A COMPANION TO

OLD NORSE-ICELANDIC LITERATURE AND CULTURE

EDITED BY **RORY McTURK**

Blackwell Publishing

A Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature and Culture

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Rory McTurk is reader in Icelandic studies at the University of Leeds. He is the author of *Studies in Ragnars saga loðbrókar and its Major Scandinavian Analogues* (1991) and of *Chaucer and the Norse and Celtic Worlds* (forthcoming), and has published translations of *Droplaugarsona saga* and *Kormáks saga* as well as articles on early Scandinavian kingship, medieval and modern Icelandic literature, and Hiberno-Norse literary relations.

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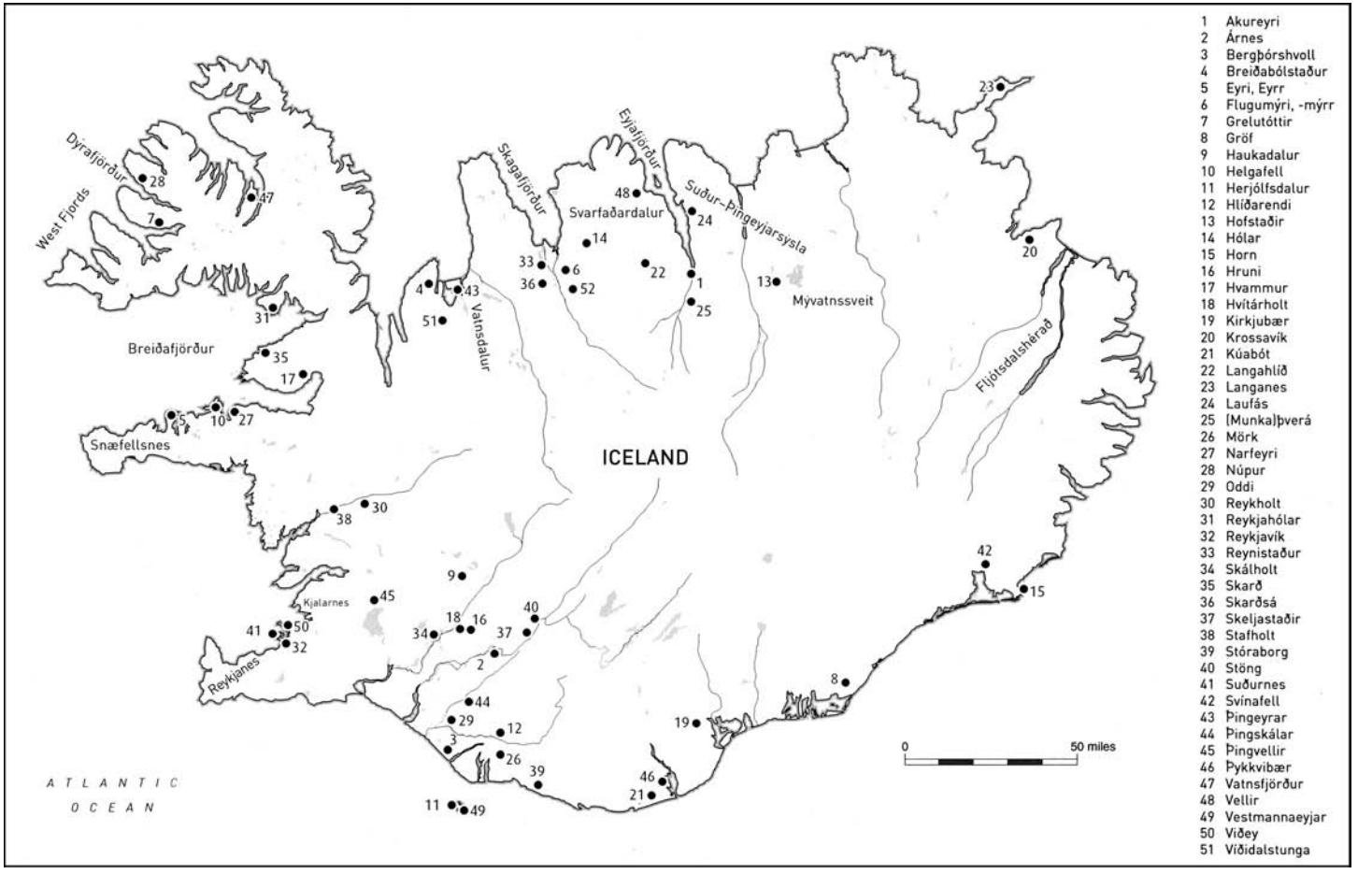
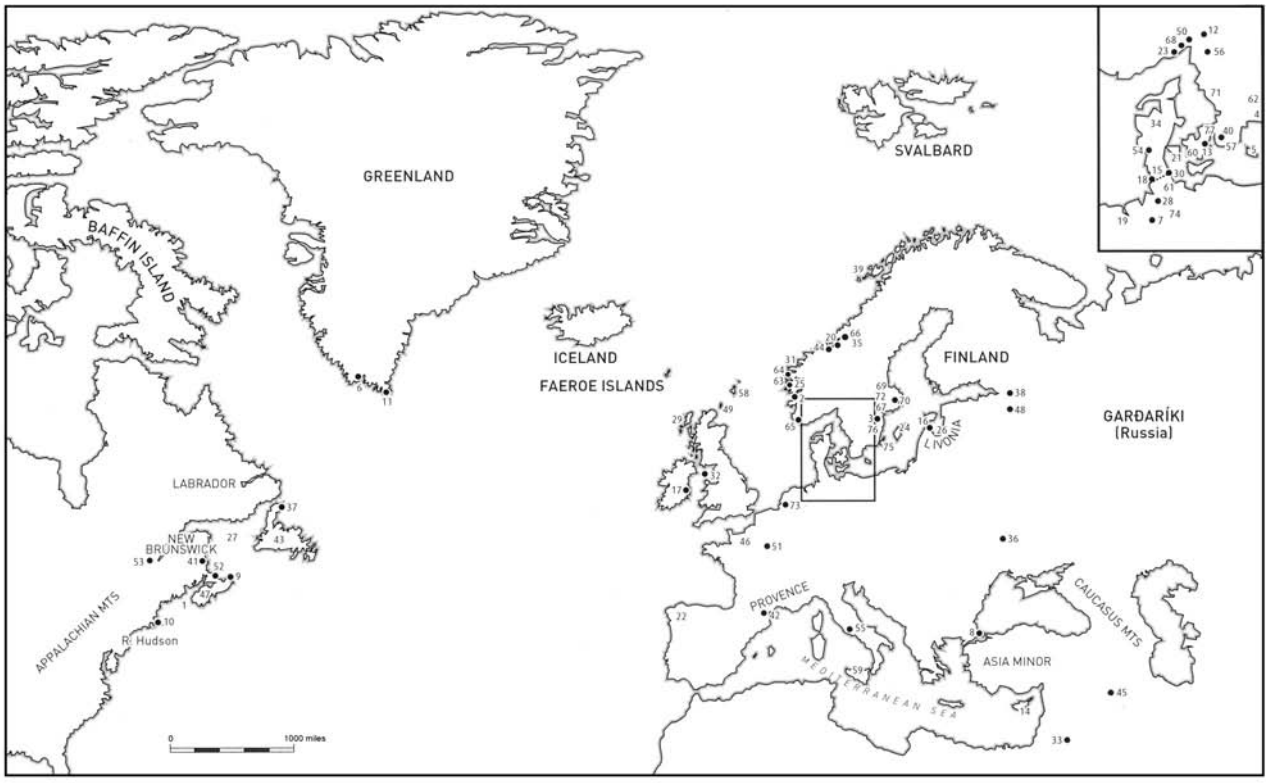


Map 1 Iceland, indicating places of major importance mentioned in the text.



1 Bay of Fundy
2 Bergen
3 Birka
4 Blekinge
5 Bornholm
6 Brattahlíð
7 Bremen
8 Byzantium (Constantinople, Mikligarðr)
9 Cape Breton
10 Cape Cod
11 Cape Farewell
12 Christiania (Oslo)
13 Copenhagen
14 Cyprus
15 Danevirke
16 Domesnäs, -isnes
17 Dublin
18 Eider River
19 Frisia
20 Frosta
21 Fyn
22 Galicia
23 Gokstad
24 Gotland
25 Gulen
26 Gulf of Riga
27 Gulf of St Lawrence
28 Hamburg
29 Hebrides
30 Hedeby
31 Hennøya
32 Isle of Man
33 Jerusalem
34 Jutland
35 Jämtland
36 Kiev
37 L'Anse aux Meadows
38 Ladoga
39 Lofoten
40 Lund
41 Miramichi Bay
42 Narbonne
43 Newfoundland
44 Niðaróss (Trondheim)
45 Nineveh
46 Normandy
47 Nova Scotia
48 Novgorod
49 Orkney
50 Oseberg
51 Paris
52 Prince Edward Island
53 Quebec
54 Ribe
55 Rome
56 Sarpsborg
57 Scania (Skåne)
58 Shetland
59 Sicily
60 Sjælland (Zealand)
61 Slesvig-Holsten
62 Småland
63 Sognefjord
64 Stad
65 Stavanger
66 Stikla(r)staðir (Stiklestad)
67 Södermanland
68 Tønsberg
69 Uppland
70 Uppsala
71 Västergötland
72 Västmanland
73 Walcheren
74 Wendland
75 Öland
76 Östergötland
77 Øresund

Map 2 The Viking World, indicating a selection of places mentioned in the text.

