrókr and Tóki.

Ms: Flæt(70va), 2845(23v-24r), 554h β3(63v) (OStór).


Note: [All]: The list of names in OStór 9-10 is possibly imitated from a similar list in Hjálm Lv 15-19 (Orv 26-30), although few of the names are exactly the same. Starri appears in Hjálm Lv 15/6 (Orv 26). The roll-call of heroic names, none of whom appear in the prose of OStór, is a convention of some early Germanic heroic poetry, and of poetry in fornaldarsörgur that follows this mode; cf. Faulkes (2011b, 33 n. 2). For the metrical characteristics of OStór 9 and 10, see Introduction.
Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 7)

10. Annat var, þá er inni. Opt á sæ fórum,
    Hrani ok Högni, Hjálmr ok Stefni,
    Grani ok Gunnarr, Grímr ok Sörkvir,
    Tumi ok Torfi, Teitir ok Geitir.

    Annat var, þá er inni. Fórum opt á sæ, Hrani ok Högni, Hjálmr ok Stefni, Grani ok Gunnarr, Grímr ok Sörkvir, Tumi ok Torfi, Teitir ok Geitir.

    It used to be different, when inside. We often sailed out to sea, Hrani and Högni, Hjálmr and Stefni, Grani and Gunnarr, Grímr and Sörkvir, Tumi and Torfi, Teitir and Geitir.

    Ms: Flat(70va), 2845(24r), 554h β*(63v) (OStór).


Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 8)

11. Annat var, þá er inni.
    Alllítt vél spörðum
    at samtogi sverða;
    sjaldan ek latta,
    at brynþalm brýndir
    biti hvæslega seggi;
    þó var Ormr at ímun
    æ oddviti þeira.

    Annat var, þá er inni. Vél spörðum alllítt at samtogi sverða; ek latta sjaldan at brýndir brynþalm biti seggi hvæslega; Ormr var þó æ oddviti þeira at ímun.

    It used to be different, when inside. We held back very little at the drawing together of swords [BATTLE]; seldom did I hinder that the sharpened mailcoat-palms [SWORDS] should sharply bite warriors; even so, Ormr was always their leader in battle.

    Ms: Flat(70va), 2845(24r), 554h β*(63v) (OStór).


Ásbjörn (Ásb Ævkv 9)

12. Mundi Ormr ófrýnn vera,
    ef hann á kvöl þessa kynni at líta
    ok grimmliga gjalda þursi
    várar viðfarar vist, ef hann næði.

Ormr mundi vera ófrýnn, ef hann kynni at líta á þessa kvöl ok vist gjalda þursi viðfarar varar grimmliga, ef hann næði.

Ormr would be displeased if he could look upon this torment and certainly pay back the giant terribly for our [my] treatment, if he could.

_Miss_: Flat(70va), 2845(24r), 554h βα(63v-64r) (OStór).


_Context_: The final stanza spoken by Ásbjörn as Brúsi the giant leads him around an iron pillar, and Ásbjörn’s intestines wind onto it. He dies immediately afterwards.
Notes: [1] This line contains only three syllables, making it likely that desyllabification of final -r has occurred. The line probably contained four syllables, with Ormr disyllabic (Ormur). — [2] ófrýnn ‘displeased’: Lit. ‘frowning’. Uncommon in skaldic poetry; cf. Anon Brúðr 13/2VI, where the adj. is used of the Virgin Mary’s displeasure with one of her devotees.