Selected Presentations from the Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse (2017-2019)

Edited by Katarzyna Anna Kapitan, Helen F. Leslie-Jacobsen, Luke John Murphy, Simon Nygaard, and Beth Rogers

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Clara Lachmanns
STIFTELSE

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An Introduction to the *Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse* (NECRON)

The rapidly-changing modern university poses particular opportunities and challenges for junior scholars – academics who have not yet secured permanent employment at a cultural or research institution. Early Career Researchers (here understood to refer to PhD Students, Post-Doctoral Researchers, External or Part-Time Lecturers, and a range of other insecure junior appointments) have traditionally been able to lean on their more senior colleagues' advice and knowledge of university systems, but the increasing pace of reform and counter-reform sweeping across most academic institutions makes even well-connected, experienced academics unsure about the future. In response, ECRs working with the (broadly-understood) Viking and Medieval Nordic region have increasingly taken to social media to communicate with one another, sharing experience, resources, and support.

While much of this assistance remains informal and deeply personal, the *Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse* (NECRON) is an attempt to offer a more structured forum for ECRs to collaborate with and support one another in the face of the issues they face. NECRON is an international, interdisciplinary network of ECRs working in all fields of research on late Iron Age and Medieval Scandinavia – that is, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and areas of Viking-Age settlement from around 800 AD until the Reformation in the 1530s, as well as subsequent reception of this material. One of the main aims of the network is the strengthening of cultural and academic collaboration in the fields of Nordic research across both national and disciplinary lines, as well as the building of a strong research community where members support each other, collaborate, and exchange professional experiences.

NECRON was first formalised in 2017, and has since held biannual workshops that are intended as inclusive safe spaces for discussion of the personal and professional challenges faced by ECRs in our fields. NECRON aims to be as inclusive as possible, and explicitly welcomes anyone who shares our goals regardless of their ethnic, racial, or religious backgrounds, their gender expression, and their sexual orientation. The first workshop "Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship" took place in Copenhagen, Denmark in October 2017, and the second workshop "Communication and Dissemination for Early Career Scholars" took place in Bergen, Norway in November 2019. In addition, the network aims to support community-building activities for ECRs across Old Norse Studies, and therefore hosted a networking event at the 2018 International Saga Conference, a major venue for everyone working on Iron Age and Medieval Scandinavia.

The present volume gives insight into NECRON's activities in the period 2017–2019, presenting brief reports by the editors (who were also involved in organising the two workshops), as well as selected posters and slam presentations by contributors at the two events.

As a network, NECRON is reliant on the people who constitute it. The editors would therefore like to thank all the participants of the 2017 and 2019 workshops and 2018 reception. NECRON would not be possible without you! We are grateful that you share our desire to to build an inclusive community of ECRs. This is especially true for the keynote speakers at our two workshops. These established scholars, no longer ECRs themselves, found time in their busy days to talk to us – their less experienced peers – and to share their own, sometimes deeply personal, experiences from the early stages of their careers. Of course, we are also

We hope to see you at a future NECRON event!

The Editors

NECRON 2017: Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship

NECRON's first event, a two-day workshop entitled "Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship" was held at the University of Copenhagen in late October 2017, organised by a collective of ECRs from across the Nordic region: Katarzyna Anna Kapitan (Københavns Universitet, Denmark), Luke John Murphy (Stockholms Universitet, Sweden), Helen Leslie-Jacobsen (Universitetet i Bergen, Norway), and Simon Nygaard (Aarhus Universitet, Denmark).[1] Generously sponsored by Clara Lachmanns Stiftelse and the Universities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Bergen, the workshop was billed as an opportunity for participants to update one another on their research – primarily via a long poster session – and to discuss the career challenges ECRs face in the modern university. Bringing together over fourty ECRs from all around the Nordic region, Germany, the UK, Switzerland, the USA, and Poland, representing disciplines spanning from Literature, through History and Archaeology to Linguistics, the workshop allowed international and interdisciplinary dialog between scholars on various stages of their academic careers, from newly graduated MAs developing their PhD projects, through PhD students, to temporary-employed researchers with many years of experience of obtaining external funding for their projects.

The workshop's first day began with two keynotes on "Current Academic Trends in Old Norse Scholarship", both with a strong focus on how ECRs could engage with these ongoing debates. Tarrin Wills (Københavns Universitet) presented his thoughts on the use of Digital Humanities as a secondary discipline for medievalists, prompting discussion of methodologies – both digital and traditional – and the difficulties of ECRs finding stable platforms to host their work when moving between institutions.

This was followed by Emily Lethbridge (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar Reykjavík), who discussed Cultural Memory in light of her own work with landscape, and her own experience of building a long-term project alongside the time-consuming labour of funding applications and short-term contracts.

These themes were built upon by a round-table discussion of "Academic Trends in Medieval Scandinavian Scholarship" chaired by Katarzyna Anna Kapitan, and featuring Michael MacPherson (Háskóli Íslands), Simon Nygaard, Beeke Steegmann (Københavns Universitet), and yoav tirosh (Háskóli Íslands). The good-spirited debate ranged from the need for digital research to have strong research questions to the necessity of explicit methodological discussion, focusing in particular on the difficulties of defining just what is – and what is not – a contribution to a particular scholarly movement.

The remainder of the day was taken up by a combined poster and "slam" session. While posters are not common at humanities conferences, the organisers of the workshop asked each participant to present their current research as a poster in the hope that this would allow a good deal of informal exchange between scholars who would ordinarily have been unlikely to meet. This session also included four short slam presentations by participants whose research was not well-suited to the poster format, where each speaker presented themselves and their ongoing project in just three minutes. Several of these presentations are reproduced in this volume: some have been updated to reflect subsequent work (or later affiliations), while others have been submitted "as is" as snapshots of ongoing research projects as they stood in late 2017.

The second day sought to address the titular "Challenges" of an ECR career, opening with

two keynote papers on publishing in modern academia: Leszek Gardeła (Uniwersytet Rzeszowski) offered a well-reasoned, systematic overview of the pros and cons of publishing in different formats and championed publishing for popular audiences; while N. Kıvılcım Yavuz (Københavns Universitet) introduced Kısmet Press, a not-for-profit, Open-Access alternative to traditional publishing houses.

This dialogue on publishing was followed by consideration of another key skill for ECR scholars, with a round table on teaching, chaired by Luke John Murphy and featuring Helen Leslie-Jacobsen, Friederike Richter (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), and Seán Vrieland (Københavns Universitet). The conversation quickly covered good practices and key skills for the classroom and courses where these could be acquired, but also touched on the difficulties of teaching across linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary boundaries, as well as noting frustration at the lack of support offered by some institutions, even in serious cases of bullying among students.

The final afternoon was opened by a forthright, autobiographical keynote by Karen Bek-Pedersen (Aarhus), detailing her career to date, and explaining the difficult choices she faced between a traditional academic career and a more balanced, fulfilling lifestyle that still allows her to contribute to academic discourse. Discussion following this challenging presentation understandably picked up on the difficulties of securing permanent employment, prejudice against "Independent Scholars", and issues in transferring from one national academic system to another. These topics were revisited during the following round table on career planning for ECRs – chaired by Leslie-Jacobsen and featuring contributions by Dale Kedwards (Syddansk Universitet), Lara Hogg (The University of Sheffield), and Simon Nygaard – which also covered the challenges of internationalisation and the "two-body problem" (where an academic must leave their partner and/or family and live in a different place to find work), and which served as a capstone to the workshop.

The event closed with a short discussion of the potential future of the NECRON network. It was agreed that a forum for ECR discussion and networking at the 2018 Saga Conference in Reykjavík would be an ideal next step, and that the organisers of the 2017 workshop would work towards publishing a small e-book of the posters presented in Copenhagen. Although significantly delayed, the present volume is the result of those efforts, and has been expanded to cover NECRON's subsequent 2018 reception and 2019 workshop. In summary: although it was acknowledged that the road ahead for ECRs will likely result in a large majority of us reluctantly leaving traditional academia to pursue forms of employment that offer greater stability, increased job security, and more normal family lives, there was also a mood of defiance, a sense that ECRs would have to challenge the prevalent academic culture of short-term, poorly-paid contracts, unreasonable requirements for time abroad, and the stigmatisation of those who take periods of leave (be that for parental, personal, or health-related reasons). In the words of one contributor, Védís Ragnheiðardóttir (Háskóli Íslands): "These are things we need to fight against, because nobody is going to do it for us."

Luke John Murphy

Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship

The **Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse** inaugural workshop
21st -22nd October 2017
University of Copenhagen
Søndre Campus, Building 27,
Room 27.0.09
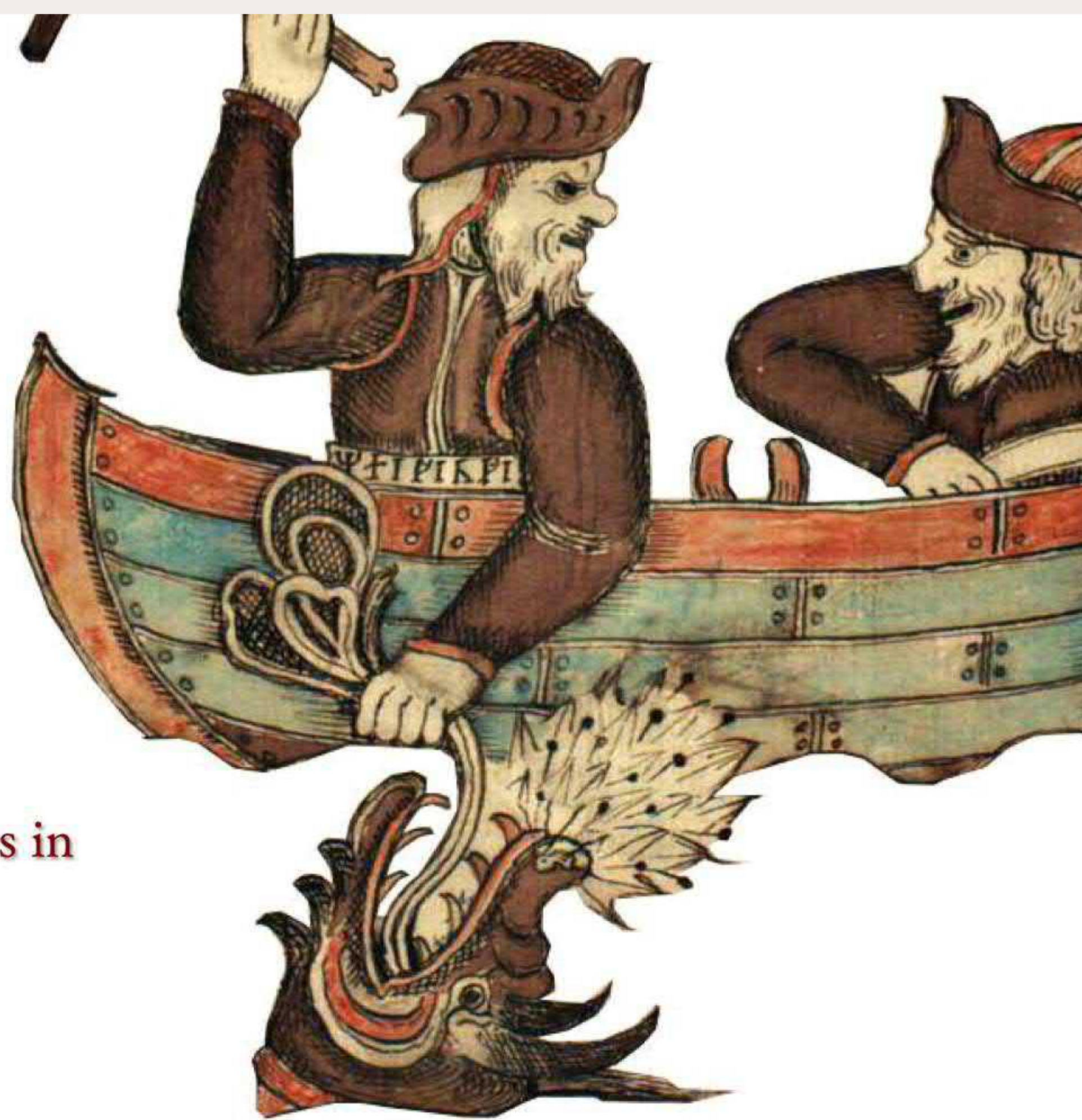
Saturday 21.10.2017

11:45-12:45 Registration
12:45-13:00 Welcome & Introduction
13:00-13:45 Keynote: Tarrin Wills, "Digital Humanities & Medieval Scandinavian Scholarship"
13:45-14:30 Keynote: Emily Lethbridge, "Cultural Memory & Approaches to Landscape in Medieval Scandinavian Scholarship"
14:30-14:45 Coffee Break
14:45-15:30 Round Table: "Academic Trends in Medieval Scandinavian Scholarship"
15:30-16:15 Poster Session Part 1
16:15-16:30 Slam Session
16:30-17:15 Poster Session Part 2
19:00-late Conference Dinner (Bryggens Spisehus)

Sunday 22.10.2017:

09:15-10:00 Keynote: Leszek Gardeła, "Publishing Strategies in Old Norse and Viking Studies"
10:00-10:45 Keynote: N. Kıvılcim Yavuz, "Publish or Perish 2.0: Open Access Publishing"
10:45-11:00 Coffee Break & Informal Poster Session
11:00-11:45 Round Table: "Teaching: Skills and Technologies"
11:45-13:00 Lunch
13:00-13:45 Keynote: Karen Bek-Pedersen, "Academic on the Edge"
13:45-14:30 Round Table: "Career Planning & Funding Applications"
14:30-14:45 Open Session & Closing Discussion
15:00-17:00 Tour of Medieval Copenhagen
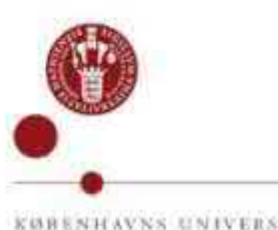
"Thor is still alive and drives around in the heavens": N.F.S. Grundtvig's Romantic Re-Enchantment Efforts

N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) is widely regarded as a central figure for Danish nation building processes in the 19th century. He was a driving force for a turn towards Old Norse mythology as the foundation of a new Danish collective identity.

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N.F.S. Grundtvig at his public lectures about Old Norse and Greek mythology at Borch Collegium in Copenhagen, 1843. 'Brage-Snak – Grundtvig på talerstolen'. Drawing: J. Th. Lundbye, 1843.

ABSTRACT

Focusing on the turbulent mid-19th century, this study examines N.F.S. Grundtvig's ambitions for introducing Old Norse mythology as the mythic foundation of modern Danish community. It situates Grundtvig's utilisation of Old Norse mythology in the context of contemporary Romantic reappraisals and nationalist mobilisations of Europe's non-Classical, vernacular mythologies. Drawing on a combination of memory theory and fantasy theory, the study argues that Grundtvig's actualisation of Old Norse mythology as a fantastic-poetic mode of discourse was an attempt to 're-enchant' or 're-mythologise' the world view of the Danes in his day. This aspect of Grundtvig's treatment of Old Norse mythology is largely unexplored in existing scholarship.

N.F.S. Grundtvig portrayed as a zealous political debater. Satire drawing, *Corsaren* 1842, 91.

Sources

N.F.S. Grundtvig was a polymath. As a pastor, historian, poet, and politician, he published and spoke publically about a range of subjects. His efforts concentrated on two core domains: the Danish 'people' and the Danish Church. Old Norse mythology and the pagan past figure prominently in his writings. This study focuses on *Brage-Snak* (1844) – the published version of a series of 25 public lectures, given in 1843-1844.

Why Build a Danish Community?

The long 19th century was a turbulent period in Danish, as in European, history. Former communal units, and the collective traditions underpinning these, faced erosion by Enlightenment thinking, increasingly penetrating the public mind. The totalising ambition of Christianity as an all-encompassing meaning system was abandoned, as nature and society were now irrevocably uncoupled from the divine, i.e. 'disenchanted' (Weber 2002). The Danish monarchy and the state church were no longer self-evident pillars of society, as they had been for centuries. To secure social cohesion among the population of the (now wobbling) Danish conglomerate state, Grundtvig and like-minded cultural thinkers sought new unifying frames of reference. The immanent threat of political revolution added to a growing sense of urgency. The sought-after unity was found in a (re)invented Danish past, attested in Old Norse mythology. Grundtvig envisioned a new 'folk-enlightenment' intended to teach the Danes about their shared past and to cultivate an emotional attachment and a collective intentionality among them (cf. Korsgaard 2015).

Mythological 'Revival'

In *Brage-Snak*, Grundtvig spoke about Old Norse mythology as poetic memories from the community's golden past, interpreting and actualising them in relation to present affairs. To him, this mythology was a figurative, poetic language – 'Nordens Billed-Sprog' [the image-language of the North] – through which the present and the future could be conceptualised and, thereby, understood. In the vein of the Romantic paradigm characteristic of contemporary nation building efforts (cf. Leerssen 2016), Grundtvig sought to convince his audience (men and women of the Copenhagen bourgeoisie) that Old Norse mythology was their cultural heritage, that it contained the cultural essence of what was authentically Danish, and that it needed to be (re)vitalised in the present in order to secure the restoration and future flourishing of the Danish community.

Connective Memory

Old Norse mythology as tales and images from the golden, heroic past served a 'contra-present' as well as a 'foundational' function (cf. Assmann 2011). They provided a contrast against which the present stood out as deficient, offering a contra-present argument for change. If the broken continuity between golden past and glorious future was rectified, communal stability could be restored. On this basis, Grundtvig envisioned that when (re)introduced and (re)vitalised as a 'living' cultural repertoire, Old Norse mythology would (re)acquire a foundational function, providing orientation in life for the entire population. It would connect members across social and geographical divides, uniting them through their common heritage into a social unit, a community or a 'people'.

Fantastic Re-Enchantment

On the one hand, Old Norse mythology was a repertoire of foundational narratives in the autobiography of the Danish people, which signaled status as well as political and cultural independence for the Danish people towards the outside world. On the other hand, Grundtvig's ambition included the vitalisation among the population of this mythology as a universe of imagination in everyday interaction. This would tie them together inwardly.

Grundtvig on Slipnir's back. Drawing: Constantin Hansen, 1846.

In Grundtvig's view, the fantastic-enchanted dimension of Old Norse mythology was crucial to attain such social cohesion. He sought to bring the fantastic-mythic elements to life as a fantastic-poetic mode of discourse (cf. Lachmann 2004). He filled his *Brage-Snak* lectures with phantasms: fantastic-mythic agents, objects, events, and places. Thereby, he took issue with the disenchanting, historical-critical approach to mythology, which explained away the fantastic dimension of mythic narratives to reconcile them with reason. In tune with contemporary Romanticism, he re-ascribed truth-value to these phantasms by relocating Old Norse mythology to the aesthetic-poetic realm, the realm of fiction. The phantasms were deemed not factually but poetically true. As part of an enchanted universe of imagination they were able to impact the world view and everyday reality of the Danes.

Enchantment as Social Adhesive

By his romantic actualisation of Old Norse mythology, Grundtvig attempted to 're-enchant' (cf. Jenkins 2000) the world view of the Danes. As a fantastic-poetic mode of discourse it provided access to an enchanted layer of reality shut off to the more rationalistically inclined. To him, it was a social adhesive, crucial for connecting the Danish population into a social unit, a 'people'.

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New Perspectives on *Knýtlinga saga*

This poster argues that Óláfr Þórðarson is the author of the saga of Knútr inn helgi, as well as the compiler of *Knýtlinga saga*. It also suggests that the addition of Blóð Egill is influenced by both Christianity and Snorri's tutelage of the saga author.

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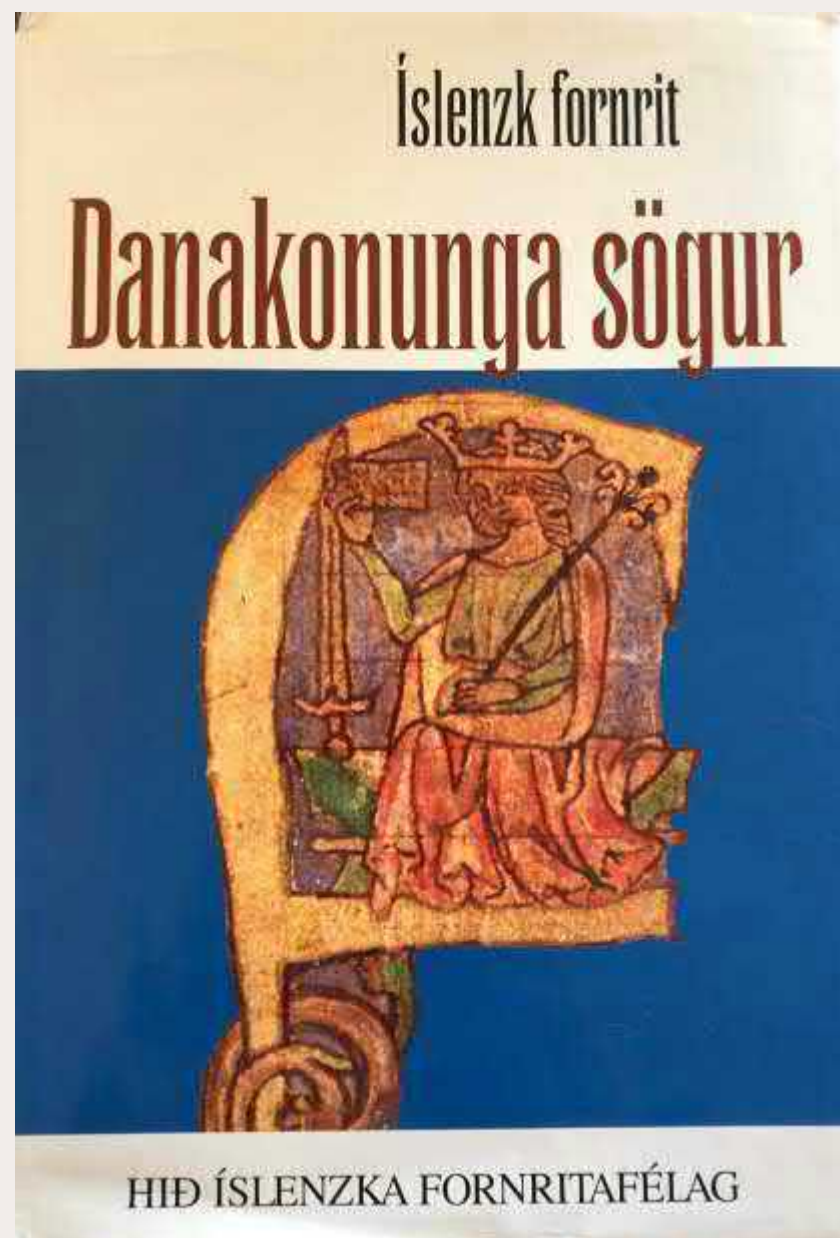
Front cover of the Íslenzk fornrit-edition of *Danakonunga sögur*. Photo by the author.

ABSTRACT

Knýtlinga saga is one of the interesting examples of the *konungasögur* for, other than *Skjöldunga saga,* it is the only saga which deals with a portion of medieval Danish history. The studies relating to the saga are, however, rather limited.

With this poster, I will present two new ideas: one on the issue of authorship and the other on Blóð Egill:

(1) I will argue that Óláfr Þórðarson is not the author of *Knýtlinga saga*, but rather its compiler, because he not only had the necessary skills for compiling, but he also had access to the needed sources.

(2) The addition of Blóð Egill is influenced by Christianity and Snorri's impact on Óláfr himself during the years when Óláfr was his student.

The Issue of Authorship

The contemporary literature on the issue of authorship of *Knýtlinga saga* is divided into two groups: (1) the scholars who are in favor of Óláfr Þórðarson, and (2) the ones who are not.

The first group argues that Óláfr is the saga author because: (1) he was related to Snorri, (2) he had personal ties with King Valdimarr II and heard many stories from him (Hermann Pálsson and Edwards 1986, 18), and (3) several verbs, nouns and adjectives repeat themselves with statistical significance throughout the saga, indicating that the saga is a work of a single author (Hallberg 1963, 93).

The second group disagrees with this notion for three main reasons: (1) there are three events in the saga which took place after Óláfr's time in Denmark, (2) the saga lacks a consistent writing style as well as vocabulary unity (Heller 1967, 162-63) and (3) the saga of Knútr inn helgi possesses a superior writing style in comparison to other sections of the saga.

I propose there is a midway between these ideas. The contemporary literature fails to recognize how similar Óláfr and Sturla Þórðarson's careers turned out to be. Their works are more influential and sophisticated than other sagas. The clear reason for this is that both these authors were educated by Snorri himself. For several years, Óláfr and Sturla observed Snorri and learnt how to compose a saga. When Óláfr visited King Valdimarr II, he had access to Danish chronicles in the royal archives which had been established by Valdimarr the Great. After returning to Iceland, Óláfr used *Heimskringla* as his model and imitated Snorri to compose the saga of Knútr inn helgi. Óláfr, however, had a busy life in Iceland and for that reason he distributed his sources to his students. These students were inexperienced and failed to match Óláfr's writing style. This is why the sections of the saga display different writing styles and the main section of the saga is a masterpiece. Regarding the three events taking place after Óláfr's return from Denmark in 1241, they must have been added to the saga by an unknown author responsible for one of the later copies of the saga.

The Addition of Blóð Egill

Blóð Egill is a unique character that can be only seen in *Knýtlinga saga* and *Flateyjarbók*. In *Flateyjarbók*, however, the story has no connection with the preceding or following parts of it.

The story focuses on the rise and fall of Egill (who is a son of Ragnar, a Dane with a farm at the diocese of Ribe) under the reign of Knútr inn helgi. Throughout the story, Egill's relationship with Knútr weakens due to Egill's actions. He receives his nickname, Blóð Egill, after drinking blood mixed water when he defeats the Wendish fleet. Eventually, Knútr orders his execution which turns out to be a mistake. The execution causes unhappiness among his magnates. In addition, Knútr's unrealistic demands of the peasantry causes a rebellion which results in his death.

I believe there are two reasons why the saga author added this story: (1) Snorri's influence and (2) Christianity.

