This polyglot dictionary draws on the vast and vibrant range of vernacular legal terminology found in medieval Scandinavian texts – terminology which yields valuable insights into the quotidian realities of crime and retribution; the processes, application and execution of laws; and the cultural and societal concerns underlying the development and promulgation of such laws.

Legal texts constitute an unparalleled – and often untapped – source of information for those studying the literature, languages and history of medieval and Viking Age Scandinavia. The Lexicon is a welcome contribution to the study of medieval Scandinavia on two counts: firstly, it makes accessible a wealth of vernacular historical documents for an English-speaking audience. Secondly, it presents legal terminologies that span the languages and geographies of medieval Scandinavia, drawing on twenty-five legal texts composed in Old Swedish, Old Icelandic, Old Norwegian, Old Danish, Old Gutnish and Old Faroese. By collating and juxtaposing legal terms, the Lexicon thus offers its readers a fascinating, comprehensive window into the legal milieu of medieval Scandinavia as a unified whole.

It is in this respect that the Lexicon differs from the other major lexica that came before it: where relevant, it gathers closely related terms from multiple Nordic languages beneath single headwords within single entries. This approach illuminates the differences (and similarities) in usage of specific lexical items and legal concepts across geographic areas and through time. This book is an indispensable resource for scholars and students of medieval Scandinavia.

The Lexicon is an ongoing project with a digital counterpart (http://www.dhi.ac.uk/lmnl/) created within the department of Swedish Language and Multilingualism at Stockholm University. It is part of the wider ‘Medieval Nordic Laws’ project based at the University of Aberdeen.
Appendix D2: Weights and Measures

The medieval Nordic systems of weights and measures varied considerably over space and time, and with respect to the object(s) being measured. One must distinguish between

A) measures of capacity and volume (‘rummål’),

B) measures of 1) length and 2) surface/area (‘jordmål’) and

C) measures of weight.

Some terms occurred in more than one category, for example tunna and fjärding, which might denote volume as well as area or length, depending on context. The units were generally parts of larger, hierarchically structured terminological systems. As examples of such connections, some terms have been included that are not found in the provincial laws (e.g. tunna, skippund and skålspund). On the other hand, it is virtually impossible, for reasons of space, to accommodate all local variations in a general survey. For this reason, only the more important regional differences are considered.

A) With respect to capacity and volume, dry and liquid goods were measured differently.

OSw measures of grain were sal(d)/soldh (145.8 litres in WSweden), usually divided into 6 skæppor, each containing c. 24.6 litres. Of the same size as the soldh was the tunna. Much used was the unit spander (ODan spand, ON spann) (c. 73 litres), divided into fiærþungar (‘fourths’) of 18.3 litres.

In Denmark the main unit was tunna (ODan tønde), varying in size from 139 to 194 litres. Spand was 1/8 tønde, i.e. c. 17 litres as a measure of oats; usually spand was a measure of butter (1/16 tønde, i.e. 8.7 litres).

In Norway and Iceland the sáld was the largest unit (in Iceland also a measure of liquids), varying in size between 97.2 and 132.4 litres, divided into 6 mælar of 22 litres (Icealand) or 16.2 litres (Norway). The sáld could also be divided into 4 skeppur of 24.3 (SNorway) or 32.4 litres (NNorway). Alternatively, in ENorway (including Bohuslän) the sáld was divided into 12 sättungar (OSw siattungar, known from Norrland); in Magnus lagabætrs landslög, ‘King Magnus the Law-Mender’s Law of the Realm’ (1274) 1 sättungr equalled 1/4 mælir, varying in size between 5.4 and 12.1 litres.

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, the sáld was replaced by the tunna, varying in size between 97 and 145 litres, in WNorway even 162 litres. The tunna was usually divided into 4 maelar or 6 speen (pl. of spander); in WSweden 6 skæppor of 24.8 litres; in DL 1/6 tunna was called a trö.

