Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia, *c.* 1100–1350

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Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia, *c.* 1100–1350

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Stefka G. Eriksen
Oslo, January 2015

Introduction: Intellectual Culture and Medieval Scandinavia

Stefka G. Eriksen

The aim of this book is to discuss and redefine intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia, in the period 1100–1350. This period was significant for the development of the intellectual climate in Western Europe in general and was characterized by changes in the institutionalization of education, the rise of the universities, and increased professionalization in many fields of society. This was essentially a transformation of social and power structures, a process which was interdependent with the major transfer of intellectual capital from Greek antiquity, often through Arab and Jewish mediators, into Latin and various vernaculars.

Intellectual and material translations of European material were major components of medieval Nordic culture in the period 1100–1350. Latin, Old French, and German texts were available in the original; they were also translated into Old Norse; and indigenous Old Norse texts were composed on European models. Furthermore, the period witnessed the construction of churches, monasteries, and castles in Norway, which followed and adapted the rhetoric of European Romanesque art and architecture to the new target context. Political alliances and international trade contributed further to the growth of contact with European political, economic, and cultural centres. In other words, this was a period of intense appropriation and adaptation of the foreign, together with a process of defining and establishing an indigenous Scandinavian culture. Understanding the intellectual processes that lie behind and result from these cultural and social structures will be the main concern of this book.

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The possible causes and effects of this *translatio* programme have been discussed by many scholars and comprise, among others, the transformation of the royal office, the strengthening and centralization of secular and aristocratic power, and the introduction of chivalric ideals and culture through literary translations. In this book, we wish to shift the focus from changes in the social structures resulting from textual and cultural *translatio*, and rather emphasize one meta-implication, namely the translation of intellectual culture. 'Intellectual culture' is defined here as modes of thinking, or intellectual, creative, and cognitive processes. In other words, we will seek to investigate what intellectual processes lay behind and were inspired by the textual and material culture in medieval Scandinavia. Our focus will be primarily on Norway and Iceland, but where relevant, attention will also be paid to textual and material culture produced in Denmark and Sweden.

What is 'Intellectual Culture'?

The term 'intellectual' is not a medieval but a modern conception.[1] It has been used to signify various groups such as elitist Russian intelligentsia, American intellectuals engaged in political debates during the 1960s, or any of the culturally minded supporters of Alfred Dreyfus in the late-nineteenth century.[2] Most often, the groups have used the term to define themselves. Our concern here, however, is not how these groups defined themselves and the exact term they used, but rather the parameters they proposed for its discussion. Sometimes the definition pertains to: the intellectuals' political autonomy or lack of it; their relation to or independence from the universities; their attitude to religious structures; the nature of intellectual labour: is it an activity of thinking or producing; or the social classification of intellectuals: does every social class have its intellectuals, or do 'intellectuals' constitute a social class separate from others?

Despite the term's modernity and multiple semantic connotations, some of the questions mentioned above have also been addressed with regard to medieval 'intellectuals', especially those in Western Europe (France, England, Germany). In his book, *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages*, Jacques Le Goff describes various groups of scholars and clerks and the main tendencies in their teachings between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries.[3] According to Le

[1] For a survey of the modern usage and connotations of the term for various scholars and movements, see Copeland, *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent*, pp. 24–35.

[2] See 'intellectual' (subs.) in *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

[3] Le Goff, *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages*. On intellectual culture, teaching, and learning

Goff, the development of intellectual culture in the twelfth century was primarily dependent on the urban social frameworks, which organized it. As a group, he claims, intellectuals could be compared with and juxtaposed to artisans: being an intellectual, like being an artisan, did not imply just the possession of knowledge, but a 'doing', a 'making', a production unfolding from reason.[4] According to Le Goff, the main tool of the intellectual is his mind, and he defines thirteenth-century intellectuals as scholars and thinkers working within the frames of a textual culture. They could have various and multiple functions within this culture, such as scribes, teachers, and professors, as well as artisans involved in the book-production process. Intellectualism was thus the profession of thinking, incorporating both cognitive and ideational labour, teaching and preaching, as well as the production of books and other written material.

According to Le Goff, the growth of the universities and academies should be seen in the context of the establishment of corporations, communities, and guilds during the thirteenth century. The universities were institutions of ambiguous stature, as they were born out of ecclesiastical institutions, but were independent from local forces and functioned as agents of the pope; they were also closely related to local politics (the University of Paris was closely linked to the Capetian monarchy) while at the same time being open and outward looking.[5] The establishment of the profession of thinking thus appeared to be a part of a specific social, economic, and political context. The intellectual's concern with the nature, capacity, and potential of his own being and mind was thus invariably explicated through a continuous dialogue with the collective, i.e. the development of urban milieus and the universities themselves.

Ian P. Wei's recent study of intellectual culture and the development of the university in the Middle Ages shares, but also modifies, some of Le Goff's main premises.[6] Ian P. Wei argues that intellectual history has to be seen in juxtaposition to institutional history, as there is a stark link between ways of thinking and knowing, and the cultural and political contexts of learning. He then inter-

mentalities in monastic contexts before the establishment of the universities, see Vaughan and Rubenstein, eds, *Teaching and Learning in Northern Europe, 1000–1200*.

[4] Le Goff, *Intellectuals*, p. 62.

[5] It was not until the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries that the universities became more nationalized, the first national university being founded in Prague in 1347. There was also an increase in the number of universities, which again led to a decrease in the degree of internationalization. The first Scandinavian universities were founded in Uppsala in 1477 and Copenhagen in 1478. See Le Goff, *Intellectuals*, p. 141.

[6] Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris*.

prets the ideas, sense of identity, and authority of thinkers and scholars within a historical and social context. In addition, he argues against the distinction between abstract philosophy and theology, on the one hand, and history of ethics and moral theology on the other, as the main aim of the university was to create preachers. Further, in the history of intellectual culture he includes the work of women, who are otherwise most often treated separately in histories of mysticism, as well as thinkers from outside the university. His survey of intellectual culture synthesizes the individual-ideational as opposed to the social, on the one hand, and the theoretical scientific aspects of intellectual culture as opposed to its practical applications, on the other.[7]

In his book *Penser au moyen âge*, Alain de Libera discusses medieval intellectual culture from a philosophical and epistemological point of view.[8] He defines intellectualism as a discourse, an attitude about thinking in itself, which is directly related neither to the universities, nor to the towns. It is rather primarily based on the appropriation of ancient Greek philosophy, mediated via Arab and Latin translations, into the vernacular. According to Alain de Libera, intellectual culture is a *habitus*, which is so self-contained that it allows for

[7] On the idea of the individual in the Middle Ages, see Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050–1200*; Bynum, 'Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?', pp. 82–109; Bagge, *Det Europeiske Menneske: Individoppfatninger fra Middelalderen til i Dag*; Bagge, *The Individual in European Culture*. On the significance of the collective and communal for the formation of the individual's competence, see the discussion of 'textual communities' introduced by Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*; Mews and Crossley, eds, *Communities of Learning*. The editors promote the idea that: 'All learning takes place within some kind of community, whether it be a formal place of instruction, a religious community, or simply an informal network of two or more friends' (p. 1). For a discussion of the dynamics between the individual and various social spaces, see Wei, 'From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities', pp. 42–78. He shows that a link between the individual and the collective is always at stake, but the representation of its dynamics in literary sources depends on the respective socio-cultural and intellectual climate. The creative individual can be discussed from a new philological perspective as well, which foregrounds the authority of the scribes and other producers of each manuscript; see for example Nichols, 'Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture', pp. 1–10. For a discussion from the perspective of cognitive theory, see Giere and Moffatt, 'Distributed Cognition', pp. 301–10. On the role of memory, both individual and collective, see Laugerud, 'Memory Stored and Reactivated', pp. 7–29. See also Helfer, 'Arts of Memory and Cultural Transmission', p. 29.

[8] For another discussion from a similar perspective see Hoffman, 'Intellectualism and Voluntarism', pp. 414–27. In this study, 'intellectualism' is seen in opposition to 'voluntarism' as the agent ultimately responsible for the freedom of human beings.

its transportation from Latin to the vernacular.[9] Even though intellectualism is seen as detachable from the universities, its discourse is not apolitical and autonomous with respect to institutional structures; but it could nonetheless be learned, appropriated, and transferred to new social contexts.

Rita Copeland, partly building upon both Le Goff and de Libera, questions whether there can be a transhistorical category of the intellectual and suggests a more historically localized one.[10] At the same time, she seeks to define intellectual culture in a broader sense than focusing on the individual thinkers or professionals. Her study of the Lollard movement shows how the intellectual project, in this case defined in terms of pedagogy, could be 'exported' from the university environment to non-academic, vernacular, non-professional circles. This intellectual exportation happened through individual careers, which were both professional and non-professional, and which entailed a link between academic and public appearances.

These studies represent discussions of intellectual culture from various fields — history, literary studies, philosophy and the human mind — and they take different stances on the dynamics between the intellectual and his social context. Le Goff, for example, focuses on the exceptional male individual (not the intellectual as such with his intellectual capacities), and reflects to a degree Marxist theory as he argues for the conditioning factors of social class, social relations, and thus power, for the development of intellectual culture. Like many post-modernists, Wei'~~s~~ and Copeland'~~s~~ ~~works~~ seek to balance structure and agency, and foreground the dynamics between them. From a slightly different perspective, de Libera argues for the compatibility and duality of the relationship between the intellectual labour of an individual and social structures, thus viewing the individual as a constant function of social life, not a remainder of it. His use of the concept of *habitus* brings to mind the work of Pierre Bourdieu where he links cultural and economic capital in order to describe features of various social classes.[11]

Recently, historians such as David Gary Shaw have taken the discussion about the dynamics between the individual and the social context in a slightly different direction, by arguing that agency comes before expression, and that it is accessible independently of texts, discourses, languages, and social structures.[12]

[9] Libera, *Penser au moyen âge*.

[10] Copeland, *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages*.

[11] See for example Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*.

[12] Shaw, 'Recovering the Self: Agency after Deconstruction', pp. 474–95.

Shaw argues that the individual is always social, but nevertheless has agency, which is primarily an intellectual, cognitive change that depends on mental and bodily experience. Indeed, even if the individual is represented as a type, or is narrated as passive, his agency remains primary. Shaw's invitation to recover the self, which is sorely needed after its deconstruction, inspires a different take on the intellectual by prioritizing cognitive agency and intellectual capacity.

