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The Vocabulary of Paganism in the Heilagra manna sogur

Running along with the large vocabulary pertaining to Christianity in the Old Norse saints' lives, there is a sizable amount of vocabulary dealing with the heathen and their religious practices, and it is the aim of this paper to investigate these words in some detail. For this purpose I have extracted material from the Heilagra manna sogur (2 vols., ed. Unger, Christiania, 1877) and the Postola sogur (ed. Unger, Christiania, 1874). While I have tried to be thorough, I make no claim to completeness. In order to keep the paper within practical bounds, I have had to omit much of my material, and cut down on the number of citations.

Cleasby-Vigfusson states that the verb blóta means "to worship" or "to worship with sacrifice," and is "used with the acc. of the being worshipped, but dat. of the object sacrificed." He cites the use of the dative of the being worshipped as "exceedingly rare."

Of the 191 examples of blóta I found in my sources, almost 40% (75) show the verb used absolutely. When a being or object is mentioned, in 54 instances the texts use the dative to designate it, and 33 the accusative. In 17 other instances the passive voice is used. If we assume these all to be conversions of active voice sentences using the accusative, we have 50 instances of the accusative compared with 54 instances of the dative. The seven other instances have ambiguous pronouns. One has the accusative used to designate the animals sacrificed, and there is one use of the past participle attributively. There are no instances at all of what appears to be the typical use in pagan times, with the dative of the object sacrificed, and the accusative of the being

worshipped. There are simply no examples involving blóta that express the idea that something or somebody is sacrificed to a deity or its representative.

Blóta is never used in a Christian context: one cannot say blóta Guð or blóta Krist. In fact, when the verb is used absolutely, it is clear that it means "to worship in a pagan manner," "to worship false gods," almost "to blaspheme":

þa mællti greifinn, at þa bada bræðr skyllði til Odens hof ok neyða þa til blota, en hoggva bada, ef þeir villde eigi blota. HMS I, 288, 19 (Ceciliu s.).

þa var sendr norðr til Fraklandz greifi ... at hann leti taka Dionisium ... ok neyða til blota eptir bodordum konungs, eða leti pina hann ath lögum þeira, ef hann villði eigi blota HMS I, 315, 24 (Dionysius saga). Cf. HMS I, 416,31; 646,11; II, 237,11; 256,5; 280,30; PS 106, 31; 245,15; 607, 6.

While the instances using the dative of the being worshipped outnumber those using the accusative, it is mostly restricted to the word gœð "heathen god," and its compounds:

blota þu godum...HMS I, 5,4 (Agathu saga I). Cf. HMS I, 155, 14; 263,1; II, 211,16; 214, 12; 328,9.

The compounds skurðgœð, skurgœð "idol" and solarguð "sun god" also appear a few times as dative object:

at ver mundim hverfa fra Cristí en blota scurgopum þinom illom oc vandom. HMS I, 263, 27 (Blasius saga).

Lattu hann nu blota solarguði...PS 733,1 (Thomas saga II).

The only other noun that appears as a dative object of blóta is djofull:

at hann reidiz oss at blota djoflum HMS II, 233,6

While the accusative is used less frequently than the dative to designate the object of blóta (36:54), it encompasses a good many more nouns. Even gœð (8 times) and skurðgœð (10 times) appear in the accusative:

ok blotit haleit ok itarlig gœð vör synilig...HMS I, 371,16 (Fides Spes Caritas). Cf. PS 761,36; 764,22; 782,13; 801,13.

ath ek mun eigi blota skurðgœð þin... HMS I 17,24 (Agnesar

s.). Cf. HMS I, 100,1; 474,20; II, 210,22; 423,11; PS 127,20; 872,17,

Also, líkneski "image," diöfull "devil," and a few miscellaneous deities (Gefjun, vör, Freyr, Simonis) or idolized objects (lund, stokkr eða steinn, bundinn "sheaf") are accusative objects of blóta: Cf. HMS I, 427,11; PS 70,21; PS 725,12; 736,7; HMS II, 275,37; PS 734,1; 748,30. HMS I 373,18; 375,8; 289,18; II, 220,25; I, 422,36; HMS I 264,1.