As a measure of butter, spander and tunna were used in all the Nordic countries. The spann varied in Norway from c. 4 to c. 16 litres. The Icelandic skjóla (= spann) contained c. 4 litres.

A third frequent unit was the (OSw) lóper (ODan lap, ON laupr), varying in size between 10 and 21 litres (i.e. from 2 up to 4 steelyard pounds, ‘bisperpund’, or from 48 to 96 merkr); in WSweden 1/9 tunna, in Denmark usually 1/6 tønde, in Gotland 1/4 tunna.

As far as shiploads and cargo of salted goods, e.g. fish (but also grain), are concerned, the largest unit was the lest (ON lest) (c. 1,600–2,000 kg), divided into 10 or 12 skippund of 170 kg (in Denmark 126 kg, in ENorway 185, in WNorway 148 kg); 1 skippund equalled 24 lif(f)spund (lispound) of 8 kg (Sweden and Denmark) or 9 kg (Norway). The lif(f)spund was divided into 16 skålspund of 415 g (Sweden) or 496 g (Denmark) or 428 g (Norway).

An important ON grain measure was the vett/vett, ranging from 6 to 46 kg. In weighing fish the vóg (18 kg) was a unit in WNorway.
Appendix D2: Weights and Measures

B) 1) Measures of length were the (OSw) alin (ODan ælen, ON öln); (OSw) foter/fiæt (ODan fiæt, ON fet/fótr); (OSw) spann, (ON) spönn; (ON) stik(k)a; hundrað; and (OSw) fann (ODan faðn, ON faðmr).

The alin (‘ell’) varied between 47 and 64 cm, in Zealand and Scania 63.26 cm, in Jutland c. 57 cm.

Sweden had at least two types of alin. In addition to the old alin of 55.5 cm and the old Stockholm alin of 52.3 cm, there was (since the middle of the fifteenth century) a newer alin of 60–61 cm.

Norway had also two types of alin, a shorter one (called alin or öln) and a longer one (called stik(k)a); but these three terms were often used interchangeably. The shorter alin, also (in the FrL) called þumalöln, was 47.4 cm, the longer one 55.3 cm.

The Olcë öln has been calculated to 49.2 cm, a younger one, the so-called ‘Hamborgaralen’, was usually 57.3 cm in all the Nordic countries. The length of the Olcë stika is uncertain, but it may have been identical to the ONorw stik(k)a.

The foter (‘foot’) usually measured 26–34 cm; in Sweden 25.9 cm (the Tychonic foot), 33–35 cm (‘den nordliga foten’), or 26.8 cm (the so-called ‘östsvensk aln’). In addition, a Guthnic foot of 27.5–27.7 cm was used in Gotland and parts of Sweden, and a Zealandic foot of c. 31.4 cm in large parts of Southern and Central Sweden. Due to lack of sources, the length of the Norwegian foot cannot be ascertained. The Olcë foot was probably 23–24 cm. The spann varied from 6 to 8 or 9 inches (‘tummar’). The Olcë hundrað was equivalent to 120 ells of wadmal. It was the measure for the value of a cow or six sheep, and also for a certain quantity (weight) of fish (see below).

The fann (‘fathom’) was usually 3 ells (in Hålsingland and Iceland 3 1/2, i.e. c. 1.5 m. This was the square measure for the height and breadth of a woodpile. In Iceland, the fathom was also a cubic measure of hay (málfömr), 42.875 ells³. A fæþunger (‘quarter’, namely of a mile) varied between 1,500 and 3,750 m, dependent on the size of an old Nordic mile. This term (færþunger) was also used as a measure of volume (see above).

Much used were also the stäng (‘stick, pole’, OSw, ODan stang, ON stöng) and the rep (‘rope’, ON reip), both usually of 4.5–9 (in Norway 6 or 8) alnar. In Norway, the stöng equalled 2 faðmar, in Denmark 10–18 feet.

