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Personal Religion among the Ancient Scandinavians and the *Fulltrúi*-Concept

ABSTRACT The question of personal religion among the ancient Scandinavians has centered around the concept of having a deity as one's *fulltrúi* 'trustworthy friend,' *ástvinr* 'close friend,' or *vinr* 'friend.' Most scholars of the twentieth century regarded the concept as a true expression of pre-Christian Germanic belief. By contrast, modern scholarship strongly tends to see it as a construct of medieval authors who took the saints' cult as a model to describe the personal piety of their ninth and tenth century compatriots. On the basis of a passage in the Old Norse translation of *Clemens saga*, corroborated with archaeological evidence and some skaldic verse, e.g. Sonatorrek, the present study argues that the religious concept of *fulltrúi* and its parallel terms developed in pre-Christian times.

KEYWORDS personal piety, Old Norse religion, Kvinneby-amulet, *Clemens saga*, *Sonatorrek*, *fulltrúi*, *ástvinr*, *vinr*.

Introduction

Religion is predominantly a community phenomenon and is mostly approached as such. The feelings experienced by the individual, also

during the religious ceremonies of the group, his or her commitment to a particular deity, as well as the private rites performed by him or her may be termed “personal religion.” This aspect lends itself to being best studied in living religions using methods of psychology and sociology of religion. However, when it comes to religions of the past, it is more difficult to grasp the concept of personal religion. The written sources that have come down to us concern mainly the various expressions of communal religion. This is true for ancient Scandinavian religion as well. Here the source material is scanty compared to that on Greek and Roman religions where literary texts and inscriptions offer a relatively broad basis for inquiries into private piety.¹

The Term *Fulltrúi*

Much of the discussion on personal religion among the ancient Scandinavians has centered around the concept of *fulltrúi* and its related terms *vinr* ‘friend’ and *ástvinr* ‘close friend.’ The word *fulltrúi* means ‘a person in whom one has full confidence’² and is used in different contexts. The word *fulltrúi* is rather uncommon in Old Scandinavian. It is not attested in the oldest Norwegian manuscripts (Holtmark 1955). *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* [‘A dictionary of Old Norse prose’] lists twenty-five occurrences, the great majority of which have nothing to do with personal religion. The five occurrences in poetry refer to interpersonal relationships (cf. *Lexicon poëticum* 1860). In this essay, we will be concerned with the use of *fulltrúi* within the religious sphere. Here *fulltrúi* occurs—as do *ástvinr* and *vinr*—to denote a person’s particular relationship to a deity or semi-deity, be it God, Christ, Mary, a saint, or—with reference to the ancient religion—Þórr, Freyr and Þorgerðr Hølgabrúðr.

Illuminating Instances in the Family Sagas

To give an idea of how the *fulltrúi* concept (including *ástvinr* and *vinr*) is applied to non-Christian deities in medieval saga literature, some examples will be presented. In *Eiríks saga rauða*, composed in the early thirteenth century, it is told that Þórhallr and his companions arrived in Vinland and were searching for food.³ Þórhallr disappeared for some time and when his Christian companions found him on a cliff, they asked him to come with them, which he did. A short time afterwards, a whale floated ashore. Having cooked the whale and eaten from it, the men felt sick. Þórhallr then said:

Varð eigi svá, at hinn rauðskeggjaði varð drjúgari en Krístr yðvarr?
 Þetta hafða ek nú fyrir skáldskap minn, er ek orta um Þór, fulltrúann;
 sjaldan hefir hann mér brugðisk. (*Eiríks saga rauða* Ch. 8)

[‘Did it not happen that the man with a red beard won over your Christ? I now got this on account of the poetry that I made for Þórr, the trustworthy friend. He has seldom deceived me.’]

