



## LOVE AND EMOTIONS IN OLD NORSE LITERATURE

### PATTERNS, FORMULAE, REALITY

*2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium of the Project “Formulae in Icelandic Saga Literature”*

Tartu, 28-29 January 2022

Love and emotions did for a long time belong to the periphery of Old Norse scholarship. During the last decades this has changed. Since the 1990s several monographs and articles have been published within this field of research, concerning all Old Norse genres. Today, emotions, and particularly love, in Old Norse literature constitutes an active field of research. Old prejudices concerning dating, taste, and originality have been abandoned. New perspectives are used, and new conclusions have been reached. The present symposium is devoted to the theme of love and the depiction of emotions in Old Norse literature in all its genres, courtly translations as well as native sagas and poems. Both the role and meaning of love and the description of it will be in focus.

#### Keynote speakers:

*Alison Finlay*, University of London, “Love in the eyes of poets: verse and prose in the poets’ sagas”

*Sif Ríkharðsdóttir*, University of Iceland, “*‘Þeim var ek verst, er ek unna mest’*: The Concept of Love in Old Norse Literature”

*Klaus Johan Myrvoll*, University of Stavanger, “The lovesick skald – from Kormákr to Víglundr”

*Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir*, University of Cambridge, “Prosimetric Saga Feelings: An Examination of Expressions in the Verse and Prose of the Íslendingasögur”

There will be 21 papers presented at the symposium as well as a general panel discussion on the formula research of today.

Please register for the symposium at the symposium website by January 3<sup>rd</sup> at the latest: <https://www.maailmakeeled.ut.ee/en/departments/formulae-icelandic-saga-literature>. Further information (on programme, accommodation etc.) is also found on the website.

The venue of the symposium will be University of Tartu, Department of Scandinavian Studies.

If you have any questions, please contact the main organizer Daniel Sävborg ([daniel.savborg@ut.ee](mailto:daniel.savborg@ut.ee)) or the department secretary Viivika Voodla ([viivika.voodla@ut.ee](mailto:viivika.voodla@ut.ee)).

*Welcome to Tartu in January!*

Daniel Sävborg, Professor of Scandinavian Studies  
University of Tartu

The symposium will especially focus on the following sub-topics:

- *Formulae, narrative patterns, and stock motifs in erotic episodes and depiction of emotions in Old Norse literature.* The aim is to get a better understanding of the morphology of love and emotions in Old Norse. It is necessary to decode the meaning of more or less opaque phrases and motifs to interpret possibly emotionally charged episodes. Distinguishing characteristics in the different genres (poetry vs. prose, native vs. translated works etc.) will be searched for.
- *Native vs. foreign in Old Norse depiction of love and emotions.* Where and to what degree is there foreign influence on love depiction in the native Old Norse genres and native influence on love depiction in the translated Norse literature?
- *The role and meaning of love in Old Norse literature and society.* How important is the theme of love in an Old Norse work as a whole? What role does it play for the plot and for the behavior of the characters? What are the differences between different genres? How should the Old Norse concept of love be described? What meaning did love have for people in real life in Viking and Medieval Scandinavia?
- *Non-fictional sources for shedding light on love in Old Norse literature.* In what ways might sources such as laws, charms, pictures, or later recorded folklore be used for the understanding of the role and meaning of love and eroticism in Old Norse literature and culture?