**PAPER XII: OLD NORSE**

**Special Subject Essay 1:**

**Discuss the representation of time in *Vǫluspá***

**Candidate number 569101**

The mythological poem *Vǫluspá* recounts in some sixty-three stanzas of succinct, elusive Old Norse *fornyrðislag* verse a holistic mythological cosmology which involves both looking back to the creation of the world and looking forward to the world’s destruction and subsequent rebirth.[[1]](#footnote-1) This ambitious subject matter is related by a prophetess or *vǫlva* who permits our entry into both past and future, describing both in our present moment (in which ‘our’ applies both to the instant of the poem’s performance and the instant of reading the extant manuscript today). *Vǫluspá* is thus ripe for an exploration of what John Lindow calls ‘mythic time’, particularly in terms of whether its presentation of time could be described as a linear or cyclical arrangement – whether the poem indicates an unbroken chronological progression or gestures towards an infinite set of endings and new beginnings.[[2]](#footnote-2) This will involve (chronologically speaking) a detailed close reading of various aspects of *Vǫluspá* whilstcomparing how they support either the linear or the cyclical models, a consideration of what relevance this question has on how we read the poem, and concluding remarks on the nature of this perceived linear/cyclical dichotomy and whether *Vǫluspá* in some way eludes attempts to place it within such a binary division.

It is instructive to begin by asserting *Vǫluspá*’s inherent form as a linear narrative; while it does not merely tell one story in the traditional sense, it has a clear chronological structure within it, the life and death of the universe broadly fitting the linear model of time as an arrow proceeding from A to B. This model, suggested by Arthur Eddington in 1927 and closely associated with the Second Law of Thermodynamics, is in many ways a good fit for *Vǫluspá*, in particular the ways in which entropy and disorder increase exponentially as *Ragnarǫk* arrives. In considering the poem’s chronology, the distinctions drawn by Lindow are especially pertinent: from the ‘distant past’, prior to the universe’s creation and home of *Ginnungagap* to the ‘near past’, the creation of the universe and the beginning of time-reckoning alongside the first war between the *Vanir* and the *Æsir*, we then proceed via the ‘mythological present’ (during which the poem’s narration takes place) to a ‘near future’ in which the terrors of *Ragnarǫk* come to pass and the world is destroyed.[[3]](#footnote-3) This would appear to form a linear progression; that eight of the sixty-six stanzas begin with ‘*Þá*’ also reinforces the idea that, by and large, this is a linear narrative we are dealing with, concerned – as are all narratives – with what happens next.

The notion that time is, if not exactly comprehensible, certainly calculable and orderable, appears in *Vǫluspá* shortly after the creation of the world. Before the establishment of a linear chronology we are told only the vagueness ‘*ár var alda*’ (3:1), an imprecise evocation of the distant past, but once the sun, moon and stars have been established in the sky, timekeeping can begin. This is an explicit action on the part of the gods: they name the times of day and quantify these by amassing them into years by which the count of time passing can be kept (‘*árom at telja*’, 6:10).[[4]](#footnote-4) The sun is referenced again as *Ragnarǫk* approaches (‘*svǫrt verða sólskin*’, 40:5) and then along with the stars in stanza 54, at which point *Ragnarǫk* is at its height: ‘*sól tér sortna*… *hverfa af himni heiðar stjǫrnur*’ (55:1, 3-4). The apocalypse thus sees the ruination and decay of the celestial bodies which the poem has already named as the markers of chronological time: eventually, entropy eats up linear time too.

An additional reinforcement of the linear progression of *Vǫluspá*’s universe comes in the creation of the first two human beings, Askr and Embla, chiefly the intriguing adjective ‘*ørlǫglaus*’ (17:8) that is used to describe them. That ‘*ørlǫg*’ has the meaning of ‘Ur-law’ or ‘first-laying-down-of-things’ indicates that, until Askr and Embla have been granted the gift of life and have taken their first breaths, they are without any kind of destiny or sense of a future ahead of them. This emergence into life, however, is “inseparable from fate”.[[5]](#footnote-5) Once their first breaths have been taken and their individual calendars have started, they are marked as part of the world and thus creatures with linear, finite lifespans – creatures which, to return briefly to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, will one day ‘end up at room temperature’. [[6]](#footnote-6) [[7]](#footnote-7) The destinies of their descendants (‘*ørlǫg seggja*’, 20:12) are then decided by three figures akin to the Fates of Greek myth – Urðr, Verðandi and Skuld, the three Norns, whose names refer to Past, Present and Future. That a teleology can be mapped out at the moment of humanity’s creation and imposed upon us by higher powers implies strongly that time can be ordered, calculated and even controlled.

