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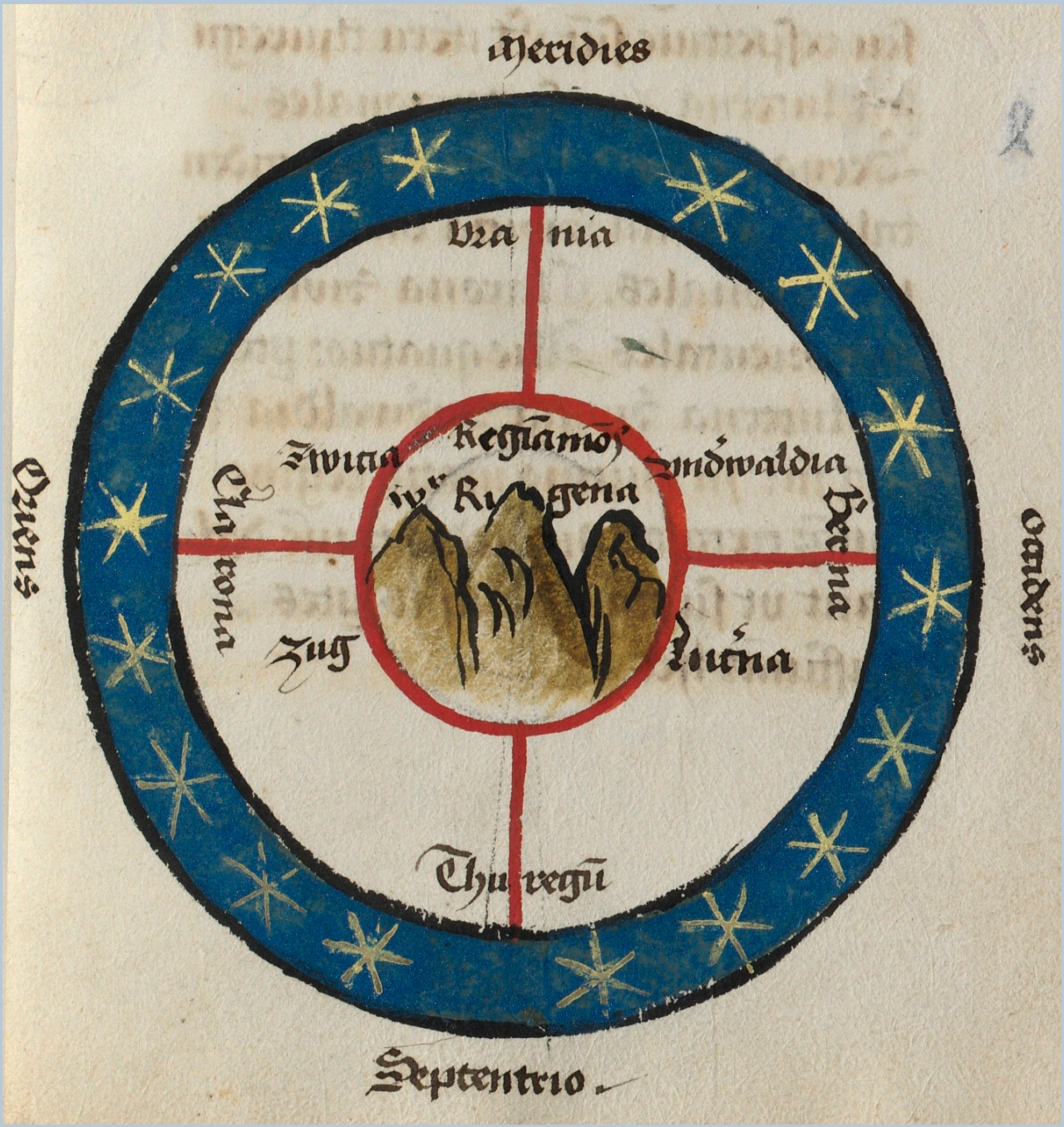
Universität Basel

The Sixteenth International Saga Conference

Sagas and Space

9th – 15th August 2015

University of Zurich & University of Basel, Switzerland



Preprints of Abstracts

The Sixteenth International Saga Conference
Sagas and Space

9th – 15th August 2015, University of Zurich and University of Basel

Preprints of Abstracts

Edited by
Jürg Glauser, Klaus Müller-Wille, Anna Katharina Richter and Lukas Rösli

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Preface

The general theme of *The Sixteenth International Saga Conference* which is held from the 9th to the 15th August 2015 at the University of Zurich and the University of Basel, Switzerland, is *Sagas and Space*.

This Preprint Publication is principally meant to be a tool to assist participants in deciding which lectures, papers, roundtable discussions and posters to attend, and to have the possibility to read abstracts again even after the conference has ended.

Papers and Project Presentations will be presented in one of the following thematic Strands:
1) Constructing Space
2) Mediality
3) Textuality and Manuscript Transmission
4) Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature
5) Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia
6) Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia
7) Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages
8) Open

Altogether, the Preprint Publication includes abstracts of the four Plenary Lectures, the 190 Papers (including Project Presentations), the five Roundtable Discussions, and the five Posters.

The editors have only standardized the lay-out of the contributions and have proofread them and corrected minor errors like orthographic fails, but not changed the texts themselves. The authors have had the possibility to check their texts online on the website of the Saga Conference before publishing, and the final responsibility for each abstract rests with its author.

Zurich, July 2015
The editors

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Plenary Lectures

Pernille Hermann, Aarhus University, Denmark

Plenary lecture

The Mind's Eye: Memory, Space and the Senses in Old Norse Literature

My presentation treats the role of the senses in Old Norse literature, and will specifically investigate the intimate connection between the senses and memory. Among the five senses – smell, sight, hearing, touch, taste – particular attention will be paid to sight, which according to the ideas of the classical world held a prominent position at the apex of the hierarchy of the senses. Sight was understood as being connected to the mind, to distance, to objectivity and to knowledge. Furthermore, sight was believed to be one of the main entrances to memory. The central position of sight for storage and recollecting processes is illustrated in Norse literature, for instance, in the image of the 'mind's eye' (*augu hugar*) (*Konungs skuggsjá*), pointing as it does to memory as a visual process of retrieval and recollection of what is kept in the mind.
The aim of the paper is two-fold; firstly, it seeks to illustrate one of the key aspects of memory, namely, its relationship to sensory experience; examples will demonstrate how the sense experiences of historical and mythological figures, as well as sensory and bodily imagery, are linked to memory. Because reflections on, and descriptions of, memory are evidenced across genres, text examples will be drawn from different corners of the textual landscape, and reference will be made, for example, to sagas, eddic poetry and the *Prose Edda*. Secondly, the lecture will touch on the complicated relationship between textual representation and memory. I will discuss the extent to which memory, for instance, organisational principles similar to those characteristic of 'artificial memory' (Yates 1974), that is, a type of memory that has among its main principles spatial structures (often architectonic structures) and images (often visually striking images), had an impact on the content and structure of Old Norse literature.

Judith Jesch, University of Nottingham, UK

Plenary lecture

Runes and Verse: The Medialities of Early Scandinavian Poetry

While the writing of runes is undoubtedly a form of literate activity, the surviving runic corpus represents a relatively restricted form of literacy, in both genre and extent, compared to the extensive body of Scandinavian and Icelandic manuscripts produced from the twelfth century onwards. Yet, while it may be less impressive as a corpus, runic literacy is attested much earlier in Scandinavia, around a millennium before the arrival of manuscript writing. While the earliest inscriptions are generally quite short and prosaic, by the fourth century the corpus includes texts that can be said to be in verse, antedating manuscript poetry by around eight centuries. At the other end of the scale, the writing of verse texts in runes continues for some time after the introduction of the roman alphabet and therefore the writing of manuscripts, with some clear reciprocal influences. Underlying both runic and manuscript verse texts we can posit a culture in which vernacular verse was also composed and transmitted orally throughout quite a long period. Thus, for most of its early history before the arrival of printing, Scandinavian verse could be oral or written, for some of its history the written form could be runic or roman, and towards the end of this long period the verse could also be in either the vernacular or Latin.

These multiple and overlapping medialities raise interesting questions about the perpetrators, the audiences and the functions of early Scandinavian verse. They also suggest the question of whether runic verse can be said to be 'poetry' (quite apart from the question of how to define 'verse') and also what role poetry (or verse) might have in this society with limited literacy. Using ideas of both mediality and materiality, the lecture will consider a range of examples from different periods to explore what the material runic text can reveal about how verse and/or poetry were experienced and used by different audiences from the fourth to the fourteenth century.

Edith Marold, Universität Kiel, Germany

Plenary lecture

Mythical Landscapes in Skaldic Poetry

It is in vain that one looks for realistic descriptions of landscapes in skaldic poetry. Neither of the two most important genres of this tradition, the praise poems and the *lausa vísur*, shows any interest in the landscapes in which the actions take place. It appears that their only concerns are the characters themselves, their weapons and jewellery, and their actions.
Landscape features such as mountains, the sea, trees, caves or the sky are perceptible in the system of the kennings only as more or less abstract ideas. Yet they do not relate to concrete, natural landscapes, nor to the content of a particular stanza.
However, a more inclusive research shows that while descriptions of geographic landscapes are lacking in skaldic poetry, there are images of landscapes that may be called mythical. These may be conceptualized as different types:
(1) Descriptions of sea-voyages on the turbulent sea: these are situated at the border of real and mythical landscapes in as much as the sea may be depicted as a threatening monster ready to devour the ship (for instance Refr Gestsson, *Ferðavísur*). Alternatively, the storm that generates the churning sea may be personified as a giant (Egill, *Lausa vísa* 23).
(2) The emotional states of individual characters may be projected onto the landscape (for instance Hallfreðr, *Óláfs Erfidrápa* 19).
(3) The inner space of a human being is depicted as a landscape. This is the case in countless kennings for 'breast' as a metaphor for the insides of a human being, found most frequently in various kennings for 'poetry'.
(4) *Þórsdrápa* presents a special case in its depiction of Þór's journey to Geirrøðr and the land of giants. In this instance there appears to be some kind of interchangeable relation between the landscape – especially rivers – and demonic or mythical beings.

Torfi H. Tulinius, University of Iceland, Iceland

Plenary lecture

'Á Kálfskinni': Sagas and the Space of Literature

Space exists outside the human mind but our only mental access to it is through representation, i.e. in the way we construct space in our minds and for each other. This internal representation is a complex phenomenon and we are only partially aware of it. Indeed, neuroscience tells us that spatial awareness is one of the key functions of our central nervous systems and expresses itself even more in behaviour than in the way we represent space through visual or verbal media, oral or written. The intellectual conceptualisation of space, especially in the way it has developed over the centuries, is of course heavily dependent on both verbal and visual representations. One could without doubt write a history of the development of the representation of space from the aboriginal songline to global positioning systems, with important milestones such as the invention of geometry, the writing down of itineraries, the beginnings of cartography, the invention of perspective, etc.

From their origins in the historical efforts of the 12th century, and probably already at an earlier stage, in the orally transmitted memory exploited by the first historians, sagas have been concerned with space: with situating Iceland within the greater – especially North-Atlantic – world, but also with how Icelandic society organized itself spatially: the division into quarters, the ownership of land, etc. The way space is inhabited and different spaces are connected is an important theme of the sagas and at the root of many of the conflicts they portray.

However, the sagas also created a mental space which was in a dialectical relationship with the actual space medieval Icelanders spent their lives within, sometimes quite similar to the actual space they inhabited, sometimes very distant both in space and in its correspondence to their real experience of space. These mental spaces were not merely an abstract representation. Indeed, they were animated by the values, feelings, anxieties and desires of those who created them and for whom they were created.

An attempt will be made to describe these mental spaces of literature as they were deployed in the sagas. Their properties will be discussed in light of oppositions between local and foreign, public and private, collective and individual, realistic and fantastic, conscious and unconscious. Examples will be taken from several saga genres, among others from Snorri Sturluson's *Ólafs saga helga*, which tells of the blind and fallen Norwegian petty king Hrærekr. After his defeat at the hands of St Ólafr, he was never treated with more respect than at the farm of Kálfskinn in Northern Iceland, which was where he spent his last years. 'Kálfskinn' is also the skin of the calf which was used to make parchment, the material space of literature.

Posters

Árni Einarsson, University of Iceland, Iceland

Poster session

Allegorical space in saga literature. *Rauðúlfs þáttur*

Many medieval writers used imagined buildings as vehicles for allegorical narratives. The Icelandic Saga corpus has an extreme case of such usage. In *Rauðúlfs þáttur* King Olaf Haraldsson is placed in the middle of a round and rotating house where cosmological symbols abound. The symbols are exhibited in the geometry and decoration of the house and also in the orderly arrangement of people within it. A vision appearing to King Olaf in a dream that night links the decoration of the house with an equally decorated crucifix, symbolising the history of Norway after Christianisation. An analysis of the symbols and their interconnection has revealed a multilayered allegory aiming for the apotheosis of King Olaf as a saint (Einarsson 1997, 2001). The framework used by the unknown author to achieve this effect is a theocentric, platonic cosmos, containing time and eternity, unity and diversity, macro- and microcosmos and also divine proportions and a gradient from the heavenly and luminous central head towards the earthly and peripheral feet. The divine centre of the house also has symbols labelling it as the heavenly Jerusalem. The house can be interpreted equally as the cosmos and the human soul, and the apotheosis is achieved by placing King Olaf in the centre, the seat of Christ (Einarsson *op. cit.*). The allegorical exercise, and its base in Platonic cosmology links *Rauðúlfs þáttur* with a tradition usually associated with the schools of St Victor and Chartres in France.

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Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Emily Lethbridge et al., University of Iceland, Iceland

Poster session

Breytileiki *Njáls sögu* / The Variance of *Njáls saga*: Preliminary Conclusion

The collaborative research project "Breytileiki *Njálu*" / "The Variance of *Njáls saga*" (PI Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir at the Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Reykjavík) received funding from Rannís 2011-2013.
The project was introduced and the main research questions outlined by members of the research team in a special session at the 15th International Saga Conference in Aarhus, 2012. The project generated great interest and we would like to take the opportunity to present some of our results to participants of the 2015 Saga Conference in the form of a poster presentation.
The poster will summarise our main findings and also touch on some of the methdological issues that have come up – and are still being discussed. These include: the electronic storage and presentation of our archive of XML-transcriptions of *Njáls saga* manuscript texts, how best to give people access to this data, and what an electronic edition of *Njáls saga* based on these transcriptions might look like. We hope that sharing our experiences might be useful for others encountering similar issues – and that the poster will generate fruitful, informal discussion.

Ellert Þór Jóhannsson, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Poster session

A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose Online – Structure and Features

A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose (ONP) is a dictionary project based at the Department of Nordic Research at the University of Copenhagen. ONP records the vocabulary of prose writing in Old Norse, as transmitted in Norwegian and Icelandic manuscripts, the earliest of which date from the middle of the 12th century.
The project was originally intended to supplement the older works of Fritzner (1886, 1891, 1896) and Cleasby/Vigfusson (1874). Work on the dictionary started in 1939 with selected excerption of texts but quickly evolved into an independent lexicographic project with an extensive archive of citations on handwritten slips covering all genres of Old Norse prose texts.
An originally planned publication of a 13 volume dictionary commenced in 1989 but was discontinued in 2004 after a volume of indices (ONP:Registre) and three volumes of dictionary entries covering words from a-em (ONP1, ONP2, ONP3) had been published.
In 2005 the decision was made to change ONP into a digital publication available online.
In 2010 the first version of the digital edition of ONP appeared (ONP Online). At the same time the editorial work continued allowing for publication of additional edited dictionary entries as well as continuous improvements of the online version.
The current version of ONP online brings together material from the printed volumes and material that has been edited after the change of format, as well as unedited material in the form of scanned citation slips.
This poster presentation gives an overview of the structure of ONP online:

- Components of the digital edition, such as structure of entries, access to citation slips and scanned editions;
- Search features: e.g. advanced search for partial forms or suffixes;
- Representation of lexicographic information and material;
- User centered features: e.g. links to other sources and the possibility of interacting with the staff;
- Further development and future improvements.

By laying out the structure of ONP online and its key features we hope to demonstrate the continued usefulness of ONP as a dynamic scholarly research tool.

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Regina Jucknies, Universität zu Köln, Germany

Poster session

Sällskap för östnordisk filologi

I september 2013 anordnades en konferens i Uppsala för att diskutera den östnordiska filologins nuvarande tillstånd och framtid. Man betonade nödvändigheten av att synliggöra östnordisk litteratur och forskning bättre än hittills, samt visade på en vilja att främja ny forskning och nya teoretiska perspektiv inom ämnet. Det kom fram att kontakten mellan den gammeldanska och den fornsvenska forskarvärlden behöver utvidgas och att det är nödvändigt att bygga ett nätverk mellan de två för att uppnå synergieffekter. Konferensens resultat kommer att publiceras nästa år (och utges av Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund).
I slutet av konferensen kom deltagarna överens om att grunda Sällskap för östnordisk filologi (SÖF) som grundlag för en vidare utveckling av denna forskningsdisciplin. SÖF har som mål att på olika plan främja studier och forskning i gammeldansk och fornsvenska.
Sällskapets nämnd består av forskare från Norden (Sverige, Danmark, Finland och Norge) samt USA, Italien och Tyskland. Sammanlagt har sällskapet redan fått ett fyrtiotal medlemmar från olika universitet och forskningsinstitutioner. Vi har satt upp en hemsida (http://ostnordiskfilologi.wordpress.com/) där vi samlar information om östnordisk litteratur och språk, tipsar om konferenser och symposier, och erbjuder ett forum för att främja utbytet mellan forskarna, även när det gäller undervisningsmaterial.
Vi planerar arrangera en konferens vartannat år för att dokumentera forskningens aktuella skeden och för att öka kontakten och utbytet mellan forskare. Våra projektplaner inkluderar som först produktionen av en katalog över östnordiska handskrifter Kungliga Biblioteket i Stockholm, som kommer att tillgängliggöras både i tryckt och elektroniskt format. Förslag på kommande projekt är produktionen av en handbok i östnordisk filologi, språk och litteratur (där den av Odd Einar Haugen utgivna *Håndbok i norrön filologi* utgör förebilden), utvecklingen av elektroniska resurser och samarbete angående en gammeldansk bibliografi.
Vi vill gärna sprida kunskap om vårt sällskap, välkomnar nya medlemmar och gläder oss åt att träffa intresserade forskare på sagakonferensen.

Lucy Keens, University College London, UK

Poster session

The sexually grotesque in the *Íslendingasögur*

This poster presentation considers the body as a source of grotesque imagery in Old Norse literature.
In the book *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin discusses Rabelais' representation of the body as grotesque, burlesque and clownish. Though the imagery and his analysis may be far removed from medieval Iceland, his interpretations are pertinent to the more vulgar imagery presented in Old Norse literature, in particular that which focuses on the body as an instrument of obscenity. Bakhtin explains why certain areas of the body are emphasised more than others: orifices and excrescences are locations of great importance when it comes to insults, and thus play a large part in the dramatic tension, methods of humiliation and source of entertainment in the sagas.
The grotesque can be deployed in a variety of ways, notably in relation to the Old Norse concept of *ergi*. The 'uncrowning' effect demeans those in power, and will be explored with particular reference to anal insults in *Ǫlkofra saga*, *Sneglu-Halla þáttr* and the rude graffiti in *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa,* while exaggeration in *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* and *Þorleifs þáttr jarlsskálds* will be considered as sources of entertainment. One concept Bakhtin returns to many times is the buttocks and head changing places; this idea resonates with several scenes from the sagas, for example, Falgeirr's drowning in *Fóstbræðra saga*, the seiðr performed by Ljót the witch in *Vatnsdœla saga*, and the humiliating death of Guðmundr the Mighty in *Ljósvetninga saga*. In each of these episodes the natural order is reversed; the buttocks and head become interchangeable (at least symbolically, sometimes literally). This phenomenon is not only observed by saga characters but also used for comedic effect, lightening the mood in the bleakest of moments. The upper torso is a less fertile ground for grotesque representation but does not escape scrutiny in *Eiríks saga rauða* and *Flóamanna saga*.
Applying Bakhtin's theories provides a thought-provoking appreciation of what the grotesque adds to the construction of sexuality, morality, and power struggles between characters.

Roundtable Discussions

Convener: Matthew Driscoll (Copenhagen)

Participants: Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir (Reykjavík), Helen Leslie-Jakobsen (Bergen), Jeffrey Love (Stockholm), Beeke Stegmann (Copenhagen)

Roundtable 2

New directions in Fornaldarsaga studies

The Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda have long been one of the more popular genres within Old Norse-Icelandic saga literature, as attested by the large number of manuscripts in which they are preserved, the earliest from the beginning of the 14th century, the latest from the beginning of the 20th. Although the stories as we have are rather young, many of them have some basis in significantly older tradition, and have also often been recast in other forms, ballads, for example, or rímur. In our round table we will focus on this aspect of Fornaldarsaga studies: continuity and adaptation in their transmission and reception.

Convener: Jon Gunnar Jørgensen (Oslo)

Participants: Alison Finlay (London), Stefanie Gropper (Tübingen),
Lars Lönnroth (Göteborg), Marie Novotná (Prague)

Roundtable 4

Translating the Sagas

In the last couple of decades we have seen a considerable amount of new saga translations, especially of Family sagas (Sagas of Icelanders). In 1997, *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders* was presented as the first complete Family saga collection in English, edited by Viðar Hreinsson. In 2011, it was followed by a German edition, *Die Isländersagas*, edited by Klaus Böldl, Andreas Vollmer and Julia Zernack. Last year (2014), the corpus was launched in parallel editions in the three Scandinavian languages Danish (ed. Anette Lassen), Norwegian (eds. J.R. Hagland and J.G. Jørgensen) and Swedish (eds. G.D. Hansson, K. Jóhannesson and K.G. Johansson). A great number of translators have contributed to these editions, and quite a few of them are present at this conference. Therefore we now have the unique opportunity to discuss problematic issues related to saga translation in a forum full of expertise. At this Roundtable we intend to raise questions about style and translation strategies such as: Is it desirable or even possible to make the sagas "sound" more modern, colloquial and "non-Germanic" without betraying their meaning or harming their beauty? How do we deal with the poetry contained in the sagas? And are we allowed to "improve" the style of the original?

Conveners: Emily Lethbridge (Reykjavík), Sandra Schneeberger (Zurich)

Participants: Haukur Þorgeirsson (Reykjavík), Laurent Di Filippo (Basel/Metz), Odd Einar Haugen (Bergen)

Roundtable 5

Old Norse-Icelandic Culture and Digital Media

This roundtable will focus on the exciting potential (as well as the challenges) of using digital media as a tool for developing research into aspects of Old Norse-Icelandic culture, as a teaching resource, and not least as a means of mediating knowledge to a wider, non-specialist public. Each of the participants will bring their individual experience of developing and using digital tools in different fields to bear on the topic, and it is hoped that – with the participation of the audience – stimulating cross-disciplinary discussion will unfold.

Convener: Stephen A. Mitchell (Harvard)

Participants: Stefan Brink (Aberdeen), Terry Gunnell (Reykjavík),
Verena Höfig (Berkeley), Slavica Ranković (Leeds), Sverrir Jakobsson (Reykjavík)

Roundtable 3

Memory Studies and Old Norse

Scholarship on memory in the European Middle Ages (e.g., Yates' *The Art of Memory*; Carruthers' *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*) has emphasized the usefulness of this cross-disciplinary approach for many tradition areas. Its application to the rich cultural goods of medieval Scandinavia, whether approached as narrative, history, law, religion or archaeology, holds great promise. How does, and how should, 'recent' work in memory studies intersect with and influence the research of Old Norse scholars working in a variety of disciplines (e.g., history, folkloristics, literature)?

Convener: Judy Quinn (Cambridge)

Participants: Margaret Clunies Ross (Sydney), Frog (Helsinki),
Gísli Sigurðsson (Reykjavík), Kate Heslop (Berkeley),
Carolyne Larrington (Oxford), John McKinnell (Durham),
Brittany Schorn (Cambridge)
Roundtable 1

Eddic Studies

The round-table discussion on eddic poetry will have two foci:
– recent work on editing and translating eddic poetry, and
– new methodologies and new interpretations of eddic poetry.
Critical issues which will be addressed during the discussion will include national traditions of scholarship, the expectations of different audiences, and the impact on eddic studies of developments in other areas of Old Norse studies and in other disciplines.

Papers

Sirpa Aalto, University of Oulu, Finland

Constructing Space

Neighbour or enemy at the gates? Construction of space between the Sámi and the Norwegians in the sagas

In the Viking Age and in the Middle Ages the Sámi people (ON *Finnar*) and the Norwegians lived side by side in the present day area of Norway. As some Norwegian medieval laws suggest, the Sámi people did not live only in the northern parts of Norway but also in the southeast (Mundal). The Sámi people were the closest neighbours to the Norwegians in addition to Scandinavian neighbours in the east and south. Yet they represented the Other for the Norwegians, because their language, culture, religion and livelihood were different from the Norwegian ones (Aalto). Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the Sámi are often associated with negative connotations in the saga literature (Hermann Pálsson).

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how the sagas construct the space in which the Sámi people lived and interacted with the Norwegians. *Finnmark* is often mentioned in the sagas as the place inhabited by the *Finnar*. It resembles in many ways the home of the giants, *Útgarðr*, which located in the outskirts of the known world. However, the Sámi activity in the sagas is not always confined to the area of *Finnmark*. Where do the Sámi actually appear in the sagas? Is it an anomaly in the sagas, if they appear outside of *Finnmark*?

The saga evidence offers hardly direct, historical evidence of Sámi presence in specific, geographical places, although it is possible that saga passages bear traces of real contacts in general. The construction of space in this case serves as an indirect way to study how the sagas define the Norwegian – or eventually, Scandinavian – group identity in relation to its Other, the Sámi people. Space between groups, albeit concrete or abstract, is a yardstick for group relations: how closely do the groups interact and in what kind of space does the interaction take place?

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Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

Mediality

Heroic Legends in Icelandic Art

The paper deals with heroic legends that were distributed throughout Europe for many centuries in the form of poetry and narratives, mostly in Central and Western Europe, as well as in the Nordic countries. Even though many of these legends were written down in the 13th century, they had circulated before that time in the form of poetry and artistic representations, and the most popular heroes are found in various carvings on stone and wood, as well as being woven in tapestries, especially in Sweden and Norway; these include heroes from the heroic poems of the *Edda*, which are commonly believed to have been composed from the 9th to the 13th centuries, *Þiðreks saga af Bern*, from about 1200–1250, the 13th-century *Völsunga saga* and *Snorra Edda*, and the 14th-century *Héðins saga ok Högna*.
There may be various reasons for the popularity of individual heroic motifs in Scandinavian art, but instead of going into that discussion, interesting as it may be, let us ask: What about Icelandic art? As known, the Icelanders preserved the old legends in their poetry and literature, so it might be expected that there were at least some traces of this material in their art as well. However, the material seems not to have been prominent in their art, and in scholarly debate about pictioiral sources of this kind, Icelandic artifacts are not mentioned at all, except for the famous carving on the door from the church at Valþjófsstaður. The following are thus natural questions: Did Icelanders not use motifs from the heroic material in their art, as their neighbours did? Or is it possible that there are some preserved artifacts with heroic motifs in Iceland which have not been so far discussed, and if so, do they indicate that there may have been more objects made, now lost? In this paper, these possibilities will be explored, with an attempt made to shed new light on five Icelandic images from c. 1200 down to the eighteenth century to see if they might be interpreted as referring to heroic legends.

Malo Adeux, University of Iceland, Iceland

Constructing Space

Hreiðars þáttr: the construction of a foolish hero

Hreiðars þáttr heimska, found in the collection of *þættir* from the chronicle *Morkinskinna* (Andersson 2000), is among the many tales of Icelanders abroad responding to an ambiguous relationship with the Norwegian crown. Hreiðarr, a stupid and strong man who never gets angry, convinces his brother Þórðr, King Magnús's retainer, to go with him on a trip from Iceland to Norway. There he meets the king, acts foolishly on several occasions, but is nonetheless permitted to stay at the court with him. He ultimately humiliates the other king of Norway, Haraldr, with a surprising craftsman's trick, and ends his life in Iceland with the favours of King Magnús.

In this presentation, I will focus on two sides of the persona of Hreiðarr: his stupidity and his relation to space. Firstly, both seem connected to the fact that he is *heimskr*, that is to say 'foolish', 'silly,' but also 'homish' (Zoëga 2004). This reveals a dynamic conception of foolishness dependent on movement between countries, therefore displaying a conception of what is home for the Icelandic society. Secondly, along the story, space seems to be a constant feature used to describe Hreiðarr as a fool, yet building his character as exceptional too, allowing him to stay beside the King.

The study of space in the *þáttr* will illuminate the place of the fool as a character, and will question whether or not Hreiðarr can be considered a hero. What he accomplishes is in many ways a transgression of the social order. Yet this transgression is, at first glance, merely the result of his own curiosity. He displays a particular perception of reality, which makes him both similar and different from other anti-heroes of the saga literature, such as Egill or Grettir. This particular yet risky attitude, which could be called the *heimskr maðr*'s strategy, proves finally to be successful for Hreiðarr. Besides it allows him in the end to move to the position of an accomplished man, even with unusual methods. Therefore, I will argue that foolishness, far from being negative or simply entertaining for the audience, allows meaningful transgressions turning the idiot into a genius. This reveals that social mobility was not perceived as possible in a single way, but that one's ingenuity was the crucial feature of a worthy saga-character.

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Aldís Sigurðardóttir, Simonetta Battista, Ellert Þór Jóhannsson, Þorbjörg Helgadóttir, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Open

The Old Norse Prose dictionary project — past, present and future (Project Presentation)

A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose (ONP) is a dictionary project based at the Department of Scandinavian Research at the University of Copenhagen. ONP records the vocabulary of prose writing in Old Norse, as transmitted in Norwegian and Icelandic manuscripts, the earliest of which date from the middle of the 12th century.
The project started in 1939 and evolved into a dictionary archive consisting of about 3/4 million handwritten citation slips. An originally planned printed publication of a 13 volume dictionary commenced in 1989 with the volume of Indices, but was discontinued in 2004, after the publication of three volumes covering edited dictionary entries of words from *a-em*.

Some important features of the printed publication of ONP include:

- Non-normalized orthography, i.e. the orthography of the relevant manuscript or scholarly edition is shown in the dictionary citations;
- Definitions in Danish and English;
- Reference to foreign parallel texts (esp. Latin);
- Detailed system of sigla detailing not only reference to the edition but also the actual manuscript of the text where the word is found;
- Morphological information (inflectional pattern and verb conjugation) based on texts (mainly the actual examples found in the dictionary database);
- Syntactic information (especially verb complements and prepositional use);

In 2005 the decision was made to change ONP into a digital publication available online. The digital edition follows the same fundamental principles as the printed edition in terms of scope and attention to detail, although publication through this new medium has required a new approach and different editorial methods from the ones applied to the printed publication.

Some of the more significant differences are:

- Editing is ongoing and progresses in phases focusing on specific word classes;
- Currently only one target language: Danish
- All the citations along with all the relevant material are shown for every entry (scanned citation slip, electronic form of the citation and wider context through a scanned page from the relevant edition);
- All available citations from the dictionary database of each lemma are assigned to a definition (demonstrating full range of meaning);
- Increased number of phrases and collocations;

- Verbs and prepositions edited for grammatical function and not semantic content.

We will present a short demonstration of the online version of the dictionary focusing on some aspects of the project such as:

- Old and new editorial principles;
- The pros and cons of the paper vs. digital publication;
- Advantages of the digital version when working with the lexicographic material;
- Current status of the project;
- Room for improvements;
- Future plans.

We hope this presentation will give an overview of the project and its evolution from a basic collection of citations into a dynamic and useful reference work for scholars of Old Norse language, literature and history.

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ONP Website: www.onp.ku.dk
ONP direct search: http://dataonp.ad.sc.ku.dk/wordlist_e_adv.html

Ármann Jakobsson, University of Iceland, Iceland

Constructing Space

Troll Space

Ch. 52 of the *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, a hagiographical kings' saga composed in Iceland c. 1200 by the otherwise unknown Þingeyrar monk Oddr Snorrason, contains an episode that takes place shortly before the final Svǫlðr battle where the heroic and chivalric King Óláfr Tryggvason (d. 1000) perished, wherein the king is sailing North to Hálogaland (Naumudalir in another version of the text), anchoring at an unspecified place at night, asking his men to remain on ship until the next morning. However, two of the king's men are awake at night and leave the ship to go to an excursion. They find a mountain with a cave and come up on many trolls sitting by the fire. The trolls converse about the impact the missionary king has had on the community and how their world has been turned upside down.

The whole incident is related in an interesting matter of fact tone with no mention of the fear of the retainers. Its main theme is the clash between the old and the new world, vying for space on the battleground of the known world. In this paper a spatial analysis of this narrative of a paranormal encounter will be attempted, with particular emphasis on the relationship between the spatial and the temporal. Comparisons will be made with other narratives such as the late 14th century *Bergbúa þáttr* which takes place in Iceland and where two men encounter an unknown being in a cave. The speaker will attempt to define 'troll space' with special reference to medieval ideas of the paranormal, with one of the main goals to move definitions away from traditional geographical concepts such as North and East and the emphasis on locations such as forests and mountains (places of undoubted significance for paranormal encounters) will also be modified. Particular emphasis when be placed on concepts such as 'troll' which may have been false friends to 19th and 20th century scholars attempting to understand the paranormal.

Arngrímur Vídalín, University of Iceland, Iceland

Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Demons, Muslims, Wrestling-Champions: A History of *Blámenn* from the 12th to the 19th Century

Blámenn have a long history in Old Norse and Icelandic literature, which nonetheless has not awarded them with much scholarly attention. The word itself is of ambiguous meaning, one which changes depending on the text and even on the context within a given text. Sometimes *blámenn* are described in detail, and in these albeit few cases their description is quite grotesque. Often times they serve as nondescript heathen fodder for heroes and missionary kings, and in some of these cases it may be deduced from the context whether they are Moors, Africans, Saracens, Arabs, Indian or Muslim. The term *blámaðr* does not seem to denote any particular skin-color or ethnicity, though it is always implied that *blámenn* are of darker complexion than Scandinavians and that they are from the marginal, heathen regions of the world. As such, *blámenn* as they appear in the sources are in many respects close cousins to the equally ambiguous *tröll*.
This paper explores the different settings in which we find *blámenn* in the sources. In encyclopedic texts they are usually made analogous to *blemmyes* and counted among other monstrous Plinian races. In many *Íslendingasögur*, *fornaldarsögur*, and Icelandic folklore of the late 19th century they are portrayed as a trollish menace the protagonist has to wrestle with to save his life. And whereas in a few cases we are told of *blámenn* who are rather normal people save for their dark complexion (e.g. in *Karlamagnús saga*), we have other instances of *blámenn* in the guise of a demon.
The great variety of sources on hand yields a great opportunity for an interesting semantic survey of the meaning of the term *blámaðr* as well as for a comparison of the different narrative forms they appear in and recurring motifs, such as the wrestling-motif already mentioned. In this fashion the present paper offers a glimpse into a year-long study of *blámenn* and their relation to identity in the Middle Ages, Christian ideology, and ideas of the monstrous.

Árni Einarsson, University of Iceland, Iceland

Open

Fencing off the Saga landscape: the 10th century settlement pattern of NE Iceland revealed by 600 km of turf walls (Project Presentation)

We are in the final stages of a project that has mapped 600 km of an extensive system of turf walls built in NE Iceland in the period c. 940-1100 A.D. The project provides an unprecedented snapshot of the settlement pattern during the Saga period. The turf-wall system, separating the inhabited lowland from the upland, and reaching from Lake Mývatn to the coast, challenges current concepts of land division and continuity in medieval Iceland. We are developing a "theory of fencing" that uses cost-benefit concepts (such as used in behavioural and economic sciences) to predict the size and shape of fenced areas according to environmental variables and human population density. This theory is based on two presuppositions: that the walls were for managing livestock movements, and that there was competition for space between neighbouring farms. The theory attempts to explain fencing patterns in terms of landscape dimensionality (1D or 2D), the quality and use (confined or free-range) of grazing and haymaking areas, distances from farmhouses, and the need to delimit territorial boundaries. The family Sagas rarely mention turf walls, even though they must have been a prominent part of the landscape well into the Saga-writing period. The walls were part of a land management system that emerged during the settlement period and both generated and responded to the political friction that sparked many of the epic events in the Sagas.

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Árni Einarsson, University of Iceland, Iceland

Constructing Space

Kingship and Pythagorean space

A recently discovered extensive, lozenge-shaped enclosure at the royal seat of Jelling, Denmark (Jessen et al. 2014), calls for rethinking of pagan Viking religion. Although the enclosure was probably a defensive structure, its striking Pythagorean-like geometry, tightly associated with the royal mounds and other monuments at Jelling, may provide new insight into pagan mythology and highlight the role of the king and his seat as a source of fertility and justice. The archaeological find also begs a fresh look at the Kings' Saga corpus and the Eddas, with Pythagorean and Platonic symbolism in mind. Such symbolism is already evident in the thoroughly allegorical *Rauðúlfs þáttur* (Einarsson 1997) in *Ólafs saga helga* (ch. 34 in Johnsen and Helgason 1941) but is also suspected earlier in the saga, in the almost theatric narration of the home-coming of *Ólaf Haraldsson*, where numbers are used in a most peculiar way. The numbers 2 and 4 are repeatedly associated with Queen *Ásta* and the number 3 with King *Sigurður sýr*, Ólaf's mother and foster father respectively, in a setting and in association with other potential symbols that relate to fertility and harvest. Although the scene can be interpreted within the framework of traditional church symbolism, the future king and saint, Ólaf arrives with his hundred men and takes over the scene, almost as if the Christian advent, possibly symbolized by Ólaf's return home, was contrasted with a pagan ideology of the kingship of *Sigurður sýr*.

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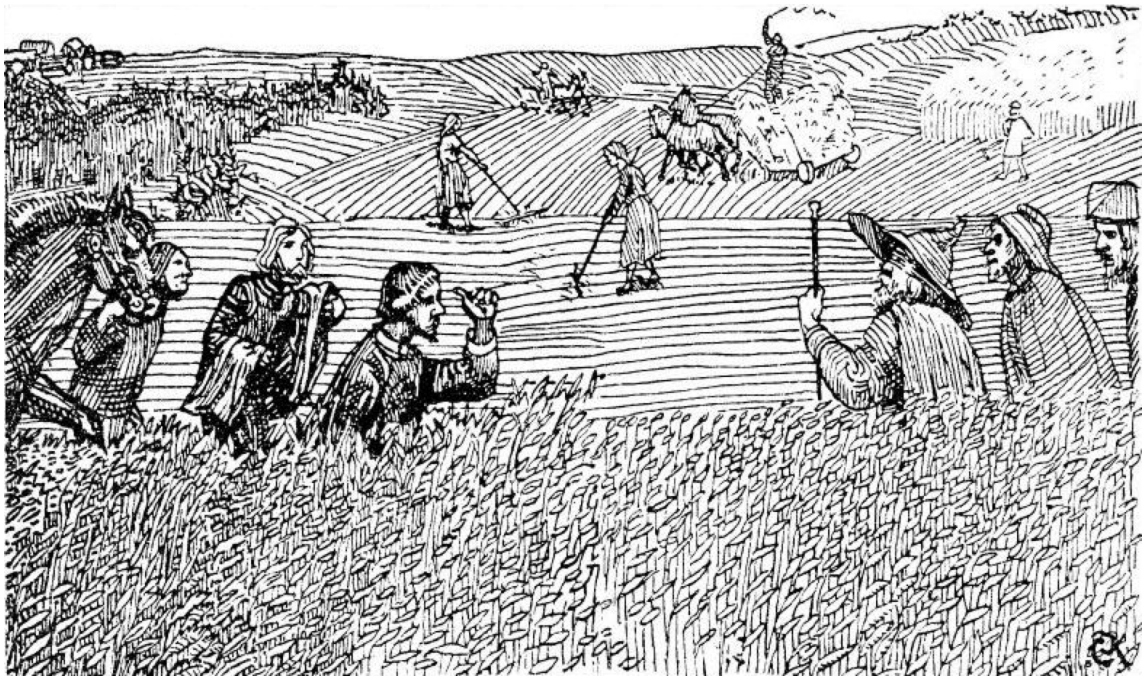
Figure:
Sigurður sýr in a group of three during the harvest season.
Illustration: Christian Krohg in Snorri Sturluson: *Heimskringla*, J.M. Stenersen & Co, 1899.



David Ashurst, Durham University, UK

Open

'Fátt mun ljótt á Baldri': Towards an Aesthetics of Old Norse Mythology

The paper begins by uncovering the several layers of irony, humour and subtext implicit in the giantess Skaði's assertion that few parts of Baldr would be ugly, in Snorri Sturluson's account of how the Æsir made Skaði choose a husband on the basis of seeing only their feet (Skáldskaparmál 1998, 2). In particular it notes the gender issues attendant on the representation of Skaði as a female who takes on masculine behaviour by donning arms and going to Ásgarðr to avenge her father, but who is simultaneously bought off and partially humiliated through the offer of a husband on the Æsir's whimsical terms, which manage to hint at an association between feet and genitals. It then considers the implications of these subtexts for our understanding of the apparently aesthetic judgement made by Skaði and by Snorri himself, who says that the feet chosen by the giantess were 'exceptionally beautiful' (forkunnar fagrar). The issues are discussed in the light of Skaði's reaction in the closely related story of how Loki made her laugh by tying one end of a rope to his testicles and the other to a nanny-goat's beard, and of her subsequent preference for the howling of wolves to the crying of seabirds (as told by Snorri in Gylfaginning 1988, 24); account is also taken of other aesthetic judgments on feet, including that in Snorri's story of the inverted pride taken by Þórarinn Nefjólfsson in his repulsive extremities, and of Óláfr helgi's delighted wonder at their ugliness (Heimskringla 1941-51, II 126). The discussion is then extended to the relationship between aesthetic and gender issues implied by Snorri's remarks on Sif's artificial hair, which grows yet is of real gold (Skáldskaparmál 1998, 41), and on Freyja's golden tears (Gylfaginning 1988, 29). For the sake of contrast and an insight into the aesthetics of a predominantly masculine sphere, it also briefly examines the myth of the mead of poetry, an aesthetic commodity produced entirely by and between males via fermenting the blood of a man created from communal spittle (Skáldskaparmál 1998, 3), according to which a poem is what a poet expels after swallowing this toxic liquor. The paper then draws provisional conclusions on whether it is possible to discern in Snorri's mythological work a consistent gendering of the aesthetic, with beauty and its appreciation being associated with the feminine, problematised or gently mocked, whilst the masculine is linked with resolute delight in what might be termed the anti-aesthetic.
By way of epilogue the paper looks briefly at how a larger project might seek to map out the aesthetics of the whole corpus of Old Norse mythology, what obstacles would need to be cleared and what the benefits might be.

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Barbara Auger, Université Stendhal 3, France

Constructing Space

Perceptual Navigation in the Late Viking Age

This paper aims to analyze ship and navigation descriptions from a perceptual anthropology standpoint. Focusing on the vocabulary of runic inscriptions and skaldic verse previously gathered, it will show how the Old Norse linguistic captured the natural phenomena triggered by the act of navigation in order to define and designate the forms of the ship. It will therefore be argued that the senses and the perceptual system of the navigating body encoded a specific relationship with the world, which would be described as phenomenological.
The metaphorical use of the natural phenomena will be illustrated by showing how the maritime etymology and the rhetorical figures (*kenningar* and *heiti*) describing the ships refer to forces that drive the ship, or refer to the way the ship interact with the elements. To amplify this point, a comparative perspective will show how later Christian sources in Normandy used both Latin and Norse vocabulary to name the ships, only referring to a more conceptual relationship to the world. Relying on Tim Ingold's essay regarding the perception of the environment, this paper will intend to argue that two cultural imaginations can here be distinguished: the first one being based on a wayfinding, the second one on a specific spiritual mapping.

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Maja Bäckvall, Uppsala University, Sweden

Mediality

Runes in space: Reading a runic inscription over multiple surfaces (Project Presentation)

The typical runic monument in Viking Age Scandinavia consists of one stone, inscribed on one surface. There are, however, a relatively small number of monuments (roughly 50–60) where several stones are inscribed in order to form one coherent monument. Related to that practice, sponsors of runic monuments sometimes chose to have inscriptions over more than one surface of a standing stone. These inscriptions can either be basically identical to one another, stating the same thing over again, or they can vary. The names of the sponsors may change, or the name of the person(s) commemorated. In such cases, each surface or stone may be read separately, and the reading order does not appear to be important. In other cases, the linguistic message of the inscriptions carries over from on surface to the next, meaning that the reader needs to start at one specific point in order for the monument to make sense.
From 2015 to 2017, I will conduct a research project on these multiple inscription monuments, aiming to understand their distribution and discuss what demands they make on their audience, and how the layout and the language of the inscriptions help guide the reader through the text. Choosing to make a runic monument with several inscribed surfaces seems to signal wealth and social status, not only through the added effort on the side of the sponsors, but also through the added effort required of the readers. While all runestones change the space around them, I would argue that multiple inscription monuments do so to a larger extent. The reader is either asked to move around the stone(s) to read a longer message or is subjected to the same message many times in a row. For instance, Jarlabanki's many, almost identical, runestones commissioned by and for himself while he was still alive creates a space saturated with Jarlabanki and his claims to power in a way that one single stone could not. This paper will introduce my research project and focus on the theory and method of the project.

Sverre Bagge, University of Bergen, Norway

Constructing Space

Haraldr harðráði in *Morkinskinna* and *Heimskringla*

Haraldr's reign is described in considerable detail in both *Morkinskinna* and *Heimskringla*, which makes it a good starting-point for a comparison between the two sagas. My paper takes its point of departure in the assumption that Snorri's narrative is based on *Morkinskinna*. Although we cannot exclude the possibility that he also had oral information, there is no strong reason to assume this; his changes of *Morkinskinna* can be explained as the result of his own invention. We can also eliminate the *Hákonar saga Ívarsonar*, which is in all likelihood a later compilation, based on *Morkinskinna* and *Heimskringla,* particularly the latter.[1]

The main novelty in Snorri's version is the link between the story of Hákon Ívarsson and that of Einarr Þambarskelfir. Hákon is Einarr's relative and the nearest to take revenge for his death. This information does not occur in any other source and is in all likelihood Snorri's own invention. In this way, Haraldr's reign is largely presented as a continuous struggle between him and two prominent magnates, belonging to the same kindred, which gives his saga a greater unity than *Morkinskinna's* version.

Finally, I shall address the question of the attitude to Haraldr in the two sagas. *Morkinskinna* contains a number of stories about Haraldr which give different impressions of him. Does the author have any general interpretation of his character and reign, or is he simply collecting the available information? Concerning Snorri, it is clear that his focus is on Haraldr's political skill, but less obvious how he regards his various actions. However, the comparison between Haraldr and his brother Óláfr may form a key to the interpretation, while at the same time illustrating the difference between the secular sagas and the cleric Theodoricus Monachus.

[1] Sverre Bagge, "Hákonar saga Ívarssonar – en kompilasjon fra senmiddelalderen", *Maal og Minne* 2 (2014), pp. 1–17.

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Constructing Space

Genealogical Space? – Genealogy and the Construction of Space in *Hauksbók*

In this paper genealogy will be discussed as a means of the construction of space, in a case study of the extensive and well-known 14th-century manuscript *Hauksbók*.
To approach the issue of this paper, there are (at least) three central questions that ask for a further explanation: What justifies *Hauksbók* as an object of investigation for the construction of space? What makes genealogy so interesting in this regard? And finally: What kind(s) of ‚space(s)' may be constructed by *Hauksbók's* genealogies?
Hauksbók draws a great deal of its importance and previous scholarly attention not only from its extent, but also (and probably even more) from its unique variety of texts and genres. The selection in itself, however, reveals an interest in geography and geographical as well as mythological and theological spatial ideas and concepts. Haukr Erlendsson, both commissioner and a main scribe of *Hauksbók*, seems to be mainly responsible for this selection. Additionally, his impact is distinctly traceable elsewhere: Haukr and his family appear in various genealogies of the manuscript. Previous research has broadly shown that by these means he is linked to a most formidable ancestry. But Haukr becomes connected to various places, too. As part of the genealogies he is imbedded in a certain geographical space: Great parts of the North Atlantic, European and Mediterranean spheres, from *Vínland* and Greenland to Asia Minor, are spatially linked to Haukr in this manner. The mentioned places are often symbolically loaded and thereby of importance and prominence in the (Northern) European learned tradition of the High Middle Ages. This indicates that the manuscripts 'genealogical space' can be identified as more than a solely geographical one.
Genealogy in *Hauksbók*, it seems, is as much about space as it is about time and ancestry. Therefore, a spatial reading of *Hauksbók's* genealogies is encouraged in this paper.

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Constructing Space

Production, Consumption and Space in *Egils saga*

This paper aims to describe and assess the role played by the production and consumption of goods as represented in *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*. While the saga provides a wealth of information concerning distribution through diverse modes of transfer (such as commerce, gifts, raids, inheritance, etc.), it places much less focus on the other two main parts of the economic process. It can be suggested that, on a general level, such difference in attention derives from the nature of the source, as distribution had a much more direct political meaning for the medieval audience than production and consumption and is therefore overrepresented in a clearly political saga. Moreover, the modes of transfer appear intimately linked with specific spatial contexts and organised in identifiable patterns. By contrast, the relatively sparse references to production and consumption do not reveal immediately identifiable regularities. However, our first hypothesis is that certain contexts make production and consumption crucial to understand the ideological stance upheld by the saga, and that such contexts can be defined spatially. On the one hand, the process of settlement in Iceland and the productive activities associated with it, such as the building and management of farmsteads play a very prominent role in *Egla*. This can be linked with the transformation of the Icelandic mode of production from peasant-based to manorial, and with the political use of the historical past by the local elite. On the other hand, the consumption of basic goods and services (food, drink and lodging) often provides the narrative stage for scenes of highly loaded drama. In such contexts, we can hypothesize that the enhanced consumption of goods breaks routine and creates a defined (and tense) space of high sociability, which sets the stage for the negotiation and redefinition of social and political relationships. Therefore, both production and consumption appear as less predictable (and as more individually meaningful) than distribution, but seem to be equally influenced by spatial considerations.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Roman civil wars in the *Rómverja saga* and the attitudes of Icelanders towards the monarchy and the republic (Project Presentation)

In this project presentation, I would like to discuss some of the ideas, conceptions and methods that constitute the core of my planned Ph.D. dissertation concerning the reception of the history of Ancient Rome in Old Norse literature.
I intend to consider cultural transmission and intertextual relations between ancient literature and medieval Scandinavian writings (in accordance with their differing conceptions of historical writing, originating in such different socio-historical, cultural, linguistic, and literary environments as the medieval North and the ancient Rome).
I will focus on the *Rómverja saga*, a collection of Old Norse translations of selected ancient Latin works: Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* and *De coniuratione Catilinae,* and Lucan's *De Bello Civili*. Following these narratives, *Rómverja saga* recounts the episodes from the history of the late Roman Republic: the social struggles, the civil wars, the overthrow of the Roman Republic, and the establishment of the Roman Empire.
Examining the *Rómverja saga* from the perspective of cultural poetics and cultural translation in contrast with its *texta recepta*: Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* and *De coniuratione Catilinae,* and Lucan's *De Bello Civili*, I attempt to answer several questions: How were ancient literary historical figures and events adapted into the Old Norse cultural context, along with all different genres and their strategies, techniques, methods, models, structures, and concepts of the received texts? How were they altered in the process of the transition from one socio-historical, cultural, linguistic, and literary world to another? What is the influence of the medieval Icelandic historical context on the *Rómverja saga*?
The *Rómverja saga* is an Old Norse adaptation – including additions and omissions in translation of the received texts, as well as commentary: explanations and interpretations of ancient Roman texts shaped by the Roman republican ideology, institutions and political thought. My presentation aims at investigating what the *Rómverja saga* reveals on the matter of medieval Icelanders' attitudes towards the ideas of monarchy (as represented by the Norwegian monarchy in particular), and democracy (as embodied by the Commonwealth).