It is not clear what Þórhallr is aiming at here. For our purpose, however, the essential thing is that he calls Þórr his *fulltrúi*. The saga then goes on by saying that when the men heard Þórhallr’s statement, they did not want to eat from the whale but threw it over the cliffside and turned to God’s mercy. Thereupon they managed to get out to sea and they had no lack of provisions (*ok skorti þá eigi birgðir*).

The *Eyrbyggja saga* gives more than one example of the intimate relationship between the god Þórr and his worshippers. It is said of Thorolf Mostrarskegg that he was an ardent devotee of Þórr, *mikill vinr Þórs*, and therefore got the name Thorolf (*Eyrbyggja saga* Ch. 3). The saga tells that, before leaving Norway, *Þórólfr Mostrarskegg fekk at blótu miklu og gekk til fréttar við Þór, ástvin sinn* [‘Thorolf Mostrarskegg arranged a great sacrificial ceremony and asked his close friend Þórr for guidance’] (*Eyrbyggja saga* Ch. 4). Thorolf had a son whom he placed under the protection of Þórr: *þenna svein gaf Þórólfr Þór, vin sínum, ok kallaði hann Þórstein* [‘Thorolf gave this boy to Þórr, his friend, and called him Thorstein’] (*Eyrbyggja saga* Ch. 7). When the coast of Iceland came into sight, as is also told in *Landnámabók*, Thórolf threw the wooden posts of his Norwegian sanctuary into the sea, one of which had an image or symbol of Þórr: *þar var skorinn Þórr á annarri* [‘on one of them was Þórr carved’] (*Eyrbyggja saga* Ch. 4; *Landnámabók* 1968: 124 f., 163 f.).

It is said of Hrafnkel, another early settler in Iceland, that he loved no other god as much as he did Freyr. He gave half of all the valuable things he possessed to the god. Hrafnkel had a horse to which he was deeply attached and which he had named *Freyfaxi*; the text concludes: *hann gaf Frey vin sínum þann hest hálfan* [‘he gave his friend Freyr half of this horse’] (*Hrafnkels saga freysgöða* Ch. 3).

Another worshipper of Freyr was Thorkell, as stated in *Viga-Glúms saga*. He went to the god’s sanctuary (*hof*) bringing with him an old ox:

Freyr, sagði hann, er lengi hefir fulltrúi minn verit ok margar gjafar at mér þegit ok vel launat, nú gef ek þér uxa þenna. (*Viga-Glúms saga* Ch. 9)

[‘Freyr, he said, you have long been my trustful friend; you have received many gifts from me and rewarded me well. I now give you this ox.’]

Recordings of Personal Religion in Other Prose Texts

Episodes have been transmitted which can be interpreted as evidence of “pagan” personal religion but in which the terms *fulltrúi*, *ástvinr* or *vinr* are not found. Let us first look at the thirteenth century prose texts. One of the early settlers in Iceland mentioned in *Landnámabók* was Helgi inn magri. It is said of him that he was *miðk blandinn í trúnni* [‘his faith was much mixed’]. He believed in Christ but invoked Þórr for seafaring and hardship, and for “everything that seemed most important to him” (*alls þess er honum þótti mestu varða*). Apparently, Þórr was his favorite god and, like Thorolf Mostrarskegg, he asked Þórr for guidance where to go ashore when he came in sight of Iceland (*Landnámabók* 2, 1968: 253).

The thirteenth-century writers in Iceland and Norway used the expression *blótmaðr mikill*, which I translate as ‘ardent worshipper,’ to denote “pagan” persons greatly devoted to a god or the gods and to sacrifices.⁴ It is said about Þorsteinn rauðnefr, who made offerings to a waterfall, that he was much *framsýnn*, that is, he could predict events happening elsewhere and in the future (*Landnámabók* 2, 1968: 358). The *Færeyinga saga* reports that Hafgrímr from Suðrey was a *blótmaðr mikill* (*Færeyinga saga*, pp. 8, 11). *Landnámabók* mentions a man from Sogn in Norway who was called Végeirr *því at han var blótmaðr mikill* [‘because he was an ardent worshipper’] (*vé* meaning ‘sacred place,’ *Landnámabók* 1, 1968: 178–181). Sigurd jarl was characterized as *inn mesti blótmaðr* in Snorri’s description of the sacrificial feasts in Trøndelag (*Heimskringla* 1, the *Saga of Hákon the good* Ch. 14). In these cases, there is no reason to assume that the saga authors and Snorri used the expression in a derogatory sense. Referring to a person as a *blótmaðr mikill* was for them simply a way to say that the person in question was particularly devoted to the pre-Christian religion. In other texts, however, especially in translations, the word *blótmaðr* carried a negative connotation and denoted a ‘pagan priest, idolater.’⁵

