



# SAGA-BOOK

VOL. XXXVIII

VIKING SOCIETY FOR NORTHERN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

2014

story-telling. Additionally, his lack of interest in saga origins and what lies 'outside' the text is resurrected in an aside at the outset of nearly every article, demonstrating the author's long-standing impatience with such issues. He is happy to concede that these are thirteenth-century texts, but sees no reason to seek a more specific date, an approach I heartily endorse—the comparative dating of the *Íslendingasögur* might be thought as much a 'parlour game' (p. 29) as the search for saga authors.

In light of the unity of the material it is somewhat disappointing that it was decided not to 'disguise what is originally an anthology' (p. 38), as the inconsistent editorial practice of the pieces gathered here is frustrating. The sudden change from footnotes to endnotes in 'Vampire Killers' and the lack of bibliography in 'Specter', 'Dreaming' and 'Masculinity' are only minor annoyances, but as the author has made the effort to include an index to the whole volume, one regrets that a uniform style was not adopted also for greater ease of reference. Reference is, after all, another legacy that the author intends this book to have, hoping that it will function as a handbook for students new to the *Íslendingasögur* (p. 27). Whilst I would recommend the introduction to all such students, the specific nature of the articles may disqualify it as a work of general reference—although I confess to being unfamiliar with the author's other reference book, *Ílla fenginn mjöður* (Reykjavík, 2009, reviewed in *Saga-Book* XXXVI (2012), 158–61), to which he sees this as a companion piece.

Recognising the autobiographical quality of a compilation such as this, the introduction not only gives a summary of the author's career thus far, but also a full list of his publications. It is a list diverse in subject matter and in language of publication, and ought to be as useful to any reader as the wide-ranging references in each article. The genesis of this work in contemporary Icelandic society is evident, and it is important to understand this in order to contextualise the author's reluctance to engage with parlour games and guesswork. Like many Icelandic academics, he appears exasperated with the term 'cultural heritage', and the public misunderstanding of the role of scholars who study the sagas. Whilst admitting that the introduction was begun in an 'irascible' frame of mind (p. 29), the author in the end appears more perplexed than anything by the continued interest in what he considers to be distractions and irrelevancies to the most defensible, valuable way of reading the sagas; that is, as literature.

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THE LEGENDS OF THE SAINTS IN OLD NORSE—ICELANDIC PROSE. By KRISTEN WOLF. *University of Toronto Press*. Toronto, 2013. xi + 405 pp. ISBN 978-1-4426-4621-6. Kristen Wolf's bibliography is intended as 'a complete revision' of the fifty-year-old handlist 'The Lives of the Saints in Old Norse Prose' by Ole Widding, Hans Bekker-Nielsen and Laurence Shook in *Mediaeval Studies* 25 (1963), 294–337. Wolf states in the preface that 'the present list does not presume to be exhaustive, but I hope that most books and mainstream journals within the field of Old Norse—Icelandic language and literature have been covered' (p. xi). The cut-off date for

consideration in the volume is given as Autumn 2011. Wolf admits a 'slight bias towards more recent publications and ones written in the Scandinavian languages, Icelandic, English, German, and French' (p. xi), an inclination which most readers will surely forgive as, with the possible exception of Italian and Russian, this would seem to cover quite admirably the languages and contexts in which most Old Norse studies are published.

Having defined the scope and purpose of the bibliography in a brief preface, Wolf turns to the matter itself. The bibliography is arranged alphabetically by saints' names from Agatha to Walburga. Icelandic saints are given their original names rather than their Anglicised equivalents, e.g. Guðmundr not Gudmund, Þorlákr not Thorlac (Þ is alphabetised between T and U). Each entry begins with the saint's name and feast day, followed by the texts in which they appear, the shelfmarks of the manuscripts in which those texts are preserved, the editions in which the texts can be found, translations into modern languages and a list of secondary literature. Wolf also adds short notes which helpfully provide 'at-a-glance' clarification of the various hagiographic traditions concerning a particular saint. For example, in the entry for St Erasmus Wolf distinguishes between one *Erasmus saga* 'probably based on one of the recensions of the Latin *passio*' and another 'translated from a now-lost Low German redaction' (pp. 102–03). This is the sort of information that scholars of Old Norse religious prose have long been accustomed to trudging through Unger's italicised small-point introductions in order to find. It is very convenient to have the various traditions succinctly clarified, with advances in scholarship since Widding's 'Handlist' taken into account.

