



# A Lexicon of Medieval Nordic Law

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Love J., Larsson I., Djärv U., Peel C., and Simensen E. (eds.). *A Lexicon of Medieval Nordic Law*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0188>

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*A Lexicon of Medieval Nordic Law* is available online at <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/lmnl/>

Digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0188#resources>

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-815-0

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-816-7

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-817-4

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-818-1

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-819-8

ISBN Digital (XML): 978-1-78374-820-4

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0188

The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, the Magnus Bergvalls Stiftelse and the Stiftelsen Konung Gustaf VI Adolfs fond för svensk kultur have generously contributed to this publication.

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# Introduction

## LMNL

A Lexicon of Medieval Nordic Law (LMNL) is a multilingual reference work designed to make terminology from several medieval legal texts more accessible to English-speaking audiences. It contains over 6000 Nordic headwords, more than 9000 English equivalents and approximately 13,200 cross-references. It is intended to function as a general lexicon of medieval Nordic legal terminology in use before the national laws. Where possible the editors have combined related terms in multiple languages under the same headword in order to highlight similarities throughout the Nordic region during the Middle Ages. The LMNL differs from other reference works, and in particular other lexica, by its presentation of related terms from multiple languages within a single entry in a manner similar to the *Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid* (KLNLM). Around a quarter of the entries feature a brief text articulating how the term fits into the legal landscape. Creation of the LMNL has been made possible in large part due to a generous project grant from the Swedish Research Council (2014–2017) and the gracious cooperation of members of the ongoing Medieval Nordic Laws (MNL) project begun at the University of Aberdeen in 2009. Draft English translations supplied by them, along with a small number of published translations (see table below), form the basis of this lexicon. Additional support was provided by the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, which supplied funding for translations and revisions of some MNL laws and for the LMNL colloquium held in Stockholm in November 2015.

## Material

LMNL is built upon 25 legal texts, mainly provincial laws, written in Old Swedish, Old Icelandic, Old Norwegian, Old Danish, Old Gutnish and Old Faroese. Material for the lexicon was taken from editions used in the latest English translations of the oldest medieval Nordic laws, many of which were produced as part of the Medieval Nordic Laws project. With such a large textual corpus and a relatively short timeframe in which to work, it was deemed most feasible to collect Nordic legal terms and phrases and present them with the English equivalents selected by the translators of the texts in which those terms appear. Modern English equivalents throughout the LMNL are therefore largely taken directly from draft and published translations with minimal interpretation by the editors. Editorial interventions generally consist of minor adjustments in cases where idiomatic translations would be confusing when removed from their contexts. Equivalents in subsequent published translations will possibly vary somewhat from those presented here. Medieval terms have been drawn from editions utilized by the translators. The following table is a list of texts cited, their common abbreviations and bibliographic information on the editions and translations used for the LMNL.

BorgL	Borgartingsloven	Halvorsen, Eyvind Fjeld and Magnus Rindal, eds. 2008. <i>De eldste østlandske kristenrettene</i> . Oslo: Riksarkivet. [Version 1, AM 78 4to] L. Collinson (draft trans.)
DL	Dalalagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1841. <i>Codex iuris Vestmannici: Westmanna-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 5. Lund: Berlingska boktryckeriet. I. Larsson (draft trans.)
EidsL	Eidsivatingsloven	Halvorsen, Eyvind Fjeld and Magnus Rindal, eds. 2008. <i>De eldste østlandske kristenrettene</i> . Oslo: Riksarkivet. [Longer version, AM 68 4to] L. Collinson (draft trans.)

