



THE ÁRNI MAGNÚSSON INSTITUTE
for Icelandic Studies

Call for Papers

ECOCRITICISM AND OLD NORSE STUDIES

Fourth Workshop of the Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies (ENSCAN)

University of Agder, Kristiansand, Norway, 26-27 November 2020

Ecocriticism, that is, research on the relationship between literature, culture and environment, is a rapidly growing field. With some exceptions, the focus of ecocritical research so far has been on the present and the recent past. However, the current environmental crisis also makes it relevant to consider how humans in pre-modern times perceived their environments and interacted with them. Pre-modern Nordic literature and culture include a huge variety of sources that can be explored from an environmental humanities perspective.

The fourth workshop of the *Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies* will therefore ask how approaches from ecocriticism and related fields can be utilized in Old Norse studies. How, for example, do the sagas of Icelanders imagine the environmental conditions of the Viking Age? What roles do environmental risks play in the bishops' sagas, contemporary sagas and the kings' sagas? What kinds of environmental imagination can we find in legendary sagas and chivalric sagas? What insights can documentary sources such as annals, law codes, charters and other administrative records give us regarding environmental issues of the time? To what extent do runic inscriptions relate to environmental aspects? Does Eddic and skaldic poetry preserve memories of pre-historic changes in climate and environment? What results might material-ecocritical or posthumanist readings of Old Norse literature yield? And what are the potential pitfalls when applying concepts from contemporary environmental discourse (such as sustainability, resilience, or the Anthropocene) to the interpretation of pre-modern texts?

We invite papers combining theoretical approaches drawn from ecocriticism and related fields with the study of any aspect of Old Norse literature and culture. Researchers from all career stages are encouraged to submit a proposal of up to 300 words for a 20-minute paper (that will be followed by a 10-minute discussion) to reinhard.hennig@uia.no by **15 June 2020**.

The language of the workshop will be English. Papers presented at the workshop will be published as part of a peer-reviewed edited volume.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the workshop organizers Reinhard Hennig (reinhard.hennig@uia.no), Emily Lethbridge (emily.lethbridge@arnastofnun.is), and Michael Schulte (michael.schulte@uia.no). Further information can also be found on the ENSCAN website at www.enscan.net.