(1) Snorri's influence on Óláfr is easy to notice. The sagas of Saint Óláfr and Knútr have several similarities in terms of storytelling which is easily explained due to Snorri being the teacher of Óláfr. For Blóð Egill's story, Snorri's influence on Óláfr comes from *Egils saga*. In the saga, Þórólfr Kveldúlfsson shares striking similarities with Blóð Egill (Bjarni Einarsson 1986, 44). In both stories the relative of a noble is appointed by the king, the king hears that the man has misbehaved and has the man killed. The representations and details of these stories are similar, and some of the unique words repeat themselves which indicates Snorri's direct influence on Óláfr.

(2) There are several Christian themes in *Knýtlinga saga*. By the time the saga was composed, the life and the death of a saint king would be seen more important than even distinguished members of the monarchy. It is possible to find motifs relating to conversion, pilgrimage and saints' lives. One can imagine that the saga author wanted to emphasise the importance of faith for Knútr and added the story of Egill. Although his execution led to Knútr's death, even in his last moments the king is devoted to his cause and fights to be a martyr.

Conclusion

The studies regarding *Knýtlinga saga* are incomplete and invite us to look further.

Studies pertaining to the authorship issue may seem adequate, however, both perspectives fail to address several issues and ignore the possibility of Óláfr as the compiler of the saga.

The addition of Blóð Egill, on the other hand, lacks much-needed research and stands as one of the only studies in the literature that does not focus on the importance of religion.

Murder of Canute the Holy, Christian Albrecht von Benzon, 1843 (public domain).

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Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse
Inaugural Workshop 21st-22nd October 2017
University of Copenhagen

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Applied Rhetoric in *Konungs skuggsjá*

The textual composition of *Konungs skuggsjá* implies a variety of didactic devices that are rooted in classical rhetoric. How did the didactic program of the text influence the visual layout of the manuscript? What are the rhetorical practices in the text and on the manuscript page?

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ABSTRACT

This project aims to investigate rhetorical concepts and their didactic functions in the textual and material composition of the educational text *Konungs skuggsjá*, written as a dialogue between a father and son, in the manuscript AM 243 b α fol. (*c.* 1275). By combining theories of semiotics and Material philology, the study focuses on the visual aspects of the text, including the arrangement of the manuscript page as well as literary imagery and figurative language, as inextricable components of the underlying pedagogical program.

Ultimately, this inclusive approach will enhance our understanding of the universal scope of rhetoric in medieval European culture, which Norway indeed was part of.

Keys for interpretation

For the analysis, the medieval rhetorical concepts *figura*, *divisio* and *ordo* (fig. 2) provide relevant tools to describe my material. They serve to detect applied rhetorical practices within *Konungs skuggsjá*, including devices on the textual-literary and material-visual level.
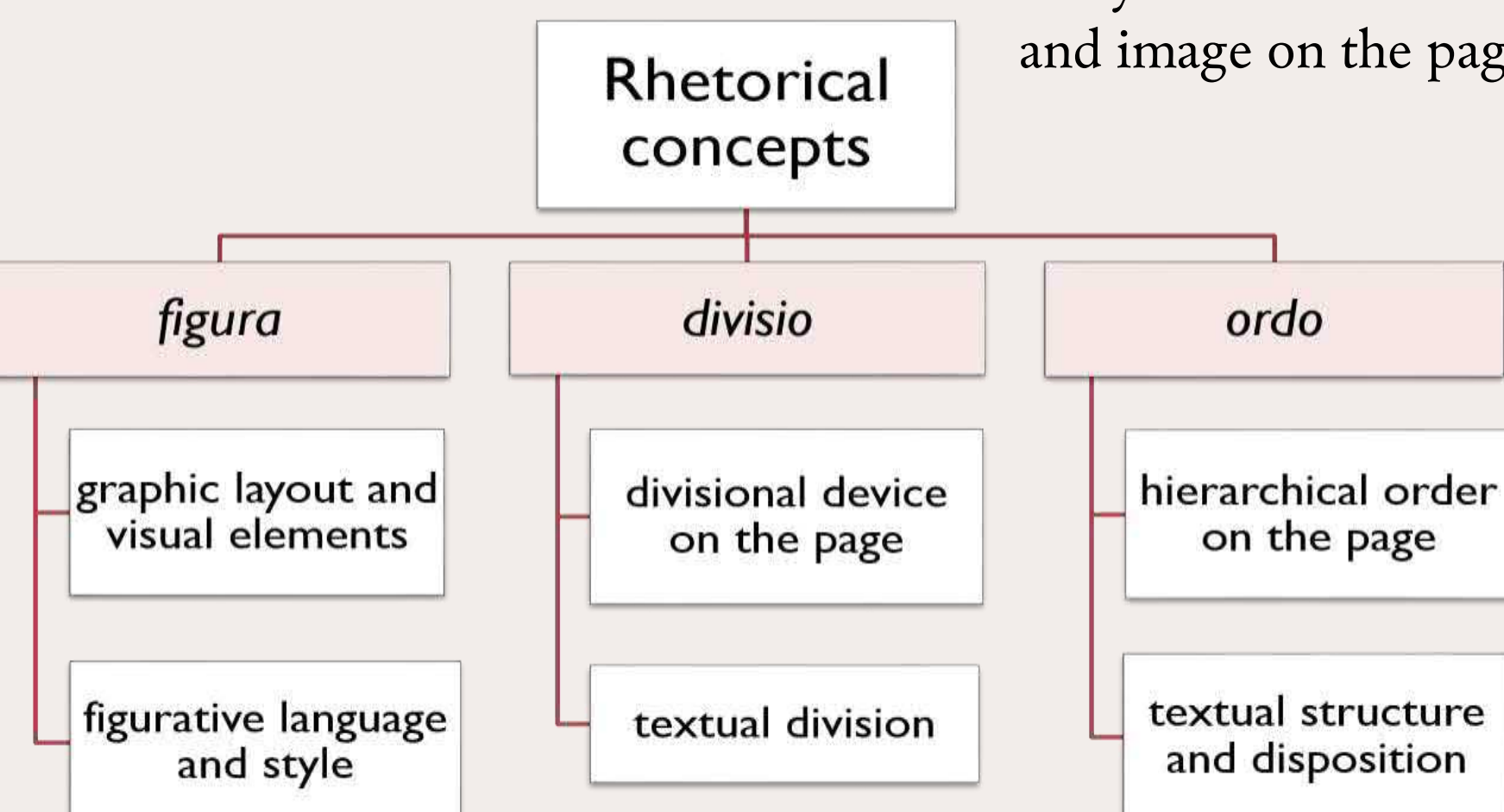

Fig. 1: Initials and rubrics indicating the voice change in the dialogue, Arnamagnæan Institute, Copenhagen, AM 243 b α fol., f. 26r. Photo: Handrit.is.

Objectives

The overall aim of this project is to explore how medieval training of rhetoric informed and framed processes of textual and material composition within a didactic and learned context. This can be specified by means of two hypotheses:

(1) Assuming that *Konungs skuggsjá* emerged within an intellectual culture in which rhetoric was one of the basic disciplines of the curriculum, this study examines particular rhetorical practices (direct and indirect influence), their didactic functions, and their implications for the textual and material composition.

(2) Based on material-philological principles, this study demonstrates how the literary structure determined the visual representation on the page, and analyzes the relations between text and image on the page.

Theoretical framework

o   Acknowledgement of the manuscript as a coherent product of intellectual work (**Material philology**)

o   Interrelation of different systems of signs (**Semiotics**)
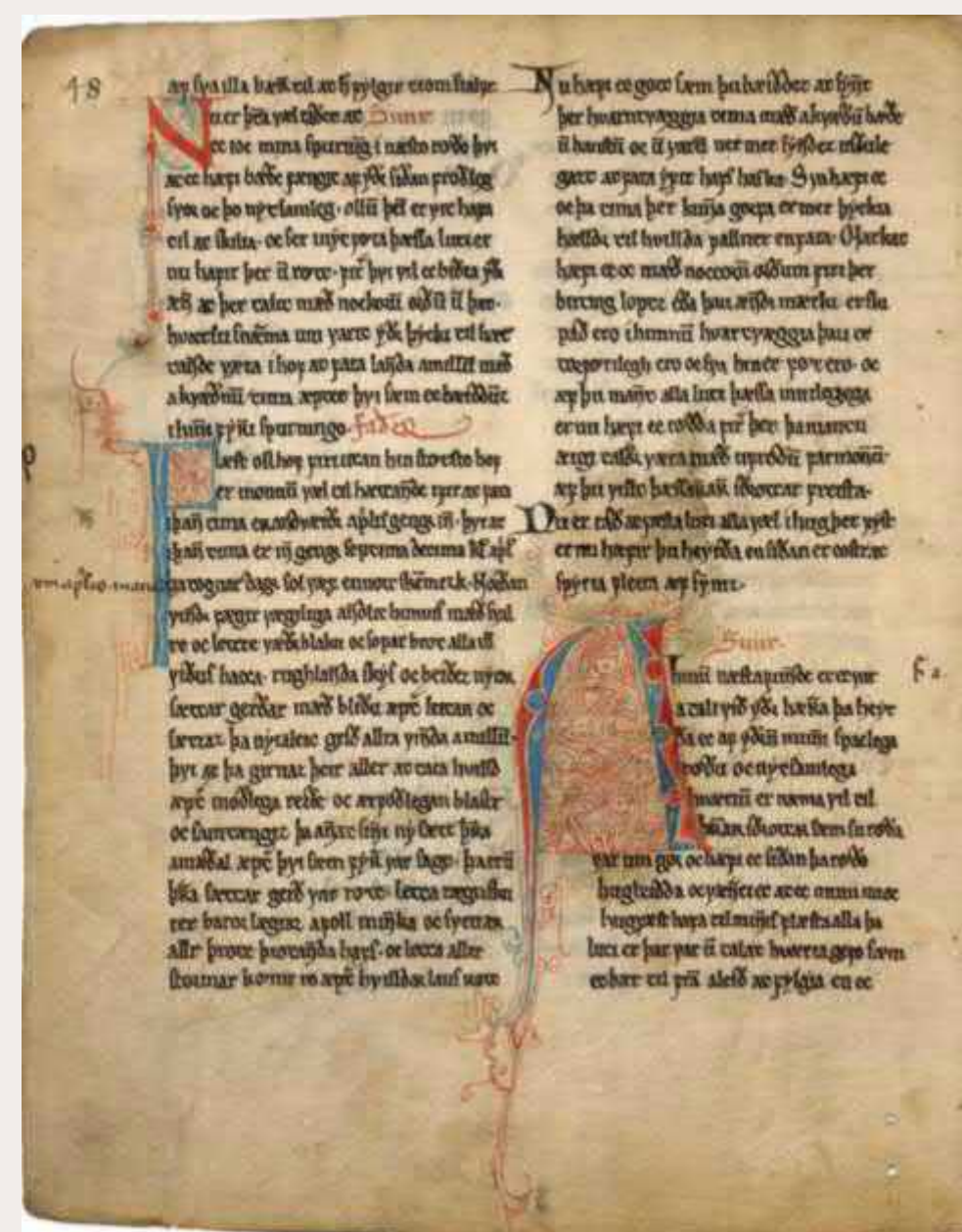
Fig. 3: Large-sized initial-A indicating second main part, Arnamagnæan Institute, Copenhagen, AM 243 b α fol., f. 24v. Photo: Handrit.is.

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Preliminary findings

The most striking observation has been that the traditional scholarly opinion of a threefold textual division of *Konungs skuggsjá* may have to be revised. The hierarchy of initials and their literary relation reveal a textual division into two main parts, each introduced by an especially large-sized initial (fig. 3). The formerly third part, which has been designated to the king, does not appear as a self-contained part in the manuscript but rather as related to part two on the rules for behavior in the king's *hirð*.

Another important finding is that both *direct* and *indirect* use of classical rhetoric appear in the material. Direct use is restricted to two references to Latin authorities, Gregory the Great and Isidore of Seville. However, indirect impact, i.e. using rhetorical strategies to establish one's own authoritative textual framework, is a far more frequent phenomenon. Specific rhetorical practices, such as metaphors, hierarchical order of topics, and repetition are deployed in order to serve the didactic purpose of *Konungs skuggsjá*.

The textual form of a dialogue is related to the material representation in various ways. One example is that rubrics and initials (fig. 1) consistently indicate voice change in the dialogue and thus serve as visual tools for different modes of reception. Simultaneously, the dialogic form provides an appropriate textual framework, so that didactic techniques, such as repetition of textual content as a mnemonic device, could have been applied.

Rhetorical concepts

figura	*divisio*	*ordo*
graphic layout and visual elements	divisional device on the page	hierarchical order on the page
figurative language and style	textual division	textual structure and disposition

Fig. 2: Rhetorical concepts.

What Do We Know About All the Versions of the Story of Hrómundur Gr(e)ipsson?

This poster presents an overview of my preliminary research results on the history of adaptation and transmission history of *Hrómundar saga Gr(e)ipssonar,* one of the best known "lost" Old Icelandic sagas, e.g. sagas whose existence is attested in the medieval period, but which appear not to have survived in their original form.

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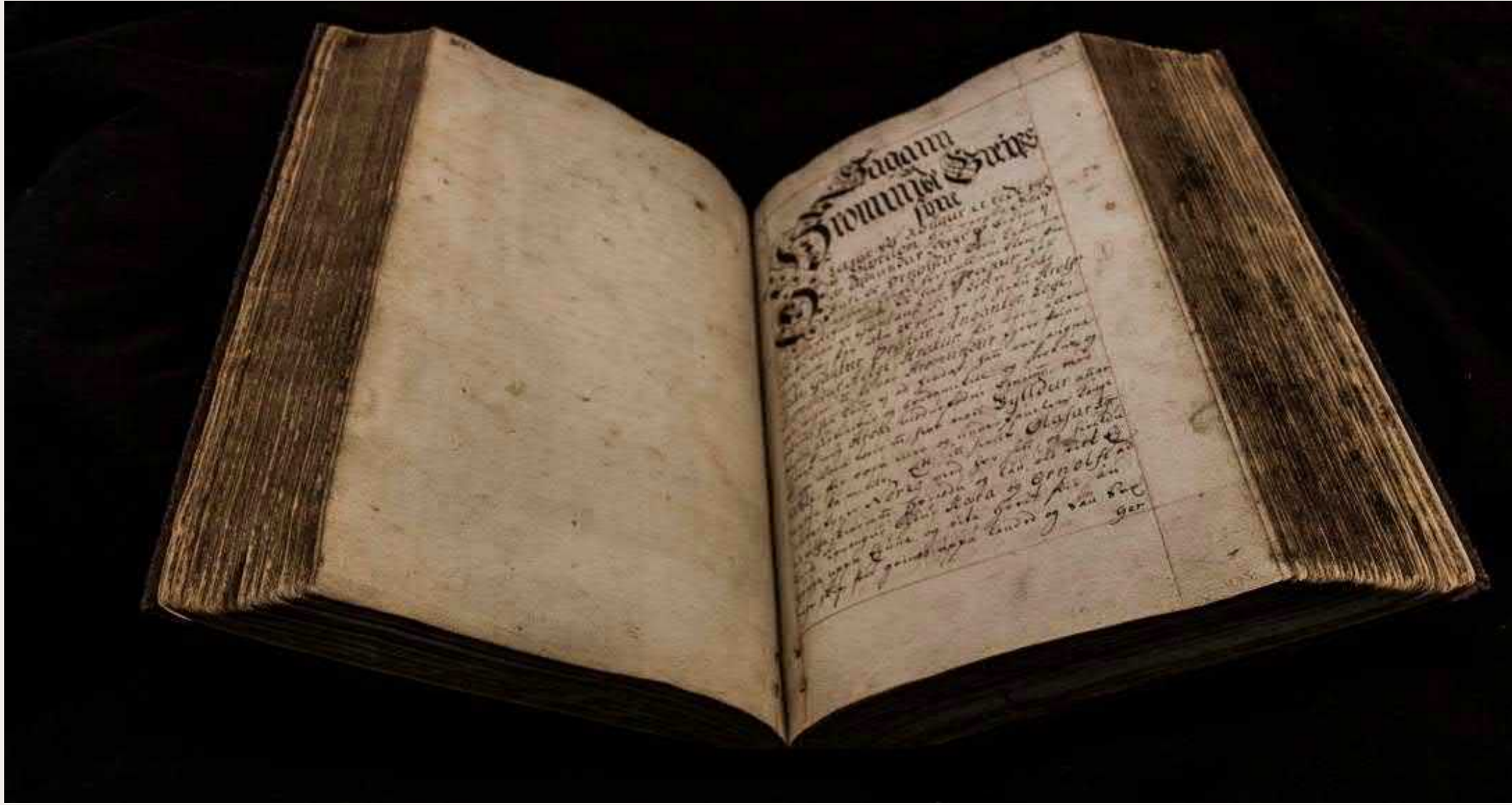
The beginning of *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar* (Version A) in AM 395 fol., held at Stofnun Árna Magnússonar in Reykjavík. Image: KAK

ABSTRACT

Hrómundar saga is a lost Old Icelandic saga (Mitchell 1991; Driscoll 2009) mentioned in the famous description of the wedding feast at Reykjahólar in 1119, found in *Þorgils saga ok Hafliða.* The story of Hrómundur has not survived in its original form, but it survived in a 15th-century metrical version called *Hrómundarrímur,* which are presumed to have been composed on the basis of the lost medieval saga. The *rímur* in turn served as a basis for the 17th century prosification known as *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar.* The story of Hrómundur appears in many postmediaeval manifestations, which so far received only limited amount of scholarly attention. My PhD-project explores the postmediaeval transmission history and history of adaptation of the story of Hrómundur in prose and verse, and the relationships among the subsequent manifestations.

State of the art

The question of the medieval origin of the saga was of greatest interest and is widely discussed in the literature, e.g. Andrews (1910–13), Liestøl (1915), Björn Karel Þórólfsson (1934), Jón Helgason (1953) and Holtsmark (1961) and Jesch (1984), all of whom believed that *Hrómundarrímur* reflects to some extent the lost **Hrómundar saga.* Moreover, the same lost saga was supposed to be the basis of the Scandinavian ballads which exist in Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish.
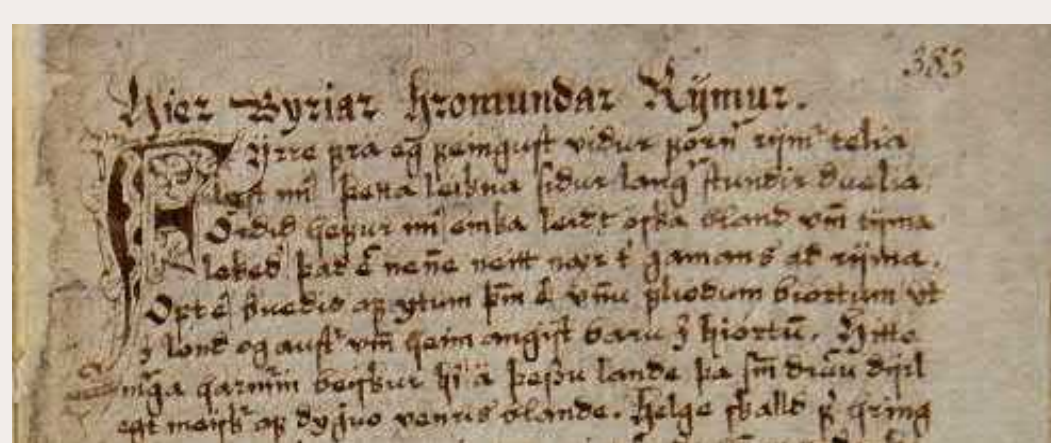

Hrómundarrímur in AM 146 a 8vo, held at Stofunun Árna Magnússonar in Reykjavík. Image: KAK

Hrómundar saga, as known from Rafn's (1829–30) edition of *fornaldarsögur,* is a 17th-century narrative, preserved in manuscripts from the 17th – 19th centuries. It is thought to derive either from *Hrómundarrímur* (Brown 1946–53, 77) or from the lost medieval saga (Hooper 1934, 56). No in-depth study of its transmission history yet exists and its relationship to younger adaptations is unknown.

Main findings

Hrómundar saga Gr(e)ipssonar exists in at least two distinct versions. Version A, known from all modern editions and composed in the late-17th century, is based on the medieval *rímur* and is preserved in at least 30 manuscripts. Previously unknown Version B was most likely composed in the late 18th or early 19th century and it is preserved in 4 manuscripts. Version B is an intriguing example of a postmedieval reception of medieval Icelandic literature, as it is most likely a modernized reworking of Version A and *Hrómundarrímur.*
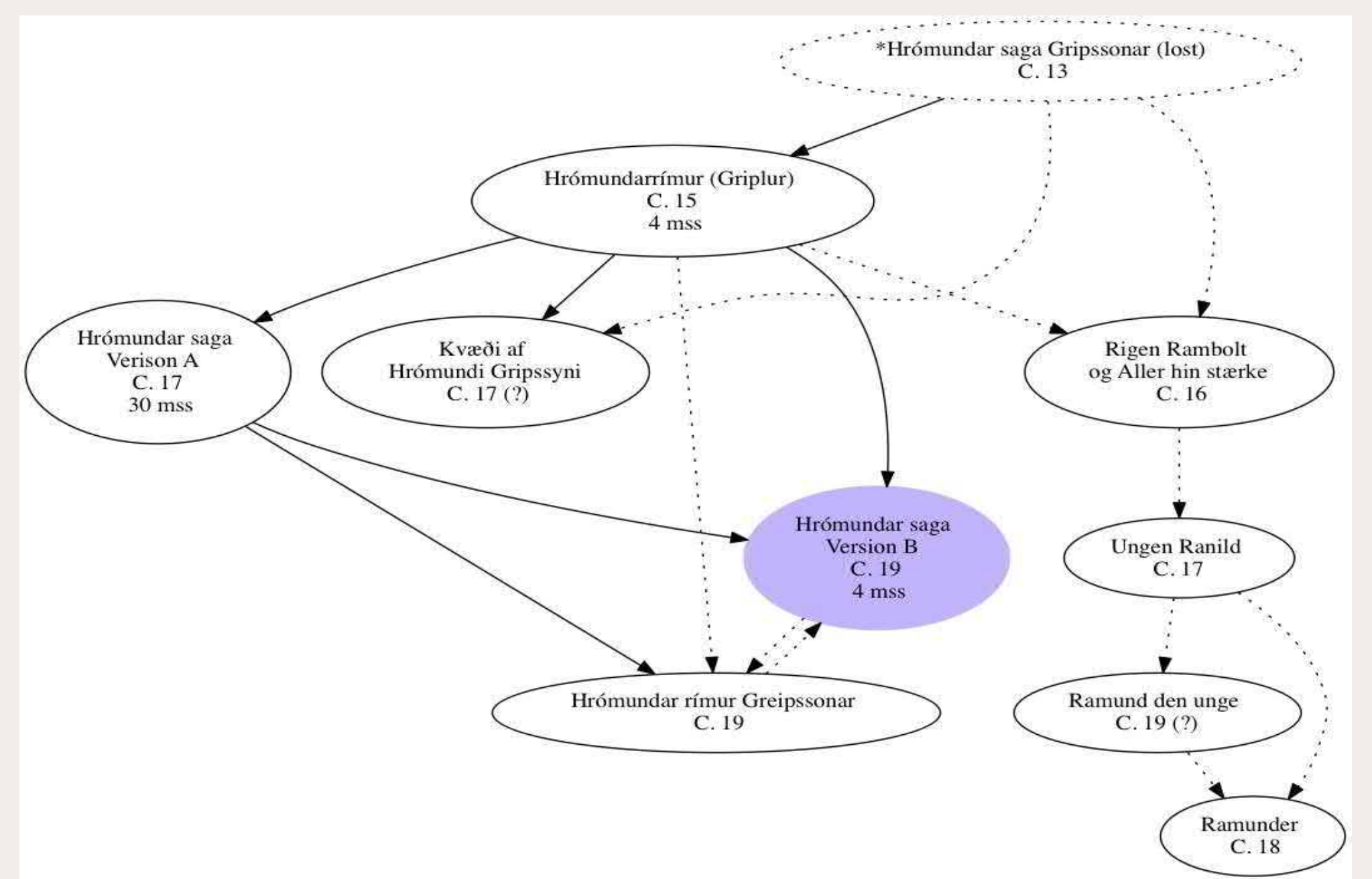
Relationships among the various versions of the story about Hrómundur Gr(e)ipsson. Dotted lines represent uncertain connections. Image: KAK

Discussion

The discovery of Version B is of great significance for the study of the adaptation history of *Hrómundar saga.* The text of Version B appears to be closer to *Hrómundarrímur* and thus provides a prose version of the story which is presumably closer to the lost **Hrómundar saga.* The relationship between Version B and the 19th-century *Hrómundar rímur Greipssonar* is unknown, but it cannot be excluded that the author of the younger *rímur* had access to both versions of the saga and the medieval *Hrómundarrímur.*

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The beginning of *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar* (version B) in Lbs 2404 8vo, held at Landsbókasafn Íslands in Reykjavík. Image: KAK

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UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

The Limits of Discrepancy: Mapping Variation in Pre-Christian Nordic Religion

This post-doc project seeks to explore the ways in which Iron-Age Nordic paganism\s varied according to a range of social conditions, and to identify semi-distinct articulations of pre-Christian cult.

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ABSTRACT

There is a growing acceptance that pre-Christian Nordic religion was not a single monolithic cultural system, but rather varied along a range of geographic, social, temporal, and even cognitive axes.

Most previous research on concepts within this variation has focused on the geographic axis, looking in particular at the East/West cultural divide in early medieval Scandinavia.

Hosted at the **Department of Ethnology, History of Religions, and Gender Studies at Stockholm University**, this short project builds on my doctoral research to investigate a range of variant and semi-distinct articulations of pre-Christian cult, using the establishment of sacral social spaces to examine the social axis of religious variation in particular. The project is generously sponsored by the **Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för svensk folkkultur.**

The Project

As a single-semester project, **The Limits of Discrepancy** will see the production and submission for publication of three articles dealing with different issues – **social**, **spatial**, and **methodological** – in the ongoing debates surrounding religious variation in the pre-Christian North. Planning will also begin for the organisation of a conference on the theme of **religious variation in the medieval north,** in order to encourage dialogue between scholars of pre-Christian and Christian cultures.

