

On Translating Icelandic Sagas into Modern Norwegian – the Case of *Brennu Njáls Saga*

JAN RAGNAR HAGLAND

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Gathered as we are here in Vilnius, on the splendid occasion of the 200th anniversary for the publication of professor Joachim Lelewel's *Edda Skandinawska*, it might be pertinent to look at parallel instances of mediating Old Icelandic literature by way of translation elsewhere. It is, as we all know, a fact that the speaker of any language – modern Icelandic excepted – who is not specializing in Old Norse, has to resort to translations in order to appreciate the literature handed down to us in that particular language. As this literature contains some of the masterpieces of medieval European literature, translations are, of course, important. This is so, needless to say, also when translations into a quite closely related language such as modern Norwegian are concerned.

I shall, then, try to look at some aspects of Norwegian saga translations. In order not to exceed all reasonable time limits, I shall confine the present exposition and discussion to the translation history of one of the major works in Old Icelandic literature – the *Brennu Njáls Saga*. The translation history of a text such as this, is of course, closely related to its historical reception, as is, no doubt, the edition we are celebrating in the present seminar. The *Njáls Saga* has a fairly long translation history in Norway – a history which each individual translated version unveils, I think it is fair to say, aspects of the historical reception of the saga, as well as aspects of the state of the art where saga research in general is concerned. We will return to the former of these two points – the latter shall be left at that here, even if this is something which may be argued.

The first to make a point of having made a translation into *Norwegian* rather than into Danish – the common written language used in Denmark and Norway at the time – was Karl L[inné]. Sommerfelt, who made a translation into Dano-Norwegian, which he published as

Approaching the Viking Age. Proceedings of the International Conference on Old Norse Literature, Mythology, Culture, Social Life and Language. Edited by Ērika Sausverde and Ieva Steponavičiūtė. (Scandinavistica Vilnensis 2). Vilnius University Press, 2009.

<https://doi.org/10.15388/ScandinavisticaVilnensis.2009.2.3>

Copyright © 2019 Authors. Published by Vilnius University Press. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

an appendix to a periodical for the enlightenment of the people called *Folkevennen* in 1871. As a translation into Danish had been re-published only nine years earlier (Petersen 1862), the reasons given by Sommerfelt for publishing a new version are interesting both ideologically and linguistically. Sommerfelt seems compelled to excuse himself for publishing a new translation so soon after Petersen – he had done so, he says, because professor Petersen’s translation, in spite of its indisputable qualities, could not really satisfy the tastes of a Norwegian reading public. This was no fault of the translator – it had to do with the Danish language. Danish and Norwegian, Sommerfelt says, are, even if close, two different languages representing two different nationalities. ‘In consequence’, he goes on to say, ‘I do not think that a Norwegian reader in general will be satisfied if he has to make the acquaintance of this particular literature through the medium of the Danish language. Even if he does not know the original language, the reader will easily be struck by the impression that the Danish language is too weak to mediate the force and vigour, the exuberance of expression, the magnificence and boldness of characters and scenes typical for the saga.’¹

A modern reader would most certainly experience difficulties in finding support in the translated text for this programmatic statement of linguistic difference between Dano-Norwegian and Danish, even if differences may, of course, be observed on closer investigation. What is more important in this context is, in my opinion, Sommerfelt’s obvious intention to associate the sagas – the literature of the Golden Medieval Age – with the *Norwegian* language rather than Danish. This is indeed an expression of a growing awareness of a specific Norwegian identity,

1 “Professor Petersens Oversættelse vil, hvilke Fortjenester den end uimodsigelig besidder, neppe ret kunne tilfredsstille en norsk Læser. Dette er ikke Oversætterens Feil, men det danske Sprog. Dansk og Norsk vise sig, hvor nær de end staa hinanden, dog i visse Henseender at være to forskjellige Sprog, ligesom de representerer forskjellige Nationaliteter [...] Jeg tror derfor, at en norsk Læser i Almindelighed ikke vil føle sig tilfredsstillet ved at gjøre Bekjendtskab med denne Litteratur gennem det danske Sprog. Selv om han ikke kjender Originalen, vil det let paatrænge sig ham, at det danske Sprog er for vegt til at gjengive den Kraft, Fynd og Kjernefyldte i Udtrykket, den Storslagenhed og Djærvhed i Karakterer og Scener, som er Sagaen egen...” (Sommerfelt 1871, III–v.).

