Non-Basic Color Terms in Old Norse-Icelandic

Kirsten Wolf
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

1. Introduction

In recent years, basic color terms in Old Norse-Icelandic have received considerable attention. The consensus so far is that Old Norse-Icelandic has eight basic color terms: blár, brún, grár, grænn, gulr, hvítr, rauðr, and svart. Non-basic color terms, which comprise terms that are hyponyms of basic color terms, contextually restricted, of infrequent use, and not psychologically salient for

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2. See Brückmann, Altwestnordische Farbsemantik; Wolf, “Some Comments.”
informants, have received attention primarily from lexicographers, who have catalogued them and offered translations of them. This article is a synchronic study of the non-basic color terms attested in Old Norse-Icelandic. More specifically, it analyzes their formation, frequency, and semantic range. The data are drawn from Finnur Jónsson’s Lexicon Poeticum (LP), Fritzner’s Ordbog over Det gamle norske Sprog (ONS) including Hødnèbø’s supplement to the dictionary (ONS+), Cleasby and Vigfusson’s An Icelandic-English Dictionary (CV) including Craigie’s supplement to the dictionary (CV+), and the online edition of the Arnamagnæn Commission’s Dictionary of Old Norse Prose (ONP). Altogether, these reference works have yielded well over a hundred secondary color terms. Terms indicating a pattern (spotted, striped, speckled, dotted, etc.), such as apalgrár, bláfáinn, blámeng(ja)ðr, blárendr, brúnmóalóttr, grárendr, grænmenginn, hvítrondóttr, jarpskjótr, raudflekkóttr, svartbælsóttr, svartflekkóttr, and svartsgdólóttr, many of which are restricted to describing the appearance of farm animals, have not been included. Nor have terms with the prefix al- (e.g., algrár, algænn, and alhvítr), since all they imply is that no other color is present, and terms with the prefix í- (e.g., íblár, ígrænn, and írauðr), since the prefix merely conveys a diminutive notion, though in the case of ígrænn, it may convey intensity or iteration in the same way that eigrænn, íðjugrænn and sigrænn do. Finally, bynames (e.g., kylnusvartr and skegg[s]hvítr, etc.) have been excluded.

2. Non-basic color terms

The following presents a list and discussion of the individual non-basic color terms arranged in categories according to their formation.

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3. The last criterion is not especially applicable to a dead language, and representation across a variety of genres may be a more suitable criterion. See Brent Berlin and Paul Kay, Basic Color Term: Their Universality and Evolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 5–7; see also C. P. Biggam, The Semantics of Colour: A Historical Approach (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 44.

4. It should be noted that the excerpting of these dictionaries is selective, and only a small selection of the oldest texts was selected for ONP as if for a concordance. All references that follow, to these and other works, are to page, preceded by volume and followed by line (indicated after a period), when applicable.
2.1 Monolexemic color terms

**Blakkr** (LP: “mörk, sort”; ONS: “blakk, om Hestens Farve”; CV: “dusky black . . . pale”; ONP: “[blakket ɔ:] lys/bleg, gulbrun / ?pale, tawny”) is attested four times in poetry. The referents are **marr** (horse), **kveldridu stôð** (a kenning for a wolf), **borð** (a heiti for a ship), and **bjórðr** (a heiti for blood). In prose, it is used to describe the color of a horse (“hestr”): *Diplomentarium Norvegicum* [hereafter DN] 4:196.29, the appearance of vellum (“ðetta er blacktt bokfelle”: Rask 72 26r, marginal note), and once the color of copper (“hon þ[otti] [Sua] [bera] [af] meyum sem <r>auda gull af [var. + blöcku] eiri”: *Sturlaugs saga starfsama* 8.8 [GkS 1006 fol. 33]).


7. *“vinhrôðigr gaf víða / visi margra Frísa / blökkku brûnt at drekka / blôð kveldridu stôði”* (Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld’s *Óláfsdrápa* 6.7; *Skjaldedigtning* 1:149).

8. *“óðu blökk í blôði / borð fyr Útstein norðan”* (Bjarni gullbrárskáld’s *Kálfsflokkr* 2.3; *Skjaldedigtning* 1:363).

9. *“fekk benþiðurr blakkkan / bjór”* (hörðmór Kolbrúnarskáld’s *lausavísa* 22.7; *Skjaldedigtning* 1:265).


11. Cf. the observation made by William E. Mead on the use of the term in Old English poetry: “Hâr, hoary, is used more conventionally than grâg, and appears at times to be chosen more for the sake of the alliteration than for the sake of the color. Hâr occurs twenty-seven times . . . . Seven times hâr is applied to the hoary, gray stone, once to the gray cliff, four times to armor, once to a sword, once to the ocean, once to the gray heath, three times to the wolf, twice to the frost, and seven times to warriors, in each case with some conventionality and with an apparently slight feeling of color.” *“Color in Old English Poetry,” PMLA* 14 (1899): 190. See also Biggam (note 3 above), who claims that
in poetry. Examples include “at három þul” (Hávamál st. 134), “inn hára þul” (Fáfnismál st. 34), “hión . . . hár” (Rígþula st. 2), “hárr . . . austrkonungr” (Þjóðólfur ór Hvini’s Ynglingatal 16.9; Skjaldeidgnting 1:110), and “hárir men” (Sigvatr Þórðarson’s Bersoglisvisur 12.3; Skjaldeidgnting 1:237).12 In all instances, the referent is humans or supernatural beings with the exception of Hallr Snorrason’s drápa about Magnús Erlingsson, where it is a wolf (“hár gylðir” 1.2; Skjaldeidgnting 1:516). In prose, it always describes elderly humans.

Hóss (LP: “grá”; ONS: “gra, graalig”; CV: “gray”) is restricted to poetry.13 In Eiríksmál (7.4; Skjaldeidgnting 1:165) it is used about the color of a wolf (“ulfr enn hósvi”), and in Eyvindr Finnsson skáldaspillir’s Hálseygjatal (8.3; Skjaldeidgnting 1:61), “hóssvan serk hrísgrisnis” describes the appearance of an “úlfhēðinn.” In Þjóðólfur Arnórssón’s Sextefja (7.5; Skjaldeidgnting 1:340), the referent is an eagle (“hvassar klær hóss arnar”), and in an anonymous eleventh-century lausavísa (2.1; Skjaldeidgnting 1:394), it is an ox (“hóss hjarðar vísi”). As a compound, it appears in the form of “enn hósfjaðri” (about a raven) in Pórbjörn hornklofi’s Haraldskvida (4.1; Skjaldeidgnting 1:22).

Jarpr (LP: “rödbrun”; ONS: “brun”; CV: “brown”) is attested four times in poetry and eleven times in prose.14 In poetry, it is used

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12. Finnur Jónsson translates “riddari enn hári” (1.4; Skjaldeidgnting 1:407) in a lausavísa by Eldjarn as “hárlange ridder,” and in LP he offers the following translation: “med fyldig hårväxt.” According to Ásger Blöndal Magnússon (Íslensk orðsifjabók, 307) and de Vries (Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 212), fullness of hair is a secondary meaning of the adjective; the former notes that in this meaning it appears most commonly in compounds, such as ljoshdr(r) and laushar(r). It is possible, therefore, that a more accurate translation would be “graharede ridder.”

13. Hóss is derived from Germanic *haswa-. It is related to Old English hasu (gray), Old High German hasan (blank, shiny), and Middle High German beswe (pale, dull) (de Vries, Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 282). “Hósmagi,” the name of a ram, appears in Grettis saga (259.18). Cf. the comment by Mead on the use of the color term in Old English poetry: “Háso, ‘gray,’ is found seven times . . . . Háso is used with an apparent definiteness of color-feeling, and is applied to the dove, to the eagle, to the curling smoke, to the leaves of plants, and even to the herestrata, the highways with their dusty dirty-white surfaces. The examples are not sufficiently numerous to enable us to decide whether it was often used conventionally, but there is certainly little evidence in the instances cited that such was the case” (“Color in Old English Poetry,” 192).

14. Julius Pokorny reconstructs the proto-Indo-European root of jarpr as *ereb(h)-,
exclusively about human hair with the exception of Heiðreks gátur, in which enar jarpari (13.4; Skjaldedigtning 2:242) refer to pieces in a board game. In prose, the referent is also human hair, the only exception being “en iarpa hest” (Fló vents saga 146.43).15

Rjóðr (LP: “rød, rødmosset”; ONS: “rød”; CV: “ruddy ... red”) may be synonymous with rauðr or a hyponym of red.16 Certainly, rjóðr is contextually more restricted than rauðr. In prose, where it is attested twenty times, it is used exclusively about facial color as in, for example, Nitida saga: “hun var bædi vitur og væn lios og rið j andlíti þuílikast sem en rauða rosa væri samtem-prad vid sniohuita líleam” (3.7), the only exception being “allr þeirra búnaðr var rjóðr [var. rauðr] af gulli” (Karlamagnús saga 181.2). In poetry, where rjóðr is attested five times, it refers to facial color in stanza 21 of Rígsþula (“rauðan oc rióðan”), in a lausavísa by Kormákr Ögmundarson (“At emk ... / ullar Svólnis fulli / of reiði-Síf rjóða”: 22.3; Skjaldedigtning 1:74), and in a lausavísa by Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld (“Emka rjóðr”: 24.1; Skjaldedigtning 1:266). Once the referent is a rose (“rósa rjóð”: Máriódrápa 19.2; Skjaldedigtning 2:500), and once it is the Holy Cross (“krossinn rjóðann”: Heilagra meyja dраБа 5.4; Skjaldedigtning 2:583).

Finally, mention should be made of ámr, bleikr, and fólkr. Ámr (LP: “mørk, mørkladen”; CV: “black or loathsome”) appears only in poetry and does not indicate color but low lightness or high

“in Worten für dunkelrötliche Farbtöne.” Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 2 vols. (Bern and Munich: Francke Verlag, 1959–69), 1:334. See also Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (Íslensk orðsífabók, 430), who draws attention to the personal names Erpr and Irpa in Old Norse-Icelandic.

15. It is difficult to assess the precise hue(s) to which jarpr refers and to determine if it should be regarded as a color term. “Dark” would seem a reasonable candidate in the earliest compositions, for it appears that it was not until the late Middle Ages, when brún came to designate a more general brown hue (or black or dark brown when used about horses) rather than the reddish-brown hue suggested by the earliest occurrences, that jarpr began to attach itself more firmly to the brown spectrum and assumed a specific sense of reddish brown to fill the gap left by brún. This is evident from one of the occurrences listed by the Orðabók Háskóla Íslands: “ýmist er hesturinn einlitur, t. d. grár með ýmsum tilbrigðum, rauður, jarpr (rauðbrún).”