The Social

This article develops a comparative model of pre-Archaic domestic, household, and family-based cult on the basis of other Indo-European cultures, seeking evidence for a similar articulation of pre-Christian Nordic religion. It proposes a model of **household cult performed in the domestic context** focused around food-based offerings to localised supranatural beings, performed predominantly in the autumn and winter, and which appears to have offered significant roles for women. (*Below: archaeological evidence for one such setting.*) This model serves as an illustration of the complex relationship between individual "**articulations**" of pre-Christian religion and the **wider system they exist within and help constitute.**
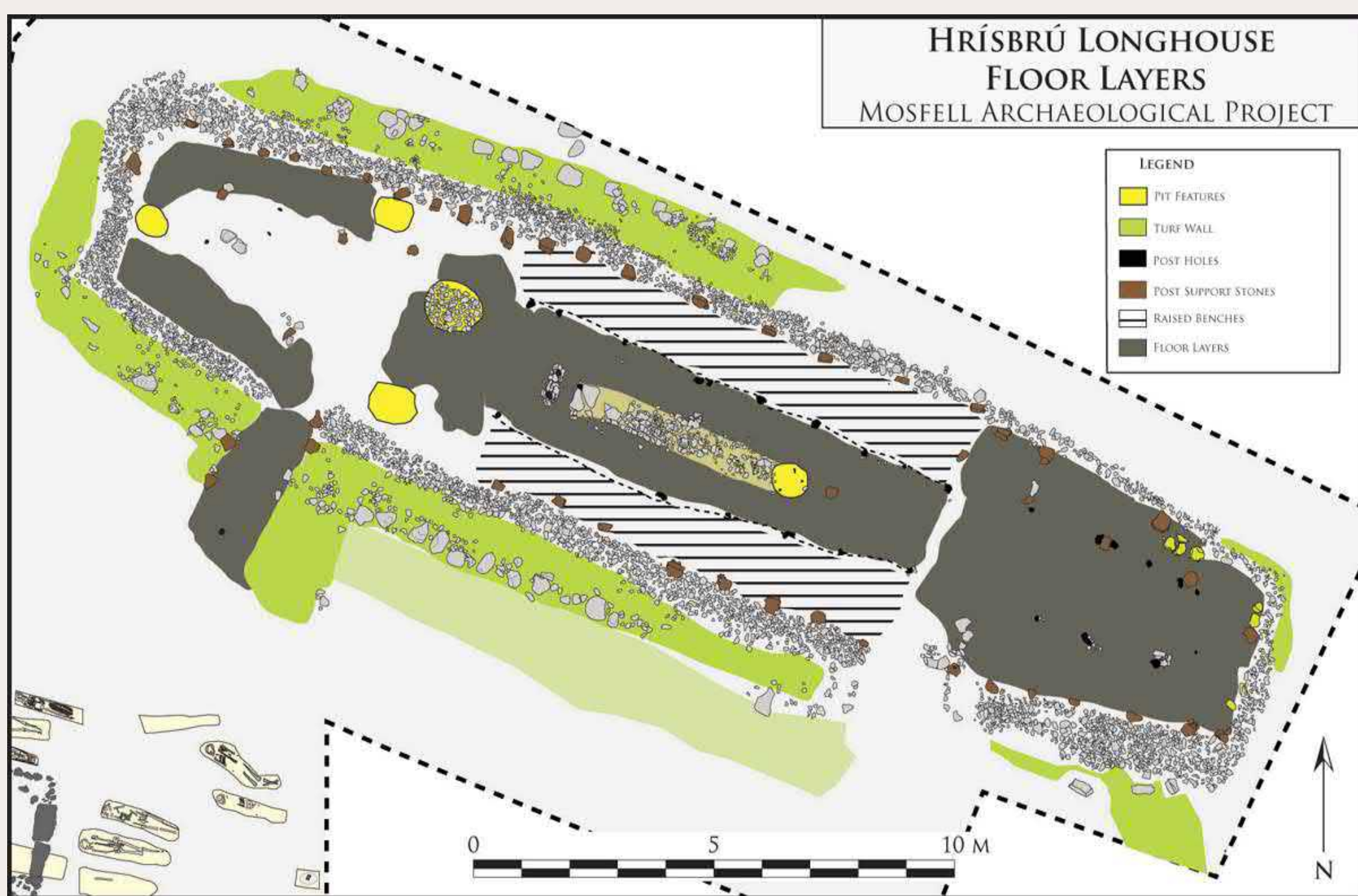
The Spatial

A study of the spatialisation of pre-Christian sacral value in Gotland, this text investigates the enigmatic "Vi" of *Guta saga*, proposing that *vé* were spatially-focused ritual places that exhibited a great concern with access to the object of sacral value and which utilised a range of controls to establish a range of analogue spaces. (*Above: an artist's interpretion of the* vé *at Götavi.*) A second article building on these findings uses *vé* as a springboard to consider the changes to sacral space during Christianisation, arguing that Gotland does not conform to traditional models of gradual centralisation. (*Right: Fabech's much-debated model of cult centralisation.*)
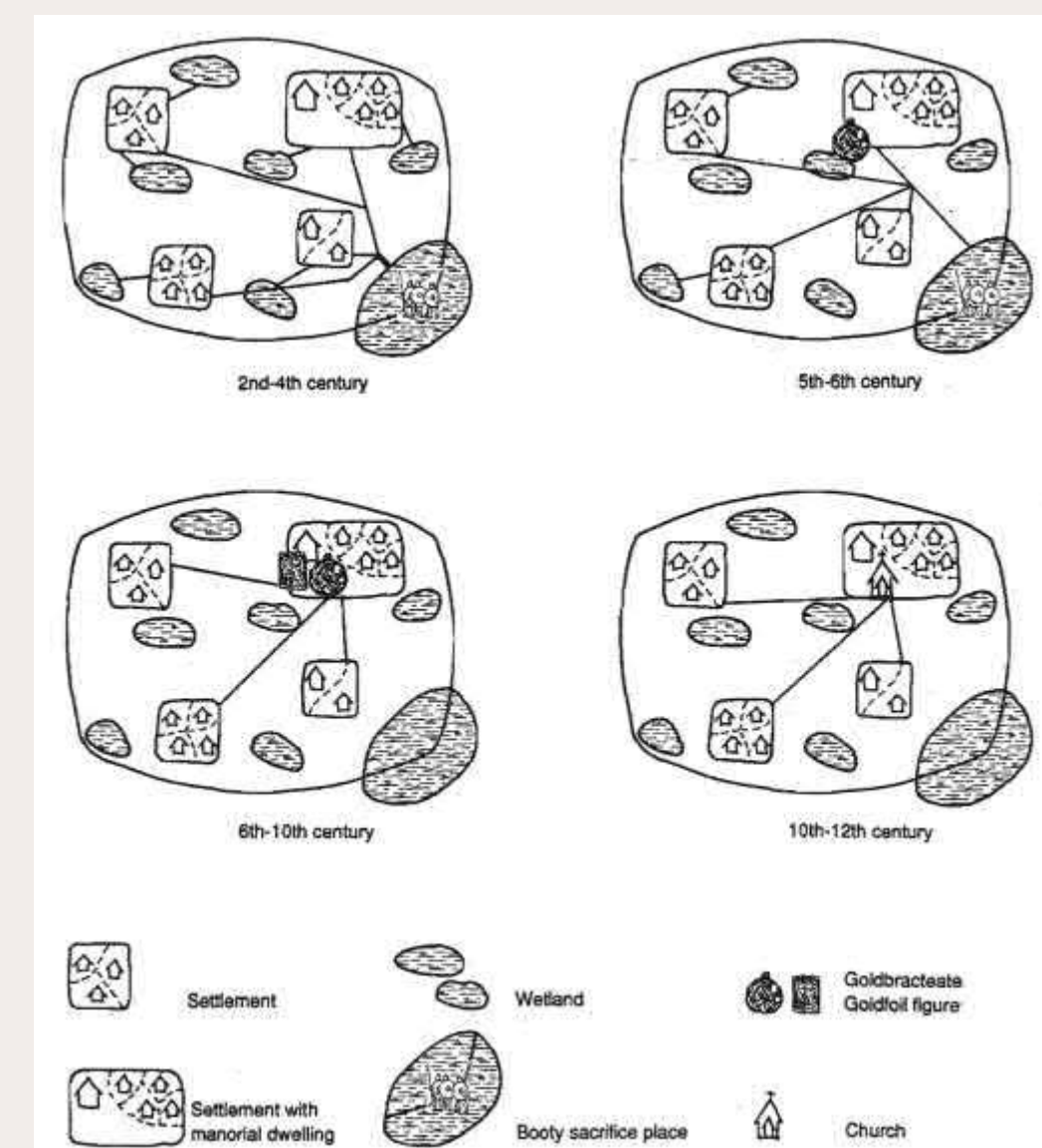
The Methodological

This polemic is a call for greater explicit discussion of methodology in the emerging field of **Viking Studies**: as the profile of the field rises, there is a risk that less attention will be paid to disciplinary concerns, particularly **theory and method**. This article seeks to provide a common vocabulary for interdisciplinary communication, and uses a case study of concepts of Iron-Age "privacy" to argue that most Viking Studies research can usefully be regard as either "emic" or "etic" and that conscious discussion of these differences can produce higher-quality scholarship.

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IMAGE CREDITS

Above Centre: The *vé* at Götavi, © Mats Vänehem. Reproduced with permission.

Above Right: A model for the physical changes of location undergone by sacral places during the Iron Age, after Fabech, Charlotte. 1994. "Reading Society from the Cultural Landscape: South Scandinavia between Sacral and Political Power." In *The Archaeology of Gudme and Lundeborg*, edited by P. O. Nielsen, K. Randsborg, and H. Thrane, 169–183. Copenhagen: Akademisk forlag, universitetsforlag i København. Reproduced with permission.

Below Left: Plan of the longhouse at Hrísbrú, Mosfell (Iceland), Viking Age, after Zori, Davide, and Thomas Wake. 2008. "Archaeofauna from the Chieftain's Farm at Hrísbrú, 2001-2008." *Mosfell Archaeological Project*. Reproduced with permission.

HRÍSBRÚ LONGHOUSE
FLOOR LAYERS
MOSFELL ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

LEGEND
- Pit Features
- Turf Wall
- Post Holes
- Post Support Stones
- Raised Benches
- Floor Layers

0   5   10 M

Ritual and Memory Specialists in Pre-Christian Nordic Religion

In oral societies, cultural memory – which includes religion – seems to have been transmitted through ritual reconstruction by 'specialized carriers of memory' (Assmann 2010, 114). But who were these specialists and what did they transmit in a pre-Christian Nordic context?

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Fig.1

Because pre-Christian Nordic religion can be characterised as a primary religion that is orally transmitted and firmly grounded in ritual, it would be plausible to look for what Jan Assmann terms 'rite-based repetition' of cultural memory in a pre-Christian Nordic context (2006, 39).

This ritual reconstruction of cultural memory is understood as a tripartite process comprising of: 1. preservation by ritual specialists in poetic form; 2. retrieval by ritual specialists through ritual performance and; 3. communication between the ritual specialists and the group through ritual participation.

Some of the few occurrences of ritual specialists and possible performances in the Old Norse textual corpus and the Scandinavian runic inscriptions form the basis of this research.

Fig. 2

Ritual and Memory Specialists

This poster focuses on two of the named ritual specialists who seem to have something to do with transmission of memory. The *þulr* may be a figure who fits the bill of ritual and memory specialist. The etymology of the term (ON *þylja*, to recite, speak) indicates a performance function. Another possibility may be the skald – court poet and very much specialist of memory. But also religious rituals?

Fig. 3

Rituals

These performances may have taken the form of ritual and ON poetry may have been the cultural memory transmitted in these performances. I will explore the possible rituals behind these performances of *ljóðaháttr* poetry – both eddic and skaldic. Ritual hall space and ritual props – like the Sutton Hoo helmet (fig. 3) – may have been utilised to ritually transformative ends.

Grímnismál and the *þulr*

The eddic poem *Grímnismál* bears marks of having been performed orally in a Viking Age hall. A close reading of the poem suggests that Grímnir deliberately reveals his identity as Óðinn gradually throughout the poem; this coincides with the ritual specialist performing the role of Grímnir in the first person revealing his transformation into Óðinn in the ritual. The name Grímnir (lit. 'masked one') may hint at the use of a ritual mask to aid this transformation. Ultimately, Óðinn transmits the cultural memory of the poem to the group in this ritual reconstruction of cultural memory.

The ritual specialist who performs this may be the *þulr*, additionally acting as an initiator for the future king Agnarr (Nygaard 2019). The *þulr* seems to be an orator of knowledge perhaps in a ritualised hall setting as implied by part of the Snoldelev inscription (fig. 4) (ODa *þulaR ā Salhaugum*, '*þulr* at *sal-mounds*'). The noun *salr*, it has been argued, often describes a ritual hall (Brink 1996).

Eiríksmál and the skald

The skaldic poem *Eiríksmál* also shows signs of oral performance. The skald may have performed a hall-based, religious ritual that both transforms the space of the hall into Valhǫll (in st. 1) and the possible warrior-audience into *einherjar* – for the duration of the ritual.

Skaldic poems may be viewed as one-off performances composed for a special occasion and considering this, we may be able to suggest a ritual occasion for *Eiríksmál*. Being commissioned by Gunnhildr, it may have been performed at the court of her brother or half-brother Haraldr *blátǫnn* in Denmark as a form of *erfikvæði* for her late husband Eiríkr blóðøx (Nygaard 2018).

Conclusions

In short, cosmological, cosmogonic and eschatological poetry may have been the cultural memory performed ritually by specialists like the *þulr* or the skald and transmitted to the group of bearers of pre-Christian Nordic religion.

IMAGES

Fig 1: Grímnir between the fires and Agnarr giving him a drink, W. G. Collingwood, 1908 (public domain).
Fig 2: Grímnir between the fires, Lorenz Frølich, 1895 (public domain).
Fig 3: Detail of reconstruction of the Sutton Hoo helmet-mask by Dave Roper of the Wulfheodenas living history group. Courtesy of owner Paul Mortimer, Wulfheodenas living history group. Photo: Lindsey Kerr.
Fig. 4: The Snoldelev rune stone (DR 248; 700-800 CE), Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet. Photo: Roberto Fortuna (CC-BY-SA).

Fig. 4

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Reassessing Language and Script in Late Medieval Icelandic Manuscripts

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The manuscript production of the 15th century in Iceland has received considerably less scholarly attention than that of the previous century. Our current knowledge about this period is based on descriptions of script, language, and orthography in individual manuscripts or—more commonly—parts of manuscripts found as part of introductions to text editions based (in part) on manuscripts from the 15th century. Consequently, no comprehensive overview exists of the development of the script, language, and orthography and this has resulted in difficulties in dating manuscripts and documents from the period. For example, the large codex AM 152 fol., containing a variety of texts, was for a long while dated to the 15th century, but more recently scholars have leaned toward a later date in the first quarter of the 16th century.

The development of the script, language, and orthography in previous centuries has been examined much more closely. The scholarship includes detailed studies such as Lindblad (1952), Widding (1960), and Spehr (1929), to mention a few on script and orthography, and de Leeuw van Weenen (1993, 2009), Mårtensson (2011) and Kjeldsen (2013) on individual manuscripts. Consequently, we have a much firmer understanding of the development of the script, language and orthography from the earlier periods, and the earlier manuscripts have been dated with much greater accuracy.

It is the objective of this study to narrow the gap in our understanding of the language and script between the 15th century and the previous ones.

This will be done by charting and analysing the development of Icelandic script, language, and orthography during 'the long 15th century', that is, from the end of the 14th century down into the beginning of the 16th century. Selected features of the script, language, and orthography in a variety of scribal hands found in manuscript books and documents from this period will be studied. Based on the resulting database, an overview of the development will be constructed in the form of a reference book which will both present a comprehensive picture of previous research, and trace the outline of a general description of the evolution of language and script in the period examined.

The hope is that to facilitate the work of manuscript scholars in dating texts from the long 15th century, and that of literary scholars in tracing the history and relations among these.

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Regional Differences in Scandinavian Clothing in the Viking Age

On the basis of archaeological and iconographic finds from Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and combining them with the written sources from Scandinavia and beyond, we can try to reconstruct ways of dressing in the Viking Age Scandinavia

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Hedeby (Denmark), 10th c.

ABSTRACT

For several years, the re-enactment of Viking Age Scandinavia has become increasingly popular. The demand for this type of event forces researchers to discuss the reliability of reconstructed elements of material culture, including costumes. It turns out that for many "Scandinavian clothing" is treated as a monolith, and they forget about the territorial and chronological variety of costumes. Therefore, I would like to draw attention to the differences in finds from various sites and periods, based on archaeological and iconographic sources.

Sources

Archaeological evidence includes fragments of clothing (shirts, trousers, dresses, coats, shoes, etc.) made of wool, linen and leather, as well as imported silk fabrics. Iconographic sources are significant because of the representation of human figures with outfits. It is possible to analyse clothing forms and patterns. Written sources come from later periods and we should not accept such data uncritically. Sometimes written sources (e.g. *Rígsþula, Egils saga, Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*) include complete descriptions of the garments, which do not appear in iconographic sources: *"(...) hosan var strengd fast at beini, hann hafði fustans kyrtil rauðan, þröngvan upphlutinn, ok lázt at síðu"* (Ásmundarson 1892: 242).

Men's clothing

Viking men's clothing basically consisted of a shirt, outer garment (tunic, kaftan or cloak), trousers and shoes. In Hedeby, men wore lacing hose or wrapped their calves with cloth tapes. The body was covered with a shirt and a tunic; the outer garment was a cloak or a kaftan. Men also wore hoods with "tails". A well-preserved linen shirt from the early 11th century was found in Viborg. However, tunics dating back to the middle of the 11th or 12th century (Kragelund, Moselund) differ from the current fashion. Swedes wore woollen tunics made of one piece of fabric with tapered sleeves and lateral wedges. In Sweden, there appear to have been two types of kaftan. It seems that the baggy trousers worn in 10th century Denmark were much more popular in Sweden, because they appear in many iconographic sources. Due to the Oseberg tapestry we can distinguish several elements of a Norwegian costume. Men wore tunics to their hips or knees, a short rectangular cloak reaching the hips, or a long ankle coat. The Oseberg depicts baggy trousers, which, unlike in other regions, were ankle-length. Unique is the 11th c. costume from Skjoldehamn, which is quite different from other Scandinavian examples.

Women's clothing

Women's clothing consisted of a dress (one or more) made of linen or wool. An apron dress was worn on top, attached with characteristic turtle brooches. In Denmark there were also pleated aprons, as the Køstrup find and Trønninge figurine show. In Sweden, women wore trailing dresses with long sleeved dresses on top. Women put on coats or tunics richly decorated with embroidery. They also wore pinafore dress above their main dress that could have been closed or – unlike the examples from Denmark – open at the front and pinned only by turtle brooches. The cloak was fastened with a single clasp.
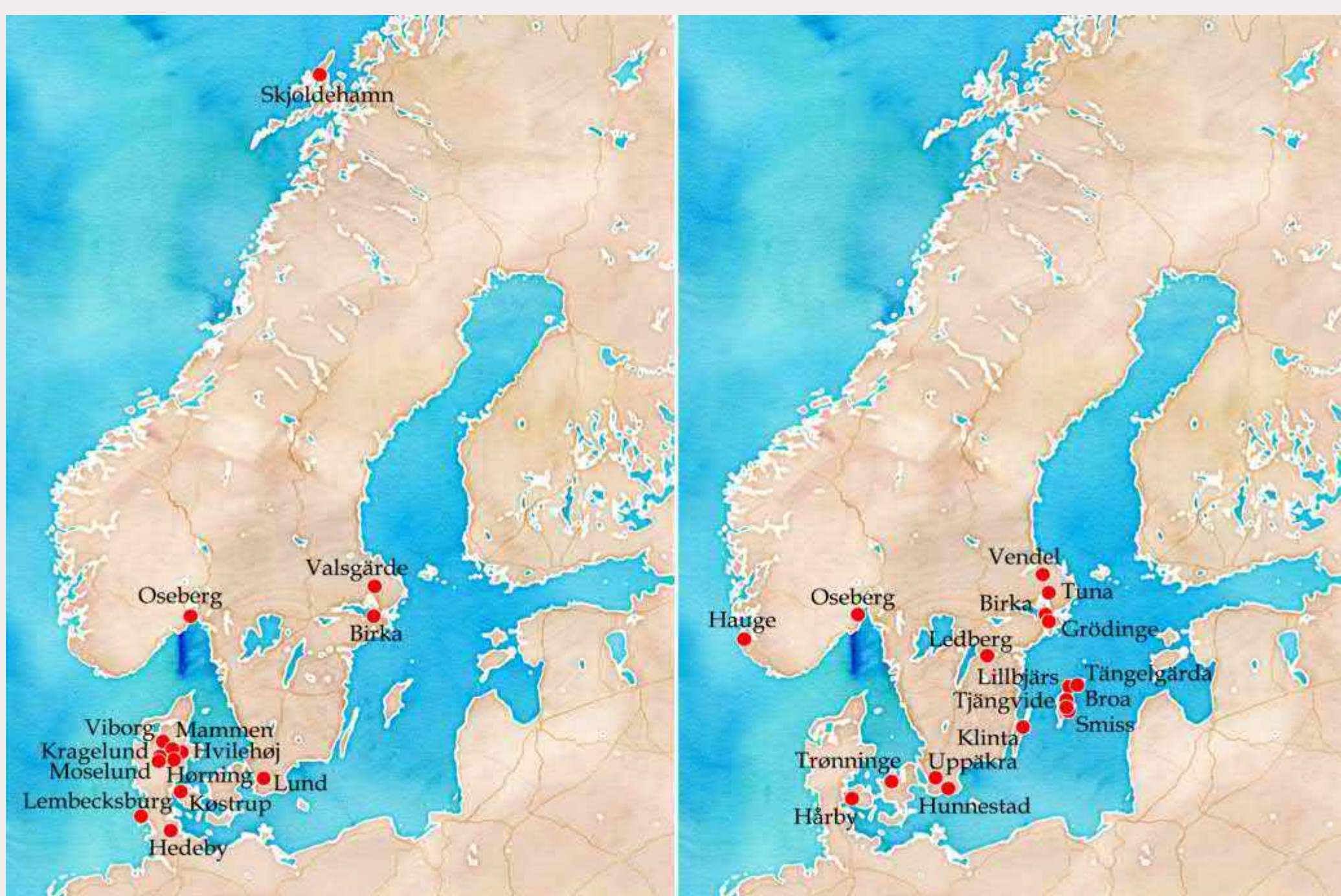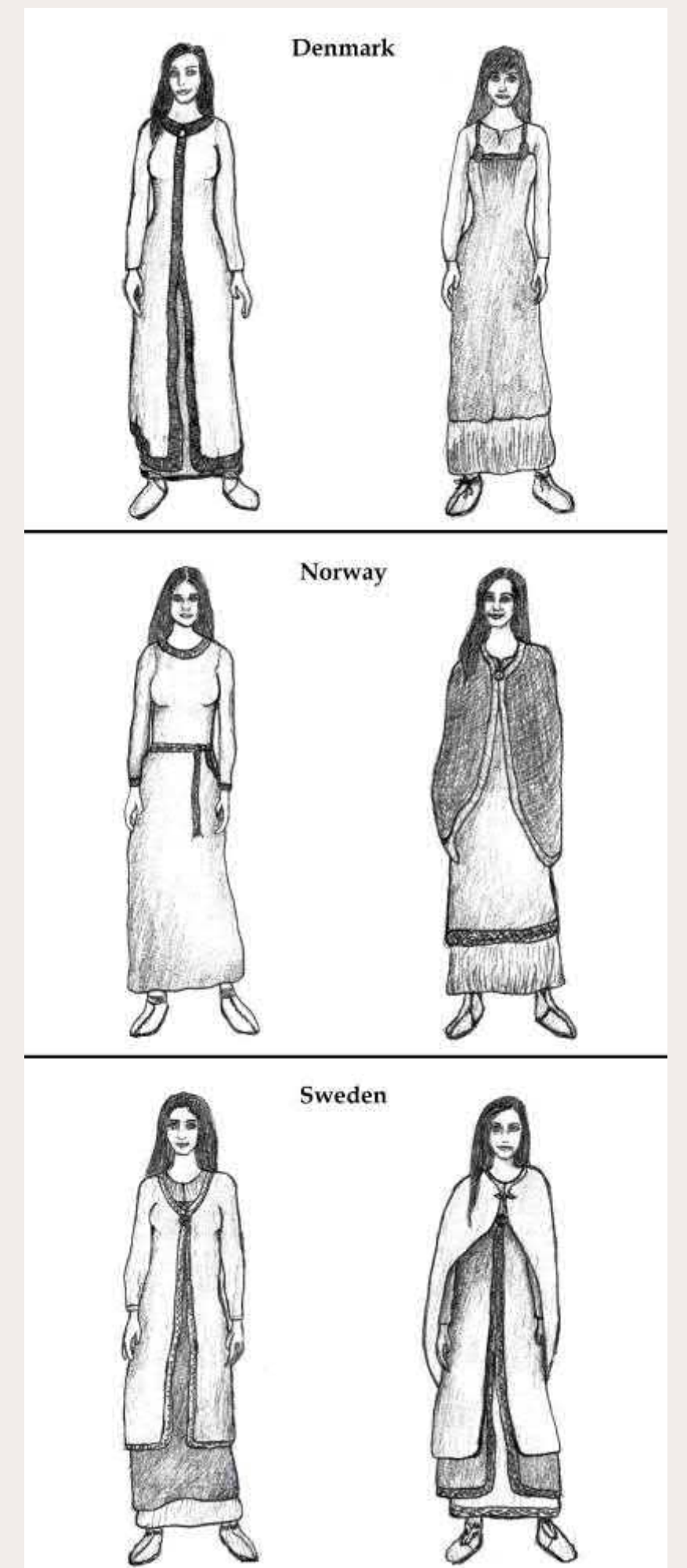
Maps depicting the presence of archaeological (left) and iconographic (right) finds discussed in this paper.
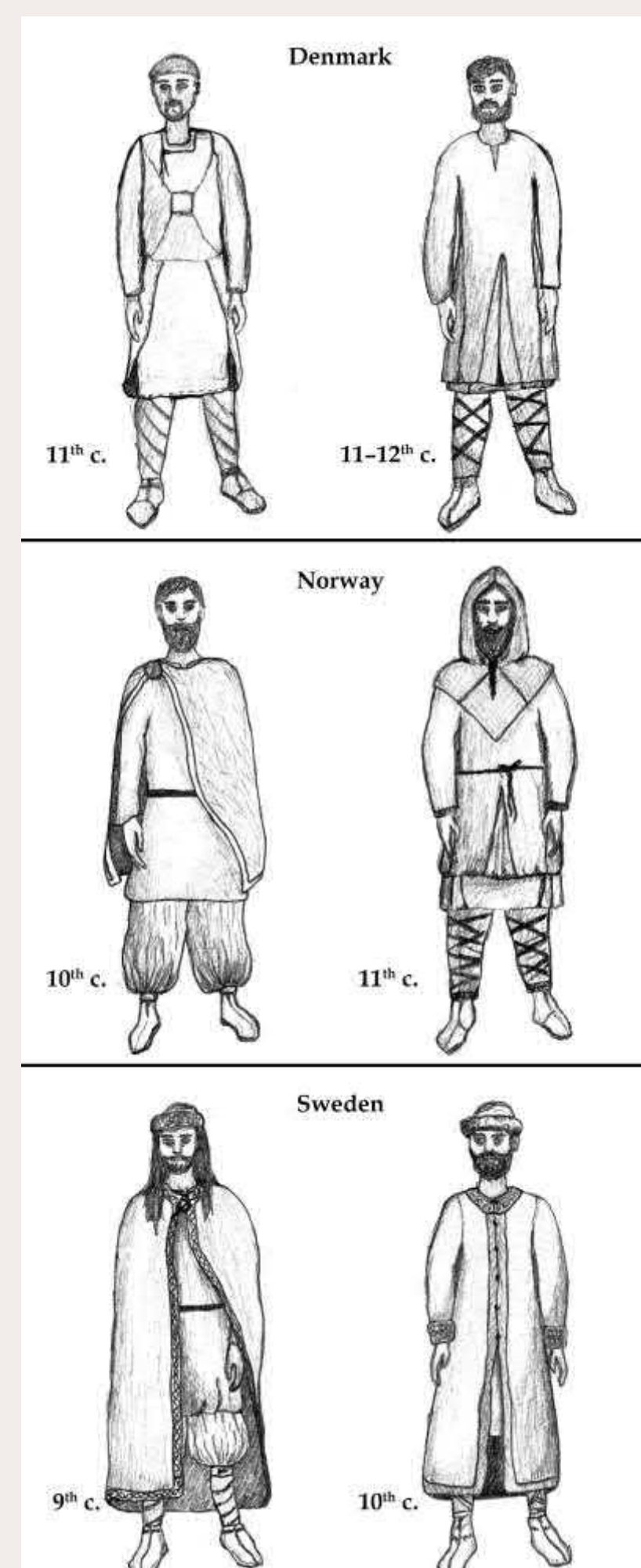
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FIGURES
Colour image: Kamil Jadczak
Maps: Stamen Design (CC BY 3.0) / Kamil Rabiega
Black-and-white images: Kamil Rabiega

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Áfram með smjörið: The Cultural Significance of Dairy Products in Medieval Iceland

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The cultural significance of various food products throughout Europe has been the focus of much scholarly debate since the 1980s, when Food History emerged as a new field.