nourished no doubt by the ideas of romanticism – an ideological basis also, and perhaps even more so, for the activity of translating sagas into the alternative written language in Norway – the then newly coined “Landsmaal”. We will return to this later on. It is suffice here just to point out the fact that the first saga to be translated into Ivar Aasen’s “Landsmaal” (by himself) – the *Fridtjovs Saga* – was published on the initiative of *Folkevennen*, the very same periodical that published Sommerfelt’s translation of the *Njáls saga*.

After Sommerfelt’s translation, a quarter of a century passed before the next translation of *Njáls Saga* appeared in Norway. As vaguely indicated above, a project of translating sagas into Ivar Aasen’s then recently established “Landsmaal”, can be observed through the latter half of the 19th century. Ideologically this was, it appears, part of a larger process of language planning in which the translating of sagas constituted, it seems fair to say, a retrospective dimension in the making of a new literary language (cf. Hagland 2003, 44–45). After Ivar Aasen’s translation of *Fridtjovs Saga* in 1858, some others had tried to forge translated saga texts into the new written idiom. The translations of saga texts into this new written standard should be looked upon, in my opinion, as a conscious search for linguistic and literary models, or patterns perhaps, in the process of making it a literary language. As such, the translations of sagas – and biblical texts for that matter – represented an archaizing element on which we shall not elaborate in the present context (cf. though Hagland 2003, 45–47). Anyway – in this process of making a literary language, a certain number of attempts at translating sagas had already been undertaken when Olav Torsson Aasmundsstad in the mid 1890s ventured the difficult task of translating *Njáls saga* into the new “Landsmaal”: *Njaala eller Soga um Njaal Torgeirsson og sønerne hans* published in 1896–97.

Since then a parallel course of translations and re-editions of this particular saga has been a distinct feature in the history of literary translations into Norwegian – one into Dano-Norwegian, later “Riksmål” and “Bokmål” the other into “Landsmaal”, later “Nynorsk”. It should be added here that Jón Karl Helgason in his interesting study *The Rewriting of Njáls saga* seems to overlook the importance of the translations into “Landsmaal” in his discussion of *Njáls Saga* and

Norwegian liberation – language and nationality (Jón Karl Helgason 1999, 101–116).

Before proceeding any further we shall briefly recapitulate the main stages in the subsequent history of *Njáls Saga* translations into the two Norwegian written standards: Sommerfelt's translation into Dano-Norwegian was replaced – if we may use an expression like that in this context – by Fredrik Paasche's translation into "Riksmål" in 1922 (cf. bibliography), an influential version of the text which was reissued in 1986 and again in 1999². The next step along this line was Hallvard Lie's translation of 1941. This is the most complete version of the existing translations into modern Norwegian – only very minor omissions can be observed in the genealogies. This translation was, however, reedited and reworked into a much abbreviated version (see below) in 1951, published in the popular series of "Hjemmenes boksamling". A somewhat more comprehensive version was published in 1954, in the series "Islandske ættesagaer" edited by Hallvard Lie. The former of the two is probably the most widely distributed version of *Njáls Saga* among the reading public in Norway ever – (exact numbers of printed copies are, however, not available).