16. According to de Vries (Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 449) it is a variant of rauðr. It is related to Old English réod.
saturation.\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Fglr} (LP: “bleg, hvidlig”; ONS: “bleg, gulbleg, graableg”; CV: “pale”) is found in both poetry and prose, but, like \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}mr}, it does not signify color but high lightness or low saturation.\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Bleikr} (LP: “bleg, hvid”; ONS: “bleg, hvid, lysgul”; CV: “pale, wan . . . fawn-coloured . . . auburn”), which also appears in both poetry and prose, is problematic.\textsuperscript{19} As is evident from the definitions, the adjective denotes different hues according to its context. According to ONP, \textit{bleikr} appears most frequently in the meaning “bleg (\textipa{\textdegree}: med mindre intens farve end den naturlige, ?bleget), / pale (\textipa{\textdegree}: of weak or reduced colour), wan, ?bleached,” as in, for example, “gevr hon [solin] af ser littit lios oc bendir firir med bleikum lit margs mannz feigó” (\textit{Alexanders saga} 70.33) and “stundum var hann raudr sem blod en stundum bleikr sem bast edr blarr sem hel edr fôlr sem nárr suo at ymsir þesser litir færduzst j hann suo bra honum vid” (\textit{Flateyjarbók} 2:136.35). However, the term is also commonly used in the meaning “blond, lys / blond, fair, light-coloured” (translation offered by ONP), as in, for example, “Alexannder son Priami var huitr ahaurunnd hár madr herdimikill. sterkr oc storradr harid bleikt oc bla augun” (\textit{Trójumanna saga} 66.12) and “Fôgr er hlíðin, svá at mér hefir hon aldri jafnfooj synzk, bleikir akkrar ok slegin tun” (\textit{Njáls saga} 182.21).

When used to describe the color of horses and cows, the term means, according to ONP, “lys, .btys grábrun, ?bleggul, ?skimlet (- fr. vair) / light-coloured, ?fawn, ?pale yellow dappled (- fr. vair)”; examples of the term being used to describe farm animals include “\textit{Ýví næst riðu fram or konungs fylking Riker ok Marant, annarr á bleikum hesti en annarr á grám}” (\textit{Karlamagnúss saga} 302.39) and “ek sá hér upp rísa at Hofi uxa bleikkan” (\textit{Vénpföðinga saga} 48.18). For the suggestion in ONP that in \textit{Stjörn} (161.5, 8) the term means “?(lys) röd / ?(light) red,” see my article on “Esau’s Pottage of Lentils.”\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{17} de Vries (ibid., 8) translates \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}mr} as “rostrot, dunkel”; both he and Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (\textit{Íslensk orðsfjábók}, 116) believe it is related to Old English \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}m} (rust). The latter is of the opinion that the original meaning of the word is rustbrown. He draws attention also to the names \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}mr}, \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}msvartnir}, and \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}mgerdr} in Old Norse-Icelandic.

\textsuperscript{18} The Germanic form of \textit{fglr} is *\textit{faluaz}. It is related to Old English \textit{\textipa{\textdegree}alu}, Old Saxon \textit{fal}, and Old High German \textit{falo} (ibid., 150).

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Bleikr} is related to Old English \textit{blæc}, Old Saxon \textit{blôk}, and Old High German \textit{bleih} (shining, light, pale, wan) (ibid., 43).

\textsuperscript{20} 254–57 (see note 1 above). The occurrences listed by \textit{Orðabók Háskóla Íslands} indicate that it was not until the first half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century or maybe even the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century that the term appears in the meaning pink and that it continued to denote also pale until the late 20\textsuperscript{th} century, though it is, of course, important to bear in mind that
Given its range, it is probable that bleikr should be considered a macrocolor or composite color covering, at least partly, a category of pale or light colors.\textsuperscript{21}

2.2 Color terms with the prefix døkk- and the suffix -døkkr.

Døkk, which is derived from Germanic *dankwia and means “dark,”\textsuperscript{22} is a tonal color word and unspecific as to hue. It appears as a prefix to five color terms and a suffix to one color term. Common to these terms is that they appear only in prose.

Døkkblár (ONS: “mørkeblaa”; CV: “dark blue”; ONP: “mørkeblå, mørk blåsort, ?sort [cf. blár adj. / dark blue, blue-black, ?black”]) describes a tunic (“kyrtill”: Sturlunga saga 1, 518.13), the design of a dragon (dreki) on a shield (Bragða-Mágus saga 98.11), a mark (mark) on weapons (Piðriks saga 1:338.7), and the color of a shield (“skjöldr”: Piðriks saga 1:338.12).\textsuperscript{23}

Døkkbrúnaðr/døkkbrún (ONS: “mørkbrun”; CV: “dark brown”; ONP: “mørkebrun [cf. brúnaðr adj. / dark brown”) is attested four times and describes a shield (“skjöldr”: Volsunga saga 55.15), a dragon (dreki) on a shield (Piðriks saga 1:346.15), and a tunic (“kyrtill”: Biskupa sögur 2:55.28 and var).

Døkkgrønn (ONS: “mørkgrøn”; CV: “dark green”; ONP: “mørk blågrøn / cerulean [D: dark blue-green”]) is found once, in Stjórn (62.26), and describes one of the colors of the rainbow (regnbogi). The Latin gloss (Speculum historiale) is “cæruleum.”

Døkkjarpr (ONS: “mørkbrun”; CV: “dark auburn”; ONP: “[om hår] writers often have a tendency to archaize. Certainly in the spoken language, it seems that the adjective is no longer used in the meaning pale, but it continues to be used to describe the color of horses and cows.

\textsuperscript{21} Biggam defines a macrocolor as follows: “Not every language has a single colour lexeme per colour category, that is, a word such as N[ew] E[nglish] green for the green category. To Modern English speakers, red, orange, brown and purple are separate categories with separate lexemes denoting them, but speakers of other languages, although perfectly capable of seeing these four colours, may denote them with a single lexeme. Such a colour concept is a macrocolour.” Blue in Old English: An Interdisciplinary Semantic Study (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), 181. See also Biggam, Semantics of Colour, 61–62. I have suggested that “a . . . reason for the absence of gulr in the earliest Old Norse-Icelandic literary works is possibly the existence of bleikr, which, along with derivatives of gull, may have rendered gulr unnecessary” (Wolf, “Towards a Diachronic Analysis,” 123).

\textsuperscript{22} de Vries, Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 92.

\textsuperscript{23} For a discussion of blár, see Wolf, “Blue in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature.”
mørkebrun, mørk kastanjebrun / [of hair] dark brown, deep chestnut-coloured”) is attested twice, and in both instances the referent is human hair (“hár”: Laxdæla saga 234.15; “lokkar”: Alfræði íslensk 3:98.28).

Dokkraudr (ONS: mørkrød”; CV: “dark red”; ONP: “mørkerød / dark red”) is used to describe the color of a bear (bjørn) on a shield (Piðriks saga 1:339.12), the edge (rønd) of a shield (Piðriks saga 1:339.13/26), and a stone (“steinn”: Sigurðar saga þögla 191.19).

Rauðdókkr is attested once, and the referent is the edge (rønd) of a shield: “hefer hann skiolld ok vmm vtan rønd daukkraudar [var. raud døck]” (Piðriks saga 1:339.25).

2.3 Color terms with the prefix fagr-.

While the etymology of fagr has been debated, it is agreed that it means “beautiful,” “bright,” or “shining.”24 The adjective is therefore unspecific as to hue and refers to brightness or saturation.

Fagrgreinn (ONS: “af en smuk grøn Farve”; CV: “light-green”) is attested twice. The referents are a tree stem (“leggdr”: Heimskringla 1:93.13; cf. “fagr ok greinn” 1:162.9) and a field (“vøllr”: Sogur Danakonunga 216.7).

Fagrraudr (LP: “lyserød”; ONS: “af en smuk rød Farve”; CV: “light-red”) is found once in poetry, in Völuspá, about a cock (hani).25 It is attested three times in prose. Once the referent is a horse (“hestr”: Blómstrvallasaga 57.9), and twice it is a shield (“skjöldr”: Piðriks saga 1:346.15; Völungsaga 55.16).

24. Biggam refers to the Oxford English Dictionary, which presents nine major senses in which “bright” is used in modern English; she argues that two of the nine are relevant to color studies: “1. Shining; emitting, reflecting, or pervaded by much light.

a. said of luminaries. b. of polished metals, precious stones, and other objects whose surfaces naturally reflect light. c. of illuminated surfaces, of the day in sunshine, etc. d. of transparent substances: Clear, translucent . . . 4.a. Of vivid brilliant color: used also with names of color, as bright red.” “The Ambiguity of Brightness (with Special Reference to Old English) and a New Model for Color Description in Semantics,” in Anthropology of Color: Interdisciplinary Multilevel Modeling, ed. Robert E. MacLaury et al. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 172. In her 2012 study, she does not use the terms “bright” or “brightness,” but instead “vivid” and “vividness” or the phrases “fully saturated” and “full saturation” (Semantics of Colour, 5). Number 4.a above is relevant as far as fagrgreinn and fagrraudr are concerned.

25. “gólum um hánom i gaglviði / fagrraúðr hani, sá er Fialarr heitir” (st. 42).
2.4 Color terms with the prefix glit- and heid-.

Glit, which is related to Old High German gliz or gliz, meaning “glitter,” and heidr, a cognate of Old English hādur, Old Saxon heder, and Old High German heitar, meaning “bright” or “clear,” are unspecific as to hue and refer to brightness or reflectivity.26 This category comprises glitraudr and heidblár.27 The former describes eyes (“augu”: Hjálmþérs saga 491.12). The latter describes a sapphire: “hann [saffirus] er litr sem heidblár himin” (Alfræði íslenzk 1:77.13).28

2.5 Color terms with the prefix ljós- and the suffix -ljóss.

Ljóss, which is derived from Germanic *leuhsa and means “light,”29 is a tonal color word and unspecific as to hue. It appears as a prefix to seven color terms and a suffix to one color term.

Ljósblár (ONS: “lyseblaa”; CV: “light blue”) is found only in Norwegian sources, and in all three instances the referent is cloth or clothing: dýki (DN 2:189.16), kaprún (DN 10:15.15), and undirstakkr (DN 4:423.14).

Ljósbleikr (ONS: “lysegul”; CV: “pale, fawn-coloured”) is attested twice and describes the color of a horse (“hestr”: Grettis saga 109.12, 221.3; Sturlunga saga 2:260.34).

Ljósbrúnleitr is attested once and used about human complexion: “Jacobus . . . [var] vndarliga biartleitr [var. medallagi lios brun-leitr]” (Mariu saga 867.10–11).

Ljósgrønn is attested once, and the referent is a topaz: “Hann [Topacius] hefir 2 myndir, i er rauda gulli likr, enn annar er skirí ok er sa liosgrenn” (Alfræði íslenzk 1:80.8).30

26. de Vries, Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 174; Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, Íslensk orðsifjabók, 314.

27. See note 24 above, where i-b is particularly relevant.

28. The sapphire is described as “any pure, transparent, gem-quality corundum other than ruby, specially the blue color variety of corundum. Blue color being due to traces of oxides of cobalt, chromium, and titanium. Sapphire color ranges from light-blue, to dark velvety blue (shades of blue).” Mohsen Manutchehr-Danai, Dictionary of Gems and Gemology (Berlin: Springer, 2000), 413.

29. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, Íslensk orðsifjabók, 569.

30. Concerning the color of the topaz, D. B. Hoover points out that “prior to the tenth century the name ‘topaz’ in the Western world was generally restricted to describing a
Ljósgulr (LP: “lysegul”) is attested once, in a verse in Hjálmpérs saga, and the referent is a lokka frón (a kenning for a head [of human hair]).

Ljósiårpr (ONS: “lysebrun”; CV: “light chestnut”) is common, and in all instances the referent is human hair. Examples include “Helgi var . . . lios-iarpur a har” (Fljótssdæla hin meiri 31.20) and “Pordr var . . . lios-iarpur a har” (Sturlunga saga 1:434.9).

Ljósrauðr (ONS+: “lyserød”; CV: “light red”) is attested once, and the referent is the fur (hamr) of a dog: “sýndist hann [hundrinn] . . . stundum sem hann væri með myrkrbrúnunum lit, ok þegar, sem hann sé í ljósrauðum ham” (Saga af Tristram ok Ísónd 130.23).