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Open

aigil andi aïlrun ≠ Egill ok Ǫlrún

The pair *aigil* and *aïlrun* of the runic inscription on the Pforzen silver buckle (570-600 AD) is usually compared to the pair *Egill* and *Ǫlrún* of *Vǫlundarkviða* and *Þiðreks saga* (Marold 2004; Nedoma 2004), although there is no etymological reason for this (Wagner 1999). The collocation seems to be justified by the phenomenon that heroic names often do not correspond exactly to their equivalents in a different language (Heusler 1910). The collocation of *aigil* with *Egill* and *aïlrun* with *Ǫlrún* has lead to conclusions that go beyond the finding, the inscription on the Pforzen silver buckle represents one of the oldest attestations of germanic heroic poetry that took its way from continental Alemannia to the scandinavian North (or the other way round?). It has been tried to link the Pforzen-inscription with the picture programme of the Auzon whalebone casket as well as with the Old English *Beowulf*. To accept the Pforzen-inscription as attestation of germanic heroic legend, further investigation is needed: It has to be asked, in what way the inscription fits into the system, the development, the transmission and mediality of Germanic heroic legend.

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Open

Methodological Reflections on Continuity in the Christianisation of the North: A Discursive Approach

The aim of this paper is to present some methodological reflections on the study of religious continuity in the Christianisation of the North, taking the notion of discourse as a key concept.
I open by critically discussing the traditional view of historical source criticism as the sole acceptable basis for the reconstruction of pre-Christian and early Christian worldviews. In line with Jens Peter Schjødt, I argue that in light of the problematic source situation as well as the cognitive diversity in worldview that must be expected in any religion, we need to accept that the reconstruction of worldviews must combine traditional source criticism with a theoretical knowledge about the types of religion we are facing, obtained from the comparative study of religion.
Schjødt applies the notion of discourse, denoting the sum of possible expressions of meaning that can be produced within a given semantic framework, to argue that, considering the diversity in religious worldview to be expected in the sources, all we can aim to reconstruct are models of the religious discourse(s) behind these worldviews. In turn, this also means that, although discourses are never fixed or stable, it is possible to speak of a pre-Christian as opposed to a Christian discourse operating within the same discursive field. Building on the premise that the Christianisation must be viewed as a transition from one type of religion to another, I propose the notion of discourse as a central methodological concept in the identification of religious continuity in the transition from pre-Christian religion to Christianity. I elaborate on the discursive perspective by explicating its theoretical foundation, namely that the production of meaning inevitably takes place within and therefore is constrained by the discourses that one is embedded in. Hence, the production of Christian ideas by Norsemen must necessarily be constrained by the existing pre-Christian discourse(s), i.e. the existing semantic framework(s).
In the second part of the paper, I apply these methodological reflections in a case study on continuity in the perception of gods in the transition to Christianity, using a combination of contemporary and medieval sources. I aim to show that the conceptualisation of Christ as a non-transcendent god, as he appears from kennings in the earliest Christian skaldic poetry (dating from the end of the 10th century to around 1150), indicates continuity in the discursive representation of gods in pre-Christian Scandinavia. I argue that out of the perceptions of Christ existing in the Christian tradition(s) in Europe at the time, the development of this particular image in the North is in accordance with pre-Christian Scandinavian discourse(s) on gods.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Anglo-Scandinavian Networks: How Contacts across the North Sea influenced the Development of the Church in Scandinavia c. 1050-1100

In early medieval Scandinavia, raiders, traders and settlers carried Scandinavian cultural elements across Europe. But the contacts were never unilateral; they took place within a larger multidimensional network of relations through which goods, people and technologies flowed back to Scandinavia (Sindbæk, 2008). These contacts are of special interest when viewed in connection with internal developments such as Christianisation, urbanisation and the introduction of supra-regional institutions that all relied on foreign expertise in their introduction and implementation. The eleventh century was a critical period during which these processes and contacts burgeoned and for which the quality of written evidence improves, so that it becomes possible to identify travellers to and from Scandinavia (Abrams, 1994).
This paper will explore what the movements of individuals and groups within specific networks can tell us about the nature and extent of cultural transfer in Scandinavia in the second half of eleventh century. The turbulent politics and chaotic events in England during this period had repercussions well beyond the British Isles. For example, the Norman Conquest created an immediate movement of people from England to the neighbouring countries. In Denmark and Norway, where significant contacts and relations already existed, it may be argued that the number of exiles was significant and that their presence may have had an impact on developments already under way (Bandlien, 2006). This paper will demonstrate how careful examination and combination of the evidence (written sources, manuscript fragments, archaeology) it is possible to extend our knowledge of the networks that enabled these developments. The sources for Christianisation and state formation in Scandinavia are diverse and complicated but do show English influence from the earliest phases of the process continuing into the establishment of political and ecclesiastical infrastructures and institutions. Scholarship has often focused on the late tenth to the first half of the eleventh century, and the question of English influence on the Scandinavian Churches in the later phases of Christianisation has rarely been discussed outside regional or national studies. This paper, therefore, will consider the status and role of Anglo-Scandinavian networks across Scandinavia in the second half of the eleventh century, particularly in relation to the establishment of the Christian Church.

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Mediality

Memory and Mediality: Óláfr Tryggvason and the Conversion of the North Norse Atlantic

Norwegian king Óláfr Tryggvason was a zealous missionary who Christianized both Norway and the Norse North Atlantic in just five years through a clever combination of fair speech and brute force. This, at least, is the impression given in medieval Icelandic sagas. My aim here, however, is to reassess the role played by Óláfr in the North Atlantic through a close study of the sagas associated with the conversion of Iceland's neighbouring Norse-speaking colonies of Orkney, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, and to question the accuracy of narratives that were produced in Iceland in the thirteenth century, far removed in both time and space from the events that they purport to describe.

In this paper, I explore the literary presentation of the conversion across three four sagas – *Orkneyinga saga*, *Færeyinga saga, Grœnlendinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða* – but also examine these texts within a broader multi-disciplinary context, discussing evidence from disciplines as diverse as archaeology, genetics and place-name studies and assessing the extent to which it supports or contradicts the saga narratives. Drawing on the framework of cultural memory, I question whether these sagas may in fact tell us more about the thirteenth-century Icelandic context in which they were produced than about the tenth-century North Atlantic, and the extent to which they can be considered as a medium for discourse on contemporary issues. A key question asked here is how and why representations of conversion across the North Atlantic might have been used as vehicles to explore wider concerns connected with Icelandic identity, particularly during the civil turmoil of the thirteenth century that culminated in Iceland's submission and loss of independence to the Norwegian crown in 1262/4. Finally, I suggest that the role played by Óláfr Tryggvason in connection to the conversion of these communities was deliberately exaggerated by saga authors, a deliberate distortion of Icelandic cultural memory that was designed to resonate with a thirteenth-century saga audience, and to act as a counterpoint to depictions of Iceland's own, more evidently self-deterministic conversion. By doing this, the thirteenth-century Icelanders were able to create a *Freiheitsmythos* that justified their contemporary independence in the face of encroaching Norwegian authority.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Meat and Taboo in Medieval Scandinavian Law and Literature

The medieval Icelandic *Grágás* law codes explicitly state which animals are meant for eating: 'Þ*at* er kiot er meN lata af navt eþa fær sauði. oc geitr. oc svín' ('That is meat which men take from cattle or sheep or goats or pigs') (33-34). People may also hunt bears, deer, walruses, seals, whales, and birds that swim. The forbidden animals are made equally clear: 'Ros eigv meN eigi at eta oc hvnda. oc melracca. oc kottv. oc en engi kló dýr. oc eigi hræ fogla' ('People shall not eat horses or dogs or foxes or cats, and no animals with claws and not carrion birds') (34). The penalty for eating prohibited animals in Iceland is lesser outlawry (34-35).

In anthropological terms, these animals are *taboo*. Food taboos maintain proper order and protect 'the distinctive categories of the universe…the local consensus on how the world is organized' (Douglas, xi). This paper will first question the historically contingent and symbolically significant factors that led to certain animals being 'good to eat' and others 'good to prohibit'. I follow Harris, who systematically demonstrates that 'Preferred foods…have a more favorable balance of practical benefits over costs than foods that are avoided' (15). Food still holds symbolic meaning, but this arises from geographically determined ecological restraints and opportunities. Horses and dogs – the only prohibited animals in the Norwegian *Gulaþingslög* (11-12) – can be used as exemplary. They were both domesticated for practical reasons and are depicted in the sagas as companion animals that reached states analogous to fostered kinship. In post-conversion Scandinavia, they became 'bad to eat' because their quasi-human status rendered them too close to one's own bodily self.

This paper will also explore how food taboos are part of an elaborate intellectual structure in medieval Scandinavia. Acknowledging that 'dietary prohibitions make sense in relation to a systematic ordering of ideas' (Tambiah, 423), a classificatory schema of hierarchically ordered groups of animals can be established. Lévi-Strauss famously wrote that animals are not just 'bonnes à manger' ('good to eat') but also 'bonnes à penser' ('good for thinking') because they embody ideas and relations as conceived by human empirical observations and sensory perception (128). The projection of human characteristics onto different animal species provided a natural model of differentiation for people to create distinctions among themselves. This classification of species and people is inextricably linked to food taboos; when it comes to animals, eating and thinking are mutually inclusive.

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Open

Descriptions of Nature in *Íslendingasögur* and *Sturlunga* (Project Presentation)

"Fögr er hlíðin, svá at mér hefir hon aldri jafnfögr sýnzt, bleikir akrar ok slegin tún, ok mun ek ríða heim aptr ok fara hvergi."
These are the well-known words of Gunnar from Hlíðarendi, one of the main characters in Njalssaga. As a punishment for his crimes, Alþingi decided he should leave the island for three years. But as he was leaving his home, his horse stumbles and thus Gunnar looks back and sees his farm and fields. His vision stirs up his feelings and he rides back home, to his enemies and ultimately his death.
Contrary to common belief, there seems to be numerous descriptions of nature in the Old Icelandic texts e.g. *Íslendingasögur* and *Sturlungasaga*. The main goal of this project is to compile, categorize and analyze the descriptions found in the texts that describe: nature and landscape, agriculture, forests and trees, man's impact on nature and natural hazards.
This categorization could shed light on the following questions: how often nature is described with feelings? How many descriptions of gardening there are? Where can be found mentions of forests/trees and how were they used? How were roads built? Did the medieval people change riverbeds and what were the effects of landslide or avalanches on people?
In the end we will, most likely, be able to answer, some of the most important questions regarding this project; Are there descriptions of nature to be found in the Icelandic medieval texts? How many are they? And what do they describe?
There will always be different opinions on whether some of the sources used in the project, namely the *Íslendingasögur*, are fiction or fact. However most scholars today can agree that they can be used as sources to explain the ethos (views, beliefs and ideology) during the time when they were written, and by some extent the decades or even centuries before.
In the presentation I will discuss this new approach in researching the Icelandic medieval texts, give examples of descriptions from them and analyze if and how, they can shed a new or different light, on how medieval Nordic people experienced, perceived and utilized nature.

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Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

A Swedish Provincial Law: Pure Literature, Stipulated Codification or actually Legal Rules in Function? The Case of the Hälsinge Law

The Scandinavian provincial laws are the most important source we have for reconstructing our early medieval society (1100–1300). It is well known that lawmaking was inseparable from kingship in England and on the continent and, therefore, there has been a predominant tendency to see medieval laws in Scandinavia in a regal context, and the laws themselves are seen as reflecting the societal situation when they were written down. This paper challenges this 'dogma'.

It was obvious to learned Icelanders that literacy was going to be important in the reproduction of legal culture, something which is stressed by the author of The First Grammatical Treatise. When this writing down of laws took place in Iceland, there must therefore have been an extensive body of laws readily available to the men entrusted with the task of writing a law book. These must have been orally transmitted laws, legal customs and 'sayings', treasured and transferred by wise men knowledgeable in legal matters. The efforts of Hafliði Másson and others did not result in one sanctioned book, but obviously in many books or manuscripts.

This Icelandic law-making situation in some ways resembles the making of the Uppland law (U.L.; Upplandslagen), which was to be valid for the heartland of early medieval Sweden (Svíþjóð), the province of Uppland, and later on set a pattern for the other so-called Svea laws. This law was collected and written in the late thirteenth century and ratified in 1296 by King Birger.

This paper focuses on a 'peripheral' law, the Hälsinge Law. We are fairly sure that the person who ordered this law to be written down was the archbishop in Uppsala, Olof. For this task the editor of the law used the Uppland law as an aid, and to abridge, adjust and complement relevant parts of this law so that it would be suitable for – and most importantly be accepted by – the people living in the northern part of the archbishop's diocese, what is now called Norrland.

The paper attempts to show that such laws were not inventions of any one person or group in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and that they cannot only be mirroring the time in which they were written down. Rather there are complex layers in the versions of these laws that we have. The adjustments and differences between the Uppland Law and the Hälsinge Law furthermore intimates that these laws actually were in function, they had a practical function in society, they were not just stipulative legislation someone wanted to implement in a certain society. The picture which emerges is much less clear-cut than has been supposed, showing many regional differences and peculiarities.

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Constructing Space

Taboos at the Boundary of Order and Chaos

Taboo is a loanword of Polynesian origin that quickly spread through the Western world from the late 18th century onwards. While originally viewed as a Polynesian curiosity, taboo is now considered a universal concept (Buckser, 464). Seibel rightfully points out that the word *taboo* only spread through the Western world as fast as it did because it referred to something that, at least in principal, was already known, i. e. the word was foreign but not the sociocultural context (9). The Protogermanic terms **hailagaz* and **weihaz* betray a notion that overlaps with the one underlying the Tongan *tapu,* and Tacitus tells of a sacred grove that the Semnones would only enter bound in fetters (ch. 39), a custom that has been connected to the *fjǫturlundr* ('grove of fetters') mentioned in stanza 30 of *Helgaqviða Hundingsbana ǫnnor* and the prose preceding it. Mundal discusses several examples throughout Old Norse literature where taboo breaches are employed to tap into creative powers, highlighting transgressions of gender categories 'as the proto-image of chaos' (1). Furthermore, the idea of 'matter out of place' (Douglas, 53) helps to explain *víg í véum* as a breach of *hofshelgi* and similar prohibitions that demarcate sacred spaces. Social categories entail restrictions on behaviour motivated by a similar underlying notion.
In this paper I shall discuss how taboo phenomena naturally surface in established and emerging orders through processes of selection and exclusion (Waldenfels, ch. 2) and highlight their roles in enforcing these orders. I shall also investigate how space, in both a concrete and a metaphorical sense, is a factor in as well as a result of ordering processes.

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Constructing Space

Making space for power in *Eyrbyggja saga*

Throughout the episodic, meandering structure of *Eyrbyggja saga*, Snorri goði Þorgrímsson ascends to an impressive position of power in western Iceland. The saga presents his journey from teenage, fatherless upstart to uncontested leader, advisor and fore-father of the Sturlungar through a series of conflicts and challenges. In this paper I will look at three individuals who are associated with stages in Snorri's career, examining the interactions between powerful people and Snorri's method of clearing space for himself in the crowded power structures of western Iceland.

Many *Íslendingasögur* feature a character introduced as an *ójafnaðarmaðr* ('inequitable man'), but *Eyrbyggja saga* outstrips the others by spreading three distinct *ójafnaðarmenn* across its narrative. This type of character usually encroaches on the space of other individuals, be that the literal space occupied by their land, or the metaphorical extent of their honour. The initial assumption might be that *Eyrbyggja saga* introduces three for the sake of its structure; *ójafnaðarmenn* typically appear early in a saga in order to catalyse the action, but *Eyrbyggja saga*'s various, unconnected conflicts need numerous catalysts. The three *ójafnaðarmenn* in *Eyrbyggja saga* also provide important perspectives on the level of power and influence wielded by Snorri at different points in the saga.

The first *ójafnaðarmaðr* is Þórólfr bægifótr (*Eyrbyggja saga*, ch. 8). He is typical of this type of character: an avaricious ex-viking who uses violent means to expand his territory. Þórólfr's deeds also encroach upon the pristine reputation of his son Arnkell, leaving Snorri goði an opportunity to square up to his biggest local rival.

Víga-Styrr (*Eyrbyggja saga*, ch. 12) kills those who oppose him and refuses to pay compensation; like most *ójafnaðarmenn* he dies a violent death. Yet in life, Styrr offers Snorri one of his first political allies and becomes his father-in-law, at which point the saga draws attention to the complementary association between the two. Without their alliance it is to be assumed that Snorri and Styrr would have been in direct competition, but Styrr's inequity never detracts from Snorri's position.

Later in the saga (*Eyrbyggja saga*, ch. 57), Óspakr Kjallaksson exemplifies a different, but common type of *ójafnaðarmaðr*: Óspakr is a thief and a bandit who lives in a fortress and menaces others. Snorri, newly arrived at Sælingsdalstunga, demonstrates his power over the area by cleansing it of this scourge in no time at all. Snorri's power is much increased by this stage of the saga and this is reflected through his influence over a variety of spaces.

I will discuss these three individuals in detail, demonstrating how Snorri goði manipulates characters more violent than he is to construct a space for himself within the sphere of power. *Eyrbyggja saga*'s variations on the *ójafnaðarmaðr* show the range of possibilities for such ubiquitous saga villains and prove their importance to the overarching narrative of the saga.

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Open

Multiple Time Structures in Early Iceland

There is agreement among scholars that the medieval West systematised time in various ways, which had been inherited from the Middle East in the previous millennia (e.g. Gurevich, 143; Le Goff, 175; Higgins, 229). On the other hand, scholars have often neglected the dynamism characterising such a complex system of time structures. Influential works from the late 1940s concerned with medieval time promoted a dichotomous approach to the issue, while fostering the opposition of a 'Christian line' vs. a 'classical cycle' (e.g. Cullmann, 51; Eliade, 143). In subsequent decades time has been analysed in similar binary terms as being, for instance, learned or secular, sacred or daily, subjective or objective matter. Despite constituting a good starting point, a methodology as such does not render justice to the coexistence and interaction of multiple time structures in the Middle Ages. In the present paper a more holistic approach is proposed. An analysis of the relationship that exists between time and narrative will be accompanied by the contemplation of time as a social and philosophical concern, while paying special attention to its connections with power and space. This theoretical framework will be applied to the study of the particular combinations of time structures that are conveyed by Early Icelandic texts, while focusing on *Íslendingabók* as a case in point. The investigation constitutes the object of an ongoing research project on the representation and understanding of time as they are shaped in these distinctive texts.

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Constructing Space

Poetry for Journeys

In the Scandinavian Viking and Middle Ages an individual's perception of space must have been shaped to a great extent by his or her experience of journeying, whether over a restricted range, as would have been the case for many people, or much further afield, by foot, horse, carriage or boat. Journeys were undertaken for specific purposes, unlike some kinds of leisure travel in the modern world, nor were they without risk, especially if they involved entry into foreign territories, whether for diplomacy, trade or warfare. Journeys were also a means of acquiring knowledge of various kinds for those who undertook them and held out the possibility of enhanced reputation at home if the traveller returned having achieved his objectives.

It is not surprising, in view of the importance of journeys and journeying in early Scandinavia, that journeys are the subject of several different kinds of Old Norse poetry, and it is the object of this paper to analyse both the poetic genres involved and their subject-matter. Among topics discussed, albeit briefly, will be the representation of journeys and travellers in Old Norse myth; the commemoration of journeys and travellers on runestones (especially the so-called Yngvar stones); the rise of journey poetry (and the special metre *tøglag*) as a branch of the skaldic encomium in honour of Norwegian and Danish rulers in the late Viking Age and its later extension to the topic of the journey as pilgrimage; the personalised journey and the stylistic and topical resources of poems describing sea-voyages.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Brandr Jónsson, a Philo-Semite between Iceland and Norway

> Brandr Jonsson, who died in 1264, also used the *Antiquities of the Jews*, and probably the *War of the Jews*, for his *Gyðinga Saga*. Both of these works might be expected to interest the Icelanders in the thirteenth century. Josephus's descriptions of the ruthless ambition, cruelty and deceit which flourished in Palestine in the time of Christ are not unlike passages in *Sturlunga Saga*.

Gabriel Turville-Petre (115)

> "Deinem Herrn Gemahl eine gute Meinung über den unverbesserlichen Europäer und Anti-Anti-semiten, Deinen ganz unmaßgeblichen Bruder und Eckensteher Fritz beizubringen …"
>
> "Teach your noble husband a good opinion of these incorrigible Europeans and anti-anti-Semites, your most humble brother and Eckensteher Fritz …"

Friedrich Nietzsche to his sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche (147)

The canonical works of Brandr Jónsson (d. 1264) are *Gyðinga saga* and *Alexanders saga.* At times *Stjórn II-II, Hrafnkels saga* (Hermann 1971) and *Konungs Skuggsjá* (Kirby 169-181) have also all been attributed to him, though rigorous work by Wolf (1988, 1990, 1991) has largely demolished these suggestions. A unifying theme in both the widely accepted "Brandr-ian corpus" and its apocrypha is the deployment of philo-Semitic typologies. For example, In *Alexanders saga*, the world-conquering King Alexander dreams of Aron the High Priest and his *petalon* [i.e. πεταλον or חֹשֶׁן *khošen*], and humbles himself before the Jerusalemites. In *Gyðinga saga*, primarily a conglomerate of 1 & 2 Maccabees, the *Historia Scholastica* by Peter Comestor, and some legendary material, the Jews are generally sympathetically depicted as a beleaguered but heroic people.
In this paper I seek to explore Brandr's overwhelmingly positive attitude towards the Jews, expressed during a century in which such opinions were certainly unusual, if not controversial. By examining Brandr's clan identity as a Svínfellingr (alongside rival clans), and his proto-national identity as an Icelander (alongside the prospect of union with Norway), I set his pronouncements on Jews and Judaism into their medieval Scandinavian context, and thereby draw out their allegorical undertones. The notion of "philo-Semitism" itself will also be scrutinised. Like its infamous relation, anti-Semitism, a universally agreed upon definition remains elusive. In Nietzsche's words, is it nothing more than "anti-anti-Semitism"? Or is there something more profound in the recourse of certain Christian thinkers to Jews as symbols, flattering or otherwise?

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Constructing Space

Foreign Books in Icelandic Space

I have been working for some years on an interactive database of churches and ecclesiastical culture in Medieval Iceland, which can be viewed at www.saintsgeog.net/index2.html. Here data from the diocese of Hólar illustrate how the site will work. The site maps churches and their contents, as listed in episcopal inventories, according to the date of the document in which the information was recorded. It is thus possible to follow the development of church property (whether manuscripts, liturgical objects, lands, or livestock) and rights (such as rights to driftwood) with the passage of time. It is also possible to study the documents themselves in terms of their contents and the interests of the bishops who (for the most part) created them; place-names are also be included (though not yet searchable) which will enable study not only of onomastics but of the physical and human environments embodied in the place-names. The project will be extended to include other countries besides Iceland, and other religions besides Christianity – place-names and archaeological evidence for pre-Christian sites, for example. I am collaborating with members of the Árni Magnússon Insitute in Reykjavík on the creation of a tool that will enable anyone to map data that can be connected to a particular Icelandic farm or place-name.

Of special interest for this conference are the numerous books listed in the inventories, in particular those identified as being of foreign origin. I will examine where such volumes are found, and compare them to other items known to be imported, such as alabaster altarpieces or altarcloths made of foreign fabrics (such information is often part of the description in the inventory). An interesting pattern emerges; although some of these items are distributed evenly throughout Iceland, foreign books are especially common in Northern Iceland, especially Eyjafjörður. A careful consideration of the proximity of such churches to ports, of the chieftains and clerics associated with them, and of the wealth and interrelations of the churches themselves, may help explain this skewed distribution. If possible, I will compare the medieval results with those of the early years of the Reformation.

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Constructing Space

The Cartography of Dragons: Oddr's Demarcation of Space in *Yngvars saga víðförla*

Yngvars saga holds a unique place within saga literature; though it is traditionally grouped with *fornaldarsögur*, it lacks any relation to the "heroic age" or its heroes. This has led to a paucity of literary analysis, and most scholarship instead focuses on prospecting the saga for historical details concerning medieval Scandinavian relations with Russia. One of the most important facets to Oddr *munkr inn fróði* in *Yngvars saga víðförla* is the utilization and demarcation of space to achieve a goal of situating and integrating Iceland within the medieval West. Close analysis of the voyages reveals that Oddr munkr had a unique approach in "centralizing" Iceland; Oddr constructs a literary map revealing a demarcation between the West, wherein the episodes follow the conventions of *Íslendingasǫgur* and *konungssǫgur*, and the East, where encounters are similar to those found in *ridarrasǫgur* and *fornaldarsögur*. Application of Stephen Mitchell's "factual-fabulous" scale to the journeys of Yngvarr and Sveinn, and specifically the two unique dragon encounters, reveals Oddr's transitions through different "genres" as their expeditions traverse multiple landscapes. The dragons Jakulus and the dweller of the royal burial demonstrate this shift most clearly. Discussing the stark difference in descriptions, settings, and behavior, authorial intent becomes more clear. By uniquely distinguishing between the early dragon's den and the later dragon's lair, Oddr presents fierce monsters for both heroes, but places them firmly within different realms of being. Additionally, as L. Michael Bell elucidates with his word study, "The *sá inn* Pattern," the saga is truly about "seeing," and the landmarks further reveal these transitions by Oddr. Of particular importance in understanding this demarcation of the world are the boundaries he establishes through the use of towns, waterfalls, and the abodes of monsters, most importantly the two dragons. Thus, the framework of *Yngvars saga víðförla* is the understanding and demarcation of space within the saga. This functions to centralize Iceland within Christendom and Scandinavia while creating a very distinct *endi heims* elsewhere, moving Iceland away from its perception as Ultima Thule.

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Open

Onomastic patterns of berserkir in fornaldarsögur and Íslendingasögur

It is sometimes asserted that the names given to *berserkir* in Old Norse literature are signifiers of a particular attribute such as ugliness or strength, more so than the names of characters that are not *berserkir* (Breen, 6; Breen, 22-32). These names have also been used as evidence that *berserkir* in sagas had a particular status that was indicated by their names. Saxo describes a company of warriors with ursine names whose activities mark them as particularly aggressive Vikings: Gerbiorn, Gunbiorn, Arinbiorn, Stenbiorn, Esbiorn, Thorbiorn and Biorn (Friis-Jensen, ed., I 364-65). These warriors have been identified as *berserkir* and Ellis Davidson (II 95) has proposed a theory of ursine name-taking upon joining a band of *berserkir*. Given the connection between *berserkir* and bears, from *berserkr* possibly meaning 'wearing a bearskin shirt or armour' to Böðvarr Bjarki's fighting as a bear in *Hrólfs saga kraka* (ch. 33) this appears to be a logical connection, but it fails to consider if such naming practices occurred in other families that were not *berserkir* or how common those names were in general usage in Nordic society which may indicate the extent to which a saga's author could be reporting tradition rather than shaping the narrative. This paper tests the theory through a frequency analysis of names of *berserkir* in *fornaldarsögur* and *Íslendingasögur*, and by examining the patterns into which names of *berserkir* may be categorised. The extent to which the names ascribed to *berserkir* were in common usage within the broader scope of Nordic society in the Viking Age and medieval period has been little analysed previously and not at all in connection with naming patterns of *berserkir*. Therefore, the discussion encompasses names of individuals that are recorded in Old Norse literature, and in Viking Age and medieval Scandinavian society. By comparing the names of *berserkir* and more general usage of those names this paper provides a solid evidence base for further analysis of onomastic patterns related to *berserkir*, questions previous conclusions, and seeks to show that, as a generic trend, the names ascribed to *berserkir* are not necessarily indicative of negative characteristics or group naming traditions, while allowing for some intentional naming practices within individual sagas.

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Constructing Space

The swirling sea as sacred space? A new perspective on Iðavǫllr in Norse myth

In a paper given at the International Saga Conference in Aahrus in August 2012, I argued that the traditionally accepted interpretation of the name **Bifrǫst** in Norse myth as meaning 'trembling' (ON ***bif***) 'ground/path' (ON ***rǫst***) has been misunderstood poetically. Specifically I proposed that Bifrǫst could actually be a poetic allusion to the sea, consistent with numerous kennings describing the sea as a moving land, path or ground.

This paper will examine the proposition that Iðavǫllr – the sacred meeting place of the gods at the beginning and end of the world in ***Vǫluspá*** – may also be a poetic allusion to the sea, sharing notable semantic and mythical characteristics with **Bifrǫst**. While the meaning of the name **Iðavǫllr** has long been disputed based on mainly on differing interpretations of the root ***iða***, there appears to have been a general academic consensus that ON ***vǫllr*** refers to field, plain or meadow. **Iðavǫllr** has therefore been consistently perceived as some form of physically wide, flat open area of land.

What appears not to have been considered, however, is the possibility of ***vǫllr*** actually being a poetic rather than a literal allusion to a plain. It is certainly interesting that ***vǫllr*** appears frequently in a very large sub-set of sea kennings depicting the sea as ground, plain, land, field or way. Likewise, it also has to be considered that ***iða*** is actually listed by Snorri as a sea heiti in the ***þulur***, and that ON ***iða*** is cognate with English 'eddy' meaning whirlpool or swirling water.

This paper will argue that Iðavǫllr should be translated as 'swirling plain' and that this is likely to be a poetic allusion to the sea. Subsequently, the implications of this thesis for our understanding of the Æsir, the sea as sacred space, and the overall cosmology of ***Vǫluspá*** will be discussed and evaluated.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Mythology, reception and digital space

Numerous contemporary video games incorporate references to Norse myths. A 'work on myth' (Blumenberg 1979) then occurs and new significance is given to mythical elements which are transformed in order to match the 'relevance' (Goffman 1961) of the gaming situation. Through this process, myths participate in designing what Erving Goffman calls a 'place of action' (1967, 195), that is to say places where chances can be taken and 'fatality' vicariously confronted. By combining theory of Goffman's sociology and Blumenberg's phenomenology, this paper offers to study how ancient Norse myths are used in various ways in order to build contemporary digital spaces in which players practice playful activities. Based on the study of Norse mythical elements found in the massively multi-player online role playing game (MMORPG) *Age of Conan: Hyborian Adventures*, it offers a reflection on cultural transmission from medieval manuscripts to digital games, through *fantasy* literature and on the transformations that have occurred through time.

From a broader theoretical point of view, this case study will help to understand how each new use of a mythical element gets its meaning at the same time from a reference to past occurrences and the way it is transformed during an historical process in order to match the relevance of a situation in its context. Therefore, the synchronic and the diachronic aspect of the study will be articulated in order to understand both how Nordic mythical resources have been used and actualized through time, each use renewing their 'potential of efficiency [*Wirkungspotential*]' (Blumenberg 1971) until their use in games, and how their use in the digital game helps to define the 'action' in which players-characters take part and the whole context of gaming. In *Age of Conan*, references to Norse myths appear in various ways, such as playable characters, place names, monsters, quests, seasonal events, just to name a few examples, in order to contribute to the game as a whole and this process also shows the multiple sources that are involved in building the game. This case study will also help to understand the place of Nordic resources in the game in relation to other traditional cultural elements. The methodology used is mainly based on participant observation and content analysis from various sources in order to understand how the relation between the various media are built.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

The Illuminated Manuscripts from Helgafell: An Interdisciplinary Approach
(Project Presentation)

The Augustinian monastery of Helgafell, situated in the north of west Icelandic Snæfellsnes between 1184 and 1550, rose under the conduct of the 12th abbot Ásgrímr Jónsson to one of the most important centres of manuscript production and illumination in 14th century Iceland (Hermann Pálsson 1967: 73–77). Between 1350 and 1400 a plethora of images filled the pages of Helgafell's rich literary culture. A corpus of about 40 high class pictorial illuminations in the early and high Gothic styles, depicting a wide range of medieval Christian and secular iconography, mixed with 13th century Romanesque pen-flourishing and patterning. Known illuminated vernacular manuscripts such as AM 226 fol *Stjórn*, AM 233 a fol and SÁM 1 fol Codex Scardensis as well as AM 347 fol Belgsdalsbók and AM 350 fol Skarðsbók show that writers and illuminators from Helgafell did not only produce a wide range of contemporary vernacular literature (Ólafur Halldórsson 1966; Stefán Karlsson 1967: 21), they also illuminated the material skilfully. In my paper I intend to present the core elements of my PhD research concerning the origins of this artistic surge. By working interdisciplinary with philological and art historical methods and sources, I will try to demonstrate under which circumstances the Helgafell manuscripts and fragments were produced and why they were produced in such a professional manner. In particular, the specific use of iconography in the context of text-image relations, style and the overall composition of the codices will be presented and set in relation to their ideological and cultural background. To give a broader cultural scale to my research, an overview of the activity at the Helgafell monastery will be given and the contact of the writers and illuminators to other ecclesiastical and secular institutions presented. The motif-sharing of the illuminators will be examined alongside their artistic change, the *Interpicturality*; changed patterns of iconography in the context of the new textual surround (Rosen 2003: 161–3). This is particularly important as barely any written material has ever been pictured in the medieval Icelandic literature before. The paper will search for rules and methods behind the specific use of illuminations in relation to the texts they initiate.

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Constructing Space

Inseln im Westen. Der Ódáinsakr, die Glæsisvellir und ihre europäischen Kontexte

Bereits seit dem 19. Jahrhundert ist grundsätzlich bekannt, daß zwischen den mythischen Orten des Ódáinsakr und der Glæsisvellir einerseits und anderen europäischen Paradies- und Sehnsuchtsorten wie der Insel Avalon der Artusliteratur, dem „Land der Frauen" der mittelalterlichen Literatur Irlands oder den „Inseln der Seligen" der griechischen und römischen Literatur bemerkenswerte Ähnlichkeiten bestehen. Von Gelehrten wie Sophus Bugge, Paul Herrmann, Rudolf Much oder Hilda Roderick Ellis wurde nicht zuletzt immer wieder auf keltische Parallelen zu den Motiven hingewiesen, die mit dem Komplex des Ódáinsakr und der Glæsisvellir verbunden sind; hierher gehört etwa, daß es sich bei den einschlägigen mythischen Inseln der mittelalterlichen Literatur Irlands und der Artusliteratur um Gefilde jenseits des Meeres handelt, die von weiblichen Figuren mit übernatürlichen Fähigkeiten und stark sexuellen Konnotationen beherrscht werden, die mit Apfelgärten assoziiert sind und wo dem Besucher eine übernatürliche Verlängerung seines Lebens oder gar die Unsterblichkeit versprochen ist – alles Motive, die mit zumeist nur geringen Abweichungen auch in Verbindung mit dem Ódáinsakr und den Glæsisvellir erscheinen, wie sie v.a. in einigen Vorzeitsagas und in den *Gesta Danorum* des Saxo Grammaticus beschrieben werden. Eine ausführliche und systematische Untersuchung dieser und vergleichbarer Ähnlichkeiten und ihrer Implikationen ist bisher jedoch ein Desiderat. Die Präsentation stellt die Fragen, methodischen Ansätze und einige der vorläufigen Ergebnisse des Marie Curie-Projekts „Inseln im Westen" vor, das derzeit am Institut für Nordische Philologie der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München durchgeführt wird und zum ersten Mal einen Versuch unternimmt, die Genese und den internationalen Kontext solcher mythischer Räume der hochmittelalterlichen Literatur Islands systematisch und umfassend aufzuarbeiten. Dabei steht insbesondere die Frage im Zentrum, welche internationalen Traditionen in die Konstruktion dieser mythischen Sehnsuchtsräume in der nordischen Literatur eingeflossen sind und welche Rückschlüsse die spezifisch nordische Adaption dieser internationalen Traditionen für die nordische Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte erlaubt.

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Constructing Space

So near and yet so far: Political geographies in the time of Knut and St Olaf

This paper proposes to illuminate the nature and extent of Scandinavian contact with Scotland and Ireland in the eleventh century, particularly those regions which had previously undergone Viking settlement. In light of the Danish conquest of England in 1013–4 by Sven Forkbeard and the subsequent kingship of Knut, scholarship has often concentrated on Anglo-Danish relations. The dramatic nature of this takeover, however, should not overshadow the complex web of networks and alliances spanning northern Europe. Due to the significant Norwegian component to the Norse settlements in the Celtic area, as opposed to the predominately Danish aspect of Norse settlement in the Danelaw in eastern England, the relationships between these settlements and Norway are particularly interesting during the Anglo-Danish period. I will examine the response of the Norse diaspora and of Norway to increased Danish influence in the Insular world in terms of their different constructions of socio-political and colonial geography.
Norway's access to the rest of the world was obstructed by Knut's power. For example, it is likely that Knut strategically blocked Norway's access to trade routes to the south, particularly the emporium of Hedeby, to increase his political position. Olaf Haraldsson began his reign in Norway as a powerful king with political backing from England and Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical connections, but his power became increasingly constrained by Knut, who bribed Norwegian magnates away from their lord. Conflict and tensions between Denmark and Norway would have played out in Norse colonies of the British Isles as well as in Scandinavia, with Olaf trying to expand his influence and control. The later West Norse sources reflect the Norwegian perspective and deliberately construct a socio-political geography beneficial to Norwegian claims in the area, as when *Orkneyinga saga* justifies Norwegian control of Orkney by portraying Jarl Sigurðr as being forced to convert to Christianity by Olaf Tryggvason.
From the perspective of the Norse-influenced or Norse-speaking communities in Scotland and Ireland, the political geography looked very different. Spatially, they were not too far removed as a voyage from western Norway to Shetland would have taken only twenty-four hours. Nevertheless, their political relationships were more complex than the Norwegian view of 'natural' Norwegian domination and 'illegitimate' Danish expansionism would have it. In this period, these colonies had many conflicting loyalties and influences. Knut had begun to infringe on Celtic regions: like other powerful kings of England he may have been recognised as overlord by the Welsh, Scots and even perhaps by some of the Irish. He thereby altered the landscape of Scandinavian presence in the British Isles. Sihtric Silkbeard, king of Dublin, aped Knut's coinage and may have witnessed three of his charters. And looking beyond the more obvious binary pair of Norway/Denmark, the Norse colonies in Orkney and the Hebrides may have been more concerned about the rise of the much closer kingdom of Scots than about either Knut or Olaf.

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Mediality

The Self in Social Spaces: Conceptualizations and Representations in Textual Culture from Medieval Scandinavia (Project Presentation)

A main concern of the humanities is to understand the ways selves create, and relate to, their world and history. These questions have been a focus of vigorous discussion in the field of medieval studies, where the accepted contention promotes the complexities of the self and its perpetual dynamic interplay with and within a variety of social spaces. This project will contribute to the discussion by studying Old Norse literature, which has not been exploited sufficiently to elucidate the topic, despite its great potential. The project will investigate three main questions: (1) How does the creative self (author, translator, scribe, artist, patron, or a reader, perceiver) condition, define, relate to the created self (a text, a manuscript, a literary character, a sculpture, or a letter), within a specific socio-political space?; (2) What happens to this link during translations from one linguistic context to another?; (3) How is this link conditioned by the mediality of the created self? The main focus will fall on two texts, *Njáls saga* and *Barlaams saga*, but in order to address the third main question, the project will incorporate investigations of Norwegian and Icelandic charters and law material.

The investigation will utilize theories of 'distributed cognition' and 'artefactual medievalism', both of which foreground human agency and the cognitive processes that underlie the production of textual and material culture. Each of the sub-projects will consistently incorporate study of four different selves: (1) the self of the 'creator' (i.e. author, scribe), (2) the self of the manuscript or cultural expression, (3) the self of the narrator, and (4) the self of the narrative characters. In conclusion, I will discuss the relationship and change of these four different selves within their respective socio-political spaces, seen against the general 'movement' of Iceland away from the political center during the years between its submission to Norway and the Kalmar Union in 1397. The consistency of the methodology across the various sub-projects ensures a holistic study of the self in medieval Scandinavian culture, which will not only lead to the expansion of this field, but will also contribute to studies of medieval self, as well as theories of self in general.

The project presentations at the Sixteenth International Saga Conference will be structured around and include short presentations of (1) the main questions of the project seen against the background of studies of the self in general; (2) the theoretical premises of the project; and (3) the method as suggested above. My aim is to inspire theoretical and methodlogical discussions which may be relevant for the study of the self based on various material.

Harriet Jean Evans, University of York, UK

Open

Animals in the family: animal and human relations in the saga-household (Project Presentation)

Over the last two decades, animal-human studies have featured in the work of archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and literary scholars alike, and yet animal-human relations still appears a quiet aspect of research within medieval studies concerning the Viking age and medieval north. The interdisciplinary study of historic aspects of animal-human relations in Iceland is limited, and has yet to emerge in any detailed way outside of discussions of horse burials. The exception to this is Lena Rohrbach's monograph: *Der tierische Blick* (2009), in which she uses literary analysis to access a wide range of Old Norse-Icelandic texts and build up an image of the relationships between animals and humans, incorporating documentary, archaeological and iconographical sources into her discussion of the medieval Icelandic sagas.
Post-humanist studies of animals often attempt to define what it means to be human, but when an animal figure is apparently placed into a human family, the lines drawn between the two become less distinct. In Old Norse-Icelandic literature, animals are sometimes seemingly placed into the family-unit. In *Hrafnkels saga Freysgoða*, Hrafnkel refers to his horse fondly as his *fóstri* ('fosterling'), and kills a man for having ridden him (*Hrafnkels saga*, ch. 5). This isn't an isolated incident, and close readings of the *Íslendingasögur* can reveal a close relationship between certain domestic animals and the men and woman with whom they live and work.
Domestic animals were incredibly important in medieval Iceland. Living in close proximity to their livestock and with a heavy reliance on them for survival, perhaps it is to be expected that the sagas (as products of the medieval Icelandic imagination), might reflect a special opportunity to examine the cultural perception of these relationships. The purpose of my ongoing PhD project is to examine this relationship, especially in relation to the human household sphere, within an interdisciplinary methodology drawing on literary, documentary and archaeological sources and approaches.
Bearing this in mind, this project presentation proposes to consider the scope and depth of my ongoing thesis project, looking at the presence of domestic animals in the sagas and potential methodological challenges in conducting an interdisciplinary study into animal-human relations in medieval Icelandic agro-pastoral society. Focussing on the concept of the household-farm, this presentation will move forwards from Lévi-Strauss' often quoted summation that living creatures are 'good to think' (Lévi-Strauss, 162), and discuss the sagas as places in which animals are 'good to become (with)' in a network of hybrid sociality within the saga-household.

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Open

Boyhood, saga-style: the coal-biter is father of the man

The scholarship on Norse notions of gender has grown exponentially over the last three decades. Important recent contributions include Straubhaar (2011) and Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir (2013). Like these two books, much of the work in this field has focused on women and on formations of femaleness (e.g., Jesch 1991; Jochens 1995 and 1996); masculinity has received rather less attention overall. Where it has been addressed, it has often been aberrant, marginal, or otherwise fraught (e.g., Meulengracht Sørensen 1980/1983; Gade 1986; Phelpstead 2003; Layher 2007); some studies have focused on overt, unambiguous displays of masculinity through agentive roles that throw it into simplified relief, such as 'warrior', 'lord', or 'retainer' (e.g., Jesch 2001: 216-47; Hadley 2008; Hiltmann 2011). Relatively little research effort, however, has been devoted to investigating more quotidian images and roles of normative masculinity in the medieval Norse world, neither especially distressed nor particularly heroic (cf. Falk 2014).
My paper begins to address this lacuna by taking seriously the premise that one is not born, but rather becomes, a man (with apologies to Simone de Beauvoir). Examining saga accounts of boys – from male babies and young children to adolescents on the cusp of manhood – gives us glimpses of how Norsemen perceived this process of becoming, the normative infrastructure upon which heroic and other superstructures might be erected. I draw mainly on *Íslendinga sögur*, but also on legal sources, poetry, and other saga genres to sketch a portrait of Norse boyhood and the kinds of masculine *Bildung* imagined by medieval Icelanders (cf. Ásdís Egilsdóttir 2005, reliant mainly on *fornaldarsögur* and focusing on a single character type). Were boys simply men of small stature, biding their time until their elders should vacate the stage for them to take their place, as Philippe Ariès might have imagined? Accounts of a three-year-old Egill in his cups or of a truculent preteen Grettir might suggest as much. What sort of education and training did boys receive to prepare them for fulfilling adult roles later in life? Descriptions of boys at play, such as Guðmundr Arason dressing up in mitre and stole, offer clues. And how did grown men (and women) treat their sons, nephews, grandsons, and other youngsters they found underfoot? Narratives of competition, hostility, gentleness and supervision reveal Norse patterns of rearing boys into men.

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Open

Fathers, sons and kappar in *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa* and the *Hildebrandslied*

This paper proposes an allusion in *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa* to the antique context of the Hildebrand legend, fostered by the associations of the word *kappi*. Heroes in two *Íslendingasögur* share the nickname element –*kappi*, and their legends are clearly closely intertwined, sharing the theme of a man's recognition of his son by a woman married to another man. The poet-hero of *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa*, Bjǫrn Ásgeirsson, fathers Kolli, officially son of his deadly rival Þórðr Kolbeinsson; he announces his paternity proleptically in a verse, and some years later speaks another verse recognising the boy as his son. In *Eyrbyggja saga* Bjǫrn Ásbrandsson Breiðvíkingakappi has an affair with the married sister of Snorri goði, who gives birth to a son, Kjartan. Shared narrative material between these texts is a certainty in the light of the clear relationship between several verses spoken by each of the Bjǫrns – the 'recognition' verses in which each hero acknowledges his son can indeed be considered alternative versions of the same verse. The most satisfactory, though inconclusive, attempt to explain the relationship between the texts is that of Ursula Dronke (Dronke, 65-72), who considers it impossible to assign the 'original' story to either, but envisages a 'lively traffic of time-honoured motifs … between one tale and another in the creative period of saga composition' (72).
These heroes also have in common the nickname element -*kappi*, in both cases qualified by the name of the inhabitants of the district of his origin: the Hítdœlir, the Breiðvíkingar. The word *kappi* is common with the general sense 'warrior', but both sagas account for the nicknames in the more specific sense of 'champion, one who fights in single combat on behalf of another'; more elaborately and fantastically Bjǫrn Hítdœlakappi, who wins the title in a duel on behalf of King Valdimarr of Garðaríki. Although unusual in this sense in the *Íslendingasögur*, the term is common in the *fornaldarsögur*, most prominently in *Ásmundar saga kappabana*, which can clearly be shown to derive material from the widespread Hildebrand legend. The oldest expression of this, the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*, represents the encounter of an old and a young warrior, apparently unknown to each other, 'between two armies', about to engage in single combat; the poem is fragmentary, but it emerges from later sources that the two are father and son, and that the encounter ends with the father killing his son. *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa* takes further the paternity theme than does *Eyrbyggja saga*, representing Bjǫrn being opposed by his unacknowledged son in the battle in which Bjǫrn is finally killed by the boy's ostensible father, Þórðr Kolbeinsson; the son turns away when his father reveals his true paternity. Dronke's consideration of the theme argues for its allusion to motifs in the Eddic *Rígsþula.* This paper proposes that *Bjarnar saga* also makes deliberate reference to the antique context of the Hildebrand legend, and that the word *kappi* signals this allusion.

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Constructing Space

***Oranges and Lemons Say the Bells of St Clement's … – Grímnismál*, Topogeny, and the Question: 'Who Would Care?'**

Topography holds a central positon in the preserved version of *Grímnismál*, the 54-stanza monologue of Óðinn. Of the 54 stanzas, Óðinn's speech only directly engages and reflects the narrative frame in six stanzas (two groups of three). The remaining 48 stanzas present an inventory of information about mythology. The survival of oral poetry is dependent on uses and users who also construct its value and meanings. The present paper considers the interest and relevance of such a poetic inventory of imaginal places in this poem to communities of users: Who would care about performing such a text, who would listen, who would learn it for reperformance, and why?
Focus is on the numbered list of eleven sites associated with different gods in stanzas 6–16 followed by the extended description connected to Óðinn's Valhǫll. When *Grímnismál* was written down, this inventory may have held a charm of so-called 'antiquarian interest' with little more significance for belief traditions than a children's rhyme like "Oranges and Lemons". The prominence of *Grímnismál* quotations in *Gylfaginning* will be assessed, as will how the mythic topography presented in *Grímnismál* correlates with the roles and places of mythic topography in other sources, noting that the index of topography may have a history distinct from the narrative of *Grímnismál*. These provide a frame to consider both the synchronic perception of the poem and the probability that its mythic topography would be produced by/for such contexts. The topographical index will be compared to other ordered and unordered lists of mythic knowledge attested in eddic poetry. It cannot be unequivocally demonstrated that such a survey of mythic topography stems from the milieu of living vernacular religious practice, but it is possible to consider implications of this poetic topography conditional on that hypothesis.
The index of mythic topography in *Grímnismál* will be discussed in relation to James J. Fox's *topogeny* as "an ordered succession of placenames" (265). *Grínmismál*'s index differs from many other examples of topogeny as a numerically ordered list that does not clearly situate individual places in relation to one another. This observation will be compared to Lotte Tarkka's address of variation in numerical/hierarchical ordering of mythic knowledge, suggesting that knowing and asserting such an order was of primary significance as a form of power. On the background of these comparative frames, the potential significance of the topogeny of *Grímnismál* in a milieu of vital religious practice will be considered. This suggests that the locations (presumably those named) held significance and relevance as mythic knowledge with some form of application. It also suggests that knowledge of such locations in this form interfaced with models of knowledge about the order of the cosmos. The numerical ordering of places without specifying their relations to one another will be compared to different models of constructing mythic topography in relation to associated technologies of magical and ritual practices.

