

Abstract

Never heard of *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*? You're not alone. Alongside the canon of world literary treasures there lies a shady world of forgotten and abandoned texts. The focus of my doctoral research has been the revindication of one such work, not simply because humanities research revels in the excavation of recondite relics of yesteryear, but also because behind every currently unpopular work there can lie a prehistory of untold entertainment and edification.

Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra tells the story of a viking hero and his encounter with a lewd and troublesome trollwoman in the far north. It is found in 37 manuscript witnesses, but also in a number of other literary and textual formats. The relationships between these various formats - a passage from Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum*, Faroese ballads, Swedish 'Stormaktstiden' academic interventions and post-medieval Icelandic *rímur* - will be adumbrated and their production contexts analyzed in an attempt to account for how past audiences interacted with this quirky saga. The result hopefully provides a partial blueprint for the salvaging of similar literary flotsam and jetsam.