

SAINTHOOD, SCRIPTORIA, AND SECULAR ERUDITION  
IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN SCANDINAVIA

ACTA SCANDINAVICA  
CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN THE EARLY SCANDINAVIAN WORLD

VOLUME 13

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# Sainthood, Scriptoria, and Secular Erudition in Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavia

*Essays in Honour of Kirsten Wolf*

*Edited by*

DARIO BULLITTA *and* NATALIE M. VAN DEUSEN

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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ISBN: 978-2-503-59548-1  
e-ISBN: 978-2-503-59549-8  
DOI: 10.1484/M.AS-EB.5.124464  
ISSN: 2466-586X  
e-ISSN: 2565-9170

Printed in the EU on acid-free paper.

D/2022/0095/129



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# Table of Contents

List of Illustrations	7
List of Abbreviations	10
Figures	11
<b>Dario Bullitta and Natalie M. Van Deusen</b>	
Introduction	31
<b>Pictorial and Sculptural Sainthood</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Thomas A. DuBois</b>	
In Hand and Underfoot: Reading Medieval Scandinavian Wooden Sculptures	45
<b>Marianne Kalinke</b>	
Pictorial Hagiography: The Gotlandic Death of a German Emperor	65
<b>Medieval Sainthood</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Ásdís Egilsdóttir</b>	
Miracles and Emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature	85
<b>Margaret Cormack</b>	
St Cecilia's Icelandic Miracles in Holm Perg 2 fol.	101
<b>Jón Viðar Sigurðsson</b>	
St Michael: God's <i>þjónustumaðr</i>	115
<b>The Sagas of Guðmundr the Good</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Gottskálk Jenson</b>	
The Evidence for the Lost <i>*Vita et miracula</i> <i>Godemundi boni</i> of Brother Arngrímur	133
<b>Shaun F. D. Hughes</b>	
Who Is Selkolla and What Is She? Disentangling Traditions in <i>Guðmundar sögur byskups</i>	171

## Spiritual Readings

### **Siân E. Grønlie**

- Frá því er Guð freistaði Abraham:  
Genesis 22 in Old Norse-Icelandic Tradition 195

### **Dario Bullitta**

- A Þingeyrar Book for Spiritual Ascent:  
Scribes and Items of AM 624 4to 213

## Skaldic Poetry

### **Russell Poole**

- The Danish Tongue on Skaldic Lips 243

### **Margaret Clunies Ross**

- Post-Classical Kennings 263

### **Martin Chase**

- Kennings for Poetry in Late-Medieval Icelandic *Trúarkvæði* 275

## Secular Erudition

### **Úlfar Bragason**

- Sturla Þórðarson: A Moral Witness 299

### **Todd Michelson-Ambelang**

- Guðrún's Mysterious Missing Husband 315

## Postmedieval Sainthood

### **Þórunn Sigurðardóttir**

- Helga Aradóttir in Ögur: A Lutheran Saint? 341

### **Margrét Eggertsdóttir**

- The Once-Popular and Now-Forgotten *Verónikukvæði* 365

### **Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir**

- Í ástarbing: Marian Sentiments in Lbs 3013 8vo 397

### **Natalie M. Van Deusen**

- A Tale of Model Women: An Edition of *Kvendæmaþáttur* 417

- List of Publications by Kirsten Wolf 443

- Tabula Gratulatoria 463



# List of Illustrations

- Figure 1. Crucifix of the Väversunda Church, Östergötland (c. 1150–1200). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 11
- Figure 2. Crucifix of the Botkyrka Church, Södermanland (c. 1300–1400). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 11
- Figure 3. Sorrowing Virgin of the Öja Church, Gotland (c. 1290–1300). Gotland museum, Visby. 11
- Figure 4. The Baptism of Christ in the Roskilde high altar (c. 1420). Roskilde Cathedral, Denmark. 11
- Figure 5. Altarpiece detail of the Annunciation (c. 1450–1500). Mariakyrka, Sigtuna. 12
- Figure 6. Altarpiece detail of the Crowning of Mary (c. 1450–1500). Mariakyrka, Sigtuna. 12
- Figure 7. Detail of St Anne's altarpiece, Hägerstad Church (c. 1490–1500). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 12
- Figure 8. Detail of St Anne's altarpiece, Hägerstad Church (c. 1490–1500). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 13
- Figure 9. Detail of St Anne's altarpiece, Hägerstad Church (c. 1490–1500). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 13
- Figure 10. Statue of St Óláfr, Tanum Church (c. 1250–1300). Kulturhistorisk museum, Oslo. 13
- Figure 11. Console figure, detail of the statue of St Óláfr, Hejdeby Church (c. 1290–1300). Gotland museum, Visby. 13
- Figure 12. Console figure, detail of the statue of St Óláfr. Väte Church, Gotland (c. 1290–1300). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 13
- Figure 13. Console figure, detail of the statue of St Óláfr. Väte Church, Gotland (c. 1290–1300). Historiska museet, Stockholm. 14
- Figure 14. Console figure, detail of the statue of St Henrik, Akaa Church (c. 1490–1500). Kansallismuseo, Helsinki. 14

- Figure 15. Detail of the sorrowing apostles, Dormition altar-piece panel, Kalanti Church (c. 1400). Kansallismuseo, Helsinki. 14
- Figure 16. St Anne extended family. Rosted Church, Denmark (c. 1500). Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen. 14
- Figure 17. *Seelenwägung* of Emperor Henry II. Vamlingbo Church, Gotland (c. 1240). Photo by Numa Markee. 15
- Figure 18. St Cecilia in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 429 12mo, fol. 28<sup>v</sup> (c. 1500). 16
- Figure 19. The sacrifice of Isaac in Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 227 fol., folio 23<sup>v</sup> (c. 1350). 16
- Figure 20. Abraham, Sarah, and Lot leave Haran. Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 227 fol., folio 23<sup>v</sup> (c. 1350). 17
- Figure 21. Hand 1 in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, page 12, lower margin (c. 1450–1475). 18
- Figure 22. Hand 1 in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, page 13, lower margin (c. 1450–1475). 19
- Figure 23. Hand 1 in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, page 14, lower margin (c. 1450–1475). 20
- Figure 24. Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 243 k fol., page 50, upper margin (c. 1450–1500). 21
- Figure 25. Lemniscate-shaped abbreviation ( $\infty$ ) for *or* by Hand 1 in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, page 2/15 (*memoria*) (c. 1450–1475). 22
- Figure 26. Lemniscate-shaped abbreviation ( $\infty$ ) for *or* in Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 162 C fol., folio 2<sup>r</sup>/10 (*j morgun*) (c. 1450–1475). 22
- Figure 27. Hand 1 in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, page 2 (c. 1450–1475). 22
- Figure 28. Hand C in Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 673 a III 4to, folio 20<sup>v</sup> (c. 1450–1475). 23