ESjL	Eriks sjællandske lov	Skautrup, Peter, ed. 1936. <i>Eriks sjællandske lov, text 1–2</i> . DGL. Vol. 5. Copenhagen: Gyldendal. Tamm, Ditlev and Helle Vogt, trans. 2016. <i>The Danish Medieval Laws: The Laws of Scania, Zealand and Jutland</i> . London: Routledge.
FrL	Frostatingsloven	Keyser, R and P. A. Munch, eds. 1846. <i>Norges gamle Love indtil 1387</i> . Vol. 1. Christiania: Grøndahl. A. Mindrebø and J. S. Love (draft trans.)
GL	Gutalagen	Pipping, Hugo, ed. 1905–07. <i>Guta lag och Guta saga jämte ordbok</i> . Samfund til Udgivelse af gammel nordisk Litteratur 33. Copenhagen: Møller. Peel, Christine, trans. 2015. <i>Guta Lag and Guta Saga. The Law and History of the Gotlanders</i> . London: Routledge.
Grg	Grágás	Vilhjálmur Finsen, ed. 1852 (repr. 1974). <i>Grágás: Konungsbók</i> . Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag. Dennis, Andrew, Peter Foote and Richard Perkins, trans. 1980–2000. <i>Laws of Early Iceland: Grágás; The Codex Regius of Grágás with material from other manuscripts</i> . 2 vols. Winnipeg: Univ. of Manitoba.
GS	Gutasagan	Pipping, Hugo, ed. 1905–07. <i>Guta lag och Guta saga jämte ordbok</i> . Samfund til Udgivelse af gammel nordisk Litteratur 33. Copenhagen: Møller. Peel, Christine, trans. 2015. <i>Guta Lag and Guta Saga. The Law and History of the Gotlanders</i> . London: Routledge.
GuL	Gulatingsloven	Keyser, R and P. A. Munch, eds. 1846. <i>Norges gamle Love indtil 1387</i> . Vol. I. Christiania: Grøndahl. E. Simensen (draft trans.)
HL	Hälsingelagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1844. <i>Codex iuris Helsingici: Helsingelagen</i> . SSGL. Vol. 6. Lund: Berlingska boktryckeriet. S. Brink (draft trans.)
Jó	Jónsbók	Schulman, Jana K, ed. and trans. 2010. <i>Jónsbók. The Laws of Later Iceland</i> . Saarbrücken: AQ-Verlag.
Js	Járnsíða	Haraldur Bernharðsson, Magnús Lyngdal Magnússon and Már Jónsson, eds. 2005. <i>Járnsíða og Kristinréttur Árna Þorlákssonar</i> . Reykjavík: Sögufélagið. J. S. Love (draft trans.)
JyL	Jyske lov	Skautrup, Peter, ed. 1933. <i>Jyske lov, text 1: NkS 295 8o</i> . DGL Vol. 2. Copenhagen: Gyldendal. Tamm, Ditlev and Helle Vogt, trans. 2016. <i>The Danish Medieval Laws: The Laws of Scania, Zealand and Jutland</i> . London: Routledge.
KRA	Kristinréttir Árna Þorlákssonar	Haraldur Bernharðsson, Magnús Lyngdal Magnússon and Már Jónsson, eds. 2005. <i>Járnsíða og Kristinréttur Árna Þorlákssonar</i> . Reykjavík: Sögufélagið. J. S. Love (draft trans.)
SdmL	Södermannalagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1838. <i>Codex iuris Sudermannici: Södermanna-lagen</i> . SSGL. Vol. 4. Lund: Berlingska boktryckeriet. U. Djärv (draft trans.)
Seyð	Seyðabrævið	Poulsen, Jóhan Hendrik W. and Ulf Zachariasen, eds. Michael Barnes and David R. Margolin, trans. 1971. <i>Seyðabrævið</i> . Tórshavn: Føroya Fróðskaparfelag.
SkKL	Skånske kirkelov	Aakjær, Svend and Erik Kroman, eds. 1933. <i>Skånske lov: Anders Sunesøns parafrase, skånske kirkelov</i> . DGL Vol. 1, bk. 2. Copenhagen: Gyldendal. Tamm, Ditlev and Helle Vogt, trans. 2016. <i>The Danish Medieval Laws: The Laws of Scania, Zealand and Jutland</i> . London: Routledge.



SkL	Skånske lov	Brøndum-Nielsen, Johs and Svend Aakjær, eds. 1933. <i>Skånske lov, text 1–3</i> . DGL. Vol. 1, bk. 1. Copenhagen: Gyldendal. Tamm, Ditlev and Helle Vogt, trans. 2016. <i>The Danish Medieval Laws: The Laws of Scania, Zealand and Jutland</i> . London: Routledge.
SmL	Smålandslagen (Tiohärads lag)	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1844. <i>Codex iuris Smalandici pars de re ecclesiastica: Kristnu-balken af Smålands-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 6. Lund: Berlingska boktryckeriet. S. Fridell (draft trans.)
UL	Upplandslagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1834. <i>Codex iuris Uplandici: Uplands-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 3. Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner. C. Peel (draft trans.)
VmL	Västmannalagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1841. <i>Codex iuris Vestmannici: Westmanna-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 5. Lund: Berlingska boktryckeriet. C. Peel (draft trans.)
VSjL	Valdemars sjællandske lov	Kroman, Erik, ed. 1941. <i>Valdemars sjællandske lov, ældre og yngre redaktion</i> . DGL. Vol. 8. Copenhagen: Gyldendal. Tamm, Ditlev and Helle Vogt, trans. 2016. <i>The Danish Medieval Laws: The Laws of Scania, Zealand and Jutland</i> . London: Routledge.
YVgL	Yngre Västgötalagen	Schlyter, C. J. and H. S. Collin, eds. 1827. <i>Codex iuris vestrogotici: Westgöta-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 1. Stockholm: Z. Hæggström. T. Lindkvist (draft trans.)
ÄVgL	Äldre Västgötalagen	Schlyter, C. J. and H. S. Collin, eds. 1827. <i>Codex iuris vestrogotici: Westgöta-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 1. Stockholm: Z. Hæggström. T. Lindkvist (draft trans.)
ÖgL	Östgötalagen	Schlyter, C. J., ed. 1830. <i>Codex iuris Ostrogotici: Östgöta-lagen</i> . SSSL. Vol. 2. Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner. J. Benham (draft trans.)

## Headword selection

Contents of the LMNL represent only a selection of material from the available medieval legal texts. Four of the editors were given the discretion to determine which terms were legally relevant and merited inclusion in the lexicon. Central legal concepts have been included, as have an expanded set of terms deemed germane to the legal culture of the period. These lists were subsequently brought together to form the core of the lexicon. Not all terms were considered equally necessary by every editor, but all selected terms have been retained in the lexicon with the understanding that some terms may have a more legal significance in one text than in another. Therefore not every term included has been excerpted from all sources used in the LMNL. It is hoped that further material can be included in subsequent editions of the LMNL.