Lindow’s chronological outline of *Vǫluspá* does not, however, end with the ‘near future’ but goes on to outline the ‘distant future’, the epoch after *Ragnarǫk* in which the world is reborn, a time in which ‘*sér hón upp koma ǫðru sinni jǫrð ór aegi iðjagrœna*’ (57:1-4).[[8]](#footnote-8) It is these last few stanzas which most clearly suggest the plausibility of a cyclical reading of *Vǫluspá*; indeed, the world’s destruction (and not just the Earth – even ‘*himin sjálfan*’, 55:8) followed by its subsequent re-emerging out of the ocean is an explicitly cyclical act. The poem could easily have ended with the destruction of the world, which, with its ‘lava-like spitting cacophony of pounding, clashing, spluttering hard sounds’ would certainly have formed a climactic ending to a live performance – and yet the audience is taken a little further, into the dawning of the next age.[[9]](#footnote-9) Tantalisingly, we end on a beginning, as though the listening public were expected to return to hear in a kind of sequel what happened in the second cycle of the world – but no such poem survives, if there ever was one.

To explain why *Vǫluspá* *II* would be unnecessary, we could point to the ways in which the second cycle of the world looks as though it will resemble the first, particularly the fact that the beginning of this next cycle is clearly paralleled with the creation of the world the first time it occurred. Noteworthy phrasing at this juncture includes ‘*ǫðru sinni*’ (the creation of the Earth is happening *again*), ‘*jǫrð ór aegi*’ (echoing ‘*Burs synir bjǫðum um yppðu*’ (4:1-2)), and ‘*gullnar tǫflur í grasi*’ (59:3-4), which evokes not just the meaning but even the sound of ‘*teflðu í túni*’ (8:1). The poet even goes out of their way to clarify for the audience that these chequer pieces are ‘*þaers* *í árdaga áttar hǫfðu*’ (59:5-6): these are very explicitly identified as the exact same items in the exact same meadow. Ursula Dronke is unequivocal on this point: ‘It would seem to be the same Earth returning, green once more, the same golden chequers found in the grass, the same Odinic precincts that the young, reborn gods inhabit’.[[10]](#footnote-10)

After all that exists has been destroyed in an apocalypse, therefore, the same Earth can handily rise from the waves of its own accord (note the absence of *Burs synir* or equivalents this time round, as though this is simply something which the universe can instigate at will) – and furthermore it is the same Earth down to the minutest detail (the chequer pieces). But, as Bauschatz points out, ‘*Vǫluspá* gives no indication that the events it finally describes are to be considered as ‘final’ events’.[[11]](#footnote-11) If this renewal is an event that can happen quite so easily, might it not occur again after the next *Ragnarǫk*, and so on and on *ad infinitum*, ‘another cycle in an endless row of cycles’?[[12]](#footnote-12) Might this even have happened *before*? We are told that this is the second instance of the Earth rising out of the sea, but given the potential vast scope of infinite renewals and infinite *Ragnarǫk*s, and taking into account that the sibyl seems unable or unwilling to report much of the renewed world, can we be sure that there are not extended cycles of past and future that are too distant in either direction for her to see?