- Figure 29. Memorial tablet of Ari Magnússon and Kristín Guðbrandsdóttir. Reykjavík, Þjóðminjasafn Íslands, Þjms. 3108 (unknown painter). 24
- Figure 30. Title page of Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, NKS 56 d 8vo, fol. 94<sup>r</sup> (1676). 24
- Figure 31. Incipit of Helga Aradóttir's poem in NKS 56 d 8vo, fol. 94<sup>r</sup> (1676). 25
- Figure 32. *Martyrologia sanctorum*, book IV of *Historiarum Sacrarum Encolpodion* by Niels Heldvad, printed in Copenhagen 1634, title page. 26
- Figure 33. Under the heading FEBRUARIVS the feast of Veronica (4 February) is listed in Heldvad's book *Historiarum Sacrarum Encolpodion*, part IV. 27
- Figure 34. The title page of a miscellany written by Jón Egilsson in 1748, including *Verónikukvæði*. Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 1070 8vo. 28
- Figure 35. The beginning of *Verónikukvæði* in Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 1070 8vo, p. 565. 28
- Figure 36. The beginning of *Mariútíðir* in Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 3013 8vo, fols 26<sup>v</sup>–27<sup>r</sup>. 29
- Figure 37. A verse added by Indriði Eggertsson below the text of *Barndómur Christi* in Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 3013 8vo, fol. 26<sup>r</sup>. 29
- Figure 38. Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 4795 8vo, fol. 106<sup>r</sup>. 30
- Figure 39. Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 4795 8vo, fol. 95<sup>r</sup>. 30
- Figure 40. Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 2397 8vo, fol. 1<sup>r</sup>. 30

# List of Abbreviations

- AM Den Arnarnagnæanske Samling/Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum
- BHL *Bibliotheca hagiographica Latina antiquae et mediae aetatis*, Subsidia hagiographica, 6 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1898–1899; repr., 1992). *Supplementum*, Subsidia hagiographica, 12 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1911). *Novum Supplementum*, Subsidia hagiographica, 70 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1986)
- CCSA Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum, 21 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983–2019)
- CCSL Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 176 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954–2021)
- DBL *Dansk biografisk Lexikon tillige omfattende Norge for tidsrummet 1537–1814*, ed. by Carl F. Bricka, 19 vols (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1887–1905)
- DI *Diplomatarium Islandicum: Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn*, ed. by Jón Sigurðsson, Jón Þorkelsson, Páll Eggert Ólason, and Björn Þorsteinsson, 35 vols (Copenhagen: S. L. Möller/Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1857–1952)
- DN *Diplomatarium Norvegicum: Oldbreve til kundskab om Norges indre og ydre forhold, sprog, slægter, sæder, lovgivning og rettergang i middelalderen*, ed. by Christian C. A. Lange and Carl R. Unger, 22 vols (Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Mallings, 1847–1995)
- ÍÆ *Íslenzkar æviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940 (1948–1976)*, ed. by Páll Eggert Ólason, Jón Guðnason, and Ólafur Þ. Kristjánsson, 6 vols (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1948–1976)
- KLNM *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk Middelalder fra Vikingetid til Reformationstid*, ed. by Lis Jacobsen and John Danstrup, 22 vols (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1956–1978)
- ONP *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog: A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* at <<http://onp.ku.dk/onp/onp.php>>
- PG *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols (Paris: Migne, 1856–1866)
- PL *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844–1864)
- SkP *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages*, ed. by Margaret Clunies Ross, 8 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013–2017)



## Introduction

This Festschrift seeks to honour Kirsten Wolf, an internationally renowned scholar in the field of Old Norse-Icelandic studies, on the occasion of her sixtieth birthday in November 2019. The idea to produce such a volume was conceived by her former PhD students, Natalie M. Van Deusen (University of Alberta) and Susanne M. Arthur (University of Iceland, formerly), and has been carried out by the present editors, Natalie M. Van Deusen and Dario Bullitta (University of Turin), who have had the privilege to work as Kirsten Wolf's co-authors and co-editors on several occasions.<sup>1</sup>

Kirsten, a native of southern Jutland (Tønder, Denmark), received an honours BA degree in Icelandic (major) and Norwegian (minor) from the University of Iceland in 1981, and went on to receive both her MA and PhD degrees in Scandinavian languages from University College London in 1982 and 1987, respectively. Kirsten's first academic position, which she held from 1986–1988, was that of Associate Editor of the Dictionary of Old Norse Prose (ONP), part of the Arnamagnæan Collection (Den Arnamagnæanske Samling) at the University of Copenhagen. During the 1986–1987 academic year, Kirsten took a period of leave from this position to serve as Lecturer in the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (US). In 1988, Kirsten was hired as Associate Professor and Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba (Canada),

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- 1 This book is the joint effort of the two editors. Their scientific collaboration was initiated during their research years at the Arnamagnæan Manuscript Collection in Copenhagen (2007–2008) and strongly supported by the dedicatee of this volume, Professor Kirsten Wolf, to whom they are deeply indebted. Dario Bullitta is responsible for the structure, illustrations, the first and third edits of the volume, as well as the second section of the introduction (“Sainthood, Scriptoria, and Secular Erudition ... throughout our own scholarly careers”). Natalie Van Deusen is responsible for the second edits of the volume as well as the first part of the introduction (“This Festschrift seeks to honour ... as a researcher and mentor”). For the sake of consistency, medieval names and titles of works produced before the Icelandic Reformation are provided in normalized Old Norse according to the Dictionary of Old Norse Prose (ONP) editorial conventions, which reconstructs a stage of the language from around 1200–1250 (an exception to this is *Laxdóla saga*, here referred to using the more common spelling, *Laxdæla saga*). Here and in the following, all Icelandic placenames are given in their modern Icelandic forms. Unless otherwise stated, the text of the Latin Vulgate is taken from *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, ed. by Weber and others. All English translations are from the *Douay-Rheims Bible*.