Such an approach, if not directly inspired by, is certainly well compatible with recent tendencies in the humanities to use cognitive and neurological theories. A main theorem in cognitive poetics is that meaning is not something that is inherent in a text. Rather, it is constructed, formed, and created by the agent himself (producer, interpreter, recipient). The usefulness of this theoretical perspective lies in the way it explains reception, meaning construction, and cognitive processes, as it includes not only the mind of the individual, but also various external representations, means of production, and other humans.[13] The concept of 'distributed cognition' holds that individual cognition is merely a component in a complex cognitive system.[14] Other relevant concepts are embodied, embedded, and extended cognition, which in different ways foreground the notion that cognition and the mind are not separate from the body, natural, and cultural space.[15] The deployment of cognitive theory when discussing intellectual culture places the individual's cognition — that is, cognitive processes, intellectual labour, creative and hermeneutic loops — before both the isolated individual and the context. Moreover, as modern definitions of cognition encompass everything from physical perception of the world, rationality, emotionality, memory, and faith, to decision making, this theoretical platform invites the study of the link between these cognitive faculties, within the same individual. Consequently, such a starting platform increases the potential to elucidate various cognitive aspects of the work of an intellectual, and thus also various social roles and functions the same intellectual might have within the same society.

Let us now return to the medieval period: even though medieval intellectuals do not use the term 'intellectual' itself to define themselves, many discuss the nature of their activities.[16] In his *Didascalicon*, Book II, Hugues de Saint-Victor, for

[13] Clark and Chalmers, 'The Extended Mind', pp. 27–42.

[14] Giere and Moffatt, 'Distributed Cognition', p. 304.

[15] Clark, 'Embodied, Embedded, and Extended Cognition', pp. 275–92.

[16] There are numerous metaphors for thinking and intellectual labour. On terms suggesting

example, distinguishes between two different types of academic activity: an art or a craft, and a discipline.[17] According to Hugues de Saint-Victor, engagement in arts results in material or written products, while disciplines are more cognitive and immaterial. However, arts and disciplines are part of philosophy, which can be divided into theoretical (speculative), practical (active/ethical/moral because morals consist in good actions), mechanical (concerned with the works of human labour), and logical (linguistic). At the end of Book II, Hugues writes:

> All knowledge, whether it be a discipline or any act of cognition, whatever, is somehow contained in philosophy — either as an integral part, or as a divisive part or branch.[18]

Anybody engaged in the activity of thinking within the professional fields of textual production or art, architecture, liturgy, music, or medicine could then be seen as 'intellectual'. The terms that medieval thinkers used to refer to themselves, such as *scolares*, *magister*, *clericus*, *philosophus*, *litteratus*, *eruditus*, *doctor*, *professor*, *auctor*, *artifex* may serve to indicate the enormous variation in the possible functions of medieval intellectuals, and the interdisciplinary nature of their work.[19] The concept of *auctoritas*, for example, was developed in the thirteenth century and referred to a person who through self-conscious analysis had the capacity to pursue and define the right meaning of a text. The *artifex*, including architects and art-makers, were gradually seen as following this scholastic theory of authorship and were seen as *auctores* themselves.[20] And vice versa: poetry was designated as mental building, which, just like the work of the

a process of collecting, such as *colligere* and *compilere*, see Fresco and Hedeman, eds, *Collections in Context*. On intellectual labour described in terms of mapping places, paths, journeys, see Carruthers, 'The Concept of *ductus*', pp. 190–212. See also Crossley, '*Ductus* and *memoria*', pp. 214–49. On the intellectual activity of thinking as a *translatio* process, and the human memory as the primary means of cultural transmission, see Carruthers, 'Mechanisms for the Transmission of Culture', pp. 1–27. On the cognitive process described as forging, see Leach, 'Nature's Forge and Mechanical Production', pp. 74–75.

[17] Hugues de Saint-Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor*, trans. by Taylor, pp. 61–62.

[18] Hugues de Saint-Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor*, trans. by Taylor, p. 80.

[19] Copeland, *Pedagogy*, p. 34. On *doctor*, see Binski, '"Working by Words Alone"', p. 33. On the problematic issue of applying modern labels and categorizations to medieval material and mental frameworks, see Matter and others, eds, 'Introduction: Marcia Colish and Mind Matters', pp. 1–12.

[20] Binski, '"Working by Words Alone"', p. 21. See also Pevsner, 'The Term "Architect" in the Middle Ages', pp. 549–62.

master architect, was an invention aided by *memoria*, a conceptual and liberal activity of the mind. Being a poet or an architect involved the knowledge of an art and the mastery of a craft, but did not have to entail the actual manufacture of the material, and could be seen as the theoretical mastery of a discipline.[21]

The role of the theologian could also resemble that of the architect or the poet, because of the similarities in their positions in juxtaposition to their operatives.[22] From the twelfth century on, liturgy was increasingly regarded as a rhetorical art, an art of persuasion, which demanded and led to the same intellectual activity as the art of rhetoric.[23] Thus performativity, encompassing orality, vocal delivery, and liturgical theatre, just like text, art, and architecture, was a medium for the expression of intellectual culture.[24]

The conceptualization of music as a discipline was also closely linked to the arts of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic), as well as the *quadrivium*, as the ancient science of harmonics. Late medieval musical treatises, for example, make use of the same terminology as Donatus in his *Ars Major*, such as *de voce*, *de littera*, *de syllaba*, *de posituris*, etc., and dissonance in music has the same defined and controlled position as vices and tropes in speech.[25] In a similar way, grammarians and rhetoricians turned to music to gain inspiration for ways of conceptualization. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the rhetorical model disappears from music, we see how treatises on polyphony influenced grammatical and rhetorical treatises.

Thinking then becomes the common denominator of many different arts and disciplines, such as poetics, rhetoric, music, painting, architecture, performing, and preaching. These disciplines borrow concepts and manners of understanding from each other. The link between them lies in the fact that they share the

[21] Aquinas and Henry of Ghent comment on the distinction between the role of the architect as a thinker and philosopher, and the manual activity of building, see Binski, '"Working by Words Alone"', p. 28.

[22] Binski '"Working by Words Alone"', pp. 14–51.

[23] On medieval liturgical functional poetry and biblical commentaries from the monastic or pre-scholastic period, see Iversen and Bell, eds, *Sapientia et Eloquentia*. On Abelard's theoretical understanding of the link between rhetoric and producing an affective liturgy, see Flynn, '*Ductus figuratus et subtilis*', p. 252.

[24] For a discussion of the significance of eloquence of delivery in letters, see Carmago, 'Special Delivery', pp. 173–89. On the rhetorical basis for the Cistercian rule of silence and extensive use of sign language, see Ziolkowski, 'Do Actions Speak Louder than Words?', pp. 124–50.

[25] Bent, 'Grammar and Rhetoric in Late Medieval Polyphony', p. 58.

double appeal of rhetoric, which is to trigger the audience's responses to the aesthetic and sensual, as well as to entice their rational and intellectual potential.[26]

In this short survey, we have seen that intellectual culture is a modern concept, which is most often used to define modern institutions, but is also applied to medieval social structures by various scholars. Medieval thinkers and writers do not deploy the concept as such, but they describe their intellectual activities and the cognitive, creative aspects of these activities. The nature of the activity is often reflected in the intellectuals' titles. Based on the theoretical platform of cognitive literary studies and the indications of this brief survey, three main aspects of intellectual culture stand out: (1) intellectual culture is primarily a result of the intellectual's cognition, which is always distributed, embedded, and embodied; the core characteristic of intellectual culture is thus the very cognitive process or intellectual labour that lies behind or is inspired by the cultural expression; (2) because of the primacy of the cognitive aspect of intellectual culture, the results of intellectual labour, i.e. the cultural expression that we still have and that we study, are always translated and adapted: they are a result of the creator's cognitive agency to create a cultural expression which is to serve a certain purpose within a certain target culture; (3) this cognitive intellectual process can result in cultural expressions of different media, or in other words, it can be realized in various medialities: orally, musically, in writing, or materially by means of art and architecture. Seen from this perspective, the various artefacts can, and should, be approached in similar modes and they should be studied in comparison to each other.

With this definition of intellectual culture it becomes clear that when we study intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia, we aim to study various cultural expressions — books, sculpture, and architecture; literary texts, documentary texts, laws, and theological texts — and read them as *texts* in combination with each other, in order to gain better insight into the intellectual processes behind their creation, the variety of intellectual activities that could be pursued by one and the same individual, and thus also, the various social functions of an 'intellectual'. This definition also explains the period chosen to be surveyed in the book — intellectual culture certainly existed also before 1100, but the cultural expressions testifying to these intellectual processes are barely pre-

[26] Carruthers, 'Editor's Introduction', p. 3. The significance of eloquence, the beauty of vocality, the *vox* in the wider sense of the word is also addressed by Bent, 'Grammar and Rhetoric in Late Medieval Polyphony', pp. 52–71. She clarifies that eloquence was a central element or ability for a good master, a rhetorician (in writing or orally), architect, theologian, a master of medicine, law, or music.

served. The twelfth century saw the major introduction of writing and books in Norway and Iceland, as well as an increase in the production of other material culture, such as architecture and sculpture. As already mentioned and as will be discussed in greater detail below and also in the chapter by Gunnar Harðarson, this blossoming of textual and material culture was based on the locally existing intellectual culture (oral tradition, for example) as well as foreign impulses, textual and material. With his cognition and agency, an intellectual could use a variety of these impulses in the production of new cultural expressions. It is important to emphasize that, on the one hand, the intellectual's agency could result in the introduction of changes and innovations to this pre-existing 'material', and on the other, it could lead to the preservation and faithful reproduction of important aspects of the material, a choice which depended on the creative strategies and intentions of the intellectual. As David Gary Shaw argues, faithful reproduction of a cultural expression should not be seen as passive and lacking agency, but as intentional and strategic, even though it is faithful. This book, as we will see, contains examples of various intellectual strategies; some necessitate innovative changes, while others demand that cultural expressions are kept similar to their source material. The book as a whole thus provides the basis for reflecting on how and when social spheres inspire or demand innovations as opposed to continuation.

Medieval Scandinavia, c. *1100–1350*

Defining intellectual culture as cognition, distributed and embedded, requires a closer look at the general socio-cultural, political, and religious context of medieval Scandinavia before we indulge in the intellectual culture developing there.[27]

Even though the twelfth century cannot be rigidly separated from what precedes it, this period witnessed major cultural innovations: the establishment of the Church and religious institutions, the emergence of many monasteries and churches in Norway, and the birth of the Old Norse literary tradition. The institutional development of the North, both secular and religious, was closely related to that of European institutions and structures. In 1104, the Nordic countries became an independent church province, under the archbishop of Lund. In 1152/53, the Norwegian province, including Iceland, was founded under the

[27] Once again, medieval Scandinavia, in this context, encompasses primarily Norway and Iceland, but studies of textual and material culture produced in Denmark and Sweden are included and drawn into the discussions where relevant, in order to juxtapose the cultural development in various corners of Scandinavia.

archbishop of Niðarós,[28] and in 1164, Sweden (and Finland) were headed by the archbishop of Uppsala.[29] The establishment of independent church provinces meant closer contact with the papacy, which was a primary patron of education and university development. Cathedral chapters, which were responsible for worship in the cathedral as well as the school for new clergymen, were established in Norway immediately after the establishment of the Norwegian province.[30]

The first Benedictine monasteries in Norway were established and built towards the end of the eleventh/ beginning of the the twelfth century and the abbots of the monasteries were under the immediate direction of the bishops. When the first bishop of Bergen lived at Selja, the monastery of St Alban was established there. A couple of decades after the bishop moved to Bergen, Munkeliv monastery was established there, possibly *c*. 1110; Holmkloster was simultaneously established in Niðarós. Several nunneries were established before 1150 as well, such as Nonneseter in Oslo, Gimsøy near Skien, Bakke near Niðarós. Benedictine monasteries were founded also in Iceland, Þingeyrar (*c*. 1133) and Munkaþverá (*c*. 1155). Around 1150, the Cistercians started to establish their houses: Lyse near Bergen, Hovedøya near Oslo, and Tautra near Niðarós.[31] The Augustinian order established themselves in the period 1150–1200: Konghelle and Helgseter in Niðarós, Halsnøy, and Bergen. Around 1240, the Dominicans established monasteries in Niðarós, Bergen, and Oslo, and later in Hamar. During the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Premonstratensians became another important order in Norway, with *Olavskloster* in Tønsberg as their main see. The second half of the thirteenth century saw the establishment of the Franciscans in Konghelle, Tønsberg, Bergen, Marstrand, and Oslo, at a time when urbanization was intensifying.[32] By 1300, there were all in all about thirty monasteries in Norway.[33]

[28] See Johnsen, *On the Background for the Establishment of the Norwegian Church Province*.