Introduction

Rory McTurk

In his introduction to the Chaucer *Companion* in this series, the editor, Peter Brown, gives examples of companions, human and otherwise, that appear in Chaucer's own works and works used by Chaucer as sources, and ingeniously compares and contrasts their functions in those works with that of the volume he is introducing. There are, of course, many companions, of one kind or another, in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, but the ones most relevant to the present volume are perhaps those with whom the Swedish king Gylfi finds himself involved in the part of Snorri's *Edda* known as *Gylfaginning* ('The Tricking of Gylfi'): Hár, Jafnhár and Þriði ('High', 'Just-as-high' and 'Third'), who tell him what are today regarded as the major stories of Old Norse mythology. As explained in chapter 17 of this volume, these three are members of a tribe called the Æsir who have arrived in Scandinavia from Troy.[1] Gylfi visits them in their Scandinavian stronghold, Ásgarðr, built on the model of their former home, Old Ásgarðr or Troy, to find out whether their apparent ability to make everything go according to their will is due to their own nature, or to the gods they worship. They are aware in advance of his coming, and subject him to various optical illusions, the purpose of which is apparently to trick him into believing that they, the human Æsir, are identical with the divine Æsir, their gods. When he arrives, the three make him welcome, but tell him that in order to leave unharmed he must prove himself wiser than they. He then proceeds to ask them questions about their gods, as much with a view to exhausting their store of knowledge as to satisfying his curiosity, and their replies, as already indicated, include what are now considered some of the best-known stories of Old Norse mythology, not least the one in which the god Þórr, when visiting a giant's castle, fails to drain a drinking-horn or to wrestle successfully with an old woman, only to be told, when he has just left the castle, that what he had been drinking from the horn was the sea, and that the woman he had failed to defeat was old age. When Þórr, furious at being so deceived, raises his hammer to smash the giant and his castle, both vanish; and when Gylfi finally brings his three companions to the point where they can answer no more of his questions, they too vanish, like the

giant in the story they had been telling, thus cheating him of any acclaim that he might have won for exhausting their store of knowledge.

There is, however, a case for saying that Gylfi has the last laugh, since he now returns to his kingdom and tells people what he has seen and heard, including presumably the fact that the gods in the stories he has been told, the divine Æsir, were not identical with the human Æsir telling them; whereas the human Æsir, it emerges after Gylfi has left, had wished it to be thought that they were identical. After his departure the human Æsir hold what we may assume is a rather hurried, panicky conference, assigning the names of personages and places in their stories to people of their own company and to places in their new homeland, Scandinavia, in the hope that, in spite of what Gylfi is telling people, they may still be able to put it around there that they and their gods are identical. Their position at the end of *Gylfaginning* is comparable to that of Alice's elder sister, who, at the end of *Alice in Wonderland*, equates Alice's dream world with reality; whereas Gylfi's position is comparable to that of Alice, who is convinced of the dream world's otherness. It is indeed possible that the title *Gylfaginning* is ambiguous; it means 'the tricking of Gylfi', certainly, but does this mean that a trick has been played *on* Gylfi, or *by* him, or both? The Æsir had indeed tricked Gylfi with their optical illusions and by their sudden disappearance, but he could be said to have tricked them in confounding and leaving them before they could convince him, and through him his people, that they were divine.

I must not push too far any comparison of Gylfi's three companions with the present *Companion*. In such a comparison, the slot occupied by Gylfi would presumably be filled by the reader, and the one occupied by his companions would be filled by the contributors; the editor would come somewhere between the two. The comparison thus proposed holds good to the extent that few readers are likely to have all their questions answered by this volume, any more than Gylfi does. The comparison shades into a contrast, however, when the obvious point is made that none of the contributors has set out deliberately to deceive, as Gylfi's companions evidently have. At the same time, none of the contributors would claim that his or her contribution offers the last word on its subject, and to this extent their chapters may be compared with the stories told by Gylfi's companions, which, for all their interest and variety, do not (at least in my view) achieve their ultimate purpose of convincing him of their narrators' divinity. The possible ambiguity in the title *Gylfaginning*, noted above, suggests that, in the history of Scandinavia as Snorri conceives it, what has emerged from Gylfi's relationship with his companions is a healthy balance of information and points of view, not least as a result of the 'tricking' played by each of the two parties on the other: the Æsir have told Gylfi a fund of wonderful stories, but with their vanishing trick have not given themselves time to carry out their full deception of convincing him that they are the gods in the stories, and Gylfi has passed these stories on to his people, without himself perpetuating the idea that the newcomers to Scandinavia, who had told him the stories, were the gods who had figured in them; he has 'tricked' them in the sense that he has left them to do this for themselves.

If the present *Companion* also provides readers with a balance of information and points of view, albeit not precisely by the means just described, I, as the editor, will be more than satisfied. The title of the volume is indeed meant to convey an impression of balance, in using the expressions 'Norse-Icelandic' and 'Literature and Culture'. There is no doubt that Old Norse-Icelandic literature and culture are most impressively represented by Iceland, and this is reflected not only in the subject matter of most of this volume's chapters, but also in the fact that over a third of its contributing authors are Icelanders. The idea of having the 'Norse-' element in the title, however, is to retain in readers' minds a sense of the mainland Scandinavian (indeed largely Norwegian) origins of the Icelandic people, and of the ongoing contact of various kinds between Iceland and other countries and cultures, in mainland Scandinavia and elsewhere, from the Viking Age onwards. As for the 'literature and culture' pairing, the emphasis of this volume is, for good reasons, primarily literary – partly because of the nature of the series in which it appears, and partly because it is in medieval Icelandic literature that Old Norse-Icelandic culture is seen at its most impressive. To be understood adequately, however, the literature needs to be studied in the context of other manifestations of Old Norse-Icelandic culture, and it is for this reason, as well as with the 'Norse-' element in mind, that chapters on archaeology, geography and travel, historical background, laws, and social institutions are included. A chapter on language in a book whose main emphasis is on Old Icelandic literature needs no special explanation, but it should be noted that the 'Language' chapter in the present volume is of particular value in discussing the Icelandic language largely in terms of its North Germanic, that is, Scandinavian, family connections. The chapters on manuscripts and palaeography, orality and literacy, and runes illustrate in different ways the interrelationship of literature and other forms of cultural expression, most especially in a 'Norse-Icelandic' context, while those on Christian biography, Christian poetry, historiography and pseudo-history, metre and metrics, pagan myth and religion, prose of Christian instruction, rhetoric and style, romance, and royal biography, while all illustrating the 'Norse' element in Old Icelandic literature, also show the openness of that literature to influences of various kinds from beyond the bounds of Scandinavia.[2] Even those chapters whose titles reveal that they deal with distinctively Norse-Icelandic subjects, those on eddic poetry, family sagas, sagas of contemporary history (*Sturlunga saga*), sagas of Icelandic prehistory, short prose narrative (*þáttr*), skaldic poetry, and women in Old Norse poetry and sagas effortlessly succeed in placing their topics, to a greater or lesser extent, in a context beyond the purely local. The chapters on continuity, late prose fiction and late secular poetry help to locate Old Icelandic literature temporally as well as spatially by giving an idea of the remarkable continuity of Icelandic literature since the medieval period, while the chapter on post-medieval reception illustrates the no less remarkable continuing influence of that literature in the world outside Iceland.

I have followed the example of the Chaucer *Companion* in arranging the chapters in alphabetical order of title, partly because, in reading the Chaucer volume, as I did from beginning to end shortly after its first appearance in 2000, I found that

arrangement thoroughly congenial, but also because – and this is no doubt a version of the same reason – it does not commit the reader in advance to any particular grouping among the topics treated. Readers may either read the present book from cover to cover, or pick and choose among the chapters as they wish, with or without the guidance of the cross-references at the end of each chapter, which point to other chapters treating the most immediately related topics. Those who wish to begin at the beginning may like to know that, by a happy coincidence, the opening paragraphs of the archaeology chapter, which is alphabetically the first in the sequence, provide an admirable introduction to the volume as a whole; others, however, should not be inhibited by this information from starting with the chapter on women in Old Norse poetry and sagas, which comes alphabetically, and for no other reason, at the end of the sequence.

The topics signalled by the chapter headings are of my own choosing, though the actual headings of one or two chapters have been modified at the request of their contributors. I am also responsible (I am proud to say) for identifying the authors of chapters (very occasionally on the advice of others, in areas where I was not sure of whom to approach), and for inviting them to contribute. Once I had established a full list of contributors, by the end of February 2002, I circulated it to all of them, together with their addresses and agreed chapter headings, encouraging those who were writing on closely interrelated topics to consult among themselves with a view to ensuring that excessive overlap among chapters was avoided, though not discouraging overlap altogether, on the grounds that it would be interesting to see the same or nearly the same topic treated from different angles. The results of this exhortation were indeed interesting, to me at least; while each one of the contributors, it seemed to me, stuck admirably to his or her given topic, some welcome if not altogether expected examples of near-overlap nevertheless arose, whether because of consultation among contributors I cannot say. To give just one example, readers who are disappointed to find no chapter in the present volume on the Norse discovery of America will find much to interest them not only, as might be expected, in the chapter on geography and travel, but also in the chapters dealing with orality and literacy and with women in Old Norse poetry and sagas. Not a few of the contributors refer explicitly in their chapters to other chapters in the volume, and/or to work published by their fellow contributors, thus fulfilling part of the book's aim in giving an impression of current interactivity and debate among Old Norse-Icelandic scholars specializing in different aspects of the subject. The overall aim of the book is the ambitious one of going some way towards meeting the needs of university students at undergraduate and graduate level, and also those of the general reader, while at the same time having something new to offer specialists in its own subject as well as in neighbouring disciplines.