where she remained until 2001, when she was hired to her current position as Professor in the Department of Scandinavian Studies (now the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; she was appointed Torger Thompson Chair in 2004 and Kim Nilsson Professor in 2015. Kirsten is also a member of the Medieval Studies Program, Religious Studies Program, and Folklore Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and was Affiliate Professor in the Department of German from 2010–2013. At both the University of Manitoba and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Kirsten has a distinguished service record. She was Chair of the Department of Icelandic Language and Literature throughout the duration of her appointment at the University of Manitoba and served as Chair of the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from 2007–2015. From 2016–2018, Kirsten was Associate Chair of the newly amalgamated Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has served as Unit Chair of Nordic since 2016. She has worked on numerous departmental and faculty-level committees, both at the University of Manitoba and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has an equally extensive international service record. At the same time, Kirsten taught a variety of courses on Scandinavian languages and linguistics, and has mentored and advised countless undergraduate and graduate students. Many of Kirsten's students and mentees have gone on to have successful academic careers in North America and Europe and still benefit from her expert advice and guidance.

Kirsten's doctoral dissertation was a study on and edition of *Gyðinga saga* (The Saga of the Jews), which was later published in 1995 as part of the Rit series at the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in Reykjavík (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum), and marked the beginning of her distinguished career to date, during which time she has published seventeen monographs. Prior to this, Kirsten published (with Árný Hjaltadóttir) *Western Icelandic Short Stories* (University of Manitoba Press, 1992) and (with Jody Jensen) *Principles for Oral Narrative Research* (Indiana University Press, 1992), and co-authored with her husband, Phillip Pulsiano, in collaboration with Paul Acker and Donald K. Fry, the immensely useful and popular *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* (Garland Publishing, 1993). She went on to publish a collection of translated short stories and poems by Icelandic-Canadian women *Writings by Western Icelandic Women* (University of Manitoba Press, 1996) before publishing her first critical edition and English translation of an Old Norse-Icelandic hagiographic legend *The Icelandic Legend of Saint Dorothy* (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1997). The following year, she published *An Annotated Bibliography of North American Doctoral Dissertations on Old Norse-Icelandic* (Cornell University Press, 1998), and in 2000 *The Old Norse-Icelandic Legend of Saint Barbara* (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2000), followed by *Saga heilagrar Önnu*, an edition of the life of St Anne (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, 2001) and, in 2003, her edition of Icelandic translations of female saints' lives in *Heilagra*



*meysa sögur* with modern spelling. She then published *Daily Life of the Vikings* (Greenwood Press, 2004, 2nd rev. edn 2013) before co-editing two collections of essays, one with A. N. Doane, *Beatus Vir: Studies in Early English and Norse Manuscripts in Memory of Phillip Pulsiano* (ACMRS [Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies], 2006), a Festschrift in honour of her husband, Phillip Pulsiano, and a second, with Johanna Denzin, *Romance and Love in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iceland* (Cornell University Press, 2008), a Festschrift in honour of Marianne Kalinke in 2008. In 2011, Kirsten published her detailed study and critical edition of the all-female legendary, *Kirkjubæjarbók* (Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 429 12mo), with Museum Tusulanum Press as part of its Manuscripta Nordica series, and in 2013 *The Legends of the Saints in Old Norse-Icelandic Prose* (University of Toronto Press), her update to Hans Bekker-Nielsen, Old Widding, and L. K. Shook's handlist of saints' lives became available to scholars and has been an invaluable resource for anyone working on Old Norse-Icelandic hagiography. The companion volume to the prose handbook, *The Saints in Old Norse and Early Modern Icelandic Poetry* (University of Toronto Press), was co-authored with Natalie M. Van Deusen in 2017. In 2018, Kirsten published *The Vikings: Facts and Fictions* (ABC-CLIO) with her PhD student, Tristan Mueller-Vollmer. In 2021, she has co-edited two collections of essays: the first with Marianne Kalinke entitled *An Icelandic Literary Florilegium: A Festschrift in Honor of Úlfar Bragason* (Cornell University Library), which also includes an article co-written by Kirsten and her son, Sune Wolf Pulsiano; and the second with Dario Bullitta devoted to topics revolving around Icelandic hagiography and entitled *Saints and their Legacies in Medieval Iceland* (Boydell and Brewer). In the same year, she and Carole P. Biggam co-edited volumes 2 and 4 of the six volume series *A Cultural History of Color* (Bloomsbury Press): *A Cultural History of Color in the Medieval Age* and *A Cultural History of Color in the Age of Enlightenment* (Bloomsbury Press, 2021), and with Biggam, she has served for several years as general editor of the same series. Her critical edition *The Priest's Eye: AM 672 4to in The Arnamagnæan Collection, Copenhagen* (Manuscripta Nordica) and *Three Humanist Compendia in Icelandic Translation* (Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana), a first edition of previously unpublished humanist treatises co-authored and co-edited with Dario Bullitta, will soon be published by the Arnamagnæan Commission. Since 2012, Kirsten has been a tireless editor of the prestigious *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, where she is responsible for essays and reviews pertaining to Old Norse-Icelandic studies, as well as all other Germanic traditions, with the exception of Old and Middle English, which are vetted by her co-editors Renée R. Trilling and Matthew Giancarlo, respectively.

Since the start of her scholarship, Kirsten has published numerous articles, book chapters, editions, translations, notes, encyclopedic entries, and reviews, both single-handedly and co-authored with colleagues and former students; these can be found in the List of Publications by Kirsten Wolf appended to the current volume (see pp. 443–61). Throughout her career, Kirsten has received

numerous prestigious awards to support her research, including research grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the American-Scandinavian Foundation; moreover, she was selected as the Humanities recipient of the Kellett Mid-Career Award at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in recognition for her impressive record of research, teaching, and service. The present volume's contributors include Kirsten's former students, former and current colleagues from North America and Europe, and scholars whom Kirsten has known since her own student days. The contributions to this Festschrift reflect the scope of Professor Wolf's impressive career as a researcher and mentor.