## Principles for lemmatization

The LMNL is intended to illustrate how cognate terms function across the breadth of the medieval Nordic region. To accomplish this, closely related terms have often been gathered under a single headword. A distinction has been drawn between words with the same meaning that differ merely in the form of a prefix or suffix (which are gathered under one headword) and those that are a combination of distinct elements forming words with the same meaning (which have been treated separately). Thus *lyte* (ODan) and *áljótr* (ON) are treated together under the headword *lyti* (OSw), while *arvi* (OSw) and *arftaki* (OSw) are kept separate despite both meaning ‘heir’. Certain linguistic distinctions, such as nominal gender and verbal prefixes, have been ignored, as with the OGu and ON terms for ‘to gamble’ (*dufla*), which can be found under *fordoble* (ODan). Extensive cross-references throughout the LMNL ensure that subordinated headword forms and variants remain accessible. Grammatical description has been limited to part of speech for Nordic headwords and in distinguishing homonyms within the English>Nordic section.

## Entry content

Each entry contains English equivalents and textual references as found in most dictionaries treating historical languages. The headword line lists forms of the excerpted term, including some of the most common spelling variants. Entries in the lexicon are lemmatized and organized according to the Old Swedish form of the headword, if there is one, as the Old Swedish laws form the bulk of the source material within the LMNL. Otherwise the terms are alphabetized according to the Nordic language abbreviation.

## Sample entry

Headword	<p><b>lænsmaþer</b> (OSw) <b>lénsmadr</b> (ON) <b>lænsman</b> (OSw) <b>lænsmander</b> (OSw) noun</p> <p>In the most general sense, a <i>lænsmaþer</i> was a representative, proxy or deputy to a higher official. Like <i>gælkare</i> (q.v.), the title has been used to translate Lat. <i>exactor</i>. In Denmark and Norway a representative of this kind was often called <i>hovedsmand</i>.</p> <p>In the Swedish laws a <i>lænsmaþer</i> was often an official of the king (OSw <i>konungs lænsmaþer</i>) or bishop (OSw <i>biskups lænsmaþer</i>) who saw to local administrative matters and represented their interests at assemblies (OSw <i>þing</i>) and collected taxes and fines on their behalf. <i>Lænsmaþer</i> also appears to be interchangeable with the term for prosecutor (OSw <i>soknari</i>) in YVgL, ÖgL and Sml, all of which appear to have functions similar to the Norwegian <i>ármaðr</i> (q.v.). According to UL the <i>lænsmaþer</i> had the privilege of convening a panel (OSw <i>næmd</i>) which selects judges (OSw <i>domari</i>) in each hundred (OSw <i>hundari</i>). The <i>husabyman</i> (q.v.) in DL may have been the equivalent of a <i>lænsmaþer</i> in Dalarna, though the former may have had some slightly different responsibilities or indeed have been subordinate to the <i>lænsmaþer</i>. The terms <i>konungs maþer</i> and <i>biskups maþer</i> in OSw DL and HL may refer to a <i>lænsmaþer</i>.</p> <p>In Denmark and Norway a <i>lænsmaþer</i> may also refer specifically to a holder of a fief (ON <i>lén</i>, see <i>læn</i>) granted by the king (or a bishop, in the case of church estates). As such he operated as governor of an area during the Middle Ages and was permitted to make use of the region's incomes.</p> <p>In Norway a <i>lénsmadr</i> often referred to a deputy to the sheriff (<i>sýslumadr</i>, see <i>sýsluman</i>) and acted on his behalf, particularly by serving in court proceedings. He also had the authority to arrest criminals. There were not supposed to be more than two <i>lénsmenn</i> in any given district (<i>fylki</i>). According to an ordinance issued in 1293, a man who was appointed <i>lénsmadr</i> had to be a householder (<i>bóndi</i>, see <i>bonde</i>) from a good family. The most important function of a <i>lénsmadr</i> was collecting incomes, namely taxes and fines. He also had police duties and could stand in</p>	<p>for the law-man (<i>lögmaðr</i>, see <i>laghmaþer</i>). After 1537 the administration system was restructured and a <i>lénsmadr</i> was renamed <i>bondeleismann</i>. The title <i>leismann</i> is still used in Norway.</p> <p>In the Icelandic laws the <i>lénsmadr</i> generally refers to the sheriff and his aides. The term does not appear until amendments began to be made to Jónsbók, though it is used in several medieval Icelandic diplomas thereafter.</p> <p><i>administrator</i> OSw YVgL Kkb, Urb, Tb, Föb, Add  <i>bailiff</i> OSw DL Mb, Tjdb, Rb, HL Mb, Rb  <i>bishop's administrator</i> OSw UL Kkb, VmL Kkb  <i>deputy</i> ONorw FrL Mhb 60  <i>king's administrator</i> OSw HL Rb, YVgL Urb, Tb  <i>king's local administrator</i> OSw HL Rb  <i>local administrator</i> OSw UL Kgb, Mb, Kmb, Blb, Rb, VmL Mb, Kmb, Bb, Rb  <i>official</i> OSw HL Kkb  <i>representative</i> OSw SdmL Kkb, Jb, Bb, Kmb, Mb, Tjdb, Rb  <i>sheriff</i> OSw HL Rb</p> <p>Expressions:  <b>biskups lænsmaþer, biskups lænsman, biskups lænsman, biskups man</b> (OSw)  <i>bishop's administrator</i> OSw UL Kkb, Äb, Mb VmL Kkb  <i>bishop's bailiff</i> OSw DL Kkb, Rb  <i>bishop's official</i> OSw HL Kkb  <b>konungs lænsmaþer, konungs man, konungs lænsman</b> (OSw)  <i>king's administrator</i> OSw DL Tjdb UL Kkb, Mb, Rb VmL Mb, Rb  <i>king's bailiff</i> OSw HL Md DL Mb, Rb</p> <p>See also: <i>ármaðr, gælkare, husabyman, laghmaþer, læn, sýsluman, umbuþsman</i></p> <p>Refs: CV s.v. <i>lén</i>; F s.v. <i>lénsmadr</i>; KLNLM s.v. <i>embedsindtægter, hovedsmand, leismann, soknare</i>; LexMA s.v. <i>Lehen</i>; NGL s.v. <i>lénsmadr</i>; Schlyter s.v. <i>lænsmaþer</i>; SNL s.v. <i>leismann</i></p>
Article		<p>Equivalents and Citations</p> <p>Phrases</p> <p>Cross-references</p> <p>References</p>

