

Roots and Reception – Stjórn and its Cognates

The Icelandic medieval writings, the sagas and the Poetic Edda, have received continuous attention since their collection in the early modern period, yet the ecclesiastical writings in Old Norse have been comparatively neglected in both scholarship and popular discussion. This is reflected in the schism between the 'Icelandic school' on the one hand, where the 'Christian Church and its representatives were considered as guests, external to an Icelandic culture and political system which constituted something unique when compared to the rest of Christian Europe' (Haraldur Hreinsson), and its counterpart represented by scholars who have stressed for decades that it is time to say farewell to the isolated Icelandic farmer unaffected by European high culture.

There has been a growing tendency to approach Old Norse-Icelandic literature in a transcultural context and to look beyond what appeared 'autochthonous', also with regard to the socio-political and intellectual background of the literary system. Genres which had been neglected due to their close connections with a transcultural literary network have received more attention, which especially applies to romance. There is nevertheless a continuing, significant imbalance between research in texts which deal with 'secular' matters and those with a 'clerical' background, including universal history – although this modern distinction is highly questionable especially with regard to Icelandic society in the Middle Ages and the obvious roots of Old Norse literature in a clerical context. It has been demonstrated that the Bible or biblical history are quoted or alluded to not only in hagiography, both classical and on Scandinavian saints, but also in the Old Norse Kings' Mirror (*Konungs skuggsjá*), local secular history, i.e. Kings' Sagas, Sagas of Icelanders, and even Fornaldarsögur. Our conference aims at addressing the imbalance in research and at deepening our understanding of the cross-genre interconnectedness as well as the cultural relevance of Biblical history in Old Norse and its contribution to the European history of ideas through an in-depth discussion between experts from theology and Scandinavian Studies.

Organisation

New Testament Seminar

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Location and Registration

Alter Senatssaal
Münster Castle (1st floor left)
Schlossplatz 2, 48149 Münster

We kindly ask for your registration until 10 April 2026
(skandinavistik@uni-muenster.de).

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International Conference of the New Testament
Seminar and the Institute for Scandinavian Studies

Roots and Reception:

Stjórn and its Cognates

23-24 April 2026

Neutestamentliches
Seminar



Programme

Thursday, 23 April 2026

08:30-09:00

Registration and Coffee

09:00-09:30

Welcome and Introduction

Roland Scheel, Münster, and Sigurvin Lárus Jónsson, Münster/Reykjavík

Theology and Scandinavian Studies – Bible and Sagas: Interdisciplinary Approaches

09:30-10:20

The Old Testament and Old Norse Literature: Generic Connections

Siân Grønlie, Scandinavian Studies, Oxford

10:20-11:10

New Testament Exegesis and its Reception: A Methodological Foundation

Eve-Marie Becker, New Testament – Faculty of Protestant Theology, Münster

11:10-11.40

Coffee

11:40-12:30

Old Testament Exegesis and its Reception: A Methodological Foundation

Oliver Dyma, Old Testament – Faculty of Catholic Theology, Münster

12:30-13:20

The Bible, Canon Law, and Church Politics: The Case of *Njáls saga*

Haki Antonsson, Scandinavian Studies, London

13:20-14:50

Lunch

Stjórn and Bible Translations

14:50-15:40

Repurposing and Rewriting in Biblical Transmission and Translation

Andy Warren-Rothlin, United Bible Societies, Switzerland

15:40-16:30

An Illuminated History of the World: Was AM 226 fol. a Schoolbook for Medieval Icelandic Novitiates?

Stefan Drechsler, Scandinavian Studies, Bergen

16:30-17:00

Coffee

17:00-17:50

***Stjórn* and Typological Historical Consciousness in Medieval Iceland**

Haraldur Hreinsson, Theology, Reykjavík

19:00

Conference Dinner

Friday, 24 April 2026

09:00-09:50

Abraham Interrupted: The Gospel of Luke as a Homiletic Text in *Stjórn*, between Genesis 25.18 and 19

Sigurvin Lárus Jónsson, Theology, Münster/Reykjavík

09:50-10:40

***Stjórn* in Words: Lexicology, Statistics, Stylometry**

Paul Langeslag, Old English/Scandinavian Studies, Göttingen

10:40-11:10

Coffee

Stjórn and its Textual Convoy: *Gyðinga saga, Rómverja saga, Alexanders saga*

11:10-12:00

The Vernacular Bible Traditions in *Stjórn* I and the Old Swedish Pentateuch Translation in the European Context

Jonatan Pettersson, Scandinavian Studies, Stockholm

12:00-12:50

Latin Authority in *Alexanders saga* as a Political Tool During the Sturlungaöld

Paul Thorben Theissen, History/Scandinavian Studies, HU Berlin

12:50-14:00

Lunch

14:00-14:50

The Word of God as Political Education of Kings and Subjects

Elise Kleivane, Scandinavian Studies, Oslo

14:50-15:40

Universal History and Pilgrimage: Texts, Geography, and Travels

Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Scandinavian Studies, Reykjavík

15:40-16:10

Coffee

16:10-17:00

Legal Language and Normative Thought in *Stjórn* and Ancient History

Roland Scheel, Scandinavian Studies, Münster

17:00-17:20

Coffee

17:20-18:00

Concluding Discussion