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Constructing Space

Mythic and Real Spaces in the *Hávamál* (Project Presentation)

The *Hávamál* are one of the examples of the coexistance of real and mythic places. In that sense, the poem generates a "problematic" space. We will analyse which are the analogies that maintain all the elements in the heterotopic space of the poem. From this point of view, we will see if the language and the structure of the poem change through the different spaces, how actions take place and where are the thresholds that give way to the spaces evoked.
Finally we will establish the possible relationships between the different spaces mentioned in the poem and its performance.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Viking Age Amulets in Poland: Symbolism and Context

For a long time the area of Poland has been largely disregarded in major studies on the Viking Age and only recently scholars have begun to pay closer attention to the complex interactions between the Norse and West Slavic societies. Over the last decade or so various aspects of these interactions have been studied by historians and archaeologists. Ongoing excavations at the sites of important ports-of-trade like Wolin and Truso have yielded numerous finds suggesting permanent habitation and/or extensive networks of cross-cultural trade and exchange with the Scandinavian world. This is implied not only by a range of objects decorated in typically Scandinavian art-styles (Borre, Mammen or Ringerike), but also distinctive forms of architecture and funerary evidence.
So far, however, considerably less attention has been devoted to the beliefs of the Norsemen who ventured to the southern coasts of the Baltic Sea. This paper will seek to cast some new light on these notions. In order to explore the beliefs of the Norsemen outside their homelands, spotlight will be placed on the types, roles and functions of Viking Age amulets discovered in various localities in the area of Poland (i.e within its today's borders). In addition, the paper will also seek to present these finds in a wider context of ongoing debates on the roles of Scandinavian immigrants in Central Europe.
Viking Age amulets have been found in several localities in the area of Poland. Most of them are known from Wolin and Truso, but some amulets have also been discovered in other places (e.g. Gdańsk, Łupawa). The largest group of Viking Age amulets comprises Thor's hammers and includes over 20 examples. Based on their material (iron, silver, amber), method of manufacture (forging, casting), ornamentation and chronology they can be divided into a range of types. Among other amulets discovered in Poland there are also various miniatures such as wheels, anthropomorphic figures (so-called 'Valkyries' and other) or weapons (spears, axes, shields). An intriguing miniature staff (similar to the large 'staffs of sorcery') has been found in Truso, and the recent excavations in Wolin brought to light a miniature anchor made from lead. There are also other very unique finds. In this paper the amulets the will be discussed with regard to their meaning content, but special attention will also be focused on their spatial location within the archaeological sites. By comparing the particular objects and contexts of their discovery with parallel finds in Scandinavia it may be possible to reveal various meanings with which they were endowed and cast new light on pre-Christian beliefs of the Norsemen who ventured to the southern coasts of the Baltic.

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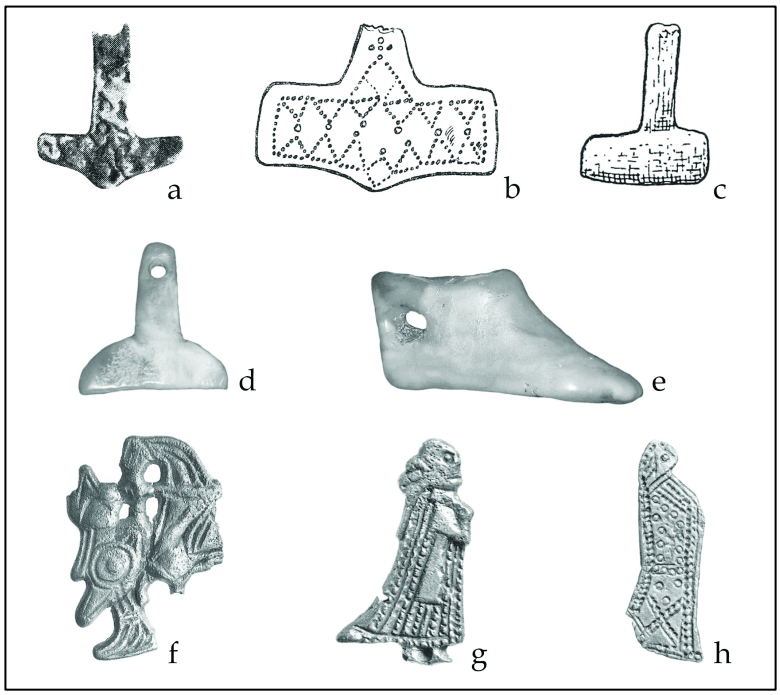

Selection of Viking Age amulets from Poland

a. Thor's hammer from Wolin (silver)
b. Thor's hammer from Łupawa (silver)
c. Thor's hammer from Gdańsk (amber)
d. Thor's hammer from Wolin (amber)
e. Miniature foot/shoe from Wolin (amber)
f-h. Anthropomorphic figures from Truso (silver)

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

The Medieval Transmission of the *Life of Anskar* in Germany and Scandinavia

The biography of the missionary Anskar (d. 865) has long been recognised as a text of great historical value for the study of Viking-Age Scandinavia due to its descriptions of pre-Christian Denmark and Sweden, which are unparalleled among contemporary texts in both their detail and proximity to a first-hand witness.

In the preparation of a new critical edition of the text (the first since that of Waitz for the *Monumenta Germaniae historica* in 1884) I have been examining the manuscripts of the *Life of Anskar*. This paper will look at their relationship and what it reveals about the movement of knowledge between Germany and Scandinavia by focusing on the manuscripts of the so-called 'B' version of the text, a revision created sometime between 1076 and 1123 at Bremen.

The oldest surviving manuscript of this version is known as the *Codex Vicelini* (now in Münster, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Msc. I 228), produced in Bremen sometime not long before 1123. Probably not much older was the now-lost manuscript which served as the basis for the first printed edition of Philippus Cæsar in 1642. However, the majority of the manuscripts that have survived or are known to have once existed are fifteenth- and sixteenth-century in date: among these are a volume from the monastery of Frenswegen in Lower Saxony; one from the monastery of Bordesholm in Schleswig-Holstein (which had previously been located at Neumünster, where it was founded by the same Vizelin who gives his name to the oldest manuscript of the B-version); one copied by Dithmarscher antiquary; a lost legendary from the monastery of Böddeken in Westphalia; and two translations, one (now only surviving as fragments) into Middle Low German and one into Old Swedish.

Many of these manuscripts were unknown to or neglected by earlier editors of the *Life of Anskar*. Although they may not be of great value as witnesses to the original ninth-century text when compared to the early and central medieval manuscripts produced in the monasteries of Corvey and Corbie, they offer an interesting glimpse into how the *Life of Anskar* was known and passed on in those areas where his legacy was most important: northern Germany and Scandinavia.

Gerður Halldóra Sigurðardóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

Constructing Space

Performing Death on a Riverbank: Comparing the Oseberg Ship Burial with Ibn Fadlan's Account of a Chieftain's Funeral from a Performance Perspective (Project Presentation)

Both the Oseberg burial and the Chieftain's burial described be Ibn Fadlan take place on riverbanks, the former in Norway and the latter somewhere in what is now Russia. Ibn Fadlan describes a complex, lengthy performance with many acts and players (see Montgomery), and the richness of the Oseberg grave (see Brøgger; Nordeide) suggests that something of the kind may have occurred there. In one case we have the description of the actual event and in the other we have the remains, and in this paper I intend to compare and analyse these admittedly quite different accounts and attempt to reconstruct and flesh out the possible performances that may have taken place. Such reconstruction could perhaps be seen as the equivalent of building a theory-house, where the application of careful and educated imagination has to fill in the blanks left by a lack of sources. By applying performance analysis I hope to shed some light on the theatres of death constructed on these two riverbanks, separated by vast distances and almost a hundred years. I will be looking at how different spaces may have been employed during those performances and movement between them, how the performances may have unfolded and different aspects of them, the effect of sounds, and smell. I will also be looking at different players and what roles they may have played througout the performances. In the end I hope to bring these performances, long since past, briefly back to life again.

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Constructing Space

Narrativizing Space. The Westfjords in *Fóstbræðra saga*

In the past years I have been trying to throw light on how the *Íslendingasögur* can be used as reflections of local knowledge in Iceland about the wider world, as sources for ideas people had about other lands in the past and present, and the ways which the local population had to mediate those ideas, that is through story-telling. By looking at descriptions of faraway lands around the North Atlantic we can thus both get an idea of how the saga writers worked (such as that they did not use written sources like *Landnáma* to obtain "historical" information or background for their stories) and how traditional knowledge about these lands is likely to have originated and be kept alive in Iceland.

It is one thing to mediate an idea about faraway spaces in stories and another to include such notions in stories about the home-region. By looking at such local features we may perhaps better illuminate the domestic role of storytelling in the culture when (and perhaps where) the sagas were written.

As an example I will look at how the Westfjords are portrayed in *Fóstbræðra saga*. My conclusions are in short that the saga gives an overview of chieftains and where they are located in the area, and where food can be obtained from the see, both drifted whales in the *Strandir* region and fish to catch in *Bolungarvík*. It describes the main travel-routes in and around the *Ísafjarðardjúp* area, to *Jökulfirðir* and out to the fishing station in *Bolungarvík*, land-routes to *Reykhólar* from *Gervidalur*, to *Vaðill* (across mountains from *Ögur*), to *Borgarfjörður* (across land via the *Dalir*-region) or across the fjord *Breiðafjörður* by leaving from *Reykhólar*, and the land route from *Reykhólar* to *Steíngrímsfjörður*; not to mention a special fascination which the saga has for long mountain roads through uninhabited land that give characters the opportunity to travel long distances unseen.

By reading *Fóstbræðra saga* from this perspective it becomes clear that the saga is a part of a culture in which people relate to their immediate environment through stories that are attached to named individuals in certain named surroundings, thereby giving meaning to the land at the same time as the audience is orientated in the landscape around them by entertaining stories that make convenient resting places along land routes memorable by having shepherds killed for the sole reason that they "stood so well poised for the blow".

Galina Glazyrina, Institute for World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

Constructing Space

"Images of Space" in *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla*

The "mental map" of Scandinavia and the surrounding regions was preserved in the historical memory till the time of literacy. It included a large number of "images of space" which embraced information about physical geography and population, economic, historical and cultural peculiarities of different regions, about the routes that connected them, and so on. The images helped to differentiate between areas as geographical objects and assisted in defining the direction.

"Images of space" become a useful literary means in *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* (created c. 1300). Its author attempts at describing a travel undertaken from *Þrandheimr* by a kings's son named *Eiríkr*, who gave a promice to find *Óðainsakr*, equated by the author with the Christian Paradise. Spatial layout of the trip from Scandinavia to Indialand (i.e. the most distant region of the known world behind which Paradise was believed to have been located) seems to have been thoroughly constructed by the saga author. His reticence about some stages of the trip which he mentions but doesn't describe (such as a short local route connecting the peninsular with the continent or the trans-continental route from Denmark to Byzantium via Rus') has been fully compensated by those mental images that the author and his audience share.

When the narrative comes to those areas which were situated behind the limits of the Scandinavians' regular activities and for which there hardly existed any fixed images the author had to suggest a description of them. The part of Eiríkr's travel between *Miklagarðr* and Indialand (*Eiríks saga víðfǫrla*: 54–58) demonstrates the author's attempt to collect the data and draw a real route. As there were no permanent and long contacts between Scandinavian countries and the Orient, the author was definitely confronted with the lack of adequate knowledge about the region between *Miklagarðr* and Indialand; only fragmentary information was available to him. 1. He names Syria (*Syrland*), the region that marks a branch of the Silk Road known in Scandinavia. 2. Speaking about different means of transportation ('en eftir þat fara þeir ymist askipum edr hestum en geingu þo oftazst'. *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla*: 54) the author in fact demonstrates the variety of landscapes during the travel from Syria to the east. 3. Mentioning many peoples who on the Byzantine emperor's request assisted Eiríkr on his journey the author points out to the extension and the continuity of this area. 4. There was certainly a necessity to attract additional sources to describe this area. Most probably the author relied upon oral evidence of those informants (presumably merchants) who had either passed this way themselves or heard people travel there.

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Erin Michelle Goeres, University College London, UK

Open

Medieval self-fashioning: the poetry of Rǫgnvaldr Kali Kolsson

Rǫgnvaldr Kali Kolsson bursts onto the pages of *Orkneyinga saga* declaiming a verse of his own composition. In that verse, he boasts of the nine skills he has mastered, ranging from hunting and skiing to harp-playing and verse-making. With this verse, Rǫgnvaldr seems to write his own character description as his story begins, and it is a description which is both modelled on, and poses a challenge to, the verse of earlier Scandinavian rulers. This paper will investigate the ways in which Rǫgnvaldr, earl of Orkney, constructs his own identity in *Orkneyinga saga*. It will argue that the historical Rǫgnvaldr seems to have undertaken a process of careful self-fashioning in which he deliberately likened himself to earlier Scandinavian rulers as a means of promoting his rule over an earldom which did not immediately accept his claim. However, the *character* of Rǫgnvaldr that we encounter in *Orkneyinga saga* takes this process a step further: through the composition and recitation of poetry, Rǫgnvaldr asserts the power to craft his own story and thus to fashion his own identity. In particular, it will be shown that Rǫgnvaldr's pilgrimage to the Holy Land is central to the construction of the earl's story and of his self. The account in *Orkneyinga saga* of Rǫgnvaldr's journey to the east echoes similar tales about the Norwegian kings Haraldr harðráði and Sigurðr Jórsalafari, but the inclusion of poetry attributed to a variety of speakers, not least to the earl himself, disrupts the saga narrative with a polyphonic mixing of voices, poetic forms and subjective responses to the journey. It becomes clear as the journey progresses, however, that the poetry of Earl Rǫgnvaldr performs the important function of sifting through these opposing viewpoints, and proclaiming those which ought to be accepted as most truthful or most valuable. In so doing, the character of Rǫgnvaldr asserts control over the crafting of the saga narrative itself: through a complex blending of prose and verse, the earl's process of self-fashioning becomes inextricably linked with the construction of a history and identity for the Orkney Islanders.

Remigius Gogosz, University of Rzeszow, Poland

Constructing Space

Sports and Space in Medieval Iceland

In the Icelandic sagas, sports contests of one sort or another – ball games, horse-fights, and wrestling, to name only a few – can play key roles in starting, or escalating, feuds. But were the fights mere literary motifs? Would the protagonists have come together – and come to blows – regardless? In choosing sporting contests as foci for certain kinds of social interaction, saga authors assume the familiarity of their audience with such events and interactions. But how common were they, and, more importantly, where were they? In my dissertation I examine the geographical locations of a variety of types of sports described in the sagas. I try to determine if they were regular events at particular locations, and how those locations were determined. Were such contests common at þing sites, or at banquets? Did trials of strength occur where a group just happened to come together? What was the status of the persons involved? What light to these details throw on the literary roles of such contests? On the social realities of medieval Iceland? I will consider not only sagas, but also place-names illustrative of meetings and/or sporting events, such as *Hestaþingsflöt* and *Hestaþingsháls.* I have created a database which allows me to map and approximately date saga accounts of sporting events. I am working with Dr. Lethbridge and Prof. Cormack to produce an interactive map illustrating this material, to see if correlations exist between sport events and other activities, or if any other spatial aspects appear, for example one type of activity being more prominent in one part of the country.

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Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Iceland

Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Manuscript production in Iceland in the 14th and 15th centuries

Book-making in Iceland seems to have reached a peak in the 14th century. At this time many large books were produced in the vernacular, such as law codes, the Kings' sagas, Icelandic family sagas and saints' lives. In the 15th century, book production changed. Fewer large books were produced and the manuscripts became less splendid, and some scholars have said that the parchment became thicker and stiffer. Smaller books also resulted in changes to the dimensions and layout of the manuscripts. Fewer manuscripts with two columns were produced and the width of the manuscripts compared to the height became proportionally greater than before. The handwriting changed around 1400 and then stagnated for more than a century. The population's literary tastes also seem to have changed during this time. In the 15th century many more legendary sagas (*fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*) were copied, along with indigenous Icelandic romances (*riddarasögur*). *Rímur* (epic poems) based on these and other sagas were also composed. Sometimes the black death is blamed for this change, but the plague – or a similar epidemic – hit Iceland in 1402–04, more than 50 years after it did in neighboring countries. It is difficult to maintain that one event could change so much, but on the other hand we have to remember that around one third or up to half of the population died in the epidemic, and many traditions and knowledge could easily have disappeared. It is therefore possible the knowledge of how to make good parchment perished along with so many people.
This lecture will give an overview of these manuscript developments – supported by statistics on the number of manuscripts and their size (measured in both the number of leaves and in their dimensions). I will also offer an assessment about whether claims of worse-quality parchment, as well as stagnation in the handwriting and illumination in the fifteenth century can be justified.

Fernando Guerrero, Universidad Juarez del Estado de Durango, Mexico

Open

All Men Are Equal before Fish: Killing for Whales in the Icelandic Commonwealth

Íslendinga Sögur often depict feuds arising over fishing rights or rights over drift-whales. On some occasions these conflicts escalate and give lead to some of the saga´s main conflicts, on other, they lay on the background. Fishing and whaling have been central to the Icelandic economy ever since it´s colonization, and their practice has remained essential to the survival of Icelandic people. Yet, the study of whaling in Old Norse literature remains in its infancy. With some scholars as Szabo and Haine bringing more attention to the subject. In this paper I will continue their discussion, by bringing forward evidence about fishing and whaling disputes found in the Íslendinga Sögur and Þættir and contrasting them with the legal evidence found in Grágás and Jónsbók about those issues. Furthermore, I will also compare this evidence with that found in the Diplomatarium Íslandicum in order to contribute to the understanding of how whaling and fishing rights were perceived and used by the saga "authors" to explain or justify conflicts, in contrast to what the historical documents show. The two main questions I expect to answer in this paper are: 1) Based on historical evidence, were the fishing and whaling feuds portrayed in sagas close to reality, at least according to the laws and diplomas?; 2) based on literary and historical evidence, what was the relevance of fishing and whaling rights for the average farmer, how were the differences settled.
As a final note I would like to add that I am aware that whales are not fish, but mammals, but my title selection is according to the beliefs of that time, not to our modern knowledge.

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Nikolas Gunn, University of York, UK

Open

'Nú eptir þeira dœmum': Contemplating the Germanic Languages in Medieval Iceland and North-West Europe

The First Grammarian's statement that 'alls vér erum einnar tungu' ('we are all of one tongue') in reference to English and Norse has been the subject of much comment and some controversy in the past century (*The First Grammatical Treatise,* 12; Gunnar Harðarson, 26-26; Hagland, 107-12). His statement is significant for what it might tell us about how medieval people in northern Europe viewed the relationship between their languages. This paper will reassess the statement in light of more recent research into Anglo-Scandinavian interaction, suggesting that the *Treatise's* ambiguities might be negotiable by considering of a wider range of sources. In addition to consideration of the text itself, this paper will also draw on the few other early medieval sources that discuss the Germanic languages in all-encompassing terms, including a short excerpt from *Encomium Emmae Reginae*. It will also draw on some of my own PhD research into purported English loanwords in Old Norse and how these findings might contribute to the debate over mutual intelligibility that has remained remarkably underdeveloped for over a decade (Townend, 2002). I will suggest that only further research into mutual intelligibility will help to open up the question of how Norse and English speakers - not to mention speakers of other Germanic dialects - perceived the relationship between their languages.

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Terry Gunnell, University of Iceland, Iceland

Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Mythological Theatrical Blessings: The Creation of Old Nordic Ritual Space on the Swedish Stage of Gustav III and Karl XIV Johan

The intention in this lecture is to examine the way in which Old Nordic mythology was employed in the royal theatre of Gustav III (1746-1792) and Karl XIV Johan of Sweden (Karl III Johan of Norway) (1818-1844), as a means of publically underlining the pseudo-religious historical connections between the Swedish royalty of the time, the Nordic gods of the past; and the ancient land that the kings ruled. The focus will be placed on Gustav III's romantic "comedy" *Odin och Frigga* (1783) (based very loosely on the theme of *Skírnismál*); Karl Gustaf Leopold's tragic *Oden eller Asarnas utvandring: Tragedie i fem acter* (1790) (written for Gustav III) about the an encounter between 'Oden', ruler of the Scythians and 'Pompé' and his Roman legions, prior to 'Oden''s move north with the Æsir; and most particularly Johan David Valerius' grand allegorical masque *Balder: Allegoriskt Divertissement af Sång och Dans* (1819) first performed at Kongl. Stora Theatern, in which Karl Johan and his son Oskar are represented in the shape of a returning Baldur and his son 'Forsete'.
Alongside attempting to recreate Old Nordic ritual and the spaces in which it took place (on the stage for the Swedish audience, all of these works go out of their way to underline parallels between the rulers of Sweden and the Old Nordic gods (Óðinn; Yngvi; Baldr and Frigg), these works simultaneously stressboth the longevity of the blood-line and the semi-religious status of the ruling families. In a sense, one can view the public performances of these Gothic works as a form of public ritual designed to enhance the image of the kings in question. Arguably the works turned the performance spaces on the stages of the theatre into living "sacred spaces" in their own right (like the temples at the heart of two of the works), invoking a kind of Gothic sacred time in which the gods were "reborn" in the shape of the kings.

Elena Gurevich, Russian Academy of Science, Russia

Open

On the application of the term *þula* in Old Norse

The paper discusses one of the unclarified issues of Old Norse scholarship, namely the use and the implications of the word *þula* (pl. *þulur*) in Old Icelandic. The term *þulur* is generally applied to versified catalogues of poetic synonyms (*heiti*) for the main subjects of skaldic verse transmitted in the mss of *Snorra Edda*, where they are added to the end of *Skáldskaparmál* (*Skm*). In none of the mss containing the so-called *þulur*, however, are these sets of stanzas introduced with a title that could give even the slightest idea of the name such enumerations of *heiti* could bear in Old Norse tradition. Since the Old Norse word designating these lists cannot be ascertained, and the term *þulur* is actually a scholarly convention, this term and its relevance for the Old Norse poetic catalogues of names deserves more thorough consideration.
The paper provides an analysis of all the contexts in which the word *þula* appears in Old Norse, laying special emphasis on *Allra flagða þula*, 'The *þula* of all trolls', found in *Vilhjalms saga sjóðs* (*Loth IV, 66-8*) from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. Whereas neither the use of the term *þula* in the names of some poems composed in eddic metres (*Rígsþula*, *Þorgrímsþula*), and as applied to a magical poem *Buslubæn* 'Busla's invocation' (st. 7), nor the two known skaldic occurrences of the word (Sneglu-Halli's lv. 7 from c. 1060 and *Málsháttakvæði*, st. 11 from c. 1200), can shed much light on its meaning and on the contrary provide evidence that in each of these cases the word *þula* is *not* used in the sense of 'a versified list of names', the last mentioned example seems to be of the utmost importance for the discussion. *Allra flagða þula* is an enumeration of ninety giants' and giantesses' names in the form of an alliterative poem and this is the only known Old Norse text entitled *þula* which demonstrates striking similarities with versified catalogues of poetic synonyms added to *Snorra Edda*. Comparison of *Allra flagða þula* with the respective lists of *Jǫtna heiti I*, *II* and *Trollkvenna heiti* found in the sets of so-called *þulur* in *Skm* leads to the conclusion that the compiler of the *þula* in *Vilhjalms saga* had most probably not consulted the latter lists. But from the ways the names enumerated in this *þula* are put together and arranged into pairs, including the apparent tendency to use, in addition to alliteration, such mnemonic devices as internal or end rhyme, it is evident that *Allra flagða þula* was composed in the same traditional genre of list-poems as the so-called *þulur* in *Skm*, which justifies the scholarly definition of the name *þula*. The other preserved Old Norse examples show that this term was also used in a wider sense than 'a versified list of names' and was likely to have been applied to certain kinds of monotonous, unsophisticated poems in the eddic metres.

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Gylfi Gunnlaugsson, The Reykjavik Academy, Iceland

Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Icelandic Philology and National Culture 1780-1918 (Project Presentation)

In my paper I will present an ongoing research project based at the Reykjavik Academy. The purpose of this international project is to investigate the work of Icelandic philologists who were engaged in the study and/or editing of Old Norse-Icelandic literature during the period 1780-1918, with specific focus on the nationalist thinking revealed therein. Emphasis will be placed on establishing the nationalist discourse of these scholars as a separate issue from the political discourse which accompanied the struggle for Iceland's independence from Denmark. Their scholarly discourse will be examined as part of the international discussion on the Old Norse-Icelandic cultural heritage and on national culture in general. One manifestation of this was the conflict between Icelanders and other nations over the 'ownership' of this heritage or specific parts of it. At the same time, Icelandic scholars enjoyed extensive collaboration with their foreign colleagues, and the nature of this collaboration and the context in which it took place will be the subject of particular attention. Finally, emphasis will be laid on an exploration of the interrelation between the discourse of Icelandic philologists and the reception of Greco-Roman heritage. Our research is expected to provide valuable insights into the formation of Icelandic identity in a period of ideological ferment, and to have significance for the field of cultural history generally. Results will mainly be published in English.
The project is funded by The Icelandic Research Fund. It began in June 2014 and is scheduled to run for three years. Project leaders are Clarence E. Glad and Gylfi Gunnlaugsson at the Reykjavik Academy. Other participants are M. J. Driscoll, Gottskálk Jensson and Annette Lassen, all from the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen, Jon Gunnar Jørgensen of the University of Oslo, Julia Zernack of the University of Frankfurt am Main, and two doctoral students: Simon Halink, Groningen, and Hjalti Snær Ægisson, Reykjavik. Our project cooperates with SPIN – Study Platform on Interlocking Nationalisms, led by Professor Joep Leerssen of the University of Amsterdam.

Viktória Gyönki, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

Open

The Cold Counsel of Þordís Súrsdóttir

Gísla saga Súrssonar has been studied from a number of different viewpoints, since the text itself is preserved in three different versions, possibly affected by continental literature and other Icelandic family sagas. Despite slightly changing the events between different versions, the main plot is quite clear: feuding started because of a putative love affair.

In this presentation, the main question will be based on the relationship among family members. The cases of loyality and feuding were the most important focusing points of many recent scholarly works, considering the textual differences, or the fixed roles of the characters.

As well as in other family sagas, the feuding between two groups gives the essence of the plot, but in this case we should pay attention to an important circumstance, namely, that the characters belong to the same family, and some of them are connected in a kind of brotherhood.

Therefore the question of loyalty gives us different layers that we have to deal with. The relationship between a married couple in *Harðar saga ok Hólmverja* could be parallel with the situation of Þorgrímr and Þordís, who stays faithful for her husband after his death, or Gísli and Auðr. But the relationship between men is somewhat complicated because of the family ties. Taking these and other evidences into consideration it seems that the categorization of the characters by loyality is hardly possible. Therefore I would like to focus my research on the level of activity and passivity of the characters.

Although, most of the actions connected with Gísli, and of course the saga itself, is about his life and death, my interest would focus on another character, Þordís Súrsdóttir. Just as other female characters in different sagas, her role seems to be passive. However, she has a great influence on the actions.

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Andrew Hamer, University of Liverpool, UK

Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Relaying Lais as Strengleikar

Cook and Tveitane (1979, 65) comment that the translator of *Equitan* 'was a cleric' who consistently moralised the text, and 'explicated it in the manner of a medieval preacher commenting on an *exemplum*'. Hamer (1994, *passim*) examined further the consistent moralising in *Equitan* and compared this *strengleikr* thematically with the moralising in the Norwegian Prologue; that paper also looked at examples of moralising in the translations of *Guigemar* and *Bisclavret*. What is now needed is an examination of all the *Strengleikar*, in order to assess the extent to which the whole collection can be said to be moralised: the present paper is a first attempt to address this issue.
The paper starts with a re-examination of the opening words of the Norwegian Prologue, where a familiar source is identified which the translators would have known from their studies in the *trivium*, and which suggests that the collection was consciously conceived as a work of literary / grammatical analysis, rather than a simple translation. Furthermore, there are similarities of style and, in particular, thematic moral concerns between the Prologue and a document produced at the court of Hákon IV, which strongly suggests that at least this part of the collection, and the decision to moralise the translation, were made at the royal court. This questions Budal's interesting suggestion that the translations could well have been made in England (2009 vol. 1, 57-59).
The paper then discusses moralising in *Eskia*, which is taken as a test-case of the translators' use of the literary-analytical approach mentioned above. The *lai Le Fresne* is the story of a woman who is abandoned by her mother at birth, and again by her lover, who intends to marry her twin sister. The apparently happy ending of *Le Fresne* provides only an uneasy resolution of questions concerning loyalty and truth that are raised by the *lai*. This paper argues that when the Norwegian translator produced *Eskia*, his clerical training and liturgical reading led him to develop Marie's understated moralising into a more overtly Christian narrative concerning the nature of marriage.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Scribes over the Ocean. Norwegian Influence on Scribal Practice in Medieval Iceland

Norwegian linguistic and/or orthographic features – commonly referred to as Norwegianisms – are found in a great many medieval Icelandic manuscripts, especially in the 13th and 14th centuries (for an overview, see Kjartan Ottosson 2003 and Kyrkjebø 2003). These have been the subject of considerable scholarly discussion. Seip (1951, 1957) took them as evidence showing that Icelandic scribes had copied texts from Norwegian exemplars, a view that was rejected by Kuhn (1952) and others. Jón Helgason (1957, xx) pointed out that other possibilities should also be considered, including short-lived Norwegian linguistic influence on Icelandic. Stefán Karlsson (1978, 1979) maintained that Icelandic scribes may have consciously adopted Norwegian features to accommodate a Norwegian readership.

These Norwegian traits in Icelandic manuscripts have naturally been associated with increased Norwegian cultural and political influence in Iceland in the 13th and 14th centuries. Moreover, their disappearance around 1400 coincides with dwindling Norwegian influence in Iceland. While it is difficult to determine with certainty to what extent these Norwegian features reflect actual influence on the Icelandic language, their relatively sudden disappearance suggests that this influence was neither deep-rooted nor widespread.

In this paper it will be argued that while practically all Norwegian traits of linguistic nature (apart from some lexical borrowings) seem to have disappeared without permanent trace in the Icelandic language, Norwegian script and scribal practice had a profound impact in Iceland in the 13th and 14th century. The influence of Norwegian script on Icelandic script manifests itself quite clearly in the introduction of several Anglo-Saxon letter forms in the early 13th century, more specifically the Anglo-Saxon variety of "v" and "f", as well as the letter "ð". These are found already in the earliest attested Norwegian script, but they are absent from Icelandic script at the very earliest stage. Their introduction is almost certainly due to Norwegian influence. Moreover, the abolishment of the Anglo-Saxon "v" and "ð" can also be attributed to Norwegian influence. The Anglo-Saxon "f" disappeared from Norwegian script in the 15th century, but by that time Norwegian influence in Iceland had diminished significantly. It will be argued that the continued use of the Anglo-Saxon "f" in Icelandic script down to the 17th century should be attributed to the termination of Norwegian influence in Iceland.

Norwegian influence on the Icelandic script, it will be argued, was both more extensive and longer lasting than Norwegian linguistic influence in Iceland. In the 13th century, the culture of scribes, script and book making in Iceland and Norway became more interconnected than before with Norwegian scribes working in Iceland as well as Icelandic scribes working in Norway (Hagland 1985, Rindal 1997). An examination of 13th-century Icelandic script suggests that in Iceland scribes formed a tightly-knit community where innovations spread swiftly. The church and the monasteries played an important role in this community, with several Norwegian bishops, abbots and other

officials. Norwegian trends in script could thus become prevalent in the scribal community in Iceland. By contrast, the linguistic society at large was not susceptible to Norwegian linguistic influence to the same degree. It will be argued that while a significant portion, perhaps even the vast majority, of scribes in Iceland were under the influence of Norwegian scribal culture, Norwegian linguistic influence affected only a small subset of the speakers of Icelandic. Consequently, Norwegian linguistic influence in Iceland was only shallow and transient, while Norwegian script had a lasting impact.

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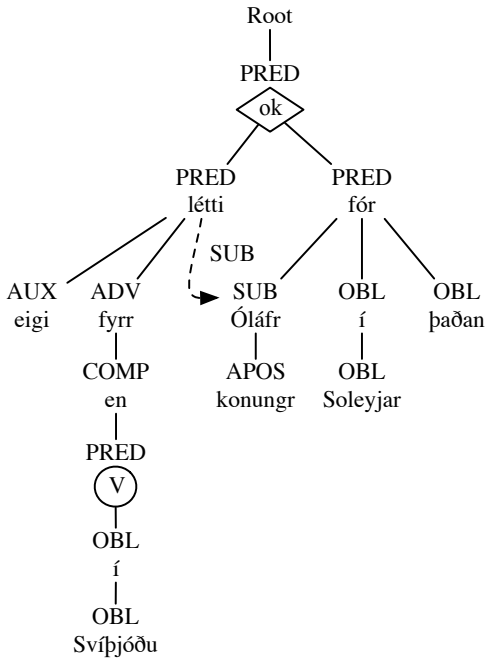
Constructing Space

The encoding of space and time in some Old Norwegian texts

The great majority of narrative texts contain descriptions of movement in space and time. In fact, the categories of space and time seem to be part and parcel of philosophical investigations since antiquity, by writers as diverse as Marcus Terentius Varro in his *De lingua Latina* 5.10 or Peter F. Strawson in his influential book *Individuals* (1959), in which he argues that the structure of our thoughts are basically spatiotemporal.
The aim of the present paper is to look into the linguistic encoding of space and time in a limited corpus of Old Norwegian narrative texts. The paper is based on the hypothesis that spatiotemporal movement will be encoded lexically primarily in a number of verbs, verbal particles, adverbs and prepositions, and secondarily in nouns and adjectives. A trivial example is the following sentence from the legendary *Óláfs saga ins helga* (Upps DG 8 II, ch. 37, ca. 1225–1250) describing king Olaf's travel eastwards into Sweden:
Þaðan fór Óláfr konungr í Soleyjar ok létti eigi fyrr en í Svíþjóðu.
'From there, king Olaf went to Solør and did not stop until he came to Sweden.'
In this sentence of 13 words, spatial movement is encoded lexically in the adverb *þaðan* 'from there', in the verbs *fara* 'go, travel' and *létta* 'stop'and in the preposition *í* 'in, to' (twice), and also in the comparative construction *fyrr en* 'until'. While adverbial and prepositional phrases often are analysed as adjuncts, metaphorically speaking as by-standers, this paper will argue that certain types belong to the predicate-argument structure of the sentence. In a dependency analysis, they will thus be analysed as obliques, which along with subjects and objects form the nucleus of the predication. This is exemplified in the syntactic tree below.



A syntactic tree displaying the argument structure in the sentence quoted above. The dependency formalism is explained in Haugen and Øverland (2014).

The corpus for the present investigation will be a small selection of *lais* in the Old Norwegian *Strengleikar* manuscript (Upps DG 4–7, ca. 1270). This manuscript has recently been morphologically and syntactically annotated and thus offers a convenient material for analysing the linguistic encoding of argument structure in Old Norwegian, and, by extension, Old Norse (see the guidelines in Haugen and Øverland 2014). The exact number of *lais* to be analysed has not yet been decided, but it is likely that the paper will present an analysis of some of the shorter ones, such as *Tveggja elskanda ljóð* and *Geitarlauf*, and that it will focus on a qualitative analysis rather than a quantitative one.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Copying the Edda

The fragmentary 15th century Prose Edda manuscript AM 756 4to is a descendant, probably a direct copy, of the 14th century Codex Wormianus. Since 756 is not an independent witness to the text of the Edda, it has been little studied. But in the fact that it is a copy of an extant manuscript lies a chance for an up-close study of the difficulties and decisions facing its scribe. By comparing the entire text of 756 with that of Codex Wormianus, I have compiled a list of deviations. I have classified each deviation into a typology according to how much text has been altered ('changes in word order', 'missing word', 'missing letter' and so on). I have also tried to guess the likely cause of each change ('intentional improvement', 'error due to miscounting minims', 'omission due to homoeoteleuton' and so on). Generally speaking, the scribe of 756 must be considered faithful to his exemplar - only a few of the deviations have the appearance of intentional improvements. Moreover, he has often faithfully transcribed what we might consider "obvious" errors. Nevertheless, the number of deviations is by no means insignificant.
It is interesting to compare the text of 756 with that of other medieval Edda manuscripts (principally Codex Regius, Codex Trajectinus and Codex Upsaliensis). There are occasional readings where 756 agrees with Regius, Trajectinus or Upsaliensis against Wormianus. Most such readings are easily explained as coincidences. A few might be better explained as oral corruption (Haukur Þorgeirsson 2010). There are, as I will show, strong reasons to think that the scribe of 756 did not have access to any copy of the Edda except Codex Wormianus.
The study of 756 gives us some idea of how many errors can be expected even in a faithful copy. I will argue that this can provide a valuable baseline for work on the relationship between other Edda manuscripts.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Converting the conversion: a fourteenth century account of Iceland's acceptance of Christianity

In this paper it will be demonstrated that far from being a mere collection of narratives relating to the Norwegian king and missionary Óláfr Tryggvason, the fourteenth century Icelandic saga *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta* (*ÓSTm*) is a carefully and deliberately constructed narrative. In the saga the author engages with older narratives and produced a new work which resonated with the Icelandic ruling class, which at this time looked to the Norwegian crown for their authority but found themselves increasingly distant from the centre of power.

The paper will focus on the most extensive of all the conversion narratives presented in the saga, that of Iceland. It will be shown that the Icelandic conversion narrative is portrayed as a unique event in comparison to the other 'national' conversion narratives presented in the saga. In *ÓSTm* the Icelandic conversion is firmly presented as part of God's ordained plan. In the saga the author gives Iceland an independent Christian history stretching back to the settlement. Unlike the conversions of Norway, Greenland, Orkney and Faroe the Icelanders lead their country to an independent conversion, accepting Óláfr as their godfather, but not their king.

The trope of independent conversion is familiar from earlier conversion narratives. However this is commonly interpreted as a reaction to increasing Norwegian encroachment on Icelandic independence in the thirteenth century. Here it will be shown that independent conversion continued to be deeply significant for a fourteenth century audience. This analysis is important for an understanding of *ÓSTm* but it also demonstrates that we should look beyond the years 1262/4 when considering how political change and upheaval is expressed in literary form. While the significance of Iceland's submission to the Norwegian crown is undeniable, it is clear that in works such as *ÓSTm* Icelanders continued to negotiate with a changing political landscape.

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Constructing Space

Tracing Liminality in the *Íslendingasögur*

In 1909 the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) first published his famous monograph *Les rites de passage* and so introduced the concept of liminality into scholarship. Unfortunately, van Gennep's work remained neglected for several decades until the Scottish anthropologist Victor W. Turner (1920-83) re-discovered it in the 1960s and focused his main research on the liminal mid-phase of the rites of passage. It was only during the past few years that the topic of liminality has received considerable interest within medieval Scandinavian studies. It can be observed, however, that what is termed liminal does not always adhere to the original idea and content of the concept as established and defined by van Gennep and Turner. Facing intricate difficulties when applying liminality to Old Norse material is not surprising for two main reasons: firstly, the evasiveness of the phenomenon *per se*; and secondly, the application of a (rather) modern anthropological concept to medieval, fictional literature. This does not mean, however, that the notion of liminality could not be a beneficial tool in Old Norse (literary) studies.
By going back to van Gennep's and Turner's understandings and definitions of liminality, this paper will thus venture to discuss how this concept can be adapted and amended to allow a fruitful application of liminality to the Old Norse genre of the *Íslendingasögur*. In line with the conference's theme 'Sagas and Space', special attention will be devoted to the application of liminality to a range of spatial categories in a selection of *Íslendingasögur*. The question of which places could be called liminal in these sagas is interesting because neither van Gennep nor Turner offer help in this regard as they do not promote any specific place as inherently liminal. They exclusively consider liminality as a distinct and vital phase in social life, which brings about some kind of transformation. All the same, the paper explores the connection of liminality and space in the *Íslendingasögur* by looking at settings in which saga figures experience liminality. Such constellations confront us with a chicken and egg situation, namely whether it is the liminal experience that makes the place liminal or – vice versa – the place that makes the event liminal. In this regard, the paper hopes to shed light on questions such as: What qualities have these spaces or rather what qualities do they need to have in order to be feature in a liminal situation? Can the spaces found then be called liminal? Are they genuinely liminal or only during certain time periods?

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Where to find the *Valir*?

Today, we find the Welsh in a part of Britain, the Walloons in a part of Belgium, and the Vallachians in a part of Romania. In German we can find similarly named people in the West of Switzerland or the South of Tyrol; in Polish they even inhabit the whole of Italy. In Old Norse the corresponding ethnonym is *Valir* (pl.), cf. *valskr* (adj.), *Valland* (country), *valska* (language). Those were living terms, at least in Iceland, until the early 13th century; in younger texts their use suggests older models. They do not apply to the Vallachians (ON *Blǫkumenn*) nor the Welsh (ON *Bretar*; a single skaldic counterexample does not stand up to scrutiny). The Walloons would definitely be *Valir*, together with at least some of their neighbours. But which neighbours?

The handbooks tend to opt for either of two extremes. Some want to restrict the *Valir* to the north coast of France, especially Normandy, including the Normans ruling England after the conquest. Others have them include the speakers of any Romance language, or at least the French and Italians.

Those few individual *Valir* who can be geographically pinpointed turn out to be Norman or Anglo-Norman. The narrow interpretation is further suggested by some texts mentioning *Valir* and *Frakkar* as two different peoples. The latter term, however, should not be taken to mean 'French' but, as I have argued elsewhere (*Kjartansson*), 'Franconian' (i.e. non-Saxon German).

The wide interpretation (cf. *Metzenthin*) is attested to in early modern Icelandic as well as suggested by the meaning of similar terms in medieval German but hardly supported by the medieval Norse evidence. Medieval Icelandic could, just as well as Modern English, adopt terms like "*wal*nut" without any clear idea of their geographical reference. An intriguing Eddic line linking the *Valir* with 'Kjárr' = Caesar might refer to a late Roman 'Caesar' residing in Gaul rather than Italy.

All things considered, neither interpretation is satisfactory. Rather, the Old Norse *Valir* should (largely in line with *de Pins*) be equated with 'the French', even if Icelandic users of the term would primarily connect it with those parts of France they knew something about, which might vary from case to case.

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Constructing Space

The Construction of Environmental Memory in the Icelandic Sagas

Literary texts are frequently used as sources in the study of cultural memory. The relation of literature and memory to environmental questions has, however, remained largely unattended. Narrative evidence of what can be called 'environmental memory' can nevertheless give us information not only on past perceptions of the environment, but also on how memories of past environments and of environmental change may play a role for the cultural capability to adapt to vulnerable and sometimes rapidly changing environments. Environmental memory can, in this context, be understood as a particular form of cultural memory. This implies that environmental memory always is culturally constructed. As, however, this memory is linked to real world environments in various and complex ways, it is not fictional in a strict sense.

This is especially true of representations of past environments in the medieval Icelandic sagas. If put in relation to palaeoecological, archaeological and historical sources, these texts provide an excellent source material for the study of how environmental memory developed and functioned in a specific cultural context. There is, however, a remarkable difference between two groups of sagas: Many *Íslendingasögur* stress that during the time of Iceland's settlement, environmental conditions were astonishingly favorable, including a wealth of resources such as extensive woodlands, wild animals and iron ore as well as a climate allowing highly profitable animal husbandry and grain farming. The central individuals and families of these narratives live in material affluence, frequently demonstrated through the consumption of luxury goods. On the other hand, hagiographic texts such as the *Biskupa sögur* tend to describe extreme scarcity of resources and a generally unfavorable natural environment. In these texts, Icelandic society appears as characterized by material poverty and vulnerability to environmental risks such as extreme weather events, epidemics and volcanic eruptions.

It is likely that such representations of the natural environment in the sagas to a certain extent originated from traditions concerning actual past environmental conditions in Iceland. At the same time, different and even partly contradictory descriptions of the environment served the interests of distinct social groups during the time the sagas were composed. Through highlighting natural abundance at the time of settlement, the *Íslendingasögur* – as a medium of Iceland's worldly elite – try to claim a high social status for this elite's ancestors through portraying them as wealthy individuals who out of their own free will migrated into even better natural conditions than those of Norway. On the other hand, the hagiographic *Biskupa sögur* stress scarcity and risk in order to glorify even more the achievements of the respective saints, who are portrayed as acting under extremely adverse circumstances, and who moreover through a dangerous natural environment gain ample opportunity to demonstrate their sainthood through performing miracles in favor of individuals in environmentally induced situations of emergency. The Icelandic sagas thus are not only hitherto underestimated sources for the interdisciplinary study of medieval human ecodynamics, but moreover constitute

two differing attempts to construct collective environmental memory through literary representations of past environments.

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Mediality

Kenning, system and context: how kennings construct referential space

Scholarship on the Old Norse kenning may be divided into two broad streams. The first, often associated with editing or lexicographic projects, is system-oriented, regarding each kenning as a representative of a class, and expending the bulk of its explanatory labour on the elucidation of those classes, or of the concepts to which they refer (cf. e.g. Snorri Sturluson, *Skáldskaparmál*; Meissner; Finnur Jónsson; Fidjestøl; Clunies Ross). The other prefers to attend to the relationship between individual kennings and their poetic environment (cf. e.g. Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal*; Kock; Marold; Quinn; Poole). This admittedly rough heuristic suggests that – despite large areas of shared interest such as the nature of kennings' reference to mythic or legendary narratives – there are (at least) two different ways that kennings construct referential spaces. One is the abstract, 'systematic' space of possible substitutions that yield other kennings of the same class (cf. e.g. Frank). The other is the so-called 'context', the material space of the text around the kenning.

In my paper I would like to explore how these spaces are used, and to what end, in skaldic and eddic texts. The Codex Regius of the *Poetic Edda* is particularly interesting here, insofar as its – hitherto rather neglected – kennings operate within the *intertextual* space of a compilation and, I will argue, play an important role in generating context in its original sense (cf. *contexere*, 'to weave together'), 'the connection or coherence between the parts of a discourse' (*OED*). However, the *Poetic Edda* also provides some good examples of metaphoric extension of, and play on, kenning components, suggesting that the systematic view of the kenning offered eddic poets resources for exploring how poetic language mediates meaning. Christian skaldic poetry, with its opening of the figurative repertoire of skaldic poetics to foreign impulses and interest in translation, raises the question of the status of kennings in the literary polysystem or 'world republic of letters' (Casanova). A subsidiary goal of the paper is to assess the usefulness of spatial models for such phenomena, for example in comparison to the well-known idea of intertextuality as the 'memory of the text' (Lachmann).

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

The Trojan War and Euhemeristic Theory in *Skáldskaparmál*

In *Eptirmáli II.* of *Skáldskaparmál*, Snorri famously (if conventionally) warns that "eigi skulu kristnir menn trúa á heiðin goð" [Christian men must not believe in heathen gods] (Snorri, I: 5). He explains that the Æsir were merely Asian men who falsified the events of the Trojan War so that the northern people would believe them to be gods. According to Snorri, each story the Æsir tell is a falsified version of a true historical event in Trojan history. Each "god" was actually a well-known figure in the war, and what the Æsir called *ragnarǫk* was in reality the fall of Troy. Although this euhemeristic treatment of the *gelehrte Urgeschichte* has long been recognized to treat Norse mythological stories as a "fictional *integumentum* [covering, veil], enclosing some kernel of truth" (Amory 1993: 332), the nature and function of this integumental approach have yet to receive thorough or detailed study. I argue that this approach to Norse mythology draws on a widespread yet little studied early medieval method of reading Roman mythological stories as the *integumenta* of historical events.

I set this interpretative practice in the context of three medieval scholars who were key to its development from patristic thought: Hrabanus Maurus in Book XV of his encyclopedic *De uniuerso*, the Second Vatican Mythographer, and most importantly Theodulus in his poem *Ecloga*. The *Ecloga* presents a dialogue between Truth and Falsehood. Falsehood present mythological stories, and Truth unveils the biblical truth of each story until Wisdom declares truth the winner. Theodulus does not explain the logic of this exchange, but Hrabanus and the Second Mythographer do. Roughly contemporary with Theodulus, these scholars provide sophisticated discussions that illuminate the interpretative theory that, I argue, lies behind the *Ecloga*.

As a school text, the *Ecloga* would likely have been familiar to educated members of Snorri's circle. The parallel proposed here is earlier than the twelfth-century scholastic *integumenta* pointed to in scholarship that has previously investigated the Continental Latin background of the *Prose Edda*; those parallels also deal with moral *integumenta* rather than historical ones. Because of the *Ecloga*'s elementary position in the curriculum, the approach I trace was widely known in Europe by the time of the thirteenth century. The *Ecloga* was thus well positioned to provide a fundamental approach to the interpretation of pagan Norse mythology, a fact demonstrated by its vernacular diffusion in *Skáldskaparmál*.

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Constructing Space

Twins, Trees, and High-seat Pillars: Dioscuric Elements and the Icelandic Settlement Myth

One of the most enigmatic features of Icelanders' foundational narrative are the settlement site-determining high-seat pillars, which were brought along by settlers from their Norwegian homes, and thrown overboard at sea. Altogether nine text passages describe such pillar casting in *Landnámabók* and several of the sagas and *þættir*, and involve well-known settlers, among them the first permanent inhabitant of Iceland, Ingólfr Arnarson who traveled in the company of his foster-brother, Hjörleifr.
The practice of throwing high-seat pillars into the ocean to ask for supernatural guidance in the process of taking new land has been interpreted as the transport of sacred power from the old land to the new, and as a request for divine help to find a suitable new place for settlement (Clunies Ross 1997, 19 and 1998, 143; Wellendorf, 10). The high-seat was the most important seat in the Old Norse hall, structurally supporting the roof; several scholars have therefore also suggested that the pillars could have been understood as part of a microcosmic analogy of the Old Norse universe, the hall representing the cosmos and the high-seat representing the world tree, world pillar, or *axis mundi* therein (Böldl, 171-4; Gunnell, 193). Although the exact form and design of the high-seat pillars is not preserved, they are always referred to in plural number, which slightly complicates this theory.
Based on the fact that the high-seat pillars were wooden objects used in the context of migrating and settling and came at least in pairs, this paper will explore possible connections between Icelandic settlement traditions and mythic motifs dealing with the creation of new civilizations that involve wooden objects and founding brother pairs, which are known from foundational narratives from Western antiquity and the Middle Ages.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Traveling the world – female Scandinavian pilgrims in the Middle Ages

Saint Bridget is one of the most eminent figures in church history, and during her lifetime she was one of the most active pilgrims coming from Scandinavia. But she wasn't by far the first pilgrim coming to Rome and/or Jerusalem from the North. Written accounts, such as the saga about the Norwegian king Sigurðr Jórsalafari, tell us about earlier pilgrims to Christian holy places around the world. Nevertheless, contrary to the literary depictions, men weren't the first and only pilgrims, especially not on an international scale. Pilgrimage was indeed one of the main reasons for women to go on a prolonged journey, be it local or abroad.
The story of Eric the Red, the discoverer of Vínland, can also be read as the story of Guðríðr, one of the most widely travelled women in European history, who, close to the end of her life, decides to visit Rome. There are more accounts of female pilgrims in medieval Scandinavian narratives, but they are not the only sources for this phenomenon: a Swedish rune stone tells us of the intentions of a woman to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and guestbooks from monastery and pilgrimage homes in medieval continental Europe include Icelandic female names.
In my paper I will speak about the female pilgrimage tradition in medieval Scandinavia before Saint Bridget. I will investigate which women went on pilgrimage, when, where to, and for what reason. To answer these questions a variety of sources, ranging from Archeology to rune stones and literary texts as well as contemporary continental sources, will be taken into consideration to give an overview of the female pilgrimage tradition.