## Headword forms

Normalized headword forms have been adopted from the most comprehensive dictionaries currently available to enable consultation of earlier and ongoing lexicographic efforts. The forms of the Old Swedish and Old Gutnish headwords have been taken more or less directly from Schlyter's *Ordbok till Samlingen af Sweriges gamla lagar*, and Old Danish headwords follow the online *Gammeldansk Ordbog* wherever possible. Old Icelandic, Old Norwegian and Old Faroese entries are listed under the normalized Old Norse (ON) given in the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*. Some negative adjective forms are given their own headword (e.g. *ogipter, ólýstr*), and certain participial verbal forms are here treated as adjectives. Some headwords with multiple common forms are listed as alternatives to facilitate easier searching. Alternative forms were selected by editorial discretion and are not intended to be comprehensive.



## Grammar

Grammatical analysis has been limited to part of speech for Nordic headwords. No grammatical information for terms is presented in the English>Nordic section except to distinguish homonyms.

## Explanatory articles

Approximately one quarter of the headwords have also been furnished with explanatory articles. They are intended to provide concise supplementary information about the legal concept the term represents, and readers are encouraged to consult the bibliographic references for more detailed analysis. Articles were composed by the LMNL editors with assistance and commentary of external experts. Article content varies in scope depending on the amount of identified scholarship on the term. Certain articles offer brief explanations of the contexts in which a term is found (e.g. ON *halsbók*), while others (e.g. OSw *sökia*) give a preliminary semantic analysis. Still others (e.g. OSw *laghmaþer*) provide historical or comparative background relating to the term as it is used across regions and time periods.

## English equivalents

English equivalents are taken more or less directly from published or draft translations without exclusion. In some cases English synonyms have been employed by individual translators to render the same medieval word or phrase, and the parts of speech of the English will not always correspond to those of the Nordic originals. Likewise an English equivalent may be applied to multiple Nordic terms. The editors have elected to leave the majority of these as an accumulation of equivalents in alphabetical order to illustrate the (at times extensive) semantic range of the legal terms (cf. OSw *fæ* and OSw *sak*), and therefore the editors have made minimal attempts to evaluate the choices of the translators. In a few rare cases (e.g. OSw *agnabaker*) the draft translations currently have no English equivalent, and the medieval term is here given within {}.

## Phrases/expressions/combinations

Phrases throughout the LMNL have been excerpted at the discretion of the editors with no bound set of criteria beyond legal relevance. Most phrases presented here are set phrases with a technical legal definition or idioms with a meaning specific to legal contexts. Phrases are not a primary focus of LMNL, and those given represent only a selection of possible legal expressions present in the medieval laws. English equivalents and textual references for phrases are presented in the same manner as for individual headwords.

## Textual references

Textual references are given for each English equivalent, most of which have been taken verbatim from published or draft translations. Textual references listed beside the equivalents for each headword are intended to be illustrative rather than comprehensive. These textual references have been divided by language grouping; OSw for laws written in Old Swedish, ODan for Old Danish, OFar for Old Faroese, OGu for Old Gutnish, OIce for Old Icelandic and ONorw for Old Norwegian. These are further divided by text and section or chapter number (see abbreviations below). Terms which appear frequently within one or more laws and have a common English equivalent (e.g. OSw *bonde* ‘householder’) often give only the abbreviation for the work in which the term appears.

## See also

In many entries cross-references are given to assist readers in locating synonyms or related terms.

## References

A list of references to published works discussing the headword. In most cases author or editor name and year are given and are keyed to the bibliography.

## English>Nordic section

The English>Nordic section of the LMNL is a mirror of the Nordic>English section. It is intended as a limited index to give users an overview of the range of medieval terms covered by an individual English equivalent. For instance, the English equivalent ‘fine’ could represent ON *áfang*, OGu *alagh* and OSw *bot* as well as several similar terms.