Some brief notes on the treatment of names in this volume, and on Icelandic pronunciation, may be helpful. My general aim has been to use medieval spellings for the personal names of medieval people (whether historical or fictional), and modern spellings for names of modern persons; with place names I have aimed to use modern

spellings except in cases where it is clear from the context that the reference is to a place as specified in a medieval text. Somewhat arbitrarily, I have taken c.1450 as a very flexible dividing line between the medieval and modern periods. I cannot claim to have achieved complete consistency in the policy just outlined, however. In cases of direct quotation I have, of course, followed the spelling of the passage quoted.

As for Icelandic pronunciation, no more than general rules of thumb can be given here. The letters *þ* and *ð* should be pronounced like *th* in English *thin* and *this* respectively; *ǫ* like the *o* in English *hot*; *œ* like the *eu* in French *feu*; and *ö* like the *eu* in French *peur*. In Old Icelandic *æ* was pronounced like the *a* in *hat*; in Modern Icelandic it is pronounced like the *y* in English *my*.[3]

My gratitude to all the contributors is clear, I trust, from my foregoing remarks. The contributions of those who were later than they might have been in sending them in were, in all cases, well worth waiting for, which is not to play down in any way the work of those who produced their chapters on time. Some have exceeded the publishers' stated word limit of 'approximately 8,000 words' per chapter; others have gone well beyond the recommended maximum of 25 items for each list of references. The one contributor who was, in the event, unable to submit his chapter should be thanked here for making space available for these excesses to be accommodated.

My debt to Peter Brown, the editor of the Chaucer *Companion*, will already be apparent from what I have written above. I had the pleasure of meeting him in the summer of 2002 and benefited greatly from his advice and encouragement. I also owe a special debt of gratitude to Peter Foote, who at my request (and with the authors' knowledge and consent) assisted me in the editing of the chapter (13) on laws, a topic which I found to be beyond my competence (and who also, though I may not be supposed to know it, did the preliminary editing of at least two of the other chapters, at the request of their authors). Thanks are also due to Jeffrey Cosser for translating chapters 14 and 20, and large parts of chapter 6; and to Andrew Wawn for undertaking, at the author's request, the preliminary editing of chapter 16. For help and advice of various kinds, and also for encouragement, I am grateful to Margaret Clunies Ross, Richard Perkins, Tom Shippey and Paul Beekman Taylor. My heartfelt thanks also go to Guðni Elísson, for his unfailing promptness, patience and conscientiousness in responding to my frequent cries for help; and to my wife and family for their love, tolerance and support.

Finally, I should like to thank Andrew McNeillie, now of Oxford University Press but of Blackwell Publishing in 2001, when he invited me to edit this *Companion*, for his encouragement at that early stage and later; Emma Bennett, Jennifer Hunt and Karen Wilson, all of Blackwell Publishing, for encouragement, advice and help at all stages; David Appleby, of the Geography Department, University of Leeds, for preparing the maps on pp. xii–xiii; and Fiona Sewell, the copy-editor, for her close and careful reading of the typescript (on which many of the contributors have commented gratefully), as well as for her sustained good humour. What errors remain are, of course, my own responsibility.

Notes

1 What follows here is very much my own view of *Gylfaginning*, and one with which Peter Orton, the author of chapter 17, would not necessarily agree. A fuller version of it appears in McTurk (1994).

2 It is only fair to point out that at least one Icelander, Jónas Kristjánsson (1994), objects to the application of the term 'Norse' to works of Old Icelandic literature, but is prepared to tolerate the term 'Norse-Icelandic' when this is used of Old Icelandic *and* Old Norwegian literature. My impression is that he interprets the term 'Norse' too narrowly, understanding it to mean exclusively 'Norwegian'.

3 For further guidance on the pronunciation of Old and Modern Icelandic, see Barnes (1999: 8–21).

References and Further Reading

Barnes, Michael (1999) *A New Introduction to Old Norse*, part I: *Grammar*. Rpt with corrections and additions 2001. London.

Kristjánsson, Jónas (1994) 'Er Egilssaga "Norse"?' *Skáldskaparmál: Tímarit um íslenskar bókmenntir fyrri alda* 3, 216–31.

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1
Archaeology of Economy and Society

Orri Vésteinsson

'Old Norse' defines the culture of Norway and Iceland during the Middle Ages. It is a somewhat illogical concept as it is largely synonymous with 'Norse' – there are no such things as 'Middle Norse' or 'Recent Norse' – and its temporal and geographical scope is far from clear. It definitely does not apply to anything post-medieval – after 1500 or so things that used to be 'Norse' become 'Nordic' or 'Scandinavian'. Linguists use the term 'Norse' or 'Old Norse' to describe the common language of Scandinavian peoples (apart from the Sami) until the emergence of the separate languages of Swedish, Danish and Norwegian in the late Middle Ages. This common language – *dǫnsk tunga* it was called by its speakers – is the manifestation of a common ethnicity – the speakers of 'dǫnsk tunga' considered themselves to be 'norrœnir menn' – and the term 'Norse' is often used as a translation of *norrœnn*. As such it applies to all the Germanic peoples of Scandinavia and their colonies in the British Isles and the North Atlantic. In the context of the Viking Age we often find 'Norse' used as a description of anyone of Scandinavian origin, synonymous with 'Vikings', 'Scandinavians' and 'Northmen', whereas after the end of the Viking Age it is as a rule not used to describe Danes or Swedes, except in the most technical discussion of language or ethnicity. Literacy reached Scandinavia towards the end of the Viking Age in the eleventh century, and in the twelfth there emerged in Norway and to a greater extent in Iceland a tradition of writing in the vernacular, the language known in English as 'Norse'. Texts in the vernacular were also written in Denmark and Sweden and the consideration of these clearly falls within the scope of Old Norse studies. But compared to the Icelandic-Norwegian output these texts are small in volume and minimal in their appeal to modern readers – law codes being the largest category of twelfth- and thirteenth-century vernacular texts from Denmark and Sweden. The vernacular literature of Norway and Iceland – the eddas, the skaldic poetry, all the different types of sagas, as well as laws, chronicles, annals and works of science and theology – is what most people think of when they hear talk of things Old Norse, and it is with this vernacular literary production of Norway and Iceland that this *Companion* mainly deals.

The term 'Norse' is not in regular use among archaeologists and it does not have a clearly defined meaning in archaeological discussion. On the other hand, archaeologists happily use the no less ill-defined term 'Viking' of anything Scandinavian during the Viking Age, but after its close things archaeological become 'medieval' all over Scandinavia and no archaeological distinctions have been made that match either the temporal or the geographical scope of 'Norse'. 'Norse' also tends to be used to refer to the less material aspects of culture, to language and phonetics, poetry and prose, memory and composition, ideas and beliefs, individuals and their exploits – in short, things that archaeology has traditionally not had much to say about. Most modern archaeologists believe they have little to contribute to Old Norse studies as they are practised by philologists, historians and linguists, and feel much more at home discussing such aspects of culture as economic strategies, diet and nutrition, trade and settlement patterns, technology and environmental impact.

While there are a number of contact points between archaeology and Old Norse studies it is fair to say that in the last half-century or so they have not aroused much interest or led to fruitful debates. This has not always been the case, and until the first half of the twentieth century archaeological, historical, linguistic and literary inquiry into the medieval past of the Nordic peoples was to all intents and purposes a single discipline practised by individuals who were equally at home discussing artefacts, runes and eddic verse. It is to this period of scholarly syncretism that we owe most of the major discoveries of ancient texts relating to the Norse world, the basic sorting of manuscripts, the decipherment of runic inscriptions, the elucidation of the language and metrics of the poetry, as well as the basic outlines of a popular conception of what 'Norse' means and what the 'Norse' world was like. In this respect we still owe much to the legacy of great nineteenth-century scholars like Carl Christian Rafn, Kristian Kaalund and Olav Rygh, men who easily straddled what are now two or more separate disciplines. Their legacy is a syncretic view of the 'Norse' world, a view which persists, especially in the popular mind, even though many – if not most – of its premises have been questioned, refuted or trivialized by subsequent generations of scholars.

We can take as an example the importance accorded to assemblies – the regular meetings of free men to settle disputes, make laws and discuss policies – in the Norse world. This institution is an essential component of the idea of freedom as a characteristic of Norse society. While this idea has come under strong criticism in its individual manifestations – nobody believes any more in a class of totally independent farmers in the Norse world (though see Byock 2001: 8–9, 75–6) – it keeps cropping up in new guises, such as sexual freedom, to name but one (for example, Jochens 1980: 388). Freedom of spirit is probably the basic notion, a notion that scholars no longer discuss or argue for, but which is nevertheless completely ingrained in the common conception of 'Norse', affecting scholars and the public alike. It was chiefly the work of Konrad Maurer in the mid-nineteenth century (Maurer 1852, 1874, 1907–38) on Old Norse laws and constitutional arrangements which defined the assemblies as a fundamental element in Norse

governmental order, and it was through the work of late nineteenth-century antiquarians like Kristian Kaalund, Sigurður Vigfússon, Daniel Bruun and Brynjúlfur Jónsson that the actual remains of Icelandic assemblies were located and categorized (Friðriksson 1994a: 105–45). This work was seen as amounting to an important verification of Maurer's interpretation of the medieval texts and it is fair to say that it was accomplished to such general satisfaction that no aspect of the assembly system as described by Maurer has been seriously questioned since (for example, Byock 2001: 171–83).