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Open

New Approaches to Contaminated Texts

The 39 surviving 14th century manuscripts of The Code of the Norwegian Realm (*Magnus Lagabøtes Landslov*), prepared by the king Magnús Hákonarson in 1274, are important sources to the manuscript culture of 14th-century Norway. However, little is known of their provenance, and given that most of the manuscripts are probably contaminated, it has so far proved impossible to establish a stemma. In 1848, Rudolf Keyser and Peter A. Munch organized the manuscripts into four groups, each group connected to one of the four legal districts of Norway; *Gulaþing, Frostaþing, Borgarþing* and *Eiðsivaþing*. The main criterion was the references to these legal districts within the manuscripts. No alternative or further subdivisions according to the relationship between particular manuscripts have so far been provided, although many textual variants suggest different grouping than those posited by Keyser and Munch.
In my ongoing PhD-project, I approach the manuscripts from a different angle. By analyzing the text structure, that is, the way the text is organized into sections and chapters, in 15 of the 39 manuscripts, new patterns have come to light which imply relationships between manuscripts across the former four-group system. Bolstering these observations with information from the production of the manuscripts themselves, such as script, layout and decorations, I will suggest that the patterns revealed through the textual structure can form the base for an alternative grouping of these manuscripts. In turn, within the new groups, further analysis of the textual variants may provide new knowledge of the production and reception of legal texts in 14th -century Norway.

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Mediality

Old and New: How Old and New Media Influenced Each Other and Society in Iceland during the 16th and 17th Centuries

The influence of the new print medium on the old, existing medium of handwriting has never been examined before. The earliest printed books were strongly influenced by handwritten manuscripts, which is well documented. A phenomenon which has not yet been analysed is that, as time went on, books in return influenced manuscripts. Even though the first printing press was established already around 1530 in Iceland, manuscript production did not stop. Instead, it grew to new quantitative and qualitative heights, including features of printed books such as title pages. I therefore propose to conduct a study on the relationship between printed books and handwritten manuscripts of the 16th and 17th centuries. The influence and interrelationship of the two media, as well as the protagonists behind the codices and their aims and goals are in the centre of the study. The focus will be on title pages, as they are a truly innovative feature of printed books that we also find in post-Gutenberg manuscripts.
The objectives of this project concern:

a) The influence of a new medium on an old, existing medium.
b) The utilisation of features of the new medium to achieve specific aims and goals.
c) The impact of this utilisation on society.

Methods to conduct the study of title pages and their sociological impact include content analysis from literary studies, quantitative codicological analysis from book and manuscript studies and iconographic/iconologic analysis from art history.

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Constructing Space

Where and who are "us" as contrasted to "them"?
Jötnar's spatial and conceptual placement

The sources about the Old Norse mythology, Eddic and scaldic poetry as well as the assumed works of Snorri Sturluson, may be stated to be presented from the "othering" viewpoint: "us" (gods and men) as contrasted to "them" (the *jötnar* (giants) as the enemies of the worlds of gods and men).
In my current PhD research of the *jötnar*, I endeavor to take the information available about the *jötnar* and view it from their point of view. By turning the "us/them" concept this way around, I intend to gain some perspectives unrealized so far, about the image and role of the *jötnar* in pagan times and worldview. Communication between gods and *jötnar*, as it appears in the literary sources, has been interpreted on a largely one-sided and homogenous basis, with the *jötnars'* image both static and sparsely diversified. I suspect, that there is more to the *jötnar* than meets the eye in the literary sources, and that probing their image from an unconventional standpoint, may reveal some unexpected connections, contexts and values of their role in the pagan conceptual cosmos.
In the present paper I intend to concentrate on issues that especially relate to the space of the *jötnar*, both "physical" and conceptual. This means surveying where and how they are described as actual beings and measure this against their conceptual image presented in the sources.
Paradoxes relating to the *jötnar*, both conceptual and spatial, abound in the literary sources. Depending on approach, methodology and viewpoint, these complications may, however, see some sorting out, especially through comparative work based on exploring cognates or compatible comparisons within the *jötnar*-group rather than comparisons that emphasize contrasts between two antagonistic bodies of beings, gods/men vs *jötnar*.
This also involves the question whether the categorization "us" vs "them", "here" vs "there", actually is applicable. As concerns the often close and even intimate contact and communication between the two groups, this classification may be more fluid and mixed than it appears to be on the surface of it, and the relationship between gods/men on the one hand and the *jötnar* on the other, more closely knit than presented in the literary sources, written down long after paganism in its living form has lost its appeal.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

'Ásgeir', a Japanese Imagined Lady of the North: A Manga Narrative and Its Space

This paper will deal with a Manga story of Vikings made by a Japanese author with a comparison with the depictions of the space in *Haralds Saga ins Hárfagra* of *Heimskringla,* from a viewpoint of Saga studies. Vikings and the Norse Gods have been featured in comic slips and Manga fully enjoyed by Japanese readership for long. Not many of the *dramatis personae*, however, were of literary authenticity. Recent authors, however, have their imagination through their readings of literary sources albeit they may have read mostly English translations.

Azumi Ryō is an active Manga author, and though she cannot be said to be one of the most popular authors, her stories have caught a number of Japanese fantasy fans' attention and procured their interests in the Western Middle Ages and Renaissance. Azumi Ryō's 'Kami no Yari', or 'A Spear of the God', is a short story about Leifr, a Viking, and Ásgeir, a mysterious lady caught as a slave-girl in a raid by Leif's band of Vikings. The title of the story signifies both the heroine and a spear which has long been inherited as a family treasure in her family. The spear is also called 'Ásgeir', because it is said to have once been given to their ancestor by Óðinn himself. The two protagonists are the products of genuine imagination of Azumi Ryō.

The way the Japanese author could make use of when she invented a story of Norway under the reign of Haraldr Hárfagri is a typical way of Manga drawing, but it has a common element with Icelandic ways of saga-composition. The sky and the sea are imagined and expressed not in a way of realism, while the weapons, the war gears, and the manoeuver of the Viking ships are drawn with lines of pens to be realised on the pages with historic authenticity. The author of Manga who found the delights in reading Old Norse sagas such as *Heimskringla* utilises such an imagination as Snorri did when he wrote or edited his literary resources to compose *Haralds Saga ins Hárfagra*. Despite the differences in media, countries and cultural backgrounds, her source of inspiration, doubtless Snorri's *Haralds Saga,* must have provided Azumi Ryō with a presentation technique to telling a story of the past in regard to a spatial background.

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Constructing Space

'Þá flýði hann vestan um haf': *Kringla heimsins* before and after the settlement of Iceland*

Paradoxically at first glance, and presenting difficulties for scribes, editors and translators of the Icelandic sagas, the act of sailing from the islands lying between the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean (the British Isles, the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the Hebrides) to Iceland is designated as going *vestan um haf*, 'from west over the sea'. That paradox will serve as a starting point for this paper. I will concentrate on the fourfold division of the world circle as presented chiefly by the Kings' sagas (a pan-German concept which originated long before the settlement of Iceland), where each quarter is named after the corresponding cardinal direction: *Norðr(h)álfa* (which includes Norway and Finnmark), *Austrhálfa* (the Baltic lands and territories far beyond the Baltic Sea such as Old Rus and Byzantium), *Suðr(h)álfa* (Denmark and Saxony, Flanders and Rome), and *Vestr(h)álfa* (England, the Orkney and Shetland Islands, France, Spain, and even Africa). Movement in this space is described in terms of a goal, which does not correspond to the compass.

Next, I will focus on the fact that this picture of the world was introduced in the ninth century to Iceland which itself, in 965 (on the decision of the Althing), was divided into four quarters that were named after the four cardinal points. Finally, I will demonstrate that Iceland *per se* found itself 'outside' that *kringla heimsins* which the settlers had arrived from (according to the sources, movement from the 'former' world circle to Iceland was described not as to the other islands in the Atlantic Ocean with the term *vestr* 'westward', but *út* 'out, towards the outer side'), and its residents created their own orientation system, their own *kringla heimsins* in which Norway was situated in the east, while in the west there were Greenland and Vínland. Stories about people who had come to Iceland *vestan* 'from the west' are likely to be based on a very old oral tradition that was formed at a time when these saga characters had just left their homes on those islands that in 'the old system' were named *Vestrlönd*. In their new homeland this designation made no sense and contradicted the whole system of spatial orientation, but, luckily, it has reached us in the form of sparse relict 'slips of the tongue' in the sagas, neither corrected nor omitted by those who were writing down and rewriting these sagas. (The opposite approach is illustrated, for instance, by the phrase 'flýði hann vestan um haf' in *Laxdæla saga* that in the manuscript M bears a late emendation of *vestan* for *vestr*, and is translated by Hermann Pálsson as 'he fled to Iceland'). Surprisingly, the Old Norse-Icelandic texts have preserved all this diversity of spatial ideas.

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Constructing Space

Creating the historical space in *Fóstbræðra saga*

Fóstbræðra saga is generally regarded as one of the s*kaldasögur* written in the thirteenth century. Although, the classification of the saga remains debatable, as it does not precisely fit the pattern of the so-called core skald sagas. *Fóstbræðra saga* tells the story of lives and adventures of the two notorious young men: the poet Þormóðr kolbrúnarskald and his sworn brother Þorgeirr Hávarsson. They grow up and cause troubles together until the day when the idea of rivalry separates them. Going their own ways, both brothers encounter king Óláfr Haraldsson. The meeting appears to be a turning point for both of them. The storyline of the saga is complex, and through the romance and revenge it leads eventually to the death of Þormóðr kolbrúnarskald alongside king Óláfr at the battle of Stiklastaðir in 1030.
After the major works of Jónas Kristjánsson (Jónas Kristjánsson 1972, 1973), several scholars directly approached *Fóstbræðra saga.* Issues regarding the dating of the saga (Andersson 2013), the influence of oral tradition, or the various features of the narrative were recently addressed (Gos 2009; Meulengracht Sørensen 1993, 1994).
This project aims to point at some aspects of the text that have not yet attracted significant interest of the scholars. The main focus of the presentation is the use of historical events and figures in the narrative of *Fóstbræðra saga,* and their impact on the biographies of the protagonists. The character of the king Óláfr inn helgi is the key figure in the construction of the historical space in the saga. Therefore, through the analysis of the mutual relation between the king and the sworn brothers I propose to examine the role Óláfr inn helgi plays in the process of structuring the characters of Þormóðr and Þorgeirr. In my project, I attempt to determine the place of *Fóstbræðra saga* within the extensive corpus of the narratives on Óláfr inn helgi.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Literature, Identity and the Outside World in Late Medieval Iceland

The literature of late medieval Iceland is the product of a fascinating period in the country's history. Late sagas and other texts, including 'young' sagas, *rímur* and *ævintýri*, and the manuscripts that preserve them, provide an insight into how national, regional, class and gender identities were debated and shaped, and how individual authors, redactors, patrons, and social groups, grappled with the cultural concerns of their age. Analysing this corpus can advance our understanding of a society in a state of ideological transition, seeking to define its relationship to the outside world.

Although previous critics have tended to represent the Icelandic aristocracy in the post-Commonwealth era as peaceful and homogenous, Icelandic society and culture in the late medieval period was by no means monolithic or static. Political and ideological struggle between élite groups remained present, and violence and even outlawry continued to occur long after the Sturlung Age. New dynasties came into material wealth and formal power, using their economic means and status to produce prestigious manuscripts and promote new types of literature. Moreover, contact with Europe did not altogether disappear although ties between Norway and Iceland weakened; in the fifteenth century, English and German fishermen and merchants increasingly sailed to Iceland.

Despite this foreign presence in seaside settlements, as well as a new political situation – Iceland became a part of the Norwegian monarchy in 1262–4, and the two countries were unified with Denmark in the 1397 Kalmar Union – colonial and postcolonial theory has made very little impact in Old Norse-Icelandic studies. Scholars working on e.g. medieval Welsh and Scottish literature have made productive use of frameworks from this theoretical field, e.g. the concept of 'cultural imperialism', the perceived cultural and political superiority of one culture over another, and its potential impact on subordinate or receiving cultures. Their work suggests exciting ways in which to approach late medieval Icelandic material and in my paper, I will explore they ways in which literature and manuscripts produced in late medieval Iceland constructed and reflected ideology and identity on many levels, and to ask whether (post)colonial theory has the potential to help us reach new conclusions about this period.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Retracing the Reformation. Biblical texts and the vernacular in Scandinavian Middle Ages and Early Modern Era (Project Presentation)

From the publication in 1526 of the New Testament in Swedish to the appearance of the Icelandic Bible in 1584, all the Scandinavian countries with the exception of Norway had the Bible translated into the vernacular. Common for these printed and complete translations are that they are considered to mark the completion of the Reformation in the North. Traditionally we see the event of these works as the replacement of the Medieval Latin culture with a vernacular culture.
There are good reasons to question such an absolute border between medieval culture and the Early Modern period. Not only is it obvious that our definition of periods has a tendency to set absolute time-limits where no such limits were apparent to the contemporary viewer, but it also presents an obstacle to the perception of longer tendencies that would shed new light on the course of political, intellectual and social changes. Our contention is that the expansion of a vernacular literacy in the Middle Ages should be studied as a prerequisite for the Reformation Bibles. In order to recover the processes leading to a wider authority for the vernacular, we need to consider the implications of the medieval translations of Bible works.
The project will focus on individual Bible works, sources where the Bible texts are used and paraphrased in secular works, and material evidence, e.g. church paintings and illuminations in manuscripts. This material has received little attention and we introduce a number of new perspectives. The presentation will provide a general introduction to the project followed by presentations of three sub-projects:

The Inscribed Reader of Vernacular Scripture
During the Nordic Middle Ages some of the books of the Bible were translated, others were not, and the translations appear in manuscripts together with texts of other origin. In the beginning of the Early Modern Era follow the vernacular New Testament books, thereafter single books of the Old Testament before the complete Bible translations appear in the middle of 16th century. There is thus a long history of translation of single books or groups of books before the complete vernacurlar Bibles appear in the Nordic countries, and we can assume that there were specific reasons and intended functions for each of these translations. In my sub-project I investigate the functions of the Bible translations by looking at the inscribed reader, i.e. what kind of reader and reading is implied in the translations. What were the function of the vernacular Bibles during the middle ages? How was the Bible used and how did the use of Biblical books change?

Strategies for teaching the good tidings to the unlearned
In order for us to understand more of the medieval mind and culture, the dissemination of Christian teaching is an important and rewarding field of study. With the Bible in Latin, literally wrapped in Latin learning, how was the history of salvation rendered to the common people in the North during the Middle Ages? A wide range of strategies involving or in addition to translation were applied, regarding choice of language, choice of genre, reading, teaching, physical participation and visualization. The project discusses how different strategies are applied to different situations and functions.

Barndómssaga Christi – Apocryphal New Testament texts in medieval and early modern Icelandic sources
Texts which supplemented the New Testament accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ became widespread in the Middle Ages and some were translated into Old Norse/Icelandic. Manuscript sources reveal that material of this kind retained its interest in Iceland after the reformation, which raises interesting questions about the function of these texts and the continuity of medieval hagiographic traditions.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Nordic Maccabees: The Tales of Einherjar, Valkyries and Eternal Warriors in the perspective of the Biblical Narratives of the Maccabees

In a recent article Kurt Villads Jensen (2013) put forward the suggestion that the *einherjar* in Valhǫll as they are described in Snorri Sturluson's prose *Edda* could be related to the 12th century "ideas about Christian warfare and heavenly horses" (2013: 112–113). This suggestion was however not grounded in any closer analysis; it is rather to be seen as an idea to be pursued. In my paper I therefore wish to further Villads Jensen's suggestion and add a number of examples of the close relation between a number of descriptions of allegedly pagan warriors in some kind of afterlife.
Throughout the crusading period the Books of the Maccabees were important for the establishing of a crusader image all over Europe. The Maccabee warriors were seen as exemplars for the Christian knights as representatives of God's eternal warriors, supported at times of crises by God and his angels. As mentioned above the *einherjar*, as they are presented in Snorri Sturluson's prose *Edda*, could be related to these Christian myths. In my paper I will take a closer look at the possible relation between the *einherjar* and the Maccabees. Further I will discuss the eternal *Hjaðningavíg* in *Sǫrla þáttr* and in a stanza from *Ragnarsdrápa*, as well as Bjǫrn hítdœlakappi's stanza where *valkyries* are described as angels sent by the Christian God (for the last motif, see e.g. Mundal 2013) from a similar perspective.
In my presentation I will discuss the relation between these rather different motifs as the result of an on-going interaction between the biblical narrative and various oral and written genres. Could *einherjar* and *valkyries* possibly have been associated with angels and biblical warriors, and therefore have received some of their forms and functions from these associations, and could the warriors in *Sǫrla þáttr* provide another example of how motifs would change and gain new functions in the largely oral society of the manuscript culture?

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Open

Uno von Troil's overview of Icelandic poetry and sagas in his *Bref rörande en resa til Island*

Im Jahre 1772 unternahm Uno von Troil (1746-1803), der spätere Erzbischof von Uppsala, eine Reise nach Island. Begleitet wurde er von den Naturforschern Joseph Banks und Daniel Solander. Nach seiner Rückkehr verfaßte von Troil eine Reihe von Briefen, in denen er seine Kenntnisse über Island darlegte. Auf Aufforderung des Kulturpolitikers Carl Fredrik Scheffer publizierte er die Briefe, die 1777 als *Bref rörande en resa till Island 1772* erschienen und nicht nur in Schweden auf Interesse stießen. 1779 folgte eine erste und 1780 eine zweite deutsche Übersetzung; 1780 und 1783 erschienen englische, 1781 eine französische und 1784 eine niederländische Bearbeitung. Der Theologe von Troil widmet sich in seinen Briefen einerseits der Natur Islands (wenig überraschend etwa den Vulkanen) und den von ihm vor Ort gemachten Beobachtungen zum täglichen Leben, wenn er über die ‚Lebensart', Speisen, Krankheiten oder den Handel schreibt. Andererseits bietet er aber auch ausführliche Informationen zur isländischen Geschichte und Literatur.
In der Forschung ist die Darstellung, soweit ich es überblicke, bislang weitestgehend unbeachtet geblieben. In meinem Vortrag möchte ich zunächst knapp umreißen, welches Islandbild mittels der thematisch vielfältigen Briefe geschaffen wird. In einem zweiten Schritt sollen die Briefe über die isländische Literatur einer genaueren Analyse unterzogen werden. Von besonderem Interesse sind in diesem Zusammenhang auch die teils recht eigenständigen Übersetzungen. So hat der deutsche Bearbeiter Johann Georg Möller das Verzeichnis isländischer Texte erweitert und ergänzt die Darstellung zudem um Erläuterungen und Bewertungen. Beispielsweise gibt er Ihres Urteil wieder, das von Peder Hansen Resen 1683 herausgegebene (und von Guðmundr Andresson verfaßte) *Lexicon Islandicum* sei aufgrund seiner Fehlerhaftigkeit praktisch unbenutzbar. In zahlreichen recht ausführlichen Kommentaren, etwa zu Odin oder dem Alter der Edda, nimmt Möller auf aktuelle Forschungsliteratur Bezug und erweitert den Text so auch um eine spezifisch deutsche Perspektive auf die isländischen Gegenstände. Es soll der Versuch unternommen werden, die unterschiedlichen Bearbeitungen in die jeweiligen nationalen Forschungszusammenhänge einzuordnen. Dabei wird zu fragen sein, welches Publikum die Texte finden sollten und ob das in ihnen entworfene Islandbild Neues bieten konnte oder aber bereits etablierte Vorstellungen bediente.

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Constructing Space

***Snúið til Vesturs*: Depictions of West in the Sagas**

Classical Greco-Roman literature, early Medieval Christian literature, and notably Arthurian myth have all contrasted East with West in significant and often similar ways: the East is old, established, decreasing in fertility while increasing in settled population, often dimming and waning even as the sun is daily breaking its light and bearing it away from the East; in contrast, the West holds virtue and vitality, green with promise of fertility, bright, blissful, untamed, and sometimes even fantastical, where even the sun is compelled to migrate daily and bear its light westward into uncharted spaces, as if emphasizing something greater than the lands it wills to leave behind. Nature and art would seem to corroborate the summons of the West to all who have the imagination and the fortitude to accept the call – and so from the European perspective there has long been something innately heroic and virtuous in the idea of West.
But how do the Icelandic sagas depict West relative to East, either in plain or subtle terms? Certainly the Medieval Icelandic saga tradition was well-connected with the other European literary and mythological traditions and would have been unlikely to maintain a completely separate vision of the natures of East and West. Even so, some level of disconnect may have been more possible between the ethos of pre-Christian Scandinavia and that of the relatively Christianized continent during the era which many of the written sagas (particularly the *fornaldarsögur*) retrospectively describe. Ultimately it was the still pre-Christian Norwegians and Icelanders on the cusp of Christianization who were drawn first and furthest into the West, as vividly recounted in *Grænlendinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*, and not representatives from the long-established bastions of continental Europe whence came the traditions of wonder about the West. Beyond these two "Vinland Sagas" there is even deeper context for the implications of West, drawing from both plain and subtle clues in the hands of Snorri Sturluson and other saga writers. In Snorri´s depiction of the World Tree *Yggdrasil*, he casts the bright and fertile sphere of *Vanaheimr* to the West; and just as Arthurian myth tends to show a story progression from warring campaigns in the East towards peace and settlement in the West, the narratives of the sagas tend to recount raiding in the East, but landtaking, farming, and new prosperity in the West. This paper will investigate these clues and draw out some of the implications of West in terms of the sagas, and why the protagonists of the sagas often turned to westward spaces.

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Constructing Space

Kunnskapens sted

Kunnskap er en høyt skattet og ettertraktet ressurs i den norrøne litteraturen. Det gjelder de fleste sjangrer både innen dikt og prosa. Formidling og jakt på kunnskap er et gjennomgående tema i Codex Regius' gudedikt, og Odins livsprosjekt er å skaffe tilgang på all kunnskap.
Jeg vil postulere en modell for kunnskapsforståelsen i det norrøne tankeuniverset med det som utgangspunkt, at all kunnskap finnes. Kunnskap utvikles ikke, den finnes. Det finnes to typer kunnskap: åpen og skjult. Åpen kunnskap er den menneskene (eller gudene) har tilgang til ved hjelp av sine (eller andres) alminnelige sanser (syn, hørsel). Odin skaffer seg åpen kunnskap ved å se ut over verden fra Lidskjalv og ved å sende sine ravner ut i verden.
Den skjulte kunnskapen er lokalisert under jorda. Skikkelsene som bærer den skjulte kunnskapen, holder til på steder sansene vanligvis ikke når inn til. Det er dvergene, som har kunnskap om hvordan man kan lage gjenstander og redskaper med overnaturlige egenskaper, nornene og volvene, og det er de døde. En forutsetning for skjebnetroen i det litterære universet er at alt er planlagt. Nornene har all historisk kunnskap, de kjenner også framtida (skjult kunnskap). De døde har også tilhold under jorda og har tilgang til den skjulte kunnskapen.
Odin og andre levende kan skaffe seg tilgang på skjult kunnskap ved selv å trenge inn i det underjordiske eller ved å kalle ut informanter fra det underjordiske.
Verdenstreet Yggdrasill gir en god illustrasjon på denne modellen. Treet har greiner og bladverk i den synlige verden, men røttene forgrener seg i den skjulte verden. Brønnene ved Yggdrasils røtter er kanaler mellom den åpne og den skjulte virkeligheten. Odin har ikke ofret sitt øye, men passert det i Urds brønn for å se inn i den skjulte virkeligheten. Det samme gjelder Heimdalls øre.

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Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

Wanderndes Wissen. Die Transmission europäischen Gedankenguts in spätmittelalterlichen Handschriften und Texten von Mitteleuropa nach Skandinavien
(Project Presentation)

Die spätmittelalterlichen Vermittlungswege von Texten und Handschriften in den ostnordischen Raum stehen im Zentrum des geplanten Forschungsprojekts. Anhand der Untersuchung exemplarischer Texte und Manuskripte soll nachvollzogen werden, über welche Stationen, durch welche Personen(-gruppen) Literatur nach Schweden und Dänemark gelangte und wie sie dem neuen Kontext angepasst wurde. Die Textauswahl konzentriert sich auf drei Themenkomplexe, die von unterschiedlichen Textgenres geprägt werden: Die höfische Literatur wird am Beispiel des Versromans untersucht, die Historiographie anhand der Reimchroniken, die Sachliteratur repräsentiert durch den moralisierenden Dialog und medizinische Rezeptsammlungen und Kräuterbücher. Der gewählte Zeitraum zwischen 1400 und 1550 bietet besser als frühere Zeitabschnitte neben den direkt zu untersuchenden Texten auch Quellen, die deren Verortung sowie eine genauere Betrachtung des Kontexts ermöglichen. Geplant ist unter anderem die Erstellung von Karten, die die Wege der Texte und Handschriften nachvollziehen, darstellen und erläutern.
Wir gehen davon aus, dass es zentrale Schnittstellen gab, an denen Handschriften und Texte produziert, überarbeitet, rezipiert wurden oder den Besitzer wechselten, sei es als Auftragsarbeit, als Handelsware, als Geschenk oder als Beute. Diese Orte setzen wir im monastisch-episkopalen, im höfischen und im ökonomischen (Handels-)Raum an; Beispiele wären das Kloster Vadstena und der birgittinische Literaturbetrieb, der dänische Königshof sowie Stockholm als Handelsstadt mit regem Austausch über die Ostsee südwärts. Ein Beispiel für die Verbindungen von klösterlichen Orden zwischen Skandinavien und Mitteleuropa ist auch das Prämonstratenserkloster Steinfeld/Eifel, von dem aus das Kloster Børglum im letzten Viertel des 12. Jahrhunderts gegründet wurde. Aus Børglum stammt unter anderem eine niederdeutsch-dänische Mischhandschrift (Vu 82), die beispielsweise die *Karlskrønike* enthält und die enge Verbindung dieser beiden Regionen demonstriert. Eines der geplanten Teilprojekte wird sich mit den dänischen und schwedischen Chroniken befassen und mögliche Vorbilder (da konkrete Vorlagen nicht zu ermitteln sind) zu eruieren suchen. Von besonderem Interesse sind auch die wichtigen Sammelhandschriften aus dem höfischen Bereich, die die drei gewählten Themenkomplexe von Historiographie, gelehrtem Dialog und höfischem Versroman vereinen, unter anderem Cod. Holm D3 und D4.
Die theoretische Grundlage der geplanten Untersuchungen bilden mehrere Ansätze: Ein klares Bekenntnis zur Materialphilologie bedeutet, dass weniger die Frage nach der unmittelbaren Übertragung und Adaption von Texten im Fokus steht, sondern grundsätzlich von den tatsächlich erhaltenen Textzeugen ausgegangen wird; dies ist ebenfalls ein Grund für die Wahl des Überlieferungszeitraums. Des Weiteren steht die Polysystemtheorie Itamar Even-Zohars Modell, in deren Sinne wir Literatur als ein

Geflecht von Systemen begreifen, das dynamischen Prozessen unterworfen ist. Es wird der Versuch unternommen, Inhalte und Formen von Literatur als differenzierte Systeme zu begreifen, die miteinander interagieren. Die Kulturtransferforschung in aktualisierter Fassung bietet die Möglichkeit, den Transfer und dessen Akteure zueinander in Beziehung zu setzen.
Die Präsentation der Ergebnisse des Projekts ist neben einer Haupt- und mehreren Teilmonographien auch als eine elektronische Europakarte geplant, die Verbindungen, Transportwege und Vermittlungszentren geographisch darstellen wird; eine Animation soll die Transmission in ihrer zeitlichen Dimension verdeutlichen. Parallelen und Sonderwege einzelner Textgattungen (und Handschriften) sollen aufgedeckt werden, die eine Übertragung auf die Transmission weiterer Texte und Handschriften ermöglicht, vielleicht aber auch die Notwendigkeit weiterer Untersuchungen aufzeigt.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Glámr's Eyes and the Sense of Sight in *Grettis saga*: a Case Study

In my paper, I will discuss the sense of sight and its relationship with the body, bearing in mind that emotions in medieval Iceland were represented as somatic changes and consequently, were considered bodily in nature. I will discuss the episode in *Grettis saga* in which Grettir encounters the reanimated dead Glámr and is paralyzed momentarily by its frightening gaze as the moon shines and reveals Grettir the eyes of Glámr. At this moment, Grettir cannot prevent Glámr from laying a curse on him. As a consequence, Grettir suffers from fear of the dark ever since. He sees the eyes of Glámr, or 'hallucinations'. The episode has been discussed in greater depth by e.g. Torfi Tulinius (1999) and Russell Poole (2004), and the theme 'eyes in saga literature' has been thoroughly studied by e.g. Anette Lassen (e.g. 2001, 2003). My perspective will differ from theirs. I will consider both the object that is seen (i.e. Glámr's eyes), and the organ that perceives it (i.e. Grettir's eyes). I will discuss how medieval Icelanders understood the sense of sight to work; what happened in the perceiving eye and body when the object, evil eye, was perceived? What was the relationship between the body-mind and the sense of sight, and the organ responsible for it, the eyes? In other words, what was the medieval Icelandic folk theory of vision? I will suggest that in medieval Icelandic view, vision was rather considered material than spiritual, in that seeing could involve movements of bodily substances. I will argue that as the evil eye of Glámr (or: Glámr's eyes), perceived by Grettir in the moonlight, elicited fear in Grettir, this emotional reaction was understood literally as movements of the heart-mind (as the verb *bregða við* used in *Grettis saga* suggests). The movement was caused by Glámr's gaze that was sharp enough to penetrate Grettir's body boundaries through his eyes. As a consequence, the bodily substances within Grettir were thought to move, making the actual process of seeing material in nature.

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Mediality

Völsa þáttr and the _drunnur_: generic norms and literary effects

Already in 1909, Magnus Olsen connected the Faroese wedding custom called the *drunnur* with the 14th-century *Völsa þáttr* ("En Indskrift med ældre Runer fra Fløksand i Nordhordland." *Bergens Museums Aarbog* 1909, no. 2 (1909): 1–44), and at least brief mention of the later folk tradition has become a commonplace of scholarship on the short tale. Certainly, the surface parallels are clear: at some Faroese weddings and at the pagan farmstead St. Óláfr visits in Flateyjarbók, a preserved animal part is passed around the table after a meal, and on receiving the object each person declares a verse before passing it on. The verses are frequently obscene. The usual conclusion is that the *drunnur* is "old," that *Völsa þáttr* describes a similar contemporary practice, and thus that the very weird *þáttr* as at least some ethnographic value.
We can go further. If *Völsa þáttr* does depict a contemporary *drunnur*-like custom familiar to the original consumers of the *þáttr*, then understanding the rules of the *drunnur* will help us access those consumers' generic expectations. With the *drunnur* in mind, we become better able to identify where characters demonstrate skill and where their lack of skill has a humorous effect. We can appreciate Óláfr's final verse as a winning move, not only because he throws Völsi to the dog, but because he exploits the generic rules of the traditional contest on which the exchange of poetry in the story is based. We can be fairly confident, too, that the verses of *Völsa þáttr* are not products of an actual proto-*drunnur* session that were remembered and textualized after the fact, since Faroese *drunnur* verses were soon forgotten before ever passing into tradition, not having had much relevance outside the fleeting context in which they were extemporized. The *Völsa þáttr* verses were likely made to resemble the kind of verses exchanged in the proto-*drunnur* of the time, artistic evocations of the genre. Seeing this should make us more comfortable reading *Völsa þáttr* and its obscene poetry as an artful whole, a literary reworking of an ephemeral tradition.

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Open

Clontarf 1014 and the saga writers of Iceland

The article in *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* devoted to the twelfth century Irish text *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh* ('The War Between the Irish and the Foreigners') asserts that the work's 'climactic battle … at Clontarf is a fraud. The actual battle of 1014 was merely another clash between Irish provincial kings (with Norse mercenaries) competing for national supremacy' (Jeffries 1993, 101). Irish nationalists, of course, long saw it in very differently, as a great Irish victory over Scandinavian invaders, with a heroic and pious Irish high king treacherously slain in the moment of triumph. Though this view is unfashionable in Ireland today, there were scholarly efforts in the run up to the millennium commemoration of the battle to suggest it was more important in an Irish and wider European context than Jeffries allows, and the anniversary was marked in numerous ways both in Ireland and elsewhere, including the production of special stamps and a special coin. But perhaps more surprisingly the battle also seems to have been seen as important in Iceland during the period when the sagas came into being. Several sagas mention the battle. *Þorsteins saga Síðu-Hallssonar* claims it was 'the most famous battle west over the sea' ('hefir sú orrosta frægst verit fyrir vestan hafit', ch. 2, 301) and *Brennu-Njáls saga* devotes several chapters to the clash, its leading figures, and the events surrounding it.

This paper will consider how and why the memory of Clontarf might have been preserved in the Norse world, and transmitted to thirteenth century Iceland, and the possible reasons why the 1014 battle still mattered to Icelandic saga writers so long after it happened. Arguably Clontarf 1014 mattered so much to the anonymous author of *Brennu-Njáls saga* that he or she gravely risked the artistic cohesion of the saga with a lengthy digression on a battle of little relevance to the main narrative. Recently William Ian Miller (2014, 296) confessed some desperation in attempting to avoid the view that largely because of the Clontarf episode the end of the saga is seriously flawed. It seems important to consider why the *Njála* author may have taken this risk, if risk it was, and what the treatment of the battle there and elsewhere might say about saga responses to at least one Norse incursion into the Celtic world.

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Constructing Space

Mittelalterlich-antike Orte in der *Fertrams saga ok Platos*

Bei der *Fertrams saga ok Platos* handelt es sich um eine Riddarasaga, die vermutlich im sechzehnten, spätestens jedoch im siebzehnten Jahrhundert auf Island entstanden und in zahlreichen Handschriften überliefert ist, so dass ein hoher Bekanntheitsgrad des Textes angenommen werden kann. Zur Überlieferungslage des Textes siehe *Driscoll,* 90. Die Forschungsliteratur behandelt diese Saga bisher, wie die meisten nachmittelalterlichen Sögur, nur am Rande in Form von knappen Inhaltsangaben in Handschriftenkatalogen oder Lexika, so z.B. bei *Ward,* 842 und *Simek & Pálsson,* 90, oder aber der Herausstellung subjektiv ausgewählter Besonderheiten. So wird im Fall der *Fertrams saga ok Platos* auf Reminiszenzen an mittelalterliche Texte hingewiesen: Etwa an das Pferd *Bussifal* (Simek & Pálsson, 90), Attilas Schwert (Simek & Pálsson, 90) den Fluss *Assdon* (Schlauch, 53), durch übernatürliche Wesen ausgelöste Stürme (Schlauch, 123), das Motiv einer Hirschjagd (Schlauch, 123), Wiederbelebung Toter (Jirizcek, 23), Zwerge als Schmiede magischer Waffen (Jirizcek, 14), die Anspielungen auf *álög* (Schlauch, 129-130), aber auch geographische Namen wie Beispielsweise *Dofrafjáll* (Simek, 363).
Die Rückbeziehung auf aus der antiken und der mittelalterlichen Literatur bekannte Personen (z.B. Artus und Atilla) oder lateinische Figurennamen wie Maximianus verleihen der Saga einen antikisierenden Anstrich und setzen den Text nicht nur in Verbindung mit dem Artus-Stoffkeis, sondern auch mit diversen Erzählungen über antike Helden. Als Handlungsorte sind in der Saga europäische, asiatische und afrikanische Schauplätze gewählt, aber auch die erwähnten antiken Helden werden mit geographischen Orten verknüpft. Ortsbenennungen sind mit aus der gelehrten mittelalterlichen Literatur bekannten, meist antiken Namen vorgenommen worden (z.B. Assiria, Grikland, Indialand). Somit ist anzunehmen, dass dem Verfasser oder den Schreibern der Saga Wissen über mittelalterlich-antike Geographie als Grundlage für ihre fiktiven Handlungsräume gedient hat.
In einem Vergleich der Beschreibungen dieser Orte in der mittelalterlich-antiken gelehrten Literatur mit Handlungs- und Figurenbeschreibung in Varianten der Saga sollen Parallelen und Widersprüche aufgezeigt werden, die dazu dienen können, mögliche direkte oder indirekte Quellen des verwendeten geographischen Wissens zu bestimmen. Zudem soll erläutert werden, ob lediglich die Ortsnamen aus dem mittelalterlich-antiken geographischen Wissen verwendet wurden, oder auch die mit diesen Orten verknüpften Vorstellungen in der Saga wiederzufinden sind.

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Open

The Vestfirðingafjórðungr, the Wild West of Sturlunga Iceland?

When Órœkja, by order of his father, was about to settle in Vatnsfjǫrðr he provided the farmstead by stealing and confiscating from the farmers in the vicinity ´according to the long tradition in the Vatnsfjǫrðr´. (*Íslendinga saga*, ch. 90)
My question is if this short passage may be taken as a characterization of the situation not only in Vatnsfjǫrðr but also in the western firths and the whole Western quarter.
For the period from about 1180 – 1260, and with special emphasis on the years 1200 – 1246, the sagas report 11 actual campaigns of ravage in the district. Most of them were performed by Þorvaldr Snorrason, Þorvaldr´s sons, Sturla Sighvatsson, Órœkja and Kolbeinn ungi. In addition we read about 35 actions of pillaging and robberies. The sagas also report 38 cases of assault or maiming, and 78 cases of homicides or executions in the quarter. These figures were the result of separate acts of violence and not of pitched battles. Additionally, the most sensational abductions are reported from the Western quarter.
Of course there were some atrocities also in the other quarters during the Sturlunga age, but they were not so frequent as in the West.
We may find some preconditions and reasons why the situation in the Western quarter was more lawless and brutal than in other parts of Iceland.
The topography made the western firths more inaccessible and more suitable for escape and hiding than other parts of Iceland.
Luðvík Ingvarsson says that the *Vatnsfirðingagoðorð,* according to the census in 1703, was the most populous in Iceland. Lu›vík writes that the *goðorð* had 6% of the *þingmenn* of Iceland. An average should have given only 2,6%. If this reflects the situation during the Sturlunga age, the *goðorð,* as a base for recruiting men and supply, must have been attractive and disputed by many chieftains.
The western firths were the theatre of a series of exceptionally ambitious and ruthless chieftains and farmer-tormentors.
The Western quarter was the apple of discord between the contesting fractions of the Sturlunga party and between Þórðr kakali and Kolbeinn ungi. Intermittently the western firths seemed to be without chieftains. (*Íslendinga saga*, ch. 88) More than half a dozen of the chieftains with *goðorð* in the quarter were slain or executed, some were exiled. So there is a clear contrast between the Western and on the other hand the Southern and Eastern quarters, where the continuity was much stronger.
It is also obvious that in the western firths we do not find the same kind of powerful assemblies of farmers as in the Northern quarter, where unwelcome chieftains were simply rejected and dismissed.

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Mediality

Spatial Symbolism in Texts and Images

Religious narratives are filled with symbolic content that opens for readings at different levels. Spatial elements define the scene of action for the actors in the narratives. In this paper I will explore how and why the presence of certain spatial features and the absence of others matters. Some spatial features seem to be more relevant to mediate meaning than others – how do they direct the reading and interpretation of the narrative?

In my work with the mediation of medieval narratives, I find a joint theoretical framework for the studies of texts and images appropriate. Reading the images of Virgin Mary on Norwegian altar frontals compared to corresponding Old Norse textual narratives, reveals how certain spatial features are highlighted in both texts and images. One example is the scene where Anna and Joachim are handing their daughter to service in the holy temple, described in detail in the Old Norse vitae of Mary. In this narrative, the symbolic features of the stairs to the temple are highly emphasized with the purpose of encouraging the recipients to self-reflection and prayers. In one of the Norwegian painted altar frontals with Mary in the central position, the stairs are also emphasized (Odda, c. 1340). The absence of other spatial features in motifs of the same frontal is also striking, which leads to the assumption that those spatial features which are depicted were intended to convey meaning. I would like to suggest that the picture opens to a mediation of the same symbolic content as the text. In another painted Marian altar frontal from Norway (Årdal III, c. 1345), a lectern recurs in three of four side motifs, a feature that has been identified as something odd rather than something which influences the reading. In my paper I will explore if this spatial feature could be explained with a function, when comparing the pictorial motifs to corresponding texts? Reading texts and images in light of each other gives insight to the medieval practice of mediating symbolic content through various medias. Analyzing how elements relate to each other in a motif, textual or pictorial, will reveal how these media, on a profound level, employ parallel modes of communication.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Herding souls in The Sixth Age: on modes of educating good Christians

We learn from the *messuskýringar* (*expositiones missae*) how the celebration of the mass was explained symbolically as the life of Christ, but also as the larger biblical history of salvation. Taking *properly* part in and understanding the celebration of the mass required knowledge of the 'greater narrative' expanding further than what was read, sung and done during the mass – and the interpretations thereof. The primary source for the 'greater narrative' was of course the Bible.

In this paper I will be focussing first on some examples of how the liturgical texts and the gestures accompanying them were 'read' and explained to the congregation and then give some examples of how the History was disseminated in the North outside scholarly milieus. By doing this I intend to discuss several modes of teaching and the varying degree of *literal* understanding required for taking part in the core of medieval Christian culture.

At least since bishop Amalarius of Metz (d. ca. 850) the *sensus quadruplex* was used on the liturgy as well as on Scripture – the liturgy including the liturgical texts, gestures and objects. This generated the genre of *expositiones missae* which became both widespread and popular. Being in origin a product of scholarly thinking and exegetical practises, the genre was produced in Latin, but we see translations to vernacular languages, such as Old Norse before 1200. In the Old Norse *messuskýringar* we learn that taking *properly* part in the mass by being present and taking part by seeing, listening, praying and understanding, was important for the salvation of each individual. But with the Liturgy being in Latin, parts of which even inaudible because uttered in a low voice by the priest (e.g. the *Secreta*), and with gestures and the placing of objects also carrying important meaning, the explanations given in Old Norse in *messuskýringar* are focussing mainly on the symbolic meaning. However, the liturgy and its symbolic explanations give only parts of the History. In order to fill out and gain a fuller understanding one needed knowledge about the 'greater narrative' which was found in the Bible.

The Bible was of a rather abstract nature for most people in the Middle Ages. The *Vulgate* was the point of reference in most cases, but the text of the *Vulgate* was dressed in Latin, covered in scholarly commentaries, dispersed into different volumes (often nine to get a 'complete' Bible) and even suffering from scribal errors accumulated in its history of transmission. In addition, most people would not read 'the Bible' themselves, but learn the most important – and the most entertaining – stories from e.g. sermons explaining the liturgy and the texts read, from listening to sagas about the apostles, from seeing illustrations in churches, and listening to world history (e.g. *Stjórn* and *Veraldarsaga*). All in all, the Bible was disseminated mainly through retelling of biblical stories, in which biblical matter proper and matter drawn from other traditions was often seamlessly assembled together.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Shapeshifting in the Sagas: From Metamorphosis to Social Metaphor (Project Presentation)

The theme of shape shifting pervades human storytelling in all cultures. More than merely a way to stimulate the imagination, metamorphosis provides a manner in which to reflect, not only on the borders of body and self, but also on the place of the individual within society, and even in some cases within the wider context of the cosmos. To many medieval theorists, for instance, the assertion in Genesis that humans were created in the image of God presents a fundamental ontological problem, in that changing the human form or appearance, one belittles God – or at least His image. Nevertheless, or even, perhaps, because of it, shape shifting remains popular in the literatures of medieval Europe. Metamorphoses appear in both vernacular and Latin texts, in both lay and clerical.

Because narratives of metamorphosis are ubiquitous in medieval literature, and indeed, even pervade medieval natural philosophy and theology, they provide a fascinating point of departure to explore the potential of interpreting transformation of the human body as a social metaphor and tool for internal and external reflection. Furthermore, the tension between philosophical or theological texts on the one hand, and works of literature on the other, can potentially show how such a metaphor was adapted to certain contexts of audience. Inspired by Clifford Geertz's semiotic concept of culture, this project investigates the metaphorical power of metamorphosis, focusing in particular on the medieval North; that is, Britain and Ireland prior to the Norman Invasion, as well as Scandinavia in the early and high Middle Ages. Key questions are: who transforms, how and why? What precipitates the transformation, and what are its consequences? How does it affect the individual's sense of self; do they retain human sensibility in non-human form? How does this affect the individual's position within society?

This presentation will describe the project as a whole, but will focus particularly on the sources for shapeshifting found in Old Norse literature, especially the Sagas, and explore their potential to act as metaphors, or as culturally encoded symbols, not only for a person's relationship to their own body and the body's necessity (or lack thereof) in identity building, but also for an individual's relationship with the society in which they belong, or to which they want to belong.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Expressions of Emotion (Especially Love) in Norwegian Runic Inscriptions

One of the best sources for information concerning body, soul and emotions in genuine Old Norse culture and original texts, not simply in Old Norse literary texts like sagas, is runic inscriptions. On Viking Age memorial rune-stones are to be found records of emotions such as triumph and desperation, and also of belief in the after-life of the soul in religious invocations and prayers. In numerous runic scribbles, especially those from the towns and churches of medieval Norway, genuine emotions are expressed by medieval persons who found themselves in various situations ranging from passionate love to horrible war.

Many of the runic texts are well known, although they perhaps have not always been reflected on concerning their personal and emotional contents. Harald Blue-tooth's greater Jelling stone, which ostensibly commemorates his parents, is more a panegyric for the king himself and demonstrates haughtily his triumphs of unifying Denmark, ruling over (part of) Norway and Christianizing the Danes. Most of the late-Viking Age Swedish rune-stones are Christian and quite often close with a simple prayer requesting that God help the soul of the departed (cf. Zilmer 2004). Many of the inscriptions from Norwegian churches are published, and several of the most interesting ones from the urban excavations in Bergen, Trondheim, Oslo, and Tønsberg have also appeared (e.g. Liestøl 1964), but generally not yet in the national corpus edition, *Norges innskrifter med de yngre runer*. Many other interesting inscriptions, however, are only stored away in museums.

Although other emotions are present, such as the contempt revealed in a vindictive statement on a rune-bone found in Oslo and accusing a man of homosexuality, love – with associated joy, elation, etc. – is perhaps the emotion that is most often and most clearly expressed. Inscriptions range from simple matter-of-fact statements ('Ingeborg made love with me when I was in Stavanger') to requests ('Kiss me!') and even joyous exclamations ('Rannveig the Red, you should fuck her!'). Skaldic love-poetry is preserved, as well as remnants of Latin love-poetry, in addition to less accomplished rhyming ditties such as: *Unn mér, ann ek þér* ('Love me, I love you!'). Several of these have been presented in for example Knirk 1997. Cf. also the Internet version of the exhibition in 2010 at the Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo, entitled: 'Kiss me! The World of Runes':
https:// www.khm.uio.no/tema/utstillingsarkiv/kyss-meg/english/10_foelelser.html.
The paper in Zurich will consist mainly of an ordered presentation of examples of this 'love' material accompanied by a preliminary listing of the Norwegian corpus.

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Open

Ragnarǫk

Ragnarǫk, the end of the world in Old Norse mythology, is a well known feature in Old Norse studies and often thought to represent remains of a pre-Christian world view. When the world comes to an end there is cosmic turbulance, monsters break free from their fetters and the gods have to fight their adversaries in a battle, which ends with their death. The world is then destroyed and reborn and a new generation of gods take over.

When looking for mentions of Ragnarǫk in the Old Norse text corpus the results are rather meagre. The sources that refer to Ragnarǫk are Snorra-Edda and a few Eddic and skaldic poems, most of which only refer to one or two eschatological events. Only Gylfaginning and Vǫluspá present the Ragnarǫk myth as a coherent and elaborate narrative and discussions of Ragnarǫk and the end of time thus rely mostly on these two sources.

This paper will discuss whether there is a concensus in the sources on what the concept of Ragnarǫk is. A comparison of the distribution of the single elements between all the available sources will allow for some conclusions of their centrality in the Ragnarǫk myth.

The focus will also be on how these elements have been formatted into different texts and forms of literature, either in isolated form or merged and how the worldview and religious ideology of the Christian mythographers may have played a part in how they were formatted. As well as whether the medieval Christian mindset of the impending doom may have contributed to how the myth was portrayed.

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Open

The Two Faces of Ritual: Óðinn and the Mead of Poetry

The basic thesis of this paper is the comparison between two different Old Norse myths of Óðinn's acquisition of the Sacred Mead. The author argues that these two myths can be explained as two aspects of the same process – initiation – related to one another in a principally new way. The proposed interpretation is then reflected and the possible applications and wider theoretical significance is considered.

According to the first narrative (*Hávamál* 138-141) Óðinn hung for nine nights on the World Tree in an inhibited state of passivity and deprivation and after this trial he was allowed to receive the Sacred Mead. According to the second narrative (*Hávamál* 104-110; *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 6) Óðinn went on a long and colourful adventure with many episodes, during which he changed his form several times and encountered various characters. Using his cunning and ability to transform himself he won at the end the same Sacred Mead.

Both myths have three basic features in common: the frame setting is a difficult trial of the hero; the main character is the supreme god Óðinn; and the acquired treasure is the Mead of Poetry. In all other respects the two stories seem to be completely dissimilar: the first one being a static vision, an esoteric experience of self-sacrifice and the second one being a dynamic colourful adventure reminding of a folktale.

The central argument of the paper is that these two myths can be explained as two aspects of the same process, the two accounts being necessary complements to each other. However the structural relationship between the two narratives is of a peculiar nature corresponding to the "internal" and "external" aspects of ritual experience and to several other binary concepts that are shown to be present already as established emic categories of the Old Norse culture. Thus Óðinn's self-hanging corresponds to the factual level of an initiatory ritual, whereas Óðinn's extravagant adventures and metamorphoses correspond to the extatic perspective experienced internally by the initiand.

The main thesis is supplemented by theoretical epilegomena, where the problems and limits of intra-cultural and inter-cultural comparisons and identifications are discussed and also where the consequences of the analysis and the interpretation are reflected and the possible applications and wider theoretical significance is considered, especially the new perspective on the relationship between double-aspected ritual and myth in the case of initiatory scenarios.

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Open

Hjálmar hugumstóri and Andri: Two *Märchensaga* protagonists in 19th c. rímur

The Late Middle Ages in Iceland saw a flowering of *fornaldar sögur* – in Early Modern Times mistakenly believed to bet he oldest type of sagas - and *riddara sögur,* for which Glauser coined the term *Märchensagas,* as they have no connection with historical reality and are characterised by a free flow of phantasy, whether heroic fighting, geography or supernatural elements are concerned. The same period saw the flowering of rímur, which combined two indigenous literary traditions, the saga-type narrative and the poetic vocabulary and metrics of skaldic poetry. But while sagas continued to be copied and read, new rímur cycles kept being produced, reaching new heights in the 19th century, despite the efforts of the literary and cultural establishment to banish them as derivative and artificial. Märchensaga stories were the favourite topics of rímur.
The story of Hjalmar hugumstóri, who with his friend Örvar-Oddr defeats, on the island of Samsö, the evil berserk Angantýr and his eleven brothers but dies himself from his wounds, sending Oddr to Uppsala to tell his fiancée, King Yngve´s daughter Ingibjörg, who dies of grief, is well known from *Hervarar saga* and also figures in *Örvar-Odds saga*. The story, with a young fighter rescuing a princess from a monster, has riddara sögur features and a lot of Romantic potential. *Rímnatal* lists 12 ríma treatments from the 19th century, most of them only as one ríma, although running up to 230 stanzas. The one extensive treatment of the story was the cycle of 11 rímur Hallgrímur Jónsson composed in 1857, and as they were printed in 1859, they had a chance to reach a wider public. Rímur appearing in print was a great exception until the 20th century, but that had happened in 1834 with the 24 *Rímur af Andra jarli* composed by the priest Hannes Bjarnason and the farmer Gísli Konráðsson. My purpose is to compare the two cycles and to show that Hallgrímur must have been influenced by his reading of *Andra rímur,* both in the presentation of characters and incidents and in a common store of kenningar.

