

# Icy What You Did There: Values In the Laws of Viking Age Iceland

Isabel Travis

Viking Age Iceland was unique for the Viking world. It was a land rich with natural resources but mostly devoid of people. When explorers and settlers from Scandinavia came to live there, they had a chance to set up their own nation in its entirety. While their law code was based on their familiar Scandinavian knowledge, over time it adapted and reflected the lives and beliefs of those who called Iceland home. Icelandic law emphasized the values of honor, Christianity, and balance to ensure the continuation of Icelandic society.

According to *Islendingabok* and *Landnamabok* by Ari, the first settlers of Iceland came to the island around the year 870. Although “considerable numbers [of immigrants to Iceland] came from Scandinavian settlements in the British Isles, especially from Scotland and Ireland” and “some of them had Celtic wives and others brought Celtic slaves,” the majority of new settlers in Iceland were originally Norwegian.<sup>1</sup> The land was fertile and rich, an ideal spot to begin a new nation in the Viking Age. According to Ari, who was writing in the early twelfth century, the reason behind their emigration from Norway was discontent with the rule of Harald Finehair (or Fairhair, depending on translation).<sup>2</sup> Harald Fairhair was seen as a tyrant lording over Norway and creating a stronger central government than Icelanders were happy with.<sup>3</sup>

Due to the background of the Icelandic settlers, when setting up their new legal system, decentralization was a priority. Instead of a form of government where one person made the rules, Icelanders chose to set up their government so that all free men had a share in the ruling. Legally, any free Icelandic man could both bring a case to public trial

and be involved in overseeing the arbitration of cases. Women could also bring suit in some cases.

According to the founding myth in *Islendingabok*, Iceland’s primary founders were Hrollauger, son of Rognvaldr; Ketilbjorn Ketilsson; Audr, daughter of Ketill Flatnose; and Helgi the Lean, who divided the island into quarters.<sup>4</sup> While *Islendingabok* was written several hundred years after the events of its founding, Iceland’s courts were based on a quartering of the island. Each Quarter had, “three springtime assemblies held in it, each at a named site, except the North which should have four assemblies” with local chieftains presiding over cases.<sup>5</sup> All citizens belonged to a specific assembly based on their household and could utilize it to arbitrate disagreements and conflicts with others with their neighbors serving and jurors.<sup>6</sup>

For more serious or complex cases, there was the General Assembly of the Althing. The Althing was the court of the whole of Iceland, founded in 930.<sup>7</sup> The General Assembly meeting was held in summer, allowing as many interested parties to be present as possible as serious matters were discussed.<sup>8</sup> Chieftains and anyone who wished to participate in the assembly were to arrive the Thursday before it started, though participants could arrive until Sunday and still have the ability to advocate for themselves or others.<sup>9</sup> This window provided a definite beginning and end to the window when suits could be brought forward while still allowing for some leeway to those who might be interested in involving themselves in a court case but ran into trouble on the road.

The man who presided over the General

Assembly was called the Lawspeaker. He was an elected official who served a three-year term.<sup>10</sup> His most notable job was to orally recite the laws of Iceland at the General Assembly. This was considered incredibly important. Should he not know the laws “so extensively that no one knows them much more extensively” he was “to arrange a meeting in the preceding twenty-four hours with five or more legal experts, those from whom he can learn most...”<sup>11</sup> The Lawspeaker had to be very well studied on the law in order to do his job properly. He also “told men what the law was when asked, made official announcements, presided at meetings of the Law Council, led the procession to the places he appointed for the sessions of the Quarter Courts.”<sup>12</sup> In exchange for his service, the Lawspeaker was given “a fee and a half of the fines imposed by judgments at the General Assembly and at the spring assembly he participated in.”<sup>13</sup> The role of Lawspeaker was a powerful position in terms of influence and pay, but he did not work or cast judgement alone. Instead, his job was to make sure court proceedings went smoothly while the jury rendered the final verdict.