The instances examined above—with or without the *fulltrúi* terminology—show, in the first place, how the thirteenth-century authors viewed the “pagan” religion of their compatriots. However, the picture they paint should not be seen as sheer imagination (cf. Widengren 1966: 329–331). Some concepts, details of ritual behaviour and objects were certainly passed down from earlier generations. Scholars are faced with the issue of distinguishing between what may be true memories and what is medieval attempts at visualization (cf. Maier 2003: 34–36 on *Hrafnkels saga freysgoða*). The *fulltrúi* concept is not only used to characterize the personal relationship with a deity in the old religion, it also occurs in Christian contexts that are considered by many critics to have priority with respect to the *fulltrúi* terminology and the phenomenon of personal religion.

Early Christian Literature in the Vernacular

As indicated above, attestations of *fulltrúi* (and *ástvinr*) in a Christian religious context are rare in early manuscripts and texts. The poet Einarr Skúlason (twelfth century) praises Olaf Haraldsson as *langvinr lausnara* [‘the Saviour’s trustworthy friend’] (*Geisli* 68; see *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning* 1912–1915). The *Icelandic Homily Book* (*IHB*) uses *fulltrúi* only in one passage.⁶ In a Lenten sermon, the preacher emphasizes that mercy precedes justice: we should ourselves make expiation for all sins or

ef því orkum vér eigi at þá grípem vér hinn fulltrúan at láta sem áðr vas getit öngu þat ráða hvé til es gort við oss, heldr gera við alla vel; sá es inn efsti fulltrúi lífsins. (*IHB* 53r 24–25)

[‘if we do not accomplish that, we should cling to the trustworthy one (God) and not to let that which was done earlier determine how we will be recompensed, rather do good to all; he (God) is life’s only remaining trustworthy one.’]

Of the two occurrences of *ástvinr* in the *Icelandic Homily Book*, one refers to the confidants (*ástvinir*) of Joakim, father of the Virgin Mary (*IHB* 58v 3). The other speaks about the happiness awaiting the just man in heaven:

ok mætti reyna sjálfr fullsælu þá er guð hyggr sínum ástvinum (*IHB* 9v 22–23)

[‘and he (or she) would be able to experience for himself (or herself) the full bliss which God prepares for his close friends.’]

To be God’s beloved friend involves a personal relationship with the deity. Another example of this relationship is found in *Elucidarius*, a didactic Christian work composed around 1100 which became very popular and was translated into several European languages. The Old Norse translation is preserved in eight parchment manuscripts, the oldest one being from before or around 1200. The form is a questions and answers dialogue between the master (*magister*) and his disciple (*discipulus*).⁷ The disciple asks about the happiness of the just in the afterlife and the master answers:⁸

fagnaðir þeira eru slíkir sem auga mans má eigi sjá né heyra né hugr hyggja þat es Guð hétt ástvinum sínum. (*Elucidarius* 1989: 142)

[‘Their joy is such that a man’s eyes cannot see or hear it, neither can the mind figure out what God has promised his close friends.’]

Christian poetry rarely uses the term *ástvinr* in its religious sense. When attested, it occurs only in texts from the fourteenth century (*Mariuvisur* 1,7, *Heilagra manna drápa* 9, Eysteinn Ásgrímsson's *Lilja* 37; see *Den norske islandske skjaldedigtning* 1912–1915). These late passages have little bearing on the problem with which we are concerned here.