Rauðljóss (LP: “lyserød”) is attested once, in Hallvarís háreksblesís Knútsdrápa, and the referent is baugjóð (a heiti for a shield).

2.6 Color terms with the prefix myrk-.

Myrkr, which is derived from Germanic *merkwia and means “dark,” is also a tonal color word and unspecific as to hue. It appears as a prefix to three color terms.

Myrkláð (LP: “mörksort, kulsort”; ONS: morkblaa”) is attested once in poetry, in a lausavísa by Sigvatr Þórðarson, and the referent is meiðir drasils tjalsa (a kenning for a warrior). In prose, the term is used primarily about clothing, the referents being kyrill (DN 3:95.12; DN 4:423.12; Sagan och rimorna om Friðþjófr 31.11), dýki (DN 2:189.16), kápa (Biskupa sögur

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31. “Hver ert þú / hýrlund með kinn fagra / ok ljósgult lokka frón?” (1.3; Skjaldeidtning 2:358).

32. “Rauðljósa sér ræsir / (rit brestr sundr en hvita) / baugjóð brodda ferðar / (bjuðrend i tvau fljúga)” (5.1; Skjaldeidtning 1:294).

33. de Vries, Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 398.

34. “Hlyð minum brag, meðir / myrkláðs, þvír kank yrkja, / alltíginn—mátt eiga / eitt skald—drasils tjalsa” (2.2; Skjaldeidtning 1:246).
2:108.30, 168.24; Diplomatarium Islandicum [henceforth DI]
2:691.29), and olpa (Ectors saga 124.9). In three instances, the adjective describes the color of a stone: "er hann [Adamantes] eigi sva skír at hann lati iarðlít ok er hann þvi myrklar" (Haukshók 228.1); "Adamantis . . . er eigi sva skír, ath hann lati iarligt ok er þi myrklar" (Alfræði islenzk 1:82.3);35 "Konradr tok þa þann steinn [ametistus] er hann stak fyr or bordskutlinum hann var myrklår ath lítt" (Konráðs saga keisarasonar 165.12).36 Once the term is used about the color of a shield ("skjóldr": Eyrbyggja saga 32.29).

Myrkrún (ONS+: "mørkebrun"; CV+: "dark brown") is attested three times. Twice the referent is a tunic ("kyrtill": Clarus saga 7.24, 21.29–30), and once it is the fur (hamr) of a dog (Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd 130.22).

Myrkgrár is attested once and describes a calf (kvíga): "Petta haust var AndriSi vant kvígu þrevetrar myrkrar [var. myrkgraarar: AM 560 c 4º; myrkgrár: AM 164 h fol.] (Kjalnesinga saga 5.11).

2.7. Color terms with the prefix lit- and the suffixes -leitr, -litaðr, and -litr.37

Litr is derived from Germanic *ulitu-z and related to Middle English lit, Gothic wlicts, Old Saxon wlli, and Old English wlite.38 Its primary meaning is "color"; secondary meanings include

35. Adamant is a synonym of diamond and coronium. The word is derived from Greek "invincible" and is an old name for a hard stone.
36. The amethyst is described as being "a pale violet to purple or violet, transparent variety of quartz, the color being due to presence of Fe³⁺ or Fe²⁺ and traces of manganese, owing to irregular color zoning" (Manutchehr-Danai, Dictionary of Gems, 16). See also Biggam: "The hues involved are red-purple and violet" (Semantics of Colour, 134).
37. There is one term consisting of a noun + -litr, another consisting of an adjective + -leitr and a third consisting of an adjective + litaðr. The first is dagglitr (LP: "duggfarvet, duggfarvet"; ONS: "dugfarvet"; CV: "dew-besprinkled"), which is attested once, in Helgakviða Hundingsbanna II, and describes Odin’s hawks (baukar). Here litr seems to reflect the secondary meaning, as suggested in LP and CV, which disqualifies the adjective as a color term. The second is fólleitr (ONS: "bleg af Ansigtifarve"; CV: "looking pale"), which is attested ten times (Njáls saga 70.14, 298.21, 301.6; Byskupa sognur 307.21; Flateyjarbók 1:545.31; Heilagra manna sognur 2:641.29; Jomsuvinga saga 67.2; Mágus saga 2.65; Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta 1:172.26; Sturlunga saga 2:125.16; Vápnfirðinga saga 63.15). In all instances, the referent is human complexion. The third is follitaðr (ONS: "bleg af Farve"; CV: "pale"), which is attested five times (Njáls saga 302.1; Byskupa sognur 378.9; Rómverisaga 82.29; Piðriks saga 1:340.14–15). In all instances the referent is human complexion.
38. de Vries, Altinordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, 359.
“appearance,” “character,” “gloss,” and “beauty.” The suffix -leitr is derived from the verb lita, meaning to “look,” “behold,” “see.”39 In terms of meaning, the color terms seem not to differ from their monolexemic parallels and should perhaps be regarded as basic color terms, although their semantic range differs somewhat.40

Bláleitr (LP: “med blåsort ansigt”; ONS: “blaa eller sort af Ansigtsfarve”; CV: “blue-faced”; ONP: “[om person] mørk, blå/sort at se på / [of a person] dark, blue/black in appearance”) is found once in poetry, in Einarr Gilsson’s drápa about Guðmundr Arason, and the referent is a woman (brúðr).41 In prose, it is attested three times and describes human facial color (Islandzkr æventyri 283.19; Karlamagnúss saga 54.33; Sigurðar saga þögla 108.6). For ljósbrunleitr, see section 2.5 above.

Hvítleitr is attested twice; in both instances the referent is the amethyst: “Amatistus . . . er hvít-leitr, sem vin se dreypt i vatn” (Alfræði íslenzk 1:81.2), “Ematistvs . . . er ok hvítleitr sem vindreyp mcð vatni” (Hauksbók 227.1).42

Jarplitadr (LP: “brunfarvet, rødbrun”) is found once, in Einarr Skúlason’s Geisli, and describes the color of an eagle (gnr).43

Litrauðr (LP: “rød af farve”) is found once, in Einarr Skúlason’s Geisli, and describes the color of gold (blík unnar) in a kenning for king.44

Rauðleitr (ONS: “rødmusset, rødlig i Ansigtet eller Kinderne”; CV: “ruddy”) is attested eight times and used exclusively about human complexion (Jóns saga leikara [AM 588 f 4° 3’]; Laxdæla saga 235.19; Leifar 90.25; Mágus saga 7.59; Mariu saga 253.31; Trójumanna saga 66.20, 67.18; Piðriks saga 1:334.30).

Rauðlitaðr (ONS: “farvet rød”; CV: “red-coloured, dyed red”) is found only in prose. In most instances, it is used about human complexion (Alfræði íslenzk 3:98.3; Fljótsdæla hin meiri 31.20; Sturlunga saga 1:518.13); where there is a referent, it is human

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39. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, Íslensk orðsforbók, 554.
40. See Brückmann, Altwestnordische Farbsystematik, and Wolf, “Some Comments.”
41. “apt kom brúðr til beiðis / bláleit ok dauð hneitis” (21.8; Skjaldedigtning 2:424).
42. See note 36 above.
43. “Lét (jarplitaðs) ótu / (arnar jóðs) enn gøði / (munn rauð malttings kennir) / Magnús hugin fanga” (29.1; Skjaldedigtning 1:434).
44. “Óld hefr opt enn mildi / unnar bliks frá miklum / (Krists mærk lim) leysta / litraúðs konungr nauðum (33.4; Skjaldedigtning 1:435).
flesh and body parts: “augu” (Eirspennill 437.25), “kinnr” (Reykjahólábók 2:152.26), “líkami” (Stjórn 161.7), and “skinn” (Flóres saga konungs 132.13). Twice the referent is hair (“hár”: Flóres saga konungs 132.13; Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar 173.25), twice it is blood (“blóð”: Karlamagnúss saga 505.25; Póðiks saga 1:25.9), and once it is the branches (“greinar”) of a balsam tree (Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany 61.6).

Svartleitr (LP: “sort af udseende”; ONS: “mørk af Ansigtstahrve”; CV: “swarthy”) appears twice in poetry, in a verse by Jórunn skáldmær, where the referent is a verse (bragr),45 and in a verse in Hjálphers saga, where it is a man (seggr).46 In prose, it is attested once, in Gríms saga loðinkinna, where it is used about the complexion of a woman (149.17).

2.8 Compounds of two color terms.

A problem with these mixed colors or one color plus an achromatic (as in gráblár and svartjarpr) is that it is often difficult to ascertain the balance of their elements (though in the case of achromatic terms, hvítr, grár, and svartr, they would seem to represent degrees of saturation from “pale” to “medium” to “dark” along with the color name).47 Should rauðblár be defined as “reddish-blue” (blue being dominant) “red-blue” (neither being dominant), “bluish red” (red being dominant) or “purple”? And should rauðgulr be described as “reddish-yellow” (yellow being dominant), “yellow-red” (neither being dominant), “yellowish-red” (red being dominant), or “orange”? Only the referents can provide possible answers.

Blábrúnaðr (ONS: “blaabrun”; CV: “dark blue coloured”; ONP: “?farvet sortbrun / ?coloured blackish-brown”) is attested once. The referent is a female tunic (“kvenkyrtill”; Guðmundar saga A, 175.8).48

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45. “Haralds frák Halfdan spyrja / herðibrögð, en logðis / sýnisk svartleitr reyni / sjá bragr, ens hárfagra” (2.3; Skjaldedigtning 1:53).
46. “Hjálmpér, ek heiti; / hvurr spyr att því, / segr enn svartleiti, á sædýri” (2.3; Skjaldedigtning 2:354).
47. See Biggam, Semantic of Colour, 123.
48. Interestingly, the same tunic is referred to in the B-redaction of Hrafnss Saga Sveinbjarnarsonar, where it is described as being “brúnaðr” (56.21–22).
Bláhvítr (LP: “sort-hvid, vistnok hvid med sorte striber”; CV: “white-blue”) appears in poetry only, in Guðrúnarhvøt (“bœcr . . . inar bláhvíto,” st. 4) and Hamðismál (“Bœcr . . . inar bláhvíto,” st. 7). Hollander, Terry, and Larrington translate bláhvítr as “bluish-white,” “blue-white,” and “blue and white,” respectively; the last-mentioned translation would render bláhvítr ineligible as a color term.

Blásvartr (LP: “blásort, sort”), too, is found only in poetry, in Helgakviða Hundingsbana I, where the referent is brimðýr (a heiti for a ship), in Pórarinn stuttfeldr’s Stuttfeldardrápa, where it is byrvargar (a heiti for ships), and in a lausavísa by Einarr Skúlason, where it is Muninn (a heiti for a raven).

Brúmrauðr (ONP: “rødbrun / reddish brown”) is attested twice. The referents are a stone (“steinn”: Veturliði Óskarsson 22.17) and a small implement for carving or cutting (“krit”: Veturliði Óskarsson 22.30).

Gráblár (ONS: “graablæ”) is attested once, and the referent is a frock (“hekla”: Laxdæla saga 234.14 var).

Gulbrúnn is attested once, and the referent is eye-brows (brýnn: AM 764 4° 17v).

Gulgrár (CV: “yellow-gray”), too, is attested only once, and the referent is a tunic (“kyrtill”: Laxdæla saga 233.13 var. [AM 123 fol. 38]).

