

## Pious Fictions and Pseudo-Saints in the Late Middle Ages

*Pious Fictions and Pseudo-Saints in the Late Middle Ages* contains English translations of selected legends from a remarkable sixteenth-century Icelandic collection known as the *Reykjahólabók*. The Middle Low German originals it translates are no longer extant, apocryphal wholly or in part, and wondrous strange.

The eight legends translated here detail the adventures of St Oswald and his quest for a bride by a garrulous raven; Henry and Cunegund, and her accusation of infidelity and trial by ordeal; John Chrysostom, the Golden-mouthed, and his hairy-anchorite tale; Jerome and an injured lion, who herds asses for the monastery; Christopher, the giant Reprobis, who bears the Christ child across deep waters; George, the Dragon-slayer, who saves a princess from the devouring monster; the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, who escape persecution by Emperor Decius through centuries-long slumber; and Gregorius, the Good Sinner, in a tale of double incest. In fictionalizing the lives of established saints, and in the creation of fictitious saints, these legends represent the concluding chapter of medieval hagiography.

The volume also includes a wide-ranging introduction that surveys the historical and literary contexts for the translation of Catholic saints' lives on the eve of the Protestant Reformation in Iceland, as well as normalized editions of the legends accessible to readers of contemporary Icelandic.



# Pious Fictions and Pseudo-Saints in the Late Middle Ages

Selected Legends from an Icelandic Legendary

*Translated by*

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*Toronto*

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