As mentioned, the laws of Iceland were conveyed orally for much of its history. This means that modern historians do not have much record of the legal goings-on of that time period, or the way the law changed over time. Beginning in 1117, effort was made to transcribe these laws into a printed record.<sup>14</sup> The collection of laws that survives is known as the Gragas, or “gray goose” laws. The Gragas covered all aspects of life Icelanders considered important and carefully broke down the correct action in pertinent scenarios and the penalty for deviating from that, in addition to legal procedures for the island. For example, the section on inheritance explains the intricacies of inheritance law in Iceland. “A son free born and a lawful heir is to inherit on the death of his father and mother. If a son does not exist, then a daughter is to inherit” and so on.<sup>15</sup> The laws break situations like this down into fine detail, reducing the number of moving parts down to better allow a fair judgement to be achieved.

One major part of the Gragas is the element of consequences for rule breaking. Iceland had no prisons or law enforcement agents. There was the Althing and the neighbors. The most common punishment was a fine paid to the Althing. One might be punished with a fine for more minor crimes, such as “If a man is more careless in tying up his dog than now prescribed, or if

it is loose, and it bites someone [so as to leave a blue or red mark] or so that blood flows, then his penalty is a three-mark fine.”<sup>16</sup> Once the fine was paid, the crime was considered paid for and the issue was resolved. Another, potentially more damaging, consequence was the revocation of immunity. Immunity was a primary concept in Icelandic law where an individual had legal protection against attacks from others.<sup>17</sup> Should that right be violated, the injured party or a select group of supporters had the right to exact revenge. However, the violating party also lost their immunity. This meant that the violating party or their supporters could not then go and wreck their counter-revenge. This limited the amount of damage that could be started from one violent interaction. One interesting aspect of loss of immunity was that it started as soon as the offense was committed “at that place of action” without interaction from the court.<sup>18</sup>

The same offense that caused loss of immunity could also invoke another sentence in a court of law. The main sentence that could result is that of being declared outlaw. There were two types of outlawry. The first was lesser outlawry. As the name suggests, it was the less extreme form. This generally entailed a period of outlawry, or formal removal from society, for a set amount of time before an individual was allowed to return. That period of time might last between three and twelve or more years.<sup>19</sup> The term of their sentence began when the man in *question* left the country. He had three years to get his affairs in order and do so, or his sentence became full outlawry. He was required to ask at least three ship owners for transport every summer or face full outlawry. Before he managed to leave Iceland, he had a measure of safety in “fjorbaugsgarðr,” which means sanctuary. He could choose up to “three domiciles not more than a day’s journey apart” and “travel the roads between them.” However, if he crossed paths with another while on the road, “he had to leave the road for a distance greater than a spear’s throw” or lose legal protection against attack.<sup>20</sup> Crimes that garnered this reaction generally tended to involve some level of violence. For example, “if men meet as they travel and one man makes what the law deems an assault on another, the penalty is lesser outlawry.”<sup>21</sup> In this case, the assaulter would lose immunity after the assault, and then be subject to lesser outlawry. However, he would eventually return to Icelandic society once he had paid his dues, so to

speaking, as his case did not overwhelm the boundaries of Icelandic society. He was still considered an Icelander even in exile and had traveler's protections until he returned.<sup>22</sup>

The highest level of punishment an Icelandic person could incur was full outlawry. In essence, the full outlaw was disowned by society. Crimes meriting this were at the level of murder and represented an extreme deviation from Icelandic social order.<sup>23</sup> As the name suggests, a charge of full outlawry affected the entirety of a man's life. After his property was divided by a Court of Compensation, his property and money going to those he owed, the outlaw basically became *persona non grata* to the entirety of Icelandic society.<sup>24</sup> All of Icelandic society was forbidden from helping him in any way, on pain of similar punishment. This was a treacherous position to be in on an island literally named after ice, where the winters were long and hard and access to the community kept people alive. The full outlaw was in essence socially dead and would most likely physically follow. When that happened, his heirs were not to inherit anything he might ever have acquired. He was also not allowed to be given any assistance, in the form of a ship, supplies, or anything else, in leaving Iceland, trapping him there. Anyone who helped him in this manner risked a similar fate. Should he manage to make it out of Iceland, he was not granted traveler's rights.<sup>25</sup> On top of that, his immunity was forfeit and a "price of eight ounce-units" placed on his head, more under specific conditions.<sup>26</sup> Anyone could kill him for profit, revenge, or even petty amusement and they would face no consequences. In some cases, such as a slave outlawed "because of killing his master or mistress," any free person who caught him was required to take him to the "man who got that outlaw condemned" who is to enact the specified gruesome punishment of "[cutting] off the outlaw's hands and feet and [letting] him live as long as he may."<sup>27</sup> Even other outlaws could not be trusted, as there is some evidence that outlaws could be relieved of that status and welcomed back into Icelandic life by killing other full outlaws. Even once an outlaw has died or been killed, his punishment was not complete, as he was not to be granted a Christian funeral or burial, a punishment more significant as Iceland became more fervently Christian.<sup>28</sup> To be a full outlaw was to be punished by being cast out from society entirely, losing all connection, rights, life, and religious practices that came with it. It was, for that reason, a penalty reserved