If, however, we look at the methods used by the antiquarians to identify assembly sites, reasons for concern begin immediately to emerge. Not only did they rely on questionable criteria, like the presence of 'court-circles' – a phenomenon of doubtful authenticity (Friðriksson and Vésteinsson 1992) – but their findings, considered independently, turn out to suggest a much messier arrangement than Maurer postulated, a system not described in the surviving texts. Quite apart from problems of assembly site identification (Friðriksson 1994b: 364–71), it is clear that the distribution of such sites is very uneven, in contrast to Maurer's model which would have the assembly sites evenly distributed among Iceland's districts. Not only are there clusters of such sites in a few regions (Dýrafjörður, Suður-Þingeyjarsýsla, Fljótsdalshérað), but in many of the central regions the assembly sites are in marginal locations, not at all central to the area they are supposed to have served (in particular the assembly sites of the southern plains, Árnes and Þingskálar). A recent hypothesis sees these assembly sites as the symptom of a particular type of chieftaincy (Vésteinsson, Einarsson and Sigurgeirsson 2003). According to this view, chieftains in regions of fragmented power, who on a national scale could only be considered of small significance, used regular assemblies at neutral locations as a means of consolidating their own powers and gaining regional supremacy. It follows from this that Maurer's model cannot be accepted as a realistic depiction of an actual system. The constitutional arrangements described in *Grágás* – the laws of Commonwealth Iceland – must rather be seen as a thirteenth-century rationalization, a lawyer's attempt to make sense where there had been little or none before.

This is just one example to illustrate the complex relationship between archaeology and the study of Norse texts. The latter has – especially in the past – relied heavily on archaeological verification, but for most of the twentieth century the two disciplines had little serious exchange, with the result that the students of each now tend to view the past in rather different ways and even tend to be unaware of the implications for the other discipline of the findings in their own. This gap has been widened on the one hand by the book-prose school, which holds that the sagas of Icelanders are medieval creations rather than Viking-Age traditions, and on the other by a growing sense among archaeologists that the Nordic countries underwent major economic and social changes at the end of the Viking Age. Both lines of thought have aggravated the perceived lack of association between actual life in the Viking Age as evidenced by archaeology and medieval ideas about that age expressed in the sagas, laws and other lore committed to vellum in the twelfth century and later.

This lack of association is not a problem for those influenced by anthropological theory who consider the legends and myths of the Norsemen as a world with its own integrity, which can be studied without any reference to the real world which created them (for example, Meulengracht Sørensen 1993; Miller 1990). This view is, however, unlikely to satisfy many readers of sagas, who are interested to know more about the society which created them and the times in which the stories are set – was Norse society really like that? And what sort of society creates literature like the sagas? These are questions that archaeologists should not shirk from trying to answer, and in the following an attempt will be made to discuss some basic notions about Norse society from the point of view of archaeology. Importance is also attached to shedding light on the profound changes undergone by Norse society at the end of the Viking Age and how these may have obscured the past in the eyes of the historically minded scholars and authors who wrote in the high Middle Ages. The focus is on Icelandic archaeology but where necessary the archaeology of other Norse regions will be mentioned.

Archaeology of Saga Times

Nobility

A pervasive notion in saga literature is that many of the settlers of Iceland were Norwegian noblemen, who for either practical or ideological reasons could not live under the tyranny of Haraldr hárfagri ('Finehair'), the king who was credited by tradition with unifying Norway under his sole rule in the late ninth century. This idea should in no way be dismissed as wishful thinking on the part of medieval Icelanders trying to create a respectable past for themselves (for example, Meulengracht Sørensen 1993: 173–6). It stands to reason that people with wealth and connections are more likely than those with neither to be able to invest in and organize such a complex and risky undertaking as settling a completely new country more than 10 days' sail away from anywhere. This is clearly what happened in Virginia in the seventeenth century, for example, so why not in Iceland?

It is of course nobility as an abstract quality that is emphasized in the sagas, rather than the idea that the individuals involved were functioning noblemen. The flight to Iceland implies that their role as such was played out; and that sort of nobility – a quality of character associated with family origin – is virtually impossible to test archaeologically. If, however, the settlement of Iceland was led by noblemen who still had wealth and authority in Norway – either personally or through their families – one would expect to see signs of this in the archaeological record. Such signs could take the form of imposing architecture, artwork and expensive consumables, rich burials, and evidence of large-scale planning.

There is now considerable archaeological evidence available from Viking-Age Iceland which allows us to assess such issues: more than 300 pagan burials, at least

three early Christian chapels with cemeteries, at least 18 long-houses with associated pit-houses, ancillary structures, middens and artefact collections as well as an increasing number of animal bone collections and a substantial environmental record. From the Faeroes there are few unambiguous pagan burials but several Viking-Age long-houses and substantial artefact collections. If this material is compared with the Norwegian evidence it becomes immediately apparent that the range is much narrower in Iceland and the Faeroes than in Norway. Considering the difference in size – and hence in the economic base – of these societies, one would not perhaps expect to find in the North Atlantic colonies monuments like the royal mounds at Borre or the Oseberg ship burial – which in any case belong to the late Iron Age and early Viking Age rather than the somewhat later period of the Atlantic settlements. It is maybe more surprising that there is nothing comparable in the colonies to aristocratic graves like the ones found in Gjermundbu (Grieg 1947), Mykleboestad, Tinghaugen or Tussehaugen (Shetelig 1912: 179–220). One has in fact to go pretty far down the social scale of Norwegian burials to find graves that compare with the richest Icelandic ones. The richest graves from Iceland would in Norway have been regarded not as aristocratic, but possibly as graves of local landowners or free-holders. An important difference is that in Norway swords are the weapons most commonly found in men's graves, whereas in Iceland swords are relatively rare. If they can be regarded as symbols of authority this difference may suggest that representatives of the Norwegian gentry did not find their way in any great numbers to Iceland. Another important difference is that in Norway tools are frequently found in graves, while in Iceland they are as good as unknown. This suggests that specialized craftsmen could not make a living in Iceland in significant numbers, which in turn suggests that their patrons, the aristocrats, were absent as well.[1]

Much the same picture emerges when we look at buildings, although we must keep in mind that in this category there is relatively little evidence from Norway. If we take Borg in Lofoten as a typical regional chieftain's dwelling in Norway (Munch et al. 1987), even the largest hall in Iceland, Hofstaðir in Mývatnssveit, is less than half the size of Borg. And Hofstaðir is an exceptional building in Iceland (255 m^2), with the rest of the long-houses in Iceland and the Faeroes falling broadly into two categories, small and large, the majority (40–90 m^2) in the former category and three (90–130 m^2) in the latter (figures from Roberts 2002: 65–6). It is important to note in this context that the Hofstaðir hall is built after 950, more than a century after the start of settlement in Iceland, and thus reflects political developments in the third to fourth generation of Icelanders and not social status among the original settler population.

In short, there are no material signs of a nobility in the North Atlantic colonies, and in so far as the social status of the settlers can be ascertained from archaeological remains it seems that, while there clearly was social differentiation in the colonies, the top of their social scale was near the middle of the social scale in mainland Scandinavia. This then suggests that the North Atlantic colonists were materially poor and that theirs was a subsistence economy only. This conclusion still, however, gives us