However, little attention has been paid to the historical cultural significance of dairy products in medieval Iceland, and so this project seeks to examine the historical relationship between medieval Icelanders and dairy products (milk, butter, cheese, skyr and mysa). The research is grounded in close textual analysis of key primary sources – notably *Íslendingasögur* that feature motifs of animal husbandry and dairy production and use. In addition, this project will draw on a range of secondary evidence, including historical, literary and physical studies of milk-based practices, and folklore from Iceland, with wider contextualization drawn from the Nordic nations.

A model is proposed whereby it is concluded that **milk products have been intrinsic to cultural identity of the Icelandic people** due to their relative abundance in comparison to other limited food choices, and these products (particularly *skyr*) are in fact an **emblem of culture** as defined by historian Fernand Braudel – that is, milk products have inspired "a state of strict bondage" (1982: 254) within the community, ritual in the collection, processing and eating of this product, space is allocated to it above other resources, relative abundance, and it undergoes refinement over time to satisfy the people's tastes. This project is an examination of the **importance, purposes and meanings of dairy products** in the medieval Icelandic cultural region, c. 1000-1500. This wide geographical and chronological scope allows for recognition and analysis of **a continual development of dairy product food culture over time.** among these.

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Added stanzas in Reykjabók *Njálu*

Multispectral and paleographical analysis indicates that the Njáls saga manuscript Reykjabók (AM 468 4to) was written by two contemporaneous scribes. The second hand wrote, among other things, the rubrics and the added stanzas, meaning that the latter are older than previously suggested.

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ABSTRACT

The main text of *Njáls saga* in *Reykjabók* was written ca. 1300–1325. A second, roughly contemporary scribe is known to have made marginal additions. This study shows that the same hand was involved in other parts of the production, such as writing the rubrics and possibly drawing the initials. The two scribes may have collaborated and divided the labour between them.
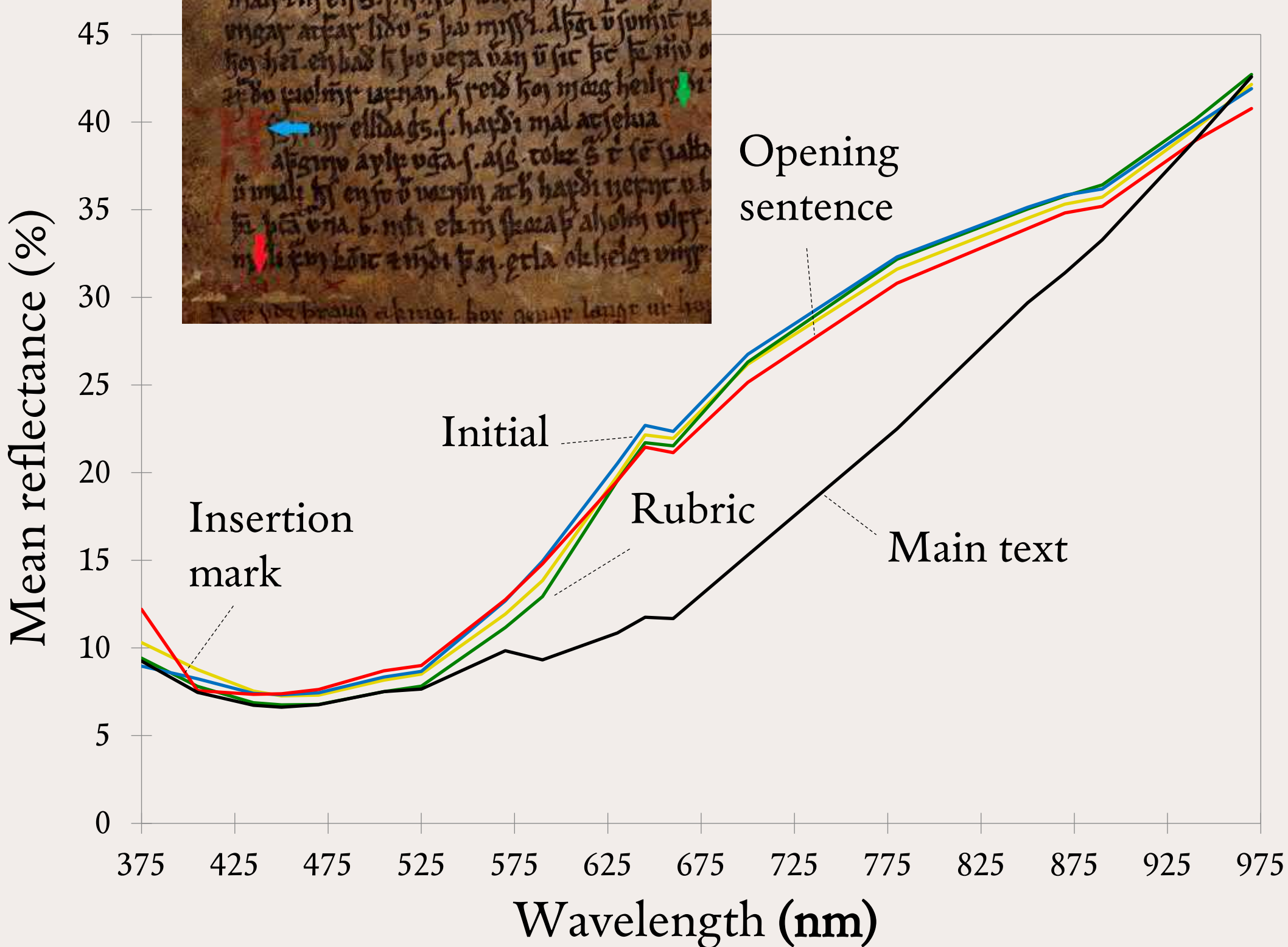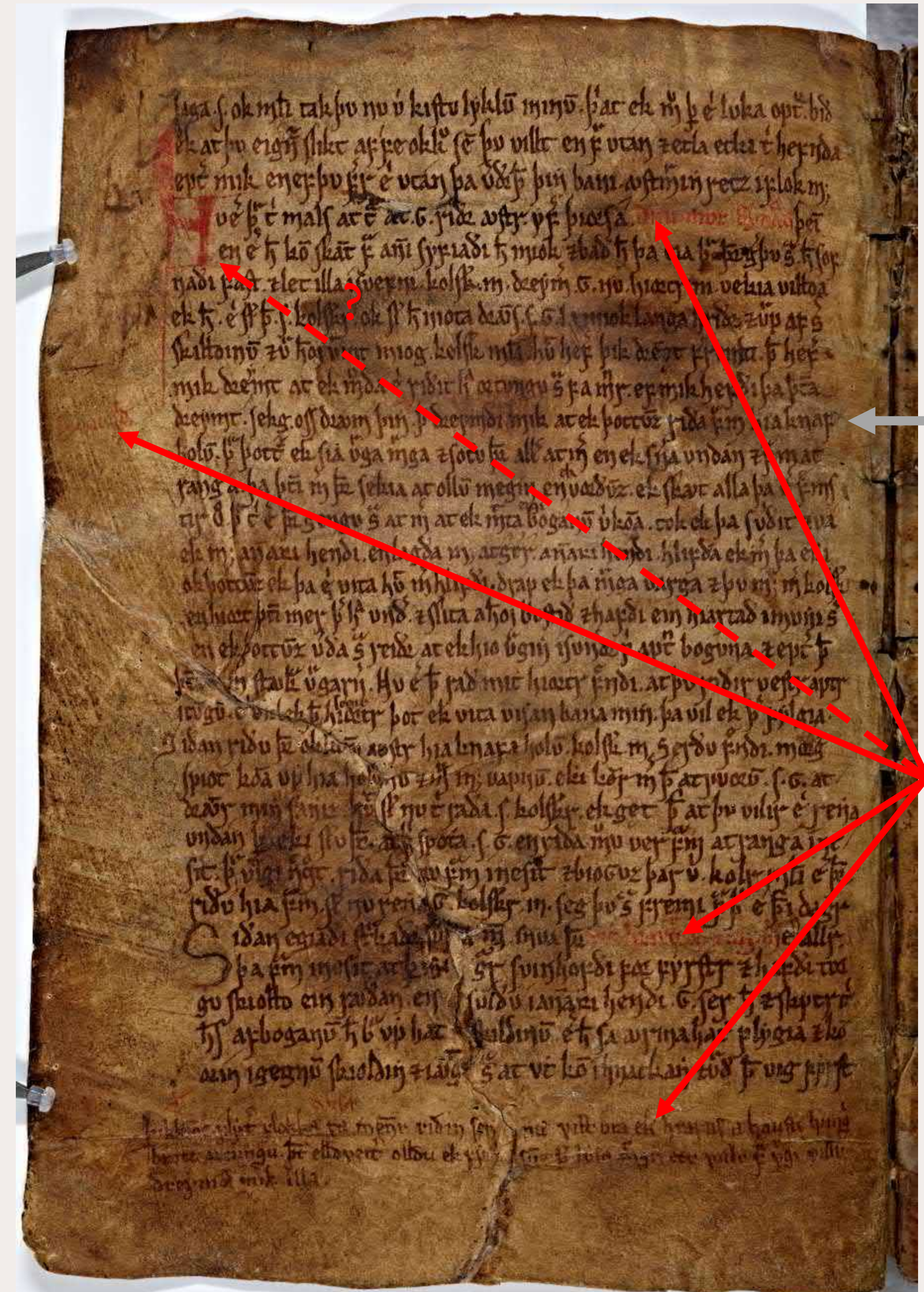

Fig. 1: Multispectral analysis of ink on f. 31v. All occurrences of light red ink show a comparable spectral signature. Photo: Handrit.is.

HAND 1: main text

HAND 2: rubrics, marginal additions; & initials?

Fig. 2: Palaeographical analysis of distribution of hands in Copenhagen, The Arnamagnæan Institute, AM 468 4to, f. 32v. Photo: Handrit.is.

PALAEOGRAPHICAL analysis of the script reveals two hands that are systematically distributed. While hand 1 wrote the main text and made smaller corrections to it, hand 2 rubricated the manuscript, added verses and indicated where to read them.

MULTISPECTRAL analysis with a VideometerLab2 shows that the light red ink found in all additions by hand 2 as well as in initials and other high-lighting elements has a similar chemical composition. These paratextual features thus seem to be added at the same time.

The spectral curve further indicates that the light red pigment used was cinnabar.

THE ADDED STANZAS by hand 2 relate directly to the main text. In some manuscripts of *Njáls saga* that are younger than Reykjabók, these stanzas are found as part of the main text. Earlier research has therefore suggested that the verses were later inventions, but this study indicates that the scribes collaborated. That means the stanzas were already known when Reykjabók was produced.

Fig. 3+4: Red ink of initial and rubric recognized as chemically similar after nCDA transformation (top). Copenhagen, The Arnamagnæan Institute, AM 468 4to, f. 1r. Photo: Handrit.is, BS.

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Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse
Inaugural Workshop 21st-22nd October 2017
University of Copenhagen

STOFNUN ÁRNA MAGNÚSSONAR
í íslenskum fræðum

Den Arnamagnæanske Samling

On the Receiving End of *Ljósvetninga saga*

A new look into questions of dating, genre and the cultural memory of a somewhat neglected saga

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Fig. 1

„Tönn tímans hefur búið a við Ljósvetninga sögu," Björn M. Ólsen, *Um Íslendingasögur: kaflar úr háskólafyrirlestrum.* 1939, p. 366.

Fig. 2

10th-11th century	13th-14th century	15th century
Guðmundr inn ríki Eyjólfsson (d. ca. 1025) Protagonist/Antagonist of Ljósvetninga saga	Mysterious author of Ljósvetninga saga	Ólafr Loptsson (d. ca. 1458), bastard son of Loptr Guttormsson Likely scribe of Ljósvetninga saga manuscript AM 162 c fol.

ABSTRACT

My PhD project looked into *Ljósvetninga saga*, a once widely-discussed text that has received little scholarly attention in recent decades. The project aimed to jump over the much debated issue of the saga's origins, and focus on the inner workings of its two redactions (A and C) in their manuscript and generic context. Three key issues were looked at; 1. the scholarly debate around the saga's redactions and dating, 2. the role the manuscripts' selection of sagas had on the differences between *Ljósvetninga saga*'s two redactions, and, 3. the cultural memory aspects of the saga's transmission in the extant 15th century manuscripts.

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Dating

The project reassessed the dating of *Ljósvetninga saga*, and questioned the assumptions of scholars such as Björn M. Ólsen, Björn Sigfússon, and Theodore M. Andersson. While not offering answers in the almost unsolvable issue of the saga's date, it problematized the assertion that both redactions of the saga were written before *Brennu-Njáls saga*, and suggested that the C-redaction could have been written as a reaction to it rather than being its inspiration. With *Ljósvetninga saga*, one feels like Goldilocks; confronted with two Björns and one Teddy, Barði Guðmundsson's late 13th century solution could end up feeling just about right.

Manuscript and genre

The project explored the role of *Ljósvetninga saga*'s medieval manuscripts AM 561 4to and AM 162 c fol. in the differences between the extant redactions. The former manuscript contains *Reykdæla saga*, *Þorskfirðinga saga*, and several 17th century *rímur*, and the latter manuscript contains several sagas that concern Northeastern Iceland, as well as *Sálus saga og Nikanórs*. This text selection creates different generic expectations from the audience, and thus influences the redaction selection/creation. The incorporation of the *þættir* into *Ljósvetninga saga*'s C-redaction could stem from a Northeastern interest in these materials.

Cultural memory

The saga, which takes place in the 10th-11th century, would have echoed contemporary concerns for its 15th century copyist and audience, such as the turbulent career of cleric Þorkell Guðbjartsson, and that of Westfjords magnate Guðmundr Arason *hinn ríki*. The research focused on AM 162 c fol.; its scribe was likely Ólafr Loptsson—bastard son of the influential Loptr ríki Guttormsson (who, like Guðmundr Eyjólfsson *inn ríki*, lived in Möðruvellir í Eyjafirði)—or someone associated with him. A speculative analysis of AM 561 4to in a 14th century context was also conducted.

Old Gutnish in a Danish Hand

A sixteenth-century paper manuscript contains *Guta lag* written in the Old Gutnish language copied by a Danish priest. This manuscript, known as 'Codex B', has received relatively little attention due to its age and foreign scribe.

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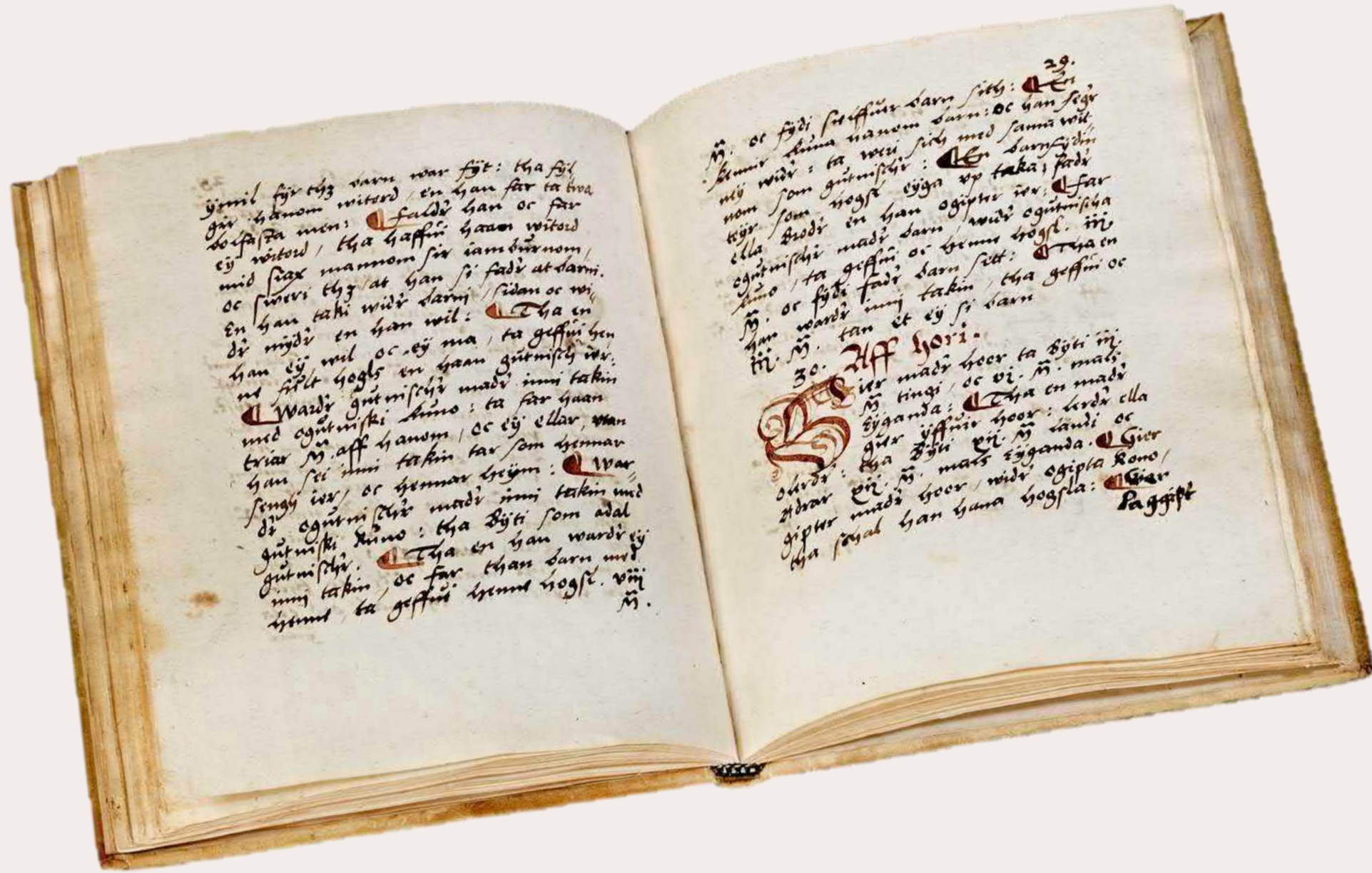
ABSTRACT

Two main manuscripts preserve the medieval law code of Gotland in the Old Gutnish language. The younger of these two, a sixteenth-century paper manuscript, is often considered inferior due to its relative age, foreign scribe, and linguistic peculiarities. Nevertheless, this so-called 'Codex B' preserves many of the older layers of the law code not present in the medieval parchment manuscript, 'Codex A'.

The present study investigates the language of Codex B as the result of linguistic contact between the Old Gutnish text and the Danish scribe. It is argued that the language of Codex B shows a mixture of Danish influence, native Gutnish developments, and the preservation of older features not found in the elder codex.

The B Manuscript of *Guta lag*

- ❖ Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Collection, AM 54 4to
- ❖ Contains the law code of Gotland, *Guta lag,* in the Old Gutnish language
- ❖ Copied in 1587 by David Hansen Bilefeld, a priest from Jutland
- ❖ Exemplar manuscript written in 1470, now lost
- ❖ Codicology suggests Bilefeld copied the manuscript for his own personal use
- ❖ Marginalia shows Bilefeld had access to other *Guta lag* manuscripts, including Codex A
- ❖ Bilefeld also cites the Danish *Jyske lov* from his native Jutland

Gotland and Denmark

In 1361 the Danish king Valdemar the Victorious (*Valdemar Sejr*) invaded Gotland. For decades Danes, Swedes, and Germans fought for control of the island, whose position and deep harbor made it an ideal possession for controlling trade in the Baltic. From 1408-1645 the island was in Danish hands.

Danish influence in Codex B

Influence from Bilefeld's native language is evident throughout the manuscript on all linguistic levels: orthographic/phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical.

Orthography:

Codex B follows the typical spelling of Danish manuscripts from the same period:

- ❖ *th* and *dh* for (etymological) *þ*
- ❖ *ffu* for *f* inside a word
- ❖ single *n* for final *nn*
- ❖ *ck* after *r l n*

Ecclesiastical and Legal Terms:

Considering Bilefeld's role as a priest, it is no surprise we find Danish spellings such as *præst* 'priest', *biskop* 'bishop', and *g*udstienistu 'religious service'.

Close Cognates:

Danish and Gutnish are closely related languages. Bilefeld often writes common words as in Danish if a close cognate exists, e.g. *mand* 'man', *er* 'is', and *da* 'when, then'.

Borrowing or Development?

Not all linguistic peculiarities are due to Danish; some show younger developments within Old Gutnish. Often it is difficult to distinguish native developments from foreign (Danish) influence.

Phonology:

Codex B shows some later Gutnish phonological developments such as [uer] > [uar] in *vara* 'to be', *quar* 'remaining' and [ul] > [ol] in *folk* 'people', *golf* 'floor'.

Inflection:

In general Codex B preserves the full case system of Old Gutnish, though some changes in the morphology have occurred, such as dat.sg.fem. *gutniski* 'Gotlandic' and *andri* 'other' for older *gutniskri* and *annari*.

Sometimes, however, apparent loss of inflection is due to a complete borrowing from Danish, such as the phrase *till liif och siell* 'to body and soul' for older *til lifs oc sialar*.

Who copied the 1470 exemplar?

We no longer have the exemplar manuscript Bilefeld used, nor do we know who copied it. Evidence from Codex B as well as external evidence, however, point to a Danish scribe.

The four main manuscripts of *Guta lag*. From back to front: B 65 (German, 1401), AM 54 4to (Gutnish, 1587), AM 55 4to (Danish, ca. 1565), B 64 (Gutnish, ca. 1350)

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Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse
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Reintroducing the Kraftaskalds

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The *kraftaskáld* ('power poets', hereafter anglicized as kraftaskalds), also called *ákvæðaskáld* ('spell poets'), were a phenomenon in Icelandic folktales during the 16th through 20th centuries. These poets were reputed to produce magical or supernatural effects through extemporaneous poetic stanzas, and their magic seems to require an excited mental state of some kind — sometimes it is sudden anger, other times it is a *heitur hugur* ('hot mind') (Almqvist 1961, 74–75). Although some were anonymous, most of the kraftaskalds were historical persons about whom such folktales have arisen. These include famous Icelanders such as Hallgrímur Pétursson — a tale about him says that once, in the middle of performing mass, he glanced out a window, saw a fox that was attacking sheep, and killed it with a stanza of poetry (Jón Árnason 1954, 450). Other significant kraftaskalds include Látra-Björg Einarsdóttir (a vagrant in old age who was known for luck in fishing), Sigurður Breiðfjörð (a notable *rímur* poet), Páll Jónsson skáldi (who was also a priest), and Þormóður Eiríksson í Gvendareyjum. The phenomenon appears to have significant medieval roots, especially as seen in poets like Egill Skallagrímson and Þorleifr jarlsskáld.