for the most extreme cases of violation of the social order as Icelanders understood it. Still, it was also a punishment that only extended to the perpetrator of the crime, not his family or friends. Once the outlaw was removed, justice had been served.

This concept of balance and consequences is found in the Icelandic Sagas. In *Eirik the Red's Saga*, Eirik is twice outlawed. The first is a dispute beginning over a landslide.

Eirik's slaves then caused a landslide to fall on the farm of Valthjof at Valthjofddadir. His kinsman Filth-Eyjolf killed the slaves near Skeidsbrekkur above Vatnshorn. For this, Eirik slew Filth-Eyjolf. He also killed Hrafn the Dueller at Leikskalar. Geirstein and Odd of Jorvi, Eyjolf's kinsmen, sought redress for the killing. After this Eirik was outlawed from Haukadal.<sup>29</sup>

This event shows improper escalation of tensions. Leaving aside what happened previously, the man Eirik was disputing with was Filth-Eyjolf. By also killing Hrafn the Dueller, he violated the notion of limits and balance needed for Icelandic society. Still, instead of killing him, Geirstein and Odd of Jorvi used legal means of getting justice for Filth-Eyjolf and Hrafn's deaths. Here, Eirik's outlawry does not seem to follow the strict outlines denoted in the *Gragas*, though if that is due to a change in laws between Eirik's time and the *Gragas*, a difference in the laws and enforcement of them, or creative license is not evidenced. Still, declaring Eirik outlaw ends conflict with him before it could escalate too far, fulfilling the need for balance.

Eirik then goes on to move to another section of Iceland. Before he can get very comfortable, he falls into conflict again.

It was then Eirik lent Thorgest bedstead boards. Later he moved to Oxney where he farmed at Eiriksstadir. He then asked for the bedstead boards back without success. Eirik went to Breidabolstad and took the boards, and Thorgest came after him. They fought not far from the farm at Drangar, where two of Thorgest's sons were killed, along with several other men.

After that both of them kept a large following of warriors. Eirik had the support of Styr and Eyjolf of Sviney, Thorbjorn Vifilsson and the sons of Thorbrand of Alftafjord, while Thord Bellow and Thorgeir of Hitardal, Aslak of Langadal and his son Illugi gave their support to Thorgest. Eirik and his companions were sentenced to outlawry at the Thorsnes Assembly. He made his ship ready in Eiriksvoag and Eyjolf hid him in Dimunarvoag while Thorgest and his men searched the islands for him.<sup>30</sup>

This conflict is an example of the type of dangerous escalation the laws of Iceland are most meant to avoid. Both parties in the initial conflict have gained allies and gone to arms to solve the problem. Several men, including two of Thorgest's sons, were killed in the resulting violence. By eliminating the party found more at fault, the conflict would die down without anyone else dying. This provides the impetus for Eirik to travel abroad and settle Greenland.

An interesting contrast to this is found in Egil's Saga. At a few points of Egil's Saga, the concept of outlawry from Norway becomes a plot point. At one point, "King Eirik declared Egil an outlaw throughout Norway, whom anyone might kill with impunity."<sup>31</sup> Later, under King Hakon, the king ordered "that Thorstein should either undertake the journey or else be made an outlaw."<sup>32</sup> These are Icelandic sagas, not Norwegian ones, but they do show a difference in perceptions of the methods of law in Norway and Iceland from the Icelanders' view. In Egil's Saga, Norwegian outlawry was declared unilaterally by the king in response to a perceived threat or personal disagreement with the subject. This is very different from Iceland's outlawry, where one has to be charged with a crime and tried in front of his neighbors to be declared outlaw. Since Norway was likely the main country Icelanders hailed from, this puts into perspective the deliberate changes Icelanders made from their original homeland's legal code and the decentralization of authority to favor a more balanced method of rule.