*Sainthood, Scriptoria, and Secular Erudition of Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavia: Essays in Honour of Kirsten Wolf* collects eighteen essays devoted to Kirsten's favoured research topics, most notably medieval Scandinavian hagiography and biblical literature, Old Norse-Icelandic philology and manuscript studies, skaldic poetry and the secular literature of medieval Iceland. The book contains seven sections: an introduction; two case studies of pictorial hagiography of medieval Gotland and Iceland (Marianne Kalinke, Thomas A. DuBois); two essays centered on selected examples of the medieval Icelandic literary legacy of St Cecilia and the Archangel Michael, along with a general overview on the treatment of emotions in Norse hagiographical texts (Margaret Cormack, Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, Ásdís Egilsdóttir); two investigations of medieval Icelandic hagiographical texts in praise of the saintly Bishop of Hólar, Guðmundr Arason (Gottskálk Jensson, Shaun F. D. Hughes); two essays on medieval Icelandic excerpts of spiritual literature and their manuscript context (Siân E. Grønlie, Dario Bullitta); three studies on the skaldic poetry of Denmark and Iceland (Russell Poole, Margaret Clunies Ross, Martin Chase); two pieces on the secular literature of medieval Iceland produced by the historian Sturla Þórðarson and revolving around the ninth-century heroine, Guðrún Ósvífrsdóttir (Úlfar Bragason, Todd Michelson-Ambelang); four essays on selected pieces of post-medieval Icelandic literature in praise of female saints and virtuous women (Þórunn Sigurðardóttir, Margrét Eggertsdóttir, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Natalie M. Van Deusen).

The first section, 'Pictorial and Sculptural Sainthood', opens with the essay 'In Hand and Underfoot: Reading Medieval Scandinavian Wooden Sculptures', in which Thomas A. DuBois sheds light on medieval Scandinavian practices of viewing and interpreting medieval Christian sculpture. Whereas modern viewers may be inclined to focus their attention on the head and face of a sculpture of a saint, DuBois stresses how medieval carvers lavished special attention on details of the hands — a singularly important *locus* of beauty, action, and virtue, which undoubtedly represented a remarkably complex technical challenge for a carver. Also important were the statue's feet and the console figures depicted underfoot — details that were probably closer to the viewer's eyes than were the statue's head or hands, due to norms of display of statuary on raised pedestals, altars, or in wall niches. Through



a survey of the different uses of hands and feet in medieval Scandinavian statuary, DuBois investigates artworks that often seem ambiguous or static to modern viewers, and discloses the artistry and intrinsic meanings of religious art produced in medieval Scandinavia and in Hanseatic centers to the south, where the source workshops of many surviving wooden statues were located. In the second essay, 'Pictorial Hagiography: the Gotlandic Death of a Roman Emperor', Marianne Kalinke analyzes the Gotlandic pictorial legacy of the early-thirteenth-century metrical narrative *Heinrich und Kunigunde* (Henry and Cunegund) by Ebernand von Erfurt (fl. c. 1200–1240), the Middle High German verses describing the life of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II (d. 1024; can. 1147) and his wife Cunegund of Luxembourg (b. c. 975–d. 1040), which represents the earliest known German hagiographical legend to be imported into Scandinavia. The object of the study is a mid-thirteenth-century fresco by the so-called Michael Master (b. and d. unknown) in the Church of Vamlingbo on Gotland. The mural depicts the weighing of Henry's soul at his death by the archangel Michael, who is holding a balance scale that measures Henry's good deeds against his sins. Kalinke argues that the legend of Henry's *Seelenwägung* was presumably brought to Gotland by German Dominican friars, who established a priory in the town of Visby in the early thirteenth century and preached both in town and in the countryside, including in Vamlingbo. She subsequently reaches the conclusion that at the consecration of the church (c. 1240), a Dominican preacher may have interpreted the mural for the congregation as an *exemplum* and that the fresco reflected the generosity of the Gotlandic community that constructed the Vamlingbo Church and had it ornamented with this magnificent mural.

The second section, 'Medieval Sainthood', opens with the study 'Miracles and Emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature', in which Ásdís Egilsdóttir examines the impact of emotions in the lives and miracles of Icelandic saints and concentrates her attention on *Þorláks saga helga* (The Saga of St Þorlákr) and *Jóns saga helga* (The Saga of St Jón), in which the sentiments of love and kindness are brought forward in the descriptions of both bishops. Yet, while St Þorlákr's emotional restraint is consistently emphasized, in the longer redaction of *Jóns saga* more emphasis appears to be placed on Jón's compassion towards his flock, who often address him full of fear and anxiety. Ásdís subsequently draws attention to the Nativity according to the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2. 8–11), where fear and joy are most prominently expressed. In a notable scene, some shepherds grazing their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem are petrified by a bright light shining over them, when an angel appears and reassures them that he has come to bring good tidings of great joy. Ásdís concludes her study by emphasizing how Icelandic miracles seem to reflect the message given in Luke by placing great emphasis on the restoration of a normal state of happiness in nature, body, and mind. In the following study, 'St Cecilia's Icelandic Miracles in Holm perg 2 fol', Margaret Cormack offers an initial survey and English translation of two Icelandic miracles attributed to St Cecilia that are found in a three-column addendum to her