Aasmundstad's translation appears to have been out of print and seems, for linguistic reasons, to have been somewhat out of date by the mid 1920s. To cover up for this Knut Liestøl, the famous saga scholar, published a linguistically revised version in 1928. Even if this revised version was based upon an edition of the saga in the source language more updated than the one Aasmundsstad had at his disposal, no major changes in the text as a whole were made.³ A third revision – or retranslation rather – was made by Knut Liestøl's son Aslak in 1961, a version that – as far as the extent of the text is concerned – deviates somewhat from the 1928 version. It was reprinted in 1975, in the series "Norrøne bokverk". As we shall see in more detail below, none of these

2 Published by Den norske Bokklubben together with *Gisla Saga Súrssonar* and *Laxdæla Saga* in one volume under the common title *Saga: norrøne sagaer i utvalg*.

3 Aasmundsstad had used Konráður Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson's edition from 1875–89 whereas Liestøl could use Finnur Jónsson's edition in the series *Altnordische Sagabibliothek* from 1908 (cf. bibliography).

versions in “Landsmål” / “Nynorsk” were complete. For this reason a new edition with the missing parts filled in was commissioned and published in 1996 and again in 2003. Even if these versions claim to be translations of the entire text⁴ they are not. Due to editorial inaccuracy, the publishers (Det Norske Samlaget) have, incredibly enough, failed to fill in missing genealogical information in seven chapters of the saga.⁵ The latter version was republished this year, in 2007, by Den Norske Bokklubben. This publication and the one from 1999 (Paasche’s translation) are, it seems, versions of *Njáls saga* widely distributed in present-day Norway (an impression of about 4000 copies each according to the publisher).

Translations of Icelandic sagas in general should rely on the best editions published in the source language available at any moment. This is so, we must assume, when the translations of *Brennu Njáls saga* into Norwegian are concerned. I say “we must assume” because some of them do not make this point explicit. The textual variation that can be observed between the various translated versions cannot, however, be accounted for, just by assuming that different editions of the source language text have been used. Here is not the time to go into detail about philological problems concerning the editing of a reliable text of the saga in its original language. As the editions upon which the various translations are based do not vary dramatically, we will just for the sake of convenience use the edition in the series “Íslenzk fornrit” (1954) as a point of reference in the following when comparing the translated texts, the overall impression of which displays textual variation between the different versions to a degree that may, somehow, remind us of the medieval manuscript transmission of saga texts.

4 “Ny og fullstendig utgåve ved Jan Ragnar Hagland” (‘New and complete edition by JRH’).

5 Chapters 20, 25 (two sequences), 26, 46, 95, 114, and 138. This is more than unfortunate as the preface to this version underscores the importance of completeness on this particular point in the narrative: “Utelating av slike delar av forteljninga kan difor både ta bort kulturhistorisk informasjon (jf. note 6 til kapittel 19 i saga) og fjerna litterære verkemiddel som skulle vera med og gje samanheng i teksten” (2003, s. 21). It is, for instance, not just a trivial detail to omit Ragnar Lodbrok from the genealogy of Snorri goði in ch. 11.4 and so on.

It seems fair to say, then, that the *Brennu Njáls saga* offered to the Norwegian reading public in modern and post-modern times varies to the extent that it is, in a certain sense, possible to see them as a number of different *Njáls sagas*. We will in the following try to look closer at the nature of textual differences that can be observed between the translated versions sketched above.

The most important point of difference, it seems fair to say, is caused by abbreviation – or *excision* in Gérard Genette's terms⁶ – the leaving out of various parts of the text in the source language, whatever edition has been used as basis for the translation. This, more than anything else, should in my opinion, be traced back to the translators' ideas about translation and what a saga such as this should look like. As from Sommerfelt onwards all translations for a long time to some extent abbreviated the text on various points. Apart from Hallvard Lie's 1941 version this is the case when all the translations into "Riksmål" / "Bokmål" are concerned and, unfortunately, also the ones into "Landsmål" / "Nynorsk", the 1996–2007 versions included – even if the omissions there are due to editorial inaccuracy rather than deliberate choices made by the translator.

The most important points of difference between the versions translated into Norwegian relate to the following aspects of the text: a. skaldic verse. b. introductory genealogical information. c. legal procedure. d. supernatural phenomena. We will take a quick look at each of these features in order to see how they are treated in the existing versions of *Brennu Njáls Saga* translated into Norwegian.