As objects represented by es/er or sem (and presumably, but not demonstrably accusative) are lund "grove" (HMS I, 38,10), bundinn "sheaf" (PS 762,2), staðr (HMS I 209,4), goð (263,5, II, 237,17), Týr (PS 741,6).

As subjects of the passive voice, and thus theoretically changeable into accusative objects: goð (HMS I, 10,25; 165,7); líkneski (HMS I, 408,17); skurðgoð (HMS I 165,12; PS 744,17; 755,1; 757,9); Týr (PS 249,9); diöfull (HMS I, 209,2; PS 744,33; 757,23); vör (HMS I, 367,9; PS 146,32); stöpull "pillar, tower" (HMS I, 596,33); tré (HMS I, 581,28).

This wavering between the dative and the accusative occasionally takes place within a few lines of each other:

þu hafnar at blóta heilug god vör ... ok blóta goðum vorum almatkum ... HMS I, 8,3-8 (Agathu s. II).

þeir er blotuðu diöflum ... þeir blotuðu þar diöfla ... PS 779,9-12 (Simonis ok Jude s.).

Thus, while the old system has broken down to the extent that the use of the dative outnumbers that of the accusative, the accusative is more likely to be used if an individual deity or object is involved, the dative if a more generalized statement is made.

In the following citation, the accusative is used to refer to sacrificial animals:

þa com þar blotmaþr þors með morgom luð oc fərþe þangat gripunga oc hafra, oc villdo blóta þa. PS 220,5 (Páls s. I).

I found only one instance of the past participle of blóta used attributively:

Martinus villdi upp hoggva eitt blotat tre... HMS I 613,25
(Martinus s. III).

Originally bltta was a strong (reduplicating) verb, but in our sources it is predominantly weak. Occasionally the strong past participle appears in passive voice constructions, but it is in the minority (3 instances out of 17):

þat stop fornt hof, þat er blotinn var diofoll...HMS I
209,2 (Liber secundus dial. Gregorii). Cf. PS 146,32;
757,23.

Strong finite forms are even rarer. In fact, I found only the following:

tíl þess at ver blétim með auþrum borgarmaunnum. HMS II,
238,34 (Septem dormientes).

The verb gofga is common in the sense of "to honor, worship" with the accusative of the object worshipped:

hvi mega ek þa gōfga skurdgod andlaus ok vitalus...HMS I,
17,6 (Agnesar s.)

ek gōfga eigi ohreinan anda Odin eda Freyio portkonu...HMS
II, 233,15 (Sebastianus s.)

Often, perhaps more often, the word is used with reference to the Christian god, or to Christ: Cf. e.g. HMS I, 479,27.

The noun derived from the verb is gofgan:

Ofsadi ser meirr i Egiptalandi einnhvern tima uhrein
skurdgoda gōfgan... HMS II, 390,18. (Vitae Patrum).

Like blttmaðr, although occurring only once, gofganarmaðr means "heathen worshipper":

svo verda ok gōfganarmenn þeira saman brendir i eilifum
elldi... HMS I, 17,34 (Agnesar s.).

A derivative of gyrr "precious, worthy," dyrka, dyrka (presumably influenced in form by dyrd--see below) also means "to venerate, worship":

þviat þeir dyrkudu fyrrmeirr hunda ok apyniur...HMS II,
390,19.

eda hvart skilit þer ydr eigi verda vitstolnare þeim
gudum, er þer dyrkit. HMS II, 423,13.

Dyrd, glossed by the dictionaries as "glory," can also mean

"veneration":

at almennileg veghsend ok einkannlig dyrd se veitt enum helguztum gudum...HMS I, 401, 7 (Katerine s.). Cf. 147,25. The deverbative dyrkan more clearly means "worship":

at rækia oll skurdgoð ok alla þeira dyrðkan. HMS I,408,13 (Katerine s.). Cf. PS 76,32; 455,19; HMS I, 105,2.12.

Lúta, lit., "to bow down (before)" also is used in the sense of "worship":

hvi mega ek þa göfga skurdgod andlaus ok vitlaus, ... ok lúta stockum eda steinum. HMS I, 17,7 (Agnesar s.). Fabricius ... etlad at leida hana þangat til at gaufga ok lúta godenu. HMS I, 324,28 (Dorotheu s.). Cf. HMS II, 230,10.

In the following the word contrasts with blóta, so that possibly the meaning "bow down" is paramount; or blóta is meant more in the sense of "to sacrifice":

Karicius mællti: "Nu leitar hann raða, at hann luti eigi ne bloti." Thomas svaraði: "Lúta mun ek fyrst, en blota síðan, ef guðmínn brytr hann eigi, þegar er ek lyt." PS 725, 20-22 (Thomas s. I).

The verb can also be used absolutely, and both of pagan and Christian worship:

Konungr svaraði: "...Glata mun ek þer lata, ef ef þu lytr eigi ok blotar." Postolinn mællti: "Nu lyt ek, ok eigi líkneskinu; nu lyt ek, ok eigi malminum; nu lyt ek, ok eigi skurdgoðinu; helldr lýt ek drottni mínum Jesu Kristo..." PS 726,13-18 (Thomas s. I).

Cf. also HMS I, 324,12; HMS II, 328,30; PS 118,4; 605,18.

The verb faga "to cleanse, adorn, worship" appears only three times in the Postola sögur, each time with villa "heresy, pagan belief" its object:

þer munut nu villa slika villu faga...PS 178,20 (Petrus s. II A). Cf. PS 202,18; 474,39.

The noun derivative, fagan, occurs only twice, but is linked with different words:

En fagan goða varra smár hann í ollum sínum orðum ok

verkum... PS 475,17 (Jóns s. IV).

hof, ok þar í skurðgoð með skipaðum þionostum til diöfla fáganar... PS 638,22 (Jóns ok Jacobs s.).

The verb soefa, lit., "to put to sleep," meant "to kill (animals)," hence "to sacrifice." It appears only once clearly in this meaning:

Annar dag eptir var feingit at bloti miklu; bædi voru naut ok saudir, fuglar ok þunnur margskonar kykvendi sæfd fyrir gudunum. HMS I, 401,16 (Katherine s.)

In the following it appears to mean "appease":

Egeas mælti: "Fyr því skyldi ec þic til at blota, at þeir er fyr þic ero.taldir(!) fyrlati sina villo oc hegoma oc færi fornir godum varom. Nu er engi borg su í ollu Achaia, er eigi se eyd oill hof oc nidr brotin; nu matu þa vera í vari vingan, ef þu leitar þessi luti at leidretta oc sæfir sva reiði godana, er nu ero adr reið ordin. PS 409,5 (Andreas s. IV).

Only one other instance of the word occurs, where it seems merely to mean "to slaughter" in non-religious context (PS 837,9).

The verb magna, basically "to strengthen," according to the dictionaries means "to empower with a charm," "to practice (as magic)," "to cast (as a spell)." In two of its three occurrences in our sources, it is used with blót to mean "to carry out worship," "to make a sacrifice":

Sva er sagt, at allra blota mest var þar magnat Gefionar blót... HMS II, 30,11 (Nikolaus s. I).

Decius var kominn í borg oc let magna blót...HMS II, 238,10 (Septem dormientes).

In its only other occurrence, the word seems to have more of its fundamental meaning of "to empower with a charm":

hellidr vor þau <evil people> eptir dauðann blötut ok mognut af vöndum mörnum ok diöfuls krapti til fyrir dæmingar eilifrar sialfum þeim ok blum þeim, er þeim treysta. HMS I, 10,25 (Agathu s. II).