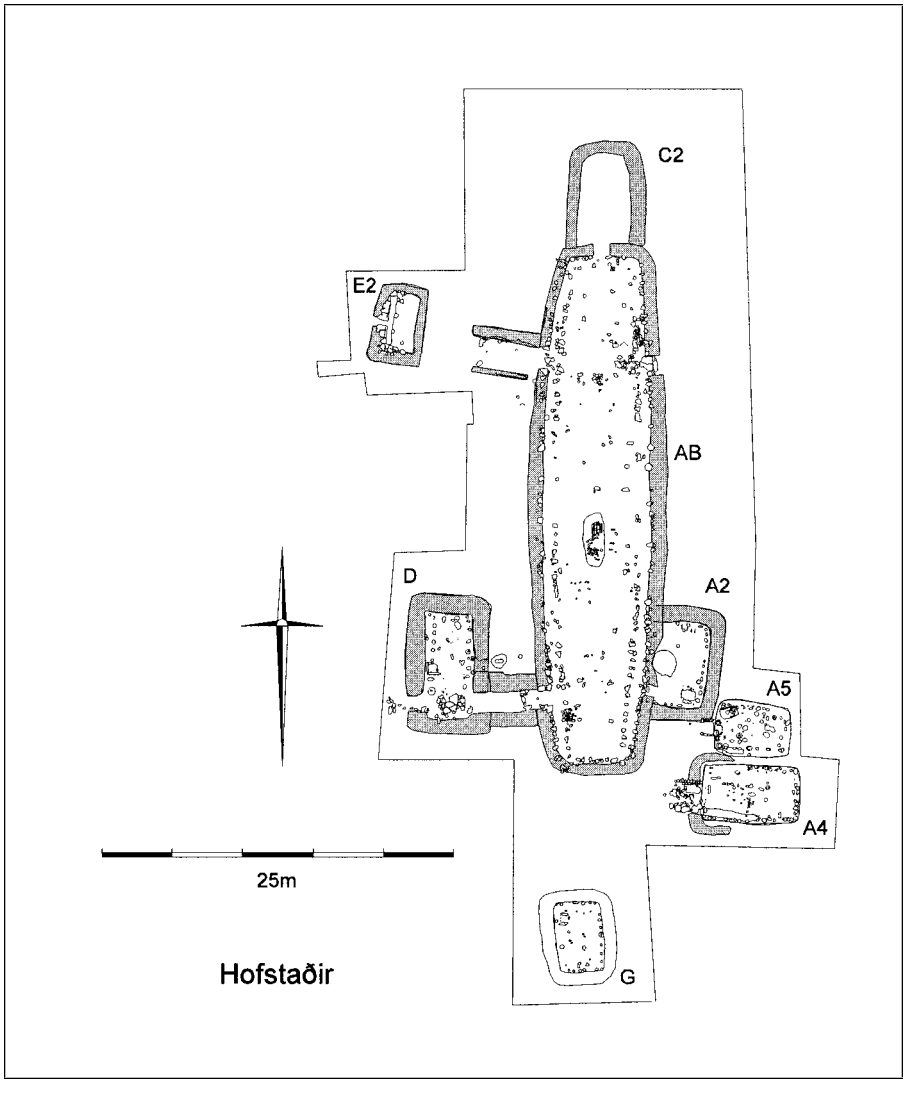

Figure 1.1 The great hall at Hofstaðir, northeast Iceland. © Gavin Lucas, Fornleifastofnun Íslands.

room to debate whether they were Scandinavian gentry fallen on hard times or peasants prepared to face hardships in order to improve their lot – or some blend of these stereotypes.

The picture of material poverty is to some extent contradicted by the settlement patterns, which suggest a considerable degree of planning and the existence of centralized authorities who must have done the planning (Vésteinsson 1998b; Vésteinsson, McGovern and Keller 2002). In those parts of the Icelandic lowlands where forests needed to be cleared in order to allow settlement, farmlands tended to be evenly spaced, with equal access to resources, which suggests that in those areas there

was a control over the settlement process which must have come from a person or persons who could wield authority over a large group of people. The extent of this planning and the number of people who must have been subject to the planners makes it difficult to imagine that they were vastly inferior in terms of status to, say, the Gjermundbu chieftain. It is possible that archaeologists have not yet located the seats of power or the burials of these great organizers, but it is equally likely that the source of this authority never left the Scandinavian homeland: that, much like the North American colonies of the seventeenth century, the North Atlantic colonies of the ninth were organized and financed by entrepreneurs in the 'Old World' who never had to brave the North Atlantic to profit from the enterprise. Once news of a large, empty, but inhabitable new country had made its way to Scandinavia and people started to get interested in becoming colonists, there must have been others who saw ways to profit from the situation. Owners of ships would have been in a position to diversify, to add passenger transport to their established trading and raiding routines, and the more enterprising businessmen would have seen that they could also profit from the colonization itself. Why stop at selling fares if you can also claim the land and sell it to the passengers for a consideration? As with any venture of this kind, some will have specialized in this latter aspect of the undertaking, rather than in the basic transport arrangements, and while many no doubt acted through agents, some may well have made their own way to the new countries to oversee things. Their futures must in most cases have lain back home, however, and that is where the initial profits will have gone as well.

This is of course an idea that will be difficult to substantiate, but as a model it has the virtue of an analogue in the North American colonization by Europeans in the seventeenth century, and it certainly explains both how the transport of people to the colonies was financed and why the people left on the shores of the colonies were so materially impoverished. And while noblemen may have played a part in this process, they are more likely to have done so as adventurous financiers than as idealistic leaders of clans seeking to build a society unsullied by novel ideas of kingship and taxation.

Affluence

Another notion which has been around for a long time is the idea that because the environments of the Faeroes, Iceland and Greenland were as good as untouched by humans when the Norse colonizers arrived, there was an initial period of plenty when unspoilt nature provided bountifully for the newcomers (see, for instance, ch. 29 of *Egils saga*). A follow-up notion is that this allowed the free farmers of Iceland to create a vibrant economy capable of sustaining a much larger population than the country has seen in later times. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars imagined that for the first two to three centuries Icelanders engaged in substantial and extensive trade on their own ocean-going vessels, and that the decline of this trade – blamed on a lack of timber for maintaining the fleet, along with a decline in climate and political

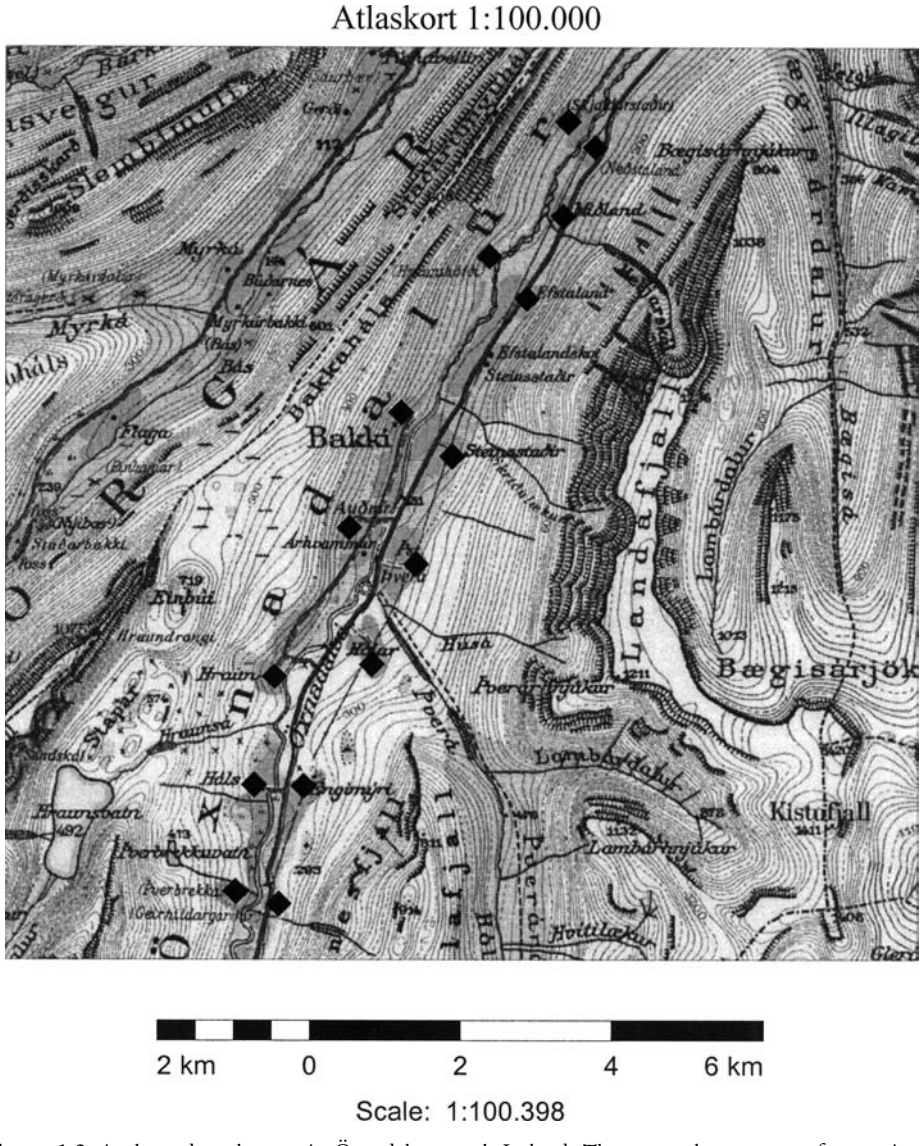

Figure 1.2 A planned settlement in Öxnadalur, north Iceland. The rectangles represent farm units in 1686. Map base © Landmælingar Íslands.

fortunes in the thirteenth century – led to a reduction of the population and to the loss of political and economic independence.

It is easy to believe that the idea of an unspoilt land appealed to prospective settlers in the ninth century, and according to twelfth-century sources (*Íslendingabók*, ch. 6), this was the essence of Eiríkr rauði's ('the Red's') sales pitch when he started to recruit settlers for his Greenland colony in the late tenth century. And to some extent it must be true that unspoilt nature made life easier for the new settlers. In particular, unwary

game (walrus, seal, birds) must have been a ready source of nutrition in the early stages, but this will have alleviated only to a small extent the immense problems facing the initial settlers. The story in *Landnámabók* (ch. 5) of Hrafna-Flóki's abortive attempt at settlement in Iceland reflects the pros and cons of being the first settler: Hrafna-Flóki's party spent the first summer hunting and fishing in the bountiful Breiðafjǫrðr but forgot to collect fodder for their livestock, with the result that the animals died, forcing them to abandon their settlement the following year. Establishing a completely new, self-sustaining settlement hundreds of miles of rough sea away from the next inhabited place is no easy task, and if the earliest English settlements in Virginia and New England are anything to go by, it will have involved tremendous hardships and major loss of life – and in Iceland there were no Indians to take pity on the initial settlers.