An area of special interest in the bibliography is the treatment of the Old Norse Marian miracles. A note under the entry for 'Mary the Blessed Virgin' cross-references several saints to clarify that entries for saints such as St Anselm or St Basil who feature in Old Norse translations of Marian miracles are listed both under their own names and again under Mary the Blessed Virgin (p. 245). The cross-referencing is not comprehensive: some saints who fall into this category are not credited for their Marian appearance. In the case of St Benedict, who appears in the two recensions of the Marian vision *Guadélinus leiðsla* (*Mariu saga*, ed. C. R. Unger (1871), 534–41, 1162–68), readers will not find any mention of his inclusion in Marian material. The same is true of St Guðmundr Arason. His appearance in two of the only three wholly original Icelandic Marian miracles (*Mariu saga* 155–57) is not cited at all. Neither is that of St Þorlákr in the third (154–55). However, these shortcomings are minor. It is never possible to include everything in a work of this kind, and the specialist will either already be aware of these saintly cameos or soon discover them in consulting the primary sources themselves. Indeed, Wolf's overview of the Marian *miracula* is otherwise very impressive. The full enumeration of the complex manuscript tradition behind Unger's behemoth 1,204-page edition, complete with dates, is particularly valuable.

As Wolf promises in her preface, the secondary literature provided in each entry considerably updates the 'Handlist'. The important scholarly contributions concerning each saint are well represented. Wolf's attention to unpublished PhD theses is welcome in widening the scholarly base upon which Old Norse

hagiographic endeavours may be built. Indeed, Wolf is well placed to give an authoritative state-of-the-field in this genre of scholarship, following *An Annotated Bibliography of North American Doctoral Dissertations on Old Norse-Icelandic* published in 1998. There are also several instances where the reader will discover Old Norse hagiographic intervention in an unexpected place, such as Jørgen Højgaard Jørgensen's 'Hagiography and the Icelandic Bishop Sagas' in *Peritia* 1 (1982), 1–16—a journal which will be more familiar to Celticists than Scandinavianists. Similarly, Ásdís Egilsdóttir's article, 'Konur, draumur, dýrlingar', in *Festschrift for Turid Sigurðardóttir (Bókmenntaljófs. Heiðursrit til Turid Sigurðardóttur*, ed. Malan Marnersdóttir et al. (Tórshavn, 2006), 351–58) or the article Ásdís co-authored with Ármann Jakobsson, 'Er Oddaverjapætti treystandi?' (*Ný saga* 11 (1999), 91–100) may have escaped the attention of many Anglophone scholars. It is fortunate that Wolf remedies this potential oversight.

The book is handsomely bound in hardcover with an image of an early sixteenth-century statuette of St Óláfr on the dust jacket. The typesetting is clear and neat, and if there are any typographical errors they are so slight as to escape detection even after strenuous examination. If pressed, the reviewer will find a few pedantic areas for improvement. The preface implies that Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen were working 'in the decades following the mid-nineteenth century' (p. ix); a somewhat distorted chronology, since Widding was born no earlier than 1907 and gained his first degree in 1932; Bekker-Nielsen graduated in 1959. Passing mentions are made of the sole Old Norse-Icelandic references to St Canute and St Canute Lavard in *Krýflinga saga*. Wolf notes that the chapters on Canute in *Krýflinga saga* 'cannot be regarded as a proper saint's legend' (p. 68). If saints who lack proper legends but are otherwise mentioned in Old Norse literature were to be included, it might have been interesting to see also entries for St Gertrude of Nivelles (*María Novellen und Märchen*, ed. H. Gering (Halle, 1882–84), I 305). The miracle of St Magnús attached to the end of *Árma saga biskups* (*Biskupa sögur* III, Íslenzk forrit XVII (1998), 206–07) might also have been a welcome addition. However, these are minor quibbles that in no way detract from the fact that the book is thoroughly researched and extremely useful.