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Constructing Space

Genre, Spatiality and Textualization of Supernatural Encounters in Sagas of Icelanders

In my paper, I will explore some examples of how stories of supernatural events and encounters with the otherworld are presented in the sagas of Icelanders. Rather than treating such episodes as purely fictional inventions of the saga authors, I will consider texts as interfaces of negotiation between different belief systems that – in addition to everything else – have the function of culturalization or 'making sense' of various kinds of supernatural experience. This means asking the question of how stories of supernatural encounters, even if they originally reflected some kind of "authentic" experience of the otherworld, might have been transformed and reinterpreted when transmitted in oral tradition, and ultimately what happened to them when they were written down in versions that became more or less fixed (textualized). In the larger framework of sagas, such stories are cast in literary modes or genres such as conversion narrative, premonition, conveying of wisdom etc, re-framing the oral narrative and how it is interpreted. A close reading of sagas can nevertheless produce information about categories relevant to how supernatural encounters were conceived and conceptualized in general. These abstract categories include, but are not limited to: continuity, discontinuity, otherness, sameness, rationalization and mystification. The information produced by this analysis can serve as a basis for further analytical models of rhetorical strategies for examining the construction, uses and relative valorization of such categories in the saga texts.
I will particularly focus on the interaction between genre and spatiality in the sagas' treatment of supernatural encounters, trying to establish where and in what kind of spaces such events take place, and whether there is any correlation between spatial features and the encounters' literary functions (genre). Of course, a short presentation only allows a selective and cursory treatment, but the analytical models developed here may provide a framework for analogical research in the future.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Of Bodies and Being: A Critical Reading of *Sigurðar saga þögla*

The original *riddarasögur* show a strong focus on royal courts and the noble humans inhabiting them, as well as on the wilderness outside this court through which the hero travels during his adventure. This (apparent) opposition between court and wilderness had been noted by Glauser (1983) and Boklund (1977), yet recent scholarship (Lambertus 2013; Schäfke 2013) has rightly challenged a complete opposition. Instead, Assmann & Assmann's ideas about constructing identity and alterity and the role of space in this process increasingly employed.
Some original *riddarasögur* explore such ideas about perceived boundaries of narrative space and identity also in relation to bodies. The present paper offers a contextualised close reading of *Sigurðar saga þögla*, a saga in which bodies play a vital part in constructing and mediating identity. *Sigurðar saga þögla* in fact shows an especially critical engagement with the courtly/non-courtly divide in relation to various bodies: the king's son Sigurðr is not fully accepted in the royal household because of his (perceived) inability to speak, and his brothers' status as royals appears problematic after their bodies are severely maimed. Furthermore, Sigurðr's encounter with two troll-women during an adventure leads to a reassessment of the categories by which a courtly identity may be established, as they strangely mirror instead of openly contradict courtly personality. Bodies are thus integral in mediating identity but also in critically assessing the lines along which it is established. The paper examines how the bodies are discursively constructed within the text and assessed within the narrated world, thus consciously foregrounding their inherent mediality. In further contextualising the close reading of the saga with sociological theories of bodies and identity construction, the paper will highlight the complexity and ingenuity with which a hitherto underappreciated saga genre can engage with issues about its own narrated world.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Mothers in Mounds: An Overlooked Piece of Evidence in Connection with the Worship of *Dísir* in *Egils Saga Skallagrímssonar*

Dísir are accepted by many scholars to represent dead foremothers who were widely known and celebrated in Scandinavia. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the activities revolving around them were at least initially linked to gravemounds. Written evidence confirming that the rituals and celebrations dedicated to the *dísir* actually took place at gravemounds has, however, hitherto been lacking. This paper suggests a reinterpretation of a *lausavísa* contained in *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* (ch. 44, p. 108, st. 8) which arguably supplies a small but significant piece of such written evidence. A man who dutifully organises a *dísablót* in the saga appears to be called a worshipper of gravemounds in the *lausavísa*. This is expressed in a phrase which is rendered *kumbla brjótr* ('breaker of cairns', i.e. 'grave-plunderer') in existing editions of the stanza. It is argued that this form of the text – used in modern editions and translations of *Egils saga*, going back to Finnur Jónsson's *Den Norsk-Islandske Skjaldediktning* B collection – represents only one possible reading of the manuscript sources. Examination of the surviving manuscripts containing the stanza demonstrates that in the majority of them the word *brjótr* does not actually occur. These include both *Möðruvallabók* and *Wolfenbüttelbuch*, which are the main sources. (The late *Ketilsbók* is a possible exception; however, there the word is abbreviated and the portion of the older manuscript on which it is thought to have been based has not survived). Instead, the word that is used alongside *kumbl* is *bljótr*, which might be related to the verb *blóta* 'to worship with sacrifice' and which, albeit rare, might be connected to similar forms that occur elsewhere; possible evidence for such a connection will be considered in the paper. The indication is thus that the name used by Egill is not a reference to a gravemound-breaker, but to a gravemound-worshipper, which is the phrase on which some early translations were based (e.g. Green 1893), and which considering the context of the chapter – the *dísablót* – is reasonable.
In this paper I will give a summary of the story in *Egils saga* and an overview of how this verse has been interpreted in previous scholarship, followed by a survey of the manuscripts that contain the relevant stanza. Although small, this piece of evidence is important as it supports the logical yet hitherto undocumented idea that the *dísir* were seen as dead ancestors whose cult had once been associated with gravemounds.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Eddic Emotion and Eddic Audiences

'What were the consequences, for instance, of having Middle English feelings, as distinct from Anglo-Norman, Welsh, French, or Latin ones?', asks Sarah McNamer (2007, 248). Or, indeed, Old Norse feelings? If, as McNamer suggests, language-specific emotional systems exist, then at the micro-level they must be constituted of specific lexis, lexical clusters or other kinds of patterning; at the macro-level they occur in 'emotion-episodes', within 'emotion-contexts'. And, my focus here, can we describe eddic emotion as a subset of McNamer's hypothetical Old Norse feelings? If we set out to map them, what kinds of conceptual tools do we need? This paper will attempt a preliminary survey for the mapping enterprise: charting some fundamental distinctions and probing the usefulness of some relevant methodologies.

I will argue (following Larrington 2001) that textual emotion-episodes originate with a sensory or perceptual stimulus which is then cognitively processed by the character. Emotion is registered in embodied reaction and, critically in eddic poetry, in speech, very often indeed in speech acts or performatives. Such speech-acts make something happen in the textual world, but they also exemplify a poetics of emotion – imagery systems, lexical clusters, syntactic or dialogic dislocation – which produce the poem's aesthetic effect on its audience.

How should audiences respond to the kinds of emotional display which are performed in eddic poetry? This paper will investigate the leads given within eddic texts, and within texts (such as fornaldarsögur) which contain and respond to eddic poems. Thus the Huns weep at the pathos of the deaths of Guðrún's children; the gods respond in highly various ways to the accusations of Loki in *Lokasenna*, or, within the prose frameworks of the fornaldarsögur, men and women respond to the 'death-songs' of doomed heroes. Serving as mirror characters (to borrow the useful terminology of Brandsma 2006), these text-internal audiences model possible audience reactions to the poetry they hear and provide us with some evidence for what may have been considered normative emotional responses for the poems' audiences, in the thirteenth-century (and later) contexts in which eddic poetry is preserved. The paper concludes by asking whether there are ways in which the poetics of feelings might produce varying responses in different kinds of performance contexts and whether interesting gaps may be opened up between the intradiegetic expression of feeling and the cognition of the audience, particularly when effects such as dramatic irony or anticipation are at stake. Such investigation may provide a firmer basis for the construction of the eddic emotional system.

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Constructing Space

"Hvat veldr at þér eruð svá starsýnir á fjallit?": Landscape and Architectural Space in *Þjalar-Jóns saga*

Þjalar-Jóns saga exists, according to the 'Stories for All Time: The Icelandic Fornaldarsögur' project website, in 46 manuscript witnesses. The earliest of these is Perg. 4to nr. 6 (Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm) from c.1400, although the text there is defective and amounts to just over 13 chapters out of 29. Two editions have been published (Gunnlaugur Þórðarson's from 1857; Louisa Frederika Tan-Haverhorst's from 1939), but no translation in any language has ever been made. Perhaps this accounts for its relative neglect: it is somewhat hackneyed to say so, but critical analysis of this saga amounts to but a few paragraphs in scattered articles.

Classed tentatively as something between *fornaldarsaga* and *riddarasaga*, the story tells of Eiríkr, son of the king of Rudoborg (Rouen), and his encounter with a mysterious stranger, Gestr, later revealed to be the eponymous Þjalar-Jón. Together they set out on a mission, Eiríkr having fallen in love with Jón's sister, after seeing a lifelike doll made in her image. Their quest, which becomes mingled with the recuperation of Jón's lost patrimony, brings them into conflict with the usurper Róðbert. The basic narrative is hardly original, but its execution is both idiosyncratic and, I would argue, highly entertaining.

My paper will look at a number of scenes from the saga where landscape and architectural space take centre stage. Although it may seem to be self-evident that there is a clear distinction between the natural backdrop against which events happen and the constructed edifices where they may take place, the author frequently blurs that distinction, repeatedly emphasising the characters' ability to impact upon topograpy just as much as manmade surroundings. This occurs, for example, in the description of the construction of a mountain highway across an impenetrable plateau using a proto-bulldozer, the excavation of subterranean tunnels for discreet entrance and exit of bedchambers, the implementation of a water regulation system and ship-building yard within a hollow mountain and the storming of the evil Róðbert's impenetrable and labyrinthine tower. The detailed attention given to these elements, some of them unique in saga-literature, within an otherwise action-packed romp reveals a fascination on the part of the author for the ways in which people can interact with their surroundings. It also amounts to a conceptual realignment of the potentialities of landscape and for landscaping, as well as the exploitation of new and uncharted spaces, narrative and otherwise. I hope to show that, in this respect at least, *Þjalar-Jóns saga* is more than worthy of our attention.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Disfigured but not Damned: The Burial of Body Parts in Old Icelandic *Grágás*

Old Norse laws in their Christian sections go to lengths to prescribe the proper handling and preparation of the dead for burial – who, where, at what times, and by whom. These stipulations imply a wholeness of bodies. What about parts thereof? One wonders, for instance, just how Icelandic society processed the profusion of limbs generated during the bloody conflicts of *Sturlunga saga*.
Medieval Iceland's legal theorists appear to have considered this eventuality. Among *Grágás'* laws pertaining to the conveyance and burial of the dead, we find the following:

> K § 262 vm lik song: Ef finz af like cristins manz at syngva scal lík söng allan yfir ef ser merki á hvart verit hevir carl maðr eða kona. Sva scal scipa et sama ef menn vita vist af hvers liki er þat er fundit er þott eigi se merki a hvart verit hafe karl eða kona nema noccot hafe þes verit um hag hans at fyrir þær sacir scyli eigi syngia licsöng yfir like hans. (Finsen Ib 1852, 215-216).

Despite what appears to be a straightforward provision for performing Christian ceremony over a bodily fragment, a slew of questions, nonetheless, arise. For example, if a part is to be buried, where was the rest of the body? Was the person, whose body part was found, dead? Or, were the dismembered pieces of the living also accorded rites? This paper examines this rather unusual Icelandic law in the context of bodily reintegration and redemption associated with the Last Judgement. In particular, I consider whether this *Grágás* law reflects the End-of-Days doctrine referred to as the Byzantine Last Judgement, a surprising connection identified by Selma Jónsdóttir (1959) in her analysis of medieval wood panels from the farm at Bjarnastaðahlíð, North Iceland.

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Constructing Space

"Ertu ei sá Oddr er fór til Bjarmalands fyrir lǫngu?": Places and the Construction of *Ǫrvar-Odds saga*

During his 300 year lifespan, Oddr, the hero of *Ǫrvar-Odds saga*, has plenty of time to travel widely, to the point where his travels are something that define him as a person. His saga, a *fornaldarsaga*, is concerned with recounting his travels and battles along the way, and the action is set in a variety of different places, including Permia, Ireland, Sweden, France, Jordan and Giantland, to name but a few. Space, or rather, movement through it, is thus a key element in the narration of the saga. Oddr's travels are told twice: once in the saga prose and a second time in poetry at the end of the saga. This concluding poem is Oddr's death song, a long poem he extemporises as he lies dying. The death song provides the whole story of the saga and summarises the action. This paper uses the double telling of the travels as a tool with which to investigate the construction of the saga.

I plan to chart the order of appearance of places mentioned in the prose of the saga, and compare it with the order of travel as recounted in the poem. It is interesting to note that stanzas from the concluding death song are cited as quotations in the prose of the saga. I will argue in my paper that this longer poem of Ǫrvar-Oddr's death song at the end of the saga has roots throughout the whole of the saga prose, and as such its stanzas form a backbone for the saga's construction. I contend that the saga seems to be composed around and on the basis of the long death song, and that it is possible that the poetry could be older than the prose and could have been known in oral tradition. This early dating of the material that makes up the saga is supported by the existence of links and parallels between episodes in the saga and the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus, a 12th century work thought to have been based in part on Icelandic oral tradition. The iteration of the travels in the poem would have been a means to give structure to the prose saga, whilst the saga prose allowed for more expansive narration of the concise information provided in the verses.

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Constructing Space

Digital Sagas – Medieval Hypertexts

In October 2014, a new resource for the study of the *Íslendingasögur* – the online Icelandic Saga Map – was launched at http://sagamap.hi.is. The Icelandic Saga Map is intended as a tool to enable specialists and non-specialists alike to 'read' the *Íslendingasögur* from a spatial perspective. On the map/text interface, places named in the sagas are geo-tagged and hyper-linked to their occurrences in the saga texts. Points of geographical intersection or overlap between the sagas are thus clearly illustrated and the extent to which individual sagas should be considered part of a bigger saga network or 'immanent' whole (following Carol Clover and Gísli Sigurðsson's use of the term, originally taken from John Miles Foley's work) that extends across the whole country, rather than as discrete narrative entities, is emphasised. Pop-up information boxes supply references to discussion about places or issues with regard to their identification. Another layer illustrates the provenance of manuscripts containing *Íslendingasögur* texts.

The Icelandic Saga Map is one part of a larger research project in which I am investigating modes of literary transmission in Iceland from the medieval period to modern times. The hypothesis I am developing is that the ways in which the *Íslendingasögur* were written into, and 'lived' in the landscapes in which their action is set (via place-names and oral retellings triggered by topographical features) were – until the 20th century – just as important with regard to their transmission as their written, textual dissemination in parchment and paper manuscripts. The Icelandic Saga Map is a useful tool in this research for the way that it encourages networked rather than linear or fixed-path reading, and opens up space for backwards-and-forwards dialogue over space and through time. This kind of hyper-textual dynamic reading (see Bolter 2001) is arguably closer to the experience of those Icelanders who read or consumed the sagas around Iceland (both indoors and while on the move from one place to another) over time.

In this paper, I will introduce the Icelandic Saga Map and comment briefly on how Digital Humanities resources can provide new perspectives on established research topics, such as that of transmission. Using hypertext theory as one theoretical point of departure, and taking a couple of sagas as illustrative examples, I will argue for the importance of appreciating the landscape-based preservation and transmission of these narratives in the landscape in parallel to that on parchment and paper, and explore the implications of this.

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Constructing Space

The Concept of the Border Area in Edda and Saga

A border between countries or regions is rarely conceived as a border line in Old Norse texts but usually as a fairly large, wild and uncivilized area where few people live and almost anything can happen. In Eddic poems and *fornaldarsögur* it is sometimes a dark forest called Mirkwood *(Myrkviðr)* or a dangerous water, difficult to cross. In *konungasögur* and *Íslendingasögur* it is often a borderland *(landamæri)* such as the area around Göta älv *(Gautelfr)* which in the Middle Ages separated the three countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden from each other. It can also be a regional border area such as Tiveden or Kolmården, the large forests which separate regions in Sweden from each other.
The paper will describe and analyse some of the mythical and literary motifs connected with these border areas, for example meetings to settle conflicts, or the difficulties of *landvarnarmenn* entrusted with the responsibility of guarding ther border. In the analysis a distinction introduced by the historian Dick Harrison between "microspace", i.e. the space known by the medieval individual, and "macrospace", i.e. the unknown space outside that area, will be discussed.

Jeff Love, Stockholm University, Sweden

Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

The Medieval Nordic Legal Dictionary (Project Presentation)

The Medieval Nordic Legal Dictionary (MNLD) is a collaborative project based at the University of Stockholm begun in March 2014. Its goal is the production of an enhanced glossary of terminology (ca. 6000-8000 terms) appearing in medieval legal texts composed and utilized in mainland Scandinavia, Gotland, the Faroes and Iceland. The dictionary is an extension of the Medieval Nordic Laws (MNL) project, a consortium of translators and legal experts working to provide English translations of provincial law codes from Sweden, Denmark and Norway. These, along with earlier translations of legal texts from Iceland and the Faroes, constitute the corpus from which the dictionary draws its headwords. Both MNL and MNLD have been conceived with a general audience of academic readership in mind, but we anticipate that the results of both projects will be of particular interest to anyone who engages with the medieval languages and literatures of Northern Europe.

Selected entries in the MNLD will be furnished with brief encyclopedic articles. As the work will encompass legal material from several regions and, to a lesser extent, several time periods, much of the encyclopedic content will be dedicated to explanations of how certain terms vary in usage between areas.

The project presentation will include a brief summary of the theoretical principles underlying the dictionary, screenshots from the software being used to compile data (a Microsoft Access database) and some sample entries. MNLD is expected to be completed at the end of 2017, and the dictionary will be published by Routledge as part of the MNL series.

Lorenzo Lozzi Gallo, University of Bari, Italy

Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Geographical competence over Italy in *Mírmans saga*

In medieval literature, the name "Apulia" and its equivalent in the vulgar languages (such as Norse *Púl*) are usually taken to indicate rather the whole Mezzogiorno than the Italian region (Lozzi Gallo 2012).
Since the High Middle Ages, Scandinavians knew of *Púl* from pilgrims such as Nikulás af Munkaþverá and Sigurðr Jórsalafari, and from soldiers such as Haraldr hárðráði (Lozzi Gallo 2011); especially Sigurðr's visit to Sicily under Roger II's early dominion may have triggered a corresponding interest in Scandinavian geography as it is shown in the work of Al-Idrisi, King Roger's geographer.
Normans and their successors, the last Hohenstaufens, concurred to shape a fabulous image of *Púl* marked by "orientalist" prejudices, richness, multiculturalism, classical heritage, heathen (in fact, mostly Saracen) legacy – and danger. Scandinavians had an extremely vague and intriguiging image of the Mezzogiorno, such as in the so-called matter of Aspromonte (similar to the matter of Spain, but hardly as popular as the former in the European Middle Ages, glorifying the liberation of Southern Italy from the Saracenes) that ended up in the *Karlamagnússaga*. Some later sagas could even confuse *Púl* with *Pólen,* following a trend from late medieval German literature (Lozzi Gallo 2011).
One saga, though, displays a deeper knowledge of Italy and its Mezzogiorno: the *Mírmans saga*. Some would even see it as the translation of a lost French work (Glauser), while others would rather criticize the idea (Driscoll).
The saga is set in 'ancient times', where the author happily mixes up emperor Nero and King Clovis of France, King Æthelred of England and Wilhelm of Sicily. Compared to this utterly confused historical setting, the geographic data is far more accurate.
The saga contains some stirring details about Italy that call for a good knowledge, for instance *Mírmans saga* contains an early reference to Otranto and Brindisi – cities that had been important till the French conquest of the Mezzogiorno in the later 13th century, when the new rulers made Naples the centre of their Kingdom and the Apulian cities were marginalised.
Some details, though, point to a longer transition: for instance the capitale of Sicily is named *Valerína:* this deformation of the name *Palermo* (Old French *Palerne*) must have occured through a German mediation.
Even if the saga is to be considered authentical Norse material, then, we may assume that it must have been based on continental geographical lore, possibly transmitted with the 'matter of Aspromonte'.

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Magnús Hauksson, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany

Constructing Space

Elaborierte und reduzierte Topographie des Erinnerns als erzählerisches Element in den *Guðmundar sögur biskups*

Der Lebenslauf des Bischofs Guðmundur Arason wird von häufigen Reisen und Umherziehen von einem Ort zu anderem geprägt. Die Versionen GA, GB und GC (bezüglich der Verhältnisse der *Guðmundar sögur* untereinander und zu ihren Quellen wird auf Stefán Karlsson 1985 und 1986 verwiesen) haben alle gemeinsam, dass sie genau festhalten, wo sich bestimmte Begebenheiten ereignet haben, wo Guðmundur sich zu bestimmten Zeiten aufgehalten hat und welche Reisen er wann unternahm. Hier ist die räumliche Einordnung der Ereignisse sicherlich ein wesentliches Element beim Strukturieren der Erzählung. Da der Text ursprünglich auf persönlichen Erinnerungen und mündlichen Überlieferungen basiert, ist die Annahme naheliegend, dass die Topographie der Ereignisse eine bedeutende Rolle bei ihrem Memorieren durch die Gewährspersonen gespielt hat. (Glauser behandelt Erinnerungsräume und narrative Funktionalisierung von Raum in der Sagaliteratur in Glauser 2006 und 2011. Seine Ausführungen sind der Anstoß für meine Überlegungen). In den Mirakeln der GB und GC werden die Ereignisse ebenfalls größtenteils an bestimmten Orten angesiedelt. Dagegen wird in GD auf sie meistens verzichtet, sowohl in der Vita als auch in den Mirakeln, und die Formulierungen in Bezug darauf, wo sich Ereignisse abgespielt haben, sind oft sehr allgemein gehalten und so gestaltet, als ob die Worte an einen Leser gerichtet werden, von dem man nicht erwarten kann, dass er die Landschaft und die Umgebung kennt. Eine Erklärung ist sehr wahrscheinlich hierin zu finden: Es ist schon öfters vermutet worden, dass Arngrímur Brandsson seine Guðmundar saga (GD) für ausländische Leser geschrieben hat. Arngrímur schätzte es offensichtlich so ein, dass für die Leser im Vatikan (oder eventuell anderswo im Ausland) andere Sachverhalte wesentlicher wären als genaue Ortsangaben, mit denen die potenziellen Leser wenig anfangen konnten. Gottgefälliges Leben und Taten, die Guðmundurs Heiligkeit demonstrierten, wo auch immer sie umgesetzt wurden, wogen schwerer.
In anderer Hinsicht kann man auch aus dem Vergleich der *Guðmundar sögur* sehen, dass die genaue räumliche Ansiedlung der Ereignisse ein sehr zentraler Bestandteil der Erzählstruktur der *Biskupasögur* ist. Es ist zu beachten, dass die *Guðmundar sögur* auf Quellen aufbauen, die man eindeutig als säkulare Geschichtsschreibung einstufen kann (dieses prägt auch die *Prestssaga Guðmundar*, obwohl andere Züge dort ebenfalls zum Tragen kommen). Die Prägung der Texte der einzelnen Guðmundar sögur durch die Quellen ist unterschiedlich deutlich, in GA ganz klar zu erkennen, wie auch in den Abschnitten der GB, die auf *Prestssaga*, *Hrafns saga* und *Íslendinga saga* aufbauen. In GB, noch deutlicher aber in GC, kann man Bestrebungen erkennen, die darauf hindeuten, dass die Verfasser das Ziel hatten, eine Heiligenlegende zu schreiben. Unabhängig davon, wie stark an der Form säkularer Historiographie oder Legendarik der Text orientiert ist, die Topographie des Erinnerns wird in diesen Versionen jeweils beibehalten. Erst als

Arngrímur Brandsson sich anschickt, eine Vita Guðmundurs für ein ausländisches Publikum zu schreiben, entschließt er sich die Ortsangaben zu reduzieren.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

The Poetic Genesis of Old Icelandic Literature

This paper is an outline of an ongoing book project. In the paper, I provide examples of how the poetic tradition has been instrumental to forming the canon of Old Icelandic literature, such as Snorri's *Edda*, sagas of Icelanders, and kings' sagas. The genres that differ most from what we encounter in European literature are also the genres that have come to define what Old Icelandic literature is. The originality of these genres corresponds to a strong poetic presence, whereas texts in which poetry plays little or no part tend to be closer to the mainstream of European literary output. For this and other reasons, it would seem that the poetic tradition was sufficiently strong to act as a catalyst when European impulses reached Iceland, resulting in new literary forms and stylistic preferences. The process, though, was more complex than first meets the eye: Latin learning bolstered traditional poetics and provided it with tools with which it could, in turn, transform the very Latin influences of which it had first benefitted.
The paper focuses on the form of sagas and of Snorri's *Edda*. The vast majority of sagas of Icelanders and kings' sagas are prosimetrical in form. In Latin literature, the twelfth century saw the greatest surge in prosimetra in historical narrative (Laurentius von Durham, *Consolatio de morte amici*, ed. by Kindermann, 70–74; Ziolkowski, 56–57). The record of known Icelandic works, where the form appears to emerge around 1200, as well as the composition of pseudonymous poetry for the sagas, shows that the prosimetrum was not taken over outright from oral tradition. Latin prosimetrum thus seems a likely giver. By contrast, though, the functions of poetic quotation in Icelandic prosimetra differ radically from those of Latin literature, which implies that the native poetic tradition dictated the outcome. I suggest a solution to this problem and discuss its possible implications for the narrative style of the sagas. Snorri's *Edda*, on the other hand, draws on a tradition of grammatical studies of poetry from the mid-twelfth century on (Guðrún Nordal, 19–40). The normativity and methodology of that tradition was shaped according to Latin models, but the poetry itself remained traditional or traditionalizing, and this tension resulted in a work which on several accounts is an anomaly within European literature.

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Margrét Eggertsdóttir, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Reykjavík, Iceland

Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Das vierundsechzigste Manuskript. Die nachmittelalterliche Überlieferung von *Njáls saga* in der *Gullskinna*-Tradition

Der Text von *Njáls saga*, dem literarischen Höhepunkt der isländischen Familiensaga, ist in insgesamt 63 (mittelalterlichen und nachmittelalterlichen) Handschriften überliefert. Im Mittelpunkt des Beitrags soll allerdings eine weitere, heute verschollene Handschrift stehen, die unter der Bezeichnung *Gullskinna* als Quelle von Textvarianten angeführt wird, die sich in den Marginalien der von Jón Erlendsson im 17. Jahrhundert für Bischof Brynjólfur Sveinsson produzierten Papierhandschrift AM 134 fol. finden.
In einem kürzlich abgeschlossenen Forschungsprojekt an der Handschriftenabteilung des Árni-Magnússon-Instituts in Reykjavík konnte gezeigt werden (Hall, Zeevaert) dass sich mindestens 26 der insgesamt 45 nachmittelalterlichen Papierhandschriften der *Gullskinna*-Klasse zurechnen lassen. Anders als für die moderne Rezeption, die anhand von Editionen erfolgt, die sich mit *Reykjabók* (AM 468 4to) beziehungsweise *Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol.) auf zwei Pergamentcodices des 14. Jahrhunderts stützen, ist also für die nachmittelalterliche Überlieferung die in *Gullskinna* überlieferte Gestalt der Saga dominierend. Diese nachmittelalterliche Überlieferung ist bisher nur unzureichend untersucht. Eine Forschergruppe an der Handschriftenabteilung des Árni-Magnússon-Instituts für isländische Studien hat deshalb in Zusammenarbeit mit Alaric Hall (University of Leeds) damit begonnen, Daten zu diesen Handschriften zu sammeln und auszuwerten. Der Vortrag soll die Arbeitsweise und erste Ergebnisse dieses Projekts vorstellen.
Margrét Eggertsdóttir untersucht Raum und Umfeld der nachmitterlichen Textüberlieferung der Saga mit Schwerpunkt auf den geographischen Beziehungen zwischen verschiedenen Manuskripten und Schreibern, Auftraggebern und Rezipienten der Handschriften.
Weitere Projektteile beschäftigen sich mit der Erstellung eines Handschriftenstemmas (Alaric Hall, University of Leeds), die sich auf eine computergestützte Analyse von Textvarianten stützt sowie eine Analyse verschiedener morphologischer und syntaktischer Variabeln in den unterschiedlichen Manuskripten (Ludger Zeevaert).
Die Bewältigung der zu bearbeitenden Textmenge (der Umfang alleine der nachmittelalterlichen Überlieferung der Saga beläuft sich auf ca. 4,5 Millionen Wörter) stellt eine enorme Herausforderung dar. Das Projekt stützt sich deshalb zum einen auf am Handschrifteninstitut in Reykjavík von Ludger Zeevaert entwickelte Methoden der halbautomatischen morphologischen und syntaktischen Annotation und des computergestützten Vergleichs der alignierten XML-Transkriptionen, zum anderen aber auch auf die Einbeziehung von freiwilligen Transkribenten in *workshops*, also *crowdfounding*, auf das im Beitrag eingegangen wird.
Erste Untersuchungen zeigen, dass unterschiedliche Schreiber den Konflikt zwischen einer möglichst getreuen Textüberlieferung und einer Anpassung an die eigene Sprache

und das zeitgenössische Publikum unterschiedlich lösen. Die endgültigen Ergebnisse des Projekts werden somit zu einer besseren Bewertung der Gültigkeit der nachmittelalterlichen Sagaüberlieferung als linguistische, literarische und kulturelle Zeugnisse beitragen.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Sacred space, creative space? Fourteenth-century Skálholt

The field of Old Norse-Icelandic studies has a strong tradition of rooting literary production in time, space and authorship. The production and reproduction of religious literature have been associated with ecclesiastical institutions, and special attention has been paid to the manuscript production of the Helgafell convent or the hagiography written at the Northern Benedictine convents of Þingeyrar and Munkaþverá. In all of these cases, foreign input was taken up creatively. Combined with the Icelandic conditions, it led to a recognisable, time- and space-bound profile. Eventually, individuals have been identified as motors of creativity, such as Arngrímr Brandsson, Brandr Jónsson or, most prominently, Bergr Sokkason.

For the episcopal see at Skálholt, a similar profile is difficult, yet not impossible to establish, since fires and post-reformation re-use destroyed both manuscripts and other possible evidence. Surviving fragments and narrative sources, however, demonstrate that Skálholt experienced a cultural impetus in the first half of the fourteenth century, thanks among others to the efforts of Bishop Jón Halldórsson, a Norwegian Dominican with a strong background in European Latin learning. Texts such as *Clárus saga,* annotated up-to-date theological manuscripts and liturgical contributions such as the Thorlak *officium* testify to a learned space with a distinct intellectual and creative character.

In this paper, I will characterise Skálholt and the people, texts and ideas connected to it on the basis of surviving evidence, and position it in national and international cultural landscapes.

Michael Matter, University of Basel, Switzerland

Jon Leifs und das Normannische in der Musik

Die Mythen und Sagas des Nordens erfuhren auch in der Musik eine breite Rezeption. Eine erste Blüte erfolgte in den dänischen Singspielen, wo die entsprechenden Sujets ab dem späten 18. Jahrhundert vermehrt aufgegriffen wurden und im 19. Jahrhundert auch der Identitätsstiftung dienten. So galt beispielsweise J. P. E. Hartmanns Chorwerk „Vølvens spådom“ (1872) als Kulmination seines ‚nordischen Tons‘ und ist heute als nationales Kulturgut verankert. Auch Edvard Grieg und Jean Sibelius bedienten sich immer wieder beim Fundus nordischer Mythologie und Geschichte.
Eine radikalere Lösung als seine Vorgänger suchte jedoch der isländische Komponist Jón Leifs. Das kompositorische Schaffen eines Grieg oder Sibelius ging ihm noch zu wenig weit, war für ihn nicht ‚nordisch‘ genug. Sein Ziel war es, das ursprüngliche „Normannische“ in der Kunst zu re-etablieren und zu seiner Entfaltung zu bringen. Auf der Basis der altisländischen Literatur wollte er so der Kunstmusik zu einem wahren nordischen Charakter verhelfen. Seine Inspiration bezog Leifs dabei nicht nur aus den Sagas, sondern gleichermassen aus der isländischen Volksmusik und aus der unvergleichlichen Landschaft Islands. Seine Überlegungen zu diesem Erneuerungsvorhaben legte er in mehreren Schriften und Aufsätzen um 1900 geradezu programmatisch dar und wandte sich dabei immer wieder gegen eine ‚südliche‘ und damit verweichlichte Kunstauffassung. Künstlerischer Ausdruck dieses Strebens sind besonders Werke wie das dreiteilige Oratorium „Edda“ (1935–40, 1966, 1964–68) oder die fünfsätzige Saga Symphonie (1941).
Um Jón Leifs Saga-Rezeption näher zu ergründen, gilt es einerseits eine Analyse seiner kompositorischen Verarbeitung der altisländischen Literatur vorzunehmen, andererseits aber auch, seine Denkmechanismen sowie seine Musikästhetik zu kontextualisieren, also in den allgemeinen historisch-politischen Diskurs über Kultur und Norden sowie über Musik und Moderne zu stellen.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

The Siward narrative in *Vita et Passio Waldevi* and Old Icelandic *fornaldarsaga* tradition

It has often been noted that Latin narratives connected to the career of Siward Earl of Northumbria have many points of contact with Scandinavian narrative tradition (Olrik, 217, Wright, 129). It is almost a scholarly consensus that a now-lost *Siwards saga* was developed in Northumbria and later influenced the account given in the Latin manuscript *Vita et Passio Waldevi*, a hagiographic narrative about Earl Waltheof, where the life of his father Siward is also related. The Latin text's Icelandic parallels, however, have not yet received much elaboration from the literary point of view, despite consistent historical interest in the figures of Siward and Waltheof.
This paper aims to analyse the 'saga-like' features of the Siward narrative preserved in Latin sources, considering these features in the framework of Icelandic saga literature. Specifically, it looks at the account of Siward's youth from *Vita et Passio Waldevi*, which shares much in common with *fornaldarsaga* tradition – as opposed to the narrative about Siward's later deeds that rather resemble *konungasögur* and *Íslendingasögur* (Olrik, 218). It is suggested in the paper that the motifs of Siward's bear parentage, his dragon fight and his encounter with an Odinic old man form a complex which has notable connections to *Böðvars þáttr* in *Hrólfs saga kraka*. Although previous scholarship tended to consider these three motifs as individually borrowed from Scandinavian tradition or hagiographical literature (Olrik, 237, Parker, 490-491, Wright, 133-134), it is very likely that the narrative about Siward's youth had been based on a previously existing narrative scheme. The presence of this scheme in a thirteenth-century manuscript also testifies to an early origin of the narrative underlying *Böðvars þáttr* – and, therefore, could shed new light on the dating of *Hrólfs saga kraka*, so difficult to date in its known form.

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Constructing space in skaldic poetry and in the Anglo-Saxon poem on the Redemption of the Five Boroughs

The paper attempts to reveal the affinities between skaldic panegyric poetry and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle poem on the *Redemption of the Five Boroughs* for the year 942. The poem celebrates King Edmund's conquest of Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, Stamford, which brought back under Wessex what had been lost to Óláfr Guðfriðarson and thus restored the spatial wholeness of the realm.
The thirteen lines of the Chronicle poem are overburdened with toponyms and ethnonyms, which has prompted scholars to suggest that its main function is mnemonic (*O'Brien O'Keefe* 1990: 123). However comparison with skaldic *drápur* points to a communicative aim in the lists of toponyms and ethnonyms, whose function is to mark the restoration of the space epitomizing the historical significance of Edmund's victory. The motif of glory, present in the Chronicle poem (Edmund is constructing space for his *weorþscipe*), is topical for skaldic *drápur* (cf. Einarr skálaglamm's *Vellekla*: Ok forsnjallir fellu / fúrs í Þróttar skúrum, / (þat fær þjóðar snytri) / þrír jarls synir (tírar), *SkP I 297. 11. 5-8*), in which it is usually intertwined with the motif of spatial conquest (cf. Eyjolfr dáðaskald's *Bandadrápa:* Dregr land at mun banda / Eirekr und sik geira, *SkP I 468. 9. 1-2*) or protection (cf. Haukr Valdísarson's *Íslendingadrápa:* Vǫrðu hauðr þás, hǫ́ðu / hlyrar tveir, með […] fleinglygg, Aðalsteini, B I 541, 9). As in the Chronicle poem, all three motifs are united in Sighvat's *Knútsdrápa* (e.g. Létat af jǫfurr / (ætt manna fannsk) / Jótlands etask / ílendr (at því). // Vildi foldar / fæst rǫ́n Dana / hlífskjǫldr hafa. / Hǫfuðfremstr jǫfurr, *SkP I 660. 9. 1-8*), which bears thematic, situational, structural and functional affinity with the former. Both consist of two syntactically, thematically and formally independent units; both use ring structure (starting and ending in the denotation of the glorified ruler: *jǫfurr* and *Eadmund cyning* respectively); in both narrative details are omitted, actions are compressed through asyndetic constructions, increasing the effect of simultaneity; in both the communicative area is narrowed under the pressure of formal markers, such as toponyms and ethnonyms; in both the events are reported for the sake of augmenting the value of the victories.
As in *Knútsdrápa*, the function of the Chronicle poem is to glorify the ruler by formally reconstructing the space. Of many heroic deeds performed by Edmund, who has conquered Northumbria and Cumbria, only one, the redemption of the Five Boroughs, was considered important enough to become the subject of poetry. The poem, which unlike most Anglo-Saxon poetry is centred not on a past but on a contemporary event, is *encomium regis*, traditional for skaldic poetry. *The Redemption of the Five Boroughs* can be called an Anglo-Saxon equivalent of *erfidrápa,* directed to posterity, ensuring eternal fame for the ruler who reconstructed the spatial identity of his kingdom.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Paranormal contagion of natural environment and the collapsing self in Íslendingasögur

In dialogue with the conference theme of 'Sagas and Space', this paper proposes to investigate the sagas' depicted sensory experiences of discomfort, stress, and bodily disruption under the paranormal influences within the cognitive reality of medieval Iceland. The natural physical environment of medieval Iceland will be approached as a zone of paranormal radiation which exercises alterity upon those who are 'exposed' to it. Having established this dynamic, I propose to extend it to 'acts of nature' and severe weather phenomena as depicted in *Íslendingasögur.* A particular temporal/spatial conjuntion appears to emerge as the most potent perceived locus of paranormal activity. Given that the revenant hauntings reported in the sagas (*Eyrbyggja, Grettla, Laxdæla*) increase dramatically with the arrival of winter with its storms, winds, and blizzards, the said phenomena is not confined to remote inaccessible wilderness but encroaches directly into the human midst. In violation of the commonly-posited 'center versus periphery' model, the closer to home it occurs the greater its perceived magnitude and terror. If cattle may have been imagined to be 'troll-ridden' by a locally-based hostile being of otherness, may not the inclement weather be likewise 'hijacked' by the same (or different) power – and what implications does it hold for the human residents of such area?

Building upon my previous research on how this (super)natural landscape dynamic in *Íslendingasögur* was perceived to have impacted the medieval Icelandic conceptions of death and otherworld (Mayburd 2014), the present paper will focus on tracing the psychological and physiological effects of this dynamic upon the living characters trapped in this paranormal vortex out of which there is no escape. The revenant hauntings in the three sagas mentioned above will serve as case study to that purpose. Of especial interest to the proposed investigation is the concept of open body schema, borrowed from neuroscience (used effectively in Stark 2006 and Kanerva 2014), as well as the phenomenon of the dissolving self – an estrangement from oneself which occurs when all the boundaries, including perceived physical boundaries between body and environment, begin to collapse. These concepts' potential applicability and relevance to the medieval Icelandic situation may enrich our understanding of how medieval Icelandic bodies were perceived and how they functioned (or malfunctioned) under stress limit situations.

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Constructing Space

The Influence of the Coming of Christianity on the Depiction of the Weather in the Sagas of Icelanders

Most of the action in the Sagas of Icelanders takes place in pre-Conversion days. It is, therefore, surprising to find that references to the weather in these works show the influence of Christian thought.

There are, in fact, five main areas in which the influence of Christianity can be detected: in the use of weather-miracles to deliver a Christian message; in references to and attitudes towards pagan weather-gods; in the depiction (or non-depiction) of performances of weather-magic; in the depiction (or non-depiction) of the climate of the Settlement Era; in differing views of what constitutes heroic behaviour when faced with challenging meteorological conditions in pre- and post-Conversion days.

The first area – the delivery of an overt Christian message – is rare and is usually found only in sagas in which the action continues into post-Conversion days. More frequent are references to pagan weather-gods, but, in this case, there is no clear consensus among the authors of the Sagas of Icelanders as to which of the pagan gods were actually responsible for storms and similar phenomena. In addition, the pagan gods are usually depicted as malevolent, in contrast to the benevolent Christian God who calms storms and saves men and crops. Moreover, remarks about both weather-gods and weather-magic are nearly always put into the mouths of characters in the sagas. On the rare occasions when witches are actually shown performing weather-magic, their actions are, with one exception, directed towards evil; the writer evidently wants us to know that God was not behind the storm or the sudden thaw. A benevolent Christian God did not, however, fit in with historical reality: the weather in the Settlement Era was actually milder than it was by the time Christianity had become well established in Iceland and the sagas were being set down in writing (Markús A. Einarsson, 679), a fact that most saga-authors avoid mentioning. The last area in which the influence of Christianity is seen is in authors' differing depictions of what constitutes heroic behaviour: in pre-Conversion days, defying the weather, usually by crossing an icy river, is the mark of a hero; in Christian days, the opposite applies, and those who put too much trust in their own strength perish.

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Constructing Space

Hliðskjálf: Tool of the gods

In the prose introductions to the eddic poems *Grímnismál* and *Skírnismál* members of the Æsir look out from Hliðskjálf, which in both texts is a place on which the Æsir sit. According to *Gylfaginning*, a narrative in which Hliðskjálf plays an important role, it is Óðinn's high seat or throne, and in one instance it is said to be a place or space that is entered by the god Freyr.

In all three sources Hliðskjálf is a narrative device that drives the story forward. In the prose introduction to *Grímnismál* it is said that Óðinn and his wife Frigg sat on Hliðskjálf and looked out over all of the worlds. From where they sat they could see their foster-children Agnarr and Geirröðr and started to compare them, which, in turn, results in Óðinn's journey to the court of Geirröðr. In the prose introduction to *Skírnismál* it is not Óðinn and Frigg, but Freyr who has seated himself on Hliðskjálf. He looks out into Jötunheimr and sees the beautiful giantess Gerðr, who he falls in love with from seeing her radiance. In both cases the prose frameworks instigate the action that follows in the poems. In *Gylfaginning*, after the death of Baldr, it is from Hliðskjálf that Óðinn sees where Loki is hiding, and the Æsir then pursue and eventually entrap him. Loki's binding by the Æsir in *Gylfaginning* is the final event to occur before the details of Ragnarök are narrated.

The speaker intends to situate Hliðskjálf in the spatial context of Ásgarðr and the Norse mythological cosmos, discuss how it is used as a tool by the Æsir to see far into the distance, and finally comment on its instrumental role as a narrative element in the mythological sources. The respective associations of Óðinn, Frigg, and Freyr with the place, as those who look out from Hliðskjálf, further informs our understanding of the divine hierarchy. Óðinn is able to use Hliðskjálf to find the gravest offender of the gods, Loki, and he and Frigg also share the view as they debate over the life-paths of their foster children. Freyr, however, becomes lovesick as a result of his view from the high seat, and although Skírnir is successful in wooing Gerðr on Freyr's behalf, or so we hear in *Gylfaginning*, the god gives up his sword in exchange for Skírnir's services, a possession he will miss at Ragnarök. Along with his sorrow, the loss of his sword suggests that perhaps Freyr receives some form of reprimand for his use of Hliðskjálf, a place that is in other instances used by Óðinn, and in one case shared between Óðinn and Frigg. In sum, the conclusion of the paper intends to comment on the fatal consequences for the Æsir of possessing such a powerful tool, not a tool that can be held, but one that is a place.

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Constructing Space

The geography of *Krákumál* and Saxo's Book IX

The construction of geographical space in *Krákumál* was an important consideration (among others) for Gustav Storm in putting forward his theory as to the origins of the poem (Storm, 196-200). Storm believed that *Krákumál* was originally a Danish poem composed in the mid C12th and later revised in Iceland, in the form in which it is preserved, no earlier than the second half of the C13th. Part of Storm's reason for this view was that the exploits of the legendary Viking hero Ragnarr loðbrók, as recorded in *Krákumál* (which is placed in Ragnarr's mouth), seemed to him to correspond geographically to those of the same legendary figure, Regnerus Lothbrog, as narrated by Saxo Grammaticus (d. c. 1220) in Book IX of his *Gesta Danorum*. Both works, according to Storm, record first the hero's exploits in Russia, then his battles in Denmark, and finally his voyages to the British Isles. This is at best an oversimplification. Finnur Jónsson, who saw the poem as originating in Iceland c. 1200, in fact argued, with a no less careful analysis than Storm's of the two works in question, that the similarities between them, at least as far as their location of events was concerned, were few and slight (Finnur Jónsson, 177-80). While much of the geography of both works remains shrouded in mystery, it is now possible, with the help of Karsten Friis-Jensen's edition of Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*, and my own edition of *Krákumál* (forthcoming in vol. VIII of the series *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages*), to make rather more solidly based statements about their location of events than was possible for either Storm or Finnur. This is what I shall aim to do in my paper, with a view to clarifying not only the interrelationship of *Krákumál* and Saxo's Book IX, but also the relationship of those two works to the Icelandic prose narratives *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* and *Ragnarssona þáttr*.

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Constructing Space

The representation of space in the Old Norse *Vitas patrum*

Space plays an important role in the narrative structure of *Vitas patrum* (*VP*; I use here the internationally preferred title variant) through its various functions: 1) the place the monks and hermits have decided to withdraw to in order to spend their existence in penitence; 2) the setting for the intervention of the 'fantastic' (intended as the 'marvellous' pertaining to the Christian sphere) in their lives; 3) the itinerary of Jerome and his companions in the section corresponding to *Historia monachorum* (*VP I* according to the Old Norse tradition). The aim of this paper is to investigate how these aspects are treated in the Old Norse version of the text, which originated and circulated in a cultural milieu where the spatial location represented, roughly corresponding to the Egyptian and Middle Eastern desert, constituted an exotic scenario. In doing this, focus will be placed on the following questions: 1) is the geographical distance and 'otherness' of space simply taken for granted or does it influence the reception of the text, e.g. in the translation of relevant passages? 2) what specific elements does this text offer to the Old Norse culture as a contribution to the knowledge and vision of this place?

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Mediality

The Mediality of Otherness: Reading the *Íslendingasögur* through the Monsters They Bear

If one looks at the concepts of monstrosity and mediality from an etymological point of view, one soon realises that the two have much in common. *Medium* means, of course, 'middle', but also 'mediacy', and the means by which information is conveyed, or knowledge imparted. The *monstrum* is 'that which points', 'the portent', something that carries, embodies, signifies meaning beyond its own existence. Moreover, the monster has been described as the middle term between the subject and the object, as that which breaks down the boundaries of self and other because it itself is not limited to one category. If the monster thus 'inhabits the gap between the time of upheaval that created it and the moment into which it is received' (Cohen, 4), it indeed resembles the medium that bridges this gap. For bridges are sometimes guarded by trolls.

The concept of mediality has so far often been regarded on a rather concrete, material level, addressing the role of media both in the modern and the pre-modern world, and of how these media changed over time. If, however, one looks at the more abstract significance of mediality, a significance that operates on the level of literature and narrative patterns, this opens up the possibility of considering those potential media that convey meaning within the world of the narrative, and also within the cultural framework in which this narrative was created. If the concept of medality shifts our gaze from the medium itself to that which is mediated and to the way this is done, to the situation in-between subject and object, between addresser and addressee, then I think it is possible to lift mediality from its concrete application and those media we can observe, and apply it to more abstract approaches and to those media we have to interpret. Thus, the monster as something that bears and conveys meaning could probably be regarded as a medium, and the situation in which it arises as medial. Moreover, if we look at it from a different angle, it also becomes clear that monsters could be considered an expression of the conscious re-writing and re-interpreting of the Icelandic past taking place in the sagas, and that they are therefore part of the saga writers' mediation of that past for the purposes of the present.

In this paper, I propose to combine the concepts of mediality and monstrosity and to investigate to what extent the one can help us understand the other, as well as how these concepts can help us – in their combined application – to understand the *Íslendingasögur* and their role as re-workings of the Icelandic past. For this purpose, I will look at the thematic concerns explored through the use of different types of (potentially) monstrous figures, and examine particularly in what way the monster is used in the narrative to convey meaning that goes beyond the text itself.

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The Death of Baldr, Again

The various accounts of Baldr's death are well-known. The god's prescient nightmares, death by projectile, and near rescue from Hel were a central concern of mythological texts produced in medieval Scandinavia, and have been variously interpreted by scholars. In an important study of the Baldr myth, Jan de Vries argued that Baldr's death was considered the first death, and that the failed attempt to weep him out of Hel established death's inevitability and finality. De Vries also proposed that the Baldr narrative relates in myth form a ritual of initiation into Óðinn's warrior cult.
Why does Baldr not go to Valhǫll when he dies? As depicted in *Snorra Edda*, his death fits the model for numerous other sacrifices in Old Norse literature, where tenure in Valhǫll is the intended outcome. The obvious objection is that Baldr is not killed in battle. However, *Ynglinga saga* relates that Njǫrðr had himself marked with a spear on his deathbed in order to gain entrance to Valhǫll; surely if this were a reliable method, Baldr's death by Æsir firing squad would count. In de Vries' theory of the ritual background of the myth, Váli, the brother sired by Óðinn to avenge Baldr, is Baldr reborn as a warrior; that is to say, the 'slain' initiate is reborn as a member of Óðinn's cult. The Baldr myth is rich and complex, and lends itself to a number of interpretations. I would like to approach the question of Baldr's absence from Valhǫll from another angle.
This paper sets out to analyze this inconsistency, if it is such, in the account of Baldr's death with reference to an Indo-European myth of the first man to die. In the myth, the man is sacrificed by his brother, and his body is used to create the world. As the first man to die, he is the first man to arrive in the realm of the dead, and therefore becomes the ruler of the afterlife. Jaan Puhvel (1975) and Bruce Lincoln (1975, 1981) have demonstrated that this myth, which is attested in Indic, Iranian, and Irish sources, lies behind the story of the founding of Rome; they also point to Germanic reflexes of the myth, citing Ymir in Norse sources, and Tuisto and Mannus in Tacitus' *Germania*. This myth may help to shed light on important features of Baldr's myth, such as his afterlife in Hel, and his death at his brother's hands.