Another primary theme in Icelandic law was the concept of honor. A person was assumed to have a certain level of honor or reputation simply by

existing. That honor was part of their personhood as much as their body, and assault against reputation was considered an equally societally divergent act as an assault against the body. For example:

The penalty is lesser outlawry if a man speaks of someone with words requiring full personal compensation, whether he speaks of him in his hearing or not in his hearing, and he has the right to personal compensation from his property, forty-eight ounce-units, if he is put under penalty for such words. And full personal compensation is required if a man says something of someone which cannot be taken in a good sense.<sup>33</sup>

Here, cruel words have the same legal standing and penalty as an unprovoked physical attack on the road. This demonstrates that a man can expect to be safe from the verbal barbs of others, and if not, to be paid handsomely for the pain of it. This section goes further to say "Every word is to be as it is spoken. No word is to be taken according to the language of poetry."<sup>34</sup> There is no legal defense of a figurative or joking meaning; anything said was meant to be taken literally and prosecuted as such. This implies that "the language of poetry" was used as a defense in the past and deemed an inadequate justification for an attack on another's reputation.

In fact, poetry itself was a suspect medium for communicating information about someone. While brief couplets were below the court's purview- "A man is not to take offence at a couplet unless there is defamation in it,"<sup>35</sup>- the lowest end of this scale was a stanza with no mockery or ill intention, which had a penalty of "a fine of three marks." Any poem about a person longer than a stanza incurred "lesser outlawry even if there is no mockery in it." This sets a standard for what level of non-mocking poetry was considered acceptable and to what degree. However, once the element of insult was added into the poems, the consequences got far harsher.

Full outlawry is the penalty if a man composes half a stanza on someone with defamation or mockery in it or with praise which he puts together in order to mock him. If he recites it or teaches it to someone else, then that

is another suit and the penalty is full outlawry. It is the same penalty for anyone who learns it.<sup>36</sup>

At four lines of insulting poetry, a man is removed from society. At that point, the poem is treated almost as a deadly weapon in itself, as anyone who learns it is also liable to be granted full outlawry. This contains the poem where it begins to limit the spread of an attack against a reputation. The laws on poetry also cover poems about dead people, though it has stronger protection for the Christian dead, about whom no poetry is allowed to be made, than pagan dead, about whom illegal poetry must defame.<sup>37</sup> This is to protect reputations of families, as charge of the suit should be handled by next of kin. Insulting poetry also was not the only type held to stricter scrutiny, as “If a man composes a love-verse on a woman, then the penalty is full outlawry.”<sup>38</sup> This implies that love poetry has a specific cultural meaning and interpretation which would be harmful to the reputation of a woman and her family should it spread.

In part, this high defense of reputation via the spoken word was likely because of the high function orality had in Icelandic culture. Stories were meant to convey important information and should be trustworthy, as there was no written source to check against. If something was incorrect in a damaging way, that undermined the structure of information conveyance and made it difficult to trust one another.

An important element of that trust was the fact that all of legal court life was done orally. Laws were spoken aloud, cases were raised in person, and witnesses testified about what they had seen. That requires a great deal of trust from all involved. Thus, it makes sense that “if a man says such a thing of someone at the General Assembly, then a man’s personal compensation there is doubled.”<sup>39</sup> Casting doubts upon a man’s word at the General Assembly, when he might be involved in any role of a court trial, is a greater imposition to him personally but also casts doubt onto the proceedings as a whole. As such, the punishment is harsher at that time.