Thus we arrive at the cyclical model of time in *Vǫluspá* – merely a glimpse of one iteration of a series of repeated events, the Earth being born and dying and being reborn over and over. Once the case for this model has been presented, other parallels and cyclical leitmotifs in the text become more significant in the light of the reborn Earth, which reflectively casts its greenery and sunlight back over the preceding stanzas. The first cycle of the world’s existence contains a marked parallel between the first war in the world (‘*fyrst í heimi*’, 24:4) at its very beginning and the last war in the world at its very end (a ‘*skeggǫld, skalmǫld… vindǫld, vargǫld – áðr verǫld steypisk*’, 44:7, 8-9), as though the two conflicts demarcate the beginning and end of a cycle as in a chiasmus; the argument could be made that the brief appearance of the dragon *Níðhǫggr* in the final stanza is a harbinger of the first war of the second cycle, like ravens gathering before a battle. We might also note that though Askr and Embla are ‘*ørlǫglaus*’ and their destiny is not set in stone until their body clocks begin counting down, the empty husks of their bodies are nevertheless lying there ‘*á landi*’ (17:5) where the *Æsir* first come across them. They were not therefore placed there by the gods, so it is as if they came into being *with* the world, where, without breath or voice or flesh or life, they lay waiting for the gods to come and animate them; there is no textual confirmation that a second Askr and Embla appear with the new Earth in the second cycle, but given that even the gods’ trinkets and playthings recur, it is certainly not impossible that the first human beings will too.[[13]](#footnote-13)

We will not overly trouble ourselves with the details of Dronke’s argument for the existence of *two* sibylline voices to explain away the inconsistencies of first person ‘*ek*’ and third person ‘*hón*’ that recur throughout (she suggests, ingeniously but with minimal textual basis, that one is a reincarnated ‘second self’ of the other).[[14]](#footnote-14) There is, however, a certain appeal to Hermann Pálsson’s suggestion that the ‘she’ of the recurrent ‘*hón*’ is in fact the enigmatic figure Gullveig, only mentioned in *Vǫluspá*.[[15]](#footnote-15) Gullveig’s relevance to the dichotomy of linear/cyclical time lies in her intriguing tripartite death and resurrection – speared and burned three times over yet ‘resurrected’ in each instance. We might compare the repetition of ‘*þrysvar brendo þrysvar borna*’ (21:7-8) with ‘*ǫðro sinni*’ and the way phrasings from the poem’s beginning recur at its end, or the transition in nomenclature from ‘Gullveig’ (‘the drunkenness of gold, hence the madness and corruption caused by this precious metal’) to the new name ‘Heiðr’ (‘bright’) just as the world goes from gold-obsessed and warring to renewed, verdant pastures.[[16]](#footnote-16) Key to any cyclical reading, she is the most prominent of the aforementioned leitmotifs, and represents the destroyed and reborn world in microcosm.

Similarly, specific language choices seem to reflect the cyclical nature of the universe according to *Vǫluspá*: from the ‘*Þá gengo regin* *ǫll á røkstóla, ginnheilog goð, ok um þat gættusk*’ (6:1-4, 9:1-4, 23:1-4, 25:1-4), which is repeated four times, to the entire stanza beginning ‘*Geyr [nú] Garmr mjǫk*’ (43:1-8, 47:1-8, 56:1-8), which is repeated three times, to the couplet ‘*Hittusk [Finnask] æsir á Iðavelli*’ (7:1-2, 58:1-2). In each of these cases, the repeated leitmotif serves a little like a chorus, helping to anchor the listeners’ attention and give a focus point for re-entry into the story, but also evoking the predominance of ritual and repeated action. The last example is particularly notable: it appears first when the *Æsir* sit in the newly created world long before any battle or hostility, and second in the same scenario in the reborn Earth: the chequer pieces and the meadows are not just the same, but the gods even perform broadly similar *actions*. The word *Iðavǫllr*, too, is of interest, the name for the location where the gods first gather in both the first and second cycles of the world: Nordal cites Sophus Bugge as first noticing the *ið* stem of the word and linking it to the Latin *iterum* ‘again’, as well as *iða*, which scans as ‘eddy’ or ‘ever-renewed whirlpool’.[[17]](#footnote-17) Where Dronke gives *Iðavǫllr* as ‘Eddying Plain’, Nordal suggests ‘the field which grows every year unsown’, which appropriately introduces the lexical field of the recurrent seasons – themselves a regular, cyclical pattern – and also hints at this being an act that occurs of its own accord and unprovoked by any external agent (for example, the fields are not sown; no single figure brings the renewed world into being; *Burs synir* do not heave the earth out of the sea; and so on). [[18]](#footnote-18) [[19]](#footnote-19)