There is very little existing research specifically about kraftaskalds. Almqvist (1961) was the first to outline this topic in any detail, and it provides starting points for many possible research questions. Almqvist (1965–1974) later looked at medieval *níð*-poetry as a significant part of the earlier Icelandic roots of the phenomenon. Only a few other articles or chapters elsewhere focus on this figure, so there are significant opportunities for further contributions to develop this obscure but fascinating part of Almqvist's legacy.

My research aims to provide a more thorough characterization of the phenomenon than has been undertaken to date. The roles the kraftaskalds take will be analyzed in greater detail to see what they use their magic for, whether cursing, blessing, affecting the weather, combating the walking dead, and other less common activities. The tales will also be looked at to see what social functions they might have had. Preliminary findings show that the kraftaskalds are often upholding social norms of some kind, such as proper treatment of animals, guests, vagrants, the elderly, and the infirm, usually by cursing those who are stingy or cruel, but occasionally blessing those who are generous. The nature of their magic itself will be examined. For the language aspects, I will look at the stanzas with a semiotic approach for how and to whom they communicate their magical intentions. For the mental state, I will look at its parallels in Icelandic folklore and magic, as well as in modern magical practices in order to clarify just what it might have been. Finally, I look at the complexities of the figure itself, as seen through the character and personality of several notable kraftaskalds.

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NECRON 2017: List of Participants

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Katharina Heinz
Lara Hogg
Regina Jucknies
Katarzyna Anna Kapitan
Dale Kedwards
Vera Kemper
Anne Ladefoged
Helen Leslie-Jacobsen
Emily Lethbridge
Michael MacPherson
Ermenegilda Muller
Luke John Murphy
Simon Nygaard
Roberto Luigi Pagani
Ana Belén Piñera Álvarez

Kamil Rabiega
Nina Kongsdal Rasmussen
Friederike Richter
Bethany Rogers
Keith Ruiter
Zuzana Stankovitsová
Beeke Stegmann
Heidi Stoner
yoav tirosh
Védís Ragnheiðardóttir
Sean Vrieland
Eirik Westcoat
Tarrin Wills
N. Kıvılcım Yavuz

NECRON 2018: A Networking Reception

Given the network's focus on collaboration and inclusivity, it was especially important for NECRON to reach out to the broader group of ECRs who, for various reasons, had been unable to travel to Copenhagen in 2017. Therefore, thanks to the financial support from the *Transformations of Medieval Law: Innovation and Application in Early Modern Norwegian Law Books* project (run by Helen Leslie-Jacobsen at the Universitetet i Bergen), we decided to organise an event alongside the 17th *International Saga Conference* in Reykjavík and Reykholt between the 12th–17th August, 2018. The *International Saga Conference* is a major triennial congress, which always attracts hundreds of students and scholars engaged with Old Norse from around the world. It was thus an unique opportunity for NECRON to reach out to international ECRs who usually stay outside the scope of Nordic professional networks, and to encourage them to join our organisation.

Taking into consideration the intensive program of the conference, the organisers of this event (Helen Leslie-Jacobsen, Beth Rogers, Luke John Murphy and Katarzyna Anna Kapitan) decided that it would be better to hold a social networking event, rather than asking potential contributors to commit a day or more of their valuable time at one of our fields' most important conferences to formalised meetings and presentations within the network. The organisers of the *Saga Conference* (particularly Haraldur Bernharðsson) and the Félag Doktorsnema og Nýdoktora við Háskóla Íslands (particularly Védís Ragnheiðardóttir) were kind enough to allow NECRON to host a reception on the evening of Sunday the 12th, and also included a flyer about the NECRON reception in the conference welcome pack. The event was attended by around 60 ECRs, many of whom had not previously been aware of

NECRON, and who did not have established social or professional networks in the Nordic countries and/or their fields – some of whom were even newcomers to the conference. NECRON wanted to offer them a warm welcome into our community and facilitate networking activities. The organisers therefore regarded the event as a resounding success (a response repeated more widely by other participants[2]) and would like to here repeat their thanks to Háskóli Íslands for hosting it, and to the *Transformations of Medieval Law* project for generously funding it.

Luke John Murphy & Katarzyna Anna Kapitan

[2] Franks, Amy Jefford. 2019. 'Saga Conference, 12-17 August 2018, Reykjavík & Reykholt, Iceland'. *Kyngervi* 1: 114–17.

NECRON 2019: Communication and Dissemination for Early Career Scholars

NECRON's second workshop entitled "Communication and Dissemination for Early Career Scholars" took place in Bergen, Norway on 29–30 October 2019. It was organised by a team of ECRs from across the Nordic region Helen Frances Leslie-Jacobsen (Universitetet i Bergen, Norway), Katarzyna Anna Kapitan (Det Nationalhistoriske Museum, Frederiksborg Slot, Denmark), Patrick Farrugia (Universitetet i Bergen, Norway), and Beth Rogers (Háskóli Íslands, Iceland). Generously sponsored by the Medieval Research Cluster at the University of Bergen, the workshop gave participants the opportunity to update one another on their current research and to discuss the strategies for academic dissemination and communication as well as career planning with the main focus on CV-building. Bringing together over thirty participants from across the Nordic region, Argentina, Basque Country, Czechia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK and the US, from disciplines such as History, Literature, Legal Studies, Manuscript Studies, etc., the workshop opened up for an interdisciplinary discussion of Old Norse scholarship in transdisciplinary and transnational perspective.

The workshop's first day began with a keynote lecture on career planning by Ingvil Brügger Budal (Høgskulen på Vestlandet), who from an autobiographical perspective presented possibilities and challenges that Old Norse scholars face when entering an academic job market. Her talk provided great insight into the assessment criteria of academic jobs, which include teaching, research, and outreach, as well as into the importance of transferable skills in career planning. With special emphasis on didactic and pedagogic skills and experiences, which most ECRs develop during their studies, Ingvill argued that the ability to adapt one's

communication to your target group can be a great advantage while applying for various education-related jobs.

On the note of competence-building, the lecture was followed by a round table on supervision and teaching chaired by Patrick Farrugia, and featuring Ingvil Brügger Budal, Sven Kraus (Universität Basel), Friederike Richter (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin & Universität Zürich), Beth Rogers (Háskóli Íslands), as well as Julián Valle (Universitetet i Bergen). During the discussion various perspectives on teaching as an ECR were presented, from traditional group work activities, through e-learning platforms to possibilities and challenges of making medieval studies relevant for contemporary audiences.

Following on the inaugural workshop's concept of discussing various theoretical and methodological approaches in the community of Old Norse ERCs, the second keynote lecture, delivered by Miriam Tveit (Nord universitet), was devoted to various approaches to legal sources. This lecture emphasised the potential of transdisciplinary approach to legal texts for expanding our understanding of Medieval Scandinavia, and was received very positively by the audience, among whom were a number of ECRs already engaged with legal culture on various levels. The research-oriented part of the workshop was continued during the poster session, which closed the first day of our meeting. The great success of the poster sessions during the inaugural workshop in Copenhagen, expressed in the positive feedback from ECRs in disciplines which rarely use visual aids, assured us that we should also have a poster session illustrating the ongoing research projects within NECRON in 2019. With almost two dozen posters, presenting research in a broad array of disciplines from the history of religion, through legal studies and manuscript studies to

food history, the poster session resulted in a lively interdisciplinary dialogue, which continued during the communal dinner. A selection of posters are presented in this volume.

The second day was exclusively devoted to scholarly communication as a part of career planning. It started with a keynote lecture by Rosie Bonté (Brepols Publishing) on academic publishing. During the lecture, as well as the following discussion, emphasis was put on converting a thesis into a monograph, but many good tips on how to approach a publisher, what to expect from the publication process, and when to best start reworking one's thesis into a monograph (as well as whether or not every thesis *should* be reworked into a book) were also exchanged. Some of these discussions continued during the following roundtable, which focused on writing strategies, chaired by Katarzyna Anna Kapitan and featuring Ben Allport (Universitetet i Bergen), Rosie Bonté, Jan Kozák (Universitetet i Bergen), Laura Saetveit Miles (Universitetet i Bergen). Speakers discussed best practices regarding types of writing, including theses, articles and monographs, and exchanged tips on how to overcome hyper-perfectionism that often blocks us from writing. With Laura's publication pipeline being a particularly inspiring tool, it was agreed that all ECRs should keep track of their writing process in either physical or digital form.

Considering the challenging employment conditions, where ECRs frequently have to individually obtain funding for their own salaries, the final session of the morning was devoted to the grant writing workshop organised by Helen Leslie-Jacobsen. Drawing on her own extensive experience in applying for external funding, Helen provided great insight into the key features of a successful grant application, including a strong track record,

solid background research, and convincing project description. Participants received worksheets which they used to reflect on their own academic achievements, and to identify weaknesses in their CVs. While many of us identified our weaknesses in public engagement and outreach, the afternoon lecture was a great response to this challenge. Tommy Kuusela (Institutet för språk och folkminnen, Dialekt- och folkminnesarkivet, Uppsala) focused on academic dissemination, not limited to traditional publication channels but also including publications for a general audience. Based on Tommy's personal experience, the take-home message of his lecture was twofold: firstly that not all good publications have to be the output of full-scale research projects, as side-interests can also lead to valuable contributions to scholarship. Secondly, that the general public is more interested in our research than we might expect, and that we should therefore not avoid engaging with them but look for possibilities to reach out to them through dissemination activities in museums, libraries and adult education.

The final roundtable of the workshop focused on preparing for conferences and delivering successful conference papers. This session, chaired by Beth Rogers and featuring Beñat Elortza (Göteborgs Universitet/Kungliga Gustav Adolfs Akademien), Katarzyna Anna Kapitan, Tommy Kuusela, and Luke John Murphy opened a lively discussion of tips and tricks for good conference presentations. While most of the speakers agreed that an interactive presentation (Prezi, Keynote or PowerPoint) is a must-have these days, opinions were divided on whether one should use a script or freestyle. Equally divided were opinions of the environment-friendly approach (relying on digital media), as opposed to having a printed version of one's script. The problems with

technology that arose during this session were a good example of what might go wrong! Overall it was agreed that there were no hard and fast answers to these questions, and that national and disciplinary traditions should inform the choices presenters make

The event closed with a discussion of the future of the NECRON network, with emphasis on the network's organisation and future events. It was agreed that, rather than further formalising its structure via the election of dedicated officers, the network should continue its activities in the same voluntary manner as it has been doing for the past two years – not least because the precarity of ECR careers makes committing to long-term responsibilities extremely difficult. That said, a group of participants expressed their willingness to join a loose steering group, and to organise the NECRON workshop in 2021. Given the enthusiasm with which the idea of continuing NECRON's mission was met, we believe our network has a bright future.

Katarzyna Anna Kapitan

Communication and Dissemination for Early Career Scholars

The Network of Early
Career Researchers in
Old Norse second workshop
29-30 October 2019
Zander K Hotel, Bergen

Tuesday 29/10

| Time	Session
11:45–12:45	Registration
12:45–13:00	Welcome & Introduction
13:00–14:00	Keynote: Ingvil Brügger Budal, "Hey Ho, Let's Go! Between Academic Identity and Reality"
14:00–14:20	Coffee Break
14:20–15:05	Supervision and Teaching: Best Practices in Giving and Receiving (Round Table with Ingvil Brügger Budal, Sven Kraus, Friederike Richter, Beth Rogers, Julián Valle)
15:05–16:05	Keynote: Miriam Tveit, "Doing Research on Non-Literary Texts: Approaches to Legal Sources"
16:05–16:45	Slam Session
16:45–17:15	Poster Session I
17:15–17:45	Poster Session II
19:00	Conference Dinner

Wednesday 30/10

Time	Session
09:15–10:15	Keynote: Rosie Bonté, "Academic Publishing: An Introduction"
10:15–11:00	Writing Strategies: Theses, Articles and Books (Round Table with Ben Allport, Rosie Bonté, Jan Kozák, Laura Saetveit Miles)
11:00–11:20	Coffee Break
11:20–12:05	Grant Writing Workshop, Helen Leslie-Jacobsen
12:05–13:15	Lunch
13:15–14:15	Keynote: Tommy Kuusela, "Trolls and Academia: Archives and Archival Work as an Arena for Research, Dissemination and Communication"
14:15–14:35	Coffee Break
14:35–15:20	Preparing for Conferences and Giving Successful Conference Papers (Round Table with Beñat Elortza, Katarzyna Anna Kapitan, Tommy Kuusela, Luke Murphy)
15:20–15:50	Open Session & Closing Discussion

Organising Committee:
Helen Frances Leslie-Jacobsen (University of Bergen), Patrick Farrugia (University of Bergen),
Katarzyna Anna Kapitan (Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle),
Beth Rogers (University of Iceland).
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Forskargruppe i mellomalderfilologi
Research Group for Medieval Philology
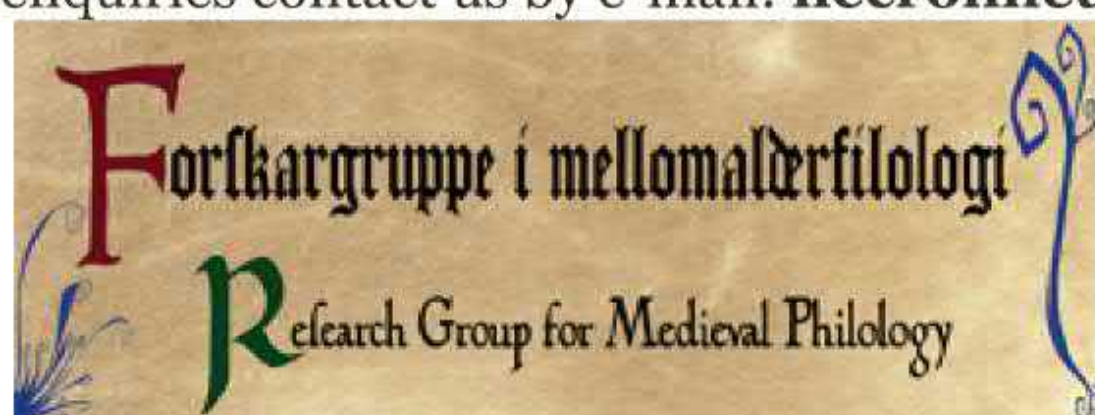
UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

Law Manuscripts of Western Scandinavia: European Influences and Domestic Use

In the spirit of *Material Philology* and with a keen focus on interdisciplinarity, this project researches the textual content, book painting, as well as codicological and societal features of medieval law manuscripts from Iceland and Norway *c.* 1250–1550.

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AM 347 fol., f. 9r, ca. 1350–70. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum.. Photo: Jóhanna Ólafsdóttir. Copyright: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum..

New Approaches

The project 'Law Manuscripts of Western Scandinavia' will explore the cultural and personal ties between the social elite of Norway and Iceland and centres of legal education in Europe. In particular, this project will shed new light on an important area of Scandinavian legal history: the book painting of West Norse secular and ecclesiastical laws. These include the Icelandic 'Grágás', 'Járnsíða', 'Jónsbók' and 'Kristinréttr Árna biskups', as well as the Norwegian national law 'Landslǫg' and 'Hirðskrá', a unique collection of laws regulating the royal court.

This project will be the first in the field to map the literary and artistic exchange between Scandinavian legal societies and other parts of Europe. Furthermore, the project will produce evidence for the cultural ties between the elite of Scandinavia and centres of legal education in Europe. Accordingly, this project will provide new insights into the movements of medieval people through pictorial and textual evidence. In this respect, the project sets the Scandinavian laws within their wider European context.

Aims

A major aim of this project is to show that despite the largely secular textual content of these Scandinavian codices, the aspect of education appears to have been equally important to the medieval users as it was to contemporary society in universities such as Paris, Oxford and Bologna where Canon and civil laws were taught to international students, many of whom also came from the Nordic countries.

Key research questions are:

1) In what way does the *material presentation and iconographic programmes* in the vernacular Scandinavian legal codices follow established models from Latin law codes, such as prevalent 'Decretum Gratiani' or 'Corpus Iuris Civilis' manuscripts?

2) How much are iconographic programmes, textual redactions, *para-texts and overall manuscript layouts in Scandinavia* bound to their sites and areas of production?

3) Via which *personal channels* did European iconographic and textual models reach Scandinavia? Is an international network of scribes, illuminators and clients visible?

Methodology

Textual Criticism: Scandinavian law texts exist in several redactions. The textual work of the codices will be researched with help of 'Polysystem Theory' combined with investigations on textual variances, as well as paratextual elements.

Manuscript Studies: Nordic codices feature 'Production Units' or 'Blocks', which provide information about the original audience, clients, as well as the scribal and artistic activities at specific times. Furthermore, features of the design indicating changes in the layout of columns, internal subdivision of texts, and the dimensions of written space and rubrics are recognised and set in relation to changing working modes.

Art History: The use of iconographic models will be examined with the help of 'Interpicturality', which identifies the technique of combining a number of iconographic models in a newly created image, which has been proven to be typical for medieval Scandinavian book painting.
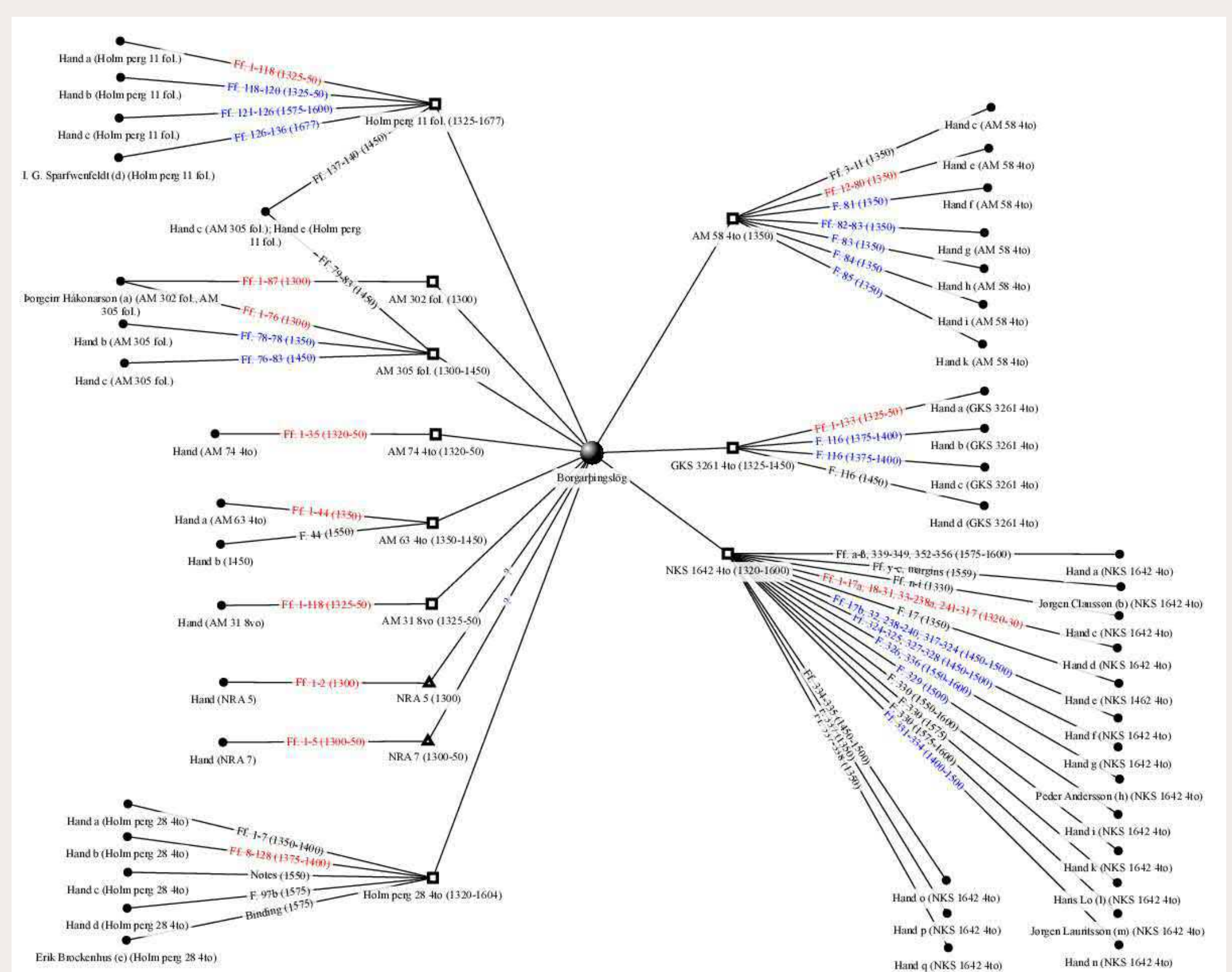
Outcome

This postdoctoral project is scheduled to run for 48 months covering the period from 09/2019 to 08/2023, and consisting of five *working packages* (WP). These WPs focus on the writing of ten peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as a final WP that will conclude with the writing of the synopsis book. The WPs are:

1) 'The Development of Law Manuscript Cultures in Scandinavia *c.* 1250–1550'

2) 'The Personal Network of Medieval Nordic Law Book Production'

3) 'Medieval Norwegian and Icelandic Law Manuscript Design'

4) 'Iconographic Programmes in Medieval Scandinavian Codices'

5) 'Preparation for the Book *Medieval Scandinavian Law Cultures: Production and Design*'

Scheduled Outcomes:

Stefan Drechsler (Forthcoming). 'Production and Content of the Fourteenth-Century Norwegian Law Manuscript *Lundarbók*'. In: *Law Book Culture in the Early and High Medieval West*, edited by Thomas Gobbit. Brill.

Stefan Drechsler (Forthcoming). 'Marginalia in Medieval Western Scandinavian Law Manuscripts'. In: *Imaginationen und Praktiken des Rechts: Literatur- und geschichtswissenschaftliche Perspektiven*, edited by Roland Scheel and Silke Schwandt. De Gruyter.

Network of 'Landslǫg' manuscripts featuring the 'Borgarþingslog'-redaction: In this project, the social environment surrounding the production history of Scandinavian law codices is displayed with help from the *Social Network Analysis*. Copyright: Stefan Drechsler.

Eiríkr inn góði and *Knýtlinga saga*

In contrast to several primary sources, *Knýtlinga saga* describes King Eiríkr as one of the vital rulers of the medieval Danish Kingdom. This poster focuses on the possible reasons why and offers an explanation.

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Ericus III Bonus Rex Daniæ et wandalorum, quos sibi tributarios feut profectus est per Russiam et Constantinopolin constituto interim ad regni gubernacula Haraldo primogenito.

76

ABSTRACT

The reign of Eiríkr inn góði of Denmark (r. 1095–1103) lasted eight years and as a result of his short reign, Eiríkr is usually described as a supporting character in the studies relating to his brother, Knútr inn helgi. *Knýtlinga saga,* however, provides a unique perspective on King Eiríkr and offers several detailed chapters about him. This poster argues that due to Eiríkr's religious activities and re-establishment of law and order during his reign, he became a point of interest for *Knýtlinga saga*.

Representations of Eiríkr in Primary Sources

- *Knýtlinga saga*

  Extremely detailed with several chapters longer than many other kings

  Focuses on his religious side (canonisation of Knútr inn helgi, archbishopric, pilgrimages) and re-establishment of law and order

- *Chronicon Roskildense*

  A few sentences about his reign and argues that he introduced many unjust laws

- *Sven Aggesen*

  Eiríkr is only mentioned three times, once in *Lex Castrensis* and twice in *Brevis Historia*

  Shares a similar narrative to *Knýtlinga saga* and praises Eiríkr

- *Saxo Grammaticus*

  In consideration of the length of the chronicle, the reign of Eiríkr does not take as much space as it does in *Knýtlinga saga*

The Religious Side of Eiríkr in *Knýtlinga saga*

Canonisation of Knútr inn helgi

- Óláfr I ignores a priest's comment on Knútr's holiness, but same priest meets Eiríkr who follows his advice

- After Eiríkr's first pilgrimage, Knútr becomes the first canonised Danish king

- A perspective which is completely different in comparison to other primary sources

- Eiríkr does play a role in the canonisation of his brother, although he is not the only reason why the elevation process started

Pilgrimage(s)

- First king to visit Rome since Knútr inn ríki (Chapter 74)

- Demonstrated as a fair judge who follows the law of God

- Forms good relations with the Pope and meets several distinguished people

- Second pilgrimage attempt is to Jerusalem, first Danish king to do so. However, dies from disease on his way

Archbishopric

- Thanks to his newly founded relations with the Pope, Eiríkr is rewarded with an archbishopric, making it the Northernmost archbishopric

- The previous archbishopric was in Saxony, causing several issues for the Danes according to Saxo's *Gesta*

The Re-establishment of Law and Order

Extermination of Vikings

- The saga suggests that Eiríkr ended all the Viking activities in the Baltic region by punishing any thievery or robbery severely

Fairness and Respecting Law

- Óláfr I was a ruthless and unpopular king, due to his greed, Denmark suffered famine and lawlessness

- Eiríkr is the complete opposite to his predecessor and vows to treat everyone equally

Why?

- In the saga, Eiríkr is demonstrated as one of the most influential and important kings of the medieval Danish kingdom alongside kings like Knútr inn ríki, Knútr inn helgi and Valdimarr I. It is possible that the saga author decided to pay more attention to Eiríkr thanks to his strong ties with the Curia, arguably ending the heathen activities in the Baltic region and reconstructing the administrative system of the Kingdom.

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IMAGE CREDITS

Above: *Erik I. Ejegod.* Det Kongelige Bibliotek (public domain)

Below: *Erik I. Ejegods mønt,* præget i Lund (public domain)

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
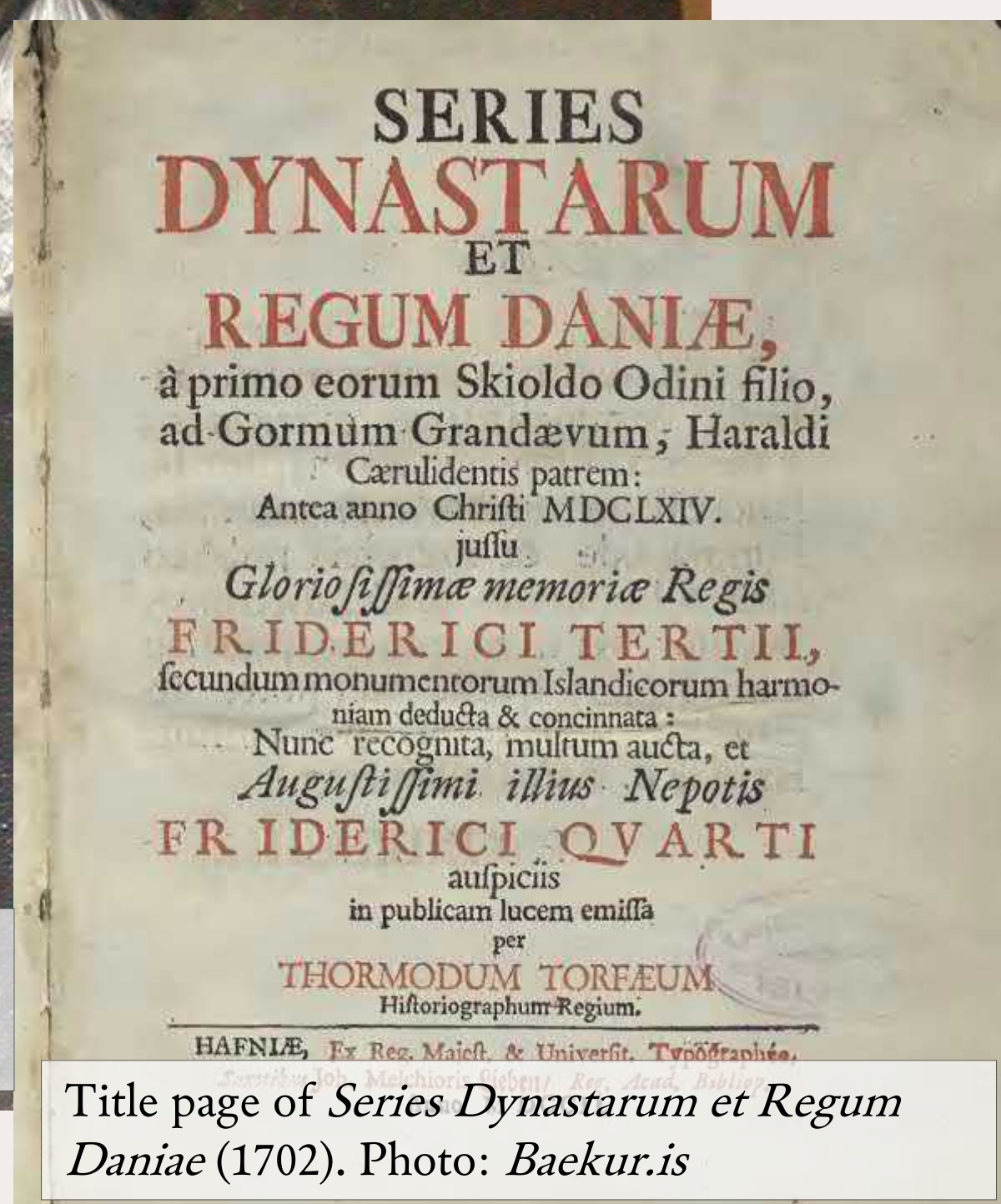
Writing Histories
Legendary Sagas and Early Modern Danish Historiography

This research project examines the scholarly reception of Old Norse literature in Denmark in the early modern period. The main focus is on the role the corpus of Old Norse legendary sagas played in the early modern Danish historiography.

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Portrait of Thormod Torfæus (1636–1719), held at the Frederiksborg Castle, A 830. Photo. *Wikipedia.org*

SERIES
DYNASTARUM
ET
REGUM DANIÆ,
à primo eorum Skioldo Odini filio,
ad Gormum Grandævum; Haraldi
Cærulidentis patrem:
Antea anno Christi MDCLXIV.
jussu
Gloriosissimæ memoriæ Regis
FRIDERICI TERTII,
secundum monumentorum Islandicorum harmo-
niam deducta & concinnata:
Nunc recognita, multum aucta, et
Augustissimi illius Nepotis
FRIDERICI QVARTI
auspiciis
in publicam lucem emissa
per
THORMODUM TORFÆUM
Historiographum Regium.
HAFNIÆ, Ex Reg. Majest. & Universit. Typographeo,

Title page of *Series Dynastarum et Regum Daniae* (1702). Photo: *Baekur.is*

Methodology

This project relies on qualitative analysis of published historical works, such as Torfæus' *Series Dynastarum*, and unpublished manuscript materials, including private and official scholarly correspondence, scholarly transcriptions of Old Norse texts, and the marginalia accompanying these texts in manuscripts (e.g. GKS 1006 fol. on the photo below). These manuscripts, considered as physical artefacts, together with the texts and the marginalia they carry, give us insight into the scholarly reception of Old Norse literature and serve as a documentation of the scholarly work in progress.

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ABSTRACT

Taking as its point of departure the scholarly work of Thormod Torfæus, royal historiographer and the author of *Series dynastarum et regum Daniæ*, and Thomas Bartholin, royal antiquarian and author of *Antiqvitatum Danicarum*, this project examines the role that the corpus of Old Norse legendary sagas played in the early modern Danish historiography. By application of qualitative analysis of published materials, as well as unpublished sources (scholarly transcripts of Old Norse sagas, marginalia accompanying these sagas, and scholarly correspondence) this project seeks to answer questions concerning the historical value of Old Norse sagas as sources, as well as methods of critical evaluation and interpretation of these texts.

Background

Since the times of Saxo Grammaticus (1160–1220) to the 19th-cent. romanticism, Old Norse sources were used in Danish historiography and played an important role in the formation of Danish national identity. Kings of Denmark were interested in Norse legendary sagas, because they concerned "Gothic" kings and heroes and described the splendid past of the Scandinavian countries. Torfæus, who was first employed as a royal translator, later royal antiquarian, and finally royal historiographer, was tasked with writing an account of Danish royal genealogies according to the Old Norse sources, which became *Series dynastarum et regum Daniæ* (first completed in 1664 and published in revised form in 1702).

Copenhagen, Royal Danish Library, GKS 1006 folio, a manuscript preserving various Old Norse legendary sagas accompanied by extensive marginalia written by Thormod Torfæus. Photo: KAK, reproduced with permission from the Royal Danish Library.

Research Questions

The project seeks to answer questions such as: What was the status of the legendary sagas in early-modern Danish historiography? What was their position on the spectrum of historical sources? How did early modern historians deal with factual discrepancies appearing in the legendary sagas? What were their working methods?

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The Sea in Old Nordic Belief

The Nordic people depend on the sea and without mastering it, the Viking Age would never have happened. How, then, have people and the sea related to each other in terms of belief, worship, myth, and ritual?

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Figure-head (4th–6thC) found in the Schelde river (Belgium). London, British Museum (BM 1938,0202.1) Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

ABSTRACT

This project dives literally into the role of the sea in the PCRN (Pre-Christian Religions of the North). It seeks to gain an understanding of pre-modern, or indeed pre-mediaeval, conceptions of the vast blue depths surrounding the Nordic lands and islands.

While several studies on sagas and skaldic poetry by philologists have explored representations of the sea, and exciting finds like ship-burials have created vivid discussions amongst archaeologists, religious aspects of the sea have thus far escaped the attention of most modern scholars.

Did the Old Nordic people of Iron-Age Scandinavia (really) worship deities of the sea? How was the sea venerated? Did different people relate to sea in different terms?

Indeed, it is not even clear whether one can speak of one sea at all, or whether there existed manifold notions of the sea(s) surrounding the North.

A project on sea-beliefs

The project presented here, *The Sea in PCRN*, will take the form of a MA-thesis in Old Nordic Beliefs at the University of Iceland, supervised by Terry A. Gunnell.

Scope and research question

Gaining better insights into how Old Nordic people pictured and interacted with the sea through myths, rituals, and other aspects of belief will hopefully foster new understandings of the Nordic past —and is equally relevant for the present and future.

Numerous recent studies have focused on the sea as a topic in studies of sagas (Barraclough 2016), runic inscriptions (Jesch 2001; Zilmer 2005), and maritime archaeology.

Picture-stone from Gotland. Photo by the author.

As a result, nautical, economical, and military aspects of human interactions with the sea in the Viking Age and beyond have dominated research. Perceptions and concepts of the sea in PCRN, , on the other hand, have largely been ignored and merely addressed in terms of individual myths and deities (e.g. Nordvig 2013; Heide 2006; Quinn 2014).

How to find the sea?

The Sea in PCRN builds upon earlier studies in myth and poetry, but looks beyond their focus to find some deeper eco-theoretical meaning through comparison with pictorial representations of the sea and indications of rituals carried out in connection with the sea.

Approaching ecology anew

The 'nature mythology' of the nineteenth century was rightfully abandoned by the scholarship of the twentieth century, yet not without leaving a vacuum. It is only recently that the 'ecological turn' saw Mathias Nordvig (2013) developing a new eco-mythological approach and Christopher Abram (2019) engaging in eco-critical readings of Old Nordic myths.

Source comparativism

Generally speaking, the sea is everywhere in mediaeval written sources, yet remarkably few of them deal explicitly with its role in Old Nordic beliefs. Relevant evidence is found in early-modern folklore as well as in archaeological material from the Iron Age. There are thus good grounds for undertaking an in-depth study of the sea, carefully comparing different sources.

Seeing the sea anew

Remarkable finds from poetry and archaeology suggest that rituals were performed in relation to the sea in the pre-modern North. A rare but prominent find is the Iron-age deposit of tiny gold-foil boats in Nors, Denmark. More numerous, but hardly mentioned, are smashed drinking vessels in migration-period boat-houses along the west coast of Norway.
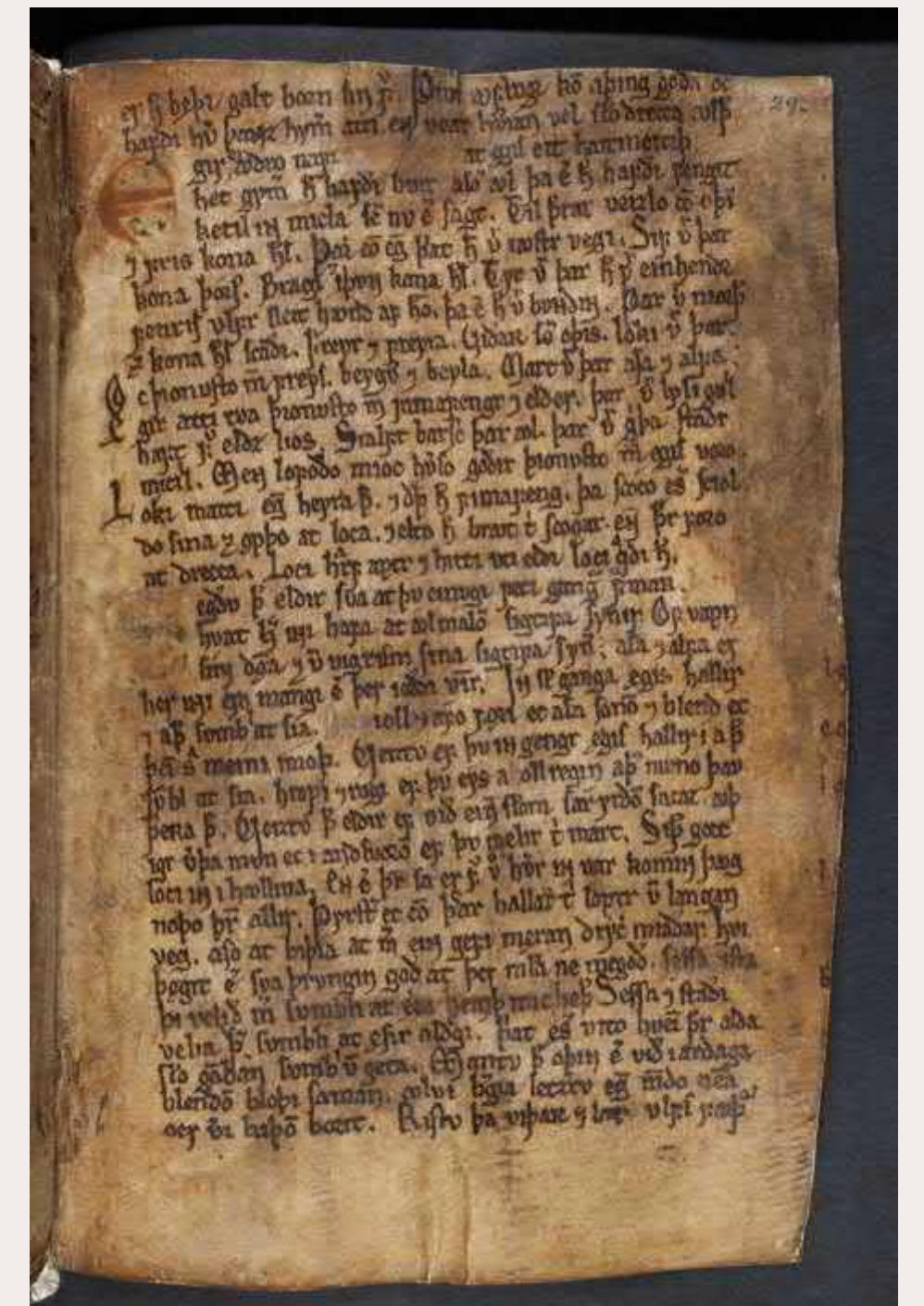
The beginning of *Lokasenna* in Reykjavik, Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies, GKS 2365 4to, 15r. Photo: Handrit.is

Mediaeval Icelandic poems such as *Grímnismál* and *Lokasenna* also talk of ritual drinking and assemblies of the *æsir* by the sea.

Such findings, supported by kennings and picture-stones, point to different reifications and conceptions of the sea which do not match modern (Western) thinking, but provide an interesting postmodern foil to it.

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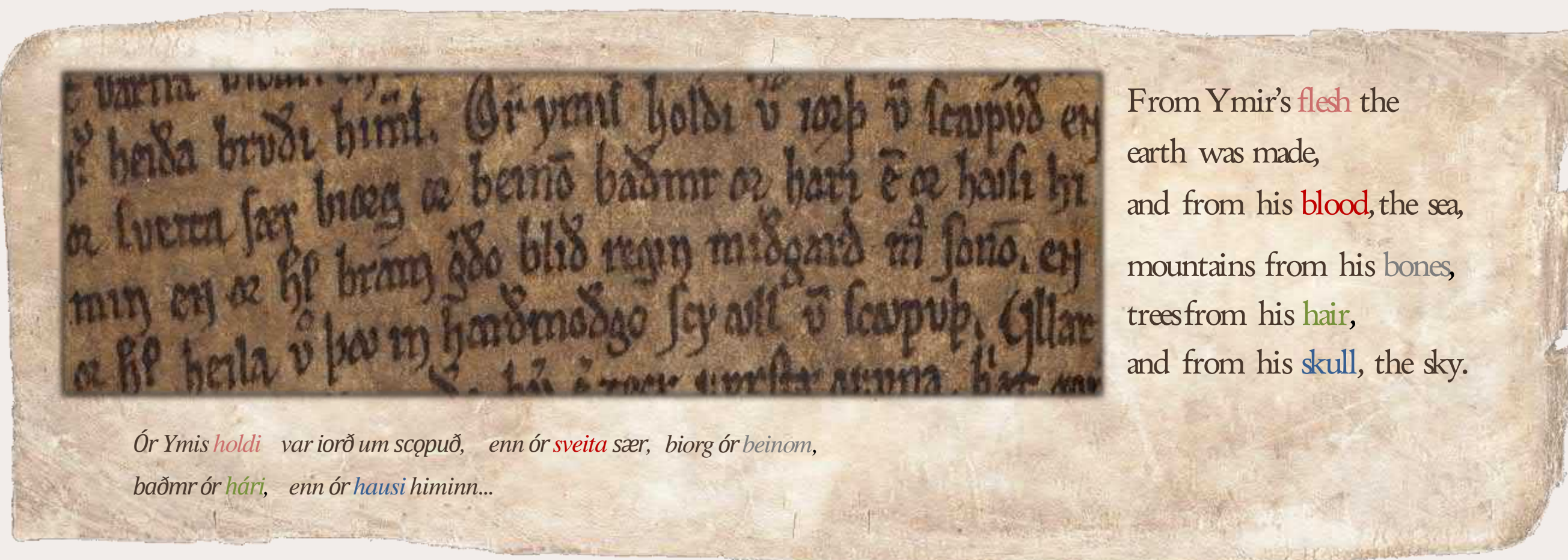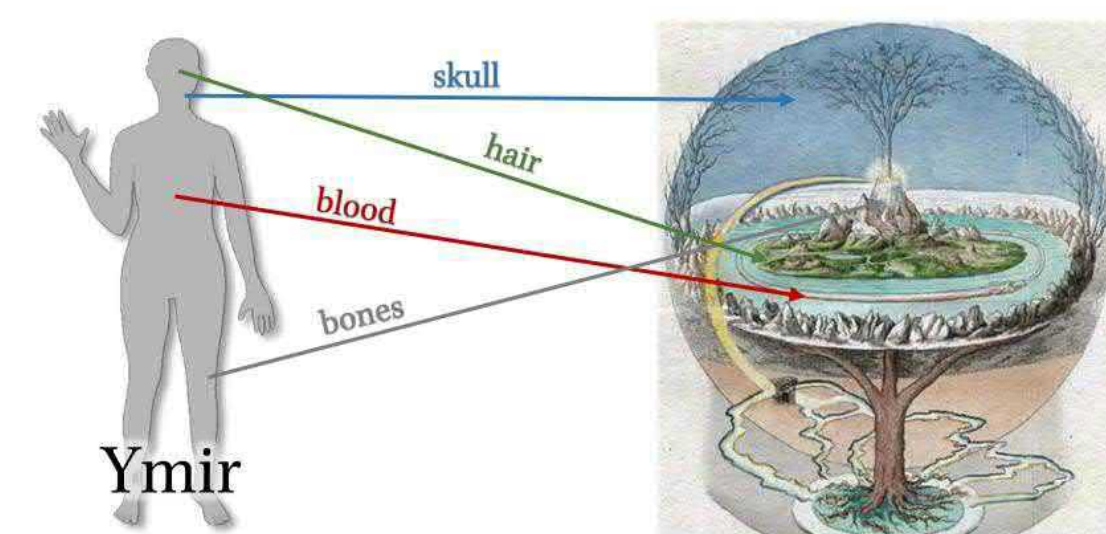
Body Symbolism In Old Norse Myth

The surreal character of ON myths can be explained by their metaphorical nature. The human body is one of the source images for ordering reality. Four different specific types of mythological motives for using the image of the body this way are presented below.

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From Ymir's flesh the earth was made, and from his blood, the sea, mountains from his bones, trees from his hair, and from his skull, the sky.

Ór Ymis holdi var iorð um scopuð, enn ór sveita sær, biorg ór beinom, baðmr ór hári, enn ór hausi himinn...

Myths contrast with historical and other 'realistic' narratives by their stark surreality, which makes them akin to dream sequences. This is true also for Old Norse mythology.

Myths seem so strange because they speak a different language. It is a non-literal, symbolic form of encoding a message.

Myths use concrete images to express general or multivalent ideas.

The human body in these myths works as a semantically overcharged whole that can either be divided into pieces with different purposes or mapped onto other wholes so as to make them meaningful.

The four *master tropes* form the core of many mythical expressions. These tropes are not mere poetic embellishments, but are rather rooted in human cognitive system.

The Four 'Master Tropes'

|	
METAPHOR	Based on similarity: e.g. "It was a heated discussion."
METONYMY	Based on contiguity: e.g. "It is an original Picasso."
SYNECDOCHE	Based on partiality: e.g. "Check out my new wheels."
IRONY	Based on inversion: e.g. "It was as soft as concrete."

PROJECT INFO

Body Parts to World Parts :: METAPHOR

skull · hair · blood · bones

Ymir

One of the better-known Old Norse myths describes the creation of the world from the body of the primeval giant, Ymir. The macrocosm-microcosm analogy is also attested in many other cultures.

## God and his Attribute :: METONYMY

Þórr

Þórr's attribute-weapon Mjöllnir *stands for* him on monuments and represents his essence and power in narratives. When he lacks his hammer, he is emasculated, 'de-thorified'. He is nothing without it.

Pars pro toto :: SYNECDOCHE
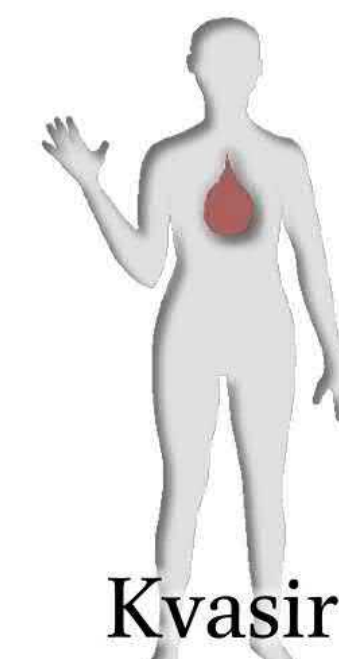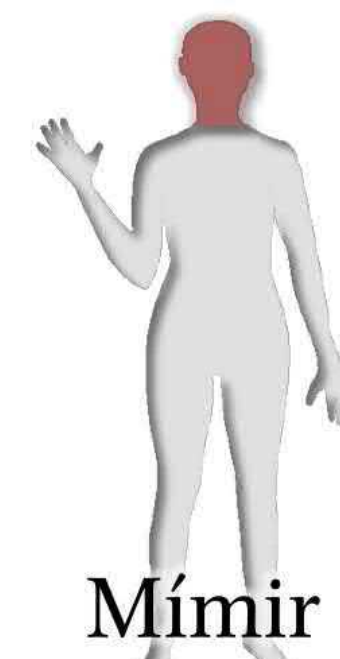
Mímir   Kvasir

A specific body part in which the power of a certain being resides is quite common in ON myths. These body parts can be quite active even after the rest of the body dies, e.g. the prophetic head of the wise Mímir or the blood of Kvasir, which becomes the Mead of Poetry, inspiration itself.

Paradoxical Mutilation :: IRONY

Óðinn   Heimdallr   Týr
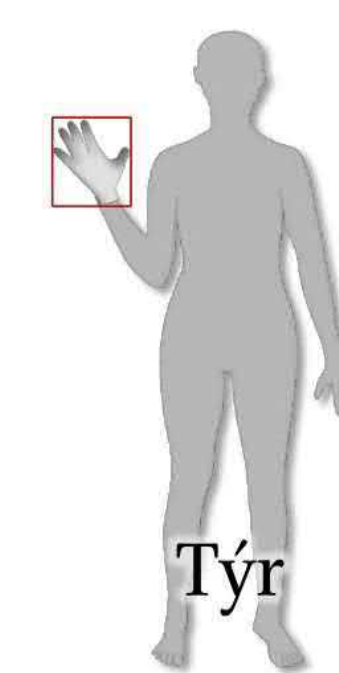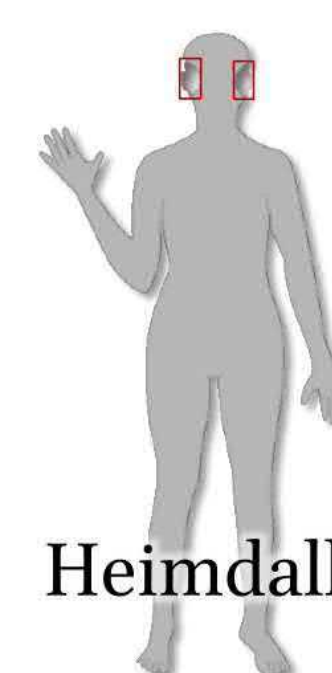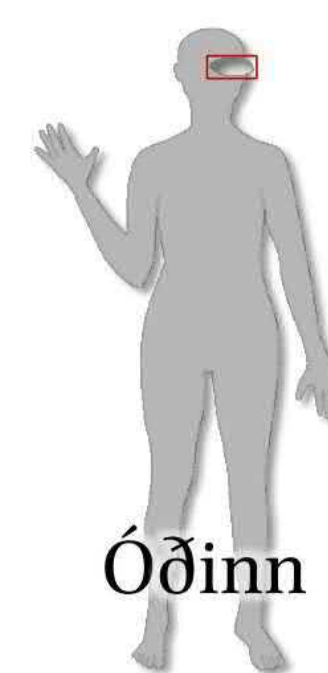
The god or character is missing a part of the body that symbolically embodies his ability: Óðinn, god who sees all, is missing an eye; Týr, the warrior god associated with justice is missing his right hand; Heimdallr, the guardian god who can even hear the grass growing, has sacrificed his hearing.

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MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

Military Aristocracy in Scandinavia, c. 1150-1300

The Scandinavian 'state formation' process is often viewed solely from a national perspective. This poster shows the importance of a comparative approach by looking at the establishment of a military aristocracy.

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Detail of the Baldishol tapestry, Oslo, National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design. Photo: Frode Inge Helland.

ABSTRACT

From the 11th to 13th centuries, the Scandinavian realms underwent significant changes in their socio-political, economic and cultural structures. These processes, often referred to as the 'state formation process', have rarely been examined from a pan-Scandinavian perspective.

One of the main innovations introduced in this period was a re-stratification of society. Shifting away from the free / unfree paradigm, Scandinavian societies moved towards new social divisions along privileged and unprivileged lines.

This poster presents a comparative case study centred upon the creation of the privileged classes, i.e. the military aristocracy.

By showing the similarities and differences of this process from a cross-Scandinavian viewpoint, this poster aims to highlight the importance of comparative methodology when looking at the consolidation of Denmark, Norway and Sweden in the high medieval period.