[29] For a general study, see Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia*, pp. 100–28.

[30] Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia*, p. 122.

[31] For a more detailed study of the establishment of the Cistercians in the Nordic countries, see France, 'Cistercienserne i Norden indtil, c. 1200', pp. 47–60. See also Henriksen, 'Cistercienserne i Norge og biskopene', pp. 61–76. See also Gervin, *Klostrene ved verdens ende*. For a discussion on Nonneseter in Bergen, see Ommundsen, 'Nonneseter i Bergen – eit benediktinarkloster'.

[32] Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, *Norsk historie 800–1300*, pp. 174–75; Bjørkvik, 'Klostergods og klosterdrift i Norge i mellomalderen', pp. 147–64; Gunnes, 'Ordener og kloster i norsk samfunnsliv', pp. 131–46.

[33] Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, *Norsk historie 800–1300*, p. 175.

The first bishopric of Iceland, at Skálholt, is traditionally considered to have been founded in 1056, when Ísleifr, son of Gizurr the White, was elected bishop. Ísleifr was succeeded by his son Gizurr, who was a bishop between 1082 and 1118. He had the tithe introduced to Iceland in 1096, and allowed the founding of the bishopric in Hólar in the north. A cathedral school was established in Hólar, while there was a major learning centre at Haukadalar in the south. The first monastery in Iceland was established at Þingeyrar in 1133 and the first nunnery at Kirkjubær in 1186.[34]

Even though the Icelandic Church was under the Norwegian archbishopric after 1152, it had its own independent characteristics. Individuals could for example build churches (following the old German *Eigenkirchenwesen*), in contrast to what was most common in the rest of Scandinavia, where churches were usually founded by the local community.[35] If the owner of the church were not a priest himself, he would hire a priest. The whole farm would often be given to the church, to form a joint ecclesiastical institution called *staðr*, which was private and economically independent. The keeping of the church was inherited as private property.[36] Another Icelandic characteristic was the existence of chieftain-priests, who would have both religious and secular power. There has been vigorous debate as to whether this system was a continuation of the dual role of the pagan *goðar* (chieftains) or not.[37] This system led to a conflict between the lay aristocracy and the Church, for the independence of the latter, which was first addressed by Bishop Þorlákr at Skálholt (St Þorlákr). The conflict included a debate about the Icelandic bishop's right to ordain *goðar*, and the system disappeared in the first half of the thirteenth century. Even though the Icelandic chieftains were no longer priests, many of them still lived at *staðir*, i.e. land and property belonging to the Church.[38]

At the end of the thirteenth century, there was a second stage in the conflict between the Church and the lay aristocracy.[39] In 1273 there was an agreement between King Magnús the Lawmender and Archbishop Jón, when the king

[34] Gunnar Karlsson, *The History of Iceland*, pp. 38–39. See Bjørn Bandlien's chapter in this volume, on the nature of these learning institutions and the intellectuals they promoted.

[35] See Kjartan Hauglid's chapter in this volume for a discussion of this topic with regard to the Norwegian context.

[36] Magnús Stefánsson, 'The Norse Island Communities of the Western Ocean', pp. 217–18.

[37] Magnús Stefánsson, 'The Norse Island Communities of the Western Ocean', p. 216.

[38] Gunnar Karlsson, *The History of Iceland*, pp. 40–43.

[39] Kristoffer Vadum's chapter in this volume discusses some aspects of the enactment of this conflict.

gave important rights to the Church with regard to the division of property between the two powers. When King Magnús died in 1280, an anti-clerical regency took over in Norway and declared all established agreements with the Church invalid: all church farms were now to be handed over to laymen.[40] When King Eiríkr came to power, a less conflict-oriented relationship with the Church was attempted. An agreement was achieved in 1296/97 between King Eiríkr and Bishop Árni that those church farms which were owned entirely by the Church should be ruled by the bishop; if the Church owned less than half of a farm, it should be ruled by the laymen.[41]

The Catholic Church influenced not only the establishment of religious institutions in Scandinavia, but also the formation of the royal office. After the Civil Wars (1130–1240), Norway was united under a strong monarchy of kings of the Sverrir family.[42] In 1217, Hákon Hákonarson was acclaimed king, but it was only after 1240, when he defeated his rival Skúli, that he functioned as sole ruler until his death in 1263. His reign was characterized by internal peace and external expansion of the Norwegian borders. In 1262–64, Iceland submitted to the Norwegian king, which implied the end of the Free State period in Iceland, and a change from a kin-based social and political structure to a society led by royal subjects affiliated to the king.[43] Greenland submitted to the Norwegian king as well in 1261. The Norwegian kingship at that time also covered the Hebrides, the Isle of Man, Shetland, and Orkney. King Hákon's reign was also characterized by the development of legislation and the emergence of public justice, administered by both the Church and the king. A new Law of Succession was enacted (1260), and the earlier provincial laws were extensively revised, which subsequently led to the development of legislation on a national scale in 1274–77 by his son King Magnús.[44] These innovations were related to

[40] Gunnar Karlsson, *The History of Iceland*, pp. 97–98.

[41] Gunnar Karlsson, *The History of Iceland*, p. 99.

[42] On the international relations between King Sverrir and England during the twelfth century, see Johnsen, *Kong Sverre og England 1199–1202*. For a more detailed survey of the development of the monarchy during the thirteenth century, see Bagge, 'The Norwegian Monarchy in the Thirteenth Century', pp. 159–77. Helle, 'Towards Nationally Organised Systems of Government', pp. 345–52.

[43] Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'The Atlantic Islands', pp. 110–24; Magnús Stefánsson, 'The Norse Island Communities', pp. 202–20; Sverrir Jakobsson, 'The Process of State-Formation in Medieval Iceland', pp. 1–20; Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, 'The Icelandic Aristocracy after the Fall of the Free State', pp. 153–66.

[44] Helle, 'The Norwegian Kingdom: Succession, Disputes, Consolidation', pp. 369–91.

the gradual institutionalization of the royal office itself, when the idea of the king as a person and a member of an egalitarian war band was replaced by a symbolic office assumed by the representative of God's just rule on earth.[45] An official royal unction and coronation, defining kingship as existing by the grace of God, became a regular custom in Norway from 1247.[46]

Despite the general tendency towards centralization of the monarchy, the secular power in Norway and Iceland was spread around various political and cultural centres. In Iceland, for example, education and the writing and copying of manuscripts was done in both religious and secular centres, for example at the episcopal sees of Skálholt and Hólar, at various monasteries, but also at private schools at various chieftain farms, such as Haukadalr, where Ari Þorgilsson was educated, the farm of Oddi, which was founded by Sæmundr fróði, and at Reykholt, which belonged to Snorri Sturluson.[47] Many of the Icelandic chieftains were closely affiliated with the Norwegian kings and/or local religious institutions, which certainly conditioned the nature of the intellectual production at their centres.[48]

These religious and secular institutions were thus the main centres for learning, and arenas for direct cultural and ideological contact between Europe and the Norse political elite. Furthermore, many of the leaders of these structures had received some of their education abroad at central learning centres such as the Universities of Paris and Bologna, among others. They brought back not only knowledge about specific issues, but also more general academic mental frameworks.[49]

[45] Bagge, *From Gang Leader to the Lord's Anointed*; Bagge, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*.

[46] Other areas of development during this period include international trade and the establishment of the Hanseatic League, see Nedkvitne, 'Utenrikshandelen fra det vestafjelske Norge 1100–1600'; Nedkvitne, 'Oslo og Hanseatene på Dronning Eufemias tid', pp. 140–56. On the multiple international alliances through marriages and gift-exchanges, see Helle, 'Anglo-Norwegian Relationships in the Reign of Håkon Håkonsson (1217–1263)', pp. 101–14.

[47] Meulengracht Sørensen, 'Social Institutions and Belief Systems of Medieval Iceland', pp. 25–26. On Reykholt, see Mundal, ed., *Reykholt som Makt- og Lærdomssenter*.

[48] See for example Helgi Þorláksson, 'Snorri Sturluson, Reykholt og augustinerordenen', pp. 65–76.

[49] Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia*, p. 123; Bagge, 'Nordic Students at Foreign Universities until 1660', pp. 1–29; Johnsen, 'Les relations intellectuelles entre la France et la Norvège (1150–1214)', pp. 247–68; Johnsen, 'Hvor studerte biskopbrødrene Arne og Audfinn?', pp. 89–98; Johnsen, 'Om St. Victorklosteret og Nordmennene', pp. 405–32. See the essay by Mats Malm in this volume.

As already mentioned, Scandinavian cultural history, including literature, art, and architecture, developed under considerable influence from European tendencies. The many Old Norse translations of Latin,[50] French,[51] and German texts[52] are direct evidence of this import of culture. Despite their local peculiarities, very many of the major Old Norse indigenous texts were also written according to principles of Latin literary production, such as historiographies,[53] Snorri's *Edda*[54] and the *Poetic Edda*,[55] *fornaldarsögur* (Legendary Sagas),[56] kings' sagas,[57] *The King's Mirror*,[58] and even the most indigenous of all genres: the Icelandic family sagas[59] and skaldic poetry.[60] In addition, there is a consid-

[50] On the translations of saint's lives, see Kormack, 'Christian Biography', pp. 27–42; on visionary literature, see Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur i norrøn tradition*; on the Old Norse Homily Book, see Haugen and Ommundsen, eds, *Vår eldste bok*; Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 'Prose of Christian Instruction', pp. 338–53. Latin historiographies were also translated into Old Norse, see Würth, 'Historiography and Pseudo-History', pp. 155–72; Würth, *Der 'Antikenroman' in der isländischen Literatur des Mittelalters*; on *Alexander saga*, see Petterson, 'Fri översättning i det medeltida Västnorden'; on *Barlaams saga*, see Johansson and Arvidsson, eds, *Barlaam i nord*.