Yet in highlighting the repetition of ‘…*æsir á Iðavelli*…’, we cannot avoid observing the degree to which the two stanzas containing these same lines deviate; or, in the macrocosm, how the first and the second cycles *differ* and the manner in which the second one is not simply a carbon copy of the first. In the first cycle, the lines following ‘…*æsir á Iðavelli*…’ tell us, the *Æsir* establish forges and fashion tools; in the second, they talk about *Ragnarǫk* and that which has come to pass. This leads to one inescapable conclusion, which is that the second cycle very definitely *follows* the first, and is a direct continuation of it – that is to say, the gods of the second cycle can recall events of the first. The model by which we understand time in *Vǫluspá*, then, cannot be said to be truly cyclical, for it has certain linear qualities. ‘There has still been a progression,’ Lindow says of the new world; there is no *Ginnungagap* here, no gaps where the stars should be, and no ‘primeval giant’, but greenery, oceans, and sunlight.[[20]](#footnote-20) [[21]](#footnote-21) It is a less inchoate, more developed world. Furthermore, there is no conclusive proof one way or the other ‘whether [the new gods] will repeat the actions of their parents’ generation because the extant texts do not tell us about them’.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Before concluding we must first turn briefly to the presence of the *vǫlva* – specifically, the problematic matter of the ‘present time’ in which she speaks the words of the poem. She allegedly addresses them to Óðinn (using his ‘*Valfǫðr*’ name, 1:5), though we, the audience, are also beckoned in to listen (‘*Hlióðs bið ek allar helgar kindir meiri ok minni mǫgu Heimdalar*’, 1:1-4).[[23]](#footnote-23) Every time the poem was or is recited aloud, its audience were or are made a part of the ritualistic act of the recital in being mentioned, albeit poetically, in the first stanza; the ‘mythic present’ of the *vǫlva* and Óðinn thus became a different mythological present with each new oral performance, though on each occasion they look back to the past and forward to the future.[[24]](#footnote-24) [[25]](#footnote-25) In being beckoned in to listen to *Vǫluspá*, to hear in an intimate, present moment this vast narrative of epic scope, we experience ‘both a ‘big time’ and a ‘small time’, that is to say …a wider cosmological aspect’ and concurrently ‘the personal story of the *vǫlva*’.[[26]](#footnote-26) But if from within the ‘small time’ we are able to perceive the ‘big’, there is an implication that (albeit only during the performance or reading of *Vǫluspá*) we are in some way able to stand outside linear time in order to view it as a complete whole, a great lattice or matrix into which various mythic developments slot. That the three Norns can exist *simultaneously* – Past, Present and Future – lends an additional credence to this ‘out of time’ theory.

If this is the case, there are profound repercussions for how we read *Vǫluspá*. The Derridean critic Derek Attridge proposes in *The Singularity of Literature* that the moment of profound response to a text is ‘an event, the event of singularizing that takes place in reception’ – the present moment of experiencing it, whether for the first time or in the act of re-reading.[[27]](#footnote-27) If a literary object, or any artwork, is powerful enough for a given reader, it can conjure the impression of feeling ‘out of time’ in some way (we have all spoken of ‘losing oneself in a book’, for instance, no longer aware of any present save the narrative present, in which we look down, godlike, upon the characters). Re-reading, then, becomes a ritualistic, cyclical act – whether seeking to re-experience the thrill of the first time (looking to the past) or exploring new directions and possibilities in the text now that one is informed by knowing the whole story (looking to the future), or both at once. Neijmann writes that *Vǫluspá* ‘takes place in a moment of performance and participation’, while Eliade contends that each new re-enactment of a mythic event (from the Aboriginal Dreamtime to a performer reading the *vǫlva*’s lines) is in some way equivalent to the event occurring again, like the ritual of Eucharist or returning to the narrative of a text once more and re-living it; Niles calls this ‘a type of ritualistic behaviour’.[[28]](#footnote-28) [[29]](#footnote-29) [[30]](#footnote-30) The very name of the *Vǫluspá* verse form – ‘past-words-law’, *fornyrðislag* – suggests that what the poet is doing is fashioning new moments of singularity out of old, pre-existing structures and vocabulary, words themselves refreshed and renewed with each iteration.