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Víkingarvísur or Konungavísur? On the potential role of the skaldic Viking encomia

The skaldic poems praising Viking exploits of their heroes, have been attracting scholarly attention for a long time, particularly those traditionally dated to the late 10th and early 11th century, describing expeditions to the British Isles led by the soon-to-be kings of Norway, Óláfr Tryggvason and Óláfr (the Saint) Haraldsson. The analysis I propose in the present paper concerns the following of the poems: Hallfreðr Ottarsson's *Óláfsdrápa*, Sigvatr Þórðarson's *Víkingarvísur* and Óttar svarti's *Hǫfuðlausn*.
So far, both their content and the contexts of their composition have served mainly to emphasize their historical reliability and to confront them with other contemporary, predominantly Anglo-Saxon, accounts (Poole 1987). Other important and recent voices focused on the stylistic correlations between particular poems of the group and pointed to the common memory of the Viking past as a decisive factor for the skalds trying to secure their role as chroniclers of events, competing with their peers to secure their artistic primacy in establishing a tradition (Jesch 2006, Grove 2009). My paper is an attempt to look at these poems from a different perspective. Although once again it is defined by the circumstances of their composition and distribution, it seems that the distinguished past was to serve the present purposes. I will argue that descriptions of the Viking exploits (in the British Isles and beyond) appeared as excellent opportunities to underline the royal attributes of the praised heroes. Their abilities to subdue a people on a given territory by means of tribute, to defend their subjects and their land, to fight against law-breakers and evildoers appear as equally important as their military skills. Thus, in my opinion, the skalds listed above, were not only supposed to record and preserve memory of the past events. Rather, their primal task was to convince their audiences that the praised hero was fully predestined and prepared to gain royal power. Consequently, the poems in question could be seen as artistic responses to the royal claims of their heroes and as important ideological tools supporting the introduction of new regimes. The much better historically established (Townend 2001) skaldic encomia praising Knútr inn riki in England seem to give a very valuable point of reference for the poems analyzed in detail in this paper.

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Mediality

Literacy frames in the *contemporary sagas*

The medial change from orality to literacy is also reflected in the Latin terminology, which distinguishes between *scribere* 'to write down' and *dictare* 'to dictate, compose'. Thus *scribere* does not contain the component 'to compose' as e.g. in Modern English *to write*. Composing a text was a purely oral act until the Late Middle Ages. There is no comparable research on the Old Icelandic terminology. In my master's thesis on the *Sturlunga saga*, I found the following terms: the verb *rita* for writing down, *setja saman* for composing and *segja fyrir* for both dictating and composing. Even so, I could not exclude the component of composing in all attestations of *rita*. In many cases it is difficult to determine the exact meanings of these verbs.

Although historical semantics teaches us to analyse a word's meaning in its various contexts, it offers only a few methodical instruments for that purpose. Semantic field theory has the disadvantage that semantic fields are often imperfect and show gaps and overlaps. Thus verbs like *setja saman* or *segja fyrir* do not necessarily exclude the component 'to compose' of the verb *rita*.

How can we better understand medieval terminologies? It is essential to understand the meaning of these words in order to understand medieval literacy. One semantic theory, which focuses on understanding, is the frame semantics established by Charles J. Fillmore, which has rarely been used in historical linguistics. Frame semantics does not ask what a word means but what one has to know in order to understand the meaning of a word. Words evoke a cognitive frame in the mind. E.g. the sentence *He writes a letter to his friend* evokes such a frame. Not all parts of a frame must be explicitly expressed. Most of the spoken language is implicit. The explicit parts of the frame are called fillers and the implicit parts, slots. The fillers in this sentence are the sender, the letter and the receiver. The slots are among others the material, contents, language, place, time, or how the letter is transported, by which we understand the modern postal system. These frames are culturally determined so that one only understands them if one has the necessary background knowledge. In order to understand medieval vocabulary, we must know the respective frames. We do not see the slots in the medieval sources. The frame of the sentence *Hann ritaði bréf til biskups* 'He wrote the letter to the bishop' looks completely different because the sender hardly ever wrote the letter himself. In this case the meaning of *rita* cannot be confined to 'to write down'. In my analysis I want to extend the focus from the single lexeme to the context. The meaning of the verb in *rita bréf til e-s* 'to write a letter to s.o.' is not the same as in *rita e-t á bréf* 'to write sth. on a letter'. To which frames belong lexemes like *rita*, *lesa*, *bók* or *bréf* and what can they reveal about the medieval literacy? I use the contemporary sagas as my corpus because they are particularly rich in attestations of literacy. Frame semantics enables us to analyse attestations systematically in their contexts, focusing on understanding and avoiding reduction to simple lexical meanings. This approach will enable a new view of medieval medial change.

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Constructing Space

The Scale of 'Private' Religions in Pre-Christian Scandinavia: Theoretical and Empirical Questions

This paper seeks to contribute to the conference theme of 'space' by examining the construction of small-scale religious spaces in the pre-Christian era. A study of the extent to which 'private' religiosity, cult practice, and belief systems can be identified in the textual and archaeological corpora of the Late Iron Age, this paper will explore theoretical concerns surrounding the identification of religious practices as 'private' as opposed to 'public', and the implications of readings of Viking-Age social spaces being based on twentieth-century terminology. Interpretations of small-scale, personal and/or localised religious activities such as *blót*, *veizla*, dramatic performance, and prayer will be proposed through engagement with relevant academic debate on topics such as the construction of sacral social spaces (see Murphy, and references therein), the organisation of religion and religious activities within the communal landscape (e.g. Brink, Fabech), and methodological approaches to Viking-Age cultural phenomena (e.g. various chapters in Raudvere & Shjødt).

Such interpretations will necessarily draw on both textual accounts of localised pre-Christian religious activity (such as *Guta saga*, *Flateyjarbók*, *Kristni saga*, and the *Austrfararvísur*) and archaeological studies of small-scale sacral sites from across the Nordic cultural region, seeking to combine multiple sets of empirical data into a small number of representative models. It is hoped that these findings will allow the proposal of some general conclusions regarding the nature of 'private' cult in the pre-Christian era: how common *was* 'private' religion, as opposed to its 'public' counterpart? How different were these two forms of cult practice? Who practiced 'privately'? What did 'private' practitioners seek to attain? Were some supernatural forces – particular gods, spirits, or ancestors – called on more or less than others? Were particular forms of religious practice characteristic of 'private' cult?

Part of a larger project concerned with public and private expressions of cultic and religious activity in the latter centuries of Scandinavia's pre-Christian Iron Age, it is hoped that this paper's findings will prove applicable not only for studies of household religiosity or farmstead-cult, but also in comparison: with the practice of religion in the public sphere, at magnates' halls or the *þing* site; or, in later periods, with the establishment of the first churches on private grounds during the early stages of the Christianisation.

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The authenticity of Gísli's verse

The strophes that *Gísla saga Súrssonar* assigns to its main character Gísli (35 complete stanzas) are amongst the most debated within the corpus of skaldic verse in the sagas of Icelanders. Opinions have shifted from the one extreme to the other. Finnur Jónsson (1903) was convinced that all strophes in the saga were authentic, whereas others, as Gabriel Turville-Petre (1944) and Peter Foote (1963), have argued for a much later date of composition, most likely in the latter part of the 12th century. Amongst the arguments that have been proposed are on the one side (Jónsson) discrepancies between the strophes and the prose, linguistic forms that belong to the oldest layer of skaldic poetry, as well as more subjective opinions about their poetic quality and the individuality expressed in them. On the other side, scholars (Turville-Petre, Foote) have pointed to the influence from heroic eddic poems such as *Guðrúnarkviða II*, the Christian sentiment of the dream-verses, and words in the kennings that can only be paralleled in poetry composed after 1100.

Few, especially in recent years (cf. Lethbridge 2012), have considered the possibility that the strophes in *Gísla saga* may be a mixture of authentic stanzas made by Gísli, and spurious stanzas made in connection with the writing of the saga, either by the saga author or by later redactors. This paper will argue that this is the most likely scenario, with a ratio of approximately two thirds authentic and one third inauthentic strophes. By combining a wide range of formal criteria drawn from metre, rhyme and linguistic forms, it will be demonstrated that it is possible to distinguish presumably authentic from spurious stanzas. In most instances, different formal criteria point in the same direction: Some stanzas tend to show several archaic features, whereas other stanzas show only younger features. Only on very rare occasions are archaic and young features found in one and the same stanza.

Further, it will be argued that the distribution of formally archaic and young stanzas is not random, but is probably predicated on needs that arose during the composition of the saga. In several instances, a sequence of three or four stanzas following each other in the saga show either archaic or young features only. Surprisingly, perhaps, do both the stanzas that are inspired by the Vǫlsungs' cycle (st. 11 and 12 in the saga), and many of the dream stanzas (e.g., st. 35–38 in the saga) clearly belong to the archaic group.

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Geschichte. Macht. Sinn. Sinnstiftung in altisländischer Literatur

Die existenziellen Krisen der *Sturlungaöld* werden in der Forschung heute unbestritten als ein gewichtiger Faktor in der Entstehung und Entwicklung altisländischer Literatur gewertet. Die Konfrontation zwischen isländischem Freiheitsdrang und norwegischem König ist gleichsam zum Topos geworden. Fraglich ist indes, ob mit dem Verweis auf eine isländische Identitätskrise die Situation aus literaturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive hinreichend erfasst ist. Anders gefragt: War es tatsächlich allein die problematische Beziehung zum norwegischen Herrscher, die zur literarischen Verarbeitung drängte? Möglicherweise war es die erschütternde Erfahrung bürgerkriegsähnlicher Zustände innerhalb des eigenen Landes, gar im familiären Rahmen, die noch eindringlicher nach dem ‚Sinn' dieser Geschehnisse fragen ließ.
Die Verarbeitung problematischer Erfahrungen, so die These, war in Island wesentlich an die Leistungsfähigkeit von Literatur geknüpft – nicht zuletzt in Ermangelung einer administrativen Infrastruktur vergleichbar derjenigen auf dem Kontinent. Die Frage ist aber, inwieweit literarische Sinnstiftung auf ein homogenisierendes Ganzes zielen muss. Diese Überzeugung wird in der mediävistischen Literaturwissenschaft meist stillschweigend vorausgesetzt, aber war es nicht vielleicht gerade das Dissonante und Kontingente von Geschichte, das die literarische Verarbeitung herausforderte – und damit literaturgeschichtlich zugleich eine Neuerung im mittelalterlichen Island anstieß? Die geschickte (bisweilen subtile) Verarbeitung sich widerstrebender Momente mag Gelehrten gar die Möglichkeit geboten haben, sich vor Zeitgenossen auszuzeichnen. Prominente Beinamen wie *inn fróði* deuten ja an, dass es im mittelalterlichen Island eine intellektuelle Elite gegeben hat, deren Urteil in diesen Fragen besondere Relevanz beigemessen wurde. Man wird daher in diesem literarischen Kommunikationsakt, ähnlich wie im Fall der *kenningar*, schließlich auch einen intellektuellen Wettstreit sehen dürfen. Der Ungebildete mochte Erzählungen zur reinen Unterhaltung (*skemtan*) beiwohnen, der Gebildete aber sollte nach ihrem Wahrheitsgehalt (*sannendi*) fragen – und wahr wäre dann das, was angesichts bedrohlich-problematischer Erfahrungen (temporär) Sinn stiftet.
Es scheint darin das wesentliche Potenzial von Literatur zu liegen: Literarische Texte können deshalb der Reflexion historischer Konstellationen dienen, weil sie diese nicht einfach beschreiben oder spezifizieren, sondern sie problematisieren, von bekannten Erfahrungsstrukturen bewusst abweichen. Was bedeutet das angesichts einer Krise, die grundlegende Werte der Gesellschaft bedrohte? Wie ist ‚Krise' – zwischen stereotyper Festschreibung und individueller Verarbeitung – im nordischen Mittelalter literarisch fassbar? Lassen sich narrative Muster plausibel machen, anhand derer literarisch produktive Isländer im 13. Jahrhundert die Unwägbarkeit ihrer Gegenwart sinnvoll zu machen suchten?
In meinem Vortrag, der im Rahmen meines Postdoc-Projekts am Árni Magnússon-Institut steht, will ich die skizzierte Fragestellung an konkreten Beispielen der

altisländischen Literatur diskutieren und damit nicht zuletzt die Leistungsfähigkeit literaturwissenschaftlicher Methoden für historisch-anthropologische Fragestellungen erproben.

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Constructing Space

Game of Thrones? The Icelandic *hásæti* as a space for political authority and social upheaval in a pre-state society

Uttryck för vem som ska sitta och vem som ska stå problematiseras i den fornisländska litteraturen. Det kan gälla situationer i vilka kunskap prövas och utmanas eller då relationer av annat slag än kunskapsmätning ställs på sin spets. Exempel på detta finns bland annat i den poetiska eddans dialogiska dikter och i islänningasagorna. Betydelsen av sittandet utspelas ofta i högsätet. I detta visar oftast en man prov på social och politisk förmåga eller oförmåga, men platsen används även för att utmana relationer av olika slag. Det handlar ofta om hierarkiska relationer mellan män, men högsätet som rumslighet ska för den skull inte betraktas som könsspecifik. Även kvinnor kan vara inblandade i en skildring om vem som ska sitta var i relation till högsätet. Högsätet utgör i sig en begränsad rumslighet, men kan ges en avgörande betydelse för relationer, makt och prestige. Sagalitteraturens högsätesepisoder är mestadels av underhållande karaktär och berättandet av dem kan tänkas ha ägt rum i det performativa sammanhang som har definierats som 'den dubbla scenen'. Syftet med mitt paper är att i första hand problematisera betydelsen av högsätet som en central plats för politisk makt och social tillhörighet i ett förstatligt organiserat samhälle, men med rötter i en fiktiv mytologisk kontext. I ett perspektiv över tid och med en förändrad maktstruktur kan högsätet som central rumslighet sannolikt ges en förändrad roll.

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Constructing Space

The war horns of Scandinavia. An account of musical horns in Scandinavian history, myth and legend

In this paper, I will present new theories about the musical horn and its functions in Scandinavian Iron Age and Viking Age society and include the significance of the horns in Old Norse mythology. I will also produce new and exciting archaeological evidence demonstrating that the use of musical horns may have been more widespread than earlier believed.

When historians and archaeologists investigate pre-historic Scandinavian history, the absence of music and sound is evident. Music is something that most historians do not really consider when they look into the past, but is quite important to our social history. Music and sound is a major part of all societies and by looking into our musical history and historical soundscape, it is possible to further our understanding of how the historical societies functioned.

During the Nordic Iron Age, there was a significant change in religious practises, burial rites and societal organisation. The famous bronze lurs, which dominates the archaeological finds from the later parts or the Nordic Bronze Age, disappears completely when the Iron Age begins and the tradition of musical horns was thought to have died out in Scandinavia. The only horns of religious value that have been found from this period are the golden horns in Denmark. However, recently there has been several finds of wooden horns that date to the Iron Age. The horns were found in dried out wells in Denmark and are believed to have functioned as a way of communication between villages and as signal of commands in battle and warnings about enemies.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

***Hamr* of the Old Norse body** (Project Presentation)

How should we imagine the body in Old Norse if we take into account the concept of *hamr*? Its primary meaning was skin, feathers and membranes covering a baby at birth. From the last mentioned probably originated the meanings of shape, form or image. Old Norse concept of *hamr* shows us a human being who can *víxla hömum* ('to change the shape or image'), i.e. acquire different physical forms - especially animal ones - with theirs various characteristic features, particularly strength. *Hamr* could occasionally get separated from its holder and move over large distances - and overcome by that limits of the real world of space and time - in the form of an animal or human being. Through composites such as *vera eigi einhamr* ('to have more shapes or images'), *hamrammr* ('to be able to change one´s shape') etc. we reach another meaning of this word: mind or soul, as in *vera sem hamstolin væri* ('to be without his or her soul or without own shape') or *hamslauss* ('a person out of his mind').
In contrast to other Germanic languages, it is just in Old Norse that *hamr* acquires also this spiritual meaning and expresses an idea of physically-based magical spirituality (Hasenfratz, 22). Excursion of the soul and change of the physical form merge then into one as in both cases the spiritual form (*hamr*) is revealed. The soul is deeply rooted in the body; if the soul is injured while fighting in another body, also its own body dies, although it could be very far away from the fight (Böldl, 110). Examples from *Hrolf saga Kraka* or *Eyrbyggja saga* and *Hávamál* illustrate that.
Difficulties we challenge defining what *hamr* was about reveals some basic differences in our concepts of matter and physical space. To understand that the same word could be used to refer to the outermost form and at the same time to the life force, to denote both the shape of a body and the shape of a soul, we have to develop another approach to both body and soul. If we look for modern concepts that can help us as they target at similar ideas, here in Switzerland we have to mention the ideas of the zoologist and anthropologist Adolf Portmann. He was convinced that the outermost aspect of a living being is a manifestation of *eigentliche Erscheinungen* ('phenomena proper') and that it opens a way to the innermost dimensions rising up from the inwardness of the being (Portmann, 57). Then we can understand that the form or image carries about certain features, it is not an external shape, but the individual's own, internal one.

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Constructing Space

Between Bog Bodies and High Halls. Changes in Spatial Focus and Religious Conceptions in the Pre-Christian North

In this paper, I will investigate changes in Pre-Christian Scandinavian Religions ('PCSR'), which seemingly took place in the middle of the first millennium CE. I shall scrutinise the change in spatial focus along with changes in religious conceptions as exemplified by a possible relationship between the *álfar* and the *Vanir*.
From 200-500 CE many social changes occurred in Southern Scandinavia. These changes were mainly brought on by war. The changes were not only on a societal level, but can also be seen in the religious sphere as noted by Fabech and Gunnell, among others. A new spatial focus in PCSR seems to have emerged in this period. The focus of the "old" *tribal religion* ('TR') on nature and local places (the periphery) seems to have been supplemented by the "new" *chiefdom religion* ('CR') with a focus on the ruler and the hall (the centre). This gave the ruler a new role in PCSR, which I will explore.
TR is the first of Bellah's five categories in his cultural evolutionary typology of religion. CR is my own proposal for amplification of the part of this typology spanning the same religions as Assmann's primary religions (31-45).
In addition to the different spatial foci of the two types of religion, there are many differences between them. The characteristics of TR include a cosmological universe often aimed at collectives of supernatural beings with a fluid identity and without a pantheon proper having been formed. CR features a mythic universe with a pantheon of individual, anthropomorphic gods. CR also seems to be permeated by the sacrality of the ruler. A sacrality, which in some instances is connected to incestuous relationships.
The transition between the two types of religion might be exemplified by a possible relationship between the *álfar* and the *Vanir*. It seems that both types of supernatural beings fill out the same area of function within the two particular religions – that of givers of fertility and well-being. Being a collective with fluid identities the *álfar* seem good representatives of TR. The *Vanir* are named, individual gods connected to the ruler and incest, thus seemingly good representatives of CR. Still being a collective of gods, this hints at continuity between the *álfar* and *Vanir*.
I will examine whether these elements could in fact serve as examples of change in PCSR in 200-500 CE.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

The Reception of the Reception. Practicing Viking Identities on the Prairies

After migrating to North America, Icelandic immigrants faced a social competition for a place in the hierarchy amongst other immigrant groups. In written sources, such as historiography, poetry, and literature, their constructed identity was built on ideas about Iceland's medieval past, where parallels were evidently sought from *Grænlendingasaga*, *Eiríks saga rauða*, and *Landnámabók*. The social identity based on the sagas and other medieval sources was not only used to justify the migration from Europe to North America, but also to create a space for the immigrant group in the New World. The reception of the sagas, how they were used to verify the existence of Icelanders in North America, as well as their positive image of the migration, is evident in historiography and literature, with an emphasis on settlement myths. This paper will shed light on the reception of the reception, i.e. how the community reacted in practicing their "Viking identity" in everyday life and around certain holidays, as well as how this "Viking identity" was shaped and reshaped with time and in new generations. Close attention will be given to the media's reception of the "Viking identity", how it was generated in reenactments, and how it appeared visually in the community.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Exegesis in Old Norse Translation and Versification

This paper will explore the translation of Latin texts into Old Norse verse in medieval Iceland, the relationship between translation and versification as processes of interpretation, and the social and cultural context of these exegetical interactions. This corpus of verse translations is small and distinctive, and has never been dealt with or fully defined as a corpus. Yet the importance of vernacular poetry to Icelandic textual culture is indisputable, and the use of that system of poetics to vernacularize Latin texts represents a unique and largely unexplored method of exegesis. Such interpretation through poetic translation suggests connections between the creation of authoritative textualized vernacularity, formal poetics and *grammatica*, and the understanding of and commentary on Latin texts. These connections represent important aspects of the learned culture of medieval Iceland.

This corpus includes most significantly the two Eddic poems *Hugvinnsmál*, the translation of the *Disticha Catonis*, and *Merlínusspá*, the translation of the *Prophetiae Merlini*, but also the essentially undefined body of skaldic poetry which translations, in some part, biblical and religious texts. Several verses in the *Fourth Grammatical Treatise* which are explicitly named as translations of biblical sources, suggesting the extent to which verse negotiated the relationship between languages.

These poems are all very distinct in length, content, and context: *Merlínusspá* is a very long piece of narrative political prophecy mixed with eschatology, dense with figurative language and allegory; *Hugvinnsmál* is somewhat shorter, a relatively straightforward and simple collection of brief moral precepts; the vernacular biblical poetry of the *Fourth Grammatical Treatise* are only a few brief stanzas imbedded in a prose discussion of Latin grammatical terminology, alongside many other types of poetry. The similarities and differences of such diverse texts, and their treatment of their Latin sources, can show how this methodology of poetic translation existed as a developing hermeneutical phenomenon which developed and changed in Iceland over the course of the middle ages.

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Open

Some Rare and Obscure Nicknames in *Landnámabók*

Landnámabók is by far the most fruitful onomastic text of the Scandinavian Middle Ages, and the large body of nicknames found there remains largely undiscussed, particularly those names whose meaning is unclear and origin obscure. The huge compendium of settlers and their genealogical history contains 517 nicknames of 709 total individuals bearing them (*Landnámabók*), and with such a large body of onomastic data in one place, it provides a better representative example of the various nicknames used and passed down in Old Norse society than anywhere else. The types of Old Norse nicknames in *Landnámabók*, as elsewhere in the literary corpus, vary from the profane to the most whimsical expressions of admiration or scorn. Several types of nicknames exist, from those describing physical features to mental characteristics or to one's deeds or habits. Derogatory nicknames in particular are more common, ranging from sexually-charged insults to descriptions of unflattering physical characteristics. They come in several grammatical forms, but they occur primarily as an adjective or a noun used to mark out a distinguishing feature of those bearing them.
Narrative explanations of nickname origins are useful as a tool to unravel their obscurity, but such explanations are frequently lacking or unreliable, and in *Landnámabók* fewer of them are explained than is typical in the closely-related *Íslendingasögur*. Nicknames ought to be transparent, and they must have been when they were coined, but for some reason, many of them are among the most opaque words in the language. Thus, the only way to uncover the lost meaning of many nicknames is to utilize the tools of etymology, a method which is not without pitfalls when used carelessly. As a representative selection of nicknames providing useful cultural data about Old Norse society but whose meaning is unclear or debated, the following nicknames in *Landnámabók* will be discussed: *beigaldi* ('fearsome; injured, sickly; coward?'), *beytill* ('horsetail [plant]; horse cock; show-off?'), *buna* ('bone shaft; clumsy foot; ungartered?'), *gufa* ('steam, vapor; laggard; imposing man?'), *herkja* ('one who scraps along noisily?'), *hrísi* ('brushwood; son begotten in the woods; giant?'), *parrak* ('bushy hair?') and *þrymr* ('loud noise; silent?'). While two reliable collections of Old Norse nicknames exist, one a dictionary by Lind (1920-21) and the other a long list of nicknames arranged according to semantic type by F. Jónsson (1907), the meaning of these names has remained uncertain. Naturally, other attempts of varying success have been made by the authors of Old Norse dictionaries and other scholars for some of them, and yet their meaning has not been adequately solved despite the availability of firmer answers. This sample of nicknames will serve as a good test case for an application of etymological method, and solutions to the original meaning of these eight nicknames will be given insomuchas it is possible to find them.

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Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

Were the Danes really so Bad in the Skaldic Art?

In the *Morkinskinna* version of *Sneglu-Halla þáttur*, Sneglu-Halli describes to the King of Norway the bad stanzas he offered to the ignorant King of England. Amongst the many features of these bad stanzas, Halli mentions that "*Verðrat drápa /með* ***Dönum*** *verri.*" (no *drápa* could be worse among the Danes), suggesting the Danes were reputedly so bad at composing *drápa*, if not so bad skalds altogether, that they could be seen as as commonplace reference for bad poetry. Knowing the mischievious and often mocking temper of Halli, which probably got him his nickname, it might be doubted that this affirmation is a trustworthy source of information about the quality of poetry by medieval Danes. Although it could be pure diffamation, the stanza does not rise any protest within the audience, as if the bad quality of Danish poetry were common knowledge. As the Latin juridic principle has it, "*Testis unus, testis nullus*" (One witness, no witness), this sole testimony is hardly sufficient to draw any conclusion about the quality of the Danish medieval poetry and poets. But a look at *Skáldatal* reveals that almost no Danish skald is mentionned, as if none had been considered good enough to be counted among these skaldic authorities. Commenting Halli's stanzas, Lee M. Hollander, in *The Skalds. A selection of Their Poems, With Introduction and Notes* (1947, 203) notes that: "It is not clear whether "Danes" stands here generically for "men", or whether it really refers to the Danes, amongst whom, it is true, we know of no real skald."

Our paper therefore aims at testing this apparent commonplace by looking into the skaldic corpus and the various scenes of sagas where Danes and poetry are referred to, in order to find confirmation or contradictory information. Our leading interrogation will thus focus on the reality of this bad reputation as well as on its origin, were this reputation confirmed.

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Constructing Space

Between kings and outlaws: a space for dissent in medieval Icelandic literature

Kings and outlaws stand at opposite ends of the legal spectrum. In medieval literature, whereas the monarchs are often portrayed as the embodiment of law, law-givers, law-menders and *Rex Iustus*, outlaws embody by nature the negation of legality. It is therefore expected that both figures are depicted as mutually antagonist. Moreover, kings are not only abstract figures of law, but figures of executive power, and so are able to either pardon or punish outlaws found in their territory. However, the relationship between kings and outlaws is much more complex, especially in the case of Iceland and its dealings (before and after the commonwealth) with a distant king. The Icelandic outlaws are neither pardoned nor executed by a kingly figure. On the contrary, they are depicted in encounters with the Norwegian king in several sagas.
Previous scholarship has emphasized that outlaw tales are often literary representations of peasant discontent towards an unjust authority, as classically exemplified by Robin Hood. The Icelandic cases have not been studied from this perspective, maybe due to the stateless nature of commonwealth-era Iceland. The aim of this paper is thus to explore the relationship between kings and outlaws as represented in the saga corpus in different spatial settings: Norway, Denmark, the Northern Isles and Iceland. This will contribute to disclose the underlying ideological stance behind the literary tradition of medieval Icelandic outlaw stories, by comparison and contrast with the previous research on the so-called "Matter of Greenwood" from England. Was the outlaw a realistic challenger to the king or was he only a literary figure used for anti-monarchic criticism in the sagas? Finally, the narrative construction of a space for dissenting discourse through the outlaw saga material will help to identify alternative systems of norms and sources of authority recognized by Icelanders.

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Open

'The Irish Dress Funny': An Analysis of Literary Motifs Concerning Ireland and the Irish in the Sagas of Icelanders and the Kings' sagas

As with all literary genres, a defining characteristic of the Sagas of Icelanders is the presence of certain recurring motifs. While many of these elements can be classified as traditional folk-tale motifs (Boberg 1966), there is another store of tropes which appear to have evolved specifically within the context of the saga narrative. The origins of these motifs are often obscure, but whether they stem from actual events and experiences, or represent pieces of knowledge garnered from other sources, over time they evolved into highly stylized elements, whose symbolic value in the narratives supersedes any literal quality they may once have represented.

This phenomenon can clearly be seen, for example, in the representation of Ireland and the Irish in the Sagas of Icelanders and the Kings' sagas. While the references to Ireland, the Irish people and Irish culture in this literature may have some historical basis, and at least suggest a certain level of cultural interaction between the Norse and Gaelic peoples, in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century saga narratives such knowledge has mostly been reduced to a series of recurring stock characters, stereotypes and tropes. After a brief, initial survey I have identified a number of distinct general motifs (and sub-categories), to which these tropes can be ascribed. For example, as the mode of Irish dress is often centered on as representative of the foreignness or strangeness of the Irish, I suggest that these instances could be classified under the heading the Irish dress strangely. Similarly, as the Irish in the sagas are frequently portrayed as being untrustworthy, we could group such instances under the pattern the Irish are treacherous. Of the more positive stereotypes of the Irish in the sagas, we can mention the recurrent motif the irish have special talents/knowledge, which would include, for example, the subcategory the irish are swift runners.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, will be to analyze the distribution, function, and (where possible) the origins of these and other recurring motifs concerning Ireland and the Irish in the above-mentioned genres, and evaluate the extent to which an extended taxonomy of such elements throughout the Old Norse-Icelandic corpus would contribute to the study of saga narratology.

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Constructing Space

The artifice of intimacy: eddic dialogues and the negotiation of space

Many eddic dialogues are arresting in their immediacy, as though Ásgarðr's security agents had wired Þórr for sound before he returned to his hall to confront the presumptuous dwarf planning to take the god's daughter away as his bride, or as if a drone equipped with a microphone arrived simultaneously with the valkyrie as she alighted next to Helgi Hjörvarðsson sitting mute on a burial-mound, in order to transmit their extraordinary conversation. Eddic poets traded on providing access to the most private, compromising and sensational conversations, held 'behind closed doors', either of a shared social space (*Lokasenna* is a striking example of the negotiation of exclusion from a communal feast) or within a very private space (take, for instance, the many scenes staged on a bed, or under a quilt, within the cycle of heroic poems). *Hávamál* in fact opens with a warning about passing through doors ('Gáttir allar, áðr gangi fram, / um skoðaz skyli') as it ventures into a locus that is both every space and the particular space of Hávi's hall, where the one-sided dialogue projects a place for the listener that, in the end, yields a recording that may or may not be useful ('allþǫrf ýta sonum, óþǫrf ýta sonum' *Háv* 164). The poem's incompleteness – the emptiness of the interlocutor's identity as well as the disjunctive connections between phases of the poem – nonetheless draws attention to the artifice of eddic dialogue, in particular its exploitation of inventive spaces and its fascination with conversations that would otherwise not have been overheard. The words of a god being burnt on a pyre (*Grm*), hanged from a tree (*Hav*); or a dead princess's tyrade against being hindered on her way to the afterworld (*Hlr*).

In this paper I will investigate the strategies used by eddic poets to present conversations to their audiences through the artful negotiation of space to provide the illusion of intimacy. Through dialogues, they composed conversations that exposed the inner workings of cultural traditions – the things that constituted the mythological and the legendary in relation to which their society defined itself. One strategy involved the intrepid poet hovering outside buildings where horrific tragedies were ongoing, reporting from the pathway (*Hamðismál*) or somehow, invisibly, from the charged space within the family home (*Guðrúnarhvǫt*). Eddic poets, for whom nothing was private, created spaces where the audience could move with the unfolding action, a space where inter-world transitions could be made within a line or two (*Vm* 4-5) or the social dimension of two people's lives could be deftly summoned up through a transposition to a different space in time: 'opt var sá leikr betri, þá er þau lint skyldu, optarr um faðmaz fyr ǫðlingum' (*Akv* 40). Another strategy involved dissolving a monologue into a scene of confrontation, such as when the *vǫlva* snaps out of her prophetic trance to confront her silent interlocutor, a conversation Óðinn's people might have preferred had not been recorded: 'hví freistið mín? / alt veit ek Óðinn, hvar þú auga falt' (*Vsp* 28).

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

The Aftermath of War in *Drottningar i Kungahälla* by Selma Lagerlöf (Project Presentation)

The geographically inspired Swedish author Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940) was a frequent visitor to family and friends in Kungälv in Bohuslän on the west coast of Sweden. The Region became the setting for a number of short stories and long narrative poems influenced by Old Norse Literature and her later pacifist novel, *Bannlyst* (1918; The Outcast). She re-mapped Kungälv's medieval past when it was known as Kungahälla and Bohuslän was called Viken and formed part of Norway in the following titles: *En vårstorm* (1894 and 1898); *Kungahällas fall* (1894) and the short story collection *Drottningar i Kungahälla* (1899; The Queens of Kungahälla).
Kungahälla (known as Konungahella in *Heimskringla*) was destroyed by the Wends as narrated by Snorri Sturluson in *Magnúss saga Blinda ok Harald Gilla* (c.1130-36) in *Heimskringla*. *På det Stora Kungahällas Grund* in *Drottningar i Kungahälla* charts a lost saga space that was wiped off the map by war. For there are no remains to be found of the splendours of medieval Kungahälla that lay at the mouth of the Göta älv (known as the Gaut Elf River in *Heimskringla*) where Sigurd Jorsalafarer, the Norwegian Crusader King built his royal castle and put a splinter of the Holy Cross in the Church to protect the land. The meeting place for the Kings of Sweden, Denmark and Norway and site of wars, peace summits and marriage unions has disappeared and been replaced by a Swedish rural idyll of a manor house surrounded by green trees and red barns.
The long narrative poem K*ungahällas Fall* and *Sigrid Storråda* and *Margareta Fredkulla* (the second and fourth stories in *Drottningar i Kungahälla*) all relate thematically. None of them describe the drama of the battle but concentrate on the aftermath, the suffering, the wreckage, the dead. The landscapes of war and conquest in *Óláfs saga tryggvasonar*, *Magnúss saga Berfoetts* and *Magnúss saga Blinda ok Harald Gilla* in Snorri's *Heimskringla* are retold from feminist and pacifist perspectives by the first woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1909.
This Paper discusses how Lagerlöf's feminism and pacifism makes her reinterpret the Old Norse sources in *Drottningar i Kungahälla*.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

From Rome to Iceland: The Legend of St Agnes in Old Norse / Icelandic

St Agnes was a Roman martyr living between the third and fourth century AD. Her cult was relatively popular in Continental Europe since the late antiquity and she was the object of a number of literary productions circulating in Medieval Europe, both in poetry and prose and both in Latin and in vernacular. Her legend was known in Iceland under the name of *Agnesar saga* at least from the second half of the twelfth century, when her cult was officially adopted, if not earlier than that. *Agnesar saga*, as the sagas of many of the numerous foreign saints venerated in Iceland, was translated from an original Latin work, allegedly BHL 156, the pseudo-Ambrose's *Passio Agnetis* (Foote, 27). The saga comes to us in several different versions (arguably three, *Agnesar saga meyjar I, II*, *III*), and is preserved in seven manuscripts (AM 429 12mo, AM 238 fol. XV, Stock. Perg. 2 fol., AM 235 fol., AM 233a fol., AM 238 fol. I, II), of which only one, AM 429 12mo, preserves the text in its entirety (Wolf, 21). Given that the cult of St Agnes in Iceland appears not to have been very popular – she was only co-patron in two churches (Cormack, 22) – and was restricted to the south-western part of the island, and also that in 1275 her feast day was omitted from the Holy Days of obligation in the diocese of Skálholt, it is interesting to see how *Agnesar saga* was still in circulation after this date. The manuscripts preserving it date, in fact, from the fourteenth century onwards. We must therefore ask, what is the relationship between the production of these texts and the cult of St Agnes? How was the legend of St Agnes received in Iceland? Was it adapted and revised to suit a specific purpose and audience? From where did the original Latin source reach Iceland? In order to answer these questions, one must first consider the relationships between the different Icelandic versions of the saga and between them and their Latin source or sources. An examination of the differences and similarities between them will provide a more definite picture of the sources and functions of the different versions of *Agnesar saga*, and this in turn will improve our understanding of the dynamics of circulation and reception of continental hagiographical texts in Iceland generally, as well as of those of the Icelandic cult of St. Agnes.

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Mediality

Distributed Reading: Formulaic Patterns and Communal Ideation in the Sagas of Icelanders
(Project Presentation)

I would like to galvanise an interest among the colleagues in collaborating on a project that aims to develop a reading methodology especially suited to traditional narratives such as the sagas. This methodology – 'distributed reading' – builds on Carol Clover's concept of the 'immanent saga' (1986), John Miles Foley's 'traditional referentiality' (1991) as well as my own work on distributed authorship (e.g. Ranković 2007) and the neglected generative or 'formulopoietic' aspect of traditional phrases, motifs and themes in the sagas of Icelanders (e.g. Ranković 2014).
Distributed reading would combine the classical close reading techniques with recent developments in 'distant reading' (Moretti 2013) or 'macroanalysis' (Jockers 2013). This would involve computer-assisted mapping and visualisation of networks of tensions in distancing between traditional saga formulae and their instances or employments in specific contexts, bound to both 'comply' and 'rebel' (in different degrees) against the expected usage. In this way any given part of a narrative would be read as breaking from its immediate context and being in a lively dialogue with similar instances within the corpus. Viewed from this perspective, traditional formulae lose the common association with clichés and emerge instead as aesthetically and semantically potent places acting as sites of communal identity formation where alternative social attitudes can be imaginatively played out and their consequences implicitly compared. The project would be supported by a set of custom-made computer applications that would provide continuous visual feedback of these tensions which could be conceived of as indices of a community making 'its mind' up about an issue/custom/social practice, with the visuals showing the possible vectors of communal contention. (A short demo of the prototype software is available at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QF9TrnKS3MA.)
To test the range and applicability of my methods and theories, the case studies would in addition to the sagas of Icelanders also include South Slavic epics, thus enabling numerous points of comparison: Norse/Slavonic, prose/verse, oral/orally-derived, traditional corpora/one singer's oeuvre, etc. Collaboration with colleagues working with different Old Norse material and other traditional literatures would be invaluable, both in terms of enabling further comparative perspectives and refinement of distributed reading techniques, and funding prospects. The result would be new theoretical and interpretative frameworks allowing for richer, orally informed readings of traditional narratives, with potentially significant implications for study of some of the more recent, digital products of communal distributed authorship.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Mythical Fiction in *Stúfs þáttr blinda*

Stúfs þáttr belongs among prose masterpieces of the European Middle Ages and is one of the most known examples of the Old Norse short narrative form, the so-called *þættir,* since it was the subject of an influential study by Björn M. Ólsen. However, *þættir* are not works homogeneous in terms of the type of narration, text structure or content: their heterogeneity escapes traditional methods of classification, which so far has made it impossible to contain them within the bounds of one genre.
The aim of this paper is to present *Stúfs þáttr* from the communicative perspective of narrative fiction that treats these so-called "short stories" outside the typical division lines set by history of genres and looks at them as texts taking part in the dialogue with reader and providing him/her with a set of clues allowing for an informed reading. In the case of *Stúfs þáttr* the typical structural arrangement of the story is reversed, which complicates its analysis and interpretation. However, the set of clues traceable in the text allow for an interpretation along the lines of what the eminent Polish literary scholar, Michal Glowinski calls mythical fiction. Even though at first glance the *þáttr* in question does not seem to present elements of the religious faith of the time, it is suffused with them and therefore requires a readerly response that takes these into consideration.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Nordic antiquity according to illuminated *Edda*-manuscripts from 18th century ÍB 299 4to and NKS 1867 4to

In early modern times, when book printing was the most popular medium to promote works of Nordic antiquity in Denmark and Sweden, the Icelandic tradition of manuscript production continued to live on. Since then the two major works to comprise Northern Mythology, *Prose Edda* and *Poetic Edda*, have been regarded as the combined testament on Norse Mythology. The texts of the manuscripts to be discussed in this paper are partly based on such printed books as P. H. Resen's *Edda Islandorum* (1665). In addition, some of the illuminations are based on printed plates like Thomas Bartholin's *Antiquitates danicæ*. Both manuscripts were illuminated by Jacob Sigurðsson (Baer, 213-215) and are complex antiquarian compilations which comprise not only both *Eddas*, but many other works including various studies on runes. This paper discusses how these two manuscripts reconceptualise Nordic antiquity by juxtaposing texts about Northern mythology alongside texts about runic script. Furthermore, by providing the illuminations of Norse gods with captions in runes these elements of ancient Norse culture, i.e. its mythology and its written language, are most noticeably attributed a new dimension and encourage new interpretation. This paper analyzes mainly material aspects of the manuscripts, for instance, the illuminations with their captions, prefaces, registers, title pages, and the compilation of the manuscripts to answer the question: What kind of Nordic antiquity is presented in the manuscripts and how?

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Constructing Space

The Spaces of Íslendinga saga – Spatial approaches to narrativizations of thirteenth-century Iceland

History happens in space and cannot be narrated but against the background of a spatial setting; it is space that makes time tangible and time that makes space meaningful. Time and space in narratives thus form an interwoven texture that Bachtin coined chronotope. Every literary tradition, every genre has its own chronotopic characteristics which can be read as 'monuments to the community itself, as symbols of it, as forces operating to shape its members' images of themselves' (Bachtin 1981, 84). This paper will address the spatial setting of *Íslendinga saga*, Sturla Þórðarson's grand historiographical narrative on Icelandic politics and society in the thirteenth century. It will discuss the implicit categories of space that appear throughout the saga and explore Sturla's location of recent and remote Icelandic history in space. I will argue that the saga draws on several spatial concepts to transform the Icelandic social structures and historical events of the Sturlung Age into a meaningful narrative. I will also maintain that the chronotope of *Íslendinga saga* exhibits conceptualizations beyond dichotomic categories and embraces both geographical as well as conceptual spaces that overlap and interfere with each other (on social spaces and heterotopias in thirteenth-century Iceland see Sverrir Jakobsson 2009 and 2010). It is thus not space in terms of a universal world-view (as thoroughly discussed for the medieval Icelandic case by Sverrir Jakobsson 2005) that will be in the centre of interest in this paper, but rather the conceptualization of (local) space as narrative category. These spatial readings of *Íslendinga saga* will be used to discuss Sturla's historiographical approach to and understanding of Icelandic history as well as the generic qualities of *Íslendinga saga* as part of the Icelandic literary tradition.

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Constructing Space

The Centre(s) of the World(s) According to the Different Redactions of the *Prose Edda*

In this paper I will discuss the narrative creation of the topographical centre of the world, as it is depicted in the four main manuscripts of the *Prose Edda* (Cod. Reg., Cod. Ups., Cod. Worm., and Cod. Traj.). I will analyse the unequal narratives of the Prologue and of *Gylfaginning* in these redactions with regard to all the centres of the presented worlds in the different diegeses starting with the antique world in the Prologue and ending with the eddic world, as it is told by the *Æsir*-kings.
First of all I would like to look into the different names and concepts that are used in the narratives of the redactions to create every particular centre of the world. My second step will be to present how these single instances start to overlap during the progress of the story. One of the centres which I would like to analyse in my paper will be the one about Troy and *Ásgarðr inn forni*. In this example, which may only be found in the redactions R, T and W, but not in the Uppsala version of the *Prose Edda*, one can clearly see how the narrative tries to establish a quasi-historical connection between the Greco-Roman mythology and the Old Norse gods. Thereby the narrative of the Prologue intends to legitimate its examination of the Old Norse mythology as well as to generate a myth of origin for the Germanic kingdoms and languages. As soon as it comes to the narrative of *Gylfaginning*, the same association between Troy and *Ásgarðr* is used to inscribe the *Æsir* into a fictitious centre of the eddic world, which is told to *Gylfi* by the three *Æsir*-kings.
By analysing all four codices of the *Prose Edda*, I would like to show, how much these centres of all the worlds created in the narratives differ from one another, and how dynamically the topography of the centre of the world is depicted in the texts.

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Open

Historicity and Fictionality in the Icelandic *Fornaldarsögur*: Space and Geography in the 'Chronotopes' of *Gautreks saga* (Project Presentation)

Studies of the Icelandic *fornaldarsögur* – 'sagas of ancient times' – have in recent decades enjoyed a renaissance in Old Norse scholarship, shaped in profound ways by Torfi Tulinius' *The Matter of the North* (2002), which suggested that *fornaldarsögur* be approached as literary constructions that reveal the societal values of medieval Icelanders. Accordingly, they have been near universally interpreted as fictional, both in the sense that they are deliberately constructed to express a particular idea or meaning, and in opposition to 'history', describing events and people that are not real. Nevertheless, it is common knowledge that a number of the *fornaldarsögur*, such as *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* and *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* – perhaps among the first to be composed, or at least committed to parchment – were evidently based on older heroic narratives. For some of these, their place in a historiographic tradition is clearly demonstrable, and their narrative, if not textual, traditions can be traced in works such as *Ynglinga saga*, *Skjöldunga saga*, and *Gesta Danorum*. Thus, even if these texts are fantastic and perhaps even fictionalised versions of past events, they operated in a culture in which at least some of their heroes were remembered in historiographical traditions, and the sagas themselves interacted with these histories.

This paper will outline the lines of enquiry of my PhD research, which seeks to question the emphasis that has been placed on the fictionality of these sagas, and analyse them in the context of European and Icelandic historiographic traditions. It is hoped that through this, we may determine whether, and to what extent, these texts were written as imaginative depictions of a real, if fantastic, pagan past, and used by audiences in remembering, and imagining, Scandinavia's heroic age.

The temporal distance of these sagas from medieval Iceland is of course fundamental to their fictionality and potential historicity, but perhaps equally so are their geographies. Not only does their chronological setting exclude Iceland as a geographic setting, but according to C.C. Rafn's grouping, the *fornaldarsögur norðrlanda* are also distinguishable from *riddarasögur* by their location in what may loosely be described as the 'Northern world', peripheral in the latter saga genre. The intersection of temporal and geographic setting has naturally led to the application of Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of a 'chronotope' to the *fornaldarsögur* (Phelpstead, 340-42), an analytical framework that may have significant implications regarding their potential historicity. To illustrate this, I will present a case study of *Gautreks saga*, which seems to employ both real and imagined, specific and non-referential, spaces. Through analysing these, it is possible to understand how geographic space in the *fornaldarsögur* may have been used to create fictional or historical 'chronotopes', indicative of the role these sagas played in reconstructing the past in medieval Iceland.

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Constructing Space

The Contemporary Political Geography of the Icelandic Annals

From around 1200 into the beginning of the fifteenth century, Icelanders kept annals, of which a dozen are still extant. Although their primary focus is time, space is no less a concern. This is seen in the notices about travel (arrivals, departures, and ship-wrecks) and the landscape (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and landslides), as well as the concern about the distance of Iceland from centers of power and learning that motivated the very creation of the annals themselves. Some manuscripts of annals also contain maps, and others contain geographic texts and information such as lists of the districts of Norway and the regions of Greece. This material is obviously part of the annals' inheritance from the Latin traditions of clerical culture, especially encyclopedias, but equally obviously the interest in geography also stems in part from Iceland's location in the North Atlantic and its tradition of exploration to Greenland and Vinland. The cultural and political geography that Icelandic authors constructed to produce certain relationships between Iceland, Norway, Greenland, and Vinland, and even Orkney and the Faroes, has been the subject of a number of studies in the last twenty years, but these studies have not included the Icelandic annals.

The present effort is a first step towards remedying that omission, with a focus on the cultural and political geography of the contemporary notices. (The cultural and political geography of the retrospective notices is revealed not so much through the notices themselves as through the sources they are drawn from, including Bede, Peter Comestor, Ekkehart of Aura, and Vincent of Beauvais.) The contemporary notices are of course limited by the Icelanders' channels of communications, but within those limitations, the annalists choose significantly different geographical orientations. For example, the earliest preserved annals (*Annales Resiani*) look to the kings of Norway and the popes in Rome, whereas thirty years later the *Annales Regii* of the monastery at Þingeyrar are truly international, reporting on the kings of all the Scandinavian countries, the kings of France, the Holy Roman Emperors, and the Crusades, not to mention Orkney and the Hebrides, which are in the same ecclesiastical province as Iceland. The almost contemporary *Annales Vetustissimi*, from Western Iceland, change their geographical focus over time, beginning with Iceland and expanding to continental Scandinavia, and later in the fourteenth century, *Lögmanns annállar* and *Gottskálk's Annals* are primarily interested in Iceland, specifically the ecclesiastical sphere for the former and the secular sphere for the latter.

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Open

Zur Figur des Dritten in den Isländersagas

In den vergangenen Jahren ist das Phänomen der sogenannten Figur des Dritten gleichsam zum neuen 'Paradigma der Kulturwissenschaften' (Koschorke, 9) erhoben worden. In der Soziologie steht der Dritte für diejenige Figur, die innerhalb sozialer Interaktion oder Intersubjektivität die Stabilität der Beziehung zwischen Zweien stört und so Vergesellschaftung überhaupt erst nötig macht. Innerhalb der Literatur tritt der Dritte sowohl als produktive als auch als prekäre Größe in Erscheinung. Er eignet sich zur Analyse von Begehrens- und Übertragungsbeziehungen, die sich zwischen Struktur und Antistruktur, Bindung und Auflösung, also in einem Feld steter Verhandlung bewegen (Koschorke, 28). Im personalen Sinn zählen u.a. Vermittler, Boten, Übersetzer, Rivalen und – besonders interessant – Trickster zu den dritten Figuren.
An der Universität Konstanz wurde von 2003–2009 die Figur des Dritten in einem gleichnamigen Graduiertenkolleg untersucht. Im Rahmen dieses interdisziplinären Kollegs entstanden Dissertationen und Habilitationsschriften in den Bereichen Germanistik, Neuere Geschichte, Politikwissenschaft, Ethnologie und Philosophie. Die mediävistische Perspektive blieb hingegen weitgehend unberücksichtigt. Innerhalb der altnordischen Literatur, insbesondere in den Isländersagas, besäße eine Untersuchung der Figur des Dritten jedoch Potenzial; schließlich berichten die zahlreichen anspruchsvollen Texte überproportional häufig von Liminalität, Ursprüngen, Enden und Grenzen sowie von Gesellschaft und Vergesellschaftung (Koschorke, 9). Dort, wo Übergänge eine zentrale Rolle spielen, rücken auch innerhalb der Sagaliteratur dritte Figuren ins Zentrum des Geschehens. Solche Figuren zeichnen sich durch ihre Andersartigkeit, ihre Nonkonformität mit der altisländischen Gesellschaft aus, sie agieren im Hinblick auf die Handlung als Überschreiter von Grenzen, können aber auch als vermittelnde Partei in Erscheinung treten. Die systematische Analyse solcher Figuren stellt innerhalb der skandinavistischen Mediävistik noch ein Desiderat dar, das es zu beheben gilt.
In meinem Vortrag soll untersucht werden, welche unterschiedlichen Rollen der Dritte im Kontext der Sagaliteratur einnehmen kann, wobei ein Hauptaugenmerk auf dem Figurentypus des literarischen Tricksters liegen soll. Trickster stellen innerhalb des Figurenkabinetts der Isländersagas geschätzte Mitglieder der in den Texten präsentierten Gesellschaft dar und übernehmen für sie essenziell wichtige Aufgaben. Allerdings haben sie auch eine ambige Wirkung auf diese Sozialgemeinschaft: Mächtige Goden wie etwa Snorri Þorgrímsson aus der *Eyrbyggja saga* oder der Titelheld der *Njáls saga*, die zu diesem Figurentypus gehören, fungieren einerseits als weise Ratgeber und Vermittler. Andererseits verfolgen sie ebenso konsequent wie durchtrieben ihre eigenen Ziele und führen am Ende nicht selten einen kulturellen Wandel herbei. Als Trickster sind aber auch solche Protagonisten der Isländersagas anzusprechen, die sich, im Gegensatz zu den politisch einflussreichen Persönlichkeiten, unangepasst und tölpelhaft verhalten. Was verbindet all diese als Trickster gelesenen Figuren? Welche neuen

Erkenntnisse hält das Konzept der Figur des Dritten für die Interpretation der Isländersagas bereit? Warum präsentiert uns die altisländische Sagaliteratur Dritte als Protagonisten? Der geplante Vortrag steht im Rahmen meines Postdoc-Projekts und soll einen Ausschnitt meiner aktuellen Untersuchungsergebnisse präsentieren.

