



The Otter's Ransom: Moral Accompaniments to Legal Codes in the Icelandic Sagas

William Creedle

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The Otter's Ransom: Moral Accompaniments to Legal Codes in the Icelandic Sagas William Creedle The Icelandic sagas contain many interesting clues to the history and culture of both the Vikings and the Early Christian Middle Ages when most were committed to vellum. As written documents they offer a static snapshot of the time in which they were written. The sagas served many purposes: historical justification for family control, documentation of Kingship lines, expressions of pre-nationalistic thought, means to integrate Christianity, perpetuation of traditions, and even entertainment. But what if they served another purpose: a way to transfer legal and moral code in a mostly illiterate society whose heads derived power though their ability to reach fair compromises (often at the expense of what may be right).



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