saga in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm perg 2 fol. (c. 1425–1445). The texts relate that during the third quarter of the twelfth century two men called Þorgils and Hallbjörn, suffering respectively from a severe leg injury and deafness, visit the farm Húsafell, where St Cecilia was patron saint. Consistent with the practice there, they decide to fast before her feast and are subsequently cured by the saint. Since such fasting was not yet required by Icelandic law, the author argues that the two early miracles at Húsafell may have led to the very observance of the feast in Iceland, which was adopted as mandatory soon thereafter, at the Alþingi of 1179. Cormack concludes her study by noting that Þorgils' dream where St Cecilia replaces his heart is paralleled by of a similar event related in *Laxdæla saga* (The Saga of the People of Laxárdalur), in which Án hrísmagi's internal organs are replaced during his sleep by a mysterious woman. In the third essay, 'St Michael: God's *þjónustumaðr*', Jón Viðar Sigurðsson surveys *Mikjál's saga* (The Saga of Michael) and *Nikuláss saga erkibyskups* (The Saga of the Archbishop Nicholas), two of the most prominent hagiographical achievements of Bergr Sökkason (c. 1304–c. 1370). In line with European hagiography, Bergr appears to mold his hagiographical material to the local demands, in this case to convince Icelanders of Nicholas' and Michael's prominence among all other saints. Jón Viðar notices how in his description of Michael, Bergr decides to depict the archangel as a servant rather than as a friend of God (as is instead the case for Nicholas), giving preference to his role as chieftain in charge of a heavenly troop of angels set against Noctifer and his devils. He concludes that the focus on Michael's office as a servant of God may be interpreted as a critique of the Icelandic secular elite during the first decades of the fourteenth century, a time when Norwegian royal power became more rigorous and demanding on the island, and the willingness to serve the Norwegian King on the part of the Icelandic social elite decreased substantially. The third section, 'The Sagas of Guðmundr the Good', begins with Gottskálk Jensson's 'The Evidence for the Lost \**Vita et miracula Godemundi boni* of Brother Arngrímur', in which the author tests and validates the conclusions of a number of Icelandic philologists, who from the turn of the twentieth century argued that the youngest of the four fourteenth-century redactions of *Guðmundar saga byskups* (The Saga of Bishop Guðmundr), now referred to with the letter D, is an Icelandic translation of an original Latin *vita* of Bishop Guðmundr Arason of Hólar (1161–1237) prepared by Arngrímur Brandsson (c. 1280–c. 1361). While some of their indications give only weak support to this thesis, some of the advanced evidence — such as the descriptions of Iceland clearly intended for a readership unfamiliar with the country and the clear traces of Latin phrases in the saga — remains highly significant and Gottskálk recommends that it should not be dismissed. A Latin narrative figure new to the D-redaction is analyzed in detail and it is shown to provide definitive evidence that the saga must have been translated from Latin. Gottskálk concludes that it is highly probable that the lost \**Vita et miracula Godemundi boni* (The Life and Miracles of Guðmundr the Good) was presented to Pope Clement VI (1291–1352) in





Avignon in the years 1345–1346, when Einar Hafliðason (1307–1393) went there on a mission on behalf of the Bishop of Hólar, Ormr Ásláksson (1342–1356), although a restrictive papal policy and the Black Death prevented the sanctity of Bishop Guðmundr from being officially recognized. In the following study, ‘Who is Selkolla and What is She?: Disentangling Traditions in *Guðmundar sögur byskups*’, Shaun F. D. Hughes investigates the first extended account of Guðmundr Arason’s (1161–1237) encounter with a troll-woman named Selkolla, which was added to the B-version of *Guðmundar saga byskups*, a text written in the second quarter of the fourteenth century to promote Guðmundr as a candidate for sainthood. Hughes distinguishes five sections in the account: a mini-*exemplum* warning against fornication — an act that allows a revenant to appear; an account of the revenant, which sometimes is seen to have a seal’s head; a second mini-*exemplum* also warning against fornication outdoors and serving as a reminder that a man may sin with his own wife; the interaction proper between Guðmundr and Selkolla, which appears to owe more to Continental sources than Icelandic ones; a concluding section in which Selkolla escapes the restrictions placed upon her by Bishop Guðmundr. Because of the popularity of Bishop Guðmundr, the story of Selkolla has become one of the best-known medieval examples of paranormal activity in Iceland.

In her essay ‘*Frá því er Guð freistaði Abraham: Genesis 22 in Old Norse-Icelandic Tradition*’, which opens the fourth section devoted to ‘Spiritual Readings’, Siân E. Grønlie explores how the Old Norse-Icelandic translation of Genesis in *Stjórn* I (Guidance) navigates the difficulties posed by Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis Chapter 22. Although it has been argued that *Stjórn*, and Old Norse-Icelandic religious writings more widely, were broadly resistant to ‘mystical’ readings of biblical texts, Grønlie claims that the translator-compiler’s work functions on two levels, establishing first the literal-historical level of meaning before turning to a psychological and affective interpretation of the passage as an allegorical drama of the soul. These two levels of meaning are foregrounded through the use of two different styles: saga-style in the sections translated from the Vulgate and from Peter Comestor’s (d. c. 1178) *Historia scholastica* (Scholastic History), and florid style, marked by word-pairs and alliteration in sections translated from Vincent of Beauvais’ (1184–1264) *Speculum historiale* (Mirror of History), which ultimately derive from Origen of Alexandria’s (c. 184–c. 253) *Homilies on Genesis*. She further argues that, if the translations in *Stjórn* were produced in a Victorine context, this move from history to allegory to moral — the reformation of the soul — is exactly what one might expect. Grønlie also notices that the two main manuscripts of *Stjórn*, Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 226 fol. (c. 1340–1360) and Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 227 fol. (c. 1340–1360), handle this chapter somewhat differently: whereas AM 226 fol. focuses on the exemplary quality of Abraham’s obedience, AM 227 fol. uses the visual exegesis of the historiated initial and marginal