Taken together with the analysis of shared linear/cyclical qualities, this would suggest that time in *Vǫluspá* is indeed presented as linear progression, but a linear progression comprised of the ritualistic, cyclical reimagining central to myth. After destruction, regeneration; but in every new world there is a *Níðhǫggr*, symbolic of the destructive qualities of the universe, ready to gnaw at the roots of *Yggdrasill*. The work’s breadth and intensity makes it hard to respond to in simple binary terms of positive/negative, affirming/bleak, or linear/cyclical; it expresses both that events are fated to occur and mistakes fated to happen again, but also that there is, in some sense, an inexorable moving forward.Perhaps Dronke comes closest in calling this ‘a cyclic chronological structure’; Simon Armitage’s ‘great, revolving permanence of mankind’ is also an apt image.[[31]](#footnote-31) [[32]](#footnote-32) As years progress in a linear fashion but also recur cyclically, comprised as they are of the cycles of days, weeks, seasons, and human generations, and as a narrative progresses chronologically but its beginning can be returned to at any time, so too might we understand each new reading of *Vǫluspá* as being in some way the start of a new cycle, a point that is ‘at once new and old’.[[33]](#footnote-33) We read, in short, the ‘world’s old news’ (‘*forn spjǫll fira*’, 1:7).

**Bibliography.**

**Primary reading.**

1. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason (eds.), *Eddukvæði I*, Íslenzk Fornrit series, Hið islenzka fornrítafélag, 2014.

**Secondary reading.**

1. Attridge, Derek, *The Singularity of Literature*, Routledge, 2004.
2. Bauschatz, Paul, *The Well and the Tree: World and Time in Early Germanic Culture*, University of Massachusetts Press, 1982.
3. Clunies Ross, Margaret, *Prolonged Echoes Volume 1: Old Norse Myths in Medieval Northern Society*, University Press of Southern Denmark, 1994.
4. Dronke, Ursula, *The Poetic Edda Volume II: Mythological Poems* (ed.), Clarendon Press, 1997.
5. Eliade, Mircea, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History* (translated from the French by William R. Trask), Princeton University Press, 1971.
6. Gunnell, Terry, and Lassen, Annette (eds.), *The Nordic Apocalypse: Approaches to Vǫluspá and Nordic Days of Judgement*, Brepols, 2013.
7. Hastrup, Kirsten, *Culture and History in Medieval Iceland: An Anthropological Assessment of Structure and Change*, Oxford, 1985.
8. Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *The Savage Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1966.
9. Lindow, John, *Norse Mythology: A Guide to Gods, Heroes, Rituals and Beliefs*, Oxford University Press, 2002.
10. Neijmann, Daisy L., *A History of Icelandic Literature*, University of Nebraska Press, 2006.
11. Niles, John D., *Homo narrans: The Poetics and Anthropology of Oral Literature*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.
12. Nordal, Sigurður, *Vǫluspá*, Helgafell, 1952.
13. O’Donoghue, Heather, *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Short Introduction*, John Wiley & Sons, 2004.
14. Orchard, Andy, *Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend*, Cassell, 1999.
15. Pálsson, Hermann, *Vǫluspá: The Sibyl’s Prophecy*,Lockharton, 1996.
16. Turville-Petre, E.O.G., *Myth and Religion of the North: The Religion of Ancient Scandinavia*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964.