## Appendices and bibliography

Six appendices have been supplied by the editors to provide information about groups of terms clustering around general medieval Nordic legal concepts. They are intended to give a more meaningful description of the terms together than would be allowed by articles distributed throughout the lexicon. These appendices cover:

Appendix A: Administrative and judicial divisions

Appendix B: Agriculture and forestry

Appendix C: Borders, boundaries and boundary markers

Appendix D: Currency and weights & measures

Appendix E: Kinship

Appendix F: Calendar of Church Feast and Fast Days

A bibliography has also been appended. It is intended to serve as a selective list of primary and secondary works treating the legal texts covered by the LMNL. An emphasis has been placed on recent titles to demonstrate how research has progressed since the publication of the *Kulturhistorisk leksikon*. Many of the works cited are those which informed the explanatory articles throughout the LMNL.

## Abbreviations

Many abbreviations for individual sections or books in the laws, particularly Swedish laws, refer to accepted modern titles rather than to the medieval ones, which were often lacking. For example, the abbreviation Rb stands for Sw *Rättegångsbalken*, rather than OSw *þingmalabalker* (‘The Legal Procedure Section’ in English).

## Cited sources

BorgL	The Borgarting Law (Norw <i>Borgartingsloven</i> )
DL	The Dala Law (Sw <i>Dalalagen</i> , often called <i>Äldre Västmannalagen</i> (ÄVmL) ‘The Older Västmannalagen’)
Bb	The book concerning building and community (Sw <i>Byggningsbalken</i> , OSw <i>bygningabalker</i> )
Eb	The book concerning the King’s oath (Sw <i>Edsöresbalken</i> , OSw <i>kunungs epsöre</i> )
Gb	The book concerning matrimony (Sw <i>Giftermålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>giptninga balker</i> )
Kkb	The book concerning Christian law (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>kristnubalker</i> )
Mb	The book concerning personal and property rights (Sw <i>Manhelgdsbalken</i> , OSw <i>manhælgðisbalker</i> )
Rb	The book concerning the legal process (Sw <i>Rättegångsbalken</i> , OSw <i>þingbalker</i> )
Tjdb	The book concerning theft (Sw <i>Tjuvnadsbalken</i> , OSw <i>um þiufnað</i> )
EidsL	The Eidsivating Law (Norw <i>Eidsivatingsloven</i> )
ESjL	Erik’s Law of Zealand (Dan <i>Eriks sjællandske lov</i> )
FrL	The Frostathing Law (Norw <i>Frostatingsloven</i> )
ArbA	The first book concerning inheritance (Norw <i>Den fyrste arvebolken</i> )
ArbB	The second book concerning inheritance (Norw <i>Den andre arvebolken</i> )



Bvb	The book concerning offences and oaths (Norw <i>Brotsverksbolken</i> )
Intr	Introduction (Norw <i>Innleiing</i> )
Jkb	The book concerning land purchase (Norw <i>Jordkaupebolken</i> )
KrbA	The first book concerning Church Law (Norw <i>Den fyrste kristendomsbolken</i> )
KrbB	The second book concerning Church Law (Norw <i>Den andre kristendomsbolken</i> )
Kvb	The book concerning women (Norw <i>Kvinnebolken</i> )
Leb	The book concerning the naval levy (Norw <i>Leidangsbolken</i> )
LlbA	The first book concerning tenancy (Norw <i>Den fyrste landsleigebolken</i> )
LlbB	The second book concerning tenancy (Norw <i>Den andre landsleigebolken</i> )
Mhb	On inviolability of the person (Norw <i>Mannhelgebolken</i> )
R	Amendments (Norw <i>Rettarbøter</i> )
Rgb	The book concerning the legal process (Norw <i>Rettargangsbolken</i> )
Sab	The book concerning wergild (Norw <i>Sakørebolken</i> )
Tfb	The book concerning summons to a thing assembly (Norw <i>Tingfarebolken</i> )
Var	A book on various topics/miscellaneous matters (Norw <i>Bolk om ymse emne</i> )
GL	The Law of the Gotlanders (Sw <i>Gutalagen</i> )
Grg	‘The Grey Goose’ Laws of the Icelandic Commonwealth (ON <i>Grágás</i> )
Arþ	Inheritance section (ON <i>Arfa þáttur</i> )
Bat	The wergild ring list (ON <i>Baugatal</i> )
Feþ	Betrothals section (ON <i>Festa þáttur</i> )
Fjl	On hire of property (ON <i>Um fjárleigur</i> )
Hrs	On commune obligations (ON <i>Um hreppaskil</i> )
Klb	Christian Laws section (ON <i>Kristinna laga þáttur</i> )
Lbþ	Land claims section (ON <i>Landbrigða þáttur</i> )
Lrþ	The Law Council section (ON <i>Lögréttu þáttur</i> )
Lsþ	The Lawspeaker’s section (ON <i>Lögsögumanns þáttur</i> )
Misc	‘Miscellaneous articles’
Ómb	Dependents section (ON <i>Ómaga bálkr</i> )
Rsp	Searches section (ON <i>Rannsóknna þáttur</i> )
Tíg	On tithe payment (ON <i>Um tíundargjald</i> )
Vis	Treatment of homicide (ON <i>Vígslóði</i> )
Þsp	Assembly procedures section (ON <i>Þingskapa þáttur</i> )
GS	The Saga of the Gotlanders (Sw <i>Gutasagan</i> )
GuL	The Gulathing Law (Norw <i>Gulatingssloven</i> )
Arb	The book concerning inheritance (Norw <i>Arvebolken</i> )
Kpb	The book concerning trade (Norw <i>Kjøpebolken</i> )