[51] For surveys of Old Norse translations from French, see Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Medieval Translations and Cultural Discourse*; Kalinke, ed., *The Arthur of the North*; Eriksen, *Writing and Reading in Medieval Manuscript Culture*.

[52] On *Þiðreks saga*, see Johansson and Flaten, eds, *Francia et Germania*; Andersson, 'An Interpretation of Þidreks saga', pp. 347–77.

[53] Some of the first Old Norse historiography was written in Latin, as for example *Historia Norvegiae* (*c.* 1160–1210), *Historia de antiquitate regum Norvagiensium* written by Theodoricus monachus (*c.* 1130), and Oddr's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, which was later translated into Old Norse (*c.* 1190). Some of the oldest Icelandic historiography was written directly in the vernacular, such as *Íslendingabók* (*c.* 1122–33) and *Landnámabók* (first half of twelfth century). See Meulengracht Sørensen, 'Social Institutions and Belief Systems', pp. 8–29.

[54] Jørgensen, ed., *Snorres Edda i europeisk og islandsk kultur*.

[55] Clunies Ross, *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*.

[56] Torfi H. Tulinius, *The Matter of the North*; Lassen, *Odin på Kristent Pergament*; Lassen, '*Origines gentium* and the Learned Origin of *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*', pp. 33–58. See also the three anthologies on *fornaldersögur*, ed. by Ármann Jakobsson, Annette Lassen, and Agnete Ney, *Fornaldarsagornas struktur och ideologi*; *Fornaldarsagaerne: Myter og virkelighed*; *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development*.

[57] Ármann Jakobsson, 'Royal Biography', pp. 388–402.

[58] See Bagge, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*; Vadum, *Dom og straff i Kongespeilet*.

[59] For a summary of the 'free-prose' as opposed to the 'book-prose' theory, see Clover, 'Icelandic Family Sagas', pp. 239–40.

[60] See for example Clunies Ross, 'Medieval Icelandic Textual Culture', pp. 163–82; Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*.

erable body of material in Latin[61] as well as individual fragments from manuscripts in Old French[62] and Middle High German[63] from Norway. These texts and fragments testify that Old Norse literary culture was formed in conjunction with Latin and other vernacular literatures, on the Continent as well as in Scandinavia.[64]

The debate about the extent of European influence on Scandinavian literary tradition, generally described, consists of two main lines of argumentation: one of them promotes the European influence as most significant, while the other acknowledges it, but emphasizes the local, vernacular, and/or oral aspects of Old Norse culture.[65] Our understanding of intellectual culture, as something translatable and simultaneously actively made, will serve to bridge the gap between these two extremes. The dichotomies of imported vs. local, written vs. oral, Latin vs. vernacular, learned vs. popular are to be replaced by an understanding that the interaction between Europe and Scandinavia always entails a combination of a certain degree of service to existing models, and their adaptation to a new target context and culture.[66] Medieval Scandinavian culture is thus conceptualized not as a passive receiver but an active participant in the cultural dialogue; it is the result of a process of *translatio* of local, traditional models and European ones, a dynamic two-way process of adaptation.

The debates are similar from the point of view of the history of art and architecture. The building of churches, monasteries, and other monumental buildings is related to the general political and institutional development as

[61] Ommundsen, 'Books, Scribes and Sequences in Medieval Norway'.

[62] Bandlien, 'Possible Routes of a Crusader Manuscript (Pal. Lat. 1963) to Norway'.

[63] Bandlien, 'På sporet av ridderen av det runde hjul', pp. 223–32.

[64] Mortensen, 'Den formative dialog mellem latinsk og folkesproglig litteratur ca 600–1250', pp. 229–71; Mortensen, 'From Vernacular Interviews to Latin Prose (ca. 600–1200)', pp. 53–68.

[65] See for example Steinsland, *Den Hellige Kongen*; Gísli Sigurðsson, *The Medieval Icelandic Saga and Oral Tradition*. Bagge suggests that the uniqueness of the Nordic civilization can be justified on the grounds of its different literature, i.e. the Icelandic family sagas, which is closely related to the character of Icelandic society (Bagge, 'Nordic Uniqueness in the Middle Ages?', pp. 49–76).

[66] The relationship between orality and literacy in medieval Scandinavia has been discussed in many publications. See for example Rankovic, Melve, and Mundal, eds, *Along the Oral-written Continuum*; Mundal and Wellendorf, eds, *Oral Art Forms and their Passage into Writing*. On the influence of oral mentalities on the formation of such literary genres as ballads and visionary literature, see Wellendorf, 'Apocalypse Now? The *Draumkvæde* and Visionary Literature', pp. 135–50.

described above, as well as the stylistic requirements of the Romanesque and, later, Gothic models.[67] Yet this influence interacted with local aesthetic and functional concerns.[68] These material cultural expressions were conditioned by and in turn conditioned the creation of oral and literary expressions,[69] and the adaptation of Christian theological and liturgical concerns to this new target-context.[70] The visuality of Old Norse manuscripts was similarly conditioned by the dynamic relation between the type of cultural centres where the manuscripts were produced, their nature (religious or secular), and the competence and needs of the textual community there.[71]

Behind the creation of all textual and cultural productions were creative individuals. Old Norse culture has preserved the names of some known individual poets and writers, such as Snorri Sturluson[72] and many skaldic poets.[73] In such cases, however, one should resist the temptation to make medieval narrators into modern-style authors, as medieval texts and manuscripts are always the result of the efforts of a collective production team. The majority of medieval texts, as

[67] On the English background of the architecture and liturgy in Trondheim Cathedral, see Binski, 'Liturgy and Local Knowledge', pp. 21–46. On King Hákon's Hall in Bergen, see Ekroll, *Med kleber og kalk: Norsk steinbygging i mellomalderen*. On Akershus Castle in Oslo, see Simensen, 'Håkon V Magnusson og finansieringen av Akershus festning', pp. 36–44.

[68] On the symbolic value and aesthetics of stave churches, see Fuglesang, 'Stavkirken – norsk og europeisk'.

[69] On the interdependence between memory (oral culture), visuality, and materiality foregrounded in both the textual and the material sources with regard to the Stave Church Homily, see Laugerud, 'To See with the Eyes of the Soul', pp. 43–68; Schumacher, 'Den hellige ands port', pp. 153–68; Aavitsland, 'Visualisert didaktikk?', pp. 217–37. For another example of the link between visual representations, orality, and literacy, see Stang, 'Body and Soul', pp. 161–78.

[70] For a study of Niðarós Cathedral, for example, see Andås, 'Art and Ritual in the Liminal Zone', pp. 47–126; Chadd, 'The Ritual of Palm Sunday: Reading Nidaros', pp. 253–78.

[71] See Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth-Century Book Painting*; Liepe, 'Bild, text och ornamentik i isländska handskrifter från 1300-talet', pp. 113–25. On the organization and interplay between text and manuscript illuminations, rubrics, marginalia, etc. see Liepe, 'The Knight and the Dragon Slayer', pp. 179–200; Rowe, *The Development of Flateyjarbók*; Liepe, 'Domkyrkor och kloster som konstcentra', pp. 169–94.

[72] Snorri has been credited with the creation of *Heimskringla*, and it has been debated whether he might have written *Egil's saga* as well; for a survey of the issue see Clover, 'Icelandic Family Sagas', pp. 245–46. For a comparison of Snorri's work and that of Saxo, see Jørgensen, Friis-Jensen, and Mundal, eds, *Saxo og Snorre*. See also Faulkes, 'The Sources of Skáldskaparmál: Snorri's Intellectual Background', pp. 59–76; Wanner, *Snorri Sturluson and the Edda*.

[73] For a list of skalds see Frank, 'Skaldic Poetry', p. 161.

well as art, were created, copied, translated, and re-rendered by unknown writers, artists, and thinkers; sometimes a name may be preserved, but nothing more is known of the person.[74] Nonetheless, anonymity is not the same as lack of recognition of the individual's creative capacity and intellectual labour. Furthermore, intellectual activity did not only lie behind the creation of literature or art; it was also a major aspect of the appreciation, comprehension, and internalization process of all cultural expressions.[75] Several Old Norse sources distinguish between hearing, as a sensory experience, and listening and understanding, as a cognitive process.[76] Old Norse skaldic poetry may be given as a prime example of the significance of the latter: the kenning system of the poetry is based on the juxtaposition and comparison of several main cognitive domains, the physical (the body and the home), the mythological (gods, dwarfs, giants), political and social structures (king, war, family).[77] The mental capacities of cognition were central for the creation, but also for the decoding and understanding of the metaphors in skaldic poetry. The latter was a common pastime of the intellectual elite in Norway and Iceland, because of the link between the metaphorical aesthetics of the poetry and people's physical and social existence.[78]

In this book we therefore aim to keep in mind and acknowledge the significance of individual cognition and intellectuality, always seen in relation to communal cultural norms, as our sources illustrate the manifold realizations of individual creative thought and also the importance of the community as a centre for the origin and rise of ideas.[79]

The intellectual culture of medieval Scandinavia *c.* 1100–1350 was undoubtedly formed under the influence of European models of institutionalizing and thinking. Nonetheless, its core nature was also conditioned by the local political, economic, cultural, and religious circumstances and structures, which were different from those in Europe. Our project contributes to the existing discus-

[74] See Rancovic, ed., *Modes of Authorship in the Middle Ages*.

[75] On the cognitive process of learning based on European sources, see Carruthers, 'Mechanisms for the Transmission of Culture', pp. 1–27.

[76] See for example the prologue to *The King's Mirror*, ed. and trans. by Larson, pp. 72–76, or a narrator's comment in *Elis Saga ok Rosamundu*, ed. by Kölbing, p. 33.

[77] See Clunies Ross, 'The Cognitive Approach to Skaldic Poetics', p. 273. See also Bergsveinn Birgisson, 'What Have We Lost by Writing?', pp. 163–85.

[78] Clunies Ross, 'The Cognitive Approach to Skaldic Poetics', pp. 176–81.

[79] On the discussion of the individual in various Old Norse genres, see Bagge, 'Kingship and Individuality in Medieval Historiography', pp. 25–41.

sion by means of a different theoretical conceptualization of intellectual culture, emphasizing the primacy of its cognitive nature, and consequently the significance of its translatability and multimediality.[80] The studies elucidate various types of intellectual activities and processes in Europe and Scandinavia, illustrating the variety and polyphony existent in medieval Scandinavia, as well as foregrounding that this polyphony continuously created a unified cultural whole. The book does not aim to give an exhaustive depiction of Scandinavian literary and material culture but rather to discuss the premises for its creation by bringing to the fore the intellectual cognitive processes behind cultural production.