Gulgrønn (ONS: “gulgrøn”; CV: “yellow-green.”) is attested twice, in Laxdæla saga (233.13), where the referent is a tunic (kyrtill), and in Jarlmanns saga (26.32 var. [AM 167 fol. 53v]) where it is the sea (sjór).

Hvitjarpr (LP: “lyse-rødbrun”; CV: “white-brown, blond”) is found once, in a lausavísa by Magnus berfrettr, and the referent is svanni (woman).
Rauðblár (ONS+: “rødblår”) is attested once and describes the color of an amethyst: “Amatista heitir eirrn ærligur steirnn. ok hefir raudblann lit suo sem uiole eda rosa. enn sumir hafa bleikan lit” (Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany 110.7).\(^\text{54}\)

Rauðbleikr (ONS: “lysrød”; CV: “reddish”) is attested four times.\(^\text{55}\) Twice the referent is human hair (“hár”: Eyrbyggja saga 21.5; Stjórn 460.11—here a translation of “rufus”; “skegg”: Piðríks saga 1:336.3), and twice it is a gem stone. One is a sardonyx: “a ofan-verdum hvitleikanum pickir hann raudbleikr, ok ero þo allir litir samblandmir” (Alfræði íslenzk 1:79.6).\(^\text{56}\) The other is a jacinth, and here one particular kind, the “garnatus” is described: “sa er raudbleikr ok fafundare” (Alfræði íslenzk 1:80.18).\(^\text{57}\)

Rauðbrún (LP: “rødbrun”; ONS: “rødbrunfarvet”/”rødbrun”; CV: “red-brown”) / rauðbrúnadr (ONS: “rødbrunfarvet”; CV: “red-brown, dark-red, reddish”) is found once in poetry, in Sigvatr Þórðarson’s Erfsrápa Óláfs helga, where the referent is a sword (hjörr).\(^\text{58}\) In prose, the referents are cloth (“bliaz”: Elis saga ok Rosamundu 53.10; “klæði”: Sturlunga saga 1:151.8 and var.), a tunic (“kyrtill”: Biskupa sögur 2:55.17, Eirspennill 235.13; Laxdæla saga 242.7), and blood (“blóð”: Hauksbók 181.18).

Rauðgøønn (ONS: “rødgrøn”; CV: “reddish green”) is attested once, in Fló vents saga, and describes the color of a mantle (møttull).\(^\text{59}\) According to Ashlee C. Bailey, red-green and blue-yellow color terms should not exist, since such terms would confuse or fail to distinguish opponent colors.\(^\text{60}\)

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\(^\text{54}\) See note 36.

\(^\text{55}\) Susanne M. Arthur argues that all the referents “may be perceived as orange-colored.” “Are Oranges Yellow? Appelsinugulur as a Basic Color Term in Icelandic,” Orð og tunga 15 (2013): 28.

\(^\text{56}\) The sardonyx is “a gem variety of reddish-brown colored sand with white or black banded chalcedony or onyx used to make cameo with the raised black, red or brown background” (Manutchehr-Danai, Dictionary of Gems, 415).

\(^\text{57}\) The jacinth is “a term applied to a transparent yellow to reddish-brown variety of zircon” (ibid., 260).

\(^\text{58}\) “auk, at ísarnleiki, / Innþrendum lét finnask, / rækinn, gramr í reikar / rauðbrúnan hjør túnun” (14.8; Skjaldeidtning 1:242).

\(^\text{59}\) “skín þav voro vndir, er engi maðr vissi hváphan af voru; þav voro gull savmvt; en þat etliðv menn hellzt, at þat véri af sialldsegum fylvum, ok svá atagz sem skín. Þav voro bla ok brún, raðgren ok með alllzkyns litv” (142.33).

\(^\text{60}\) “The theory [of color opponency] is based on the idea that there are four unique hues: red, green, yellow, and blue. These form opponent pairs, with red and green being one pair and yellow and blue the other pair. When we perceive one of the pure hues in
Raūdgulr (ONS: “rød gul”; CV: “yellow-red, orange”) is used about human hair (“hár”; Karlamagnúss saga 113.19; Sturlunga saga 2:125.20) and cloth (pallklæði): “eitt pallklæde raudgult” (DN 3:148.23).

Svartblár (ONS+: “mørkeblaa”; CV: “dark blue”) is attested twice and describes a rare-earth magnet: “Magnes . . . er svartblár, hann dregr iarn” (Alfræði islensk 1:81.17) and “Magnetis heitir sa steinn er finnr a India landi sv þioð er Trogodi heitir, hann er svartblár (Hauksbók 227.16).

Svartbrúnaðr (ONS: “farvet sortbrunt”; CV: “dyed black-brown”) is attested once and describes the color of fabric (klæði): “i.x. aalnar af svartbrunadu klæde” (DN 1:195.24).

Svartjarpr (ONS: “morkebrun”; CV: “dark-brown”) is attested twice (Byskupa sögur 307.19; Laxdæla saga 235.19) and describes the color of human hair (hár).

2.9 Compounds of a noun and a color term.

Biksvartr (ONS: “begsort, sort som Beg”; CV: “black as pitch”; ONP: “begsort / pitch-black”) is attested once, and the referent is water (vatn): “Vatn er þar sialldfengit, en biksvart ok beiskt bmde þat er a particular region of the visual field—say, pure green—we cannot perceive the other in the same area, in this case pure red. The same holds true for blue and yellow. All other colors are mixtures of these four. Thus, if 75% of the chromatic response received by the retina in a given area were green and 25% were yellow, the resulting color would be a yellowish-green. However, there can be no reddish-green or bluish-yellow because the same neural mechanism signals red in one state and green in the other (or yellow in one state and blue in the other), thereby not allowing for mixtures of members of each opponent pair . . . It is impossible for blue to overlap with yellow to create a ‘blellow’ or for red and green to combine to create a ‘gred.’” “On the Non-existence of Blue-Yellow and Red-Green Color Terms,” Studies in Language 25 (2001): 187.

61. Arthur argues that “the most frequently used term for the color orange in Icelandic (besides the now prevalent term appelsinugulur) is raūdgular ‘red-yellow,’ which appears three times in ONP and fifty-three times in ROH [Rítmálasafr Orðabókar Háskólsins] . . . As with raūðbleikr, these instances describe objects that can be conceived of as orange-colored” (“Are Oranges Yellow?” 128).

62. This is presumably magnetite. Its color and transparency are described as “black” and “opaque,” respectively, and its lustre is defined as being “metallic, shining; to submetallic, dull.” It has a strong metallic character and has “by reason of its strongly magnetic properties . . . attracted attention since early times.” W. R. Hamilton, A. R. Woolley, and A. C. Bishop, A Guide to Minerals, Rocks and Fossils (London: Hamlyn Publishing, 1970), 40.
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fezz” (Heilagana manna sögur 2.471.8); it translates the Latin “quasi bituminea.”

Bleikhárr (ONS: “hvidhaaret, lyshaaret”; CV: “auburn”; ONP: “lysháret, blond / fair-haired, blond”) is attested six times (Heimskringla 3:220.1, 286.16; Hulda 99.16, 185.4; Trójumanna saga 69.23; Þiðriks saga 2:336.2), and in all instances the referent is human hair.

Blikhvítr (LP: “lysende, hvid, lyst glattet”; ONS: “blinkende, lysende hvit”; CV: “white-gleaming”) appears once in a verse in Hervararsaga, and the referent is lind (a heiti for a shield).63

Blódraudr (ONS: “rød af eller som Blod”; CV: “blood-red”; ONP: “rød pga. blod, rød som blod / red on account of blood, blood-red”) is attested nine times:

<table>
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<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>hundr</td>
<td>1 (Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd 130.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gangari</td>
<td>1 (Flóres saga ok Blækiflur 29.9—here translating “rouges”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth</td>
<td>dúkr</td>
<td>1 (Mariu saga 872.14—here a cloth stained with wine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>silkiklæði</td>
<td>1 (Thomas saga erkibiskups 458.38–459.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hail (tears)</td>
<td>bagl</td>
<td>1 (Vilhjálms saga sjóðs AM 577 4° 41’17”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2 (Alexanders saga 3.27; Valvers þátt 388.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>complexions</td>
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In two instances, it is used in an abstract meaning: “man olafr lata hring blódraudan vm hals þer ef þu kemr til hans . . . hann man lata af hófdi þík (Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar 1:236.14) and “mun Óláfr láta hring blódraudan um háls þer, ef þú finnr hann” (Heimskringla 1:354.6).

Blódroðinn (LP: “blod-farvet, blodig”; ONS+: “farget rød av blod”; CV: “blood-stained”; ONP: “farvet rød af blod / red with blood”) is found three times in poetry, in Þjóðólfr Arnórsson’s Magnúsflokkr, where the referent is shields (skildir),64 in Ívarr Ingimundarson’s

63. “Bresta mun bróðir / en blikhvíta lind” (10.2; Skjaldedigtning 2:272).
64. “Spúði einu orði / (old blódroðna skjöldu) / satt’s at morg (áTTi) / Selunds mér hverr vé bæri” (17.2; Skjaldedigtning 1:336).
Sigurðarbólkr, where it is shafts (*skópt*),
and in Rögnvaldr jarl
and Hallr Bórarinsson’s *Háttalykill*, where it is swords (*benja reði*).
In prose it is attested once, and the referent is the cross
(*kross*) of Jesus Christ (*Íslenzk æventýr* 1:150.15). It is questionable
whether the adjective should be considered a color term.

**Blómhvítr** (**ONP:** “hvid som en blost, blosterhvid / white as a flower”) is attested once, in *Karlamagnúss saga* (332.39), and the referent is a horse (*hestr*).

**Bráhvítr** (**LP:** “med lyse òjenvipper”; **ONS:** “som har hvide Øjen-
haar”; **CV:** “white-browed”) is found once, in *Völundarkviða*, and
the referent is Bóðvíldr, a maiden (*mey*).  

**Brandrauðr** (**LP:** “ildrod”) occurs once, in a verse in *Ragnars saga
lodbrokar*, and the referent is baugr (a ring).

**Brúnhvítr** (**LP:** “med lyse òjenbryn”; **ONS:** “som har hvide Øjen-
bryn”; **CV:** “white-browed”) is found once, in *Hymiskviða*, where
it describes a giantess: “Enn þonnur gecc, algullin, fram, / brúnhvít,
bora þiðriði syni” (st. 8).

**Dreyrrauðr** (**ONS:** “blodröð”; **CV:** “blood-red”; **ONP:** “blodröð,
röð som blod [i ansigtet; af ophidselse, etc.] / blood-red, red
as blood [in the face; from agitation, etc.]”) is found in prose
only: *Njáls saga* 39.20; *Egils saga* 37.3; *Flateyjarbók* 3:266.39;
*Gibbons saga* 44.14; *Heimskringla* 3:145.6; *Hulda* 210.12, 213.16;
*Laxdæla saga* 113.3; *Morkinskinna* 224.30; *Orkneyinga saga* 134.23;
*Sagan ock rimorna om Friðþjófr* 31.22 and 57.4; and
*Sturlunga saga* 2:255.2–3. In all instances, it describes facial color
due to emotion.

**Drífhvítr** (**LP:** “hvid som sne”; **ONS:** “drívhvid, snehvid”; **CV:** “white
as driven snow”; **ONP:** “hvid som sammenføget sne / white as the
driven snow”) appears in a verse in *Víglundar saga*, and the referent is
dúkr (cloth).