Moreover, all of the major suits and their consequences were raised in a public arena where personal reputation made connections and connections swayed arbitration matters. Jesse Byock, in *Medieval Iceland*, discusses advocacy as a sort of medieval lobbying function in Icelandic society. As such, the

reputations and followings of those involved was a matter that could sway fortunes, making the ability to connect with others a political and economic function. This ties back to balance, as “advocacy because the keystone of a system of reciprocal arrangement in which people carefully kept track of assistance rendered and maintained a balance of obligations. The social fabric depended upon the maintenance of this balance...”<sup>40</sup> Since life in Iceland depended upon favors and contracts, being unable to be trusted to keep an agreement prevented a man from achieving any kind of economic or political power, and a blow to the reputation could cut off his future in the public arena.

Further, reputation could mean the difference between walking free, a fine, or a life of outlawry, as all court cases were decided by a jury of one’s neighbors. If someone had a positive or negative reputation around their community, it could seal their fate. An example of this is in Egil’s Saga. A conflict brews between Egil’s son, Thorstein, and his neighbor, Steiner, over Steiner using Thorstein’s land to graze cattle and Thorstein killing Steiner’s slaves. The men take the matter to be decided in court. Before the trial itself but at the assembly, several people tried to arrange a settlement between the men, likely trying to continue the system of favors mentioned before. When the conflict was to be decided, Egil was the agreed-upon mediator and judge. Egil knew both parties well, with one as his son and the other his friend’s son. Knowing both their characters and the facts presented, he ruled strongly in Thorstein’s favor. While Egil declared that this was fair, it is worth noting that every level of potential arbitration was steeped in having and making connections, and Thorstein’s lot was likely better under Egil judging than it might be from a man who did not know him.<sup>41</sup>

Christianity also featured heavily in the laws of the Gragas. According to *Islendingabok*, Iceland became Christian in 1000. Apparently, Christian missionaries came to Iceland to convert the heathen population, which caused some conflict. In order to keep the peace in the future, at the Althing

It was then proclaimed in the laws that all people should be Christian, and that those in this country who had not yet been baptized should receive baptism; but the old laws stand as regards the exposure of children and the eating of horse-flesh. People had the right to sacrifice in secret,

if they wished, but it would be punishable by lesser outlawry if witnesses could be produced. And a few years later, these heathen provisions were abolished, like the others.<sup>42</sup>

In the time between conversion in 1000 and the Gragas being transcribed in the twelfth century, there was more emphasis placed on Christianity as the required dominant religion of Iceland, as mentioned with the removal of “heathen provisions.” By the time the Gragas was transcribed, Icelandic policy was that people were “not to worship heathen beings.”<sup>43</sup> The penalty for such a crime was lesser outlawry. The same penalty went for those who practiced “spells or witchcraft or magic” or “[fell] into a berserker’s frenzy.”<sup>44</sup> However, if the magic used was black sorcery, described as “if through his words or his magic a man brings about the sickness or death of livestock or people,” the penalty was full outlawry.<sup>45</sup> Magic was consistently considered publicly taboo and illegal from the point of conversion on.

As the penalties for magic remained the same, it is likely that the “heathen provisions” referred to were those allowing for the exposure of infants and eating of horse flesh. The Gragas’s definition of meat states that “meat is what comes from slaughtering cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs.” Horses are specifically excluded as meat animals here to the point that “if a pig gets into horse meat, it is to be kept for three months but starved to shed its flesh and then fattened for three months.”<sup>46</sup> A similar but longer procedure is supposed to be done if the pig eats human flesh, implying that the Christian taboo against eating horse meat was in a similar vein as eating human meat. Other forbidden animals included “dogs, foxes, and cats” along with “beasts with claws” and “carrion birds.” Though there were no guidelines on what to do to another animal that ate one of them, it signaled their priority as slightly lower than horses.<sup>47</sup> The penalty for eating any of these animals was lesser outlawry.