In early twentieth-century research, the concept of *fulltrúi* (*ástvinr* and *vinr*), when used with reference to religious matters, was regarded as genuine expressions of Germanic personal religion. It showed the free and confident relationship between man and his god, also emphasizing their position as equals. In addition, this idea was in sharp contrast to the fear and subjection thought to dominate the approach of man to God in Judaism and Christianity. Prominent representatives of such an interpretation were Gustaf Neckel and Bernhard Kummer (Neckel 1920: 134–136; Kummer 1938). In his *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* Jan de Vries accepted the *fulltrúi* texts as authentic attestations of Germanic piety, but without interpreting them in the national Germanic overtones of Neckel and Kummer (see de Vries 1956–1957: §§ 16, 439, 568 f., 620).⁹

The tendency in present-day scholarship is to view the *fulltrúi* concept as a construct by medieval authors under the influence of Christian ideas pertaining to the cult of saints in particular (Zernack 1998; Simek 2003: 162–164; Maier 2003: 32–37). Scholars like Helge Ljungberg and Walter Baetke arrived at a similar conclusion and Eyvind Fjeld Halvorsen suggested a Christian influence on the sagas' descriptions (Ljungberg 1947; Baetke 1951; Halvorsen 1960). The relationship between a saint, God or Christ and their worshippers could be expressed in terms of friendship and confidence. Hagiographical and homiletic writings in the vernacular dating to the second half of the twelfth century in Norway and Iceland used the terms *fulltrúi*, *ástvinr* and *vinr* to denote this relationship. The thirteenth-century saga writers adopted these terms when attempting to describe “pagan” personal piety of the ninth and tenth centuries. The criticisms directed at the *fulltrúi* concept as a genuine pre-Christian idea often include doubts about the existence of personal religion in general among the ancient Scandinavians. The arguments put forward can be summed up as follows:

1. All the attestations of the *fulltrúi* episodes involving “pagan” deities have a literary character and are almost exclusively found in saga texts of the thirteenth century (Zernack 1998).
2. The total absence of that concept where it would be expected, namely in non-Christian skaldic poetry. Such a concept does not occur in poetry until the twelfth century with the Christian poet Einarr Skúlason (Maier 2003: 36).

3. The relationship between the poet Egill Skallagrímsson and Óðinn as described in *Sonatorrek* is doubtful evidence of personal religion (von See 1970; Zernack 1998; Maier 2003: 36–37).

4. Neither the archaeological material nor the reports of late antiquity and medieval authors betray the idea of a personal commitment to a particular deity among Germanic peoples (Maier 2003: 33). A distinction is made between ethnic community religions like that of the ancient Scandinavians and the type of religion to which adherence is based on personal conviction, e.g. Christianity and the mystery cults of Late Antiquity.¹⁰

The arguments adduced against a pre-Christian origin of the *fulltrúi* concept (in a wide sense) needs to be discussed and in some respects be questioned. In what follows, I will draw attention to some texts and circumstances that speak in favour of such an origin.

Personal Religion in Skaldic Poetry

First, there are undoubtedly some poems from the late Viking period that express ideas of a personal relationship with a “pagan” deity. The poem most often referred to is *Sonatorrek*, ‘The loss of sons,’ usually attributed to Egill Skallagrímsson. As we have seen, doubt was cast on its relevance for the issue of personal religion. The poem is not very well preserved and its interpretation varies among commentators.¹¹ I see no reason for denying that the poem alludes to a particular friendship of Egill with Óðinn. Stanzas 22 to 24 describe the poet’s relationship with the god. The meaning of the first half of stanza 22 is not difficult to understand:¹²

Átta ek gótt	[‘I got on well
við geirs dróttinn	with the lord of the spear,
gørðumk trygg	I felt secure
at trúa hánum	in trusting him’]