Life must have been very hard during the initial phases of reconnaissance and landscape learning, and as in the case of seventeenth-century North America we must allow for at least two or three decades before a semblance of stable and self-sustaining communities can have been created. There are no archaeological sites which can with certainty be associated with an initial settlement phase – all the sites excavated so far seem to be farms, the occupants of which based their livelihood on stock-rearing. Many of the oldest sites excavated in Iceland and the Faeroes were, however, abandoned very early, some it seems within a generation of their establishment. In some cases (for example, Grelutóttir in north-west Iceland and Tóftanes on Eysturoy in the Faeroes) the relocation seems to have been over a short distance, possibly within the same home-field, but in others (for example, Hvítárholt in southern Iceland and Herjólfsdalur in Vestmannaeyjar) the abandonment of the farms seems to have been part of a larger-scale reorganization of the settlements. These relocations attest to the length of the learning curve involved in colonizing a new country. Some things, like the lie of the land, the presence and absence of flora and fauna, and distances and routes, can be learned relatively quickly, whereas the knowledge necessary for successful farming, an understanding of soils and drainage, and an awareness of the interrelationship of climate, location and vegetation will have taken much longer to establish. The problems of the first generations of settlers must have been compounded by chains of events which their own colonization had set in train, and which led to changes to which they had to adapt. The decimation of the walrus colonies is one obvious case, the destruction of the woodlands another.

At those sites where significant artefactual and faunal collections have been retrieved, identifiable signs of stress have not been found. While research into the health of early livestock is only now under way it seems that, by the time the North Atlantic settlers had established a farming routine, they had achieved at least bare survival. From the artefact assemblages it is, however, clear that these people were materially poor. Although a systematic comparison of artefact collections from the North Atlantic colonies and Norway has not been attempted, a cursory glance over the evidence seems to suggest that the differences within this overall area are most striking. North Atlantic farm sites are characterized by small numbers of artefacts,

a very limited variety of types, very limited imports (mostly soapstone for vessels, schist for whetstones, and beads, mainly of glass but some of amber) and hardly any imported prestige items. In the Viking Age the colonists made much more extensive use of local stone (in Iceland using obsidian for cutting, and sandstone for gaming pieces and spindle whorls) than they did in later times, which possibly suggests a limited availability of raw materials that was later alleviated by increased local iron production and imports. In Norway artefact quantities from farm sites are greater overall, but there is, more importantly, a greater variety of find categories there, and a greater frequency of prestige imports.

The archaeological record in Iceland and the Faeroes becomes much thinner after the Viking Age, but it seems that this relative material poverty began to diminish in the thirteenth century with increasing imports, more substantial architecture and greater stability of settlement. Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century farm sites like Stöng, Gröf, Kúabót and Stóraborg in Iceland and Sandnes, Gården under Sandet (GUS) and Brattahlíð in Greenland evince not only a more substantial architecture but also much larger and more diverse artefact collections than their Viking-Age predecessors. The stone churches of thirteenth- to fourteenth-century Greenland and Faeroe demonstrate the existence of a substantial surplus of wealth, and the political organization to channel that surplus into monumental architecture. In Iceland comparable churches have not yet been excavated, but the unusual buildings at Reykholt, associated with the use of geothermal water and steam (a spa?), may represent comparable economic growth. The fact that this growth took place hardly needs explanation – it is most easily understood as the result of a slow accumulation of wealth over two to three centuries, driven by a desire to attain standards similar to those current in the old homelands. It is indeed surprising that this growth seems to have been so slow.

In Iceland a stage in this development may be represented by a complex system of earthworks, mainly found in the northeast of the country and dated to the tenth to twelfth centuries (Einarsson, Hansson and Vésteinsson 2002). The building of the system will have involved something like three weeks' work every year for 10 years for each of the c.200 farms in the region (36,500 labour days). While that no doubt represents a significant investment in a subsistence economy, the form of this investment suggests a degree of social organization which has not yet attained the central focus attested to later by the monumental architecture.

For our present purpose we can see in this system a confirmation that by the eleventh century at least (the exact time of the building of the system is not certain), the Icelanders had mastered their new environment and developed their subsistence strategies to such a degree that they could start investing in large-scale projects like the earthwork system.

Confirmation that the Icelanders had their basic subsistence worked out by the eleventh century comes from the cemetery in Skeljastaðir (eleventh to twelfth centuries). Analysis of the skeletons suggests that this population was relatively healthy, with no signs of malnutrition or endemic disease. The explanation for this is good

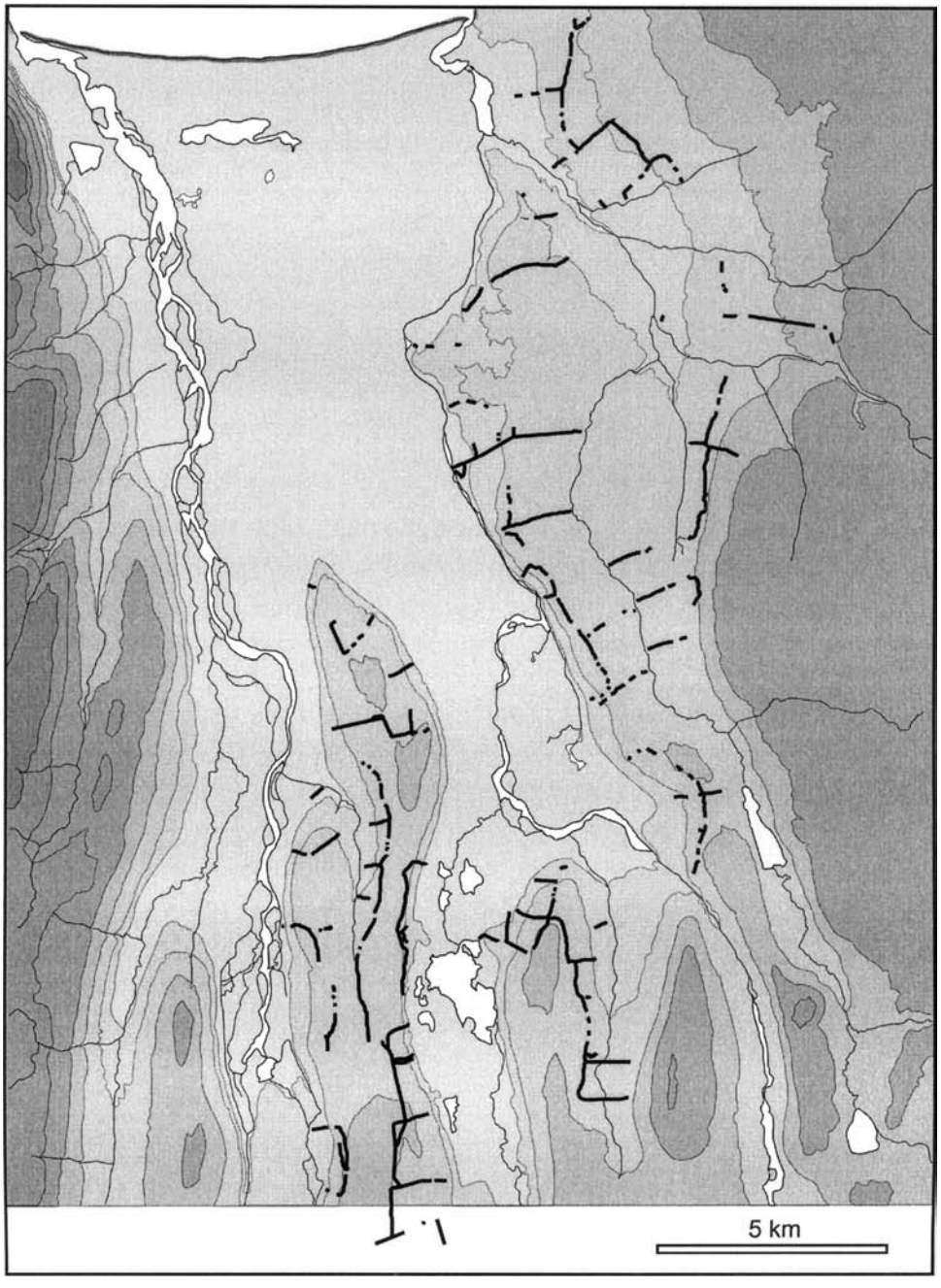

Figure 1.3 A part of the system of earthworks in northeast Iceland. © Árni Einarsson, Fornleifastofnun Íslands.

nutrition on the one hand and, on the other, isolation and clean water, which will have impeded the spread of infectious diseases (Gestsdóttir 1998).

It seems then that by the eleventh century the Icelanders were on the whole well fed and that they had begun to be able to invest in large-scale building projects. They were, however, still materially poor in comparison with the societies of mainland Scandinavia, and it is not until the thirteenth century that we begin to see signs of concentrated surplus wealth in the North Atlantic colonies. Rather than supporting the view of original bounty followed by decline and crisis in the thirteenth century, archaeology suggests an initial period of relative material poverty followed by slow growth up to the thirteenth century, when the North Atlantic colonies can be said to have attained economic standards similar to those of the old homelands.

Freedom

The idea that Norse society, in particular the new societies established in the North Atlantic, were characterized by economic and political freedom has already been alluded to. It is a very old idea which seems to originate on the one hand in ideas about barbarism – no doubt ultimately derived from classical descriptions of Germanic and Celtic warrior societies – and on the other in nineteenth-century perceptions by Nordic societies of themselves as democratic and enlightened. Scholars have long conceived of Norse society as made up of a large group of property-owning farmers ruled over by not very interfering chieftains or petty kings, government being characterized more by collective institutions like assemblies and the military organization of the *leidang* ('levy'). The property-owning farmers are seen not as great landowners but as owners of the land they tilled themselves. In the Icelandic context these property-owning farmers are then seen to have made up the constituency of the chieftains, who have traditionally been regarded as *primi inter pares* rather than despotic rulers.