The exemption allowing for the exposure of infants was even more heavily revoked. With Christian conversion, baptism became a top priority, and deliberately exposing an infant instead of baptizing them would have likely netted several religious charges on top of simple murder. The now-Christian Icelanders saw baptism of infants, especially sickly infants, to be of top priority. While under pagan law, a child might be

exposed for physical disabilities, the second law on record in the Gragas (behind only “all people in this country must be Christian and put their trust in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost”) is “Every child that is born is to be brought for baptism at the first opportunity, however deformed it may be.”<sup>48</sup> If the child was close to death, certain elements of the baptism could be expedited for time, just in case. In a specific turn of events, the priest is traveling and comes across a child in need of baptizing, “he lawfully administers baptism if he administers it at the nearest church-farm, provided the child is not sick.”<sup>49</sup> This might be some walking, so the child must be healthy enough to endure the journey. However, “if the child is sick, it is to be baptized at the first place where water is to be had.”<sup>50</sup> If the child was not even well enough to wait to find a priest, a layman could even do a baptism with any water he had on hand, and then have a priest check his work.<sup>51</sup> This was a dramatic turn from allowing unwanted infants to be exposed without ceremony, to prioritizing the spiritual needs of an ill child above the convenience of an important adult in society, regardless of if the child itself is desirable, in order to officially make it a Christian and provide the rights that come with that status.

The requirement of baptism was seen as a civic duty, where if one man was unavailable, another needed to step in. Should someone with the responsibility to take the child to be baptized— a long list, including the “natural heir” of the child, the householder of the place the child was born, any other men living in the house, or any other persons living nearby— did not do so, they were to be given the penalty of lesser outlawry.<sup>52</sup> If the priest had made a decision that prevented him from baptizing a child he came across— such as not having baptismal supplies when away from home for more than three days, the penalty was lesser outlawry.<sup>53</sup> Baptism was prioritized over most other aspects of civic and, at times, even religious life.

Baptism was even more important than funerals, and there was a noticeable difference in how the law treated each. For example, if a child was born on a distant island or the highlands, far away from any church or priest, they were required to be brought to the mainland for baptism if possible. In doing this, “if someone refuses him passage or the use of a boat or draught animals without legitimate excuse, the penalty is lesser outlawry.”<sup>54</sup> A corpse was also required to be conveyed to the mainland for burial, if the deceased should die on a distant island or the highlands, so that the proper funeral rites could be bestowed. In the process of conveying the body, “A man asked to lend a boat must lend it if he has one. If a

man refuses boat or passage when asked, he is fined three marks.”<sup>55</sup> This penalty is substantially less than the same situation but with a newborn instead of a corpse, demonstrating that it was considered more important to achieve a baptism than a funeral. This may be at least in part due to the fact that a child that died without the proper rite of baptism could not be given the proper rites of death or buried in the churchyard, which was considered a fate worse than death.

The role of the Church in Iceland was structural as well as personal. In addition to handling ceremonies around life’s most vulnerable moments, like birth and death, it also acted as a unifying factor with rules of its own. In order to fulfil its administrative function, these rules kept the Church running from year to year. For example, every adult person with the means to do so was required to pay an annual tithe. The tithe was based on one’s property value, not including property in debt, to support a dependent, belonging to a dependent, belonging to a needy person, or used to work for the Church like vestment and books.<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, this tithe was self-assessed, with the tithe-payer swearing an oath they were paying the proper amount, in another example of honor intermingled with Christianity.<sup>57</sup> The tithes collected were used to help the needy and support the Church administrative costs. It was divided into quarters, with a quarter each going to the needy, the bishop, the individual churches, and the priests at those churches.<sup>58</sup> A good portion of the tithe was in goods like cloth for clothing or incense and wood for the church.<sup>59</sup> The tithes allowed for the churches to remain open without producing a physical good to be sold and to protect the needy.

It was also important to have clear rules on how individual churches were run. The holding of a church-farm was an honorable but expensive matter. For one, the priest’s full job produced no tangible produce, so he had nothing to trade but his work. As such, he had to be fed and provided for by whosoever church-farm he was attached to. He also had to be trained, a tall order when few Icelanders had the skills required to learn to speak and read in Latin, let alone a teenager who would be contracted into the trade. The priest would then stay at the church for which he was ordained for most of his life, as he was unable to leave without permission from the bishop of his quarter. Should he choose to flee, he was “to be claimed in the same way as slaves” and “the churchman who receives him into his home or hears services

from him or shares living quarters with him is liable to full outlawry.”<sup>60</sup> A priest who shirked his duty was opening all of his congregants up to spiritual harm, a crime that made him liable for heavy punishment. The salvation of souls was at stake, along with the harmony of the community. Laws regarding priests, like the other Christian laws, allowed for the Church to maintain a continued, unifying presence in Iceland with no interruptions of the important gathering times or salvation rituals.