Krb	The Church Law (Norw <i>Kristendomsbolken, Kristenretten</i> )
Kvb	The book concerning matrimony (Norw <i>Kvinnebortgiftingsbolken</i> )
Kvr	The rules about whaling (Norw <i>Kvalretten</i> )
Leb	The book concerning the naval levy (Norw <i>Leidangsbolken</i> )
Llb	The book concerning tenancy (Norw <i>Landsleigebolken</i> )
Løb	The book concerning freedmen (Norw <i>Løysingsbolken</i> )
Mhb	On inviolability of the person (Norw <i>Mannhelgebolken</i> )
Reb	Amendments (Norw <i>Rettarbøter</i> )
Sab	The book concerning wergild (Norw <i>Bjarne Mårssons saktal</i> )
Tfb	The book concerning summons to a thing assembly (Norw <i>Tingfarebolken</i> )
Tjb	The book concerning theft (Norw <i>Tjuvebolken</i> )
Trm	The Peace Pledge (Norw <i>Trygdemålet</i> )
Olb	The book concerning redemption of odal land (Norw <i>Odelsløysingsbolken</i> )
HL	The Law of the Hälsingar (Sw <i>Hälsingelagen</i> )
Bib	The book concerning building and community (Sw <i>Byalagsbalken, OSw viþerbobalker</i> )
För	<i>Praefatio</i> (Sw <i>Förord, OSw ‘Praefatio’</i> )
Jb	The book concerning land (Sw <i>Jordabalken, OSw jorþarbalker</i> )
Kgb	The King’s book (Sw <i>Konungabalken, OSw kunungsalker</i> )
Kkb	The book concerning Church and Christian Law (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken, OSw kirkiubalker</i> )
Kmb	The book concerning trade (Sw <i>Köpmålabalken, OSw köpmalabalker</i> )
Mb	The book concerning personal and property rights (Sw <i>Manhelgdsbalken, OSw manhælghisbalker</i> )
Rb	The book concerning legal process (Sw <i>Rättegångsbalken, OSw þingmalabalker</i> )
Äb	The book concerning inheritance (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken, OSw ærfþarbalker</i> )
Jó	‘Jón’s Book’ The Laws of Later Iceland (1280) (ON <i>Jónsbók</i> )
Fml	Maritime law (ON <i>Farmannalög</i> )
HT	Of the Holy Faith (ON <i>Um helga trú</i> )
Kab	Trade (ON <i>Kaupabálkr</i> )
Kge	Marriage and inheritance (ON <i>Kvenna giftingar með erfðum</i> (includes <i>Framfærslubálkr</i> (Maintenance of dependents))
Lbb	Land claims (ON <i>Landsbrigðabálkr</i> )
Llb	Tenancy (ON <i>Landsleigubálkr</i> (includes <i>Rekabálkr</i> (Drift rights)))
MagBref	Letter of King Magnús (ON <i>bréf Magnúss konungs</i> )
Mah	Personal rights (ON <i>Mannhelgi</i> )
Sg	Payment of tax (ON <i>Um skatt greizlu</i> )
þfb	Assembly attendance (ON <i>Þingfararbálkr</i> )
þjb	Theft (ON <i>Þjófabálkr</i> )



Js	‘Ironside’ The National Law of Iceland issued in 1271 by King Magnús Lagabætir of Norway (ON <i>Járnsíða</i> )
Ert	The inheritance list (ON <i>Erfðatal</i> )
Kab	Trade section (ON <i>Kaupabálkr</i> )
Kdb	Christianity section (ON <i>Kristindómsbálkr</i> )
Kvg	Marriages (ON <i>Kvennagiftingar</i> )
Lbb	Land-claims section (ON <i>Landabrigðabálkur</i> )
Mah	Personal rights (ON <i>Mannhelgi</i> )
Rkb	Drift rights section (ON <i>Rekabálkur</i> )
Þfb	Assembly procedures section (ON <i>Þingfarabálkur</i> )
Þjb	Theft section (ON <i>Þjófabálkur</i> )
JyL	The Law of Jutland (Dan <i>Jyske lov</i> )
KRA	The Church Law of Árni Þorláksson (1275) (ON <i>Kristinréttir Árna Þorlákssonar Skálholtsbiskups</i> )
SdmL	The Laws of the <i>Supermæn</i> (Sw <i>Södermannalagen</i> )
Bb	The village community section (Sw <i>Byggningsbalken</i> , OSw <i>bygningabalker</i> )
Conf	<i>Confirmatio</i> (Sw <i>Konung Magnus Erikssons stadfästelse</i> , OSw ‘ <i>Confirmatio Regis Magni</i> ’)
För	<i>Prologus</i> (Sw <i>Förord</i> , OSw ‘ <i>Prologus</i> ’)
Gb	The marriage section (Sw <i>Giftermålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>giptninga balker</i> )
Jb	The land section (Sw <i>Jordabalken</i> , OSw <i>jorþarbalker</i> )
Kgb	The King’s section (Sw <i>Konungabalken</i> , OSw <i>kunungsalker</i> )
Kkb	The Church section (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>kirkiubalker</i> )
Kmb	The trade section (Sw <i>Köpmålabalken</i> , OSw <i>köpmalabalker</i> )
Mb	The personal security section (Sw <i>Manhelgdsbalken</i> , OSw <i>manhælgthisbalker</i> )
Rb	The assembly procedure section (Sw <i>Rättgångsbalken</i> , OSw <i>þingmalabalker</i> )
Till	<i>Additamenta</i> (Sw <i>Tillägg</i> , OSw ‘ <i>Additamenta</i> ’)
Tjdb	The theft section (Sw <i>Tjuvnadsbalken</i> , OSw <i>þjufnaþabalker</i> )
Äb	The Inheritance section (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken</i> , OSw <i>ærfþarbalker</i> )
Seyð	The Sheep Letter (1298) (OFar <i>Seyðabrævið</i> )
SkKL	The Church Law of Scania (Dan <i>Skånske kirkelov</i> , Sw <i>Skånska kyrkrätten</i> )
SkL	The Law of Scania (Dan <i>Skånske lov</i> , Sw <i>Skånelagen</i> )
SmL	The Småland Law (Sw <i>Smålandslagen</i> or <i>Tiohärads lag</i> )
UL	The Law of Uppland (Sw <i>Upplandslagen</i> )
Add	Supplements (OSw ‘ <i>Additamenta</i> ’)
Blb	The village community book (Sw <i>Byalagsbalken</i> , OSw <i>Wipærbo balkær</i> )
För	Foreword (Sw <i>Förord</i> OSw ‘ <i>Praefatio</i> ’)
Jb	The land book (Sw <i>Jordabalken</i> , OSw <i>Jorþæ balkær</i> )

Kgb	The King's book (Sw <i>Konungabalken</i> , OSw <i>Kununx balkær</i> )
Kkb	The Christian book (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>Kirkiu balkær</i> )
Kmb	The trading book (Sw <i>Köpmålabalken</i> , OSw <i>Kiöpmalæ balkær</i> )
Mb	The personal security book (Sw <i>Manhelgdsbalken</i> , OSw <i>Manhælghis balkær</i> )
Rb	The legal process book (Sw <i>Rättegångsbalken</i> , OSw <i>Pingmalæ balkær</i> )
StfBM	King Birger Magnusson's Charter of Ratification (Sw <i>Konung Birger Magnussons stadfästelsebrev</i> , OSw 'Confirmatio')
Äb	The inheritance book (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken</i> OSw <i>Ærfpæ balkær</i> )
VgL	The Laws of the Västgötar (Sw <i>Västgöotalagen</i> )
VmL	The Law of Västmanland (Sw <i>Västmannalagen</i> )
Bb	The settlement book (OSw <i>Bygninga balkær</i> )
För	Foreword (Sw <i>Förord</i> , OSw 'Praefatio')
Jb	The land book (Sw <i>Jordabalken</i> , OSw <i>Jorþa balkær</i> )
Kgb	The King's book (Sw <i>Konungabalken</i> , OSw <i>Konongs balkær</i> )
Kkb	The Christian book (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>Kristno balkær</i> )
Kmb	The trading book (Sw <i>Köpmålabalken</i> , OSw <i>Köpmala balkær</i> )
Mb	The personal security book (Sw <i>Manhelgdsbalken</i> , OSw <i>Manhælghis balkær</i> )
Rb	The legal process book (Sw <i>Rättegångsbalken</i> , OSw <i>Pingmala balkær</i> )
Äb	The inheritance book (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken</i> , OSw <i>Ærfda balkær</i> )
VSjL	Valdemar's Law of Zealand (Dan <i>Valdemars sjællandske lov</i> )
YVG	The Younger Law of the Västgötar (Sw <i>Yngre Västgöotalagen</i> )
Add	<i>Additamenta</i> (Sw <i>Tillägg</i> , OSw 'Additamenta')
Drb	The book concerning manslaughter (Sw <i>Dråparebalken</i> , OSw <i>draparibalker</i> )
Frb	The book concerning peace (Sw <i>Fredsbalken</i> , OSw <i>friþbalker</i> )
Föb	The book concerning illegal appropriation (Sw <i>Förnämesbalken</i> , OSw <i>fornæmisbalker</i> )
Gb	The book concerning matrimony (Sw <i>Giftermålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>giptarbalker</i> )
Jb	The book concerning land (Sw <i>Jordabalken</i> , OSw <i>jorþarbalker</i> )
Kkb	The book concerning the Church (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>kirkiubalker</i> )
Kvab	The book concerning mills (Sw: <i>Kvarnbalken</i> , OSw <i>mylnobolker</i> )
Rlb	The book concerning lawlessness (Sw <i>Rättlösabalken</i> , OSw <i>rætlosubolker</i> )
Tb	The book concerning theft (Sw <i>Tjuvabalken</i> , OSw <i>þiuvabalker</i> )
Urb	Outlaw cases (Sw <i>Urbotamål</i> , OSw <i>urbotamal</i> )
Utg	The book concerning fences (Sw <i>Utgärdabalken</i> , OSw <i>utgærþabolker</i> )
Vs	The book concerning accidental wounds (Sw <i>Balken om vådasår</i> , OSw <i>af vapasarum bolker</i> )
Äb	The book concerning inheritance (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken</i> , OSw <i>arvabolker</i> )