There is much in the saga literature and the medieval law codes that can be made to fit this scenario and it is certainly true that Norse society was simpler in terms of political hierarchies than societies further south in Europe. The polities were smaller and the organization of the top layer in each region was weaker. The development of complex political hierarchies and feudal modes of proprietorship seems to have begun in southern Scandinavia during the Viking Age, but in the northern part and in the new colonies this development was much less pronounced, even in the high Middle Ages. The fact that the concept of serfdom does not occur in the Norse law codes suggests on the one hand that Norse farmers in general had more freedom than, say, their French or Italian counterparts. On the other hand, it may simply reflect the relative lack of organization on the part of the Norse ruling elite.

The limited size of Norse polities also has an effect on our appreciation of the conditions of life of Norse farmers. The smaller the political group to which an individual belongs, and the more distant and the more poorly organized any ultimate power is, the more political weight that individual will have, irrespective even of

wealth or pedigree. Both observations point to a relative difference between the conditions of life of Norse farmers and their counterparts in more southerly latitudes. This is not the same thing as saying that they were all free or politically active, however, or that their portrayal by nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars is necessarily accurate.

The concept of freedom, as it has been used to describe Norse farmers, is a legal and philosophical definition which is difficult to test archaeologically. From the archaeologist's point of view such terms are of limited value for describing prehistoric societies, and should be used only with the utmost caution in describing protohistoric societies such as the Norse ones of the Viking Age. When archaeologists contemplate questions as to what extent people are likely to have been able to make their own decisions about their own lives (for example where to live, whom to marry, which crop to sow, how many sheep to slaughter, which chieftain to support), they are confined to a limited range of evidence. Settlement patterns fall within this range. As already discussed, Icelandic settlement patterns are characterized by relatively few large units occupying the very best land and often centrally located vis-à-vis a larger number of much smaller but evenly sized and regularly spaced units. With the help of other evidence, such as place names and the distribution of churches and chapels, it has been suggested that in the eleventh to twelfth centuries Iceland's roughly 4,000 farm units were divided between about 600 estates, some 1,000 reasonably large and seemingly independent units and up to about 2,500 planned settlements (Vésteinsson 1998a: 165–6). The farmers of the planned settlements were clearly in a dependent relationship to the estate owners and it is easiest to view this relationship as one of lords and peasants. If we accept this picture of differential access to resources as the basis of social analysis, it then follows that the portrayal of farmers in the sagas must be limited to the society of the roughly 600 estate owners and possibly the 1,000 independent farmers (a theme developed in Vésteinsson forthcoming). The majority of the Icelandic householders were, according to this picture, not politically free in anything but the most technical sense.

The Great Change

The greater part of Norse literature is set in the Viking Age or even earlier periods, but was composed after the close of the Viking Age – in some cases long after. Many scholars have pointed to the long time-lapse between the events described and the writing of the accounts as a reason to be suspicious of the authenticity of the sagas as historical documents. There is undoubtedly some truth in this – as time passes, memories fade and take on a life of their own – but this is not necessarily a mechanical process (that is, a memory does not lose its content at a steady rate through time) and it is affected by a number of more subjective factors. One of them is the rate of change in the society in question. In a society which is relatively stable, where institutions and attitudes change slowly or not at all, memories presumably lose their significance

and meaning more slowly than in a society which is transforming rapidly. In such a society memories will not only lose their meaning and significance relatively soon, but a need may arise for new 'memories', that is, explanations for a past that has become incomprehensible through change.

The transition from the Viking Age to the medieval period in the lands of the Norsemen is no arbitrary chronological demarcation created by scholars for want of other things to do. It is a division between genuinely different periods, different in nearly all the most important aspects of society: economic, social, political and ideological.

One of the most striking features of the Viking Age is the remarkable homogeneity of Norse culture in that period. While there are distinct regional differences, there are also certain traits which were shared by all the peoples of the Norse world. A common language is apparent from runic inscriptions and the earliest vernacular texts, but the Norse also shared ideas about what their houses should look like, how jewellery should be decorated and what fashion accessories it was fitting for women to wear. Among the more distinctive types of artefacts are the oval brooches worn by women, the distribution of which (see figure 1.4) maps out quite convincingly the geographical extent of Norse culture during the Viking Age. The Norse of the Viking Age clearly had a strong cultural identity which set them apart from other Europeans, whether Christians to the south or other pagan peoples to the north and east. The introduction of Christianity gradually reduced this distinctiveness, replacing indigenous art styles and tastes with more universal decorative fashions in the course of the twelfth century. These changes signify the incorporation of Norse society into the larger sphere of European Catholic culture. The Norse ceased to maintain a divergent identity and instead adopted new building styles, new decorative styles and new learning. In the twelfth century Norse artists – wood-carvers, stone-cutters and jewellers – forswore the traditional decorative styles based on animal motifs and took up Romanesque styles based on floral motifs. From an art-historical point of view this is a major transformation, implying a fundamental shift in tastes and attitudes. To the archaeologist it makes sense to view the inception of vernacular writing in the twelfth century as a corollary to developments in other spheres of fine art, as a new concept which is more correctly understood as the reception of a completely new type of cultural expression than as an adaptation of old traditions to a new medium.

The end of the Viking Age marks the end of a barbaric expansion and the integration of the Norse lands into 'civilized' European society. They became integrated in terms of political structure, with kings levying taxes, minting coins, promulgating laws and making alliances with other European kings as equals. With the introduction of Christianity and the establishment of the church they became civilized in the eyes of other Europeans. In becoming Christians they adopted a whole new ideological suite, ranging from matters spiritual and intellectual to ideas on social order. The establishment of permanent kingdoms and the church (a gradual and complex affair, to be sure) involved changes in the social structure which are most

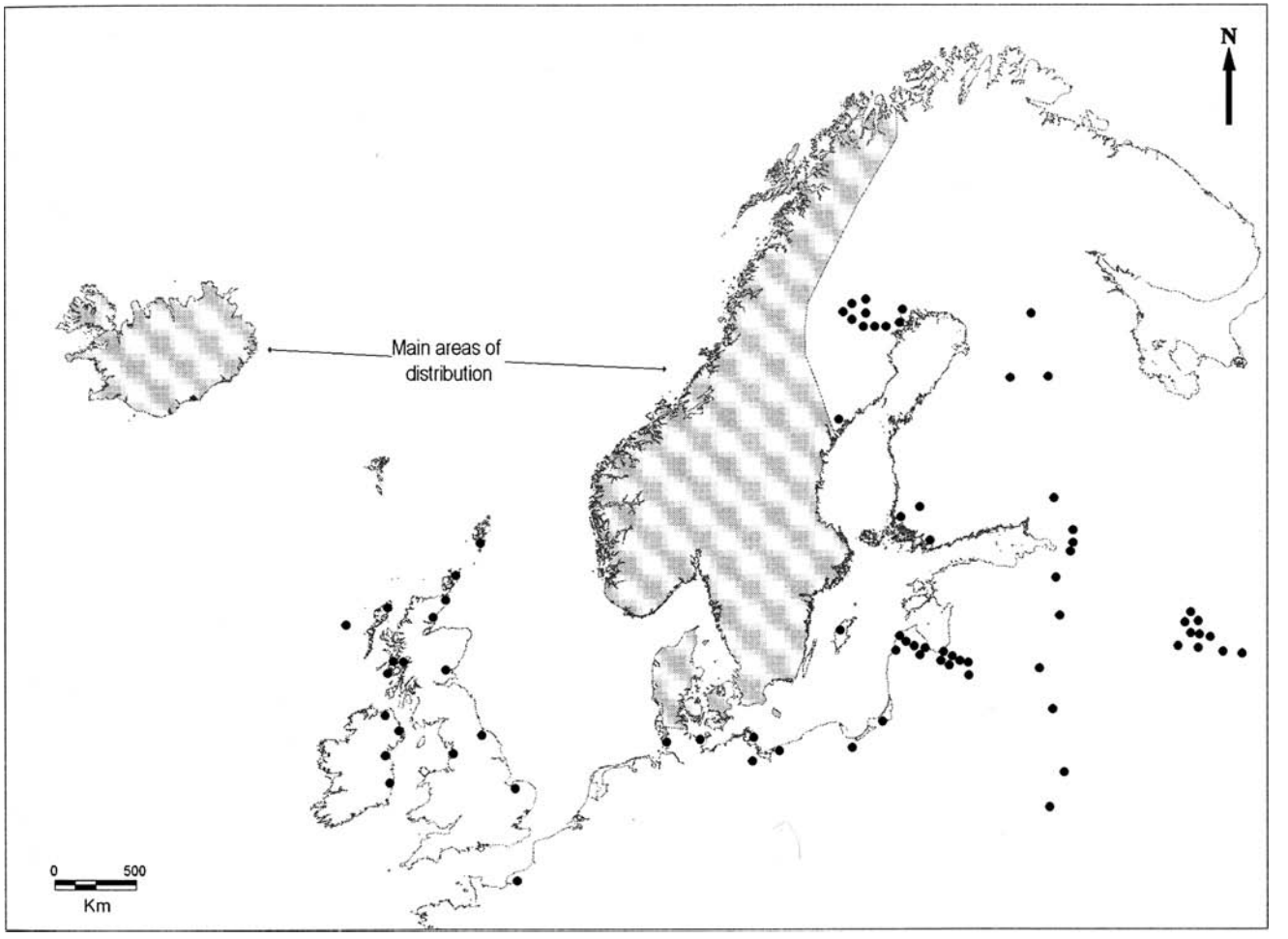

Figure 1.4 Distribution of oval brooches in Northern Europe in the Viking age. After S. H. H. Kaland, 'Dress'. *From Viking to Crusader: The Scandinavians and Europe 800–1200* (New York: In Else Roesdahl and David M. Wilson (eds.) 1992), fig. 1, p. 192.

notable in the effects these new institutions had on patterns of landownership, on the organization of the aristocracy and on the judicial system.

