

Ingela Hedström: Brynolf Gerlaksson – a Skara bishop with literary ambitions

For the late Middle Ages in Sweden, studies of literacy and book production tend to focus on the Birgittines in Vadstena, and the diocese of Linköping. However, Brynolf Gerlaksson, bishop of Skara 1478–1505, was at the same time an notably well educated and literary man, who has received much less attention.

Brynolf was educated at Rostock university. During his time as bishop, a *registrum* for Skara cathedral was put together. Brynolf has been connected to the beatification of Katarina of Vadstena, and the fact the the Vadstena Birgittines printed a Book of Hours (1495) for their local diocese as well as for Skara might be thanks to him. He was also responsible for the printing of the *Breviarium Scarense* (Nürnberg, 1498), which includes an image of the bishop himself. The office of Saint Brynolf (Algotsson), another bishop of Skara, has been attributed to Brynolf. Finally, he composed a rhyming chronicle over the bishops of his diocese, putting himself into the list of the handful of known Swedish medieval authors. Although the entire breadth of his own library is not known, a handful of items from this book collection have been identified, including an early copy of a printed edition of Saint Birgitta's Revelations in German.

In the following I aim to look at Brynolf Gerlaksson and his literary activities, to see what we can establish about the communication with other social players and the introduction of new media into the diocese.