Q34307 THE HAMMER & the Cross

Please note that there will be weekly reading tasks from this list. For an introduction I would suggest that you read a good history of Viking Age Scandinavia. You may find the chapters in Brink and Price The Viking World helpful. We have this as an e-book.

Select Bibliography

Conversion processes in early medieval Europe (non-Scandinavian)

Althof, Gerd, 'Gandersheim und Quedlingburg: Ottonische Frauenklöster als Herrschafts- und Überlieferungszentren', Frühmittelalterliche Studien 25 (1991), 259-82. [on the impact of female monasticism on medieval historiography, the journal is not held by the UoN, but I have a copy]


Grimm, Jacob, Deutsche Mythologie (1875-78), tr. as Teutonic Mythology by J. Stalybrass (1882-88) [not the first comparative study, but the most influential. Grimm’s ideas of analogies became very influential for the study of Norse religion]


Paxton, Frederik, Christianizing Death: the creation of ritual process in early medieval Europe (1996, 2nd ed.).


Widukind of Corvey, Sachsengeschichte, ed. Lohmann and Hirsch (1989) [Widukind does not only charter the enforced conversion of the continental Germans, but also has some information on their beliefs]

Texts -- Old Norse


**Texts -- Latin**


**Other:**

Ibn Fadhlan’s account of the Rus, ed. H. Smyser, in: J. Bessinger and P. Creed eds., Franciplegius (1965), pp. 92-119. [Account of Arabic envoy who observed a group of ’Vikings’ in Russia; often quoted as ‘evidence’ for pagan ritual, there is still no complete translation
of the Arabic text, which was rediscovered by the Turkish scholar Al Zeki Togan in a library in Iran in 1923, but there is a complete German translation by Al Zeki Togan himself.

**Background reading:**


Andersson, Theodore M. ‘The conversion of Norway according to Oddr Snorrason and Snorri Sturluson’, *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 10 (1977), 83-95.


Fuglesang, Signe Horn, ‘Crucifixion iconography in Viking Scandinavia’, in


Hagland, Jan Ragnar. ‘Note on two runic inscriptions relating to the Christianization of Norway and Sweden’. *Scripta Islandica* 49 (1998), 34-44.


Jochens, Jenny, ‘Late and peaceful: Iceland’s conversion through negotiation in 1000’, *Speculum* 74 (1999), 621-55.


Krogh, Knud and Olov Olsen: ‘From Paganism to Christianity’, in: E. Hvass
Digging into the past. 1983, 233-236.


Revaluations. 1993, pp. 128-136.


Turville-Petre, Gabriel, Origins of Icelandic Literature (1953).


Anglo-Saxon definitions of (Norse) paganism:


General reference

The first four of these are indispensable, but note that Kulturhistorisk leksikon is written in the Scandinavian languages. McTurk’s Companion contains useful essays on aspects of Norse literature and culture, and most of them are very good. Haywood is not very accurate but may be useful as a starting point. Orchard is both useful and has a very detailed and reasonable bibliography. For those able to read German the two encyclopaedias offer a wealth of information, though some of the older volumes may be a little dated. German historians also have a tendency to ‘jumble’ chronologically and geographically distinct areas.

Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages.

Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder.


Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum

Rerallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde