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The devil in the desert. Representations of the demonic in Old Norse translated hagiography
“Feeding the Dragon”, Workshop, 17 September 2020

This talk will consider representations of daemons and the devilish in some Old Norse/Old Icelandic translations of Latin hagiographical texts. The main focus will be on the Old Norse *Vitas patrum*, which includes *Historia monachorum* and parts of *Verba seniorum*, but the analysed corpus will also include other connected texts, such as single desert fathers’ lives, especially Antony (*Antonius saga*) and the legend of Archangel Michael (*Michaels saga*), which opens with the fall of the rebel angels and inserts into the narrative excerpts from *Verba seniorum*.

The aim of this contribution is to analyse the different manifestations of the devil we can find in these texts in order to study how they contribute, both linguistically and figuratively, to the demonic imagery on the northern periphery of the western European Middle Ages.