Cleasby-Vigfusson states that frón "gift, offering" is a Christian word and is scarcely ever used with regard to the

heathen gods. It would derive it from Latin offera, whereas de Vries derives it from the stem of fara, therefore views it as a native derivative. The word is quite frequent in our sources, appearing almost exclusively in the plural in the phrase foera fbrnir (with the dative) "to bring offerings," and is used almost exclusively with regard to heathen gods or idols:

Toku þeir of hetu þeim auðefum, ef þær villdu blota ok færa fornir godunum... HMS I, 322,25 (Dorotheu s.). Cf. HMS II, 237,23 and many others.

Fbrn and foera combine into the compound verb fbrnfoera:

ek geck hia hofi einshveriu, hvar heidingiar fornferdu ...HMS II, 423,10 (Vitae Patrum).

Cf. PS 608,15, 655,34; 656,3.

From this verb is derived the noun fbrnfoering

Hvart skulu nu riddarar minir ... fyrirlata helgar fornferingar goda vorra ok minna? HMS I, 648,5 (Mauritius s.). Cf. PS 375,14; 484,20.

The verb fbrna "to make an offering" also occurs:

Vær skulum forna gudunum slikt, er vær megum af voru valldi... HMS I, 401,12 (Katerine s.). Cf. HMS I, 416,12; PS 76,29.33.

And, finally, the deverbative noun fbrnan "offering," occurring only once

þer varnit við skurðgoða fornan ok fornaðum lutum...PS 76,29 (Petrs s. I).

Cleasby-Vigfusson glosses blót as "worship," "worship including sacrifice," "specifically, a sacrificial feast or banquet." In our sources the noun, like the verb treated above, refers only to heathen worship, and seems to mean "an act of worship," "an individual sacrifice." To get the abstract sense of "worship" across, as in phrases like "the worship of idols," or "to be forced to worship heathen gods," the plural must be used, so that what is actually said is "to be forced into acts of worship," etc. The idol or deity worshipped then appears typically in the genitive:

ok hurfu fra blotum skurðgoda. HMS I, 289,26 (Ceciliu s.).

Cf. HMS I, 409, 22; 316,11; 312,4; II, 257,13.

The word is often used in the plural more abstractly without the mention of the deity or idol, often in the genitive as the object of til. This is comparable to the absolute use of the verb (see above):

Adrianus skyllidadi hann til blota...HMS II, 210,25
(Placidus s. III).

þeir ...voro scyldir til blota. HMS II, 211, 10 (40
militum passic).

Cf. HMS I, 5,16; 373,26; 425, 26; II 231,39; PS 346,17; 352,24.

The phrase neyða til blota "force into pagan worship" is so frequent as to be almost formulaic:

hann ... neyði dottur hans til blota. HMS I, 155, 7
(Barbare s.).

hann let þegar taka hvern kristinn mann...ok neyða til
blota eða selia til þisla. (HMS I, 315,19) (Dionysius s.).
(Cf. also HMS I, 315,23; 373,3; 475,10; II, 236,15,17; PS
106,34 and many others.)

An individual act of worship or an individual sacrifice is generally meant when the singular is used:

þa vor hum leidd til blotz, at hun brendi reykelsti fyrir
skurdgodum. HMS I, 290,5 (Ceciliu s).

Annan dag eptir var feingit at bloti miklu. HMS I, 401,15
(Kat. s). Cf. HMS I, 403,13.

The following contain the meaning "sacrificial offering":

En er Martinus sa, at þeir foru með lík en eigi með blót
(="sacrificial animal?"), þa góði hann cross eftir
þeim...HMS I, 559,17 (Mart. s. I). Cf. 581,15; 612,22.

I einum fornum kastala, þar som nu er munkbygd, var fyrr
blót ok skurgod í ramlighum stopli...HMS I, 596,22 (Mart. s.
II): Cf. HMS I, 646, 7,8; II, 236,10; 237,2; PS 223,23;
725,26.

In the following examples the meaning tends to be more generalized, more abstract:

þer teygir andir manna fra skapara sinum til skurdgoda
blotz. HMS I, 434,33 (Lucie s.).

En því var blotid fyrirboðit, at saa laustr hafði mest gengit yfvir alþýðu heiðinna manna... PS 245,17 (Páls s. II).

ok var þar sva mikil blot, at naliga i hverium garði stoðu hof, ok þeim guðunum garðarnir kendir, er þar var blotuð i hofunum. PS 249,11 (Páls s. II). Cf. PS 405, 35; 409,11; 734, 7.

For the generalized or abstract meaning of "heathen worship," "idolatry" blótskapr is sometimes used:

Ver kennvm einfallda trv Kristz, ok berivm ver sva niðr allan blotzkap ok skvrðgoða þionostv...HMS I, 106,33 (Antonius s.). Cf. HMS I, 111,21; HMS II, 380,4; 391,3; 394,10; PS 622,19; PS 638,13; 656,26.

Many compounds occur having blót as the first constituent. The most common is blótmaðr "heathen worshipper, idolater": HMS I, 7,8; 19,30; 314,33; 559,9; II, 232,22; 394,4; PS 146,15; 462,25; and many others (57 in all). Blótbyskupr "heathen priest" is also common: cf. HMS I, 19,26; II, 234,26; PS 91,14; 374,38, et al. (37 in all). The synonymous blóttgofi appears only once (PS 793,24), blóthofdingi twice:

þa er Marteinn braut skurgod nockut, þa villdi blóthofdingi einn leggja saxi honum. HMS I, 583,4 (Martinus s. I). Cf. PS 726,21.

The heathen temple is sometimes called blóthús (HMS I, 223,11.12; II, 53,32; 210,23.27; PS 455,3), sometimes blóthof (HMS I, 288,19; II, 202,26.27)--see hof below. The meaning of blóttstaðr (found only HMS I, 644,8) is similar. Blóttstallr (or blóttstalli--it appears only in the plural) "heathen altar" appears only twice (HMS I, 646,21; PS 149,23), blóttstóull "pedestal to place a sacrifice on" once (HMS I, 596,35). The following compounds also occur once each: blóttmatr "food eaten at a heathen ceremony" HMS II, 310,5 (this is Unger's correction of the manuscript's blóttmatr); blótttré "tree sacrificed to" (HMS I, 559,19); blóttgod "heathen god" (PS 734,11); blóttkennimaðr "heathen priest" (PS 244,19); blóttkona "heathen priestess" (HMS I, 7,9); blóttatilblótmaðr "appurtenances for worship" (PS 655,31 fn.); blóttviðr "grove where heathen gods are worshipped"

(HMS I, 209,5).

The derivative blótnaðr "idolatry" appears once:

Mikinn hug lagdi hann á blotnad ok skurgodum at þjona. HMS I, 645,14 (Mauritius s.).

The compound adjective blóttauðigr "rich in sacrifice" also appears twice in the superlative:

Enn villdi Martinus bricta et blótaupgasta hof a acprom bð.. HMS I, 560,12 (Martinus s. I). Cf. HMS I, 613,17.

Blót appears as the second component in the compound diöflablót "worship of devils" (HMS I, 559,21).

The compound blótskaparmegn means something like "heathen authorities":

hinn sæli faðir Johannes dregr marga brott af hirðsveitum Dyane, ok leiðir til goðs erfidis í vingarð himnakonungs, þar til at sialft blótskaparmegnit þolir eigi ok reisir mikit framleypi ok samblastr unfríðar moti hunum... PS 655,31 (Jóns ok Jacobs s.).