illumination to encourage a reading of Isaac as a prefiguration of Christ. She reaches the conclusion that these differences in emphasis may reflect different audiences or functions: whereas AM 226 fol. shows an interest in universal history among the canons regular at Helgafell, AM 227 fol. is a partial Bible (Genesis to 4 Kings), made at the Benedictine monastery of Þingeyrar, for liturgical purposes or personal study. In the following study, 'A Þingeyrar Book for Spiritual Ascent: Scribes and Items of AM 645 4to', Dario Bullitta investigates the provenance and circulation of Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 624 4to (c. 1450–1475; c. 1500), a voluminous composite miscellaneous manuscript in small quarto format, transmitting mostly Old Norse-Icelandic translations of Latin theological, catechetical, homiletical, and computistic literature, along with numerous edifying short tales adapted from Middle English, and fewer original texts composed in the vernacular. Despite its late date of production, the codex bears an enormous historical and literary value within the corpus of Old Norse-Icelandic literature by virtue of its inclusion of some of the most rare and sophisticated devotional texts of the Old Norse-Icelandic corpus. The significance of these texts is threefold: AM 624 4to is often the sole surviving witness transmitting its texts (Items 1; 5; 7–8; 13; 15; 19; 27; and 32–33); in several cases it is the oldest extant witness within a given textual tradition (Items 9–11; 14; and 22); in three instances it combines significantly ancient texts with manuscript material that dates to around 1200 or earlier (Items 6; 10; and 31). In light of new manuscript evidence, Bullitta complements previous studies on the codex by presenting a fresh assessment of its codicological composition and paleographic features, producing a more informative analysis of its provenance and circulation, and providing a first exhaustive catalogue of its items. Particular attention is paid to the idiosyncrasies of the first codicological unit (pp. 1–14), which has hitherto received virtually no scholarly attention.

The fifth section, 'Skaldic Poetry', follows with an essay by Russell Poole, 'The Danish Tongue on Skaldic Lips', in which the author investigates the cases of possible Danish influence on the phonology of the skaldic poetry, paying particular attention to two Icelandic skalds, Sigvatr Þórðarson (c. 995–c. 1045) and his nephew Óttarr svarti (fl. eleventh century). In his study, Poole distinguishes two categories: a first group of skalds who exemplify sporadic adoption of a few specific phonological features of early East Norse, probably to be identified as the Danish variety, and a second group of much wider incidence. Here skalds in general appear to be systematically effacing some conspicuous features of their native West Norse varieties, especially Icelandic but perhaps also Norwegian. According to the author, their objective may have been to approximate more closely to the metropolitan form of the common Nordic language — *ðönsk tunga*. The second essay, 'Post-Classical Kennings', by Margaret Clunies Ross, discusses some of the changes in kenning-formation detectable in Icelandic skaldic poetry of the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These include changes in the meanings



of poetic words, formations resulting from misunderstandings of earlier rhetorical effects, and expansions of kennings and kenning-like phrases, the latter encouraged by growing metrical laxity. Such changes have often been regularized by earlier editors to conform to earlier poetic conventions, but Clunies-Ross contends that they should be recognized as genuine differences from earlier skaldic practice and not irreversibly emended. In the third study, 'Kennings in Late-Medieval Icelandic *Trúarkvæði*', Martin Chase surveys the so-called *trúarkvæði* (devotional poems) from the period leading up to the Protestant Reformation, which seem to reflect *Lilja's* (Lily) aversion to the traditional kennings of skaldic poetry. Yet, many of them experiment with a new kenning style that was beginning to appear in the secular *rímur* (rhymes). *Trúarkvæði* have not received the same scholarly attention as the *rímur* texts, but there is enough similarity in the diction of the two genres to make studies of the poetic language of the *rímur* useful for interpreting the *trúarkvæði*. Chase examines the kennings for poetry in a selection of *trúarkvæði* from Jón Helgason's *Íslenzk miðaldakvæði* and Jón Þorkelsson's *Kvæðasafn*, as well as a few unpublished poems. Many of these poems recall the self-consciousness of the skaldic *drápur* (court poems) in opening stanzas that invoke eloquence, and conclusions grandly announcing the successful completion of the work, a convention that necessitates the use of a variety of kennings for poetry. There is also a preoccupation with where poetry comes from, and another characteristic of the genre is thus a range of kennings for the 'seat of poetry'. The author examines and compares these kennings in light of Björn K. Þórolfsson's and Davíð Erlingsson's theories about *rímur* to show how the kennings work, how they are based in the skaldic tradition, and how they depart from it.

The sixth section, dedicated to 'Secular Erudition', opens with 'Sturla Þórðarson: A Moral Witness', in which Úlfar Bragason focuses on Sturla Þórðarson (1214–1284) as a reliable witness of the historical events that he collected in his *Íslendinga saga* (The Saga of Icelanders). Úlfar suggests reading Sturla's *Íslendinga saga* in the light of its date, place of production, and the identity of its commissioners, and regards Sturla the historian as a scholar interested in filtering what the following generations should remember and what they should forget. In his study, 'Guðrún's Mysterious Missing Husband', Todd Michaelson-Ambelang examines the life of Guðrún Osviksdóttir (b. and d. unknown) in *Laxdæla saga*, and how after a life of sinning she becomes a model of Christian morality by converting and becoming an anchoress and *Sponsa Christi* (Bride of Christ). During the last century, much scholarly debate has revolved around Guðrún's ambiguous answer to her son Bolli, who at the end of her life, asks her whom among her husbands she loved the best, to which she famously responded: 'Þeim var ek verst er ek unna mest' (Though I treated him worst, I loved him the best). Michaelson-Ambelang discusses the ways in which through this affirmation Guðrún is subtly referring to her spiritual husband, Christ, whom she loved the most and yet abused severely throughout a lifetime of sinning and unrighteous choices.

