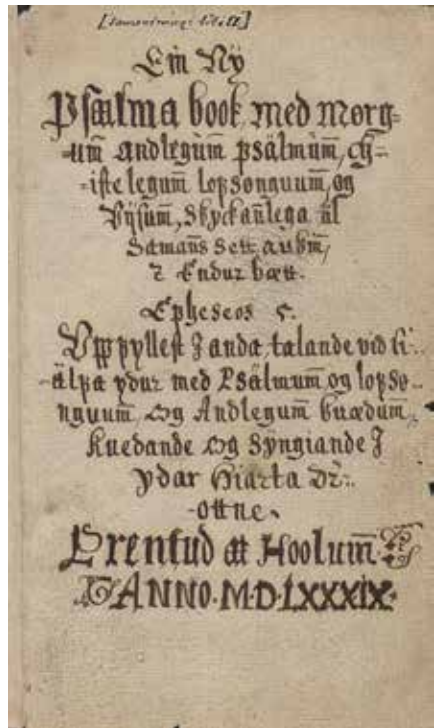


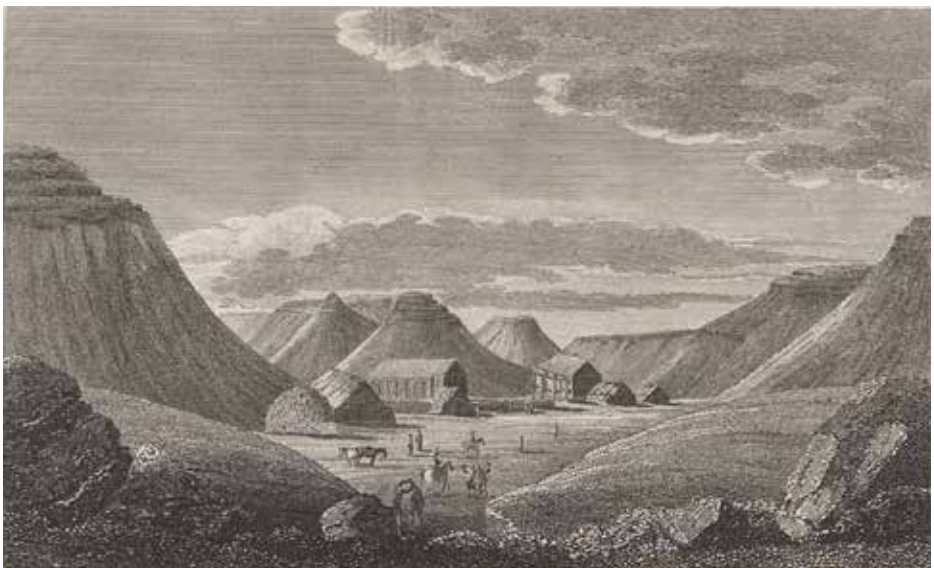


16TH CENTURY HYMNBOOKS

Guðbrandur Þorláksson (ca. 1541–1627) was bishop of Hólar from April 1571 until his death. As a bishop Guðbrandur took on the task of cementing the Reformation in Iceland. In doing so he focused on printing religious works, nearly 100 books, including hymns and the *Bible*, in Icelandic. Previous hymnbooks published by the bishops Marteinn Einarsson in 1555 and Gísli Jónsson in 1558 were inadequate with few hymns, many of which were badly translated, but nevertheless formed an important base for Guðbrand's hymnbook. *Ein ný sálmaþók* was published in 1589 with 343 hymns in six categories was therefore a much needed solution to the request of the congregation singing in their mother tongue.



Ein ný sálmaþók 1589 (Title page)



Hólar in 1814. From the *Iceland Journal* of Ebenezer Henderson 1814–1815.

Om Söðingna 114

Herrað öpan af Ginnunum síe/ þerlede erter
 Manlyne/ Þu vill þá kurt af Syndu síe/ þar
 buers eins Manna/ og þolpen til sañy ný Myrk
 um þafs.

Sollum nu til nota Chrif/ sí þaddest off til
 Lausnar vñ/ þick off a Ginnunum Síð og vñ
 Syngre þafs Síð/ þonun Lop og Dyð/ og
 Þakargíð.

Eitt lítið Barn so gledenigt.