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Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

Icelandic Literature in Medieval Sweden

It is well-known that Icelandic sources, both oral and written, were important also for the Norwegian and Danish historians in the 12th and 13th centuries. This is made clear by e.g. Theodoricus Monachus, Sven Aggesen and Saxo Grammaticus. But to what degree were the Icelandic sources known in Sweden in the same time? Even though Sweden is also a Nordic country, its relation to the Icelandic literature and traditions has not been widely discussed.

In my paper I will search for and examine possible influence from Icelandic literature and tradition on medieval Swedish historiography. I will focus on some specific cases of parallel information in Icelandic and old Swedish texts and discuss if we have a dependence between them, if so, what is the direction of the influence, or if there are other possible explanations for the similar information.

The following cases will be examined:

- The knowledge of the Yngling kings. In Swedish historiography from the early 14th to the 18th centuries the Yngling kings play an important role. The main source was a corrupt version of *Historia Norwegiæ*, which sometimes meant very different names and stories from the original ones. Some of these deviations from the original story are analyzed, and the possible knowledge of Old Norse versions of these stories is discussed.
- The king lists. The 13th century lists of Swedish kings in Iceland and Sweden are partly similar and partly different (Bolin 1931: 162-166). Is there a relationship between the written texts and it what direction does it go? To what degree do we have to do with independent oral traditions? How should we interpret the differences between the Icelandic and Swedish lists?
- Blót-Sveinn. The story of Blót-Sveinn and his rebellion against King Ingi in *Hervarar saga* (p. 62-63) and *Orkneyinga saga* (p. 89-90) have some counterparts in Old Swedish texts – "Sveno ydolatra" in the king lists (in Bolin 1931: 162) and Blodhswen in *Vita Sancti Eskilli* (p. 395-396). Are the Swedish sources based on the Icelandic ones, as has been claimed by some scholars (Sven Ulric Palme 1962: 73, Philip Line 2007: 65 etc.), or the opposite (e.g. Henrik Janson 2000: 187-190). Or are they independent of each other?

In some of these cases the dependence between the sources is disputed. The paper tries a new perspective by testing the possibility of mainly independent, oral stories behind the stories about the same persons and events. The character and conditions for such oral traditions is also discussed in the paper, and some new directions for the research will be pointed out.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

The lexical field of 'friendship' in Old Norse and its coherence across texts

One of the many aims of Old Norse studies is the reconstruction of the cultural and social concepts in Scandinavian societies at historical times. This paper investigates concepts of 'friendship' and their depiction in different text types (e.g. different saga genres and homilies) and the development of this depiction through time in medieval Icelandic sources.

One possibility to describe cultural and social concepts is semantics. Most semantic theories describe 'static' concepts, such as the semantics of lexical items such as color terms (e.g. *blár*; cf. Brückmann 2012) or appellatives (eg. *troll*; cf. Jakobsson 2008). This is useful for concepts, but this is just one of two types of concepts usually distinguished. The other type of concept are 'procedural' concepts. 'Friendship' is such a 'procedural' concept, as it refers to procedures and conventions 'friends' undergo, and the actions they take under certain circumstances. A different semantic theory is needed to describe such 'procedural' semantics, and one that seems useful is script analysis, borrowed from computational sciences and the philosophy of learning (Abelson/Schank). This model is at the same time open to insights from history and sociology, regarding the determinants of social interaction.

Semantic theories, however, are not intended to be applied to literary texts, but day-to-day communication. The Old Norse material we have, however, consists mainly of literary texts or text with a distinct literary character, such as homilies. Literary texts have certain liberties when it comes to depicting concepts known from everyday life. The function of 'political friendship' (*vinfengi*) for example, can be depicted differently in different sagas. A semantic analysis of historical concepts of Scandinavian society in the Middles Ages has to take the literary character of its material into account, and be sensitive to the role these concepts play in individual texts.

Beyond describing how concepts of 'friendship' might be depicted differently in various texts, this paper offers further insights. As there are multiple terms denoting some kind of 'friendship' in Old Norse, it is possible to determine different kinds of 'friendship': e.g. the lexical field includes different lexical items such as *vinátta* 'emphatic friendship', *vinfengi* 'political friendship' and *fóstbrœðralag* 'sworn brotherhood'. Looking at the text types and genres they are found in an the roles these 'friendships' are assigned to in different texts, can also illuminate a cultural history of different forms of friendship and the value ascribed to them in different discourses, as the Icelandic society underwent many changes from the ages depicted in different saga genres to the age of reformation.

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Constructing Space

Between Scandinavia and Byzantium: The Conceptualisation of European Spaces

For centuries, *Miklagarðr*, the "Great City", had been the destiny of Scandinavian traders and warriors. Therefore, it is the dominant view today at least in Anglophone and Scandinavian research that the Northerners' superb orientation skills and shipbuilding techniques enabled them to establish a working trade route to Byzantium and to secure it, which contributed significantly to the emergence of the Kieven Rus' (e.g. Franklin/Shepard 1996, Schramm 2002, Duczko 2004). The Varangians' alleged loyalty and bravery soon recommended them as guardsmen to the Byzantine emperors (Blöndal 1978). If one looks at early conceptualisations of the space between the *Norðrlǫnd* and *Grikkland*, however, knowledge about this famous "East Way" beyond *Hólmgarðr*-Novgorod proves to be practically absent, while the "West Way" used by crusaders is described in great detail. Even Haraldr Sigurðarson, probably the most famous "Varangian", travels from Rus' to Byzantium through western Europe (Morkinskinna I, 85-87); his itinerary back to the North through the East is not described in detail before he reaches *Hólmgarðr*.

Curiously, this crucial importance of the rather neglected "West Way" to geographical orientation is underlined by Byzantine writers from the 12th century. While the Greek term "Varangos" emerged around the middle of the 11th century, a reliable distinction between these "Varangoi" as "Scandinavians" and speakers of Eastern Slavonic emerges first when the former arrive in Constantinople from the West. Byzantine writers like Anna Komnene and Ioannes Tzetzes are the first ones to associate the Varangians' homeland with the north western corner of the inhabited world.

Paradoxically, these tight and culturally influential relations, mirrored mainly in early historiography in the vernacular, e.g. *Orkneyinga saga* and *Morkinskinna*, but also in *Gesta Danorum*, seem to trigger a growing interest in older contacts via the East. Danish historiographers are the first ones who create an old eastern *imperium* in mythological history – obviously in reaction to Romano-German imperial ideology and as typological mirror to current Byzantine relations. Conflicts with church reform and the papacy around 1200 also seem to benefit stories of old relations to the "Greeks" via the East in Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*. Especially in the case of Óláfr Tryggvason's Christian education in Byzantium and his subsequent conversion of the Rus', but also in many of Saxo's stories, one may not speak of old oral traditions fixed on parchment by historiographers, but rather of a reinvention informed by political aims. Nevertheless, this construction of eastern Europe as a way to Byzantium and as a theatre for Scandinavian heroes and crusaders proved extremely productive. From the 13th century onwards, spatial associations between mythological contents and eastern Europe grew increasingly strong, as may be observed for instance in *Vǫlsunga saga*, *Þiðreks saga* and the different versions of *Ǫrvar-Odds saga*, but also in late medieval romance.

Thus, eastern Europe as an imagined space received an important semantic function in Old Norse Literature, which exerted great influence on modern research. Therefore,

attention should be drawn to the specific origins of this Scandinavian conceptualisation of European spaces.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Authorial Manipulation of Scandinavian and Continental Traditions in *Þiðreks saga*

The thirteenth century Old Norse/Norwegian *Þiðreks Saga af Bern* (*Þs.*), a collection of traditional stories centered around the legends of Dietrich von Bern, has awoken the curiosity of scholars interested in its relationship to other texts such as *Das Nibelungenlied* (*NL.*), the *Völsunga Saga (Vs.)*, and *Das Lied vom Hürnen Seyfrid* (HS.). As current research has argued that attempts to create a "family tree of real and hypothetical texts" are hopeless endeavors (Grimstad and Wakeman 237), theories concerning the text's importance in the milieu of Hákon Hákonarson's Norwegian court and the *Übersetzte Riddarasögur* ('Translated Courtly Sagas') have investigated the ideological motivations behind the work (Kramarz-Bein 110ff.).
In light of these recent findings *Þs.*'s account of Sigurd's life in can grant us new insight into the author's mixing of the Scandinavian and German "traditions". In *Þs.* Sigurd assaults the smith's servant as in *HS.,* but the smith's name, *Mímir*, is Scandinavian. Sigurd is also rewarded by Brynhild for his efforts by the horse *Grani*, which was given to him by Odin in *Vs.* There Brynhild taught him the runes, which are Odin's in *The Poetic Edda.* In *Þs.* one motif linked with Odin is replaced by one with similar associations, and this suggests a familiarity with the god despite his absence. The so-called *Burgundenuntergang* ('Downfall of the Burgundians') also exhibits a intertwining of story elements. Grimhild/Kriemhild's rage against her family (as in *NL.*) is retained but redirected, and this allowed Högni to survive and father Aldrian (=Niflung in *Vs.*). The child traps Attila in a cave, marries Brynhild, and brings the cycle to a close unique to *Þs.* It has been pointed out that Icelandic *Märchensagas* combine courtly and native elements for their feudal message (Glauser 215ff.). In light of this we find that not only did *Þs.* exist in a station between different genres, (Kramarz-Bein 346f.) but that it also served the purpose of reducing the 'foreignness' of chivalric sagas by adding material its audience would have been more familiar with. This would have been necessary because *Þs.* adopts Southern German character constellations (Reichert 264) and lacked the prestige of French/British stories. The combination of continental and Scandinavian elements would endeared it to the audience, making them more receptive to the ideological message of this and other *Übersetzte Riddarasögur*.

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Constructing Space

Crafted Words and Wood: Kennings, Carvings and Sensory Perception in Óláfr's *Eldhús*

In the poem *Húsdrápa*, ca. 985, Úlfr Uggason described woodcarvings of mythological scenes adorning an Icelandic hall owned by the chieftain Óláfr pái. The performance, of which some verses have been passed down in writing by Snorri in his *Edda*, was an act of referential intermedia, insofar as the art form of skaldic poetry presented with woven words the content of a wood-carved medium that has long since rotted away. Hence, the composition created a link that opens up a union between extant literary sources and material culture. This paper examines the oral tradition recorded later in *Laxdæla saga* describing the events leading up to the creation of the fire-hall, *eldhús*, the stature of the building and its form. I draw from a range of sources in order to answer central research questions regarding the appearance and qualities of the missing woodcarvings and the structure in which the poem was recited. The affect of the combined media on the audience at the event is a focus of investigation. Intermedia becomes interdisciplinary in the quest, as archaeological finds of Viking Age and early medieval woodcarvings and iconography help fill the void of otherwise missing artifacts. Archaeological excavations in Iceland also reveal structural components of Viking Age dwellings which contribute to a hypothetical reconstruction of Óláfr's fire-hall in Hjarðarholt. Old Norse literature provides clues to the mythic cultural values imbued in the wooden iconography. Anthropological and other theories drawn from the liberal arts also apply as legend, myth and art combine to inform cultural meaning. The paper examines how the appearance and function of the woodcarvings, the space they were incorporated and the performance of the poem merged as the audience perceived not only an aesthetic but also an imaginary spatial experience that reached far beyond the perimeter of the hall. During the wedding ceremony later described in *Laxdœla saga* (ch. 29) Úlfr recited the poem, and based on the fragmentary extant verses presented separately by Snorri and edited by Finnur Jónsson (Úlfr Uggason, *Húsdrápa*), the poet praised Óláfr and presented him with a gift of the mead of poetry as he described the woodcarvings in the hall. The woodcarvings conveyed myths that were set in primordial lands, seas and vessels. This paper explores the relationship between the kennings formulated by Úlfr and the iconography of the wood-carved ornament. Both the oral circumlocutions and the imagery of the designs would have impacted the psyches of the audience by evoking layers of temporal/spatial understanding and cultural identity. Through research it is possible to reconstruct the space and evaluate the input to the senses in this ritual environment. In particular, the aural acoustic and illuminated visual patterns would have made tangible for the participants strata of an imaginary Nordic world. In order to display my findings, I present a hypothetical three-dimensional graphic model of the *eldhús* in Hjarðarholt. I also display a hypothetical carved reconstruction of one of the myths described by Úlfr:

"*Húsdrápa,* Stanza 2: The Contest for a Mythic Ornament" – a hypothetical wood-carved reconstruction by Erik Schjeide.

I argue in the ritual setting the recital of the poem enhanced for the audience the particular material qualities of the *eldhús*, which combined to provide the participants a profound perception of, and portal to, a Norse macrocosm within the microcosm of the sacred space of the hall.

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Constructing Space

A *terra incognita* and the semantics of its space. The Faroe Islands in Old Norse Literature and the concept of spaces in *Færeyinga saga*

The North Atlantic archipelago of the Faroe Islands remains a *terra incognita* in large parts, even some 1200 years after its allegedly first description in the Irish geographer Dicuil's *Liber de mensura orbis terrae*. The islands are not featured prominently in Old Norse Literature and only the reconstructed *Færeyinga saga* is dedicated to them as a whole text.
My paper will seek to give an overview of the instances in which the Faroes are established as a space in Old Norse saga literature and be mainly dedicated to a closer examination of the construction of spaces within *Færeyinga saga*. The saga is characterised by a constant shift of the setting between the islands on the one hand and Norway on the other hand. This dualism highlights the fundamental conflict of the saga, the struggle for the domination over the islands between the exiled Sigmundr Brestisson and his cunning antagonist Þrándr í Gǫtu. The interpretation of this conflict and its ideological implication for the saga's audience has been diametrically opposed. An in-depth analysis of the saga, however, remains missing until today and is the objective of my PhD-project. My paper will be set to demonstrate how the construction of the two spaces of setting – the Faroe Islands on the one and Norway on the other hand – is employed by the author of *Færeyinga saga* in the telling of his narrative. Richard North has argued that 'the wanderer Sigmundr Brestisson' fails in his attempt to establish his rule of the Faroes against the land-possessing and rich Þrándr for his 'rootlessness' in the saga's main space (67). Re-evaluating his findings, my focus will be placed on the connection between the construction of the spaces of setting themselves and the content of the saga – how does the author construct his spaces, what meaning can be ascribed to them and how are they utilised within the narrative.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

The Body Politic and other Body Imagery in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

The opening words of the *Speech Against the Bishops* from ca. 1199 point to a 'disease' that has befallen Norway, and makes use of the well known concept of the body politic – different social groups are presented as the members of one body, that is, as functionally interdependent elements of the state: Christ and the Church make one complete body, and all its members are meant to serve different purposes. Thereby, the *Speech* relies on well-established Christian and political body imagery, where the human body serves as a model to visualise a complex society (or other complex matter) and works as a means of political and social thought.
The paper focuses on the character of such images in general and the concept of the human body and its senses specifically. Such images can function as a mnemonic device, as a tool used to arrange and systematise multifaceted complex matter and as a basic image from which metaphors can be derived. Thus, they form a link between memory, the order of knowledge and rhetoric.
The paper shows different forms of body imagery in texts such as e.g. the *Elucidarius*, the *King's Mirror* and the above mentioned *Speech Against the Bishops* and it explores related connections between continental European learning and Old Norse culture.

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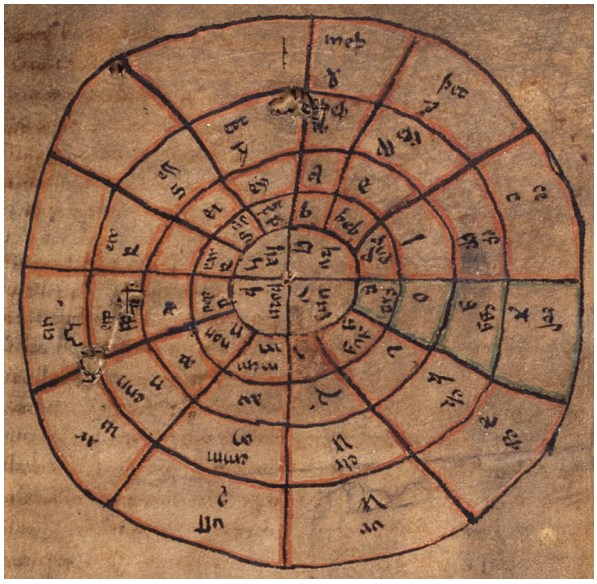
Mediality

Gylfi meets the *Ring-Figure*: Medial Dynamics in the *Prose Edda*

What connects the so-called *Ring-Figure* (Fig.1) in the *2nd Grammatical Treatise* with Gylfi, one of the main characters of *Gylfaginning*? According to the existing scholarship – not much. The phonological diagram shows a systematic inventory of all syllables that are capable of rhyme. It represents a way of thinking about language and poetry in the context of learned Latin book culture. Therefore, it may stand for linguistically oriented scholarship, which is mainly interested in poetics. Gylfi, on the other hand, acts as opponent to the three *Æsir* kings in the mythographical narrative of the pagan Norse world. He may therefore stand for the indigenous art of story telling in the form of a wisdom-contest. So far this aspect was only examined from a literary (narratological) perspective. This paper proposes that a mediological view offers a promising way of combining both sides. If we open up our understanding of the *Prose Edda* as a fixed text (Prologue, Gylfaginning, Skáldskaparmál, Háttatal), and include the various additional materials preserved in the four surviving medieval manuscripts, it becomes evident that the so-called *Ring-Figure* and Gylfi are closely intertwined. Alongside visual diagrams and mythographical narratives, we find illustrations, different types of lists, learned dialogues about the study of style and verse and of course a great deal of poetry itself. All of these medial phenomena are concerned with the premises of literature in general and the conditions for skaldic poetry in particular. Seeking to explain and define skaldic poetry, the *Prose Edda* aims to preserve this traditional verse art for cultural memory while at the same time actualising it for present demands. This paper seeks to re-read the *Prose Edda* from a mediological perspective. Codex Upsalisens (DG 11 4to) from around 1300 can serve as a representative example for such a holistic approach. The paper will look at the different uses of medial phenomena and asks about the diverse poetological and performative strategies through which each form strives after legitimisation for itself and its content. By highlighting the complex and fascinating discussion about mediality, a new perspective for the engagement with the Prose Edda opens up.

Fig. 1 *Ring-Figure* in Codex Upsaliensis DG 11 4to f. 46r



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Mediality

Mediating Eddic Modes in the *Fornaldarsögur*

The traditional scholarly view of eddic poetry as a category, named for and defined by reference to the anthology collection of the Poetic Edda (GK 2365 4to), has evolved in recent years in response to a growing awareness that privileging the Codex Regius poems has led to the relative neglect of poetry preserved elsewhere. This has in part occurred in response to renewed scholarly interest in the *fornaldarsögur* as literature, and the reediting of the verses preserved in them as part of the larger-scale Skaldic Project. Recent work by Margaret Clunies Ross, Hannah Burrows and Elizabeth Ashman Rowe in particular has advanced our understanding of how this poetry relates to the Regius poems and a broader Old Norse literary context. It is clear that the verses in the *fornaldarsögur* offer important insights into both traditional Old Norse poetics and its mediation by medieval scribes and saga authors.
Saga authors availed themselves of eddic quotations to evoke the voices of a time long past, at once remote to the audience and familiar as a literary space. But these verses add more than colour: the distribution of eddic stanzas in the sagas is very uneven and far from perfunctory, fulfilling a range of stylistic, narratological and communicative functions. The rhetorical sophistication in dialogue inherent in eddic poetics is fully exploited as different modes are called upon to convey unusual characters and speech acts. These episodes reflect the complex associations of eddic modes expressed through formal and rhetorical shifts and allow us to refine models of poetic derived from the Codex Regius poem. In this paper I will examine the use of eddic quotations in *Áns saga bogsveigis*, *Ásmundar saga kappabana* and *Bósa saga* to produce speech acts that straddle particularly difficult generic boundaries: prophecy, boasts and insults.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Medieval Science Fiction. The Learned Latin Tradition on Wondrous Stones in the Icelandic *Riddarasögur*

The genre of Icelandic (or indigenous) *riddarasögur* is a prime example for the cultural contact between continental Europe and medieval Scandinavia and its influence on the Old Norse literary production. While it is well known, that the Icelandic *riddarasögur* as a genre have their roots in a series of translations of continental courtly narratives, the translated *riddarasögur*, it is only of late that their indebtedness to European learned and scientific writing has also come under academic scrutiny (Barnes, Divjak).
My paper follows this recent line of inquiry to take a closer look at Latin lapidaries, treatises on stones with wondrous features, such as the ability to turn water into wine, predict the outcome of marriage proposals, or attract metal. These lapidaries were of major importance to medieval medical literature as most of the stones were said to have healing properties. Thus the Old Norse translations of the Latin lapidaries were often part of manuscripts with encyclopedic or medical content, e.g. *Hauksbók*, AM 194 8vo or Royal Irish Academy 23 D 43. However, the wondrous stones were also used to a great extent in the Icelandic *riddarasögur*, where passages from the scientific literature were often quoted directly.
After tracing the connection between the Old Norse lapidaries and their immediate template, a Latin lapidary written by the French bishop Marbode of Rennes, I will go on to analyse the literary adaptation of this scientific material in the fictional narratives of the Icelandic *riddarasögur*. The aspect of space bears special consideration in this as a key concern for the Latin lapidary treatises was to locate all the stones and give information on where to find them, thus placing the stones on a map. Most of the particularly wondrous stones were situated in faraway places, such as India or Arabia. Although extraordinarily distant from Iceland, it is especially these regions of the world that constitute some of the characteristic settings we find in the Icelandic *riddarasögur*. Through the means of fictional narrative the sagas were thereby able to bring the stones and their wonders within reach of their medieval Icelandic audience, if not in real life than at least in imagination.

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Open

Personennamen zwischen Runeninschriften und Sagas – Kontinuität und Diskontinuität

Personennamen (Individualnamen) in den altgermanischen Sprachen (ebenso wie in den indogermanischen Sprachen generell) können prinzipiell auf zwei Arten gebildet werden, nämlich zweigliedrig (aus zwei Wortstämmen bestehend) und eingliedrig (aus einem Wortstamm bestehend). Dabei ist primär der erstere Typ aus dem urindogermanischen ererbt und steht der Dichtersprache nahe (Typ: run. [Horn von Gallehus, ca. 375/400-460/70] **hlewa-gastiz** : gr. *Κλεό-ξενος*; vgl. dazu Schramm 1957), der letztere Typ zerfällt in der Hauptsache in zwei Untergruppen, nämlich Verkürzungen aus zweigliedrigen Namen (Typ: run. [Kamm von Vimose, ca. 150/60-210/20] **harja**) und Beinamen (Typ: run. [Schildfesselbeschlag von Illerup Ådal 1; ca. 210/20-250/60] **swarta**).
Jedoch dienen Personennamen nicht nur zur Identifizierung einzelner Personen, sondern drücken ebenfalls Wertvorstellungen der Sprechergemeinschaft aus (dazu grundlegend Neumann 1995). Diese Wertvorstellungen manifestieren sich durch die Wahl des Wortmaterials, das in Personennamen Verwendung findet. Dies ist ein Aspekt, der bisher generell in der onomastischen Forschung wenig Berücksichtigung gefunden hat.
Die Personennamen, die sich in den Sagas finden, stehen somit in einer längeren (letztendlich bis in das Indogermanische zurückreichende) Tradition. Die früheste nordgermanische Überlieferung findet sich in den Runeninschriften im älteren Futhark (ca. 160-750 n.Chr.), die in der Hauptsache aus Personennamenmaterial besteht (vgl. Peterson 2004). Die Inschriften im älteren Futhark werden ab der Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts durch die im jüngeren Futhark geschriebenen abgelöst. Auch in ihnen finden sich sehr viele Personennamen. Erst ab dem 12. Jh. setzt dann die Saga-Überlieferung ein.
Es ist durch diese lange Zeitspanne zu erwarten, dass sich Änderungen in der Personennamengebung finden lassen. Im Vortrag sollen folgende zwei Punkte herausgearbeitet werden:

1. Welche Wortstämme werden in den Personennamen von der ältesten Überlieferung bis in die Saga-Literatur durchgängig verwendet, welche sterben aus und welche kommen neu dazu?
2. Welche Wertvorstellungen liegen dieser Auswahl zu Grunde?
3. Was sagt dies über Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten in den Wertvorstellungen bei den Nordgermanen aus?

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Die Rezeption von Skaldenstrophen in der *Laufás Edda*

Ein sehr interessantes Beispiel für die handschriftliche Überlieferung skaldischer Dichtung ist in der neuzeitlichen *Laufás Edda* zu finden. Im Wesentlichen umfasst die *Laufás Edda* die Adaption einiger Inhalte der *Snorra Edda* und enthält darüber hinaus zahlreiche weitere Skaldenstrophen. Magnús Ólafsson (1573–1636), der Verfasser der *Laufás Edda*, ordnete die Strophen gemäß ihrer Kenningar und metaphorischen Umschreibungen in alphabetischer Reihenfolge an, so dass sie als ein Nachschlagewerk und Lehrbuch der Skaldendichtung dienen konnte.
Der Vortrag befasst sich lediglich mit einem Teilergebnis einer Untersuchung zur Rezeption von Skaldenstrophen in der *Laufás Edda* und konzentriert sich auf die Skaldenstrophen in der mittelalterlichen Handschrift **W** (Codex Wormianus) der *Snorra Edda* und deren weiterer Textüberlieferung in den Handschriften der *Laufás Edda*, vor allem GKS 2368 4to, AM 743 4to und Holm papp 10 4to.
Durch jede neue Abschrift unterliegt ein Text einem Rezeptions- und Aktualisierungsprozess, der im Text seine Spuren hinterlässt, sei es ganz offenkundig durch Schriftbild, Layout, Orthographie oder auf der inhaltlichen Ebene, z.B. durch morphologische Unterschiede oder den Austausch, die Hinzufügung bzw. das Weglassen von Vokabular.
Im Fokus des Vortrags werden anhand einiger Textbeispiele Ergebnisse vorgestellt, die sich aus der Untersuchung der Textüberlieferung der skaldischen Dichtung in der *Laufás Edda* gegenüber der Handschrift **W** ergeben. Anhand der Informationen aus der Datenbank des internationalen Skaldik-Projekts (*Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages*) ist ersichtlich, dass insgesamt 112 Strophen in der *Laufás Edda* (Version Y), auch in **W** vorkommen. Man kann davon ausgehen, dass Skaldenstrophen prinzipiell größeren textstabilisierenden Faktoren, wie Metrik und Stilistik, unterliegen. Folgenden Fragen wird in der Untersuchung daher nachgegangen: Wie groß und von welcher Quantität und Qualität ist die Textveränderung von Dichtung in den Handschriften der *Laufás Edda* gegenüber **W**? Welches inhaltliche Verständnis der Skaldenstrophen ist anhand des umgebenden Prosatexts und der Strophenanordnung in den Handschriften der *Laufás Edda* erkennbar und welchen Einfluss hatte dieses Verständnis im Umkehrschluss auf den Rezeptions- und Aktualisierungsprozess?

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

A Collaborative Edition of *Pólenstators saga og Möndulþvara*: A Report (Project Presentation)

In Summer 2012 the Master class of the 8th International Summer School in Manuscript Studies administered by the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen produced a diplomatic edition of the text of a single manuscript's version of a post-medieval saga for which no previous edition existed, *Pólenstators saga og Möndulþvara*. At the same time, we also compared relevant variants in all of the dozen or so (known) extant manuscripts of the saga, determining certain details about the story's origins and earlier history in *rímur* versions, manuscript history, and development over time into a few distinct recensions. The expansion and refinement of this edition and its supplementary material is an ongoing process.

The paper I propose is a report introducing the Norse-Icelandic scholarly community to this saga and our collaborative edition of it, which has been made available online and is continually being updated as we develop and augment individual sections. There are many points of interest both about the saga and about our engagement with it that bear discussion. The story of the saga, for example, displays a curious reversal (or at least a strikingly eccentric interpretation) of an expected relationship between religious belief and geographical space, casting its hero as the virtuous and mighty prince of a Christian Poland, whose primary antagonist is the dastardly king of a pagan France. Topics of note concerning the editing process include the advantages and challenges of a collaborative editing process, the particulars of a fully electronic methodology and possibilities of output in an online space rather than a paper page, and the long-term consequences of decisions made early on and in partial (and pardonable?) ignorance of the saga and its manuscript witnesses. By reporting on this saga and our edition, I will contribute both to the scholarly community's general knowledge of Iceland's saga culture and to the dialogue concerning what may be considered part of that heritage, as well as to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the role of new editions – and especially electronic ones – in the study of sagas.

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Open

Talking about the weather

The weather played an important role in medieval society. This can e.g. be seen by number of references to weather in old annals and weather diaries that appear from the late 13th century onwards (e.g. *Islandske Annaler*, Pfister, Brazdil et al.). Whereas it is not surprising that the weather is mentioned in medieval texts, it is perhaps more interesting to examine how people in earlier periods actually talked about phenomena such as rain and wind. Among the questions that arise in this regard are: What were the grammatical means of forming weather expressions and how were weather sentences constructed?

In this talk I will focus on weather verbs and related phrases in Old Icelandic. My aim is to investigate the possibility that deities were seen as causing particular type of weather to happen, or if the weather itself was thought to be somehow responsible for rain and wind. The alternative would be that these types of construction should be regarded as impersonal, as in Modern Icelandic and most other related languages.

For Old Icelandic it has commonly been assumed that weather verbs are subjectless, or that the subject is somehow incorporated into the verb (e.g. Smári 21-24; Nygaard 6-7). However, close scrutiny of the textual material reveals that some weather verbs can actually have a visible subject noun or refer to a subject in a conjoined clause. Two relevant examples are given in (1).

(1) a. **Veðrit** <u>gerði illt</u>, snæfall mikit. (*Bjarnar saga Hítdælakappa*)
'The weather turned bad and there was a heavy snowfall.'

(1) b. ...at ér gerist synir **fǫður yðvars**, þess er á himnum er, ok sól sína lætr skína jafnt yfir vánda sem góða ok <u>rignir</u> slíkt yfir illa. (*Íslenska hómilíubókin*)
'...that you become sons of your father who is in heaven, who makes the sun shine equally upon the bad and good and pours rain upon the evil...'

In example (1a) it is the weather that 'turned bad' (lit. 'did bad'), but in example (1b) God ('fǫður yðvars') is seen as being responsible for the rain, i.e. 'he rains'. While subjects of the former type sometimes surface in Old English (e.g. *Ða þa se dæg æfnode* 'When the day turned into a evening' (Naya & Couso, 187)), subjects of the latter type are mainly known from the classical languages such as Latin (*Iuppiter tonat* 'Jupiter thunders') and Greek (*Zeus huei* 'Zeus rains'), as discussed e.g. in Bauer (106-107).

The main conclusion is that despite common claims to the contrary, weather verbs in Old Icelandic can have a subject. In a wider context I will consider the effect that grammatical subjects might have on the perception of weather in medieval times.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Mokkurkalfi and Golem. A distant echo of Jewish magic in the North?

The aim of the paper is to reconsider striking similarities between short story about Mokkurkalfi by Snorri Sturluson (*Skáldskaparmál* 17) and some narratives from Jewish tradition and folklore telling about Golem, already noticed some years ago by Rudolf Simek. Best known of Jewish golems, the Golem of Prague, created allegedly by famous rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel in late 16th century (contemporary sources know the rabbi but tell nothing about his Golem!) is in fact described (in German only) for first time in the early 19th century. The legend was based on an earlier source, concerning another golem created by rabbi Eliyahu of Chełm in the second half of the 16th century and described in the 17th and 18th century by Jewish and Christian authors.
The word *golem* is old in Hebrew (*Psalms, Mishna, Talmud*) but means originally "something unformed". The meaning changed about the 12th/13th century in Jewish intellectual circles fascinated with magic and commenting the book *Sefer Yezirah*. The earliest written account describing how to create golem as an human like creature appears in kabalistic work *Sodei Razaya* of Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (1165-1230) – an author contemporary with Snorri (and with William of Auvergne speculating about homunculus in Latin).
There are similarities and differences between Jewish Golem(s) and Norse Mokkurkalfi. The first and basic similarity is that Mokkurkalfi, like Golem of Prague, was created of clay. This brings to mind a long line of analogies including Adam from the *Bible* and Enkidu from *Gilgamesh* epic. The manner of animating Golem and Mokkurkalfi was different however. Mokkurkalfi was animated by putting into his artificial body a real heart of a mare. Golem was animated by some magic but especially by the use of some charms spoken and some others written in Hebrew and forming a *shem* inserted into Golems mouth or fixed or written on his forehead (some parallels are here to be found in the accout of Saxo Grammaticus (I, 6, 4) about necromantic magic of Giantess Harthgreipa).
Mokkurkalfi was however not the only golem-like homunculus described in the North. In *Thorleifs tháttr jarlaskáld* 5 (6) the hero, an enemy of Jarl Hakon, is killed in Iceland according to jarls order by Thorgard, some human like creature made of wood (*tremann*) and animated by Thorgerdr holgabrudr with magic and true heart of a dead man killed especially for that purpose. The wood as a material of which Thorgard was made appeals to the Old Norse myth of the creation of man what suggest that golem motifs seems to correspond with the myth of creation of the man (if made of clay – in foreign biblical version, if of the wood – in Old Norse one).

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Open

The Impact of Riddle Categorisation in Old Norse Verbal Duels

'A dweller in the soil
I saw passing,
a corpse on a corpse there sat;
blind upon blind one
to the billows riding,
on a steed without breath it was borne'
(*Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ch. 10)

This riddle, asked by Óðinn (under Gestumblindi's identity) to king Heidrek, seems to rely on the personal experience of the riddler, as shown by the answer: 'You came upon a dead horse on an icefloe, and on the horse a dead snake, and they all floated together down the river' (*Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ch. 10). It is possible to find variations of this riddle in a number of folktales, where it used as a *neck-riddle*. This type of riddle primarily relies on the experience of a single individual. The name refers to the tale of the prisoner who saves his life by submitting a question which he alone can answer. This last aspect, central to *neck-riddles*, is not found in *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*; Heidrek is indeed able to answer the question. As with the previous riddles, that were asked by Óðinn, the king seems to deduce the answer from the question and does not rely on any specific knowledge. The text represents a tradition in which the story of the dead animal floating is not used as a *neck-riddle*, but as a *true-riddle*. According to its reception the same riddle can change categories and therefore meaning. Determining the category in which every riddle belongs, gives us a better understanding of its function in the text. In this paper, I will discuss the importance of defining the exact nature of each question and its impact on our understanding of riddling in the North.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Chopping and Changing: Árni Magnússon's custodial interventions with regards to the paper manuscripts in his collection

In her article 'Sønderdelte arnamagnæanske papirhåndskrifter', Agnete Loth draws attention to the fact that Árni Magnússon (1663-1730) partitioned many of his paper manuscripts after he acquired them from various owners. The present paper shows that this phenomenon was even more common and widespread than indicated by Loth. New research reveals that at least a quarter of the paper manuscripts from the 17th and early 18th centuries in the Arnamagnæan collection were subject to a partitioning activity that changed the physical form and context of the texts.
The presentation moreover calls attention to the fact that Árni Magnússon re-combined his manuscripts, since he did not only divide the paper manuscripts, but also arranged them with parts of other manuscripts. This fact is obscured by the work of later librarians and conservators, who counteracted Árni's efforts by re-binding and cataloguing many of his compilations based on the origins of their multiple parts (Springborg, 8-9). Detailed codicological analysis in combination with information given in the first handwritten catalogues of the collection (AM 384 fol., AM 456 fol., AM 477 fol.) reveal that this compiling activity took place on just as great a scale as the partitioning. Árni Magnússon's dividing and compiling habits should therefore be studied as parts of the same re-arrangement practice.
This re-arrangement activity is discussed based on selected cases. The physical history of the manuscripts is traced throughout the centuries, contrasting the form Árni Magnússon gave his codices to both their earlier compositional arrangements and today's form. Special focus is directed towards the collector's motivation for this extensive custodial engagement and possible patterns observable within it. The analysed material suggests that Árni Magnússon's approach to his manuscripts was more heterogeneous and multi-faceted than hitherto assumed.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Wood and Flesh: Artificial Bodies in Old Norse Literature

In *Þorleifs Þáttr Jarlsskálds*, Hákon jarl, outraged after Þorleifr's nið against him, exacts revenge on Þorleifr by aid of the witches Þorgerðr Horgabruðr and Irpa. They give him the instructions he needs to attack Þorleifr: from a piece of driftwood, he fashions a man who is then brought to life through the spells and magic of the trio. The earl has a man killed and his heart placed into the wooden figure, which is made into a walking, talking man who is promptly sent to Iceland to murder Þorleifr. In this incident, a part of the corpse of an anonymous man is merged with wood, thus animating an inanimate object and turning it into a form of *draugr*: a walking dead person. Joseph Harris notes that the þáttr is a story about "the dark side of the … power of poetry" (109), but it is also a story that compares and contrasts the power of poetic invention with Hákon's necromantic creation of an artificial mercenary.

Though unusual, this is not the only episode in which an artificial, yet strangely animate, body is created from wood or other natural materials in an Old Norse text. In the translated romance *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, Tristram creates his astonishing Hall of Statues specifically from wood, and yet these marvelously lifelike artworks function as though they were real, human bodies: Tristram uses the figure of his absent lady, Ísönd, to live out the drama of his love for her, while Tristram's companion falls helplessly in love with the representation of Ísönd's servant. Though these two episodes appear in very different contexts, they share a common concern with the origin and materiality of these bodies, and the effect of such artificial bodies on the human world. In my paper, I explore what a reading of these and similar episodes can tell us about an Old Norse interest in artificial creation (poetic and otherwise) and its social consequences. As figures on the border between inanimate objects and living beings, these bodies might fall into the ambiguous category of "things" (that is, objects that upset human categories precisely because of their ambiguous origin and function) that have been discussed by Bill Brown, and my paper questions whether or not the theoretical framework of "thing theory" is useful for discussing the creation of artificial bodies in Old Norse literature.

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Open

As large as life and twice as natural: *föðursystir Droplaugarsona*, or Origins of one noun phrase packaging pattern used in skaldic extended kennings

Skaldic verse is considered notoriously difficult to read. The so-called *skýringar* supplied in editions radically rearrange the verse so that a skaldic text acquires a 'standard' word order, as if it were prose; one key feature of *skýringar* is the elimination of gaps, often large (from a few words to a couple of lines), that regularly exist between constituent elements of the same extended kenning. This procedure may seem helpful to a modern reader, simplifying as it does the comprehension of the verse's normally meagre message; yet, crucially, it is a serious disservice to him/her, for not only does it allow the reader to ignore the true skaldic syntax by rendering opaque the real-life linguistic phenomena of skaldic verse such as the one mentioned above, but it also acts as a conduit for the positive feedback loop that reinforces the very notion that skaldic poetry is overwhelmingly linguistically "unnatural".

This notion, however, is somewhat at odds with one basic fact – i.e., skaldic poetry's wide representation in all kinds of Old Norse sources. If it were indeed so unnatural, it is logical to assume it would only have survived in highly specialized texts like *Snorra Edda*, composed, written down and then copied by skaldic professionals – which, of course, is not the case. This suggests that while skaldic poetry's syntax may indeed be called convoluted, it must needs originate from patterns existing in regular Old Norse and rely on these to ensure its comprehensibility to a regular, if probably somewhat trained, native speaker. Our task as researchers should thus be not to decry skaldic complexity but to look for such natural language patterns and trace their fate and peculiarities of their usage in skaldic poetry.

The present paper discusses one such natural Old Norse syntax pattern, actively used in packaging of regular noun phrases in prose Old Norse, that was taken up by skalds and applied to metrical packaging of skaldic extended kennings – with a peculiar but typically skaldic linguistic twist that endowed this basic pattern with new syntactic abilities it is lacking in prose. Specifically, for four-element kennings of warrior, in a scheme where 1 denotes the topmost (root) heiti in an extension chain, 2 the next topmost heiti etc., a dominant surface arrangement (more than 60% of cases) would take one of two forms: "4-3 + gap + 2-1" or "2-1 + gap + 4-3", with pairs 4-3 and 2-1 each joined into a two-element compound noun, and gap often containing a whole *dróttkvætt* line. The paper traces this scheme to the prose Old Norse pattern mentioned in its title, stressing that while in prose it packages free word combinations, in *dróttkvætt* it packages kennings, i.e. multi-stem compound nouns, splitting them into smaller manageable ones; and ties the new syntactic ability of *dróttkvætt* language to process a gap between compound pairs (insert it during verse generation, detect and remove it during parsing) to specific morphology of the 2-1 compound, markedly different from its prose Old Norse counterparts.

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Constructing Space

Space and Power in 13th Century Iceland

Michel Foucault once stated: "It is surprising how long the problem of space took to emerge as a historico-political problem". According to Foucault, power is always spatially situated somewhere within society, and social relations infuse all spatial sites and concepts. The organization of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience. Space, along with time, is a cultural subtext, i.e. a fundamental cultural framework. Subtexts are cultural presuppositions that are generally unexamined because they are assumed to be "the way things are". Socially produced space is a created structure comparable to other social constructions, in the same manner as history is a social construction of time.

The analytical tools of current research into spatiality are of value for the study of sacred spaces in the Middle Ages. Of particular interest is how the Church used spatial discourse to redefine power relations in a society where the state was not present as an agent of support to the agenda of the Church. The formation of sacred space went hand in hand with the advent of literacy, the development of a new hegemonic discourse, and new types of redistributing surplus wealth in a stateless agricultural society. The Church managed, through the medium of literate culture and by the use of symbolic capital, to shape 13th century discourse of time and space, and, in parallel, the habitus of social practices. Through the creation of embracing, instrumental and socially mystified spatiality, the Church was able to influence the exercise of power and the conduct of warfare in a violent stateless society. The very neutrality of the Church in the power struggles of the 12th and 13th century made it an ideal agent for the perpetuation of a hegemonic discourse of sacred places which was instrumental in organizing power relations, as well as creating new social distinctions.

As for secular definitions of space, the Old Norse concept of *ríki* often occurs in medieval Icelandic sources, but not in connection with territorial authority. This changed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as the power of chieftains – formerly dependent on their personal relationships with their clients – became regional within a territorial unit that modern historians have termed a 'state' or '*ríki*'. These changes were not reflected in the traditional laws, which might indicate that they were of a fairly late provenance. In this paper, it will be discussed whether the discourse about foreign hierarchies had implications for the development of similar hierarchies at home.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Restraining the North: Presenting merciful behaviour as ideal conduct for elite men in Norway and Denmark, 1050-1300

The granting of mercy and quarter, or ransoming of individuals, following warfare has been seen as a key element to the set of behaviours commonly referred to as 'chivalry' which scholars have argued were adopted by the elite class in western-Europe in the second half of the twelfth-century (Gillingham; Strickland). These ideals, however, have not generally been noted as having much influence on representations of elite men in historical narratives describing Norway and Denmark in this period. In this paper I will argue that acting in a restrained and moderate way towards defeated opponents, both in warfare and in political conflicts, was depicted within these texts as being an ideal behaviour for elite men. This view of mercy as a positive character trait was influenced by a range of ideas which spread geographically and temporally across Europe; informally through the movement of elite men as well as formally via classical texts, Christian learning and canon law. Native influences were essential to this process as well, having both a creative as well as an augmenting role. I will argue that the way in which mercy is granted to an opponent differs in each community as a result of this. This paper will view Norway and Denmark as an active part of the wider European 'space;' a space within which the presumably frequent movement of people and ideas is now largely invisible to the scholar. It will discuss some of the ways in which we can use the kings' sagas, as well as *Knýtlinga saga*, to address questions of elite culture and the spread of ideas alongside texts from other European regions.

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Grettir and Glámr: Perspective and empathy in Old Icelandic narrative

This presentation reports on a case study of stylistic and syntactic phenomena in medieval literature that may have influenced empathy in the recipient audience. The focus is on a famous chapter in *Grettis Saga* which tells of the fight between Grettir and Glámr. Particular attention is paid to different perspectives of the narrative, where the event is variously described, either from a neutral point of view, or based on Grettir's experience, or through the eyes of Glámr. It is suggested that certain grammatical features of the text increase the effectiveness of the narrative in regard to empathy, including the "demotion" of the agent in passive, the switch between the present and past tense, the reference of noun phrases, and various word order patterns. It is argued that the relevant phenomena pattern according to the Empathy Hierarchy proposed by DeLancey, Kuno and Kaburaki and Kuno. The lower on the Empathy Hierarchy the narrative manifestation of the relevant grammatical features is, the more difficult it is to feel any kind of empathy with the characters. Finally, it is proposed that the use of verbs in this text that express sensations or experience (*sjá* 'see', *sýnask* 'seem', *undrask* 'wonder', *ætla* 'suppose', *vilja* 'want') allows the audience to participate in the perception and look into the mind of characters that fight with each other. It is concluded that it is possible to identify factors in the text that affected the empathy of the medieval audience for the characters of *Grettis Saga*, and even the situations in which they find themselves.

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Mediality

And It Burns, Burns, Burns – Burnings in the Farmhouse Space as Saga Type-Scenes

The burning of Njáll (*Njálsbrenna*) – described in *Njáls saga* – has been said to echo the 13th century burning of Gissur's house in Flugumýri (*Flugumýrarbrenna*) – described in *Íslendingasaga* – by scholars such as Lars Lönnroth and Barði Guðmundsson. The readers of both narratives would be hard pressed to ignore the many plot devices the two sagas share; a woman egging the aggressor, the foreboding omens before the event, the negotiations amidst the fire, and the death of someone who tries to flee by taking advantage of the quarter given to women. These features that appear in both burning scenes and might imply that that one is influenced by the other - either that the oral telling and memory of the *Njálsbrenna* had influenced the telling of the *Flugumýrarbrenna*, or perhaps, the other way around: The 'author' of *Njáls saga* had the burning of Gissur's house in mind as he was describing last moments of his distressed heroes.

While both theories are enlightening and could teach us much about how the *Íslendingasögur* and the *samtíðarsögur* corresponded with their background of history and oral storytelling, matters are further complicated when one reads the *samtíðarsaga* of Guðmundr dýri, which features a burning scene that also might have inspired the story of the *Njálsbrenna*. After Guðmundr dýri is repeatedly attacked for a display of moderation that was perceived as lack of manhood, he gets to a breaking point and fiercely burns his bitter enemy Önund inside his house in Langahlíð. Both burnings feature paranormal forebodings, both feature a character which convinces their fellows to fight inside rather than meet their aggressors outside, both feature a burning character jumping out of the fire, and a character being killed as he attempts to flee. The similarities between the *Njálsbrenna* and the burning of Önund cannot be ignored just as much as those that exist between the *Flugumýrarbrenna* and the *Njálsbrenna* cannot. Furthermore, we can find many similar elements in the *Flugumýrarbrenna* and the burning of Önund's house. Other similarities can also be found between the *Njálsbrenna* and the burning of Hrafn's home by Þorvaldur, or the subsequent burning of Þorvaldur by Hrafn's sons. This paper proposes that rather than seeking a linear connection between these scenes, it would be better to look at them through the theory of 'type-scenes' suggested by Biblical scholar Robert Alter, which discovers a certain scene's meaning through how it variants from literary or oral convention. Looking at these scenes through this prism allows us to better understand the goals of the sagas' 'authors' or compilers.

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Open

Named artefacts in saga literature

There is a considerable number of named artefacts in saga literature. Some are just mentioned in passing while others play an important role through much of a story. Generally speaking, they have been overlooked in saga scholarship. This paper seeks to begin remedying this situation by examining the status and role of named artefacts in two genres of saga literature, the *fornaldarsögur* and *konungasögur*.
The category of named artefacts consists of a variety of different types of objects, though some are more common than others. The advantage of a classification based on naming, rather than one based on object type, is the possibility of examining the sagas' attitude towards material culture in general instead of a single object type. This renders the relevant material heterogeneous in the way it functions practically in each storyline, something which must be taken into consideration when analysing the role of individual named artefacts. However, naming something marks it unequivocally as special, singularised and perhaps even individualised. Thus, examining named artefacts as a group and analysing similarities and differences between different object types, saga genres and literary motifs allows for a better understanding of a category which is not defined by the researcher, but by the sagas themselves.
Their name marks these artefacts as somehow important and not exchangeable with any other similar object. This is confirmed when their status and role in the sagas are examined. Some have features that make it reasonable to regard them as proper characters, a few even main characters. In some cases the grammatical form of the name roughly predicts its role in the story. Their status is much more than mere props, their significance clearly linked with significant social interactions, which they affect and sometimes direct. Their role is active, changing situations so profoundly when they are involved that one often cannot achieve a proper understanding of the events without considering their role. Therefore, this paper will both present some general features of named artefacts in *fornaldarsögur* and *konungasögur* and show how greater knowledge of these will aid understanding of individual scenes as well as longer storylines.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Odin's millennial crisis. Old Norse myth and new Nordic identities

What role can Old Norse literature and mythology play in the discussion of (national) identity, history and memory in a changing world? How can we relate to this cultural heritage in times of globalization and mass migration? In this paper, I attempt to answer these questions by looking at some contemporary literary texts from the Nordic countries, in which Norse gods turn up as protagonists in contemporary or imagined future societies.

At the center of this study are Danish Janne Teller's novel *Odins ø* (1999) and Norwegian Cornelius Jakhelln's novel *Gudenes fall* (2007). In both these stories, the Norse god Odin turns up in modern, Nordic societies close to the millennial shift, raising questions and debate about national memory, cultural identity and the possibility of writing a nation's history. The novels are read from a postnational point of view, with Homi K. Bhabha's (1994) notion of *writing the nation* serving as a theoretic starting point. They are also read as part of «migration literature» in a broader sense, dealing as they are with the effects of migration from a cultural majority viewpoint.

I will show that both novels use the intervention of a mythic Norse god to deconstruct the very idea of a national narrative, by letting pre-national (mythic), national and postnational narratives, symbols and imaginations collide into apocalyptic visions without fixed perspectives or closed endings. But while Teller's novel uses elements of myth to give off a critical warning about the dangers of forgetting one's own, living history and become locked into a fixed, nationalistic viewpoint in which the Other has to be kept out by all means, Jakhelln pinpoints a different stance towards the Old Norse material. In his novel, Odin becomes a voice for those who are afraid of losing their culture and their hegemonic position due to mass migration, tapping into the problematic, but little discussed issue of Nordic right-wing extremists' fascination for the Old Norse material. Through this case-study I will discuss several ways the contemporary literary reception of Old Norse material can be both relevant and controversial to modern problems regarding the national or cultural «self».