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65. “skarða skjoldu / skópt blóðröðin, / veðrblásin vé / of vegóndum” (34.6; *Skjalde-
digtning* 1:473).
66. “vann blóðröðin benja / benfloðr skolat reði, / sóknbára gat sára / sárvorm þvegit
árar” (33b6; *Skjaldeidgntign* 1:504).
67. “bíð þi Bóðvíldi, meyna bráhvíto” (st. 39).
68. “ilt er í borgðhlið baugi / brandrauðum framm standa” (VI.1; *Skjaldeigtning*
2:257).
69. “strauk drífhvítum dúki / drós um hvarminn ljósa” (7.7; *Skjaldeigtning* 2:489).
Dumbleikr (ONP: "?mat/grål bleg / ?dull/greyish pale") is attested only once, and the referent is a chalcedony: "Calcedonius heiter eirn ærligr Stein hann hefur dumbleikann lit" (Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany 220.21).70

Fannhvitr (LP: “snehvid”; ONS: “snehvid”; CV: “white as driven snow”) occurs once in poetry, in a lausavísa by Björn Breiðvikingakappi, where it is used to describe the appearance of a woman (fjöldu Fold).71 In prose, it is attested twice; the referents are human flesh (“hörund”: Bænings saga 101.60) and horses (“hestar”: Stjórn 206.8).

Fifilbleikr (ONS: “lysegul, med en Løvetand lignende Farve”; CV: “dandelion-yellow”) is attested three times and describes the color of a horse (“hestr”: Víglundar saga 77.6; “stoðhross”: Finnboga saga 44.5; Vápnfirðinga saga 46.3).72

Físbleikr (ONS: “fiskbleikr”) is attested once: “Eigi vilda ek svá verða við blóðlátíð físbleighr” (Heimskringla 3:416.19). Eirspennill has the variant fullbleikr (218.5) and Codex Frisianus has fískbleikr (355.33).

Fískbleikr (ONS: “hvid, bleg som Fisk”; CV: “pale as a fish”) appears in Codex Frisianus (see above) and Hulda (300.21).

Fótgulr (LP: “‘fod-gul,’ med gule fødder”) is attested once, in Krákumál, and the referent is an eagle (fogl).73

70. The chalcedony is “a translucent, crypto-crystalline variety of quartz. It is commonly microscopically fibrous, massive, and has a nearly wax-like luster, it has a lower density and is lower than ordinary quartz . . ., uniform tint, white, gray, pale-blue, brown, or black, many of the hues are known by a variety of names” (Manutchehr-Danai, Dictionary of Gems, 16).

71. “Pá mun þoll en mjóva / þórodds aðalbjóra / (Fold unni mér fjöldu) / fannhvít getu sanna” (3.4; Skjaldedigtning 1:125).


73. “ok fógulum fogli / fíngum vér, þars sungu / við háséymða hjálma / hörð jórð, mikils verðar” (2.5; Skjaldedigtning 1:649).
Glóðraudr (LP: "ildrød"; ONS: "gloðrød, rød som en Glok"; CV: "red as embers") is found in poetry only, and the referent is gold or treasure (goll, fé, eld álfoldar): “gull glóðrautt” (Guðrunarkviða II, st. 2); “gulli . . . glóðraðo” (Atlamál, st. 13); “iðiit glóðraúða fé” (Fáfnismál, st. 9 and 20); and “líþiz hrein hæstum / höfn af skipstofnum / eldi álfoldar / auðar glóðraðum” (Sturla Póðarson’s Hrafnsmál, st. 5.8; Skjaldedigtning 2:127).

Goldhvitr (LP: “lys som guld”) appears once in poetry, in Hárbardsljóð, and describes a woman (mær).74

Gollroðinn/gullroðinn (LP: “red af guld”; ONS: “forgyldt”; CV: “gilt”) is used in Krákumál about a spear (geirr) and in Atlakviða about helmets (hjalmr).75 In prose, it is common, though it is questionable whether it should be considered a color term:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number or examples:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armor and weapons</td>
<td>hjalmr</td>
<td>22 (Ágríp 10.1; Alexanders saga 41.1; Codex Frisianus 577.33; Egils saga 159.19; Fagrskinna 327.3, 352.21; Hálfdanar saga Eysteinssonar 137.14; Heimskringla 1:211.5 and 441.2–3, 3:386.18; Islendzk aeventyri 1:37.7; Konráðs saga 57.28; Laxdæla saga 67.14; Morkinskinna 455.21; Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta 1:42.8, 2:262.6; Partalopa saga 103.4; Saga Ólafs konungs bins helga 1:70.7; Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd 10.14; Sogur Danakonunga 136.23; Píðriks saga 1:178.2; Yngvars saga viðfyrsla 6.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skjóldr</td>
<td>1 (Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar 225.17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grasgrønn (ONS: “græsgrøn, grøn som Grøs”; CV: “grass-green”) is attested twice. The referents are foliage (“lauf”: Konungs skuggsjá 9.15) and a helmet (“hjalmr”: Karlamagnúss saga 311.8 var).76

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74. “gladdac ina gullhvito, gamni mær unði” (st. 30 var).


76. The main text has “gréen sem gras.”
Hárrarauðr (LP: “rødhaæret”; ONS+: “rødhaæret”) is found in a verse in Grettis saga, and the referent is Grettir’s head (hófuð Grettis).77

Helblár (CV: “black as death”) is attested once, and the referent is (injured) bodies (líkamir): “þeirra líjókamer voru allir hufíletter og helblaera” (Dínus saga dramblát 35.7).

Himinblár (CV: “sky-blue”) is attested once, and the referent is a cloth (klæði): “eitt klædi . . . er himenn blatt var at lith” (Reykjabolabók 2:350.32).

Hrafnblár (LP: “ravnsort”; CV: “raven-black”) is found in Bragi Boddason’s Ragnarsdrápa and describes the appearance of Erpr’s brothers, Sørli and Hamðir.78

Hrafnsvart (LP: “ravnsort”; CV: “raven-black”) is found in a verse in Hjálmpers saga ok Olvis, and the referent is a man (halr).79

Hvarmráðr (LP: “med røde øjelågs kanter”; CV: “with red eyelids”) appears in a lausavísa by Kormákr Ogmundarson, and the referent is frenju fæðir (feeder of cows).80

Hórunðsvitr is attested once and describes human complexion:

“Leifur var hvitr [var. hórunðz huijtur]” (Skardásrbók 58.24).

Hórunðsvart, too, is attested once, and the referent is spirits (andar):

“hórunðsvartir anndar stódu yfir henni” (AM 764 4° 22v).

Ilbleikr (LP: “med bleg, d.v.s. gul, fod”) is found in Einarr Skúlason’s Geisli, and the referent is an eagle (orri).81

Indibláð (ONS+: “indigo”) is attested once: “pund sinopur fyrir 6 aura, meniu fyri 2 aura ok indiblatt, hvit fyri aura, gult 3 aurum” (Alfreði Íslensk 3:74.6).

Járngrár (LP: “jærn-, stål-grå”; ONS+: “jerngrå; om naturlig farget ullstoff”; CV: “iron-gray”) appears once in poetry, in Snorri Sturluson’s Háttatal, and the referent is byrnies (serkír).82 In prose, it is used about cloth (“klæði”: DI

77. “Flutta ek upp ór eyju / ómett hófuð Grettis, / þann grætr nála nauma / nauðig hára-rauðan” (52.4; Skjaldedigtning 2:476).

78. “þás hrafnblárd hefnða / harna Erps of barmar” (3.7; Skjaldedigtning 1:1).

79. “halr enn hrafnsvarti, / í hraevarskrúði” (2.7; Skjaldedigtning 2:363).

80. “Spurði frenju foðir / fréttinn, hví mér þettri / (hann synsk mér heima / hvarmráðr) ketilormar” (13.4; Skjaldedigtning 1:72).

81. “Hneitir frák at héti, hjaldrs at vápna galdri, / ódlings hjórr, þess ’s orra / ilbleikum gaf steikar” (43.4; Skjaldedigtning 1:438).

82. “styrs rýðr stillir hersum / stærk järngrá serki” (7.8; Skjaldedigtning 2:62).
3:418.33; *Islandske originaldiplomer* 71.4), a bull ("naut"; DI 3:430.26), and a tent ("tjald": Fljótsdæla hin meiri 76.4). *Kinngrár* (LP: "grá, bleg om kinden"; CV: "gray-cheeked") is found in a *lausavísa* by Máni, and the referent is a man (karl).83 *Kolblár* (ONS: "kulsort"; CV: "coal-blue, dark blue, livid") is common:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Injured human body or body parts</td>
<td>bak</td>
<td>1 (Íslandska handskriften N° 645 4° 30.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fótr</td>
<td>1 (Grettis saga 252.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>likami</td>
<td>3 (Karlamagnúss saga 54.29; cf. also Eyrbyggja saga 166.26, 253.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kinn</td>
<td>1 (Sturlunga saga 1:139.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea and waves</td>
<td>haf</td>
<td>1 (Íslandska handskriften No. 645 4° 73.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sjör</td>
<td>9 (Áns saga bogsveigis 355.21; Bósa saga 49.4; Njáls saga 35.16, 78.6; Færeyinga saga 135.10; Laxdæla saga 103.10; Jarlmanns saga 26.32; Mariú saga 98.1, 271.19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Kolsvartr* (LP: "kulsort"; ONS: "kulsort"; CV: "coal-black, jet-black") is also common:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>bestr</td>
<td>1 (Partalopa saga 103.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kótrr</td>
<td>2 (Rómverja saga 187.4; Flateyjarbók 1:26.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sauðr</td>
<td>1 (Konungs skuggsjá 134.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vargr</td>
<td>1 (Gibbons saga 87.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and cloth</td>
<td>kleði</td>
<td>1 (Membrana regia deperdita 230.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human skin and body</td>
<td>andlit</td>
<td>1 (Gibbons saga 44.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>auga</td>
<td>1 (Ívens saga 10.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maðr</td>
<td>1 (Heilagra manna sogur 1:84.28)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

83. "Hvat munt hafs á òtri / hengilgr með drengjum / karl, þvít kraptr þinn förlask, kinngrár mega vinna" (5.1; Skjaldedítgning 1:520).
Once, the term is used in an abstract meaning: “alldri hefir orðit jafn kolsvart um mitt efni, sīðan faðir minn miðlaði mér fé” (Gautreks saga 9.15).

Kverkhvitr (LP: “lys-, hvidhalset”) is found in Þórbjörn hornklofi’s Haraldskvæði, and the referent is a valkyrie (valkyrja).84

Laufgrænn (LP: “lövgrön, grön som løvet”; ONS: “grön som Löv”; CV: “leaf-green”) is found in Rúnakvæði, which says about the runic letter Æ (bjarkan) that it is “laufgrænnstr lima” (25; Skjalde-digtning 2:249). In prose, it is attested four times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armor</td>
<td>hjalmr</td>
<td>1 (Elis saga ok Rosamundu 5.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth and clothing</td>
<td>klæði</td>
<td>1 (Sturlunga saga 2:144.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kyrtill</td>
<td>1 (Hrafnkels saga 1403.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>segl</td>
<td>1 (Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga 1:428.1 var.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lifraðr (CV: “liver coloured, dark red”) is used exclusively about clothing, more specifically a blouse (“stakkr”: DI 8:801.20) and hose (“hosur”: DI 10:488.20, 597.20).

Línhvitr (LP: “linnedhvid, hvid ved det brugte hovedtøj af lin”; ONS: “hvid som Lin? hvid under Lin, iført hvidt Linned?”; CV: “white as linen”) occurs twice, in Hárbardsljóð, to describe a woman (mey).85

Mansvartr is attested once: “Gestr scifti við hann sverðe oc oxi oc feck honum hesta í knockotta [marginal note to ‘hesta í knockotta: h<n>ockottir ᛅ: mansvartir. sva avbjectir væri. þvi Gestr vildi hann feigann’]” (Skarðsárbók 79.9).