Þ Dag bleffad þarred er/ þored off i þamun
 af þreue Mey off aumun þies/ er til Lausnar
 (I omes)

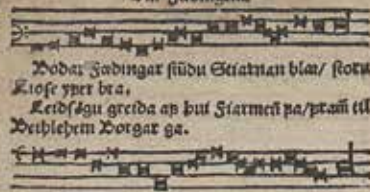
Vore þad þarred off et þades/ allez þad þarred

Þanda mott/ af þu kom allz þad goda/ þ vor


Þar þesu Chrif/ er einu Madur off þaddest

þlyþ

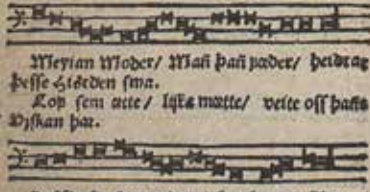
Om Söðingna



Þoda Söðingar síðu Stratan þan/ stotu
 Lofe ypr þa.
 Leidsigu greida af þu Siarmer þa/ þran til
 Þrepleþen Þorgar ga.



Christum konna/ Herrað Ginnu/ þa skru
 Lausum Steþnum sí.
 Gud sem gíðe/ alle med Orde/ nu i þóðum
 Stalle þu.



Meylan Mober/ Man þan þades/ þerðag
 þesse Síðden sma.
 Lop sem ate/ I þa mott/ vete off þafs
 Þykan þar.



Stelfid þe sem þeingu/ samþyngre/ Amen.

Benedicamus. A Tolum
 Med þu Lage. Þader vor
 þu a Ginnunum er.

þader

Hymns of Crist's Birth.

The hymnbook also brought the novelty of musical notation that Icelanders had never seen before, with notation to 106 hymns. In addition to the hymnbook Guðbrandur published a *Graduale* in 1594. Congregational singing were then based on those two books until the mid 19th century.

The majority of the melodies came from German and Danish hymnbooks, many of them in variations due to adjustments to the Icelandic text, some melodies came from Latin hymns but few have an unknown origin. Many of the songs lived with the nation for centuries and several are still sung today, and while the majority took on numerous variations some were sung unchanged, showing how some melodies are more memorable than others.

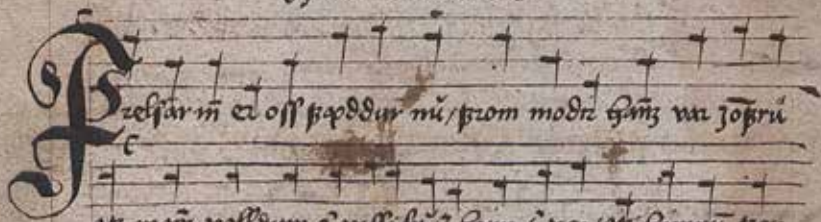
With the reissue of 16th century hymnbooks, published in two volumes 2023, those hymns, that had enormous influence on poetry and musical life for centuries and played a big role in the preservation of the Icelandic language, are made accessible again.

murrhu z zeybelsit / hallelina. Þaðdur af modur meyni
 var; meyni var; manz volld eigin þou til þar hallelina

Dzmsin spallng e var a fem. var a fem. af blod þu barst
 z hem hallelina. Ean lykst off ad holdsmz mynd / holdf
 mz mynd hem z o nagn off ad synd hallelina

Sld off med gnybu gozdi hier / gozdi hier. Sud lyka o fia
 þu hier hallelina. Al þadmgar tyd þrelsmz þrelsmz
 þagne z frangi Eþner gny hallelina. Þegasta þrenng
 þedrud sie / þedrud sie med heme tru o þarklæti hallelina

Þu er off þaðdur ihesu christ / ma þyngia suo sem
 Resonet in laudibus



Þrelsm er off þaðdur nu / þrom modur gny wa þofru

af manz volldum e vissi þu / þ hem e vor / af þinnu þor
 Med off er Sud Emanuel / ord sendmg
 þar þar Sabziel / um þ vitn Ereniel / g
 þu heilæn þoz þauduz son / gop lyft z þon / v gidyf þior

Ord Dandz vel vpp þyllast hier / z þvad sþa spamen
 ner / christur er þu engla kongur er / Gu'n þiac men þa / þotu
 la em maneska. Þezran oþan af þinnu þie / þezrad
 eptir man kyni þ vill gny kvit af þyndum þe / þul guz

Lbs 524 4to written ca.1600. A hymnbook manuscript with a notation to nearly all the 343 hymns from the hymnbook 1589.