B) 2) The area of a surface was measured in different ways. Arable land was often measured in terms of i) the amount of seed sown, ii) the size of the crop or harvest, or iii) worth (land rent).

i) The amount of seed sown. Sædesland (from seede ‘seed’) is used as a general term for land sowed with a certain amount of grain, specified in the first part of the compound in question. Under this term may be subsumed, e.g., mælirland and sáldsáð. A mælirland (Norway) was sown with 1 mælr, its size equalled 4.7 are; a sáldsáð (Norway) with 1 sáld, possibly c. 4 decare (c. 1/4 acre); a pundássó (Norway) with 1 skippund. The same pattern is shown by OSw spannaland and tunnaland (c. 4,000 m²). A special OSw term is seland (Ángermanl.), for which the quantity of sowed grain is not known; its size has been estimated to 800 square fathoms.

ii) The size of the crop or harvest. OSw snesland (from snes, ‘score, set of twenty’, 1 snesland = 9 bandland) (measured according to the size of the harvest), and the OFar tunnalendi (64 square fathoms).

iii) Worth (land rent). Much more frequent are measurements based on rent (‘landskyld’, the tax or fee paid by the tenant to the landowner), where the first part of the compound denotes the size of the rent. Examples are (OSw) löpsbol, (ONorw) laupsból, laupsleiga, (OSw) markland, (OGu) laupsland, marklaigi, (OSw, ODan) öre(s)land, (ODan) ørebol, (ONorw) ortuga(r)ból, (OSW) örtoghaland, (OSW) pænningsland, (ONorw) mánadarmatarból, merkreból, markaból, øyrisbol, auraból.

The OSw öresland equalled 3 örtoghaland, each comprising 3,000–4,000 m² (= 1 tunnland or 1 dagsværk (‘day’s work’) or 36 snesland). The ONorw merkreból equalled 8 auraból (= 24 örtogaból or 480 penningaból). 1 mánadarmatarból equalled 1 laupsból (= 1/3 merkreból).

The central ODan unit was bol, the value of which was normally (in Zealand) 1 mark ‘skyldjord’, in Zealand it corresponded to c. 110 tønder (sown) grain. But the size of the bol varied considerably. Those valued less than 1 mark ‘skyldjord’ were divided into fjerdinger (fourths) or ottinger (eighths).

The OSw attunger was originally 1/8 of a village (by) or of the smallest conscription unit of the levy (the hamna). It was primarily not an area measure, but a measure of wealth, a unit used in the taxation of farms as a base for the military levy. As an area measure, it expressed the size of fields. In the Early Middle Ages a normal attunger was equal to the size of a field sown with 2 tunnor each year, when half of the field lay fallow, and the crop was 12 tunnor. In the High Middle Ages it became a norm for the rent (OSw avrad), in Sweden and Denmark normally 24 spand. It was equal to 1/2 markland in Svealand, 1/8 bol in Denmark.
The Olfr kristfé (‘Christ’s properties’) constituted a special case. These were freeholding foundations *ad pios usus*, properties or parts thereof encumbered with servitudes implying that the rent should be used to pay for the maintenance of paupers in the local district. Dependant on the size of this rent the property in question was called *karlgildr* (196 ells) or *kvengildr* (144 ells), irrespective of the gender of the recipient.

C) Measures of weight were partly the same as the units mentioned in the Appendix D1 (q.v.). This especially applies to the *mark*, *öre* and *örtogh*. The *mark* had the weight of c. 210 g, varying somewhat over time and regions (in Sweden 213.3 g (Skara), 207.2 g (Stockholm); in Denmark 217.5 g (1282), 210.47 g (1332–33) and c. 230 g (‘the Cologne mark’); in Norway c. 214.3 g (1287) and 214.5 g (1329)). The *öre* was 1/8 *mark*, the *örtogh* 1/24 *mark*. Larger measures were the *skålpund*, *li(f)spund*, *skeppund*, *větt/vætt* and *vág* (see above). In Iceland, larger quantities of fish were weighed in *hundrað* (pl. of *hundrað*). 1 *hundrað* equalled 120 gildir fiskar (40 of 4 *merkr* and 80 of 5 *merkr*).