A particular joy in using Wolf's bibliography is that idle perusal thereof reminds the reader of saints whose legends or *vitae* one had briefly noticed but never properly considered, or brings to the reader's attention entirely new sources of which one had not previously been aware. That Old Norse sources treat Sis Henry and Cune Gund, St John Chrysoptom (known rather charmingly in Old Norse as *Jón gullmunnr*), St Gangulphus, St Lucy of Syracuse and St Walburga was a pleasure to discover. Those who are already very familiar with Old Norse hagiography are thus still likely to find new information between the pages of this volume, while at the same time scholars who are perhaps just 'hagio-curious' will be sure to find a lead here that sparks their interest.

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ALTWESTNORDISCHE FARBSEMANTIK. By GEORG C. BRÜCKMANN. *Münchner Nordistische Studien* 11. *Herbert Utz Verlag*. Munich, 2012. 123 pp. ISBN 978-3-8316-4168-0.

The use of colour-terms in ancient and medieval literature is a well-investigated topic, and there has been more than a trickle of recent works on the subject. Nor does Brückmann claim to be a pioneer in this area of Old Norse studies. The bibliography appended to his slim volume shows how often scholars have tried to understand what seems obvious at first sight but proves to be puzzling and even erratic. Shades, hues and all kinds of intermediate colours have names that baffle us in the works of old authors. Even some 'basic' words, such as *black* and *white*, if they meant what they do today, make us ask questions about the vision (physical, not metaphorical!) of saga-tellers. Why should a black man be 'blue' (*blámaðr*) and a sword 'white' (*hvít*) in Icelandic? Such riddles confront the reader at every step. Most, but not all, have been solved in the past with varying degrees of persuasiveness.

Brückmann's goal consists in providing a complete list of occurrences of colour-words in Old Norse prose. He is of course aware of their use in poetry but mentions the *Edda* and the skalds only in a few instances. The resulting work looks like an annotated motif index. Brückmann does not shy away from tackling some controversial questions, but polemic has little interest for him. The main part of the book is devoted to separate colour-names: *blár*, *brúnn*, *grár*, *grønn*, *gulr*, *hvít*, *rauðr* and *svartr*. This is followed by a few pages on the use of such words for stylistic purposes and in describing animals, people, monsters, the human face, clothes, metals and armour; colour-words in nicknames; *blár* auguring murder; and colour-names in *Gylfaginning*. Every section has a few lines on the word's etymology, borrowed from standard sources, mainly from *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen Primäradjektive* by Frank Heidermanns (*Studia Linguistica Germanica* 33 (Berlin and New York, 1999)). Then we are told what kind of textual evidence has been used for the survey and how the colour-name in question was used for describing animals, plants, stones, clothes, food, people and so forth. One constant rubric is devoted to positive and negative connotations of colour-names.

Since this book is mainly about evidence, quibbles would look redundant in a review of it. Yet I shall mention several things that caught my attention. The tradition, in folklore and literature, of calling flame blue can hardly be accounted for only by the physical properties of fire, which is mainly perceived as bright yellow or red. Likewise, no rationalising will explain the use of green (*grøn*) for meat, fish and butter, or of red (*rauðr*) for yolk. Brückmann expresses little surprise when encountering such strikingly non-trivial epithets, but they make us wonder, and will keep embarrassing researchers in the future.

Even less unusual collocations need a closer look. Gold is red in European folklore and epic poetry (so not only in Icelandic prose), and again, however tentatively we may look at gold and especially when we remember the etymology of the word *gold*, we shall arrive at the same trivial results: *gold* means 'yellow' (just like *yolk*!) and should not be called red. Sometimes we run into a convincing