At a more fundamental level important economic changes were taking place in the last part of the Viking Age. In southern Scandinavia this is seen most clearly in the increased emphasis on cereal cultivation as against cattle-breeding and the sudden halt in the relocation of villages. Villages which had shifted their site every century or so since their foundation in the Iron Age became stationary from the eleventh century onwards. These changes were on the one hand the result of the introduction of new technologies – the heavy plough with the mould-board, for instance, and intensive fertilizing – but on the other they reflect increased social complexity, which meant that the needs of national or supra-national institutions like the state and the church had a direct impact on decisions as to production and land use at the household level.

In Iceland a variety of changes in the late Viking Age can be detected in the archaeological record. Most obvious and well known are the changes in burial customs resulting from the introduction of Christianity around 1000 and the introduction of a new type of structure, namely churches, permanently changing the layout of a large number of farmsteads. Other changes are often associated with the process of adaptation to a new environment, such as the disappearance of goats and pigs from archaeological faunal collections in the eleventh century. These woodland-dependent animals became rare as a result of overexploitation (whether intentional or otherwise) of the birch forests, but the result of the reduction in their numbers was a different sort of farm management and a different sort of diet, setting twelfth-century Icelanders apart from their forefathers as well as their neighbours.

In Iceland as well as the rest of the Norse world, building styles changed towards the end of the Viking Age. The boat-shaped long-houses, a very distinct cultural symbol common to all the Norse lands during the Viking age, made way for new building styles, styles that varied from one to another of the many different geographical zones of the post-Viking Norse world. Instead of a common architectural expression there developed building types that reflected the local rather than the regional culture. In Iceland the boat-shaped long houses were replaced by narrower buildings with straight walls and a number of smaller rooms branching off from the central hall. These changes reflect new engineering solutions as to how a roof should be supported, and also, possibly, different use of materials; they clearly also reflect new ideas about the use of space and about the symbolism of domestic architecture.

There developed from the late tenth century onwards a specific Icelandic paradigm of what domestic buildings should look like and what functions they should be able to serve, a paradigm different from the earlier Viking-Age one as well as from those developing in other Norse lands. In the later stages of this process, as late as the thirteenth century in some parts of Iceland, the long-fire – the hearth central to the Viking-Age halls – disappears from the halls, the function of which must by that time have become very different from what it used to be in the Viking Age. In Iceland and Shetland this is also the time when bi-perforated sheep metapodials begin to appear in the animal bone assemblages (Bigelow 1993). The practice of boring into

both ends of sheep leg-bones to extract the marrow suggests that in these regions boiling was replacing roasting as the principal method of cooking meat. Roasting makes the bone brittle enough to be broken easily, whereas boiling tends to make the bone relatively dense, so that special excavation techniques are required to extract the marrow. This change in cooking practice is probably associated with the abandonment of the floor-level central hearths of the halls as the principal focus of cooking activity, and with a new preference for raised fireplaces in special kitchens. These changes no doubt have complex reasons reflecting issues ranging from fuel usage to the status of women, but they certainly indicate that the organization of the Norse household was undergoing major transformations in the wake of the Viking Age. To the archaeologist such transformations suggest that society as a whole was changing in fundamental ways.

At Reykholt in southwest Iceland buildings have recently been excavated which are believed to have been in use in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, at the time that the writer Snorri Sturluson lived there. The excavations have revealed two rectangular cellars, one possibly connected to a steam conduit (for heating?) and the other to a passage leading to the famous outdoor pool mentioned in thirteenth-century accounts and still to be seen at the site. It is believed that these cellars supported large timber buildings representing a completely new departure from the Viking-Age paradigm of house construction. If this was the setting of Snorri's literary activity, it serves as a poignant reminder of the enormous changes that Norse society had undergone between the end of the Viking Age and the pinnacle of literary activity in the mid-thirteenth century.

Conclusion

The fundamental nature of the changes to Norse society at the end of the Viking Age has long been apparent to archaeologists, and this is the reason why they distinguish quite emphatically between the Viking Age and the following centuries. It is also the reason why relatively few archaeologists or historians deal with both periods or the transition between them, most preferring to specialize either in the Viking Age or in the following medieval period. It therefore makes good sense for an archaeologist to stress these changes in a *Companion* to Old Norse-Icelandic literature and culture. It does not follow at all from the fundamental nature of the changes undergone by Norse society in the intervening period that the sagas need to be considered fictitious. The fact of this transformation does, however, mean that any student of the sagas who wishes to use them as guides to Viking-Age society and culture must proceed with the utmost care, and consider at every turn how the differences between the time of writing and the times in which the stories are set may have affected the creation of the narrative.

Because archaeology bases its discourse on a completely different set of data from history or philology, and furthermore a set of data that is continually expanding, it is also useful to review from its separate vantage point some of the basic notions that

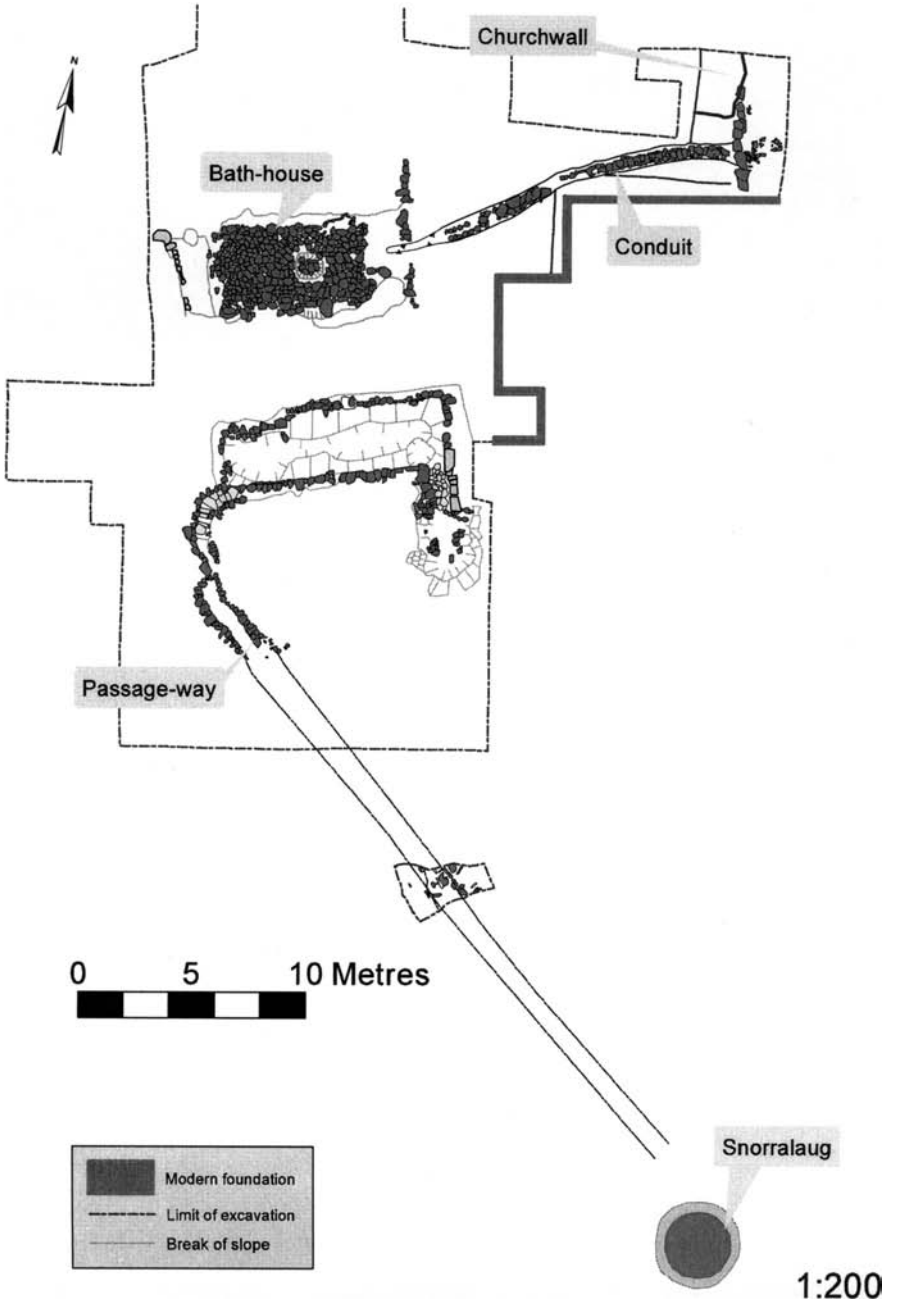

Figure 1.5 High medieval house foundations and other features at Reykholt, southwest Iceland. © Guðrún Sveinbjarnardóttir, Þjóðminjasafn Íslands.