The difficulties involved when trying to translate skaldic verse into any language are, to say the least, considerable. *Brennu Njáls saga* represents no exception in this respect. The translated versions of this saga into modern Norwegian have, as a whole, solved these problems in a variety of ways so as to create considerable variation between them. Again the most striking point of variation is created by the various omissions. As for the translation itself of the stanzas quoted in the saga, there is also much to be said. This is, however, a huge and general problem, that might fill a conference of its own, so we shall leave it at

6 See Genette 1997, 229f.

that for the moment. For the present purpose we shall just ask to what extent the translators have chosen to include the stanzas in the different translated versions. A total of 23 stanzas or parts of stanzas are quoted in the source language text – in the ÍF and other editions of the saga – in addition to the 11 stanzas of *Darraðarljóð*.⁷ Paasche's 1922 version, Hallvard Lie's 1941 version and Hagland's 1996-2007 versions offer translations of all the stanzas. Paasche's 1922 version, however, turns the verses in ch.12 into a prose line in direct speech. As can be expected the actual translations offered in the different versions vary a great deal, but that is a topic for another day.

In all the remaining versions of the saga translated into modern Norwegian stanzas are, to a varying degree, omitted – most extensively so in Sommerfelt 1871, who omits 20 of the stanzas. Aasmundstad was an autodidact in the Old Norse language and obviously reluctant to take responsibility for the difficult task of making sense of the stanzas. Therefore the linguist Rasmus Flo was commissioned to take care of that particular aspect of the saga text (Kleiven 1926, 25). Compared to Finnur Jónson's 1908-edition and the ÍF edition of the source language text Aasmundstad's 1896/97 version leaves out 12 stanzas and parts of stanzas. This version, however, in accordance with the 1875 edition used as the basis for the translation adds one stanza to ch. 7 and two to ch. 23 not extant in the reference texts mentioned.

In Knut Liestøl's 1928 version the stanzas included in the narrative follow Rasmus Flo's selection in the 1896/97 version closely except for the three "extra" stanzas in ch. 7 and 23 which are omitted. A total of 12 stanzas or parts of stanzas are in consequence left out. The translation of each stanza is kept identical with or very close to the 1896/97 version. As in Paasche's 1922 version the part of the stanza in ch. 12 is given in prose in these two early translations into "Landsmål".

In Aslak Liestøl's 1961 version some of the stanzas are completely retranslated, some only slightly revised linguistically. By omitting

⁷ These are the stanzas common to all complete manuscripts of the saga. In the earliest complete manuscripts (e. g. Reykjabók, AM 468, 4to and Kálflækjarbók, AM 133 fol.) thirty so-called additional stanzas are included, stanzas that are included in some of the earlier editions (cf. Nordal 2007, 221 and 231f with references).

one stanza in ch. 132 and including three new ones in ch. 77, 145 and 157 the total number of stanzas omitted in this revised version amounts to 10.

The versions published by Hallvard Lie in 1951 and 1954 are interesting in the sense that the translator himself abbreviates by omitting several of the stanzas from his own complete version of 1941 – most extensively so in the 1951 version in which 11 stanzas are omitted. In the 1954 version four stanzas are left out. Hallvard Lie does not make a specific point of these changes in the preface to these versions (almost identical in the two). As *Njáls Saga* is the longest of all the Icelandic family sagas, he says in the prefaces, abbreviations have been made – abbreviations of which he makes specific reference only to those concerning genealogy and legal procedure (point b and c above). The omission of skaldic verse has, however, wider consequences for the translations than the text constituted by the omitted stanzas as such. This is so because even sequences of narrative prose surrounding the stanzas have frequently been suppressed in order to “conceal” the abbreviation. It is worth noticing, I think, that the 1961 version in “Nynorsk” except for one single stanza omits the very same ones as does the version in “Bokmål” of 1951. Even if it cannot easily be proved there is no reason to believe that this is just due to chance.