Icelanders sought to break away from their Scandinavian roots when forming their own country. Instead of a monarchy, they chose a to build a democracy. With everyone living so closely together, both geographically and in relation to each other, traditions had to adapt into a more practical, less immediately violent form of resolving conflicts. Over time, Icelandic law code emphasized the values of Christianity, personal reputation and honor, and balanced judgement.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Else Roesdahl, *The Vikings*, trans. Susan M. Margeson and Kirsten Williams (Great Britain: Penguin Random House UK, 2016), 277.

<sup>2</sup> *Islendingabok*, trans. Sian Gronle (University College London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2006), 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Islendingabok*, trans. Sian Gronle, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, (Winnipeg [Man.]: University of Manitoba Press, 2006), 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 55.

<sup>7</sup> Else Roesdahl, *The Vikings*, trans. Susan M. Margeson and Kirsten Williams, 278.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 58.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 187-188.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 249.

<sup>13</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 187.

<sup>14</sup> Jesse Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 210.

<sup>15</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard

Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 202.

<sup>17</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 147-148.

<sup>18</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 139.

<sup>19</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 250.

<sup>20</sup> Jesse Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 219.

<sup>21</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 139.

<sup>22</sup> Jesse Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 219.

<sup>23</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 140.

<sup>24</sup> Jesse Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 219.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 164.

<sup>27</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 170.

<sup>28</sup> Jesse Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 219.

<sup>29</sup> "Eirik the Red's Saga," in *The Sagas of the Icelanders*, trans. George Clark, (Great Britain: Penguin Group, 2000), 654

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> "Egil's Saga," in *The Sagas of the Icelanders*, trans. Bernard Scudder, (Great Britain: Penguin Group, 2000), 102.

<sup>32</sup> "Egil's Saga," in *The Sagas of the Icelanders*, 136.

<sup>33</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas II*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 195-199.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas II*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 196.

<sup>40</sup> Jesse Byock, *Medieval Iceland*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 124-134.

<sup>41</sup> "Egil's Saga," in *The Sagas of the Icelanders*, trans. Bernard Scudder, (Great Britain: Penguin Group, 2000), 170-177.

<sup>42</sup> *Islendingabok*, trans. Sian Gronle (University College London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2006), 9.

<sup>43</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 39.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 48.

<sup>47</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 49.

<sup>48</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 23.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 24-25.

<sup>52</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 23.

<sup>53</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 24.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 28.

<sup>56</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas II*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 221-231.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> *Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*, Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis, 59.

## Bibliography

*The Book of Settlements: Landnamabok*. Translated by Paul Edwards and Hermann Pálsson. Winnipeg, Man: University of Manitoba Press, 2006. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=497388&site=ehost-live>.

Byock, Jesse. *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982.

Byock, Jesse. *Medieval Iceland*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990.

Byock, Jesse. *Viking Age Iceland*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.

DeAngelo, Jeremy. *Outlawry, Liminality, and Sanctity in the Literature of the Early Medieval North Atlantic*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1980302&site=ehost-live>.

*Islendingabok*. Translated by Sian Gronlie. University College London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2006.

*Laws of Early Iceland: Gragas I*. Translated by Richard Perkins, Peter G. Foote, and Andrew Dennis. Winnipeg [Man.]: University of Manitoba Press,

2006. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=497376&site=ehost-live>.

*Laws of Early Iceland : Gragas II*. Translated by Richard Perkins Peter Godfrey Foote, and Andrew Dennis. Winnipeg, Canada: University of Manitoba Press, 1980. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=497379&site=ehost-live>.

Miller, William Ian. *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking : Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=277320&site=ehost-live>.

Roesdahl, Else. *The Vikings*. Translated by Susan M. Margeson and Kirsten Williams. Great Britain: Penguin Random House UK, 2016.

*The Sagas of the Icelanders*. Edited by Ornlöf Thorsson and Bernard Scudder. Great Britain: Penguin Group, 2000.

Smith, Charles Sprague. "The Vinland Voyages." *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 24 (1892): 510–35. <https://doi.org/10.2307/196712>.