In the great majority of cases, goð, guð "heathen god" appears in our sources in the plural (200:34). Generally it is inflected as a neuter, but there are a few instances of masculine inflections. Of the 200 plural forms found, 79 are dative, and 43 are genitive, none of which distinguish between masculine and neuter. 75 nominative/accusative forms are uninflected neuters, thus distinguishable from the singular only because of modifiers or plural verbal forms dependent upon them. Only two nominative plurals are clearly masculine, and two accusatives:

Villumenn þessir ... göfguðu .xxx. gode...HMS I, 38,11 (Ambrosius s.).

En þórr ok Óðinn ok allir gudar ok goð heidfinna manna ero diöflar... HMS I, 417, 22 (Katherine s.).

Litit ok aa, at hegomlig likneski ero eigi guðar helldr manna giðrþir...PS 117,2 (Petrs s. I).

The word appears 34 times in the singular. Of these, 14 appear in the dative or genitive, so that there is no distinguishing between masculine and neuter. Of the remaining 20 instances in the nominative or accusative, 8 are ambiguous because

they possess no modifiers, while 12 are apparently masculine in gender:

Ver þu sem gud þinn Odinn...HMS I, 2, 32 (Agathu s).

þa spurdi Paulus Dionisium speking, hvern sa væri enn okunni gud. HMS I, 312, 8) (Dionysius s.). Cf. PS 725,11; 726,9.10; 733,6; 761,36; 764,22.23; 784,2; HMS II, 391,12; PS 146,31.

Thus it seems that whenever the word is used in the singular, it is masculine, identical in form with the Christian word for God. The few times that the masculine form is used in the plural it seems to designate the gods themselves as opposed to their images.

The stem vowel of the plural is overwhelmingly o, although a number of u-forms appear, particularly in the uninflected forms. In the singular the opposite is true--the o appears only in a handful of cases (5 out of 34). (My statistics do not count manuscript variants, given in footnotes in Unger's edition.)

All the 259 examples of skurðgof, skurðof "idol" that I collected are neuter in gender, both singular and plural. All of them except a handful contain the vowel o in the second constituent. Only the following (both singular and plural, and various cases) have u: PS 762,32; 764,13.21; 796,2.

Only 11 instances of gyfja "goddess" occur. Three of them are used in a general sense in the plural (HMS I, 428,2; II, 232,29; PS 656,2).

In one instance tregof is used for idol:

Meita þu bolvudum tregodum þinum...HMS I 8,33 (Agathu s.)

The compound hofudgyfja "chief goddess" occurs only once, and refers, surprisingly, to Diana (PS 484,18).

The term áss "heathen god" occurs only 5 times. Twice it refers to the sun god (sólar áss):

þar stod hof fornt, ok var blotad mannlikan þat, er kallat var solar aas... HMS 165,7 (Benedictus s.) cf. 209,3

hann seger, at þorr se eigi goð fultrúe varr oc en sterxte &ss arþesfullr PS 146,31 (Clemens s.).

Oc sia lagabriotr fœler øll goð &r lastar þau miøc oc gremr at øss, oc engi þeira asa ma hann heyra vel latenn, hværtke

Þór ne Openn. PS 147,2 (Clemens s.).

Another word for "idol," or more properly "graven image," is líkneski, líkneskja. Cleasby-Vigfusson puts citations for them both under one entry, while Fritzner has two different entries. He gives more citations under líkneskja than under líkneski, thus giving the impression that the feminine form is the more usual. He cites all the dative plural forms in líkneskjum under líkneskja, whereas they can just as well be neuter. Of the 88 instances I have recorded, 68 are clearly neuter, 14 feminine, while 6 are in the ambiguous dative plural.