It seems fair to say, then, that the translators’ attitudes concerning the importance of skaldic verse in the saga alone have created a variety of *Njáls Sagas* offered to the reading public in Norway over the years. This variety has been deepened further by similar attitudes towards the importance of genealogical information and the depiction of legal procedure in the text.

For the present purpose I shall, in order to illustrate the two latter points, just quote from Hallvard Lie’s preface to the 1954 version along with a footnote made by Fredrik Paasche to the 1922 version in order to justify a major omission in ch. 142 of the saga. Hallvard Lie justifies his abbreviations as follows: ‘It is particularly the long and – for modern readers – tedious pleadings of the Allthing scenes that have been affected. Also the genealogies have been shortened, as these – for a saga reader of to day – are totally “dead matter”; for the old Icelanders, however, these were exquisite literary delicacies. Otherwise minor

abbreviations have been made here and there where possible without weakening the general artistic effect in any way.⁸ Paasche in his footnote to the omitted sequence of ch. 142 states that ‘Here for the first time some of the text has been omitted. The omitted piece deals with Mørdr’s conduct of the case, which is quite prolix. What Mørdr does can be deduced from his own ensuing words.’⁹

These quotes unveil, I think it is fair to say, a “readers’ digest” kind of attitude, very noticeable in the mediating of *Brennu Njáls Saga* by way of translation into modern Norwegian over the years. We shall not expand on that here, suffice it so say that Norwegian speaking students – if dependant on translations – should, in consequence, be very careful when choosing a translated version of this particular saga.

A final point about abbreviations to be made here relates to what could be termed supernatural phenomena in the text – point *d* above. Towards the end of the saga, in chapters 156 and 157, three sequences, two of them quite long, have been omitted in some of the translated versions. They all tell about miracles – *jarteikn* – of the kind often found in legendary texts. Sommerfelt 1871, Paasche 1922, and Lie 1941 do not make these omissions.¹⁰ Hallvard Lie’s 1951 version leaves them all out, whereas only one of the two sequences in ch.157 is left out in the 1954 version, so as to make a rather strange pattern. Among the translations into “Landsmål” / “Nynorsk” these abbreviations exist in the 1961 version only. Probably this version just copies Hallvard Lie’s abbreviation

8 “Det er især de lange og – for moderne lesere – nokså trettende prosessinnleggene i tingscenene det er gått ut over. Slechtsregistrene er også blitt beskåret, da de for en norsk sagaleser i dag er totalt «dødt stoff»; for de gamle islendinger var de derimot en utsøkt litterær lekkerbiskn. Her og der ellers er også mindre forkortninger foretatt, hvor det kunne skje uten at sagaens kunstneriske helhetsvirkning på noen måte ble svekket” (Lie 1954, 10).

9 “Her er det for første gang noe av teksten blir utelatt. Stykket handler om Mørds saksfremlegg og er meget vidløftig. Hva Mørd foretar seg, fremgår av hans egne ord i det følgende” (1986 reprint p. 258).

10 The parts left out are a long sequence telling about the raining of blood, swords fighting by themselves, and an attack by ravens with iron claws in ch. 156 and two shorter sequences in ch. 157, one about the healing of the boy Taðkr and one about various supernatural events happening in the Faroe islands, in Iceland and in the Orkneys (cf. Hagland 1987, 47f.).

from 1951 on this point. It is worth noticing that no reasons for omitting these parts of the narrative are given in the versions that do so. We might suspect that narrative elements such as these did not satisfy Hallvard Lie and Aslak Liestøl's ideas of what a realistic saga like this ought to look like – that these supernatural events did not belong there. Hallvard Lie's inconsistency on this point in his versions, however, makes it difficult to understand the textual variation he creates on this point.