Margrár (ONS+: “gráfarget [om naturlig farget ullstoff]”) is attested once: “hesta madr V. alner margratt” (DI 3:414.33).

Mjallhvitr (LP: “hvid som nyfalden sne”; ONS: “hvid som nyfalden tór Sne”; CV: “white as driven snow”) appears only in poetry. In

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84. “kvæddi en gleðhvarma / ok en kverkhvita / Hymis hausrofa, / es sat á horni vinbjarga” (2.6; Skjalde-digtning 1:22).

85. “léc ec við ina línhvít oc launþing háðac” (st. 30), “Liðs þíns væra ec þá þurfti, þórr, at ec helda þeirri inni línhvít mey” (st. 32).
Alvissmál the referent is a woman (here maðr),\textsuperscript{86} and in Víglundar saga the referent is mundar jökla (a kenning for silver).\textsuperscript{87} Móbrunaðr/móbrúnn (ONS: „graabrun”; CV: “dark brown”) is attested once, and the referent is a tunic (“kyrtill”: Eyrbyggja saga 48.8 and var). Mörauðr (LP: “brunrød”; ONS: “rødbrun”; CV: “yellow brown”) is found in a lausavísa by Kormákr Ögmundarson, and the referent is sheep (sauðir).\textsuperscript{88} In prose, it is attested five times. In Mágus saga (34.37, 39.41), it describes the color of a man’s one eye (auga) and likened to the color of cat’s eyes, the one side of his nose (nef), and the one side of his body (líkami). In Njáls saga (59.14 var.) it is used about a tunic (söluváðarkyrtill), and in Gøngu-Hrólf’s saga (252.20) the referent is a hood (hetta). Mosrauðr (LP: “rød, brun som mos, eller: ‘farvet i mosfarve’”; CV: “moss-red) is attested once, in a lausavísa by Steinarr Sjónason, and the referent is a single pair of hose (hosa).\textsuperscript{89} Razhvitr is found once, and the referent is a horse (hestr): “gialla hessta, enn eigi merar, graðann hest, enn ecki gelldan, þann hvern er ecki sie rá: (S: raz) hvitur” (Gulapingslög [Fragments] 10,35). Sauðsvart (ONS+: “sauesvart,” naturlig svartfarget [ullstoff]; CV: “sheep-black”) is attested twice, and the referents are cloth: “karfua m[enn]. form[adr] x. alner sauðsvart” (DI 3:406.21), “gizeri vij alner sauðsvartar (DI 3:418.19). Silfrhvitr (ONS: “hvíð som Sølv”; CV: “silver-white”) is found only in prose:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armor</td>
<td>brynja</td>
<td>2 (Karlamagnúss saga 328.7, 342.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>berklaði</td>
<td>1 (Karlamagnúss saga 309.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hjalmr</td>
<td>1 (Karlamagnúss saga 306.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bringabrynja</td>
<td>1 (Islendzk æventyri 1:36.22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Silkibleikr (ONS: “gul som Silke”) is attested seven times. In four

\textsuperscript{86} “eiga vilia, heldr enn an vera, / þat íþ mihallhvita man” (st. 7).

\textsuperscript{87} “Mjök hefir mundar jökla / mihallhvít numit allan” (t.7.2; Skjaldedigtning 2:492).

\textsuperscript{88} “makara ’s mér at mæla, / an mórauða sauði / of afreittu elta, / orð mart við Steingerði” (9.6; Skjaldedigtning 1:72).

\textsuperscript{89} “Lifðak lengi, / létk ráða goð, / hafðak aldri / hosu mosrauða” (t.14; Skjaldedigtning 1:89).
instances, the referent is human hair (“hár”: *Heimskringla* 3:253.13; *Hulda* 152.13; *Jóns saga Hólabýskups* 133.5; *Órvar-Odds saga* 169.24), and in three instances it is horses (“hross”: *Hríðar saga Gautrekssonar* 41.6–7; “merhross”: *Gautreks saga* 35.9, 66.7).

*Silkigulr* is attested once, and the referent is human hair (“hár”: *Ágrip* 6.17).

*Skauðhvít* (ONS: “som har hvidt skauð”; CV: “sheath-white”) is attested once: “giallda hesta. en eigi marar. graðan hest. oc eigi gelldan. þann hvern er eigi er raðzhvervingr. ne skauðhvitr. ne skauðmigr. ne valldægðr. æða aðrer kauplestir a” (*Gulapingslag* 75.21).

*Skinnhvít* (ONS: “hvid af Hudfarve”; CV: “white-skinned”) is attested once, and the referent is a leg (*leggr*): “sæ menn þann hennar leg miðra ok skinn huitara ok óþrymlottara eptir vadil i frosti . . . en hinn sem fullkomliga var iafnan adr vsakadr” (*Byskupa sögur* 368.15).

*Skjallhvít* (LP: “hvid som skjall, d.v.s. som den hvide hinde i et æg”) is found in Árni Jónsson’s *Guðmundardrápa*, and the referent is a lily (*lilja*).90

*Snjáhvít*, *snjóhvít*, *snæhvít* (LP: “snehvid”; ONS: “snehvid”; CV: “snow-white”) appears three times in poetry, in *Atlamál*, Árni Jónsson’s *Guðmundardrápa*, and in an anonymous skaldic verse; the referents are silver (*silfr*), a dove (*dúfa*), and blood (*blóð*), respectively.91 In prose, it is common:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animals, birds, fish</td>
<td><em>dúfa</em></td>
<td>1 (<em>Heilagramanna sögur</em> 1:413.29 var.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>fugl</em></td>
<td>1 (<em>Heilagra manna sögur</em> 1:275.16)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>gangari</em></td>
<td>1 (<em>Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr</em> 29.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>hestr</em></td>
<td>4 (<em>Adonius saga</em> 201.7, 123.11; <em>Alexanders saga</em> 22.3; <em>Postola sögur</em> 502.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>hvittingr</em></td>
<td>1 (<em>Konungs skuggsjá</em> 15.22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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90. “Skírlifs með skýru prófi / skjalhvít lilja máttu kallaz” (68.2; *Skjaldeidtning* 2:458).

91. “maní mun ec þic hugga, mætom ágætom, / silfri snæhvíto, sem þú síaalf vilir” (st. 70); “snæfurt syndiz snjóhvít dúfa / snara í gegnum ræfur þegni” (13.5; *Skjaldeidtning* 2:444); “seggr sparir sverði at hóggva, / snæhvítr er blóð líta” (*Skjaldeidtning* 2:147).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing, cloth, skin</td>
<td>Klaði</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>saudr</td>
<td>1 (Heilagrar manna sogur 1:273.32)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dúkr</td>
<td>1 (Thomas saga Erkibyskups 494.14)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Klabi</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>motr</td>
<td>1 (Olafs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta 2:235.16)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skinn</td>
<td>1 (Karlamagnúss saga 302.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flowers and trees</td>
<td>leggr</td>
<td>1 (Heimskringla 1:93.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lilja</td>
<td>2 (Bænings saga 122.52; Nitida saga 3.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>brauðbleifr</td>
<td>1 (Mariu saga 329.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manna</td>
<td>1 (Stjórn 294.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human hair</td>
<td>hár</td>
<td>3 (Konungs skuggsjá 22.26, 134.15; Sverris saga 10.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skegg</td>
<td>1 (Stjórn 225.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human skin and body</td>
<td>likami</td>
<td>2 (Mágus saga 34.41; Piðriks saga 2:51.14 var.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nef</td>
<td>1 (Mágus saga 34.39)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snow and hail</td>
<td>bagilkorn</td>
<td>1 (Stjórn 292.17)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>mjöll</td>
<td>2 (Erex saga, 23.4, 17)</td>
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<td>steinn</td>
<td>1 (Sverris saga 2.15)</td>
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<td>steinhró</td>
<td>1 (Heilagrar manna sogur 2:127.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teeth and ivory</td>
<td>Þónn</td>
<td>1 (Duggals leiðsla 73.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>filsbeinn</td>
<td>1 (Saulus saga 13.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other objects</td>
<td>kistill</td>
<td>1 (Mariu saga 199.21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, a man is said to be “sniahvitr af lik^ra” (Stjórn 618.22), and once the adjective is used in an abstract meaning: “meðr patriarchum ok dyrleighum gu^s postolum meðr purpurleghum pislarvatuum ok sniohuitum iaturum” (Thomas saga erkibyskups 282.10).
Sólbrún (ONS+: “brun av sol, solbrent”) is attested once, and the referent is people (menn): “þau [smyrsl] eru god þeim monnum er solbrunir eru eda fialkomnir vid allz konar ryiu. oc ef ut þytur a manne” (Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany 98.10).

Sólhvítr (LP: “hvid, lys som solen”; ONS: “hvid som Solen”; CV: “sun-white”) is found in Hávamál, and the referent is a woman (mey).92

Sótraudr (LP: “sodroð’, mörkerð”; ONS: “sodbrun”; CV: “soot-red,’ dark-red) occurs in Voluspá, and the referent is a cock (hani).93

Steingrár is attested twice, in Ectors saga, and the referents are cloth (“klæði” [139.17]) and a lock of wool (“lagðr” [166.2]).

Svanhvítr (LP: “svanehvid”; ONS+: “hvit som en svane”; CV: “Swan-white”) is found in a verse in Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar, and the referent is Ásbjörn’s mother.94

Tandráuðr (LP: “ildröð”; ONS: “ildröð”; CV: “fire-red”) occurs three times in poetry, in Pjóðolfr Arnórsson’s Sexstefja, in Einarr Skúlason’s Geisli, and in a verse in Hardar saga; the referents are all heiti or kennings for gold (ormtorg, vala strætis fasti, and nad Nilsandr, respectively).95 In prose, where it is attested five times, the referent is also gold (“gull”: Bragða-Mágus saga 13.7; Bærings saga 95.35; Clarus saga 13.52–53; Kirialax saga 66.3; and Partalopa saga 23.3).

Úlfgráðr (LP: “ulvegrá, grá som ulvens hár”; ONS: “graa af Farve som Ulven”; CV: “wolf-grey”) occurs once in poetry, in Egill Skallagrímsson’s Arnbjarnarkviða, where the referent is a human head (hattar stau).96 In prose, the term is used about human hair (“hár”: Egils saga 86.21, Grettis saga 110.4), a brown bear

92. “Billings mey ec fann bediom á / sólhvíta, sofa” (st. 97).
93. “enn annarr gelr fyr íord nédan, / sótraudri hani, at sólum Heliar” (st. 43).
94. “Segið þat minni móður, / mun eigi syni kemba / svarþar lát í sumri / svanhvít í Danmorku” (IV.1.4; Skjaldeidtning 2:365). Svanhvít appears as the name of a valkyrie in Völundarkviða st. 2).
95. “Tógu má tekna segja / (tandrauds) á Særklandi / (ungr hætti sér) átta / (ormtorgs húðour) borga” (2.2; Skjaldeidtning 1:339), “Tolf múnouð var týnnir / tandrauds húðor sandi / fremdar lystir okasta / fimm náetr vala strætis” (25.2; Skjaldeidtning 1:433), “Vist mun Torfi treystaz / tandraudra Nilsanda, hæðinn hóldr, at riða / hemi í Botn at Gotnum” (15.2; Skjaldeidtning 2:480).
96. “þás ulfgrátt / við Yggjar miði / hattar stau / at hílmi þák” (7.5; Skjaldeidtning 1:38).
("viðbjörn": *Færeyinga saga* 28.13), and a boar ("galtí": *Hrólfs saga kraka* 120.3).