The second half of the stanza is usually interpreted in the way that Óðinn broke his friendship with the poet, but the text can be understood in another, more plausible manner, as proposed by Jón Aðalsteinsson (Aðalsteinsson 1998–2001: 170–171). The reading *vagna runne* in the manuscript can be interpreted as *vagna rúni*, ‘the friend of the wagons,’ or as *vagna runnr*, ‘the man of the wagons.’ In both cases, this must be a kenning for Þórr and if one takes *áðr* adverbially, the meaning would be that ‘before [this] Óðinn broke Egill’s friendship with Þórr.’ This is in agreement with Sigurður Nordals suggestion that Egill was brought up as worshipper of Þórr but later turned to Óðinn (Nordal 1924).

Some stanzas of Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld provide information about his relationship with Scandinavian gods before his conversion; they indicate a personal relationship, in particular with Óðinn (Strömbäck 1975: 78 ff.; Poole 2002). The underlying situation of Hallfreðr's stanzas seems to be the Christian ritual preceding baptism: the renunciation of the "pagan" gods and the affirmation of belief in the Christian trinity. Although Hallfreðr praises his patron, Olaf Tryggvasson, for introducing the new faith, the poet still has some remorse for having abandoned Óðinn (Poole 2002).

The two stanzas dedicated to Þórr by the poetess Steinunn reflect, in my opinion, her personal commitment to that god (*Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning* 1912–1915, A I: 135–136).¹³ We learn that Þórr wrecked the ship of the missionary Thangbrand and that Christ could not protect it. We move within the sphere of personal religion: the poetess compares her own god with that of Thangbrand; she claims that his god (Christ, here denoted *Guð*) had little power:

litt get ek at Guð gætti Gylfa hreins at einu

[‘I think, God hardly protected the ship’]

Without using the words *fulltrúi* and *ástvinr*, the poets of these verses express their commitment to a particular god. In my view, we have here to do with personal religion among non-Christians Scandinavians.

A Remark on Word History

Secondly, the terms *fulltrúi* and *ástvinr* do not have the appearance of being medieval innovations as such. The word *ástvinr* is found with Egill Skallagrímsson in *Sonatorrek* stanza 7 where he says: *em ek ofsnauðr at ástvinum* [‘I have no longer beloved friends’]. With respect to *fulltrúi*, we may note that it occurs in one of the oldest eddic texts, *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu*, ‘Fragment of a Sigurd lay,’ which together with the *Atlakviða* belongs to a group of early poems dated to the ninth and tenth centuries.¹⁴ In stanza 2, Gunnar says that Sigurd had sworn to be to him ‘a trustworthy friend,’ *einn fulltrúi*. Similarly, in the somewhat later *Sigurðarkviða in skamma*, ‘Short poem about Sigurd,’ Gunnar takes Högni as his *fulltrúi* (stanza 14). Further attestations are found in twelfth-century poetry: stanza 119 of the *Hugsvinnsmál*, an Old Norse translation of Cato’s *Disticha*, and a stanza by Ívarr Ingimundarson in praise of Sigurd Jorsalafar (*Sigurðarbólkr* 40; see *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning* 1912–1915). In this context it should also be noted that a verb *fultrūwian* [‘to confide in’] is known in Old English (e.g. *King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon Version of the Metres of Boethius* 1835: 60).

The Relevance of Archaeology

As pointed out above, doubt has been cast on the possibility to find evidence for personal religion in the archaeological material. Admittedly, the interpretation of objects found in personal contexts, for example in graves, as symbols of a particular deity is uncertain without textual evidence. It is even more so when it comes to determining the character of the worship directed to that deity by the person involved. The community or the family of the deceased could have deposited grave gifts of a religious character to express common beliefs that would not necessarily have been shared by the buried person(s).