The Establishment of a Military Aristocracy

Denmark
- Military aristocracy introduced in 1169-70, after the conquest of Rügen
- Exemption from *lething* tax if they provided service to the Crown whenever requested
- Reforms further expanded in 1241 Law of Jutland; privileged status can be lost if armed service is neglected

Norway
- Recognition of elite status first recorded in *Hirðskrá* (c. 1270)
- Several levels within *hirð*, with differing obligations e.g. maintaining certain equipment
- No exemption from tax, but benefices awarded according to rank

Sweden
- Tax-exempt aristocracy established with the Ordinances of Alsnö in 1280
- Exemption from all royal taxation in exchange for mounted service

Similarities
- The establishment of an aristocracy is tied to the fiscalisation of the *leiðangr*, the peasantry's naval levies
- Three things are needed for social advancement: economic capital, social capital, and martial prowess
- The main obligation in exchange for elite status is to provide armed service
- Privileges bestowed upon the aristocracy are fiscal, but not jurisdictional

Differences
- Strong chronological disparity throughout Scandinavia
- Dissimilarities in terms of status, e.g. Norwegian aristocracy is not tax-exempt

European dimension
- Elite status often hereditary in Western Europe, but decided on a case-by-case basis in Scandinavia
- The idea of privileged warring aristocrats and later social divisions based on European institutions – e.g. knighthood

Seal of Erik Magnusson, Duke of Södermanland, Stockholm, Riksarkivet. Photo: Narking / Wikimedia Commons.

Depiction of Erik IV of Denmark, St. Bendt's church, Ringsted. Photo: Orf3us / Wikimedia Commons.

Significance

The creation of a military aristocracy showcases the similar nature of the Scandinavian 'state formation' processes. Royally-sponsored legislation was used to form a new privileged social class, which had strong political, economic and social implications.

These reforms were based on western European social and ideological practices, but the Scandinavian aristocracy only received fiscal privileges, and jurisdictional powers present in Europe were largely absent. At the same time, the differences in speed and character accentuate the diverse nature of the 'state formation' in Scandinavia.

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Transformations of Medieval Law

Ordering, conveying and updating knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Norwegian law books, from 1274 to 1687

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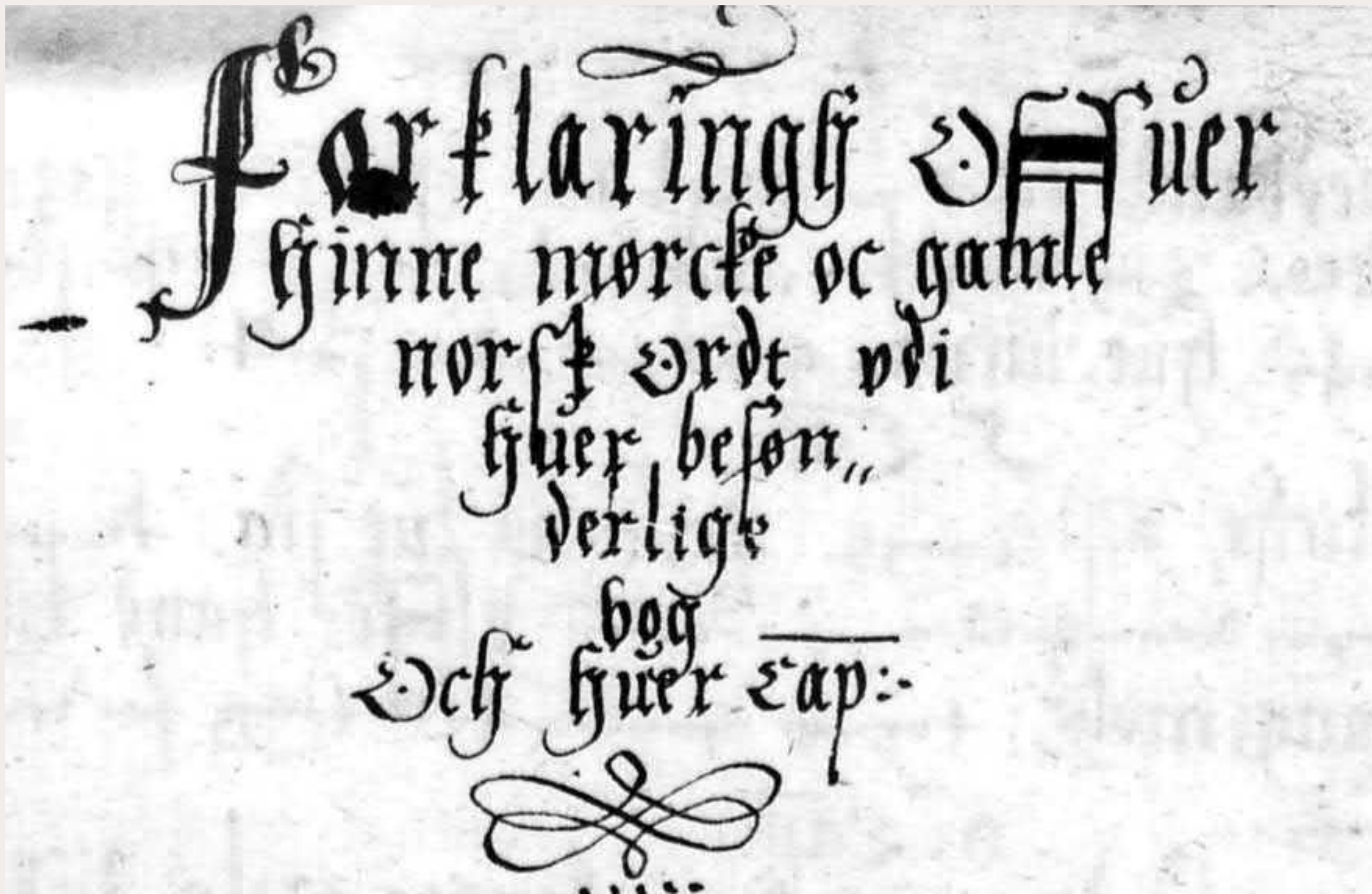
ABSTRACT

The *Landslov* was the first national law code of Norway. Introduced in 1274 by King Magnus Lagabøte, it was in force for over 400 years. This project examines the transformation of the medieval law throughout its lifetime. It considers the following aspects:

- Manuscript compilations containing the *Landslov*

- The translation of the laws in the 16th century from Old Norwegian to Danish

- The amendments made by various rulers to update the legislation

- The revision of the *Landslov* to form the Icelandic law-code *Jónsbók*

Research Questions

The main research questions the project deals with are:

1) How and to what extent do innovations and changes in the structure, contents and use of the law books of Early Modern Norway reflect changes to Norwegian society during the Reformation and Renaissance?

2) How did legal circles in Norway and Iceland order, apply and update their knowledge in medieval and Early Modern times?

Sources and Approach

There are over 100 manuscripts that contain the *Landslov*, whether in Old Norwegian or in Danish translation.

Manuscript Compilation

The texts that accompany the law code in manuscript compilations can indicate how the law was used and contextualised.

Translation

The translation of the law into Danish reveals translation strategies, and the historical basis for modern Norwegian legal vocabulary.

Amendment

Amendments reveal how the *Landslov* was transformed from a medieval law to one that reflected the needs of an Early Modern society.

Adaptation

The *Landslov* was amended and combined with earlier Icelandic law to form the Icelandic code *Jónsbók*, adopted in Iceland in 1281.

Methods

- A database of manuscripts and their contents

- Material philology

- Cultural approach to medieval manuscripts

- Material approach to medieval multilingual communication.

- Translation studies

Below: The Prologue of the *Landslov* in Old Norwegian in the oldest manuscript, Holm Perg 34 4to, 8r, from c. 1300.
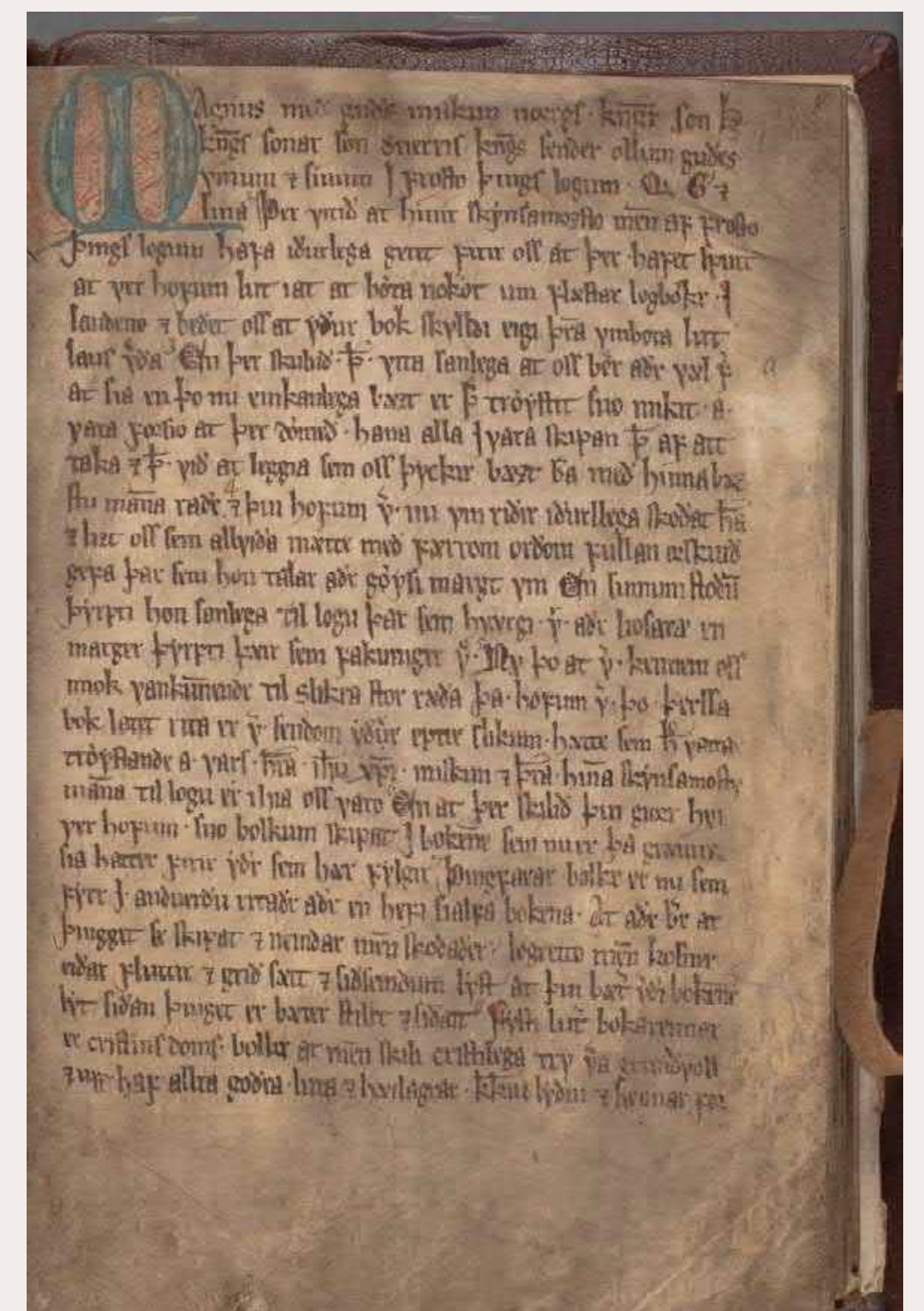
Below: The Prologue of the Landslov in Danish translation, AM 79 4to, 9v, from 1575-1599.
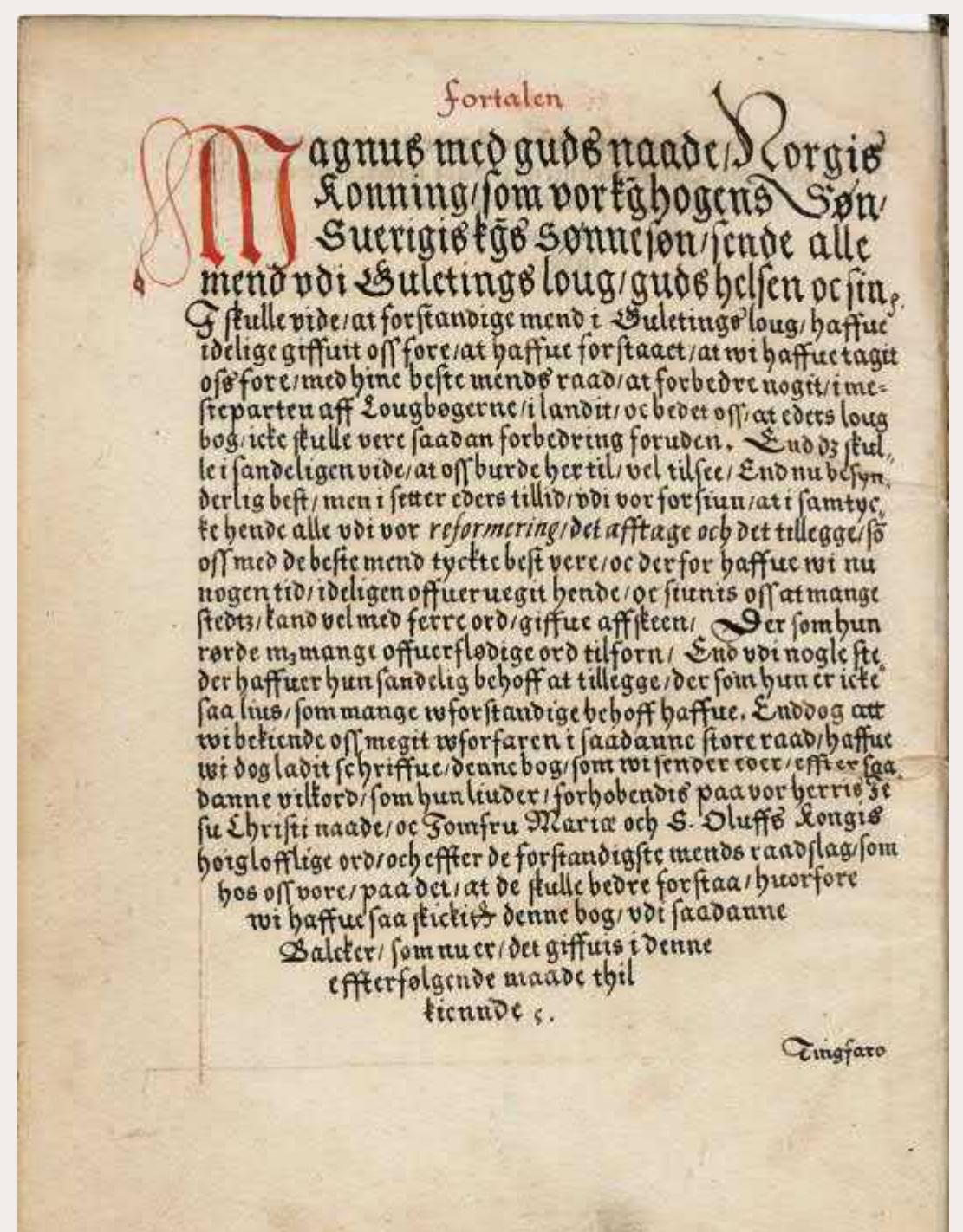

IMAGE CREDITS
Top left image: AM 101 4to, 60r, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, Copenhagen.
Bottom right image: AM 79 4to, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, Copenhagen. Both available on www.handrit.is.
Top right image: The Royal Library, Stockholm. Digitalt faksimil Stockholm Kungliga biblioteket 2015
Bottom centre image: Codex Hardenbergianus, public domain image from Wikipedia.

Artemis, Diana, and Skaði: A Comparative Study

The research deals with an analysis of Skaði's role in the Late Pagan Period. A comparative analysis is carried out using Artemis and Diana as tools for reconstructing Skaði. It is concluded that Skaði's role is to be found in the frames of dry-land wildlife.

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Figure 1: Skadi Hunting in the Mountains

ABSTRACT

Skaði is a truly fascinating goddess, and her complexity and controversial origins have captured the attention of many excellent scholars.

Little focus, however, has been paid to the question of her role in the Late Pagan Period. As such, this project seeks to attempt a reconstruction of the goddess' role by placing her into a wider European context, using Artemis and Diana as terms of comparison.

Drawing from a series of literary sources from the Germanic and Classic tradition, a comparative analysis of the goddesses is proposed, to individuate similarities and differences in their connection with animals, hunting and landscape.

It is concluded that Skaði's main role is to be found within the frames of dry-land wildlife.

The goddesses

Artemis: Greek goddess of the hunt, wild animals, wild nature, moon, and childbirth. She is unmarried and hunts with bow and arrow.

Diana: two different goddesses:

- Italic Diana: Sylvan, moon and childbirth goddess. No connection with hunt and animals. Pre-Republican.

- Roman Diana: Molded over Artemis. Post-Republican.

Skaði: Norse Jötunn, turned goddess. Wife of Njörðr and (allegedly) Óðinn. Generally associated with the hunt, skiing and bow and arrow.

Figure 2: Artemis / Diana

The methodology

The Model, Discourse and Semantic Center Approach (Schjødt):

- MODEL: tool to reconstruct reality through the construction of a map (Smith; Jensen).
- DISCOURSE: all the different ideas about a god or ritual in the model.
- SEMANTIC CENTER: Defining characteristic of the discourse.

The Comparative approach (Paden)

- Use of patterns.
- Comparison of 2+ objects horizontally.
- No foundational agenda.
- Differences and similarities have equal importance.

The patterns

The Hunt and the Animals

3 patterns emerged from the analysis of the classical goddesses in relation to the animals and the hunt. Skaði did not fully fit in any of them.

	ARTEMIS/ ROMAN DIANA	SKAÐI
THE PROTECTOR OF WILD ANIMALS	✓	✗
THE (AVID) HUNTRESS	✓	~
MISTRESS OF THE WILD ANIMALS	✓	~

The Landscape:

2 patterns emerged from the analysis of the classical goddesses in relation to the landscape. Skaði did not fully fit in either.

	ARTEMIS/ ROMAN DIANA	ITALIC DIANA	SKAÐI
THE PROTECTOR OF THE SANCTUARIES	✓	✓	~
THE AVENGER OF THE WILDERNESS	✓	✗	~

Conclusions

The research did not succeed in determining Skaði's exact semantic center in the Late Pagan Period. It was, however, able to find the frames within which it can be found: dry-land wildlife.

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Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse
Workshop 29th-30th October 2019
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Outlawry and the Judicial Space in Medieval Scandinavia, c.1200-1350

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The king handing his people the law in *Kong Magni Hagensens Gule Tings Lov* in Copenhagen, The Royal Danish Library, GKS 1154 2º, f.1v,. Photo: Høvel & Hage.

The Project

Part of the Space and Place in the Humanities project at Stockholm University, this dissertation aims to explore the nature and development of a judicial space in Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden during the period 1200−1350 through a comparative study of outlawry between the various town, provincial and national lawcodes extant.

In doing so, this project will improve our understanding of the institution of outlawry in medieval Scandinavia, and the evolution of punishment in the centralizing Scandinavian kingdoms, as well as provide commentary on the complex manner in which law and space interacted in Scandinavian society in the High Middle Ages. It will argue why this understanding can offer new insights into the mentalities of medieval Scandinavians.

Outlawry

The manner in which lawbreakers were treated can tell us a lot about a specific society and the realities with which it contended. For those who committed a serious enough breach of the social contract, execution was certainly an option; or one could be sentenced to execution in absentia: outlawry. Expelled from the space of legal protection, an outlaw could be killed with impunity; anyone providing them with food or shelter risked becoming an outlaw themselves. A sentence of outlawry condemned one to a life on the outskirts of society. For this reason, a detailed analysis of this punishment reveals much about how space was perceived by the societies that utilized it. But as much as outlawry is a statement on space and place, the regulations that resulted in this punishment can also tell us much about how people viewed and interacted with the world around them.

Research Questions

-What does the association between outlawry and specific spaces (e.g. towns, farms, churches, etc.) say about the social importance of these spaces, and how might it have influenced legal behaviour?

-What relationship existed between secular outlawry and religious excommunication, and how might this interplay have affected legal behaviour?

-Building on the answers to these first two questions, how then might 'judicial space' be defined in Medieval Scandinavia? What differences can be identified as having existed between the provinces, towns and states under examination in this study, and what reasons might be given to account for these?

-As with elsewhere in Europe at this time, I expect to find that outlawry as a punishment becomes increasingly outdated and replaced by fines in younger laws, indicating a growing monopoly on violence by the sovereign power. How did this change impact the quality of judicial space in 13th and 14th century Scandinavia?

-How distinct was the judicial space of towns compared to the surrounding countryside, and what was the relationship between outlawry in the provincial codes and banishment in the town laws?

The Sources

Denmark:
Skånske Lov, 1202-1216
Valdemars Sjællandske Lov
    (older redaction), 1225
Valdemars Sjællandske Lov
    (younger redaction), late 1200s
Jyske Lov, 1241
Eriks Sjællandske Lov (Books 1-2), 1232−1248
Eriks Sjællandske Lov (Book 3), 1280

Iceland:
Grágás, c.1260/1280
Járnsíða, c.1271
Jónsbók, 1281

Norway:
Bjarkøyretten, c.1160
Gulatingsloven, 1220
Frostatingsloven, 1220
Magnus Lagabøtes landslov, 1274
Magnus Lagabøtes bylov, 1276
Hirdskråen, 1273-1277

Sweden:
Gutalagen, c.1220
Äldre Västgötalagen, c.1225
Yngre Västgötalagen, c.1290
Östgötalagen, c.1290
Upplandslagen, 1296
Bjärköarätten, 1252−1296
Södermannalagen, 1327
Hälsingelagen, 1320-1330
Smålandslagen (Tiohäradslagen), 1340
Dalalagen, 1248−1350
Västmannalagen, 1296−1350
Magnus Erikssons landslag, 1347−1352
Magnus Erikssons stadslag, c.1350

Magnus Erikssons landslag/Östgötalagens kyrkobalk in Uppsala, Uppsala University Library, B 68, Folio 19v. Photo: Alvin.org.

Religious 'Stuff'

The Cognitive Science of Ritual Props in the Romanisation of Britain and the Christianisation of Iceland

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Introduction

Religion today is often presented as a matter of intangibles like sin, charity, or *nirvāṇa*. Changing from one religion to another is thus regarded as an internal personal change, rather than a new set of material circumstances. Nonetheless, 'stuff' has always played a significant role in religious praxis, taking forms as diverse as icons, jewellery, costumes, musical instruments, foodstuffs, and even animals.
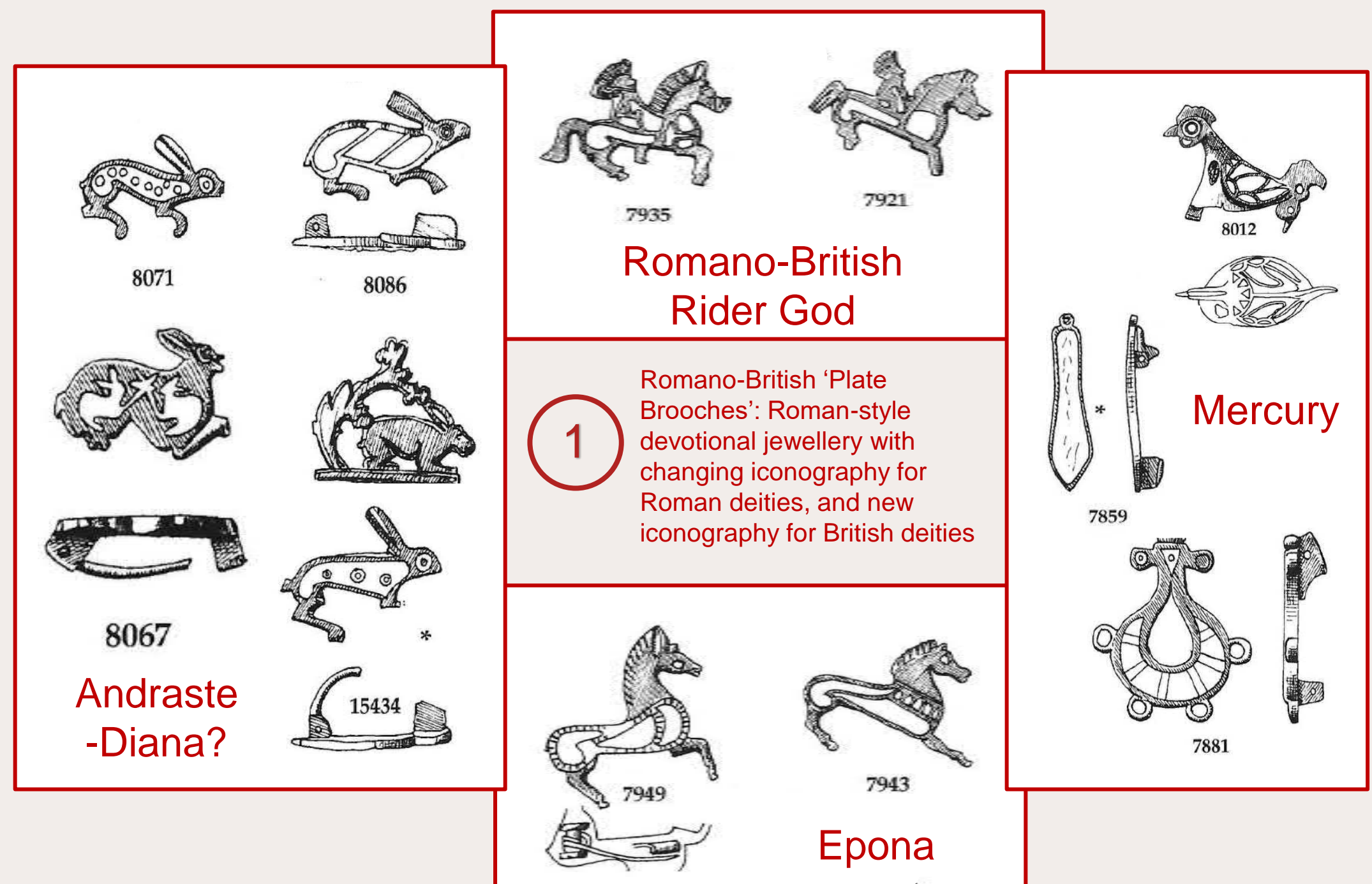
This new project will examine the role of such paraphernalia in two periods of religious change in order to test a recently-developed theory in the Cognitive Science of Religion: *Cognitive Resource Depletion* theory. Its comparative structure will allow the drawing of theoretical, localised empirical, and comparative conclusions.