The last section of the volume, ‘Postmedieval Sainthood’, investigates the resilience of hagiographical literature in post-Reformation Iceland. In the first essay, ‘Helga Aradóttir in Ögur, a Lutheran Saint?’, Þórunn Sigurðardóttir interprets a verse eulogy on Helga Aradóttir in Ögur (1604–1632), who voluntarily remained celibate. The poem portrays a young woman of exceptionally good character, with strong emphasis on her virginity and her pure love for Christ, resulting in a heavenly marriage. The poem mentions several noble suitors who were refused because of the young woman’s commitment to Christ. Existing historical sources on Helga’s life and death support this picture of her, although they concurrently show a certain degree of ambiguity. Þórunn raises the question of authorship and discusses the relationship between the proposed poet and the family of the deceased. Finally, her survey on the dissemination and preservation of the poem allows her to demonstrate that Helga’s legacy was kept alive by her relatives and at the same time used as an appropriate model for young women. At the end of the study, a first edition of the poem is provided. In the following essay, ‘The Once-Popular and Now-Forgotten *Verónikukvæði*’, Margrét Eggertsdóttir provides an edition and a discussion of the poem *Verónikukvæði* (Veronica’s Poem), twenty-three stanzas about St Veronica — and to a greater extent about the dream of Pilate’s wife and the destruction of Jerusalem — composed in eighteenth-century Iceland, in all probability by Þorvaldur Magnússon (c. 1670–1747). Despite the poem’s overt popularity, it is rarely mentioned in Icelandic literary histories and has received little scholarly attention. Margrét offers an edition of *Verónikukvæði* based on Soffía Ófeigsdóttir’s BA thesis from 1986 with some expanded manuscript evidence, as well as a survey of the manuscripts, their provenance and distribution, including information on the respective scribes and owners. Increased influence of Pietism in the eighteenth century as well as the deep roots of the Catholic faith on the island may explain the interest in the legend. Margrét reaches the conclusion that the author must have had a background that enabled him to compose poetry well enough to please his audience and argues that his social position as a liminal figure may explain why the poem never became part of the Icelandic literary canon. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir’s ‘*Í ástarbing: Marian Sentiments in Lbs 3013 8vo*’ focuses on *Barndómssaga Kristí* (The Saga of Christ’s Childhood), an Icelandic translation of the Danish *Jesu Barndoms Bog* (The Book of Jesus’ Childhood) extant in Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 3013 8vo, a composite manuscript written in the Icelandic region of Ísafjarðardjúp (in the Westfjords). The text of *Barndómssaga* in Lbs 3013 8vo deviates in interesting ways from that contained in older manuscripts. Svanhildur advances that the changes to the text serve to enhance the status of the Virgin vis-à-vis her offspring and show a reverence for her that is mirrored in the two other texts under discussion, *Mariútíðir* and the poem *Mariúdilla*. The study includes an edition of the latter, as well as a discussion of the manuscript’s provenance. In the last essay, ‘A Tale of Model Women: An Edition of *Kvendæmapáttur*’, Natalie M. Van Deusen focuses on *Kvendæmapáttur* (A Tale of Model Women), a moral



poem that treats a number of different women from the Old Testament, saga literature, and history, which as of yet has neither been edited nor studied in detail. Van Deusen discusses the poem's authorship, provenance, and purpose, and examines how the poem invokes resolute female characters from the Scriptures, the sagas, and history in order to construct particular models of womanhood for the audience. Van Deusen concludes that *Kvendæmaþáttur* and other similar poems — most notably *Kvennadans* (Dance of Women) and *Sprundahrós* (In Praise of Women) — can be said to constitute something of a poetic genre in early modern Iceland, which in terms of content and structure may be considered part of the long and diverse European 'discourse of female worthies', which encompasses a variety of biographies of virtuous women. The chapter concludes with a diplomatic edition of *Kvendæmaþáttur* based on Reykjavík, Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Lbs 4795 8vo (c. 1800–1850), where it is preserved in codex unicus.

Each and every one of these submissions is in one way or another indebted to Kirsten Wolf and to her highly influential work and long-standing legacy in the areas of medieval Scandinavian philology, paleography, and the study of Old Norse-Icelandic literature, both secular and sacred. We, the editors of the present volume, offer this collection of essays to Kirsten in celebration of her sixtieth birthday, in recognition of her outstanding career and monumental contribution to the field of medieval Scandinavian philology, and in gratitude for the unwavering support and the myriad ways in which she has taught, mentored, and guided both of us throughout our own scholarly careers.

Turin and Alberta

In Epiphania Domini, 2022

Dario Bullitta and Natalie M. Van Deusen

# List of Publications by Kirsten Wolf

## Forthcoming

- Book.** *The Priest's Eye: AM 672 4to in The Arnarnagnaean Collection, Copenhagen, Manuscripta Nordica: Early Nordic Manuscripts in Digital Facsimile*, 4 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, forthcoming)
- Book.** With Dario Bullitta, ed., *Three Humanist Compendia in Icelandic Translation*, Bibliotheca Arnarnagnaana (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, forthcoming)
- Book.** (With Marianne Kalinke), *Pious Fictions and Pseudo-Saints in the Late Middle Ages: A Medieval Icelandic Legendary* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, forthcoming).
- Article.** (With Dario Bullitta), 'Three Unedited Exempla from JS 405 8vo'. In *Þáttasýrpa – Studien zu Literatur, Kultur und Sprache in Nordeuropa. Festschrift für Stefanie Gropper*, ed. by Anna Katharina Heiniger, Rebecca Merkelbach, and Alexander Wilson. Beiträge zur Nordischen Philologie, 71 (forthcoming)
- Article.** (With Dario Bullitta), 'A Repository of Protestant Exempla in Icelandic Translation'. *Gripla* (forthcoming)
- Article.** (With Laura Moquin), 'Language and Identity: The Case of North American Icelandic', in *The Icelandic Heritage in North America*, ed. by Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, Höskuldur Práinsson, and Úlfar Bragason (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, forthcoming)
- Chapter.** 'Christian Poetry', in *Cambridge History of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature*, ed. by Heather O'Donoghue and Eleanor Parker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)
- Edition and translation.** 'Guðmundar kvæði', in *Poetry on Icelandic History*, ed. by Guðrún Nordal, SkP, 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming)
- Edition and translation.** 'Vísur um Guðmund biskup', in *Poetry on Icelandic History*, ed. by Guðrún Nordal, SkP, 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming)
- Edition and translation.** 'Guðmundar kvæði', in *Poetry on Icelandic History*, ed. by Guðrún Nordal, SkP, 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming)
- Edition and translation.** 'Vísur um Guðmund biskup', in *Poetry on Icelandic History*, ed. by Guðrún Nordal, SkP, 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming)
- Translation.** (With Marianne Kalinke), Annette Lassen, *The World of the Sagas of Icelanders* (University College London: Viking Society for Northern Research)
- Translation.** (With Marianne Kalinke) Annette Lassen, *The World of the Sagas of Icelanders* (University College London: Viking Society of Northern Research, forthcoming)
- Review.** L.K. Bertram, *The Viking Immigrants: Icelandic North Americans. Great Plains Quarterly* (forthcoming)
- Review.** Ármann Jakobsson and Miriam Mayburd, eds, *Paranormal Encounters in Iceland 1150–1400* (2020), *Scandinavian Studies*, TBA (forthcoming)