One instance which, in my opinion, more clearly points at a personal relationship between man and a particular god is the Kvinneby lead amulet from Öland on which a rather long runic inscription has been carved (Fig. 1).¹⁵ The amulet was found in what seems to have been a grave. A man named Bovi was apparently the owner of the amulet which he had carried in his life time. The inscription is difficult to interpret in parts. The central passage provides no difficulty, however. It runs: *Þórr gæti hans me(ð)R þēm hamri sæm ...*¹⁶ ['may Þórr protect him with the hammer that ...']. Here the hammer symbolizes the god's protective power and the invocation expresses Bovi's confidence in him.



Fig. 1. The so-called Kvinneby-amulet found in Södra Kvinneby, Öland, Sweden. Photo: Ulrik Skans. Courtesy of the Swedish History Museum.

Two Key Passages

My last argument for a likely non-Christian origin of the *fulltrúi* concept (including *ástvinr* and *vinr*) as an expression of a personal relationship between man and deity is based on two texts.

The above-mentioned *Sigurðarkviða in skamma* speaks about Sigurd as *Freys vinr* (stanza 24), a fact that stands out in the heroic poetry where Scandinavian deities are otherwise not mentioned (*Eddukvæði* II 2014: 87 f.). The poem appears to have been composed from oral tradition in which the poet found the epithet “Freyr’s friend,” in all probability used in tenth-century Iceland to characterize worshippers of Freyr.

Another key passage is found in an episode told in *Clemens saga*. Clement is accused of blasphemy against the “pagan” gods, and the text also enumerates which deities are exposed to the saint’s derision. The Latin *Vorlage* is here quoted first in order to elucidate the comparison with the Old Norse translation.

Iovem dicit dominum non esse, Herculem consecratorem nostrum dicit immundum esse, Venerem, deam sanctam meretricem esse commemorat, Minervam sanctam deam blasphemat, Dianam ac Mercurium simul et Saturnum et Martem accusat, numina etiam universa blasphemat. (Mombritius 1, 1910: 343)

[‘He says that Juppiter is not lord. He says that our god Hercules is unclean. He claims that our holy goddess Venus is a prostitute. He blasphemes against the holy goddess Minerva. He attacks Diana and Mercurius, as well as Saturnus and Mars, all the divinities at the same time.’]

The Old Norse translator basically followed the structure of his Latin *Vorlage* but replaced the Roman deities with Scandinavian ones. In addition the last part of the passage was composed using alliterating word pairs:¹⁷

Hann segir at Þórr sé eigi goð, fulltrúi várr ok inn sterksti áss
 áræðisfullr, ok er nær hvars sem hann es blótinn.
 En þá úsómð ok úvirðing veitir hann Óðni órlausnafullum ok hvarfsemi
 at síá Clemens kallar hann fiánda ok
 úhreinan anda. En hann kveðr Freyju portkonu verit hafa,
 fólir hann Frey, en hrópir Heimdall,
 lastar hann Loka með
 slógð sína ok vélar ok kallar hann ok illan,
 hatar hann Hónir, þolvar hann Baldri,
 tefr hann Tý, niðir hann Njörð,
 illan segir hann Ull, flimtir hann Frigg,
 en hann geyr Gefjun, sekja dómir hann Sif.

[‘He says that Þórr is not god, our trusty friend and the strongest god,
 full
 of courage, who is close at hand wherever he is worshipped.
 And he does this disgrace and dishonor to Odin who is always able to
 provide solutions and safety, that this Clement calls him a fiend and
 unclean spirit.
 And he says that Freyja has been a prostitute,
 he derides Freyr and slanders Heimdallr,
 he speaks ill of Loki and his cunning and tricks and says that he, too, is
 evil,
 he hates Hœnir, he curses Baldr,
 he hinders Týr, he libels Njördr,
 he says that Ullr is evil, he ridicules Frigg,
 and he blasphemes Gefjun, he condemns Sif. ’]
 (*Clemens saga* in *Isländska handskriften no 645*: 66–67; Carron [ed.] 2005:
 44)¹⁸