A Roadmap

The book will take the reader on a road trip through various intellectual processes and activities. The essays are grouped according to three major themes or clusters of intellectual activities: negotiating secular and religious authority and identity; thinking and learning through verbal and visual means; ruminating on worldly existence and heavenly salvation. Despite this structure, we ask our readers to keep in mind the constant and complex overlaps between these intellectual processes, as these are most often integral parts of the intellectual pursuits of the same individual. This is illustrated in detail in the first background chapter in the book, by Gunnar Harðarson. By surveying textual sources from medieval Norway and Iceland, he shows that textual and material culture is a result of and a predicative for various intellectual processes, such as negotiating secular and religious authority, teaching and learning, preaching, instructing, and arguing, reasoning, and judging, and often a combination of these is pursued by one and the same individual. In relation to these cognitive processes, he discusses individual intellectuals, their multiple social roles, and the social networks they form part of, such as the authors Sturla Þórðarson and Snorri Sturluson, King Magnús Hákonarson, or the lawman Haukr Erlendsson, to mention just a few. Thus, Gunnar Harðarson's chapter provides a general survey of the complex intellectual culture in medieval Norway and Iceland and its peculiarities compared to European tendencies, and functions as an introductory framework to the following chapters which focus on and study in greater detail the separate processes and parts of this culture.

[80] The term 'multimedial' is used here to indicate that medieval cultural expressions could be realized through various media, i.e. orally, in writing, through art and architecture, or a combination of these.

Negotiating Identity

Even though the book focuses on medieval Scandinavia, the first part of the book — about negotiation processes of secular and religious authority and identity — begins with a contribution by Ian P. Wei who discusses intellectual culture in medieval Paris. He foregrounds the lack of normativity in the academic discourse at the University of Paris through the treatment of topics such as money and marriage in quodlibetal disputations.[81] Masters of theology at the University of Paris in the thirteenth century considered themselves to be at the summit of a hierarchy of learning, an elite to which others were bound to turn for authoritative judgement on moral issues. They therefore claimed a guiding role in Christian society, elucidating the truth, removing doubt and error, defending the faith, and teaching others how to preach and attend to the curing of souls in confession. Modern scholars have rightly analysed the abstract moral theory and grand normative assertions that they produced in fulfilment of this role. In this chapter Ian P. Wei, however, pays more attention to the complexity of academic discourse. Disputations about marriage problems and money show that academic discourse was multilayered, with arguments working on different levels, some implicit rather than explicit. Reading these academic texts in new modes can help us to see beyond the masters' normative assertions and appreciate the complexity of intellectual discourse and its place in medieval society, as well as when it was 'translated' to new target cultures such as medieval Scandinavia.[82] Looking beyond the discourses on money and marriage, the essay illustrates the discursive nature of the university models of thinking that Scandinavian students may have acquired in Paris. This chapter shows that intellectual discourse at the University of Paris was not as normative and dog-

[81] The primary significance of Paris as an intellectual centre with enormous influence all over Europe is undisputed. This does not, however, mean that Scandinavian frameworks of thought were not influenced, directly or indirectly, from other intellectual centres in England or Germany, as will become clear from the essays in the collection.

[82] The emphasis on the complexity and dynamic nature of the masters' teachings is crucial when the debate is to be investigated in the Old Norse context, where there are very few, if any, explicit theoretical theological debates on money and usury. There is a relevant ongoing project, 'Religion and Money', at the University of Oslo, which will address the link between religious thought and the use of money from a historical, archaeological, and numismatic perspective. For more information see: <http://www.khm.uio.no/english/research/projects/religion-and-money/> [last checked 11 November 2014]. Old Norse sources likewise present little theoretical discussion with regard to marriage, but they nonetheless convey a complex and varied attitude to marriage in practice. See, for example, Bandlien, *Strategies of Passion*.

matic as it is traditionally regarded. This lack of absolute normativity, allowing for and demanding continuous intellectual activity, is a central premise for our understanding of intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia, as it may have been a key element of the intellectual competence that was brought back to various Scandinavian institutions.

Following on one of Ian P. Wei's arguments, that ways of knowing are conditioned by their respective institutions, the following three articles discuss how representatives of various religious and secular institutions in Norway and Iceland negotiated their authority and/or identity through various material and textual means.

Kjartan Hauglid focuses on Romanesque stone buildings in Norway as visual and material representatives of the cultural *translatio* taking place from the twelfth century onwards. Hauglid argues that the diversity of styles and architectural expressions in this period is a deliberate choice of the Norwegian patrons and can be seen as a demonstration of secular and aristocratic power. The essay shows how the cognitive processes behind the production of stone sculptures were conditioned by the political and economic capital of the commissioning secular aristocracy, as well as the patrons' cultural and aesthetic horizons developed through intercultural exchange.

In the next chapter, Bjørn Bandlien takes the reader to Iceland and discusses the production of knowledge, ideas, and intellectual identities in various Icelandic social spaces. He argues that various ways of learning and knowing can be seen as means of expression for different types of intellectual identities and structures in Iceland. Bandlien suggests three types of Icelandic intellectual: the courtier-bishop type, the bishop or learned man as the protector of Christianity against the demonic wilderness, and the ascetic cleric, although these seem to be intermingled and given different emphases depending on the situation. Through a case study of *Sverris saga*, which he sees as a hybrid text braiding local warrior ideals with learned ideology from Sallust, Ovid, biblical commentaries, saints' lives, and the theology of both Sts Victor and Clairvaux, Bandlien demonstrates not only the complexity and polyphony conditioning this identity-negotiating process through writing, but also through reading.

In the last essay of this section, Kristoffer Vadum continues the discussion of the premises for negotiating social identity and authority. He investigates how Grímr Hólmsteinsson (d. 1298), author of an Icelandic saga about John the Baptist (*Jóns saga Baptista II*), used material from canon law in his hagiographical saga narrative in order to communicate ecclesiastical claims in the ongoing struggle against private churches in Iceland. Grímr does this by extensive use of one of the major penitential manuals from the thirteenth century, Raymond

of Peñafort's *Summa de casibus*, reworking the source text in order to angle the arguments more clearly towards local problems. Although the polemics in the saga are primarily directed towards an Icelandic context, more or less the same arguments are found in contemporary Norwegian sources, related to a general conflict between secular and ecclesiastical authorities that spread throughout the province of Niðarós in the 1280s. *Jóns saga Baptista* thereby sheds light on how canon law and canonistic texts functioned as an integral part of ecclesiastical ideology in the Norse areas at the end of the thirteenth century. As very little is known about the impact of canonistic texts in Iceland and Norway in this period, the saga, a mixture and adaptation of canon law and a hagiographical narrative, gives rare testimony not only to the reception but also to the use of such texts among clerics on the periphery of Europe.

These chapters demonstrate that identity and authority negotiation was realized through preaching, debating publicly, writing ambiguously, leaving space for custom and personality, infusing people with fear (Wei); through a conscious, deliberate, and propagandistic choice of style in newly built churches, commissioned by early Norwegian Christian kings (Hauglid); through literary representations of specific types of intellectuals and sometimes a fascinating mixture of these (Bandlien); and through literary translations and their accommodation in new literary contexts (Vadum). All chapters display the close link between the personal individual concerns of the creative intellectual and the local ideological and political circumstances within which he aimed to situate himself.

Thinking in Figures

In the next section of the book, the focus falls on intellectual processes such as studying and learning, composing and creating, through linguistic and figurative use of Latin and the vernaculars.

As in the previous section, the first essay in this section provides a glimpse of the European background. The university institutional culture with all its polyphonic impulses, as described by Ian P. Wei, had great implications for the development of the linguistic arts and their positioning in relation to each other. In her essay, Rita Copeland traces some of the innovative methods in the study of grammar and rhetoric from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries and onwards, in various European contexts, and relates it to the steadily increasing vernacularization of medieval Europe. Further, she compares the treatment of tropes in grammar as opposed to rhetoric, by paying closer attention to one trope, *metalepsis* (Latin: *transumptio*), using Geoffroi de Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*

and the commentary on Donatus's *Barbarismus* by the Pseudo-Kilwardby, in order to illustrate how the vocabulary associated with tropes (or the vocabulary of *eloquentia*) is diffused in learned vernacular discourse.

In the next chapter, Åslaug Ommundsen demonstrates that the development of Latin grammar and rhetoric as discussed by Rita Copeland was also spread in medieval Scandinavia, by studying textual culture in Latin produced in Norway and Iceland at the beginning of the thirteenth century. This Latin textuality is manifested and preserved in manuscripts and manuscript fragments, as well as rune sticks. Ommundsen presents the making of these textual manifestations as a consequence of Latin education in the Old Norse world. She discusses whether Norway and Iceland followed the trends in Europe regarding the grammars and readers used for more advanced stages of education. She argues that in addition to the custom of Scandinavian students going abroad for studies, Latin textuality was actively taught, produced, and used throughout the Middle Ages in Norway and Iceland, alongside and in conjunction with Old Norse texts. Upon *translatio*, the content, form, and even materiality of Scandinavian Latin textuality were thus adjusted to the resources and demands of the Old Norse target culture.

Old Norse vernacularity gradually established itself alongside the permanence and ubiquity of Latin textuality. Mikael Males studies the interplay between Old Norse poetry and Latin learning. He divides the impact of broadly defined *grammatica* on Old Icelandic poetry and literature into three stages: the urgency to establish vernacular orthography, expressed in the *First Grammatical Treatise* from around 1150, is replaced with an aggressive self-assertiveness communicated in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* from around 1250. In a version of the prologue to the four grammatical treatises, dating to *c.* 1350, there does not seem to be any need to insist on the primary significance of vernacular script and poetry any longer, because these had already reached their desired status. Based on such observations, Males argues that grammatical studies underwent considerable adaptations to the native poetic tradition, but also that this tradition changed under the impact of Latin *grammatica*.

In the last chapter of this part, Mats Malm discusses the rhetorical art of memory and modes of visualization, or visual cognition, in two different cultural and intellectual contexts in medieval Scandinavia: Icelandic learned culture of the twelfth century, which was discussed in the previous chapter, and Swedish fourteenth-century Vadstena. These two cultures seem to exploit and adapt the heritage of Latin learning in different ways and with a varying degree of adaptation. The two examples emphasize the significance of the local circumstances for the formation of a specific intellectual culture, under foreign influence.

This section displays the importance of figurative images when thinking and learning, in both Latin and the vernaculars. Even though figurative language is more elusive and relatively absent in some vernacular learning (Copeland), it forms part of the intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia, both through the copying of Latin texts (Ommundsen), but also through original composition in Old Norse (Males and Malm). This is due to the Old Norse poets' consciousness concerning the use of metre and their historical awareness with regard to language and literary tradition (Males). Visualization, verbalization, and memorization were thus pedagogical and structuring tools in both vernacular and Latin contexts of Scandinavia, but each was expressed very differently (Malm).

Worldly Existence and Heavenly Salvation

The last thematic section of the book concerns intellectual processes linking decision making and participation in worldly forums, and rumination and preparation for heavenly salvation. In a sense, this heading is relevant for all intellectual processes in the Middle Ages, but here we will take a look at how ritual participation in the Mass linked worldly and heavenly existence, how the interior of a church could function as a stimulus further inspiring this intellectual and spiritual process, and how theological ruminations on the link between body and soul could be relevant for the personal and professional development of a lawman.