ÄVgL	The Older Law of the Västgötar (Sw <i>Äldre Västgötalagen</i> )
Föb	The book concerning illegal appropriation (Sw <i>Förnämesbalken</i> , OSw <i>fornämisbalker</i> )
Fös	Cases concerning illegal appropriation (Sw <i>Förnämessaker</i> , OSw <i>fornämissakir</i> )
Gb	The book concerning matrimony (Sw <i>Giftermålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>giptarbalker</i> )
Jb	The book concerning land (Sw <i>Jordabalken</i> , OSw <i>jorparbalker</i> )
Kkb	The book concerning the Church (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>kirkiubalker</i> )
Kva	How a mill is built (Sw <i>Huru kvarn skall byggas</i> , OSw <i>huru mylnu skal göra</i> )
Lek	About a player's rights (Sw <i>Lekarerätten</i> , OSw <i>lekararätter</i> )
Md	About manslaughter (Sw <i>Om mandrâp</i> , OSw <i>af mandrapi</i> )
Rlb	The book concerning lawlessness (Sw <i>Rättlösabalken</i> , OSw <i>rätlosubolker</i> )
Slb	The book concerning fighting (Sw <i>Slagsmålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>bardagha</i> )
Smb	The book concerning wounds (Sw <i>Balken om sårsmål</i> , OSw <i>af saramalum bolker</i> )
Tb	The book concerning theft (Sw <i>Tjuvabalken</i> , OSw <i>þiuvabalker</i> )
Urb	Outlaw cases (Sw <i>Urbotamål</i> , OSw <i>urbotamal</i> )
Vs	About wounds by accident (Sw <i>Om vådasår</i> , OSw <i>af vapasarum</i> )
Äb	The book concerning inheritance (Sw <i>Ärvdabalken</i> , OSw <i>ærfparbalker</i> )
ÖgL	The Law of the Östgötar (Sw <i>Östgötalagen</i> )
Db	The book of killings (Sw <i>Dråpsbalken</i> , OSw <i>drapabalker</i> )
Eb	The king's sworn peace (Sw <i>Edsöresbalken</i> , OSw <i>kunungs epsöre</i> )
Kkb	The church book (Sw <i>Kyrkobalken</i> , OSw <i>kristnubalker</i> )
Vm	Cases of accidents and cases of wounds, adultery, rapine and theft (Sw <i>Vådamålsbalken</i> , OSw <i>vapamal ok saramal, hor, ran ok styld</i> )

## Other Abbreviations

ASun	Liber legis Scaniae Dan: <i>Anders Sunesens parafrase af Skånske Lov</i>
Bj	The law for trading places and towns ON: <i>Bjarkeyjarréttr</i>
BjR	The law for trading places and towns Sw: <i>Bjärlöarätten</i>
Dan	Danish
KrL	King Kristoffer's Law of the Realm Sw: <i>Kristoffers landslag</i>
MEL	King Magnus Eriksson's Law of the Realm Sw: <i>Magnus Erikssons landslag</i>
MES	King Magnus Eriksson's Town Law Sw: <i>Magnus Erikssons stadslag</i>

MLL	King Magnus the Law-Mender's Law of the Realm Norw: <i>Magnus Håkonsson Lagabøters landslov</i> ONorw: <i>Magnus lagabætrs landslög</i>
Norw	Norwegian
ODan	Old Danish
OFar	Old Faroese
OGu	Old Gutnish
OIce	Old Icelandic
ON	Old Norse
ONorw	Old Norwegian
OSw	Old Swedish
SjKL	The Church Law for Zealand Dan: <i>Sjællandske kirkelov</i>
SkSt	The Town Law of Scania Dan: <i>Skånske stadsret</i> Sw: <i>Skånska stadsrätten</i>
Sw	Swedish
VSjL yr	King Valdemar's Younger Law for Zealand (younger redaction?) Dan: <i>Valdemars sjællandske lov</i>
VSjL ær	King Valdemar's Older Law for Zealand (older redaction?) Dan: <i>Valdemars sjællandske lov</i>
VSt	The Town Law of Visby Sw: <i>Visby stadslag</i>

## Further notes

A note on English spelling: All English equivalents of Nordic terms drawn from published and draft translations have been normalized to reflect British spelling conventions, regardless of how they appear in their source. An attempt has been made to standardize language usage and style throughout this work, but various portions have been compiled by multiple authors and reflect their individual preferences.

Medieval Swedish law codes are often referred to by the accepted groupings of Göta laws (*Äldre Västgötalagen*, *Yngre Västgötalagen*, *Östgötalagen*, *Smålandslagen*) and Svea laws (*Dalalagen*, *Hälsingelagen*, *Södermannalagen*, *Upplandslagen*, *Västmannalagen*).

Alphabetical order of the headwords generally follows the principles of the Dictionary of Old Norse Prose:

a, á, b, c, d, ð, e, é, f, g, h, i, í, j, k, l, m, n, o, ó, p, q, r, s, t, u, ú, v, x, y, ý, z, þ, æ, ö, ø, ó

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