

Introduction

Christian Cooijmans
with Brigitte Guenier-Kruse

Wherefore my heart leaps within me,
My mind roves with the waves
Over the whale's domain, it wanders far and wide
Across the face of the earth, returns again to me
Eager and unsatisfied; the solitary bird screams,
Irresistible, urges my heart to the whale's way
Over the stretch of the sea.

– Anonymous, 'The Seafarer'.¹

This festschrift, *Islands of Place and Space*, honours and celebrates the achievements of Dr Arne Kruse, who retired from the University of Edinburgh in 2021 after an accomplished scholarly career of over four decades as a researcher and educator. In doing

1. 'The Seafarer' is among a group of Old English poems found in the tenth-century Exeter Book (Exeter Cathedral Library, MS 3501, ff. 81v–83r). Although its precise date of composition is unknown, it is considered to have been handed down for at least several generations before being put to parchment. See Orton 2001: 213. The present translation is from 'The Seafarer': 118.

so, the volume pays tribute to an academic all-rounder, whose wide-ranging scholarship has carried him into the realms of onomastics, history, art history, archaeology, ethnography, and literature; encompassing the medieval period to the present day; and shining a light on Scandinavia, Scotland, the United States, and the myriad interfaces within, between, and beyond their respective physical and cultural boundaries.² As eclectic and broad-ranging as these interests and investigations have been, however, a shared thematic thread has always been apparent throughout Arne's academic work – one marked by seas and shorelines, by ships and sails, by tides and currents, and, above all, by islands and their inhabitants. As well as holms, skerries, stacks, and other stone and soil sites surrounded by water and wind, these have included peoples and communities as islands in their own right – be they travellers, immigrants, diasporas, or even outcasts – bound together by shared lives, languages, legacies, and lots.

But for all of their many-sidedness, Arne has made sure never to treat his research interests themselves as insular, consistently finding ways to connect and journey between them in a cross-disciplinary fashion, whilst offering new insights and perspectives along the way. In much the same manner, although himself born an islander, Arne is by no means a proverbial island unto himself, and is widely known and admired by colleagues and students, past and present, for his good-natured and generous demeanour, leading many to consider him not just as a lecturer, mentor, or co-worker, but as a friend – as is readily apparent from the many warm thoughts and testimonies shared throughout this volume.

Arne Dagfinn Kruse was born on 14 July 1954 to Johannes O. Kruse and Hanna Øien. Descended, on his father's side,

2. For an overview of Arne's publications, see the Bibliography at the end of the volume.

from a long lineage of fishermen from the island community of Brattværet, he himself grew up on nearby Smøla – part of the same seaswept archipelago in Møre and Romsdal.

Having moved to Kristiansund as a teenager, he pursued his first degree at the University of Trondheim, focusing on history, religion, and geography. Notwithstanding a two-year interruption to his studies – which was spent working on a fishing boat – Arne was granted his *candidatus philologiae* (*cand.philol.*) in 1983, having penned his thesis on the names of Smøla's fishing grounds.³ In the years following his graduation, he found work as both a high school teacher in Rissa (Trøndelag) as well as a lecturer at the department of Norwegian Language, Literature, and Social Sciences at Lund University, to which he commuted from Copenhagen.

In 1985, Arne was awarded a Fulbright Visiting Scholar grant, allowing him to further develop his burgeoning academic pursuits as he made his way overseas to the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, taking up a role as its first Fulbright scholar-in-residence.⁴ Although originally appointed for a single academic session, his stay would eventually be extended into 1987, as he coordinated the ongoing establishment of UW-L's Norwegian Language and Culture Project (NLCP) – a collaborative programme which promoted research on Norwegian-American language and culture whilst supporting the university's Scandinavian Studies curriculum.⁵ Under the auspices of the NLCP, Arne likewise carried out a detailed study of Norwegian place-names in western Wisconsin, a venture that helped to inspire multiple publications across several

3. Kruse 1983. His thesis was supervised by the late Nils Hallan.

4. Winrich 1986: 4.

5. Sutton and Kruse 1987. The authors would like to thank Arnstein Hjelde for furnishing this report.

decades.⁶ It was also during this time that Arne met Brigitte Guenier – his future wife – who was then teaching French at UW-L on a visiting lectureship.

Following his stint in the United States, Arne returned to Norway, where he took up a position at the research centre of Møreforskning in Volda (1987–89), focusing his efforts on a pilot project to collect and organise the place-names of Møre and Romsdal alongside the late philologist Peter Hallaråker. In 1988, he also briefly held a position as assistant professor at Møre and Romsdal Distriksthøgskule (now University College Volda).⁷ But it was in 1989 that he would apply to his career-defining position at the recently established Scandinavian Studies department of the University of Edinburgh, joining an academic community he would remain part of for thirty-two years.