Sigurd Hareide takes us to the sphere of theology and liturgy by focusing on the ritual of 'Holy Mass' and by discussing how this untranslatable Latin ritual was interpreted in Old Norse translations of Latin expositions of the Mass. These Old Norse sources were part of a flourishing literary genre in Europe at the time, the *expositiones missae*, expositions of the Mass. In Hareide's study of *Messukýringar*, the collection of Old Norse liturgical expositions, the 'source text' is not so much the Latin expositions of the Mass as the Latin Mass ritual itself. Further, the translation or 'target text' discussed is ultimately not the translation from Latin to Old Norse exposition, but instead the translation from Latin to Old Norse ritual and from biblical salvation history to daily life and heavenly hope in medieval Scandinavia. Through the analysis of this common and universal Latin ritual at the centre of medieval culture and of its Old Norse interpretation, light is also cast upon the relationship between the culture of the intellectual elite of interpreters and professional performers of the Mass on the one hand, and of the common people taking part in the Mass, on the other. Performing, interpreting, and participating in the Mass are seen here as similar cognitive hermeneutical processes, involving not only spiritual

meditation on and faith in the Christian message, but also intellectual understanding and meaning-creation on several levels. As the Mass ritual was universal in Christian Europe, its *translatio* to Old Norse texts is — not surprisingly — characterized by a strategy to retain the universal. This study thus elucidates how faithful reproduction of a source also represents intellectual agency.

The universality of the mystical process is touched upon in the next essay as well. By studying the altar frontal from Lisbjerg church in eastern Jutland, Denmark, Kristin B. Aavitsland discusses the self-understanding and inner meditation of the 'intellectual', art-commissioning class of twelfth-century Denmark. The altar ensemble from Lisbjerg, which presents a fascinating and unparalleled array of personified virtues in combination with saints' figures, is seen as a source of an ideological *translatio* of aspects of the monastic pedagogy in the empire and the French kingdom to a Danish context. The educational ideals of German and Frankish schools, where numerous Danish intellectuals were educated, were founded on an understanding of the virtues as the main link between the external and internal in human nature. The translation and adaptation of this ideology to Scandinavia may be seen in the reconciliation of concerns for both the transcendental sphere of salvation history and the earthly sphere of good manners and social conduct, as attested by the pedagogical programme of the Lisbjerg altar.

Finally, Stefka G. Eriksen studies the relationship between the body and the soul, the physical and the spiritual from a literary point of view. The body-and-soul matter is conveyed and debated in a great variety of textual and art historical medieval sources, and in this chapter Eriksen demonstrates the topic's wide meaning-potential and its centrality in several aspects of Old Norse medieval culture. She studies two Old Norse textual representations of the body-and-soul matter in their respective manuscript and cultural contexts: one is a translation of the Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit* and appears, for example, in the Old Norse Homily Book (AM 619 4to), and the other is a translation of Hugues de Saint-Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, preserved in *Hauksbók*, among other manuscripts. The fluidity and translatability of the topic emphasizes its relevance for conveying theological, philosophical and epistemological, and political discourses. Both dialogues are shown to foreground inner reflection and the intellectual activity of thinking and meditating. Their reception in very different Old Norse social contexts indicates that one's individual ethical development, search for knowledge, emotionality, and spirituality were essential elements in the making of both clerical and secular intellectual culture in medieval Norway and Iceland during the thirteenth and at the beginning of the fourteenth centuries.

This section reveals that cognitive and spiritual involvement and transformation could be inspired by physical presence at the Mass and understanding, if not all the words, the ritual movements and the meaning of the physical environment (Hareide). Church art was one of these meaningful elements; it can be indicative of the self-understanding of the art-commissioning class as well as of the inner self-cultivating processes they aimed to inspire with the art they commissioned (Aavitsland). Such inner spiritual processes were significant not only when in church and during Mass, but were essential for the personal ascent of all Christians, as private individuals or professionals.

The main motivation behind the story related in this book is to elucidate the variety of intellectual and ideational processes that lie behind, and are inspired by, the textual and material culture of medieval Scandinavia. These have been structured here in three main clusters of activities: negotiating authority and identity, studying and creating in word and image, and reflecting upon and linking worldly concerns and heavenly salvation. In the discussion of these processes, we show that intellectuals could have multiple social roles and functions: they could be literary and art patrons, kings and secular aristocrats, students and teachers, bishops and priests, lawyers, poets, writers and scribes, and certainly artisans. They could have different intentions for their cultural expressions, which were infused with a combination of the foreign, on the one hand, and the local, on the other; they could have different strategies for how to achieve this, by innovating or staying faithful. The book explains this complexity not by means of the traditional dichotomies of written vs. oral material, Latin vs. vernacular, lay vs. secular, European vs. Nordic, but in terms of the cognition of the creative individuals, where the various faculties — physical perception of the world; memory and creation; rationality, emotionality, and spirituality; and decision making — are inevitably and constantly linked. The sum of these processes defines the contours of intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia.

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Old Norse Intellectual Culture: Appropriation and Innovation

Gunnar Harðarson

One late summer evening in 1263, the Icelandic poet and historian, Sturla Þórðarson, found himself without food, drink, or company on the deck of King Magnús Hákonarson's ship as it sailed slowly down the Norwegian coast. He had recently arrived in Bergen, where he was met with hostility on the part of the king due to his disputes with the king's agents back in Iceland. In addition, Sturla had been heavily maligned at the Norwegian court by his Icelandic enemies — or so the story goes — and none of the ship's crew was at all keen to have him at their table. The disgraced poet was finally ordered to take a seat beside two rugged fellows, Þórir 'the mouth' and Erlendr 'the belly'. Challenged to entertain them and their comrades, he began to tell the story of a female troll named Huld, possibly the same one who appears in Snorri's *Heimskringla*. As the story unfolded, more and more people gathered around him, until Queen Ingibjörg, who noticed the noisy crowd at the other end of the ship, asked what was going on. She was told that the Icelander was telling a story about a troll in a better way than anyone had ever heard. The next day the queen sent for Sturla and asked him to tell his story. Sturla did so, taking a good part of the day, and he also recited a poem in honour of the king, who, while dismissive at first, gradually accepted the poet. A few days later, the king asked Sturla to recite the poem a second time. Finally, King Magnús took Sturla into his company and counsel, commissioning him to write the history of his father, King Hákon, and later of himself, as well as involving Sturla in his pro-

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ject of revising the laws of the entire Norwegian realm. In 1271, the king sent Sturla home to Iceland with a new law code, the so-called *Járnsíða*.[1]

In this encounter between Sturla and Magnús we can observe the traditional recital of poetry for the king as well as popular oral storytelling, the commissioning of a king's saga, the quest for the rule of law in times of recent anarchy and violence, personal allegiance, and mutual respect. Even if Sturla and Magnús came from different backgrounds, they shared an interest in history and literature, as well as in law and government. What were the conditions, generally speaking, that made possible their intellectual encounter and their achievements? What institutions and practice did they rely on? How was it that an old disgraced poet and a young regent king ended up collaborating on two major projects, committing to writing contemporary history and the laws? By exploring the backgrounds of Sturla and Magnús, this chapter will first look at some characteristics of the early Icelandic intellectual context and the general educational framework in Norway, before moving on to examine a few examples from the traditional disciplines of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, as well as preaching and law. The main aim here is twofold. First, by investigating specific examples from Old Norse literary sources, written by some well-known authors, the chapter exposes the variagated nature of intellectual work and culture in medieval Scandinavia, encompassing writing, oral recitation and communication, instructing, and arguing to legal conclusions. Second, this study demonstrates that the vernacularity of Old Norse textual culture frequently presupposes familiarity with, and deployment of, Latin intellectual culture in one form or other. However, the diverse intellectual practices conducted in the vernacular are not slavish imitations of the Latin models or presuppositions, but rather appropriations of Latin forms by the Norse intellectuals for purposes of their own. In some cases, this fusion of Latin and vernacular forms helped to generate what has come to be acknowledged as highly original work, even by contemporary standards.

[1] *Sturlunga saga*, ed. by Örnólfur Thorsson, II, 764–68. A Finnish sorceress named 'Hulð' is mentioned in *Ynglinga saga*, 13 and 14; another female troll occurs in *Óláfs saga helga*, 141, a wonderful piece of storytelling (*Heimskringla*, ed. by Bjarni Aðalbjarnason, I, 29–30; II, 255–61). On the reasons for Sturla's problems see Magnús Stefánsson, 'Drottinsvik Sturlu Þórðarsonar', pp. 150–73.

Context and Conditions

What, then, was Sturla Þórðarson's background? How could the youngest, illegitimate son of a Sturlung chieftain become lawspeaker of the Icelandic parliament, author of a redaction of the *Landnámabók*, as well as of *Íslendinga saga* (preserved as part of the *Sturlunga* collection), a renowned court poet, the author of two kings' sagas, and 'lögmaðr' (magistrate) for the whole country? The brief answer is that Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241) was his uncle. As a young man, Sturla presumably learnt his trade as a poet, historian, and jurist at his uncle's seat in Reykholt.[2] Even if this answer only defers the question, we begin to see the unfolding of a continuous tradition of teaching and learning that reaches back to the eleventh century. Snorri Sturluson had been instructed at Oddi by his *fóstri* (tutor), Jón Loptsson (1125–97), who was an ordained deacon, a man of law, and a powerful chieftain.[3] He was a man of the Church *as well as* a chieftain. This particular combination exemplifies the background of Icelandic intellectuals in the twelfth century that, at least indirectly, conditioned the education of authors like Snorri and Sturla. It is an important key to the understanding of the formation of a class of intellectuals characterized by multiple skills who could express themselves in different cultural, literary, and intellectual forms. Let us briefly discuss three features of the early institutional context: (1) the fusion of the two orders, (2) the nature of the education provided, and (3) the vernacularity of the intellectual culture.

The fusion of the clerical and secular orders probably has its origins in the way in which Christianity was grafted onto the prevalent social structure at the beginning of the eleventh century and in Bishop Gizurr Ísleifsson's effort to strengthen the Church at the turn of the twelfth. The result was a widespread combination of the secular and the clerical in what scholars have termed the system of the 'goðakirkja' (chieftains' church) of the first two centuries or so after the conversion. This phenomenon is not quite identical to the German or English private church system ('Eigenkirche') or the rights of a layman over

[2] Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 'Sturla Þórðarson', pp. 11–12.