**Ullhvitr** (ONS: "hvid som Uld"; CV: "white as wool") is attested twice, and in both cases the referent is human hair ("hár": *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta* 212.16; *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar* 161.22).

**Váðablár** (ONS: "saa dyb, at den er udsat for fare") is found in *Pjalar Jóns saga*, and the referent is the sea (sjór): ãþeir verða hræddir og felmz fullir, og villdi huer giarnan leita sier ljífz; enn þad er þó ecki hoglegt, þuaid vótvn voru tueimmeigin, enn vóda blár sjór fjirrit framann" (29.22). Although váði is compounded with a color term, it seems that color is not a primary meaning of the adjective (cf. bládjúp).

**Valraudr** (LP: "blodröd, röd af blod"; ONS: "meget rød"; CV: "blood-red, crimson") occurs in *Atlakviða*, and the referent is tunics (serkir).

**Vetrgrønn** (LP: "vintergrøn") appears in the superlative in *Rúnakviði*. The referent is the runic letter ýr (þ) which is said to be "vetrgrønstr viða" (31; *Skjaldedigtning* 2:249). The meaning would seem to be "green(est) in winter," which disqualifies vetrgrønn as a non-basic color term.

**Qskubleikr** (ONS+: "askebleik, askefarget") is attested once: "tok Sigurdur þógle fyrr sagt gler . . . og lijtur nu j þann hlut glersins sem hann synndizt <þegar hann þar j leit meðr> oskubleikum lit og storskorinne asionu sem eins bergbua" (*Sigurðar saga þögla* 194.1).

### 2.10 Color terms with the suffix -ligr

**Blóðligr** (ONS: "blodfarvet"; CV: "bloody"; ONP: "blodfarvet, blodröd / blood-coloured, blood-red") is fairly common but appears to refer to color in only three instances: "tungl fal geisla sinn undir blodligu skyi" (*Heilagra manna sogur* 1:284.5), "Sol mun svört verða, en tungl mun hafa blodligan [var. blodgan: Stock. Perg. 4° no. 19 13'12" lit" (*Postola sogur* 22.7), "Hafdi hann .iii.

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97. "Scoilo knegod þar velia oc scafna asca, / hiálmu gullroðna oc Húna mengi, / sílfrgylt sòulklæði, serki valruða, / dafar, darraða, drosla melgreypa" (st. 4).

98. It can, of course, be argued that these terms consist of only one lexeme, since -ligr is not a second lexeme. See also Biggam, *Semantics of Colour*, 23.
nófn . . . hann het Esau sua sem raudr . . . ok Edom þat er bleikr edr blodligr” (Stjörn 161.9).


*Eiriligr* (ONS: “af Kobber”; CV: “brazen”; ONP: “kobberagtgig, kobberfarvet/copper-like, copper-coloured”) is attested five times, all in prose, though, as noted in ONP, it only seems to refer to color in two instances: “eiriligr Mars” (Alfræði íslensk 2:241n17, 3:66.27).

*Eldsligr* (ONP: “ildagtig, ildfarvet / fire-like, with the colour of fire”) is attested only once as a color term: “Elldzlligr skinzlitr med skinöndum augum snyzt til ædi (Alfræði íslensk 3:103.4).

*Gulligr/golligr* (LP: “forgyldt”; ONS: “af Guld”; ONS+: “gullaktig”; CV: “golden”) is found once in poetry and numerous times in prose, but it seems to refer to color in only a few instances:99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feather</td>
<td>fjôdr</td>
<td>1 (Völsunga saga 61.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavenly bodies</td>
<td>himintungl</td>
<td>1 (Trójumanna saga 87.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sól</td>
<td>3 (Alfræði íslensk 2:241n14, 3:66.28; Elucidarius 66.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human hair</td>
<td>lokkr</td>
<td>3 (Saga Óláfss komungs bins helga 2:674.14; Sigurðar saga þögla 198.15, 244.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Messingligr* (ONS+: “messingaktig”; CV: “brasen”) is attested three times. Twice the referent is the planet Mercury (Alfræði íslensk 2:241n16, 3:66.24), and once it is the sun (“sól”: Alfræði íslensk 2:ccxiii.16).

*Purpur(u)ligr* (ONS: “purpurfarvet, purpurroð”; CV: “purple”) is attested seven times. In three instances, the referent is a martyr or martyrdom (“þislarváttir, “þislarvætti”: Magnúss saga 272.19; Postola sögur 592.32; Thomas saga erkibiskups 282.10), once it is

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a precious stone ("gimsteinn": Jóns saga Hálabyskups 106.28), and once it is blood ("dreyri": Trójumanna saga 130.1). In Rómverja saga, it is twice used about a ring (bríngr) around the sun (251.15, 25), which is said to signify martyrdom.

Rósaligr/rósuligr (ONS: “rosenfarvet, rosenråd”) is attested once, and the referent is blood (dreyri): “Eptir þat dro hun dukinn með rosaligum [var. rosuligum] dreyra runnin or faði ser” (Postola sögur 121.19).

Silfrligr (ONS: “bestaaende af, som har et Udseende af Sølv”; CV: “silvery”; CV+ “of silver, silvern”) is common, but it seems to refer to color in only the following instances: “Luna silfrlig” (Alfræði íslenzk 2:24 in 13, 3:66.24) and “En þær er hon [sólin] tæcr at vitia austrsættar mað værum oc biartum geislum. þa tæcr þar fyst dagr upp at letta austan vinnide silfirligr brynn” (Konungs skuggsjá 7.31).

Smaragdligr (ONS: “smaragdgrøn”; CV: “emerald-like”) is attested once, in Konungs skuggsjá, and the referent is grass or herbage (gras): “því næst leifð hon [sólin] fram ilmannde gras mað smaragligr lit” (9.12).

2.11 Nouns with the suffix -litr.

Finally, attention should be drawn to nouns with the suffix -litr, since they are indicative of color.

Blóðslitr (ONS: “Farve af Blod”; CV: “blood-colour”; ONP: “blodfarve, farve af blod, farve som blod / colour caused by blood, colour of blood”) is attested three times. The referents are Þórr’s stone (steinn) on which men were sacrificed (Eyrbýggja saga 28.11), the rings (bríngar) around the eyeball (Alfræði íslenzk 3:99.32), and the moon (“tungl”: Postola sögur 287.39).

Brennusteinslogonalitr (ONS+: “farge som svovelild”; ONP: “svovlluefarve, farve som en svovllflamme / colour of a sulphur flame”) occurs once to describe one of the colors of the rainbow: “A Regn

100. The emerald is “a brilliant, grass-green variety of beryl . . . highly favored as a gem. Green color is caused by trace of chromium (Cr+3 and vanadium (V+3) ions” (Manutchehr-Danai, Dictionary of Gems, 161).
boga ero þrir lítir. vatnñ litr oc ældz litr oc brenno steîns loga litr” (Hauksbók 174.31).

_Dauðalitr_ (ONS: “Farve som er eiendommelig for den dødes Legeme”; CV: “colour of death”; ONP:”dødsfarve / deathly pallor”) is attested once: “engi var dāþalitr á andliði þeira” (Heilagra manna sögur 2:238.27).

_Eldslitr_ (ONS: Farve som af Ild”; CV: “orbs of fire”) is attested four times. Twice it is used about a color of the rainbow (Hauksbók 174.31; Veraldar saga 80.24). Once it is used about a ring (bringr) on the horizon: “leit hann í vestrættina, ok þóttisk hann sjá hring ok eldslit á” (Njáls saga 320.23). And once it is used in an abstract sense: “Eldz litr merkir fírir gefning synda í liflate fírir guðs sakar” (Hauksbók 175.4).

_Fóstulitr_ (ONS+: “farge i ansiktet under faste”) occurs once: “Deir ryggvæsc sva sem skímmenn er fírir manna augliði syna fastu lit a sér. til þes at þæir róse goð-gerninge sinum fírir mánnum” (Gamal norsk Homiliebok 76.28).

_Gull(s)litr_ (ONS: “Guldfarve”; CV: “gold colour”) is common. The following describes its usage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Referent</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dragons and serpents</td>
<td>dreki</td>
<td>1 (Rómverja saga 238.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ormr</td>
<td>1 (Píðriks saga 1:137.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yrmlingr</td>
<td>1 (Bósa saga 62.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feathers</td>
<td>fjadrar</td>
<td>3 (Blómstrvallasaga 7.6, 53.14; Yngvars saga víðforla 8.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flesh</td>
<td>hörund</td>
<td>2 (Flateyjarbók 3:291.33; Hulda 102.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>gler</td>
<td>1 (Gamal norsk Homiliebok 132.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel</td>
<td>grjót</td>
<td>1 (Ectors saga 112.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>hár</td>
<td>2 (Flóvents saga 186.36; Gøngu-Hrólfssaga 266.14; Kirialax saga 1.3–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skegg</td>
<td>1 (Kirialax saga 1.3–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tagl</td>
<td>1 (Vilhjálms saga sjóðs 19.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilt</td>
<td>bepti</td>
<td>1 (Flateyjarbók 3:431.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horns</td>
<td>horn</td>
<td>1 (Gautreks saga 61.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>laukr</td>
<td>1 (Flóamanna saga 46.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teeth</td>
<td>tennr</td>
<td>1 (Sögur Danakonunga 5.29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In three instances, it is difficult to determine the referent: “Aðalkeldu ein var þar, grent var alt umhverfis þohana, á því þikkir gulls litr vera” (Karlamagnúss saga 423.1); “Hofudit uar bollott sem eyiar þær er gullz lit hafa med skina<nde> birte som logannde elldr e(dur) solar geislar” (Sigurðar saga þögla 100.11); and “Hann kom at þar sem upphæd uard fyrir honum, su er gullz litur var a” (Yngvars saga viðforla 14.8-9).

_Hermdarlitr_ (LP: “vredens farve, vredt ansigtsudtryk [blussende vrede]”; ONS: “Ansigtsfarve, Udseende som røber Misforøielse, Forbittrelse”) is found in Helgakviða Hundingsbana I: “Hví er hermðar litr á Hniflungom?” (st. 48).

_Horundarlitr/horundslitr_ (ONS: “Kjødfarve”) is attested seven times: “mosin var gróinn niðr í hausinn, svá sem múteraðr í heins náttúru, ok er frá leið tók jafnvæl hörundslit, en var í þeim stað nokkurin linara átaks en í öðrum stað” (Biskupa sögur 2:180.30), “hálft hans nef ok enni ok haka hafði fagran hörundslit” (Bragða-Mágus saga 114.21), “haurunnz lit ok skinz hafði hun miklu biartara enn nauckr madr annar” (Dámusta saga 51.28), “haurunz lit hafir hann suo biartann, at aunguann fær ek iafningia hans” (Dámusta saga 65.17), “Hon [Hel] er bla half, en half með hárvinndar [var. horundz] lit” (Edda Snorra Sturlusonar 35.8), “Par er þer syndiz lérín. ok hórandar [var. horvndz] litr a fagran” (Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga 2:679.5), “þer syndiz a baðum lérunum hörundar [var. hórandz] lit” (Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga 2:679.7).