Curiously enough, Þórr has taken the place of Juppiter, and Óðinn that of Hercules. In the Old Norse version, these two Scandinavian deities stand out since statements are introduced that explain the way they benefit their worshippers. With respect to the question of personal religion, the description of Þórr is the most interesting. He is called the *fulltrúi* of men and he is present wherever his worshippers turn to him. Here it seems that the translator refers to genuine beliefs in Þórr as a personal god, beliefs that were held by his compatriots in the tenth century, and most probably also in the early eleventh century, and remembered and passed on to later generations. *Clemens saga* was in all probability composed in the late twelfth century (cf. Kristjánsson 2007: 136 f.; Carron [ed.] 2005: xxv). The time span in between was short enough for some cult memories to be kept alive in many Icelandic families. As noticed by several scholars, the *fulltrúi* concept is especially linked with the god Þórr and the *Clemens saga* agrees in this respect with the other written sources.

Conclusion

The thirteenth-century saga literature provides several examples of personal religion in pre-Christian Iceland and Norway. Terms like *fulltrúi*, *ástvinr* and *vinr* are used to express the particular relationship between man and deity. These texts cannot be used as primary witnesses to the individual beliefs and ritual behaviour of the persons involved. Nonetheless, they reflect vague memories from the past, to which imaginary details have been added over time. However, the poetic texts discussed above should, in my opinion, be interpreted as expression of the poets' personal religion, although they do not use the *fulltrúi*-terminology. Some archaeological material like the Kvinneby-amulet is undoubtedly to be interpreted from the perspective of a personal relation-

ship with a god. The passage in *Clemens saga* seems to offer an important link connecting the later saga texts with a non-Christian *fulltrúi* concept.

NOTES

- ¹ A good example is provided by the monograph of Festugière (1954) 1984.
- ² *person som har ens fulle tillid*. This is the definition of Fritzner (1886–1896, under *fulltrúi*).
- ³ I use the text of the *Skálholtsbók* which is closer to the original version than that of the *Hauksbók* version, see Ólafur Halldórsson in his edition of the saga, pp. 333–338. The statement of Þórhallr on Þórr as his *fulltrúi* has basically the same wording in the *Hauksbók* version.
- ⁴ In translated texts, it referred to Latin *haruspex* or *idolater* (e.g. Agat 2). The word *blót-maðr* is not found in poetry.
- ⁵ For this, see *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* 2, 2000: 508 f.
- ⁶ I have normalized the diplomatic text of the edition in the *IHB* passages cited.
- ⁷ On *Elucidarius*, see Firchow & Grimstad (eds.) 1989: xii–xxvi.
- ⁸ The text of *Elucidarius* Ms. AM 674a is here normalized.
- ⁹ Other scholars following in the steps of de Vries are F. Ström (1961) and Å.V. Ström (Ström & Biezais 1975).
- ¹⁰ Maier emphasizes the role played by personal commitment to God or the gods: “in jenen religiösen (Wahl-)Gemeinschaften, die sich durch eben diese individuelle und persönliche Bindung überhaupt erst konstituieren.”
- ¹¹ A discussion of the poem’s preservation, background and interpretations is given by Vésteinn Ólason 2005.
- ¹² I follow the edition of Jón Helgason in *Skjaldevers*.
- ¹³ The wording of stanza 2 varies between the different manuscripts. The Icelandic of the line cited above is established from the text and apparatus in Finnur Jónsson’s A-edition.
- ¹⁴ See for this Kristjánsson 2007: 59; *Eddukvæði* II 2014: 87 f.
- ¹⁵ For the amulet, its inscription, dating and different interpretations, see Pereswetoff-Morath 2017: 106–143.
- ¹⁶ I follow the reading of Pereswetoff-Morath 2017.
- ¹⁷ The text of the editions is slightly normalized.
- ¹⁸ I have used the English translation of Carron (ed.) 2005 with some minor changes.

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