As far as the historical reception in general of *Brennu Njáls Saga* in Norway is concerned, then, it seems fair to say that one translated version or other of the saga has been available to the reading public more or less continuously from the 1870s onwards. In statistical terms it seems as if the most abbreviated version – the 1951 version – had the widest distribution. It is not irrelevant, then, as we have seen, to ask what *Njáls saga* we are referring to when speaking about its historical reception in Norway. The quantitative aspects of this do not, however, lead us very far. On the qualitative level we have unique and interesting information about the importance of *Njáls Saga* – even for the Norwegian history of literature. Well known are Sigrid Undset's own words about the importance of her first encounter with this particular saga. In an essay called "A book that was a turning point in my life"¹¹ she reflects upon this encounter, of which she had given details already in her strongly autobiographical novel *Eleven years* (Undset 1934). In our context it is relevant and interesting to note that it was Sommerfelt's version from 1871 that made such a decisive and lasting impression on the 11 years old girl who was later to become Nobel Prize laureate in literature. We do not, to my knowledge, have information that can stand up to this when it comes to the reception of other translated versions of this saga into Norwegian.

Sometimes the history of translation concerning a text such as *Brennu Njáls Saga* may even reflect changes of attitudes in the society at large surrounding the texts transferred into the target language. The famous episode in ch. 7 of the saga – where Unnr reveals to her father, Mörðr, her reasons for wanting a divorce – may serve as a nice

11 Printed posthumously in 1952, translated from the English – "En bok som blev et vendepunkt i mitt liv" (Undset 1951, 27–34).

little example of this. The editions of the saga in the original language – as from the 1772 edition onwards – quote the reasons she gives for this quite straightforwardly without evasion. For the 19th century translators this obviously was a difficulty that had to be solved by paraphrase in more or less euphemistic terms. We see this clearly in Sommerfelt's version. His translation, it seems, copies N. M. Petersen's rather bashful solution in his version from 1841 and 1862 on this particular point, it is at least very close. This is also the case with Sir George Webbe Dasent's translation into English from 1861 – a tradition that was continued in the Norwegian versions of 1896/97 and 1928. Fredrik Paasche in his 1922 version was the first to translate this part of the text into Norwegian without paraphrasing it. Sir George Webbe Dasent's somewhat timid translation into English may well represent the bashfulness that also Norwegian translators of the 19th and early 20th centuries experienced when trying to mediate this particular point in the text: “when Mord pressed her to speak out, she told him how she and Hrut could not live together, because he was spell-bound, and that she wished to leave him”.¹² Why give the indelicate details of the source language text when they can be avoided so elegantly – we may well ask! Or perhaps prudishness ought to be included among the causes for variation in translation?

- 12 Cf. e. g. the 1772 edition of the saga on this point: “*Hversv má svá vera? segir Mordr. ok seg enn giorr. hon svarar. þegar hann kemr við mik þá er horvnd hans svá mikit at hann má ekki eptir lęti hafa við mik. en þó hofvm við þęði breytmi til þess á alla vega at við mețtim niótaz. en þat verđr ekki. en þó aðr við skilim sýnir hann þat af ser at hann er í eđi sínu rett sem aðrir menn.*”

Bibliography

Editions:

[Ólafur Olavius ed.] 1772, *Sagann af Niáli Þorgeirssyni ok Sonvm hans &c. út gefin efter gavmlum Skinnbókvm med Konvnglegu Leyfi*. Kaupmannahafn.

[Konráður Gíslason & Eiríkur Jónsson (eds.)] 1875–89, *Njála*. Udgivet efter gamle håndskrifter af det Nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab. København.

Finnur Jónsson (ed.) 1908, *Brennu-Njálssaga (Njála)* = Altnordische Sagabibliothek 13. Halle: Verlag von Max Niemeyer.

Einar Ól. Sveinsson (ed.) 1954, *Brennu-Njáls Saga* = Íslenzk fornrit, vol. XII. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.