This word is more comparable to Latin simulacrum than idolum. Thus, while it is used to designate the likeness of many of the heathen gods (e.g., Óðinn <HMS I, 321,23>; Þórr <HMS I 367,10>; Diana <HMS II, 91,31; PS 392,7>; Gefjun <PS 223,16; 462,38>; the sun <PS 725,7; 733,7; 790,21>; Týr <PS 736,7>, it is also used of mortals elevated to the realm of gods (e.g., St. Katherine <HMS I, 408,6.16>; St. Nicholas <HMS II< 142, 15.19.23>; Gaius <PS 70,20.24.28>), and even of Jesus (HMS I, 308,27; 309,1).

While the names of Roman gods and goddesses are occasionally used, mostly, however, the Graeco-Roman gods are designated by the names of Old Norse gods, generally speaking with the same equations we find in the Germanic days of the week. Thus Óðinn appears for Mercury (HMS I, 2,35; 288,28; II, 230,15; PS 146,33; et al.), Þórr for Jupiter/Zeus (HMS I, 289,17.18; 367, 9.10; et al.), Frigg presumably for Venus/Aphrodite (HMS I, 370,19; 618,25; et al.).

Freya, though originally one of the Vanir, and the female counterpart of Freyr, appears among the Ésir, and is married to Óðr, a doublet of Óðinn. There is therefore some confusion between her and Frigg. Mostly her name appears in lists of gods and goddesses, mentioned without attributes (cf. HMS I, 370,19; 416,15; 569,22; 618,24; II, 328,11; 330,10). On three occasions in our sources she is called a portkona "whore":

Martinus ... calla i Freyio portcono. HMS I, 569,26 (Mart. s.

I). Cf. HMS II,233,16; PS 146,25.

This appears to be a rendering of the following words in the Latin source: "carissimam et suavissimam Venerem meretricem induceret,"

so that Freyja, like Frigg, is equated with Venus. On the other hand, the following citation links her with Óðinn, although not clearly as his wife, and thus may be meant to refer to Juno:

Agatha svaradi: "Þu sagdir gud þin vera sannreynd ath guddomi, ver þu ok þa sem Odinn, en kona þin sem Freyia, at þit megit verda höfd i tölu godanna". HMS I, 2,36. Cf. 2,32.

Gefjun, standing for the Graeco-Roman Diana/Artemis, is the goddess most frequently mentioned. The frequent mention of Ephesus, where the famous temple to Diana was located, makes the connection certain: cf. PS 253,25; HMS I, 372,1; et al.

Tyr is usually identified with Mars/Ares, but there is little to go on for this identification in the few instances in which he occurs in our sources, except for the following:

þar (Athens) heilt þaa skola sa maðr, er Dionisius het, ok kallaðr ariopagita at kenningarnafni, ok kendr við garð þann, er stoð i hof Tyss, er blotaðr var til þess, at maðr hefði sigr i bardaganum...PS 249,9 (Páls s.II).

Clemens ... tefr ... Tý...PS 146,37.

There is little to distinguish Freyr, or to equate him with any Roman god, in the instances where the name appears in our sources: cf. HMS I, 422,28; 423,1; et al.

328,10; 330,10; PS 146,35.

The situation with Baldr is similar: cf. HMS I, 417,15; PS 146,37.

Otherwise, there is one mention apiece on PS 146 of the following gods and goddesses: Loki, Hoenir, Heimdall, Njörðr, Ullr and Sif. The Latin passage on which it is based is such a free translation, and so many more Norse gods' names are included than Roman ones, that it offers little help (PS XVI - XVII).

The usual word for the pagan temple, corresponding to Latin templum, is hof (apparently a loan-word from Old English). It is contrasted to kirkja, the Christian place of worship:

En er Benedictus com þangat, þa braut hann scurþgöbit oc brende blotvipo umhverfis oc gærþi or hofino kircio oc helgæði Martino. HMS I, 209,6 (Liber secundus Dialogorum Gregorii).

Cf. HMS I, 224,4.

