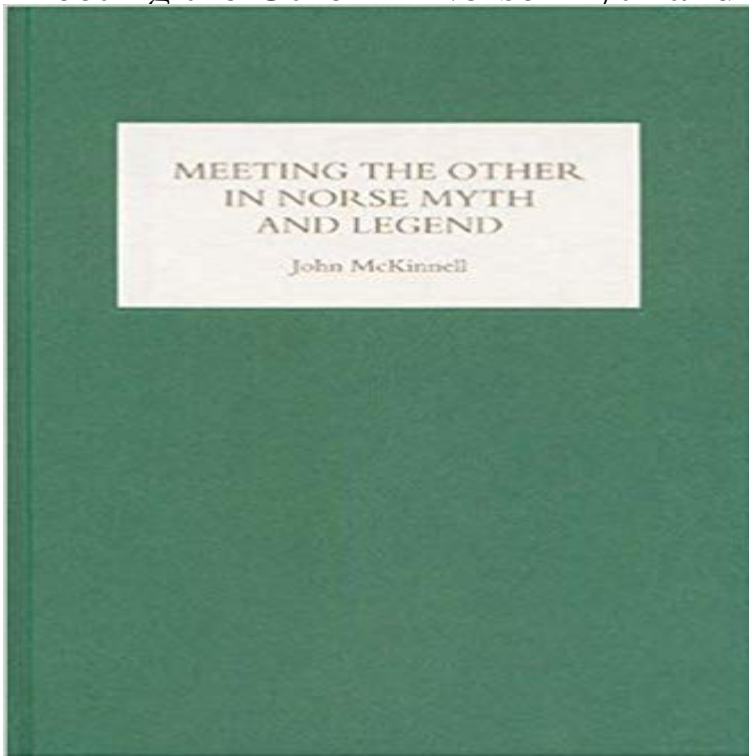


Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend



A particular, recurring feature of Old Norse myths and legends is an encounter between creatures of This World (gods and human beings) and those of the Other (giants, giantesses, dwarves, prophetesses, monsters and the dead). Concentrating on cross-gendered encounters, this book analyses these meetings, and the different motifs and situations they encompass, from the consultation of a prophetess by a king or god, to sexual liaisons and return from the dead. It considers the evidence for their pre-Christian origins, discusses how far individual poets and prose writers were free to modify them, and suggests that they survived in medieval Christian society because (like folk-tale) they provide a non-dogmatic way of resolving social and psychological problems connected with growing up, succession from one generation to the next, sexual relationships and bereavement.

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