**2022**

- Book.** (With Tristan Mueller-Vollmer), *Vikings: An Encyclopedia of Conflict, Invasions, and Raids* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2022)
- Article.** (With Natalie M. Van Deusen). 'Epitomes of Saints' Lives in Two Old Norse-Icelandic Manuscripts: AM 764 4to and AM 672 4to', in *The Cult of Saints in Nidaros Archbishopric: Manuscripts, Miracles, Objects*, ed. by Ragnhild M. Bø and Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), pp. 17–51

**2021**

- Book.** (With Dario Bullitta), ed., *Saints and their Legacies in Medieval Iceland* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2021)
- Book(s).** (With Carole P. Biggam), general ed., *A Cultural History of Color*, 6 vols (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021)
- Book.** (With Carole P. Biggam), ed., *A Cultural History of Color in the Medieval Age 2* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021)
- Book.** (With Carole P. Biggam), ed., *A Cultural History of Color in the Age of Enlightenment 4* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021)
- Book.** (With Marianne Kalinke), ed., *An Icelandic Literary Florilegium: A Festschrift in Honor of Úlfar Bragason*, *Islandica*, 62, *New Norse Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 2021)
- Article.** (With Carole P. Biggam), 'Introduction: Color across Medieval Europe', in *A Cultural History of Color in the Medieval Age*, ed. by Carole P. Biggam and Kirsten Wolf (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), pp. 1–23
- Article.** (With Carole P. Biggam, Piera Molinelli, and Roman N. Krivko), 'Language and Psychology', in *A Cultural History of Color in the Medieval Age*, ed. by Carole P. Biggam and Kirsten Wolf (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), pp. 113–28
- Article.** (With Sune Wolf Pulsiano and the assistance of Jón Atli Árnason), 'Disease and Discomfort in Medieval Iceland', in *An Icelandic Literary Florilegium: A Festschrift in Honor of Úlfar Bragason*, ed. by Marianne Kalinke and Kirsten Wolf, *Islandica*, 62, *New Norse Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 2021), pp. 301–71
- Article.** 'Medieval Icelandic Hagiography: The State of the Art', in *Saints and their Legacies in Medieval Iceland*, ed. by Dario Bullitta and Kirsten Wolf (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer), pp. 1–28.

**2020**

- Article.** 'Grimur Thorkelin, Rasmus Rask, and the Origins of Philology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medievalism*, ed. by Corinna Wagner and Joanne Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 114–24
- Article.** (With Natalie M. Van Deusen), 'Mapping Hagiographical Literature in Medieval and Early Modern Iceland', in *Faith and Knowledge in Medieval*

and *Early Modern Scandinavia*, ed. by Karoline Kjesrud and Mikael Males (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), pp. 97–122

**Translations.** ‘Jakobína Johnson: “Candlelight”, “Leif the Lucky”, “Lullaby”; Júlíana Jónsdóttir: “Hay Harvesting Poem”, “When the Spirit Wants to Fly”, “Dejection”; Guðrún H. Finnsdóttir: “The Christmas Gift”, *Icelandic Connection*, 71.2 (2020), 54–72

**Review.** Annette Lassen, *Islændingesagaernes verden* (2017), *Speculum*, 95 (2020), 848–50

**Review.** Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, Höskuldur Þráinsson, and Úlfar Bragason, eds, *Sigurtunga: Vesturlenski mál og menning* (2018), *Scandinavian Studies*, 92 (2020), 139–244

## 2019

**Article.** ‘A Little Tale about Santa Claus from Medieval Iceland’, in *Isländisch-deutsche Beziehungen: Philologische Studien anlässlich des 70. Geburtstag von Hubert Seelow*, ed. by Lena Rohrbach and Sebastian Kürschner, Berliner Beiträge zur Skandinavistik, 24 (Berlin: Nordeuropa Institut, 2019), pp. 127–33

**Note.** ‘De aetatibus hominum in Icelandic Translation’, in *Dansað við Úlfar: Nokkur spor stigin til heiðurs Úlfari Bragasyni sjötugum 22. Apríl 2019*, ed. by Helga Hilmisdóttir, Magnús Hauksson, Veturlíði Óskarsson, and Þorsteinn G. Indriðason (Reykjavík: Hnotskurn útgáfufélag, 2019), pp. 44–45

**Review.** Sian Grønlie, *The Saint and the Saga Hero: Hagiography and Early Icelandic Literature* (2017), *Saga-Book of the Viking Society*, 43 (2019), 172–74

**Review.** Dario Bullitta, ed., *Páls leizla: The Vision of St Paul* (2017), *Speculum*, 94 (2019), 813–14

**Review.** Sverrir Tómasson, *Pipraðir páfuglar: Matgerðarlist Íslendinga á miðöldum* (2017), *Scandinavian Studies*, 91 (2019), 414–17

**Review.** Sif Ríkhardsdóttir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts* (2017), *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 118 (2019), 309–11

## 2018

**Book.** (With Tristan Mueller-Vollmer), *The Vikings: Facts and Fictions* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2018)

**Article.** “Engi er allheimskr, ef þegja má”: Women and Silence in the Sagas and *Þættir* of Icelanders, *Maal og minne*, 110 (2018), 115–26

**Review.** Úlfar Bragason, *Frelsi, menning, framför: Um bréf og greinar Jóns Halldórssonar* (2017), *Scandinavian Studies*, 90 (2018), 307–09

**Review.** Anatoly Liberman, *In Prayer and Laughter: Essays on Medieval Scandinavian Literature and Germanic Mythology, Literature, and Culture* (2016), *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 117 (2018), 276–78





**Review.** Virginia Blanton, Veronica O'Mara, and Patricia Stoop, eds, *Nuns' Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Kansas City Dialogue* (2017), *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 117 (2018), 89–92

## 2017

**Book.** (With Natalie M. Van Deusen), *The Saints in Old Norse and Early Modern Icelandic Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017)

**Article.** (With Lauren Poyer), 'North American Doctoral Dissertations on Old Norse-Icelandic', *Scandinavian Studies*, 81 (2017), 1–86

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