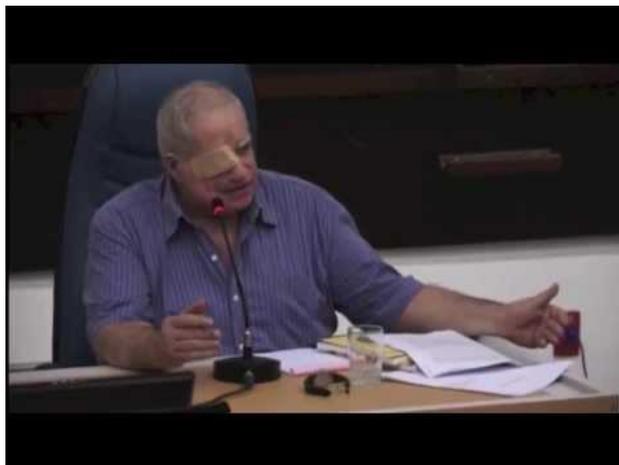


EDITORIAL NOTE



Ciro Flamarion Cardoso at a conference in Rio de Janeiro (2012), shortly before his death.

*Johnni Langer*¹

In 1997, historian **Ciro Flamarion Cardoso** published a pioneering study on the Icelandic narrative *Helga þáttur Þórissonar*, in which he analyzed the contents involving Christianity and Norse paganism in the medieval world. From this moment on, a whole new generation of publications and events in Norse studies began in Brazil, focusing on activities especially developed in the State of Rio de Janeiro until the year of 2012. Up to present days, most of these studies are related to mythology, religion, religiosity, magic and beliefs in Medieval Scandinavia. Following this trend, the second edition of *Scandia Journal* is devoted almost entirely to this important thematic axis of the area. Firstly, knowing the importance of this researcher for the historiography of Brazilian Scandinavian Studies, we have published a

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study by **Ciro Flamarion Cardoso** that was no longer available, in which the author offers a vigorous analysis of the Scandinavian social structures present in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*.

For this number we have interviewed Professor **Stephen Mitchell** (Harvard University) about his research, where the subject of medieval Norse magic figures as essential: he comments on the meaning of witchcraft in textual sources, from which interdisciplinary research in conjunction with archaeology and gender studies can provide new conceptions and clues of interpretation, going far beyond the perspective of literature as an ethnographic source. Mitchell also urges the study of non-Icelandic sources, indispensable for an overview of the role of memory in Scandinavia, as well as the study of the continuity of traditions to be understood through the framework of “cultural memory”, renewing previous research by folklorists. The entire editorial team thanks the eminent researcher for the kindness of being available for the interview.

Speaking of folklorists, we must also thank Finnish scholar **Frog** (University of Helsinki) for sending his study for this edition, comparing the figure of the Scandinavian *berserker* with the Finno-Karelian *tietäjä* and concluding through an analysis of ritual technology that they have historical connections. The article is highly relevant not only to provide a better understanding of the role of famous warriors from textual sources, but also to enlighten the very notion of ritual, symbol, and supernatural beliefs in Medieval Scandinavia.

Still in the field of magic, a thought-provoking Italian study by professor **Fiorella Di Fonte** (Università degli Studi “G. D’Annunzio” di Chieti-Pescara) examines the famous curse present in the eddic poem *Skirnismál* from a literary and linguistic point of view, pointing to the surprising formal preservation and continuity of themes in the Germanic oral tradition.

Also addressing themes of Norse paganism, **James Michael McIntosh** analyzes the Slave poem *Plácitusdrápa*, where the characterizations of the pagan figure refer much more to a conscious synthesis between pre-Christian tradition and Christianity than to new material elaborated by reference only of the new religion. In another bias, **Eirik Westcoat** examines literary poetry's course, noting the variations around the poet's authority - in particular, the figure of Snorri and the transformation of pagan tradition (myths, runes, poetry, history) into

a material compatible with biblical and Latin references - but he himself, backing tradition, became an authority.

We also have two studies addressing gender issues in Norse Mythology. On the one hand, the Portuguese historian **Hélio Pires** analyzes various general aspects of the sexual behavior of gods and goddesses in literary sources, concluding that they may be authentic pre-Christian conceptions and not merely Christian filters. In another respect, **Amy Jefford Franks** specifically analyzes the sexuality of god Óðinn through *queer* theory, emphasizing that this deity behaves by mediating the male and female roles in culture of the hall. The *Scandia Journal* also received a French contribution to the studies of Mythology, written by **François Anastacio**. In his paper, the author examines how the Scandinavian theonyms received literary influences from Latin and Christian traditions.

Another important contribution to the Journal was **Are Skarstein Kolberg's** study of the theme of battles in *Heimskringla*. Using the perspective of battlefield archaeology, the author resumes the traditional discussion of the historical reliability of the Icelandic sagas, but now with a greater interdisciplinary view and paying attention to the veracity of the social and institutional contexts instead of merely to the events themselves.

This edition received five works regarding translations: four in Spanish and one in Portuguese. **Luis Lerate de Castro** presents his translation of the Icelandic Gramatical Treatises in the *Codex Wormianus* and a study of the Old Icelandic proper names, while **Mariano González Campo** makes *Hungroaka* available to Spanish readers and **José María Izquierdo** also translated the narrative *En tale mot biskopene* into Cervantes' language. **Yuri Fabri Venancio** contemplated a translation of the eddic poem *Baldrs draumar* to Portuguese. All of these works are unpublished and extremely important for the advancement of investigations into Medieval Scandinavia in romance speaking countries.

Finally yet importantly, the issue also received five reviews. Questions regarding the historiography of Brazilian Norse studies were the subject of **Johnni Langer's** text, while **Victor Hugo Sampaio** analyzed three recent publications about the god Þórr. **Luciana de Campos** reviewed the book *At Home at the Castle: Lifestyles at the Medieval Strongholds of Östergötland*; **Monicy Araújo** reviewed the book *The Viking Age: A Time of Many Faces*; **Andréa**

Caselli reviewed the book *Trolls: An Unnatural History* and also **Leandro Vilar** reviewed the book *Mitos e lendas nórdicas*.

We are convinced that the present issue of *Scandia Journal* will provide new directions and impulses in medieval Norse studies in Latin America as well as in romance speaking countries in general. We are grateful for all the support and interest we have received to this issue, especially from several European scholars (including Torfi Hrafnsson Tulinius, Carl Edlund Anderson, Ármann Jakobsson, Macià Riutort, Stephen Mitchell, Fiorella Di Fonte, Frog, Enrique Santos Marinas, Luis Lerate de Castro, Hélio Pires and Mariano González Campo). We wish a helpful and enjoyable reading, not without taking the opportunity to invite you all to participate in the forthcoming third edition.