Romano-British Rider God

1) Romano-British 'Plate Brooches': Roman-style devotional jewellery with changing iconography for Roman deities, and new iconography for British deities

Mercury

Andraste-Diana?

Epona

The Theory

Cognitive Resource Depletion (CRD) theory appears to solve a long-standing paradox in the study of ritual: how can ritual be both a deeply communicative act that transmits ideologies, beliefs, and world views, but simultaneously also an activity that requires focus on the tiny details of the here-and-now? CRD proposes that it is this very complexity that makes ritualised behaviour such an effective medium for communication. It argues that the intense concentration required of ritual participants depletes their cognitive resources, supressing individuals' ability to form their own impressions of a religious experience, and thereby enhancing the effectiveness of a specialist's after-the-fact explanations.

Methodology

If CRD theory is correct, we would expect rituals to become more complex – seeking to further deplete the cognitive resources of their participants – during times of religious competition. This project will therefore analyse a range of textual and archaeological evidence for the ways in and extent to which so-called 'ritual props' were used during two periods of early-Medieval religious change: the Romanisation of Iron-Age 'Celtic' culture in the Roman province of Britannia (*c.* 43–410 CE) and the Christianisation of Germanic paganism in the Nordic region (*c.* 870–1100 CE).

Image Credits

1) Plate Brooches linked with Romano-British cults. After Mackreth 2011, 'Brooches in the Late Iron Age & Roman Britain'. Reproduced with permission.
2) Illumination showing monks singing from a hymnal(?), 3. verso, MS 24, Getty Museum. NE Italy. c. 1420. Getty Museum, CC 4.0.
3) Altar showing Diana as huntress, RIB 2343. Goldsmiths' Hall, London, UK. C1-4th. Image Credit: The Goldsmiths' Company. Photographer: Richard Valencia.
4) Beaker of bronze, silver, and gold foil (L), and glass bowl (R). House 2, Uppåkra, Sweden. ©LUHM, reproduced with permission.

Research Questions

1) what role did ritual props play in Iron-Age Britain?; 2) how did this change during Romanisation?; 3) what role did ritual props play in the pre-Christian Nordic region?; 4) how did this change during Christianisation?; 5) what comparative conclusions may be drawn about the role and effectiveness of ritual props during inculturative religious change?

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Food Anxiety: Crying over Spilled Milk in Medieval Iceland

This research explores the cultural importance of dairy products in medieval Iceland, which it argues was due in large part to general scarcity of resources and feelings of food anxiety in the medieval period through to the mid-20th century

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ABSTRACT

This project is an examination of the importance, purposes and meanings of dairy products in medieval Iceland, c. 1000−1500. This research is grounded in close textual analysis of key primary sources − notably *Íslendingasögur* that feature motifs of animal husbandry and dairy production and use. It argues that milk products were intrinsic to cultural identity of Icelanders due to their relative abundance, and these products (particularly skyr) are an 'emblem of culture' as defined by historian Fernand Braudel.

Theory

In addition to the 5 criteria put forth by **Fernand Braudel** to suggest a food is emblematic of a particular culture (see below), this work will also analyze dairy according to the frameworks created by **Roland Barthes** and **Claude Lévi-Strauss**.

In his work, Barthes describes food as "a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and behavior" (2008: 24), and Lévi-Strauss specifically argues that cooking is the means by which humans begin to create a unique culture (1966).

A State of Strict Bondage

The Law

The Icelandic law code *Grágás* underlines the importance of milking work, even on Sundays, a holy day of rest: "Men may drive livestock out and in again, women may do milking and may carry the milk … between the farm and the milking place, and women may begin to see to the milk."

Space to Grow

A Land of Farmers

On arrival to the country in the 9th century, *Landnámabók* describes Icelanders' attempts to replicate huge, wealthy Norwegian farms with livestock which quickly devastated the ecology of the new land, forcing continual reliance on dairy products.

View on farm fields from Kerið crater rim, Iceland, Wikimedia Commons. Photo by Alexander Grebenkov, 2019.

In 1754, the Danish king issued a decree to remind Icelanders of their tradition of transhumance, but the food supply was too precarious by then. Fishing was now the norm.

Ritual in the Collection, Eating & Use of Dairy

The Milk-Stealing Witch

Food anxiety in the form of a dairy-obsessed crone emerges at least as early as the 10th century, where warnings against women using incantations to take milk which is not their own appear in *Decretum* by Burchard of Worms, bishop of the Holy Roman Empire.

Witch milking the handle of an axe, Wellcome Library, London, Wellcome Images. Woodcut from Dr. J.G Von Kaisersberg's *Die emeis*, 1517. The witch is not "milking" the axe itself; in folklore that speaks of this phenomenon, she has enchanted the axe to flow with milk she takes from a specific source, such as the neighbor's cow.

A Braudelian Analysis

Ritual in the Collection, Use & Eating

A "State of Strict Bondage"

Relative Abundance

Space to Grow

Refinement Over Time

Relative Abundance

In *Grettis saga*

Auðunn tosses the skyr bag to Grettir, and "Grettir varð allr skyrugr" ["Grettir became all slathered in skyr"] (Guðni 1936: 96).

Refinement Over Time

Natural Regional Flavors

Over time, regional flavors developed due to the bacteria naturally present in hay, which was digested by the milk-producing livestock and thus present in their milk.

"In the Northeast, it was sometimes done that **fresh eggs, either whole or just the whites,** were stirred together with sour milk or sour cream and used for a condenser [to make skyr]" (Hallgerður 1999: 69-70).
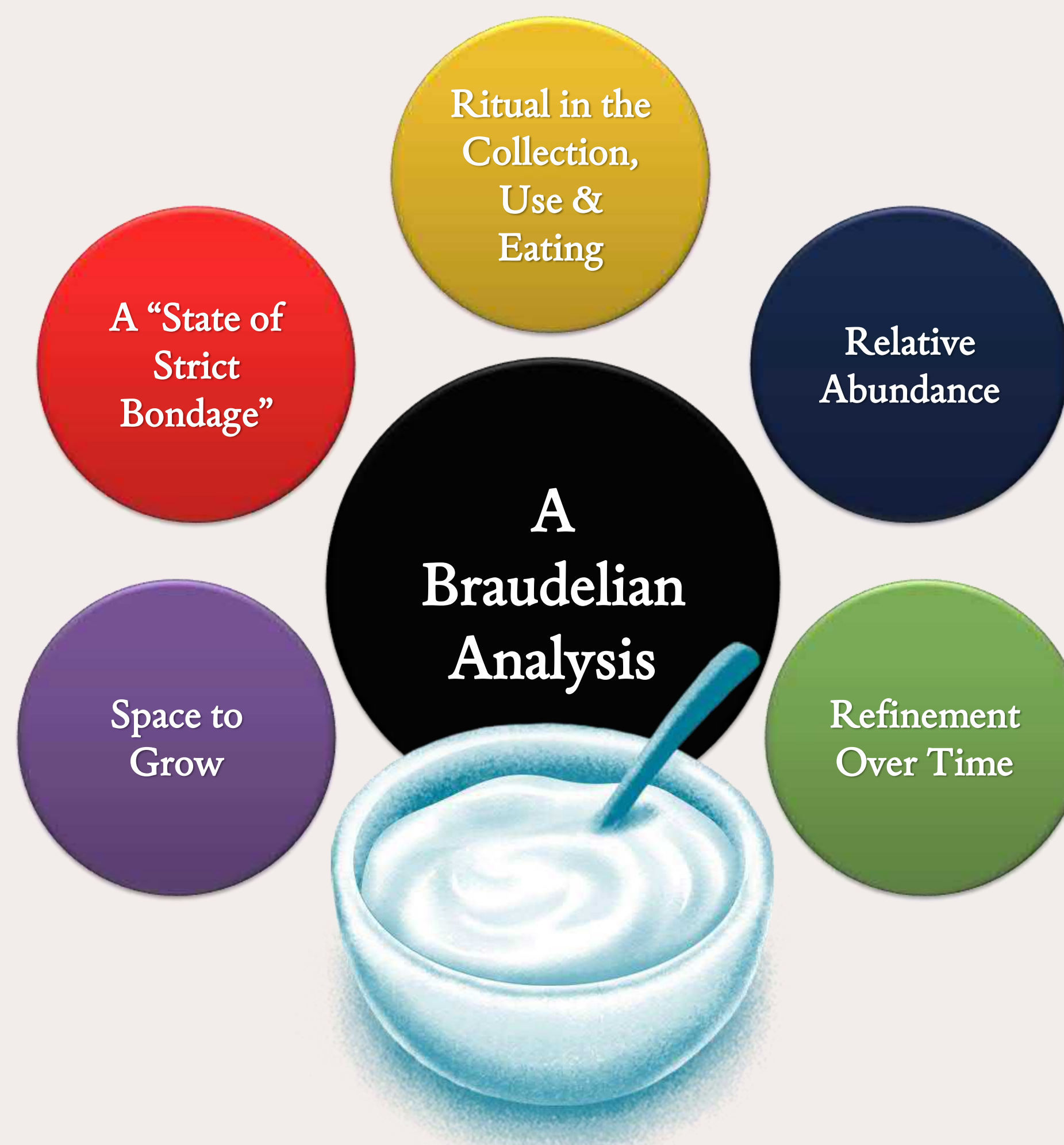
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IMAGE CREDITS (Dairy Products below Abstract)
Skyr: Strawberry Ísey skyr, Iceland, MS Iceland Dairies. Photo used with permission.
Cheese: Swiss semi-hard cheese, from thermised cow's milk, Wikimedia Commons, Vacherin Fribourgeois mi-salé, 2015.
Milk: Milk is cool from olly claxton, Wikimedia Commons, No author, 2007.
Butter: Butter and a butter knife, from Renee Comet, Wikimedia Commons via National Cancer Institute, 1994.

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The Main Manuscript of *Konungs skuggsjá:*
What a discussion about the world tells us about communication strategies

Old Norwegian and Old Icelandic are often treated as one under the broader category of 'Old Norse'. A close-up study of Old Norwegian material, however, shows that information is in fact expressed differently in Old Norwegian than in Old Icelandic very early in the history of these language(s).

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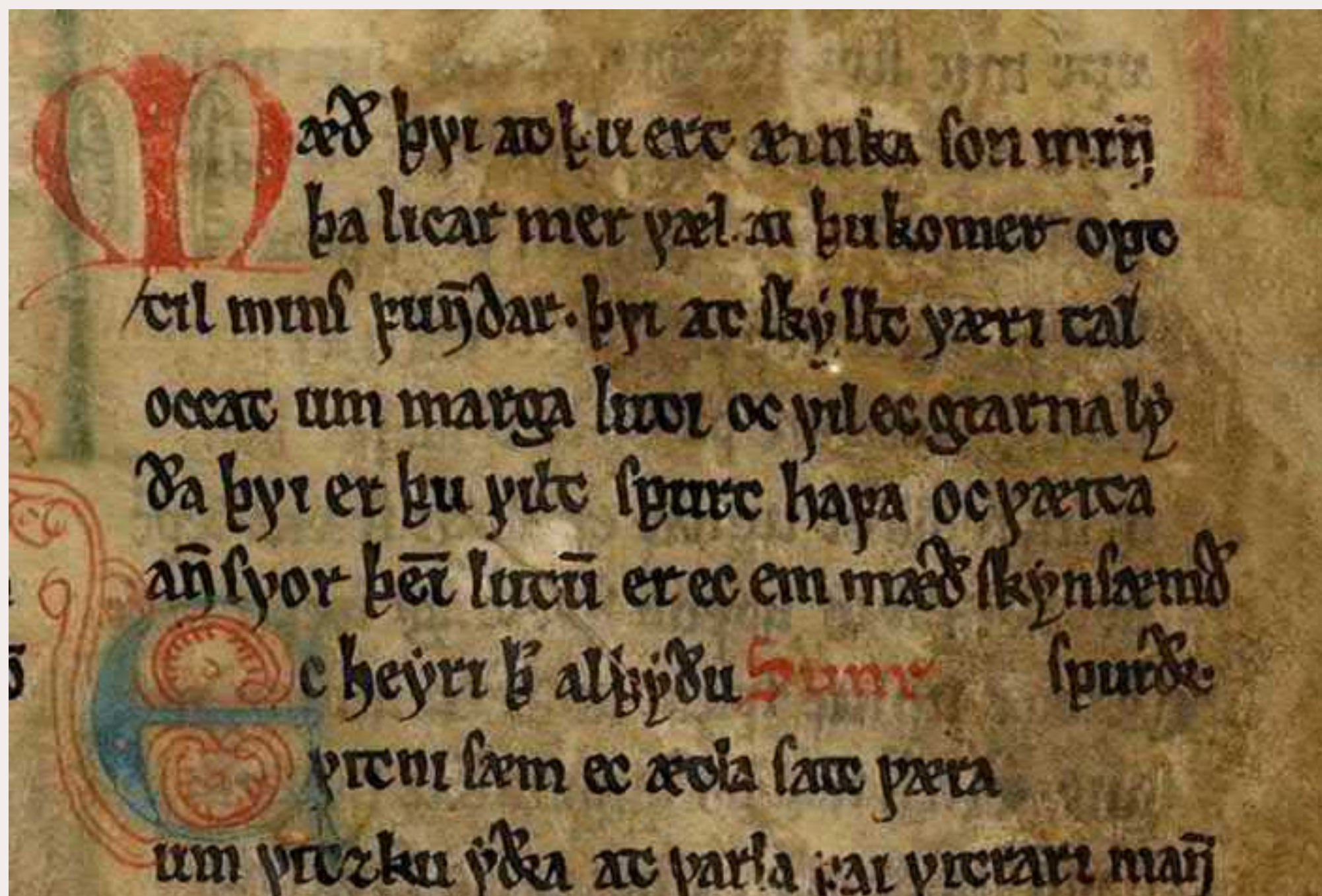
Konungs skuggsjá in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM243 bα fol, f. 1r. Photo: Handrit.is

ABSTRACT

The way a message is linguistically "packaged" varies across languages, media, and time. Old Norwegian shows syntactic variation as one strategy to mark focused or back-grounded elements. For Old Norse, studies on Old Icelandic have shown that prosodic weight seems to be the decisive factor for word ordering that can overwrite information structural factors. However, examining the influence of information status and prosodic weight of a constituent in clauses for Old Norwegian shows that word ordering is dependent on both factors. The results taken from my study thus imply that there are syntactic differences within Old Norse early in the history of the language(s). These results also reflect the syntactic development in the history of Norwegian as a change in the way information structure categories are displayed in grammar.

Object position

Old Norwegian (as Old Icelandic) has various possibilities for the positioning of an object in a clause relative to the lexical verb V (OV vs VO).
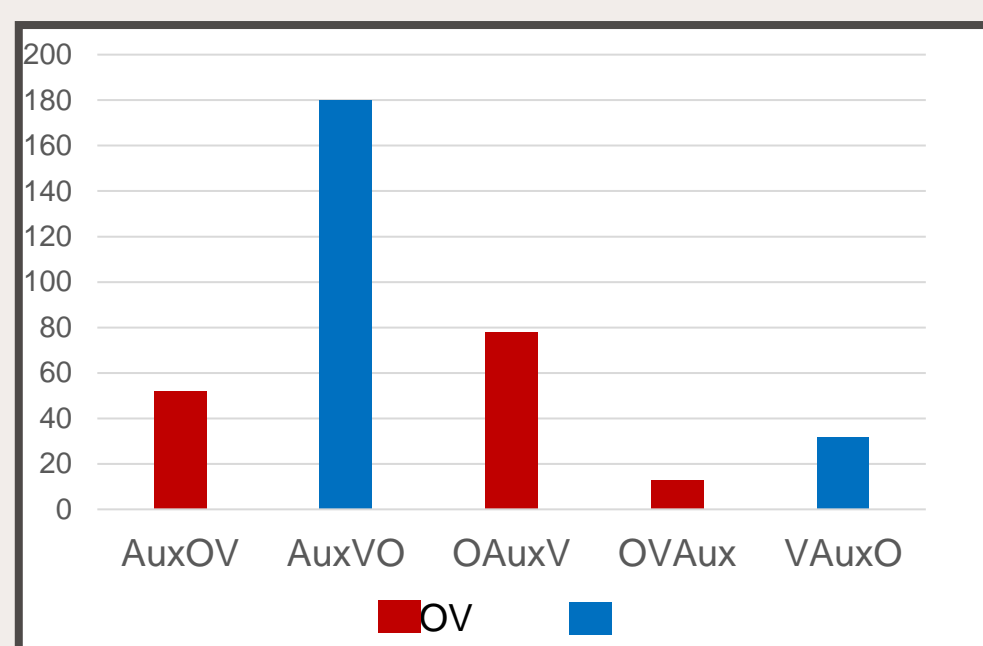

Fig. 1: Distribution of objects.

These various orders were tested for their **information status** (given/new), and their **prosodic weight** (type of the object & number of syllables).

The results in fig. 2 show that light given objects occur predominantly in OV surface order, while relatively heavy given objects are predominantly post-verbal. New objects in correlation with prosodic weight show an overall tendency for VO. But even though VO is preferred with new information, weight can overwrite this requirement if the object is heavy. VO thus shows a more diverse picture in terms of information status of the object. Light objects, on the other hand, are distributed over OV/VO according to their information status.
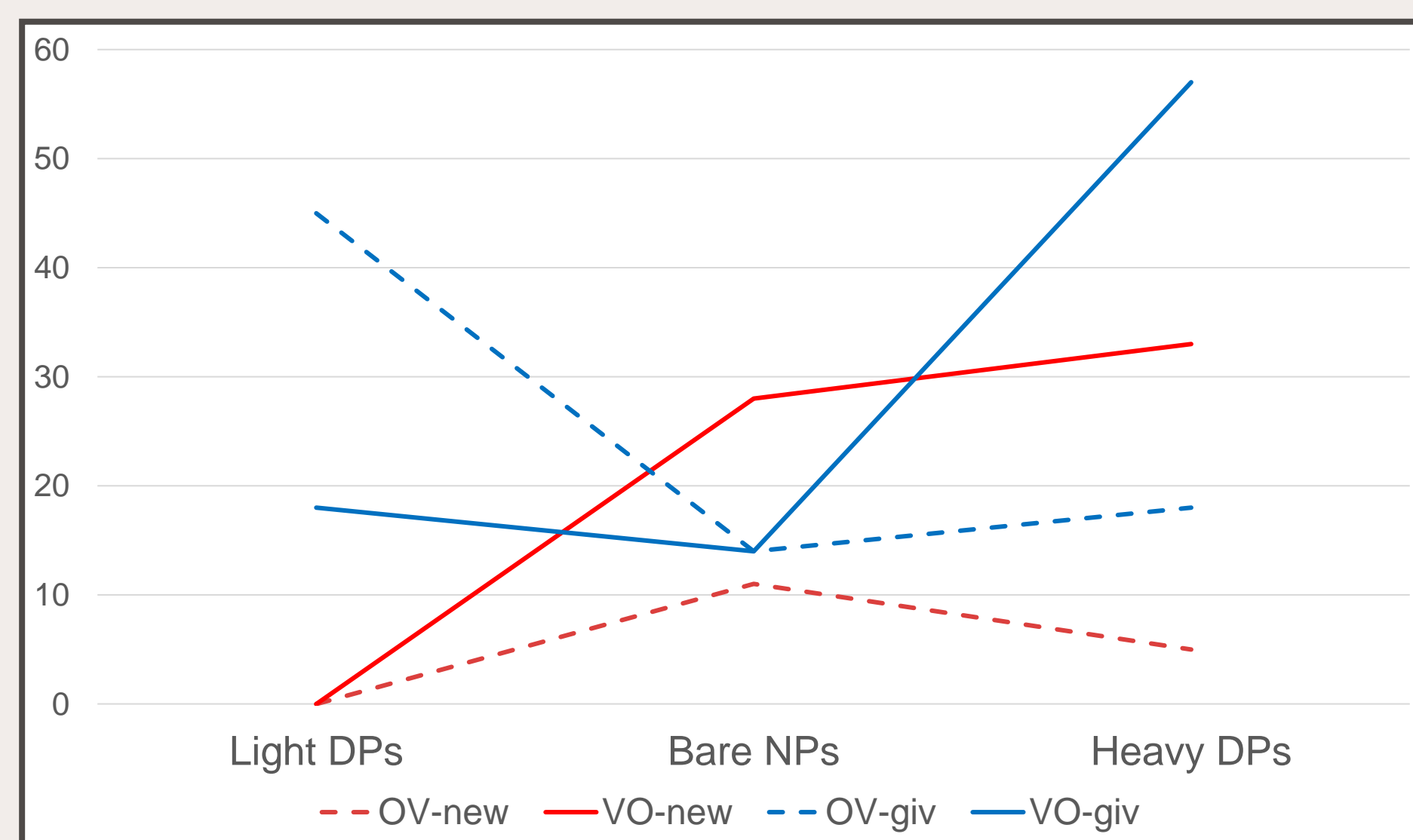

Fig 2: Object position in correlation with information status and prosodic weight.

Adjective position

In DPs containing one or more adjectives, Old Norwegian (as OI) shows a great range of alternation in the positioning of the adjective. These relate to a number of parameters such as definiteness of the NP (def/indef), form of the adjective (strong/weak), information status of the NP (new/given), or prosodic weight. In total, three general patterns can be described:
1) strong/weak postposed A,
2) strong/weak preposed A, and
3) split construction.

Form	Preposed	Postposed	Split	Total
Strong Adjective	86.06% (395)	11.33% (52)	2.61% (12)	100% (459)
Weak Adjective	87.10% (54)	12.90% (8)	0.0% (-)	100% (62)
Total	**86.18% (449)**	**11.52% (60)**	**2.30% (12)**	**100% (521)**

Tab. 1: Adjective position in Old Norwegian.

Faarlund (2004) found that postposed adjective would be the predominant order in Old Norse. The data, however, shows that postnominal adjectives are already very much reduced in their use. Overall, the data for Old Norwegian shows an overwhelming tendency for prepositioning of the adjective.
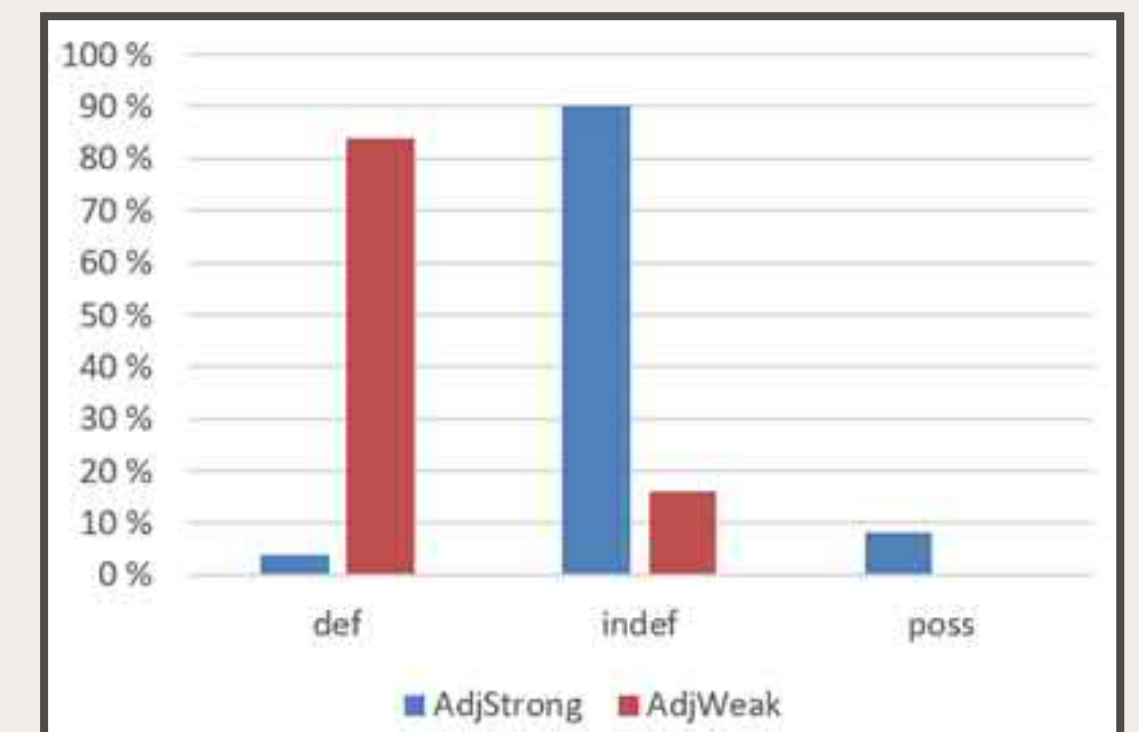

Fig. 3: Adjective agreement in Old Norwegian.

Turning to agreement within the clause, as expected, strong adjectives appear predominantly in indefinite DPs and weak adjectives appear predominantly in definite DPs. The weak form is usually called for by the insertion of a determiner (the definite article *hinn* or the demonstrative *sá*). However, there are also some instances of disagreement, where strong adjectives appear in definite and possessive contexts, as well as weak adjectives in indefinite constructions. A closer examination of these cases might give explanations for the disagreement, as e.g. all cases of weak adjectives in indefinite contexts show the usage of the comparative form, which does not have a strong declension.

A rather rare construction shows flanking of the adjectives (here split constructions), with both an adjective to the left and to the right of the noun. This surface pattern seem to be the result of a correlation between information structure and prosodic principles, as it is found with the strong form of the adjectives, even if a determinative is used.

As the corpus data shows that the pre-nominal position is already the preferred order in all contexts, it reflects the slow loss of the significance of information status as a word-ordering strategy in Norwegian. However, we can still see remnants of the influence of information structure on the distribution and positioning of adjectives in Old Norwegian.

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