As Edinburgh's first full-time lecturer in Norwegian – at a time when the university had become the only one in Scotland to offer Scandinavian Studies – Arne played an instrumental role in developing the department into the thriving centre of Nordic languages, cultures, and histories it remains today. Ever generous with his time and knowledge, Arne's teaching, mentorship, and supervision were marked by his dedication and good humour, whilst his versatile public engagement demonstrated a clear belief that there need not be a sharp divide between the academic and the layperson – a point he has accentuated himself.⁸

Arne's research continued unabatedly as well, even as his scholarship became increasingly focused on the place-names and settlement history of Scotland. Yet his appointment in Edinburgh would also allow him to revisit and reshape his

6. See, among others, Kruse 1991a; 1991b; 1996; 2007.

7. The authors are indebted to Geir Petter Hjorthol for providing these particular details.

8. Kruse 2000: 9.

Trondheim thesis into the monograph *Mål og méd. Målføre og médnamn frå Smøla*, which was published in 2000.⁹ Arne was a founding member of the Hjalmland Network, a cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional research initiative to map Shetland's Viking past (2011–13), and has been a regular delegate for Scotland to the quadrennial Viking Congress, as well as numerous other international conferences. On top of his role at the university, he has likewise taken on various responsibilities within the Scottish Society for Northern Studies, assuming the general editorship of its journal, *Northern Studies*, from 1999 to 2006, and editing the well-received volume *Barra and Skye: Two Hebridean Perspectives* (2006). He eventually served as president of the Society between 2012 and 2015.

Having retired from his senior lectureship post in 2021, Arne continues to be affiliated with the University of Edinburgh as an honorary fellow. As well as maintaining his academic pursuits, he remains an avid outdoorsman, and enjoys boating, fishing, (hill)walking, and cycling. He and Brigitte divide their time between Edinburgh, the island of Veiholmen (Smøla), and the village of Crocy (Normandy). They have two sons, Erik Norvald and Philip Johan.

As a testament to Arne's broad-ranging research interests and influence, the fifteen contributions to this festschrift collectively cover a wide range of time, space, and fields of enquiry. Due to this diversity, any thematic division or delineation imposed on such a collection would be entirely arbitrary, and the editor has been defeated in his efforts to do so. Instead, these essays are presented in an order that roughly aligns them with Arne's own academic positions and interests over the course of his career. Apart from chapters III, XIII, and XV – which are of a more personal and anecdotal nature – all contributions to

9. Kruse 2000.

this volume have been peer-reviewed, and the editor wishes to acknowledge the fourteen anonymous reviewers who generously provided their time and expertise.

To begin with, harking back to Arne's own research at UW-L on language heritage, Arnstein Hjelde provides insights into the development of Minnesota-Norwegian dialects since the 1980s – observing the appearance of specific sounds that are otherwise absent from their European counterparts. Subsequently, Botolv Helleland, whom Arne also first met during his time in the United States, offers an overview of the widespread use of metaphors in the mountain names of western Norway. Berit Sandnes then characterises the methodology and legacy of the place-name collection project of the county of Møre and Romsdal (1985–95), which Arne actively contributed to during the latter half of the 1980s.

As one of Arne's earliest colleagues at the University of Edinburgh, Bjarne Thorup Thomsen then presents a consideration of Swedish author Selma Lagerlöf's perspectives on Norway, comparing two of her lesser-known works, published on either side of the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905. Afterwards, in reference to Arne's indefatigable championing of Nynorsk in Edinburgh, Guy Puzey highlights a prior sojourn of another Norwegian scholar, Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, to the Scottish capital, during which he authored the (presumed) first English-language essay on this new standard of the Norwegian language (1863).

In line with – and often drawing on – Arne's own long-standing and wide-ranging investigations into the Scandinavian presence in premodern Scotland, the subsequent chapters delve into aspects of the onomastic and linguistic legacy of these interactions.

First up is Alan Macniven, who (re)considers the presence and prevalence – as well as the associated implications – of

the Old Norse (ON) topographic place-name element *dalr* in northern and western Scotland. This is followed by a brief note by Brian Smith on the potential whereabouts of the ON place-name *Pursaker*, as featured in *Orkneyinga saga* (c. 1200). Ryan Foster, in turn, examines the distribution of ON shieling (i.e. summer pasture) names in Caithness, pointing to a seemingly atypical distribution of the element *aergi*, in particular. Afterwards, Anke-Beate Stahl casts a light on the place-names of the island of Mingulay – in the Outer Hebrides – as well as the individuals and institutions who witnessed, collected, and recorded them over the years. Finally, Pavel Iosad considers the processes through which the Norse vernacular spoken in Scotland would have been replaced by Gaelic following the Viking Age.

Turning the focus briefly back to Norway itself, Peder Gammeltoft provides an analysis of the significance of two Viking Age place-name types, *bólstaðr* and *staðir*, drawing on data from the digital *Norske Gaardnavne* ('Norwegian Farm Names') database as well as cadastral and land-resource information – demonstrating their combined value for place-name research. Subsequently, in reference to Arne's own background as a fisherman, Linda Riddell assesses the development and downturn of the herring trade in Shetland during the latter part of the nineteenth century, highlighting its impact on local communities.

Arne's more recent work on early modern witchcraft, its persecution, and the associated parallels between Scotland and Scandinavia are likewise represented by two contributions. Liv Helene Willumsen paints a picture of Arne's interdisciplinary approach to language and landscape, illustrated by her experience of conducting fieldwork with Arne in connection to the North Berwick witchcraft trials. Andrew Jennings then provides a brief insight into the Old Norse terminology on

magical practices inherited by the dialects of Orkney and Shetland.

Wrapping up this festschrift is a prose poem dedicated to Arne by Hilde Rognskog and Heidi Rognskog Mella, evoking a windswept journey ‘home’, to Norway, over land and sea, across islands of place and space. Collectively, these fifteen contributions represent a fitting tribute to Arne as a valued and versatile colleague, mentor, and friend, as well as a resourceful and committed researcher.

On a final note, the editor himself also wishes to extend his gratitude to Arne, whose unwavering support has been instrumental to his own academic ventures, and whose energy and enthusiasm remain an example to aspire to.

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