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

The Origin of the *Landnámabók*

Only heavily interpolated versions of the *Landnámabók* (LNB) have come down to us dating from the 13th - 14th centuries (S, H, M), and later copies (Sk, Þ). The main question is if the LNB furnishes historically accurate information about the settlement of Iceland and the genealogies of the settlers. We have to consider whether part of the text is based on orally transmitted myths written long after the events - and therefore inaccurate and having little or no historical value - or if part of the text is "contemporary" and therefore more accurate. The purpose of my talk is to examine the origin and content of the original text, the **frum-landnáma*, which may be uncovered by removing interpolations. Of the versions of LNB, the Melabók,(M) (written in the 15th century) comes closest to the original, though it is interpolated with genealogies of the Melar family. Unfortunately only two leaves have survived, and I will limit my presentation to the second leaf, concerning Western Iceland (M15 to M48= S76 to S135). The S, H, and M versions are published in volume 1 of the Íslenzk Fornrit series. The Þórðarbók (Þ), which contains information from the *Melabók, has been left out. Finnur Jónsson published Þ under the title ´Melabók' even though the text is mainly a copy of the Hauksbók/Skarðsárbók. Both versions called Melabók (older and younger) are poorly presented in ÍF 1.
It may be possible to spot interpolations by comparing the M (and Þ) versions with S and H, in order to find inserted chapters or sentences in S or H. Another method is to notice stylistical differences, such as longer narratives that may have been interpolated from sagas written later than LNB. In my presentation I will demonstrate that descendants have often been added to extend an earlier genealogy, and that genealogies leading to prominent people (bishops, priests, Sturla & Haukr) in the 12th to 14th centuries, do not belong to the original version of the LNB.
In order consider the validity of the LNB as a historical document, it is first necessary to establish the distance in time between the writing of the text and the events described. Scholars have uncritically accepted the statement in the Hauksbók version (H, by Haukr Erlendsson, d. 1334) that the priest Ari Þorgilsson (1067-1148) and Kolskeggr (12th C) compiled the LNB in the 1130-40s (Sveinbjörn Rafnsson: 1100).
It is, however, very unlikely that Ari wrote the LNB, and therefore the **frum-landnáma* might have been written much earlier, maybe as early as 1020-40: In Íslendingabók, Ari presents his paternal lineage with great pride, but it is absent in the LNB. Several close relatives of his are not mentioned in LNB, in which Ari only appears inconspicuously in the genealogy of his mother (S129) which is interpolated so that it ends with Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241). Haukr's interpretation of Ari as Author may have been the result of him not realizing that sections of Ari's Older *Íslendingabók were interpolated into LNB: The sentence 'Svá segja fróðir menn' (S90) obviously indicates the beginning of an interpolation, which Haukr changed to ´Svá segir Ari Þorgilsson' (H78) (Jóhannesson, p. 97).

All surviving versions have an interpolated historicizing introduction (S1-9) and Quarter introductions. The introduction has a mythical flavor, indicating a long distance in time from the first settlement and the writing in LNB. The number of *þingfarakaupsbændir* for the western (900) and northern Quarter (1200) probably interpolated from Ari's Íslendingabók (ch.10, ÍF 1, p. 23, 210, 286) are at odds with the substantially smaller number of settlers mentioned in the Landnámabók.
The LNB lists 435 landnam settlements and settlers of Iceland in the late 9th and early 10th century, as well as their descendants. A total of about the ca. 3,600 people are mentioned in the Landnámabók. I entered the names of people that are related to each other into a modern genealogy database. The result shows that about 2,536 persons or about 2/3 were related to each other, in 1,486 families. That it is possible to create such a large database reveals that the information is consistent as there is little conflicting data, which indicates that the genealogies of LNB are statistically reliable. Most of the genealogies are fairly flat, comprising about 3 to 6 generations from the time of the settlement. Consequently, the LNB has an aristocratic character, as there are only about 800 people per generation. In reality, there would have been at least ten times as many people per generation in Medieval Iceland.
The people that were unrelated to other settlers were living in the extreme northern peninsulas and in Eastern Iceland. It was also possible to observe that there were very few family relations between the families in the West and the South of Iceland, which may indicate that the hostilities in the Sturlung period had deep roots.
All versions of the LNB appear to list the same farmsteads and a core of genealogies, but each version branches out to list the descendants to specific families: the Melabók to the family of the compiler Snorri Markússon the lawman (d. 1313), the Sturlubók to the Sturlung family of compiler Sturla Þórðarson (d. 1284), and Hauksbók brings the lineages down to the family of the compiler Haukr Erlendsson (d. 1334).
In order to uncover interpolations in the text, it is necessary to compare the information, sentence by sentence in M (and Þ) with that in S and H. Also, chapters that appear in S and H have no parallel in M (chapters S87-S98 and S101-110). They are interpolations regarding the settlement of Greenland, and Auðr djúpugða's landnam and that of her freedmen (except Vifill). Her story has a mythical air and may have been interpolated from saga materials (Breiðfirðinga kynslóð, ÍF1 p. 137).
Two locations in the Skagafjörður district have not been noted as landnam settlements. One is Viðimyri (p. 90-1, 170-1) which relates to chapter 78 in Egils Saga Skalla-Grímssonar. The second is the settlement of Uni in Unadal (p.220, 242). The information relates to Vatndæla saga, chapters 18ff.
Another method of finding interpolations relates to observing chapters written in a narrative style. The original text was a fairly brief and terse list written in a "genuine lapidaric Landnáma-style" (Björn Magnússen Ólsen). Accordingly, the longer narratives would be interpolations.
Agnes Arnórsdóttir takes a position against Ólsen's stance: All preserved versions of Landnámabók include a number of historical narratives. Scholars have been inclined to reject them as 'quite worthless' later additions - without good reasons. So even though it is it possible to separate the original text of Landnáma from later interpolations, will the

uncovering of the **frum-Landnáma* alter the view of the history of the settlement of Iceland?

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Contempt for Byzantine Gold. A Theme in the Sagas and Russian Chronicles

It is hard to find a passage of the Rus *Primary Chronicle* that has been more extensively studied than the story of the campaign of Prince Sviatoslav, son of Igor, against Byzantium and how he was met in Constantinople. According to the text of *Primary Chronicle*, when Sviatoslav and his troops approached the walls of Constantinople in 971, the Byzantine emperor, on the advice of his counsellors, sent ambassadors to meet him with lavish gifts. The Rus prince spurned these gifts, and either had them returned to the emperor or commanded that they should be distributed to his warriors. The next time, the emperor sent him arms ("a sword and other accoutrements"), and Prince Sviatoslav accepted these gifts, which he praised and admired, and returned his greetings to the Emperor. The envoys went back to the Emperor and reported what had occurred. Then the counsellors remarked, 'This man must be fierce, since he pays no heed to riches, but accepts arms.' (*Russian Primary Chronicle*, 175)
This is not an isolated story. It was included in the set of the laudatory characteristics of the Rus princes especially of the tenth and eleventh centuries (although there are also later examples), in which a ruler's low esteem of property, gold, silver and precious clothes, in contrast to his love of and generosity towards his troops and entourage, was highly regarded. These characteristics are based on Old Norse panegyric formulas that were couched in poetic language. Without discussing this question in detail now, we may cite a basic example in a line of the poem by the tenth-century skald Eyvindr *Skáldaspillir*, in which the king is described as "loyal to men, not to gold" (*gumnum hollr ne golli*) (Snorri Sturluson, *Saga Hákonar góða*, 215). Antithetical sayings of this kind were a regular, almost mass phenomenon in Norse culture of the tenth and eleventh centuries. They were applied not only to kings, but also to nobles who had mustered an armed force, or to the leaders of land and sea forces. Undoubtedly, the Riurikids inherited from their Scandinavian motherland. In Sviatoslav's case, however, we are not dealing with a formula but with a developed narrative based on this formula. Generally speaking, these panegyrical antitheses could develop into complete stories already within the Norse tradition. Apparently, microtexts of this genre already had the potential to do this. In the saga of the kings of Norway, the *Morkinskinna*, there is a story that is very similar indeed to the tale of Prince Sviatoslav. The Norwegian king Sigurd *Jórsalafari*, having come to the walls of Constantinople, underwent the same sort of trial by gifts (*Morkinskinna*, 348–9). The question thus arises: how and where was the plot about Prince Sviatoslav formed? Did it stem from a ready-made Varangian formula circulating in Rus, or was the whole plot, in its surviving form, brought from Scandinavia?

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Letters in the margin: Female provenance of *Laxdæla saga* manuscripts on Flatey

Laxdæla saga belongs to the group of *Íslendingasögur*, long prose narratives relating to events that took place in Iceland in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. *Laxdæla* stands out amongst these stories because of its unique focus on women. It exists in eighty-eight manuscripts dating from the middle of the thirteenth century to the late nineteenth century. In this paper, I will discuss the transmission and female provenance of *Laxdæla saga* during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and place this within a particular cultural and literary milieu on the small island of Flatey, located in Breiðafjörður in western Iceland.

During the Middle Ages, Flatey used to be one of the main cultural centres of Iceland with its own monastery (founded in 1172), and was famous for once being the home to the largest medieval Icelandic manuscript, *Flateyjarbók*. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Flatey was still very much a cultural centre as well as becoming a thriving literary centre. One of its residents at that time, Ólafur Sívertsen (1790-1860), together with his wife Jóhanna Friðrika Eyjólfsdóttir founded *Framfarastofnun* ('Society for Progress') in 1833, and they donated one hundred books as well as a large sum of money (hundred *ríkisdalur*, or 'rix-dollars') to this organisation. The goal of *Framfarastofnun* was to 'efla og glæða nytsama þekkingu, siðgæði og dugnað meðal almennings í byggðarlaginu' ('Promote and nurture a useful knowledge, morality and work ethic among the people of the district.'). In 1864 a first library building was erected at the initiative of Brynjólfur Benedictsen (1807-1870) and his wife Herdís (1820-1897). It is the oldest and smallest library in Iceland.

Against this background, I will discuss the possession and transmission of two manuscripts containing the 'feminine' saga *Laxdæla*, Lbs 3712 4to (ca. 1776-1825) and Lbs 1489 4to (ca. 1812), by women. The first of these codices was owned by Guðrun Sigurðardóttir (1862-1941), great-granddaughter of Bogi Benediktsson (1771-1849) and granddaughter of Brynjólfur Benedictsen. The latter was owned by Katrín Ólafsdóttir Sívertsen (1823-1903), daughter of Ólafur Sívertsen, and she passed on the manuscript to her daughter-in-law Björg Margrét Magnúsdóttir (1857-1922). Manuscripts featuring prominently in this paper will include: Lbs 3712 4to, Lbs 3713 4to, Lbs 3714 4to, Lbs 1489 4to and Lbs 4893 8vo.

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Constructing Space

The Fantastic Space of indigenous *riddarasögur*

The indigenous *riddarasögur* seem to have been very popular in Iceland since medieval times until the 20th century when they slowly but surely fell into oblivion and have in present day Iceland become an almost forgotten literary phenomenon. To most scholars in the field they were long seen as poor and unoriginal literature, their so-called literary 'inferiority' among such classics as the *Íslendingasögur* has been a hindrance and they have received scant scholarly interest. In recent decades this fortunately has started to change and interesting research on the genre is now published regularly.
A debate over the idea of *riddarasögur*, as well as *fornaldarsögur*, being regarded as fiction, has been going on for a while. Scholars have in this debate quoted prologues, e.g. the prologue that *Sigurðar saga þögla* and *Göngu-Hrólfs saga* share, as evidence for their varied interpretations. Some have wanted to understand these prologues as proof that medieval Icelanders considered these texts fiction (Barnes, 16-17; Sverrir Tómasson, 250-253) but others have denied these claims and state that the prologues give no indication of the sagas being fiction (O'Connor).
In my paper I will discuss the idea of 'possible worlds' in connection with the *riddarasögur*. The concept of 'possible worlds' was pioneered in literary theory by such scholars as David Lewis, Thomas Pavel and Umberto Eco and has been applied to the studies of *riddarasögur* and *fornaldarsögur* by Torfi H. Tulinius. According to the theory, 'possible worlds' are governed by their own rules and laws of physics and the readers, or listeners, are very well aware that, as they read or listen to these sagas, they are not hearing of historic events or 'truths'. I will examine whether the theory of 'possible worlds' can shed any light on the scholarly debate on the fictionality of medieval Icelandic literature.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Ásgeir Jónsson as a prospective manuscript smuggler

In his career Ásgeir Jónsson made several copies of the same text, often from the same manuscript (cf. Már Jónsson 2009). Although we could think that different copies were made for Árni Magnússon and Þormóður Torfæus, Jón úr Grunnavík wrote that Ásgeir made copies not only for his patrons but also for himself (cf. Loth 1960:XXXIII) and indeed Árni Magnússon bought some manuscripts with her late husband's hand from Ásgeir's widow (Jørgensen 2007:285). Although we might think that Ásgeir had a personal interests in some sagas, another option presents itself.
In his history of the Antikvitets Kollegium, Schück (1935:IV, 21) quotes an official translation made for the archives of a slip of paper that was added by Ásgeir Jónsson to a letter from Torfæus and addressed almost certainly to the main Icelandic scribe in Uppsala, Guðmundur Ólafsson. Ásgeir suggests that he could provide the recipient of the letter with economic transcriptions, but it should be kept secret to everybody. Guðmundur Ólafsson had been in contact with Torfæus, asking him to share their resources. The historiographer was doubtful about it and preferred to send a letter to Johan Moth in order to ask for advice on the matter. Whether the doubt in Torfæus' mind is instilled by the ban on the commerce of Icelandic manuscripts is questionable, as Már Jónsson (2012:44) has pointed out that the ban seems to be a lie crafted by Jón Eggertsson in order to fetch a higher price for the copies he wrote for the Swedes. Moth at least did not seem too concerned about the whole matter, and after a few months Torfæus was still waiting for an answer.
Independently of the existence of the ban, Ásgeir Jónsson was thinking of going behind the back of his employer in order to advantage academic rivals, and it seems very likely that such a breach of trust would have had consequences if found out. Although the only manuscript with Ásgeir's hand in Sweden arrived there in the 19th century, not all manuscripts with his hands are in the Arnamagnæan collection. The fact that he made transcriptions on the side in order to sell them might explain why.

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Constructing Space

Setting the Stage: Material Descriptions of Domestic Space as Mnemonic Devices in Saga Literature

Recent research on the representation of domestic space in the *Íslendingasögur* (Vidal 2013) has demonstrated that the material descriptions of houses in the sagas reflect elements of architectural reality for both the Viking Age and medieval period in Iceland and Norway. While some extremely precise descriptions of domestic interiors and other buildings do occur in the sagas, these findings are, of course, nuanced. It is not supposed that sagas provide a homogenous, universally accurate depiction of domestic material culture and architecture, especially with respect to the Viking Age setting of the *Íslendingasögur* (9th to 11th centuries). Indeed, due to the difficulties in interpreting the historicity of these sagas, it is necessary to critically analyse the relation between domestic material culture and medieval Icelandic literary production (from the mid-12th century onward). Why, and how, do some precise and, in some cases, archaeologically reliable descriptions of domestic space find their way into the *Íslendingasögur*? This presentation offers one possible avenue to explain these descriptions, and proposes that these spaces may have acted as mnemonic devices to aid in the recitation of the narrative episodes in which they appear. By focussing mainly on the representation of houses and domestic interiors in samples from *Grettis saga*, *Gísla saga* and *Eyrbyggja saga*, this presentation proposes to examine how the material setting of domestic life, particularly in the *skáli* and *stofa* as the main rooms of the house, played an important part in *sagaskemtan*, or the recitation of sagas. It also proposes and demonstrates how material culture may have become enmeshed in the processes of saga composition and genesis, ultimately manifesting in the medieval written versions we now know.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

The intellectual and ideological origins of the 'Icelandic School'

The context and origins of the 'Icelandic School' within the history of Old Norse literature has been much discussed over the past few decades. Contrarily, its philosophy of history and intellectual and ideological origins within the practice of history are noticeably underexplored and for the most part unaddressed by scholars.
This paper examines these historical roots in a European-wide context, linking the historical manifestos of Sigurður Nordal – primarily *Snorri Sturluson* (1920) and *Íslenzk menning* (1942) – and Einar Ól. Sveinsson – primarily *Um Sturlunga öld* (1940) – to continental traditions. In particular, it will be argued that the eminent historian Jacob Burckhardt, who worked in Basel, served Sigurður Nordal as a model for *Íslenzk menning*. Both Sigurður and Burckhardt promoted a historical interpretation of the 'individual' and the 'work of art', an important notion for the 'Icelandic School's' understanding of the origins and nature of the medieval Icelandic saga proper, that may be directly linked to their respective geographical and political locations on the fringes of larger powers. It will be shown that Sigurður took an early interest in Burckhardt and that it translated directly into his thesis of the origins of Old Icelandic literature and its historical preconditions.

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Constructing Space

A Social Space: Feasts as an Arena for Performing Kinship Relations in the *Íslendingasögur*

Feasts – a gathering of people for the communal consumption of food and drink – may be defined as an occasional and abstract social space in which relationships may be formed and performed. From an ethnographic perspective, feasts may be regarded as not only a form of 'ritual activity' which 'gives them their peculiar power in articulating social relations and action' (Dietler & Hayden 2001, 3) but also as a component of 'social technology'[2] in which they are 'meant to create social solidarity and cooperative bonds between family members and other close affiliates' (Hayden 2001, 29). While entertainment and pleasure feature prominently as part of feasts, the gatherings also serve the practical purposes of displaying status and power, demonstrating control over the 'foodways' (Effros 2002) in question and thus serving to legitimise power relations (Mann 1986, 22-23).

Feasts feature prominently in Old Norse literature, including the *Íslendingasögur*, as occasions of social interaction. On one hand, they are the social space within which kinship relations are created, maintained and reinforced, through celebration and the mutual obligations of exchange and hospitality inherent in the feast. On the other hand, they are also the stage on which that most spectacular interplay between social relations and political power – the blood-feud – is played out, either as a forum for the initiation of feuds or alternatively as a neutral space for arbitration and reconciliation.[3] The aim of this paper is to establish the importance of feasts as social space in the *Íslendingasögur* and the variety of circumstances – both positive and negative – under which this social space is accessed. It will consider the representation of feasts as arenas in which kinship relations are mobilised and the manner in which feasts are used within the sagas to maintain, promote and reinforce kinship ties. Finally, this paper will consider the interplay between power and kinship relations within the context of feasts and feasting in episodes of the *Íslendingasögur*, and how this may shape or effect the social space of the feast itself.

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[2] Hayden explains the term 'social technology' saying that it 'can be defined as the creation and maintenance of social relationships that are predicated on securing access to resources, labour, or security… Other facets of social technology certainly include many aspects of kinship (real and fictive), ritual, gift-giving, and language. Indeed, since all these behaviours can have the same ultimate goal, such as establishing subsistence or defensive alliances (…) it is far from coincidental that they all tend to occur and be used together in the same contexts, although the relative emphasis may vary from one instance to another' (2001:26).

[3] Cf. Miller on feud and other forms of social interaction, especially the similarities between the language of feud and gift-giving (1990:182).

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Literatures of Eastern Scandinavia

Geatland, Gutland, Gothland: *Guta Saga* in a Swedo-Gothic Mansucript

Compiled during the heyday of Swedish Gothicism, the seventeenth-century paper manuscript UBB Ms. 58 contains an expected compilation of Icelandic *fornaldarsögur* and *konungasögur*, exposing its origin in the Gothicism movement with the title 'GL. GÖTSKA SAGOR' on the spine. The sagas, which span from Scandinavia to Russia to Asia to the British Isles, are mostly incomplete, though meticulously copied in a relatively young form of Old Icelandic. Compiled by Petter Salan, the manuscript was given to the infamous proponent of Swedo-Gothic ideology, Olof Rudbeck the Elder.
Included among the Icelandic material is the Gotlandic narrative *Guta Saga*, only the second known extant copy of the text in the original Old Gutnish language, though a table of contents at the beginning of the manuscript lists the text as being 'på Islandska'. As with the other texts in UBB Ms. 58, the narrative is incomplete, though the two and a half chapters included in the manuscript clearly serve a purpose in the Gothicism movement: from the legendary hallowing of a bewitched island; to the emigrants, perhaps to be connected with the fearless and valiant Goths, who deceived the king of Greece; to the eventual subjugation to the Kingdom of Sweden.
This paper aims to compare the literary themes found in these chapters of *Guta Saga* with the other narratives found in the manuscript, considering both their original purpose as well as their intended use to connect Sweden with the heroic peoples and places of the ancient past. Special focus will be placed on the themes of (1) the founding myth of a nation or people-group, the origins of the myth and later use the formation of a national or regional identity; (2) connections with heroic tribes, their proposed origins and later attempts at finding a common identity; and (3) connections to the contemporary Kingdom of Sweden and the attempt to create a unified identity. The paper concludes that, although the chapters from *Guta Saga* found in UBB Ms. 58 could easily be used in creating the Swedo-Gothic identity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the text itself cannot be seen merely as an East Nordic parallel to Old Icelandic saga literature.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Multilingualism in the context of Scandinavian pilgrimage in the Middle Ages – the onomastic evidence in Continental sources

In the Middle Ages, Scandinavian pilgrims travelled through Continental Europe on their way to Rome, Santiago de Compostela and the Near East. Scandinavian sources, such as for example Sturlunga saga, the Abbot Nikulás's Leiðarvísir and runic inscriptions, provide data about specific persons, the time they traveled and the goal of several journeys (Springer 1950, Krötzl 1994, Wassenhoven 2006). About the actual itineraries through Continental Europe and events on the way, however, only little is mentioned (cf. Wassenhoven 2006, 85). Still, Scandinavian pilgrims left marks in Continental sources. Among them are personal names in contemporary *Libri vitae* (Confraternity books), codices with extensive name lists that were kept in monasteries and had a commemorative liturgical function (McKitterick 2010).
In this paper I will address the Scandinavian names in one of these books, the Confraternity book of *Reichenau*, both from a graphemic, onomastic and a sociolinguistic perspective. Some of the names clearly show German interferences which indicate direct contact between Scandinavian speakers and German scribes (Jørgensen & Jónsson 1923, Naumann 2009, Fix fc.). Yet other name entries seem rather to be copied from a list written by Scandinavians since interferences are absent (ibid.). Next to methodological questions these "scripting contexts" raise for graphemic and onomastic analyses, they provide data for language contact which in turn indicates multilingualism in the context of Scandinavian pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. What might have been possible "language biographies" of Scandinavian pilgrims? How did they communicate in monasteries abroad? Lastly, such considerations constitute grounds to discuss the role of language skills and multilingualism as a trigger for cultural transfer from Continental Europe to Scandinavia.

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Textuality and Manuscript Transmission

Manuscript Lacunae in *Arons saga Hjörleifssonar*

According to *Arons saga*, Aron Hjörleifsson, a supporter of Bishop Guðmundr Arason, was outlawed in the 1220s by Sturla Sighvatsson. This outlawry came after, and was probably a consequence of, the killing of Sturla's brother, Tumi Sighvatsson, who had occupied the episcopal see at Hólar, forcing the bishop out.

The surviving manuscripts of *Arons saga* do not tell us, however, exactly how Tumi was killed. The earliest fragment of *Arons saga* AM 551 d ß 4to is incomplete. It begins only after Aron has been outlawed and continues on to the end of his life. Seventeenth-century manuscripts of the saga appear to have been made from AM 551 d ß 4to when it was more complete, but even in the seventeenth century, it seems that AM 551 d ß 4to did not preserve a narratively coherent saga, or at the very least, there appeared to be at least one missing leaf to the seventeenth-century copiests. Seventeenth-century copies of the saga leave a blank space when their exemplar failed, which happened to occur at the delicate point in the narrative when Tumi was killed, the very moment that seems most likely to have precipitated Aron's outlawry.

This paper focuses on this gap in the manuscripts and in the narrative of Aron's life, exploring what the blank space left in seventeenth-century manuscripts, and sometimes later filled, can tell us about manuscript transmission and the narrative expectations of both early modern and modern readers. There will always be more uncertainty about these points in *Arons saga* as it was first written. But these gaps also create an opportunity to consider the ways in which later readers and editors decided to fill in the gaps.

In this paper I will speak about two distinct issues: the reasons that seventeenth-century copiests left blank space in their transcriptions of *Arons saga* and the creation of a narratively coherent reading edition of *Arons saga* in the twentieth-century. I argue that the incomplete preservation of *Arons saga* creates an interesting situation in which it is possible to explore audience expectations for saga narratives across time.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

The Self-Made King: The Ideological Function of Biblical and Secular Literature in *Sverris saga*

Sverrir Sigurðarson is a fascinating as well as a controversial figure: a well educated priest of humble descent, he fought his way to the Norwegian throne in a time of tremendous changes and inner upheaval in Norway. To overcome the lack of legitimation by descent he had a saga written by the Icelandic abbot Karl Jónsson (and possibly other authors for the later parts). The saga makes creative use of the Bible as well as of secular literature. This paper will explore the use of literary sources, biblical and secular, primarily in the beginning of the saga, shedding also some new light on the '*Grýla* problem'.

The composition and interpretation of the dreams in *Sverris saga* have already received some scholarly attention (e.g. Löbner 1992; Lönnroth 2006). They – as well as some other motifs – deserve, nonetheless, a further reading in thorough comparison with the Book of Daniel, but also in comparison with some passages from other biblical books such as the First Book of Samuel for the parallel with King David. These biblical passages seem to have been used for the ideological foundation of Sverrir's claim for kingship. Historiographical texts, in Latin or in translation, might have been used as models for the narrative composition of the saga. Since Karl Jónsson was abbot in Þingeyrar, he must have been familiar with *Rómverja saga*, which was composed there (Þorbjörg Helgadóttir 2010: cxcv), and its source texts. This connection was made by Hermann Pálsson (1988; 1991), but never thoroughly explored. *Rómverja saga* as well as *Sverris saga* deal with the topics of civil war and with character traits or virtues of leaders. On this background it might be interesting to compare the discourses on civil war and leadership in these texts.

Finally, we will bring together the two strands of exploration by comparing the use of the biblical and the secular models for leadership. While King David is certainly a good and well-proven exemplar for a Christian king, the attitude of Sallust and Lucan towards their rivaling leaders is certainly not a positive one. Are these negative models only used for Sverrir's antagonists whereas Sverrir is modeled after King David? Or is Caesar in *Rómverja saga* as in other medieval interpretations a positive figure that could be used as a model for Sverrir?

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Mediality

The Doubling of Þórður: Variant Production as an Expression of Material Engagement

In 1973, Kathryn Hume published an articled entitled 'Beginnings and Endings in the Icelandic Family Sagas', arguing the genealogical information appended to many sagas serves to link the medieval audience with the past represented in the narrative. This article was influential for Vésteinn Ólasson's *Dialogue with the Viking Age* (1998), and in turn Pernille Hermann's application of Cultural Memory Theory to the Old Norse corpus (2009). In this paper, I use Hume's article in reference to an understudied saga, *Þórðar saga hreðu*. This saga exists in two distinct versions, one known through Vatnshyrna and another representing a broader tradition, but both finding their earliest extant attestations in manuscripts dated to around 1400. Accordingly, both are taken as independent traditions, rather than one preceding the other, although they seem to share the same narrative arc and have overlapping characters. A direct comparison is however difficult because of the lacuna in the Vatnshyrna tradition, which breaks off the narrative before Þórður has left Norway and returns it near the end of the saga. Despite this lacuna, the extensive culminating genealogical information in the fragmentary version is sufficiently noteworthy to have warranted separate publication in the authoritative Fornrit edition (1959): it reckons the genealogy down to Jón Hakonarsson and his wife (p. 247), the supposed commissioners of Vatnshyrna. In my dissertation (2012), I focused by necessity primarily on the complete version of the saga, and argued that it has a complex and multi-faceted engagement with its material world, defined therein as moveable goods, the built environment, and the natural landscape. Seen outside of this material meaning-making matrix, the complete saga reads as derivative and uninteresting, but when read within its landscape and built environment, multiple layers of meaning emerge. In this paper, I will utilize the concept of material engagement developed in my dissertation and apply it to the fragmentary version of the saga. I submit that the genealogy in the fragmentary version of Þórðar saga hreðu, though well-illustrative of Hume's thesis, should be understood as a form of material engagement rather than a chronological link. Whereas the complete version of the saga utilizes places and place-names to provide a link between the audience and the narrative time of the saga, the fragmentary version uses material bodies. These complementary but distinct modes of mediality could in fact be generative of the two variant traditions.

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Constructing Space

Maternal Space and Child Exposure in the Sagas of Icelanders

The mother's "powerful influence during early infancy" has been described as "maternal space" by critics such as Patricia Cramer and Julia Kristeva (Cramer 497; Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, 247, 281-86). An obvious situation, then, in which to examine the potential construction of maternal space would be the episodes when men try to co-opt such space, for example in the eight or so narratives of child exposure that are extant in the Sagas of Icelanders (Jochens 85-93; Clover 101-10). On the one hand in these narratives men typically wrap the child tightly, place something in the infant's mouth to replace the mother's breast, and otherwise attempt to imitate and ritualize maternal space by (among other things) trying to secure the child's silence while it is exposed. On the other hand these scenes assert women's highly individual emotions, co-optation of language, and marking out of space. To offer one example, in *Vatnsdæla saga*, Nereid's illegitimate child is exposed with a cloth over its face (ch 37). The infant is eventually recovered, but the cloth must be connected to the "kerchief" that a witch named Groa has previously used in her sorcery. Her magic results in the death of an entire household. Not only is the child's cloth thus connected to a particularly female mode of expression, but it is also connected to a ritual marking out of space: Groa had been observed walking around her house backwards just before the household's disaster. In *Þorsteins þáttur uxafóts*, the many details of clothing and the sense of ritualizing a specific space through setting up a child's place of exposure as an externalized substitute for maternal space evoke, even more than in the *Vatnsdæla saga* version, ideas of a female language (*Þorsteins þáttur uxafóts*, ch 4). The boy's mother, Oddny, is dumb, and communicates with her family through the inscription of runes (ch 3). There follows a pattern of language acquisition in the *þáttr* that echoes the treatment of space by the major characters, and a similar pattern occurs in the story of Selkolla from the *Byskupa sögur*, which goes on to connect child-abandonment with lust, demonology, and *fylgjur* (pp. 494-95). A survey of these episodes, then, suggests that maternal space in the sagas reasserts itself during instances of child exposure, with unusual depictions of heightened expression by certain female characters in these works – both traditional artisanal modes of expression for women, such as textile usage, and also examples of highly individual language production.

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Continental Europe and Medieval Scandinavia

Narrating the Supernatural - Dreams and Dream Visions (Project Presentation)

The literary tradition of the North is rich with phenomena which can be attributed to the sphere of the supernatural. Whenever one encounters depictions of magic, visions, monsters, or miracles within supposedly realistic texts, such as the historiographic sagas of kings or the Icelandic family sagas, one can draw interesting conclusions concerning medieval systems of belief and imagination.
The narratives of saga-literature often encompass or blend both pagan tradition and motifs as well as ideas associated with high medieval Catholic doctrine and scholasticism. This also reflects on the way supernatural events are being narrated. Rory McTurk demonstrated how the narrator of *Njála* depicts miraculous events directly on the primary level of narrative whenever they appear in a clearly Christian context, while s/he depicts more dubious events by way of focalization.
Using McTurk's hypothesis as a basis for further examination, it is the aim of my project to examine if and how the narrative depiction of supernatural phenomena can be linked to the assessment of these phenomena within the scholastic and literary discourse of the Middle Ages.
Within this context, dreams and dream visions are suitable as exemplary objects of examination.
The protagonists of the sagas offer a unique approach toward the dream phenomenon, as prophetic dreams, often entailing heathen imagery, are an almost omnipresent motif in saga literature. The eponymous hero of *Gísla saga Súrssonar* is probably the most well-known example, as the motifs of his dreams, of which we learn both in prose as well as in scaldic verse, have been interpreted both as being of heathen as well as of Christian origin, apart from offering deep insights into the psychology of a fascinating character. This just shows that Old Norse literature cannot be regarded as an isolated phenomenon. Vision narratives, both fictitious as well as factual, constitute one of the most popular genres of the medieval European literatures. The question of whether or not dreams could actually mediate supernatural knowledge sparked a vivid and well-documented scholastic discourse throughout Europe. Philosophical, theological, and scholastic considerations served as the foundation of complex dream theories such as the Gregorian dream lore, which has long been argued to have had an influence also on Old Norse literature.
It shall be examined if and how the narrative depiction of dream visions in Old Norse literature is dependent on other literary traditions or scholastic discourse, and how this relates to questions concerning the supernatural.

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Open

The Tripartite Theology of the North

Like Old Norse religion, Roman religion contained varying, often contradictory modes of belief. The Roman antiquarian Varro (d. 27 bce) attempted to account for this inconsistency in the Roman context by splitting the approaches to the divine into three separate, but occasionally overlapping, spheres or 'theologies' as he called them: the mythical, the physical and the civic. Theology in this context should not be understood in the Christian sense as referring to the study of God and his relation to the world, but more broadly to designate conceptions concerning the divine and divinities or as Augustine states in his discussion of Varro's work: 'the account that is given of the gods' (*De civitate Dei* VI, 5; *tria genera theologiae … id est rationis quae de diis explicatur,* ed. and trans. Green, 306–07). Varro's theorizing about polytheism has been called 'the most cogent theory of polytheism' (Assmann, 17). It does not appear to been influenced by monotheistic ideas and might help us see the well-known Old Norse textual materials, and some of the mechanisms that shaped them, in a different light.
In my paper, I will discuss the textual materials connected with Old Norse pre-Christian religion using Varro's categories. I will argue that the better part of the textual material known today belongs to the sphere of the mythical theology, aka the theology of the poets. I will also suggest that an Old Norse counterpart to Varro's physical theology only came into being after the Christianization, while the Old Norse equivalent to Varro's last category, civic theology, was actively suppressed in the course of Christianization.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Skin and Flesh as Mediators of Identity in Old Norse Shape-shifter Narratives

Using the shape-shifter narratives of the sagas, this paper will differentiate and interrogate the respective functions of skin and flesh, their role in forming identity, and the extent to which that identity creates a divide between human and animal. In doing so, I am working from Katie L. Walter's ideas of the layered body. Walter notes that recent scholarship on skin as a formant of identity relies on its opposition to flesh: "if skin is legendary, then flesh – undifferentiated, closed in on itself – breaks discourse down" (120). She complicates this binary, however, through an analysis of flesh in medical texts, which describe flesh not as an unreadable mass, but as a sensitive, nerve-filled substance, congealing sperm into fetus and serving as a prosthetic for skin by hardening when exposed by wounds (125-6). Thus in the Middle English model, flesh precedes the formation of human identity but also plays a role in individuating the human and shaping the body.

Through the recent work of Walter, Sarah Kay, and others, the study of skin, flesh, and the haptic has produced significant results in the cultural study of Middle English literature, but it has not yet been widely explored in Old Norse texts. The shape-shifting episodes of the sagas are a rich source for this exploration, with their focus on skin as both a medium of change and a method of containment. This tension between skin as a container, emphasized in Middle English studies of skin and flesh, is complicated by the Old Norse model of physical transformation, in which skin functions as a boundary, forming identity, yet is interchangeable, turning human beings into wolves, bears, and birds. In many of these saga episodes, it is skin, not flesh, which is illegible and permeable, blurring human identity and the nature of the body. The interplay of skin and flesh is therefore a promising site for thinking about shape, transformation, and interstitial creatures, poised between the human and the animal, but a new model is needed to describe the relationship of skin, flesh, and identity in the Old Norse sagas. This paper will work toward that model and its relation to the larger study of embodiment and haptics in the Middle Ages.

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Bodies and Senses in the Scandinavian Middle Ages

Conceptual metaphors in *seiðr*

I analyze conceptual metaphors underlying *seiðr* magic using theories of metaphor and blending from cognitive linguistics (Lakoff and Johnson; Fauconnier). I compare the cognitive metaphors seen in *seiðr* with analyses of Sámi shamanism (Pentikäinen) and traditional Finnish women's magic (Apo, Stark-Ahola).

Study of conceptual metaphors in religious systems is a new field. Martin discusses religious schemas as conceptual mappings between domains of human and divine. Sørensen uses blending theory to make sense of the linguistic mappings found in Trobriand spells.

Seiðr has been studied extensively since the classic work by Strömbäck, with several major recent studies including Price and Dillmann. However, *seiðr* has never been analyzed using cognitive linguistics.

Cognitive analyses that employ similar concepts have been applied to other magical and shamanic traditions. Pentikäinen has discussed Sámi shamanism from a cognitive viewpoint. Apo and Stark-Arola have analyzed the core cognitive metaphors involved in traditional Finnish women's magic.

Etymological studies of key terms such as *seiðr* and *gandr* (Heide, Parpola) provide evidence for conceptual metaphors that have led to polysemy and semantic change (cf. Sweetser, 18-20). For example, Almqvist (262) connects the etymological meaning of *seiðr* with the idea of luring something toward oneself. This involves the Location Event-Structure Metaphor, in that the 'string' or 'yarn' of the magic metaphorically ensnares its targets.

Comparing the cognitive metaphors underlying *seiðr*with these neighboring traditions may help shed light on the development of Norse magic and its connections to these other traditions.

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Constructing Space

The Use of Vindland as an Indeterminate Literary Topography in the Redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga*

Given the close proximity of the states on the southern coast of the Baltic to mainland Scandinavia, and the known presence of Scandinavian settlers in those states, it is surprising that Old Norse–Icelandic literary accounts of the region display such great variation in contrast to the accounts of other nearby topographies. The few saga accounts that exist of the region known as Vindland, for example, often conflict significantly in their accounts of the popular Jómsvíkingar legend, which is invariably grounded in that area. Fagrskinna attributes the founding of Jómsborg to Haraldr Gormsson, whereas *Jómsvíkinga saga* itself attributes it to the legendary Pálnatóki; the legend is complicated further by the various retellings that include Styrbjǫrn sterki, and the connection between the Búrisleifr of *Jómsvíkinga saga* and the Burizleifr of *Eymundar þáttr Hringssonar* is similarly unclear.

The uncertainty around the history of the region within Old Norse–Icelandic accounts, along with the highly stylised and symbolic nature of the Jómsvíkingar community in *Jómsvíkinga saga*, indicates that Icelandic writers viewed Vindland as a kind of narrative *tabula rasa* within their literary cosmology. For the Icelandic saga audience, Vindland was an unfamiliar, indeterminate landscape: indeterminate in the sense that quasi-historical entities, such as the Jómsvíkingar, might be more easily located there than in the familiar, definite literary topographies of the societies of Scandinavia and Iceland, or even of Western Europe or the British Isles.

This paper investigates how the writers of texts concerning the Jómsvíkingar legend, particularly the various redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, interacted with Vindland's uncertain status within saga literature to explore heavily fictionalised concepts in a more textually-appropriate setting. These concepts, which include the creation of an idealised society of elite warriors and the subsequent radical renegotiation of kinship values in that society's laws, are explored in detail, with particular reference as to how the indeterminate nature of the Vindlandic geography allows for the inclusion of these fictionalised ideas in the body of saga literature. The discussion considers how the Jómsvíkingar legend probably developed from the history of the region, what the legend came to represent for the saga-writers and their audience, and how the Old Norse–Icelandic literary perception of Vindland facilitated this development.

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Constructing Space

Some Cardinal Points in 'Vǫluspá'

Prior to Viking-Age contacts with Greenland and North America, cultural traffic with Scandinavia transpired along vectors to its South and East. Alignment with neighbours southward steadily increased throughout the Middle Ages, so that Norse convergences in religious and political expressions with those of the cultural heirs to the Western Roman Empire are well documented. Less so remain historical ties which bound Scandinavia, along with the Eurasian forests and steppes, to Eastern civilizations beyond them, as such intercourse transgressed frontiers which came to be erected by a hegemony focussed around Rome, in its opposition to rivals variously oriented towards Byzantium or Mecca.

This paper treats the significance of East and South within the cosmology of 'Vǫluspá', especially in terms of the differences which exist among the surviving recensions of the poem regarding the structural role of Orient within its narrative. Key to this analysis will be a mapping between the terrestrial sphere of mankind and its celestial counterpart, home to the Norse *tívar*. The figurative language used to orient such a cosmos links 'Vǫluspá' with Norse astronomical conceptions attested elsewhere in the eddaic corpus and in early scaldic verse, which do not appear to stem directly from Latinate learning. The paper is aimed to demonstrate that the construction of the eastern quadrant in the Hauksbók recension of 'Vǫluspá' is both more archaic and more authentic, involving a series of *lectiones difficiliores*, with respect to the recension attested in the Codex Regius and most likely to that underlying *Snorra Edda*, as well. Close reading of the poem in Hauksbók reveals the East as a source of salvation from, rather than an accomplice to, voracious powers destructively extending from the southern quadrant.

Thus 'Vǫluspá' can offer textual support to early Viking-Age archaeological testimony as to the importance for Scandinavia of a poorly documented region once dominated by the Scythian branches of the Indo-Iranian cultures.

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Constructing Space

Þuluheimar

Íslenskar þulur síðari alda (þ.e. frá 14. öld og yngri; hér eftir ÞSA) eru tiltölulega stutt þjóðkvæði í frjálsu formi, þ.e. ekki undir reglulegum bragarháttum, ekki erindaskipt, braglínur eru mislangar, en stuðlar og/eða rím er þó jafnan notað. ÞSA eru lausbyggðar og síbreytilegar romsur af heitum (samnöfnum og sérnöfnum), minnum (e. *motif*) og tiltölulega fastmótuðum atriðum sem samanstanda af heitum og/eða minnum (lausleg samsvörun við *scene* Parrys og Lords). ÞSA eru því talsvert frábrugðnar miðaldaþulum (hér eftir MÞ), sem þær eiga þó rætur að rekja til (sbr. m.a. Yershova, 158–178 og Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir, 98–119), en MÞ eru listar af skáldamálsheitum (og örsjaldan minnum) undir fornyrðislagi eða dróttkvæðum hætti.
Með innri heimi ÞSA og MÞ (þ.e. heimi sem birtist í þulunum, heimi sem þær lýsa og skapa með beinum og óbeinum hætti) er margt sameiginlegt en einnig talsverður munur, auk þess sem munur er á aðferðunum til að lýsa heiminum (m.a. á eðli heita). Hvorttveggja tengist sérkennum MÞ og ÞSA sem bókmennta-/munnmenntagreina.
MÞ eru lærðar þulur, fæddar í skáldskaparfræðum og settar fram sem skipulagður ljóðabálkur í helstu heimildum. Þær lýsa heiminum með kerfisbundnum hætti; fyrst valdhöfum, goðum og yfirnáttúrulegum verum, síðar mannfólki og helstu athafnasviðum karla (orrustum, sjómennsku), þá jörðinni, dýrum og plöntum og loks himni og himintunglum. Í einni heimild er mannfólkið – einkum konur – aftur í brennidepli undir lokin: hugur þess, hjörtu og hendur.
ÞSA eru hins vegar munnmæli með frekar lága samfélagsstöðu (af heimildum þeirra að dæma). Sjónarhornið er öðruvísi og lýsingin talsvert óskipulegri, en í henni eru þó ákveðin munstur:

- Fyrstu persónu frásögn er áberandi. Ljóðmælandi kemur einkum fram í upphafi og/eða lok þulu, svipað og hinn hlutlausi miðaldaþulur – en ólíkt honum tekur ljóðmælandi í ÞSA oft þátt í því sem hann segir frá, og sjónarhorn hans litar þuluheiminn.
- Frásögnin fylgir oft munstrinu „heima – út – heim“. Fyrst er kastljósi beint að næsta umhverfi ljóðmælanda: fjölskyldu, híbýlum o.þ.h. (ólíkt MÞ). Síðar berst frásögnin út í heiminn: upp í dal, út á sjó, út á meðal fólks; heimurinn opnast og fjarvídd kemur í hann. Í þululokin skreppur heimurinn þó aftur saman í kringum ljóðmælanda og samastað hans.
- Þá byggja ÞSA á andstæðunni „inni *vs.* úti“: öryggi *vs.* hætta, bóndabær og bústörf *vs.* tröllin í fjöllunum og varasamir aðkomumenn. Málið er þó ekki einhlítt; Grýla er t.d. bæði utanaðkomandi ógnvaldur á bóndabæjum og búkona (heima í fjöllunum).

Heimur MÞ er heimur stríðs, vopna og hermanna; heimur ÞSA er heimur bænda og bústarfa. MÞ lýsa heiminum skv. lærðum erlendum hugmyndum; ÞSA lýsa fyrst og fremst íslenskum raunheimi, bæði í því sem landafræði og menningu varðar.

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Reception of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Old Norse Myth in Contemporary Scandinavian Multimodal Narratives for Children and Young Adults

Various Scandinavian novels, story and picture books for children and young adults make use of figures and themes modelled or directly based upon the pre-medieval and medieval literature and culture of the North. What we could broadly label 'Old Norse myth' is one of the most actively, and imaginatively, employed sources of inspiration. There are numerous retellings of Old Norse myths, which may serve the pedagogical purpose of introducing cultural heritage to children, and there are works that creatively adopt and adapt the material in a variety of forms. Such use may include allusions created in terms of the names of characters or places as well as motifs inspired by the Old Norse; this practice is visible in fantasy novel series, adding medieval and mythical flavour to the story. At the other end of the spectrum we find books that engage with the material extensively and explicitly. In addition to children's books, Old Norse myth has provided inspiration for other forms of story-telling, e.g. in comic books, films and TV series.

The adaptations of Old Norse myth have thus far largely been examined in (traditional) written narratives, including historical and fantasy novels. The works of Tolkien form one popular example (among recent contributions, see e.g. Fimi, with references). Some studies have focused on Old Norse themes in contemporary children's books (e.g. Clark; Larrington). The influence of Old Norse myth on various types of multimodal narratives has gained less attention. By multimodal narratives we mean texts that integrate different modes and meaning systems in telling a story, such as written-linguistic, visual, audio, spatial and gestural.

This paper examines the construction of mythical spaces and landscapes in multimodal narratives for children and young adults. It will outline possible trends in the contextual, cultural and commercial adaptations of Old Norse myth in Scandinavia, discussing to what extent representations of Old Norse spatial concepts build upon clichés and stereotyped images or potentially reflect innovative techniques of re-familiarizing (or de-familiarizing) Old Norse themes for contemporary audiences.

Examples will be drawn from the works of various Scandinavian authors that engage actively with Old Norse myth, paying particular attention to their use of spatial concepts. A few illustrated story-books (e.g. by the Norwegian author Tor Åge Bringsværd) will be discussed in some more detail. Among other multimodal texts, the comic book series *Valhalla* by Peter Madsen and the Danish TV series *Jul i Valhall* will be examined.

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Ambiguity at the heart of royal chronology: the case of Sturla‘s *Hákonar saga*

Sturla‘s poetry is almost solely preserved as part of his own narratives. Few stanzas are cited in Þorgils saga skarða, which did not belong to the original compilation of Sturlunga; the saga was added to Reykjarfjarðarbók, one the main manuscripts in the 14th century. Some scholars have even attributed the creation of the saga, which tells the story of his nephew, to Sturla. The provenance of Sturla‘s verse gives us a unique opportunity to study verse by a thirteenth-century poet in a setting of the poet‘s own making. In most other cases, the poets were at the mercy of writers which used their verse as any other material in their saga. The two sagas are probably written with different audiences in mind; Sturlunga saga for an Icelandic audience, but Hákonar saga for the Norwegian court. Both audiences were, however, in close contact at the time of writing. The verses in Íslendinga saga differ from the ones in Hákonar saga; the former are more complex and intricate, whereas the poems composed in honour of King Hákon are simpler, even though their imagery is subtle and colourful. In both cases the writer is using the stanzas as an integral part of the narrative. The verse gives him a freedom to introduce ambiguity and different points of view into his own account of historical events in the Iceland and Norway in the thirteenth century. The paper will explore these intricacies and how they relate to his own position as a major player in political events of his time.

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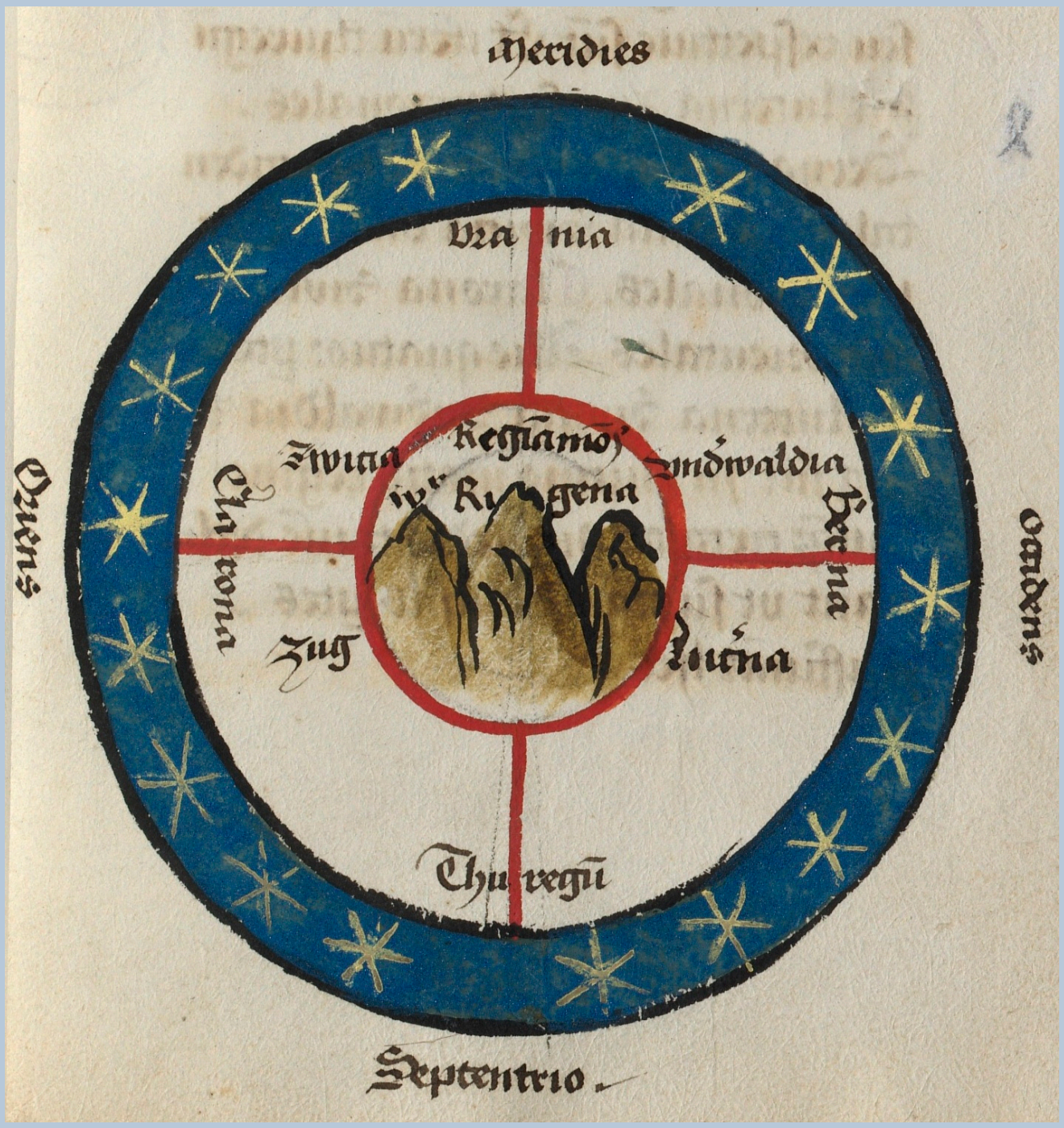

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