1. The number sixty-three comes from the *Codex Regius* or *Konungsbók* manuscript in the 2014 *Eddukvæði*, part of the Íslenzk Fornrit series (ed. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason). All citations of stanza and line numbers are taken from this edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Lindow, John, *Norse Mythology: A Guide to Gods, Heroes, Rituals and Beliefs*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p39. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Lindow, pp40-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Kirsten Hastrup, in *Culture and History in Medieval Iceland: An Anthropological Assessment of Structure and Change* (p19), identifies medieval Iceland’s ‘basic temporal unit’ (twenty-four hours) as being defined by the sun’s course in the sky – implicit in its name *sólarhringr.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Dronke, Ursula, *The Poetic Edda Volume II: Mythological Poems* (ed.), Clarendon Press, 1997, p39. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Stoppard, Tom, *Arcadia*, Faber and Faber, 1993, p67. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss notes in *The Savage Mind* (pp217-44) the difference between the cyclical repetition of nature and the more linear human experience; the former he calls ‘cold’ (i.e. static), the latter ‘hot’ (i.e. dynamic). Seeing Askr and Embla’s lifespans in light of this distinction suggests a linear existence that will eventually revert to a ‘cold’, static fate as part of the cyclical repetition of nature. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Lindow, p42. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Gunnell, Terry, ‘*Vǫluspá*in Performance’, in Gunnell, Terry, and Lassen, Annette (eds.), *The Nordic Apocalypse: Approaches to Vǫluspá and Nordic Days of Judgement*, Brepols, 2013, p.71. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Dronke, p101. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bauschatz, Paul, *The Well and the Tree: World and Time in Early Germanic Culture*, University of Massachusetts Press, 1982, p94. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Vésteinn Ólason, ‘*Vǫluspá*and Time’, in Gunnell and Lassen, p27. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. We might note in passing the humans Líf and Lífþrasir, who are mentioned in *Vafþrúðnismál* and *Gylfaginning* and are said to repopulate the Earth after *Ragnarǫk*, but the two are not referred to anywhere in *Vǫluspá* and so fall outside the scope of this essay. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Dronke, Ursula, p27. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Pálsson, Hermann, *Vǫluspá: The Sibyl’s Prophecy*,Lockharton, 1996, p17. For Pálsson’s theory to work, however, one must accept that Gullveig and Heiðr are not the same person, and that Gullveig is only mentioned in passing whilst Heiðr is another *vǫlva* who lived in the distant past from the perspective of ‘our’ sibyl. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Turville-Petre, E.O.G., *Myth and Religion of the North: The Religion of Ancient Scandinavia*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964, p159. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Nordal, Sigurður, *Vǫluspá*, Helgafell, 1952, p60. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Dronke, p8. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Nordal, p60 (‘völlurinn, sem vex hvert àr ósáinn’). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Lindow, p42. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Vésteinn Ólason, ‘*Vǫluspá*and Time’, in Gunnell and Lassen, p27. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Clunies Ross, Margaret, *Prolonged Echoes Volume 1: Old Norse Myths in Medieval Northern Society*, University Press of Southern Denmark, 1994, p241. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The notion of a *vǫlva* recounting her visions to Óðinn is made more explicit in *Baldrs draumar*, printed as an appendix to *Vǫluspá* in Dronke’s edition, in that the narrator describes the god approaching the sibyl and they actually converse, whereas Óðinn says not a word in *Vǫluspá*, existing only in so far as the sibyl says he does. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Clunies Ross, p237; see also Lindow’s “mythological present”. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Gunnell (in Gunnell and Lassen, p73) is insistent *Vǫluspá* be seenas a *performed* work: ‘Past account and future vision are thus effectively blended with the present. The present performer (male or female) is the mythological vǫlva, and we are simultaneously reminded of our own mythological connections. The implication is that Óðinn is also present somewhere in the surroundings. All of this means that if we, the watchers and listeners, dare to suspend disbelief for a moment and believe in the performance, then during the liminal time of this performance, we will either feel that we have been transported into the past, or that the *vǫlva* has joined us in the present. As this happens, worlds start to blend and a form of ‘sacred time’ is introduced to the surroundings, as occurs in any effective theatrical performance, or in a church at the moment of the communion.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Pétursson, Pétur, introduction to Gunnell and Lassen, p xii. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Attridge, Derek, *The Singularity of Literature*, Routledge, 2004, p64. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Neijmann, Daisy L., *A History of Icelandic Literature*, University of Nebraska Press, 2006, p11. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Eliade, Mircea, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History*, Princeton University Press, 1971, pp20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Niles, John D., *Homo narrans: The Poetics and Anthropology of Oral Literature*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, p122. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Dronke, p101. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Armitage, Simon, *Killing Time*, Faber & Faber, 1999, p32. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Bauschatz, p94. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)