Translated versions (listed in order of chronology):

- 1861 = *The story of burnt Njal, or Life in Iceland at the end of the tenth century. From the Icelandic of the Njals saga by George Webbe Dasent.* Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas.
- 1862 = *Njals saga: eller fortælling om Njal og hans sønner.* Efter de islandske grundskrifter ved N. M. Petersen. Anden udgave. København 1962. [1st ed. 1841 = *Historiske Fortællinger om Islændernes Færd hjemme og ude* Udg. af det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-selskab ved N. M. Petersen. Vol 3.]
- 1871 = *Njaals Saga* oversat af Karl L[inné]. Sommerfelt. Kristiania: Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme.
- 1896–97 = *Njaala elder Soga um Njaal Torgeirsson og sønerne hans.* Umsett fraa gamalnorsk av Olav Aasmundstad. Kristiania: Det Norske Samlaget.
- 1922 = *Njaals saga.* Oversat av Fredrik Paasche. Kristiania: H. Aschehoug. Reprints 1986, 1997. Thorleif Dahls Kulturbibliotek. Oslo: H. Aschehoug. 1999 In: *Saga: Norrøne sagaer i utvalg.* Oslo: Den norske Bokklubben.
- 1928 = *Njåla* umsett av Olav Aasmundsstad. Ny utg. ved Knut Liestøl = *Norrøne Bokverk 23.* Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- 1941 = *Njáls Saga.* Oversatt av Hallvard Lie. Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag.
- 1951 = *Njáls Saga.* Oversatt av Hallvard Lie = *Hjemmenes boksamling.* Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag.
- 1954 = *Njáls Saga.* Oversatt av Hallvard Lie. In: *Íslandske ættesagaer.* Under redaksjon av Hallvard Lie, vol. IV, pp. 7–252. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co.
- 1961 = *Njåla.* Til nynorsk ved Aslak Liestøl. In: *Den norrøne litteraturen*, bd. 2. Ættesoger. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget. Reprinted in the series 'Norrøne bokverk', No 23. Oslo 1975: Det Norske Samlaget.
- 1996 = *Njålssoga.* Omsett av Aslak Liestøl. Ny og fullstendig utgåve ved Jan Ragnar Hagland. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- 2003 = *Njålssoga.* Innleiing ved Roy Jacobsen. Omsett av Aslak Liestøl. Ny og fullstendig utgåve ved Jan Ragnar Hagland. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- 2007 = *Njålssoga.* Oversatt av Aslak Liestøl. Ny og fullstendig utgåve ved Jan Ragnar Hagland. Innledende essay av Roy Jacobsen. Oslo: Den norske Bokklubben.

Other references

- Genette, Gérard 1997 [1982], *Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree.* Lincoln and London: Nebraska University Press. Original title 1982: *Palimpsests: La littérature au second degré.* Paris: Seuil.
- Guðrún Nordal 2007, *The Art of Poetry and the Sagas of Icelanders.* In: Quinn, Judy & al (eds.) *Learning and Understanding in the Old Norse World. Essays in Honour of Margaret Clunies Ross,* pp. 219–237. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publisers n. v.

- Hagland, Jan Ragnar 1987, Njáls saga i 1970- og 1980-åra. Eit oversyn over nyare forskning. *Scripta Islandica. Isländska sällskapets årsbok* 38, pp. 36–50.
- Hagland, Jan Ragnar 1996, “Fager er lidi”. Eit hundreårsminne for Olav Aasmundstads Njålssoge på landsmålet. *Motskrift* No 2 1996, pp. 157–169.
- Hagland, Jan Ragnar 2003, Å meisla ut eit litteraturspråk. Kring litterære omsetjingar til Landsmaalet fram til om lag 1900. *Motskrift* No 1 2003, pp. 43–55.
- Jón Karl Helgason 1999, *The Rewriting of Njáls Saga. Translation, Ideology and Icelandic Sagas* = Topics in Translation 16. Clevedon–Buffalo–Toronto–Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Kleiven, Ivar 1926. Olav Aasmundstad. *Bygd og Bonde. Tidsskrift for historie og folkeminne*. 8. årg., pp. 19–27
- Undset, Sigrid 1934, *Elleve aar*. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co.
- Undset, Sigrid 1952, *Artikler og taler fra krigstiden*. Utg. av A. H. Winsnes. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co.