[3] Jón was the son of Loptr Sæmundarson, son of Sæmundr the Learned and Þóra Magnúsdóttir, daughter of King Magnus Barefoot, and had his royal origin recognized by the Norwegian court in 1163. 'Hann var inn vísasti maðr á klerkligar listir, þær sem hann hafði numit af sínum forellrum. Hann var djákn at vígslu, raddmaðr mikill í heilagri kirkju' (He was a most able man in the clerical arts which he had learnt from his parents. He was an ordained deacon, and had a good voice in the holy church). *Þorláks saga B*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 166.

his church.[4] It is characterized, on the one hand, by the chieftains' establishing and running parish churches as their own property and, on the other, by the overlap of clerical and lay status.[5] Or, perhaps, they should not be conceived of as two separate orders, but rather in terms of different functions: a priest would then be someone who, like the *goði*, performed the rituals as a qualified agent, but not someone primarily belonging to a separate holy order distinct from the secular one.[6] Priesthood would thus be conceived of as a particular agency coming to expression in particular circumstances, not unlike speech acts performed by a man of law in an appropriate context; for a chieftain it would thus have been normal to take on the functions of a priest, as his predecessors would have done in the pagan context. There exists a list of priests of noble origin, ten in each quarter, dated to 1143, and it has been suggested that over a half of the chieftains had taken some form of holy orders in the twelfth century.[7] Many of the renowned 'priests' in the first centuries of Christianity in Iceland, and, by implication, men of learning, were in fact chieftains. For instance, *Kristni saga* expressly mentions by name ten ordained 'höfðingjar' (chieftains), including both Sæmundr the Learned and Ari the Learned, who, accordingly, were priests and men of learning, but also married men and important figures within, if not leaders of, their secular communities. *Kristni saga* gives this account of the period when Gizurr Ísleifsson was bishop:

> Þá váru flestir virðingamenn lærðir ok vígðir ok lærðir til presta þó at höfðingjar væri, svá sem var Hallr Teitsson í Haukadal ok Sæmundr inn fróði, Magnús Þórðarson í Reykjaholti, Símon Jörundarson í Bœi, Guðmundr sonr Brands í Hjarðarholti, Ari inn fróði, Ingimundr Einarsson á Hólum, Ketill norðr Þorsteinsson á Möðruvöllum ok Ketill Guðmundarson, Jón prestr Þorvarðsson ok margir aðrir þó at eigi sé ritaðir.[8]

> At that time, most men of high rank were educated and ordained priests, even though they were chieftains, as was Hallr Teitsson in Haukadalr and Sæmundr the Learned, Magnús Þórðarson in Reykjaholt, Símon Jörundarson in Bœr, Guðmundr Brandsson in Hjarðarholt, Ari the Learned, Ingimundr Einarsson at Hólar, Ketill Þorsteinsson at Möðruvellir in the north and Ketill Guðmundarson, the priest Jón Þorvarðsson and many others, though their names are not written down [here].[9]

[4] On the 'Eigenkirche' in Iceland see Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Islandsk egenkirkevæsen'.

[5] Cf. Gunnar Karlsson, *Goðamenning*, p. 413.

[6] Cf. Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Islandsk egenkirkevæsen', p. 287.

[7] Gunnar Karlsson, *Goðamenning*, p. 484.

[8] *Kristni saga*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson and others, pp. 42–43.

[9] *The Story of the Conversion*, trans. by Grønli, p. 53.

Modern readers may tend to view figures such as Teitr, Ari, and Sæmundr as canons or monks, but they should perhaps rather be thought of as medieval 'men of letters'.

Now, it is one thing to observe as fact that the twelfth century was characterized by the hybrid character of what has been termed the 'clerical gentry' or 'Christian secularity'.[10] Quite another is to try to evaluate the *implications* of the fusion of the two orders. One of its consequences, which seems to distinguish the Icelandic context from the Norwegian one, is that this rather widespread fusion contributed to the formation of a class of intellectuals whose education could find expression equally in religious and secular matters, in the liturgy as well as in the court of law, in the saint's hagiography as well as the king's saga.[11] As the political structure of Iceland was characterized by an autonomous rule of law without a centralized executive power, there was perhaps no way of maintaining Christianity without ordaining the chieftains, who had assumed religious functions as part of their status before enacting Christianity into law at the Alþing in the year 1000. Thus, from early on, the distinction between the layman and the clergyman was blurred by the presence of an elite of clerically educated laymen and lawmen, some of whom were at the same time clan leaders and chieftains. Whether they were based on a manor or in a monastery, they could apply their knowledge and skills equally to religious practices and writings in Latin or to secular practices and writings in the vernacular.

A second feature of the intellectual context is the formation of educational centres under the auspices of the bishops. It must be emphasized that the formation of the schools of Skálholt and Hólar took place *before* the proliferation of the schools in twelfth-century France, and that the ecclesiastical context was that of the province of Bremen-Hamburg, at least until 1104 when the province of Lund was established. The Saxon background of early Icelandic education is exemplified by Ísleifr Gizurarson (1006–80) and Gizurr Ísleifsson (1042–1118), both of whom were educated and ordained in Saxony.[12]

[10] Cf. Foote, 'Secular attitudes', p. 32; Clunies Ross, 'Medieval Iceland and the European Middle Ages', p. 113, cf. ~~in~~ Torfi H. Tulinius, 'The Self as Other', p. 205.

[11] Church-owners were required by law to keep written inventories of their churches' possessions and to have them read out for the general public once a year. 'Kristinna laga þáttur', in *Grágás*, ed. by Gunnar Karlsson, Kristján Sveinsson, and Mörður Árnason, p. 12. This practice was established between 1122 and 1133, *Grágás*, pp. x–xi.

[12] A possible exception might be Sæmundr the Learned, who studied in 'Frakkland', variously interpreted as France or Normandy (Bec, Anjou) or the Frankish kingdom (Aachen). However, recent research has pointed to Franconia, which would integrate Sæmundr into

This was, perhaps, natural since the Nordic Churches were part of the province of Bremen-Hamburg, but on the other hand we know that Norway was much more informed by English practices.[13] However, it is only with Jón Ögmundarson — the first bishop of Hólar, who had been educated in Skálholt under Bishop Ísleifr — that we have some concrete information about the content of the curriculum. According to *Jóns saga*, it centred on *grammatica* on the one hand, and music and versification on the other.[14] Preaching is also mentioned. It should be noted that *Jóns saga* does not indicate the traditional liberal arts course; rather, the curriculum seems to be a version of the earlier Anglo-Saxon or Carolingian one, centred on grammar, *computus*, and chant.[15] This kind of education was presumably intended for the formation of priests who needed some knowledge of Latin and music for liturgical purposes and *computus* for the calculation of the liturgical year. But these branches of learning, even if they were in principle aimed at clerical education, contained what now go by the name of 'transferable skills'. It must also be mentioned, in this context, that *Jóns saga* reports that a young maiden, Ingunn, studied at Hólar and taught *grammatica* to many students and corrected Latin books by having them read out while she wove cloth depicting saints' lives, thus serving God in her study of words as well as the work of her hands.[16]

There were other kinds of instruction as well. Individuals set up schools for shorter or longer periods on their own initiative or were invited to do so by ecclesiastical or monastic authorities. The schools of Haukadalr and of Oddi were probably dependent on the presence of an able master, such as Teitr

the German background of the early Icelandic Church. Cf. Helgi Skúli Kjartansson, 'Þegar Frakkland var í Þýskalandi', pp. 112–13.

[13] French influence seems not to have been evident in the Scandinavian Church until Archbishop Eskil of Lund, an acquaintance of St Bernard of Clairvaux, favoured the introduction of the Cistercians into his Nordic province. French influence continued with Archbishop Absalon of Lund, who had studied in Sainte-Geneviève, and, during the 'Victorine' period (*c*. 1161–1214) of the archbishopric of Niðarós with Archbishops Eysteinn, Eiríkr, and Þórir, all of whom had strong connections to the abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris (cf. Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, pp. 15–27).

[14] *Jóns saga helga*, ed. by Foote, II, 217.

[15] Jones, 'Preface', p. vi.

[16] *Jóns saga helga*, ed. by Foote, II, 219–20. Probably Ingunn Arnórsdóttir of the Ásbirningar chieftains, who is also mentioned by Oddr Snorrason as an authority for his *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (ed. by Ólafur Halldórsson, p. 362). On Bishop Laurentius's school at Hólar, see *Lárentíus saga*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, p. 381.

Ísleifsson or Eyjólfr Sæmundarson. It is reported that Guðmundr Arason set up school once or twice in his career for teaching priests, and Óláfr Þórðarson established a school at Stafaholt. All these men were ordained, and their schools were presumably Latin schools, at least in many cases.[17] But there must also have been vernacular schools, in particular as regards the teaching of law. Possibly, Snorri Sturluson ran some kind of a 'workshop' or school in Reykholt, and if so, it could have been a vernacular one.

This brings us to the third feature of the early institutional context. As Margaret Clunies Ross has emphasized, 'one of the most striking characteristics of Icelandic textual production is its use of the vernacular as the normal means of communication'.[18] The reason for this may be sought in the indigenous literary tradition, especially the poetic tradition that occupied the high social and intellectual ground.[19] Old Norse-Icelandic was already a literary language that had a hegemonic status in Norway as well as Iceland. But one also has to take into account the legal tradition, since the laws were an all-pervasive component of the society, touching almost every aspect of it, and all legal processes were conducted in the vernacular.[20] Educating future men of law must have been important, and many sagas mention adolescents from the ages of nine or twelve to sixteen (the same age as students at the cathedral schools) studying the law (and 'mannfræði', historical lore) in a home school at a well-known lawman's house: the place of the school depended on the residence of the master. Studying the law at an early age would, therefore, seem to have been the normal practice in Iceland as well as the Faroes and, presumably, Norway.[21] Legal training, implying practice and narrative examples of famous cases, together with historical lore and some basic religious learning, seems therefore to have been part of the vernacular home school education.[22] Also, a lawspeaker had not only

[17] *Íslendingabók*, ed. by Jakob Benediktsson, pp. 4, 21 (Teitr); *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 49 (Eyjólfr); *Sturlunga saga*, ed. by Örnólfur Thorsson, I, 118 (Guðmundr), II, 697 (Ólafr).

[18] Clunies Ross, 'Medieval Icelandic Textual Culture', p. 166.

[19] Clunies Ross, 'Medieval Icelandic Textual Culture', p. 169.

[20] The Icelandic law codes, *Grágás*, *Járnsíða*, and *Jónsbók*, as well as the Norwegian regional laws (such as Frostaþingslög, Gulaþingslög) and the national laws (Landslög) were all in the vernacular.

[21] For instance, *Gunnlaugs saga*, 4; *Droplaugarsona saga*, 4; *Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss*, 10, 11; *Njáls saga*, 27, 109; *Færeyinga saga*, 57. Cf. Gunnar Karlsson, *Goðamenning*, p. 53 n. 8.

[22] Cf. Gísli Sigurðsson, *Túlkun Íslendingasagna*, pp. 94–96. That the study of law involved practice can be gathered from, for instance, *Gunnlaugs saga*, where a young man learns the formulas (speech acts) and the corresponding performances required for a legal action.

to recite the law but to announce the calendar, the dates of the Ember Days, and the beginning of Lent.[23] This implies that the functions of the lawspeaker required computational and religious knowledge, which must have influenced the formation of men of law. In this sense, the overlap of clerical and secular education is exemplified in the training of the lawspeaker.