The hof is often designated as the place of worship of one or another of the gods or goddesses: Odens hof (HMS I, 288,8); Freys hof (HMS I,422,28) i Þors hofi i Rumborg (PS 126,22); i hof Tyss (PS 249,9); hof goda varra (PS 340,3); hof goðanna (PS 378,2); til hofs þess, er þeir hofðu eignað Gefion (PS 430,11); til hofs Gefionar gyðio sinnar (PS 462,26); til hofs hofutgyðiu þeirar, er Diana kallaz (PS 484,18); til Tys hofs (PS 736,6).

Several designations for "heathen priest" occur. The most frequent (8 occurrences) is hofprestr:

heifnir menn ok sialfir hofprestar skvrðgoð blotandi flyctvz saman..HMS I 100,19 (Antonius s.) Cf. HMS II, 600,13.15.17.19; 601,2.6.11.

Hofgoði appears once, as does hofshöfðingi:

Ok i því bili varð sa atburðr, at skreið undan umbuningi skurðgoðans dreki mikill, ok drap þegar til dauðs son hofgoðans, er reykelst bar fyrir skurðgoðit. PS 736,9 (Phil. ok Jac. s. I).

Dionisius hofshöfðingi toe tru, oc mærger aprer menn meþ honom. PS 222,4 (Pals s. I)

Hofmaðr, like blotmaðr above, seems to mean simply "pagan worshipper":

Fyrir því hyggit at, romverskir hofmenn, ok kanniz við, at guðdoms nafn parteraz eigi i fleiri staði, þvíat einn er guð...PS 117,10 (Peters s. I).

Hofgyðja, which also occurs only once in our sources, appears to mean "priestess" (so Fritzner, who cites other sources):

þa sendo blotbyskupar Constantino konungi rit ok mællto a þessa lund: "Lydr þinn, konungr, fær skada mikinn af blæstri dreka þess, er hofgydiur vorar voru vanar at blota ok færa honum fæzlur a hverium manadi. HMS II, 274,12 (Silvesters s.).

Musteri, mustari, originally a Christian word, borrowed (probably through Old English--see de Vries) ultimately from Latin monasterium, is used mostly to designate a Christian place of worship (or Jewish--Cleasby-Vigfusson). In a few instances, however, it is used in place of hof:

þessir bolvudu blotmenn dyrkudu ... einn diofulligan
kragt. Musteri eitt mikit attu þeir, ok stod þar i skurdgod
... HMS II, 394,15 (=Latin templum, 394,26). Cf. PS 127,33;
655,33; 656,19.20.22.26; 475,19.

The traditional grove (lund) of Northern paganism is mentioned,
so far as I know, only twice:

crisnir menn hofdu upp brent tidagerdarhus Gypinga ok lund
einn Valentinianorum, er blotadr var. HMS I, 38,109).

(Ambrosius s.) Cf. PS 475,21.

In Scandinavian paganism, the word horgr "cairn, pagan altar"
is frequent in the alliterative formula hof ok horgr (see
Fritzner). In our sources the word horgr appears only once:

ok þar sem fyrr hofdu verit hof ok horgar heidingligrs blots-
kapar...HMS II, 380,4 (Vitae Patrum; =Latin templa
superstitiones antiquae 380,23-24)

There are strikingly few loan-words in our list, and most of
the words used are descended from Scandinavian heathen worship. At
the same time, many of them (notably blöta) are used incorrectly,
from the pagan standpoint--it seems obvious that in the two hundred
plus years of Christianity their proper use had been forgotten.
There is, of course, considerable difference in the density of
these terms from saga to saga. Mostly they are found in the lives
of the desert saints and those of the saints and apostles who went
to Greece and Rome. The later saints had to wrestle more with the
devil than with heathens. In the more Latinate sagas, the main
difference seems to be that there are more nonce compounds. Also,
they sometimes use the Roman god names instead of changing them to
their Norse equivalents.

Most of the words are found in the dictionaries, but
sometimes, as I have noted, with distortions of sense or usage.