_Jardlitr_ (CV: “earth colour, dark colour”) is attested once: “er hann [Adamantes] eigi sva skir at hann lati iarðlit ok er hann þvi myrk- blar” (Hauksbók 227.28).

_Járnslitr_ (ONS+: “farge som jern, jernfarge”; CV: “iron colour”) is used to describe a stone. One is asbestos: “Par finnz ok sa steinn sem abeston heitir han hefir iarns lit” (Stjórn 86.2). The other is

101. See note 35.

102. Asbestos is a mineral fiber. In terms of color, there are several types. One is amosite, which is known as brown asbestos. Another is crocidolite, which is known as blue asbestos. A third is tremolite, which can be white, green, gray, or even transparent. A fourth is anthophyllite, which displays a gray-brown color. See “Types of Abestos,” accessed March 21, 2014, http://www.asbestos.com/asbestos/types.php.
an adamant: “Hann [adamans] er af kyne kristallo, iarns litt er af honum” (Alfræði Öræfæings 3:84.7).103

Moldarlitr (ONS: “molfarge, jordfarge”) is attested once: “af altera es ahr haflhe legit scaten var ha oc non moldar litt á. sed var litt, sem rafr boca stein” (Íslandska handskriften N° 645 4° 11.17–18).

Nattúralitr (ONS: “naturlig farge”) is found once: “Er hun [calamentum] sodin med vin. ha dugir hun kvende at fa. sinn naturu lit” (Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany 67.26).104

Purpuralitr (ONS: “purpurfarve”) is attested five times.105 In three instances, it describes precious stones. One is a jacinth: “margar huitar byflugur sem snior flug ok foru utan af seiminum. enn sumar af þeim hofdu raudan purpura lit sem iacinctus” (Stjórn 210.19).106 Two are an amethyst, and in both purpuralitr is equated with the color of a drop of wine: “Ematistvs hefir purpvralit sem vindropi” (Hauksbók 227.1); “Amatistus hefir purpura lit sem vin-dropi” (Alfræði Öræfæings 1:81.1).107 Once, the referent is the fold of a garment (“klæðafall”: Mariu saga 113.22), and once it is the middle piece of a sword (“meðalkaflí”: Islendzk æventyri 1:37.3).

103. See note 35.

104. Cf. “Se hon sodin uít uín þa dugir hon kvende at fa. sinn naturuligan lit” (Gamalnorsk fragment av Henrik Harpestreng 7.25).

105. Purpur is a Latin (ultimately Greek) loan word. “Originally, purple derived from shells (Purpura) found on the coast of the eastern Mediterranean Sea. The animals gathered into shoals in spring time; abrasion produced a milky white fluid from which purple dye was obtained. When the shells were broken, the white substance oozed out. Upon exposure to the air and light this substance passed through a series of colours: first citron-yellow, then greenish yellow, then green, and finally, purple or scarlet. The juice obtained from Murex brandaris, a kind of Purpura, changed photochemically into a deep blue-violet, but that of Murex trunculus, another kind of Purpura, gave a scarlet red hue . . . . According to OED, in the Middle Ages purple applied vaguely to various shades of red but now it applies to ‘mixture of red and blue in various proportions.’” N. B. McNeill, “Colour and Colour Terminology” [Review of Brent Berlin and Paul Kay, Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969)], Journal of Linguistics 8 (1972): 27–28. See also Bailey: “The word purpura, originally from a blue-dye from seashells, was the name of a silk fabric which did not only represent the color purple, but also white, yellow, blue, black, red, and green . . . Not until the middle of the seventeenth century (at the earliest) did the term come to mean the hue purple” (“On the Non-existence,” 203–204).

106. See note 57.

107. See note 36.
Silfr(s)litr is attested twice: “A góðo glere er bæðe gulz lítr ok silfrs ok allor ener færirsto lítr” (Gammel norsk Homiliebok 132.19) and “ syndíz þer niðr fra nafla allt um skópin silfrs [var. silfr] lítr a” (Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga 2:678.6).

Skinn(s)litr (ONS: “Hudfarve”; CV: “complexion of skin”) is used about human complexion: “skinzliturin þrutnar. er allt yfirbragd af færirt” (AM 672 4° 15v); “hón var svá fógr ok hvít á skinnlit at . . .” (Bárðar saga 102.16); “Hann var . . . dökkkr á hár ok svá á skinnslit” (Njáls saga 359.16); “Svartur skinzlitur ok blanding medur litlum blama synir hrygga menn ok i lunderni þunga” (Alfræði íslensk 3:97.34); “Svartur skinzlitr segir mann slægan, en hvitur skinzlitr ok nocud riodur segir styrka menn ok hugfulla. Akafliga hvitur skinzlitr med bleikum merkir þrottnanda kraft ok ostyrkkt af of kallldri natturu. Elldzialgr skinzlitr med skinóndum augum snyzt til æði. Medal skinzlitr hvitur ok svartir, ok bregdi a nocud brunu, synir mann med godu hugviti og godum sidum” (Alfræði íslensk 3:102.32, 103.1, 2, 4, 5); “uñnn madur a skins-lit og lidmannligur og kurteis” (Jómsvíkinga saga 32.20); “var hann hvítr á skinnsllit” (Porsteins saga bæjarmagns 189.3).

Sænautalitr (ONS: “farge som på et ‘sjonaut’”) describes the color of a bull: “Pá reis upp í Krossavík þjórr npkkurr, ok var sænautalitr á” (Vápnfirðinga saga 48.27).

Sævarlitr describes one of the colors of the rainbow: “Regnbogin . . . hefer a sier sævar lit” (Veraldar saga 80.24).

Vágslitr (ONS+: “materiefarge”) is found once: “þa synom ver oc vágs lit utan a scinni” (Leifar 38.9). The noun vágr appears here in the secondary meaning of “medicinal fluid or salve.”

Vatnslitr (ONS: “farge som vann”; CV: “water-colour”) is attested twice. Once, it describes one of the colors of the rainbow (Hauksbók 174.31), and once it is used in an abstract meaning: “vatnsz litr iartegnir firir gefning synda i skírn heilagre” (Hauksbók 175.2).

108. It is doubtful that the composer of Vápnfirðinga saga had seen a sea cow (Hydrodamalis gigas). It was first described by Georg W. Steller on his voyage of discovery in the North Pacific in 1741. It is now extinct, and its last known habitat was in the Commander Islands. Steller describes the hide of the sea cow as follows: “The hide of this animal has a dual nature. The outer hide is black or blackish brown, an inch thick, and with a consistency almost like cork.” Journal of a Voyage with Bering 1741–1742 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 163.

109. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, Íslensk orðsísabók, 1150.
3. Conclusion.

By far the largest category of non-basic color terms is comprised of terms consisting of a noun and a color term. This is followed by the category of compounds of two color terms, terms with the suffix -ligr, and terms with the prefixes dökk-, fagr-, glit-, heið-, ljós-, myrk-, lit-, and the suffixes -dökkur, -ljóss, -leitr, -litaðr, and -litr. The smallest category is simplex terms.

Sixty-one non-basic color terms, about half of the ones listed, are attested only once. These comprise: biksvatrr, blábrúnaðr, blíkhvitr, blömhvitr, bráhvitr, brandrauðr, brúnhvitr, dumbleikr, döggrænn, eídaðr, fiskeleikr, fótgulr, glitrauðr, gollhvitr, gráblár, gulbrún, gulgrár, hárarauðr, heiðblár, helblár, himinblár, hrafnsblár, hrafnsvartr, hvítjarpr, hörundshvitr, hörundsvatrr, ilbleikr, indibláð, jarplitaðr, kinngrár, kverkhvitr, litrauðr, ljósbrún-leitr, ljósgreinn, ljósgrulr, ljósrauðr, mansvatrr, margrár, móbrún/móbrúnar, mosrauðr, myrkgrár, rauðblár, rauðdökkur, rauðgrænn, rauðljóss, rauðhvitr, rósalgr/rósuligr, sílkigulr, skauðhvitr, skjallhvitr, skjallhvitr, sólbriinn, sólvítr, sótrauðr, svanhvitr, svartbrúnaðr, valrauðr, smaragdiligr, and öskubleikr. Of these, twenty-four appear in poetry only: bráhvitr, brandrauðr, blíkhvitr, brúnhvitr, fótgulr, gollhvitr, hárarauðr, hrafnsvatrr, hvítjarpr, ilbleikr, jarplitaðr, kinngrár, kverkhvitr, litrauðr, ljósgreinn, mosrauðr, rauðljóss, skjallhvitr, sólvítr, sótrauðr, svanhvitr, and valrauðr. In addition, the following five color terms are restricted to poetry: blásvatrr, glóðrauðr, hóss, línhvitr, mjálhvitr. By far, most of the non-basic color terms in poetry serve alliterative purposes.110

Given the evidence, most of the remaining non-basic color terms are contextually restricted. These terms include bláleitr, bleikhárr, blylígr, dreyraraðr, dögjarpr, eirígr, fagrænn, fannhvitr, fífilbleikr, glóðrauðr, gullróðinn/gullróðinn, hárarauðr, hárr (if indeed it should be regarded as a color term), hvítileitr, hörundlitr/hörundslitr, jarpr, lifrauðr, ljóslár, ljósbleikr, ljósjarpr, messingligr, reigullr, rauðileitr,

110. Biggam comments that “a . . . potentially helpful consideration is the information which may arise from the role of certain color terms in alliterative, or other formulaic structures found in poetry. It is sensible to consider the possibility, for example, that a particular colour word had been chosen because it alliterates with other words in the same line of a poem. It is unlikely to be completely inappropriate semantically in such a position but its meaning may be weakened or slightly shifted” (Semantics of Colour, 150).
The terms are especially prevalent in the context of human coloring (notably hair and complexion), animal colors (particularly horses), cloth and clothing, precious stones, and armor and weapons. Only blakkr, bleikr, blöðraudr, kolsvartr, snjáhvítur/snjóhvítur/snæhvítur and to a lesser extent drifhvítur, golligr/gulligr, járngrár, kolblár, laufgrønn, móraudr, myrkblár, raudbleikr, rauðbrúnur, and rauðlitaðr have a range of referents.

Of the terms consisting of two color adjectives, blár and rauðr are the most common. They are followed by brúnn; gulr and svartr; grár, grønn, hvitr, jarpr; and bleikr. Of the terms consisting of a color term and a noun, hvitr is the most common color term. The nouns are primarily snow (drif-, fann-, mjall-, snjá-/snjó-/snæ-), metals (goll-, silfr), facial hair (brá-, brún-), and fabric (lín-, ull-). Rauðr, too, is common, and here the nouns are mostly blood (blöð-, dreyr-, val-), fire (brand-, glöð-, tand-), human facial hair (hvarmr-, hára-), and vegetation (mó-, mos-). Most of the nouns have to do with vegetation (blóm, fifill, gras, lauf, mó, mosi, rósa); complexion, hair, and body parts (brá, brún, fótr, grøn, hár, hvarmr, hørungr, il, kinn, kverk, lif, skinnt); and blood and fire (see above). Surprisingly few nouns are from the world of animals, birds, and fish (the only ones in evidence are fiskr, brafn, saudr, skjall, svanr, and úlfr). Of all the non-basic color terms that have a basic color term as one of its components, rauðr is by far the most common. It is followed by hvitr, blár, svartr, brúnn, grár and grønn (which are equally common), and gulr. This is more or less in line with the frequency of the individual basic color terms in the sagas and þættir of Icelanders, except that in non-basic color terms brúnn is more common than grønn and grár.

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111. See Wolf, “Basic Color Terms,” 156 (note 1 above).


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