Having discussed the Icelandic context, let us briefly turn to the situation in Norway, which appears to have been somewhat different. Although the early Norwegian scene may have resembled that of Iceland as regards the private church system, the Norwegian Church had closer ties to the monarchy until the establishment of the province of Niðarós and the consequent political Augustinianism of the Norwegian archbishops. Perhaps the creation of the archbishopric of Niðarós can, as such, be interpreted as one of the most important stages in the assimilation of Norway into European Latin Christianity: it integrates Norway, together with the Atlantic provinces, firmly into European intellectual culture. Even in far-off Greenland, there was an ordained bishop, as well as some Benedictine monks and Augustinian canons. And the church magnates took their offices seriously and made efforts to impose their policy on their subordinates. Before the creation of the see of Niðarós, the Norwegian and Icelandic Churches were on an equal footing, dependent first on Bremen-Hamburg, then on Lund; but after 1152 the archbishops of Norway answered directly to Rome, and the Icelandic bishops became subservient. The period of political Augustinianism had begun, and in 1190 Archbishop Eiríkr Ívarsson forbade the Icelandic bishops from ordaining the chieftains, resulting in the separation of the clerical and the secular in Iceland during the course of the thirteenth century. Gabriel Turville-Petre has argued that this policy affected the education of the chieftains: after 1190 'they were not necessarily educated as clergymen, and they turned their attention to the native traditions rather than to the southern culture'.[24]

If the educational standing of Iceland had been relatively high in the twelfth century, in the thirteenth century the Norwegian elites were, by con-

[23] 'It is also prescribed that a Lawspeaker is required to recite all the sections of the law over three summers and the assembly procedure every summer. The Lawspeaker has to announce all licences for the mitigation of penalty, at Lögberg, and at a time when most men are present if that can be done, and the calendar, and also if men are to come to the General Assembly before ten weeks of summer have passed, and rehearse the observance of Ember Days and the beginning of Lent and he is to say all this at the close of the Assembly.' Lawspeaker's section, *Laws of Early Iceland. Grágás*, trans. by Dennis, Foote, and Perkins, I, 187–88.

[24] Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature*, p. 221.

temporary European standards, far better educated than the elites in Iceland. As elsewhere, schools had been established at or in connection with cathedrals in Norway in the eleventh century. One can assume that schools were run at monasteries or convents which, by the mid-thirteenth century, were quite numerous, both in town and country. The Norwegian context reflects, in this way, the regular European ecclesiastical institutions. The Norwegian kings received an intellectual education and Sturla Þórðarson recounts as a matter of fact that King Hákon Hákonarson learned to sing and attended school together with another noble youngster.[25] It is a self-evident phase in the narrative; and indeed King Hákon emerges as an educated king, bent on bringing his court and kingdom nearer to European, particularly French, forms of culture As is well known, in 1226 he became the initiator of translations of French literature into Old Norse. His son, King Magnús, on the other hand, studied theology with the Franciscans at St Ólaf's in Bergen and remained attached to them throughout his life.[26] King Magnús was no less a patron of literature than his father: for instance, he commissioned Abbot Brandr Jónsson of ~~Þykkvibær~~, while Brandr was in Bergen as elected bishop of Hólar, to translate *Alexanders saga* and *Gyðinga saga*, according to the epilogue of the latter.[27] King Magnús's son, Hákon Magnússon, knew Latin well enough to be able to speak the language at official meetings.[28] Perhaps it would not be absurd to emphasize a certain degree of *Latinity* in Norwegian clerical and royal circles in the thirteenth century, as opposed to the general vernacularity of the Icelanders, along with the conscious adaptation of European models of literary and material culture, of ecclesiastical organization and of political structure.

The Norwegian kings frequently employed university educated clerics as civil servants in their administration. Since there were no universities in the Scandinavian countries until the late fifteenth century, one had to go abroad to receive a university education. In order to be able to conduct university studies abroad the students must have had not only the material means but also a good Latin education. In the Middle Ages, Nordic students usually

[25] *Hákonar saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, Sverrir Jakobsson, and Tor Ulset, I, 186.

[26] 'Pater hujus regis religionem sancti Francisci plurimum diligens, filios ejus plurimum coluit, ac in eorum scholis sacræ theologiæ non segniter intendit, ubi et sibi mausoleum statuit.' *Chronicon de Lanercost*, ed. by Stevenson, p. 104.

[27] *Gyðinga saga*, ed. by Wolf, p. 219, cf. pp. lxxxii–lxxxviii.

[28] *Lárentíus saga*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, p. 255.

went to Paris. Some went on to Bologna or Orleans to study canon law, and a few to Montpellier for medicine. Having a university education was an asset that made possible careers in the high offices of the Norwegian Church and government. Indeed, the majority of the clergy who exercised high ecclesiastical office or high positions in the royal administration in Norway seem to have received university education, probably in Paris and Bologna or Orleans, but they were not always native Norwegians.[29] For example, the chancellor Askatín was probably an Englishman; he was a *magister* and became bishop of Bergen in 1270. Most of them, however, were well-educated Norwegians: Þórir Hákonarson, who succeeded Askatín as chancellor of King Magnús in 1271, was well versed in canon law; Bjarni Loðinsson, chancellor of King Eiríkr Magnússon in 1281, had studied in Paris and Bologna; and Áki, the chancellor of King Hákon Magnússon, is called *magister* which indicates studies abroad.[30] An example of the kind of studies these men may have pursued can be seen in a catalogue of books, preserved in a copy of *Summa Gaufridi*, the owner of which has been identified as Bishop Árni of Bergen, who supposedly studied at Orleans.[31] In this catalogue we come across 'trivial' books, such as ~~the~~ *Summulae logices* by Peter of Spain, juridical books such as ~~the~~ *Summa Raimundi*, and several theological works. But there are also books in Norse, such as ~~the~~ *Trójumanna saga* and also ~~the~~ *Breta sögur*, a copy of which is preserved in ~~the~~ *Hauksbók* from the same period. Bjarni Auðunsson's testament makes clear that he possessed a copy of ~~the~~ *De regimine principium* by Giles of Rome.[32] The milieu around the royal administration seems, therefore, to have been a highly literate one.[33]

[29] Bagge, 'Nordic Students at Foreign Universities', pp. 1–29; see also his study of the Norwegian clergy, *Den kongelige kapellgeistlighet 1150–1319*, for information concerning the various individuals in question.

[30] Cf. Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, p. 165.

[31] *Tvo norröne latinske kvæde med melodiar*, pp. 58–70; Johnsen, 'Hvor studerte biskopbrødrene Arne og Audfinn?'. However, the identity of the owner is far from certain, cf. Tveitane, 'Bøker og litteratur i Bergen', pp. 106–08.

[32] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger fra kretsen omkring Håkon V Magnusson*, pp. 3, 7, 37–38.

[33] Cf. Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, Chapter 5, and, more recently, Johansson, 'Queen Eufemia, the Norwegian Elite and the Background of the Eufemiavisor' ~~(forthcoming)~~.

Alphabet and Identity

The source for our knowledge of Sturla's oral performance, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, is a written parchment. Books and writing were basic features of medieval intellectual culture: the recording of discourse, narrative, and poetry on parchment to be preserved, transmitted, and *re-enacted in the same form* by reading. A fundamental characteristic of Old Norse-Icelandic intellectual culture, as it has come down to us, is that it is to a large degree a *written* culture and a culture — a cult, even — of writing, as the examples of Ingimundr the priest and Guðmundr Arason suggest.[34] It was, of course, not the case that the medieval Scandinavians were totally illiterate from the outset: they had a runic alphabet, designed to be carved in wood or in stone. In principle, they only needed to switch over to parchment and identify the corresponding letters in the Latin alphabet. And so they did — and did not.[35] It so happens that we have a first-hand report from the twelfth century of the challenge posed by finding a way to write the vernacular. This is the *First Grammatical Treatise*, so-called because it is the first of four grammatical treatises preserved in the Codex Wormianus of the Prose Edda.[36] The *Second Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1270) has the idiosyncrasy of describing language as a musical instrument and using visual representation to convey the division and combination of letters.[37] The vowels are like strings in the instrument whereas the consonants are like the plugs; and the different sounds are made as when playing upon the instrument: a fine metaphor, but one that in practice complicates things instead of clarifying them. The *Third Grammatical Treatise*, attributed to Sturla's brother, Ólafr Þórðarson, and the *Fourth Grammatical Treatise* (possibly the work of Abbot Bergr Sokkason, early fourteenth century) are more concerned with rhetorical figures and their application to the analysis of poetry.[38] *Grammatica* must here be conceived in a broad sense as the study of grammar, rhetoric, and poetics, as well as of poetry, speeches, and historical texts, and not as grammar in the narrow modern sense. The study and teaching of *grammatica*

[34] *Sturlunga saga*, ed. by Örnólfur Thorsson, I, 113, 118.

[35] In the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, Ólafr Þórðarson starts his treatment of the nature of letters by discussing the runic alphabet, the names of the letters in the 'Danish tongue', and their number in the 'Norse alphabet'. 'Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske Afhandling', ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 41–42.

[36] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson.

[37] *The so-called Second Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Raschellà.

[38] 'Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske Afhandling i Snorres Edda', ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, 1886.

was a valuable intellectual pursuit in itself. For example, Guðrún Nordal has argued that skaldic poetry was integrated into the study of *grammatica* and practised by clerics and laymen alike, as the examples of Bishop Klængr, Árni the smith, and the 'priest' Einarr Skúlason demonstrate.[39]

The author of the *First Grammatical Treatise*, who was presumably a lay priest of the twelfth century (cf. his references to marriage and chieftainship, and his citing strophes from kings' sagas in support of his theory), is not content with a simple juxtaposition of two alphabets. He takes a different approach, a theoretical approach, implying a reflection on language and languages — their nature, origin, and development — with far-reaching implications for national and cultural identities and ideological backgrounds. His problem consists in the hermeneutical distance between the written word and spoken language, and his analytical tool, the one that illustrates the problem *and* resolves it, is the concept of the letter as a particular combination of a name, sound, and shape. The author applies conceptual distinctions which he translates into the vernacular and in this way applies and rethinks the Latin grammatical concepts. Thus the concepts *littera* and *elementum* become 'stafr' (letter) and 'atkvæði' (syllable); *nomen*, *figura*, *potestas* become 'nafn' (name), 'líkneski' (form), 'jartegn' (signification).[40] To each sound there corresponds a letter that has a particular shape and signification. This conceptual approach manifests a clear intellectual effort to work out a theoretical and systematic approach to linguistic analysis; it is not simply a matter of teaching practices that can be imitated. In sum, the *First Grammatical Treatise* attempts a kind of phonological analysis of the Old Norse language and provides examples of minimal pairs, possibly inspired by rules for internal rhymes in skaldic poetry.

For the First Grammarian, the concept of the letter as a correspondence between sound and shape implies, in theory at least, a broader correspondence between a particular language and its particular written form. Thus, each language has its own phonology that is expressed in a corresponding system of written signs, both of which are analysed in terms of the concept of the letter. The Hebrews write their language in its corresponding Hebrew letters, the Greeks use Greek letters, and the Romans use Latin letters: each language is written in its own particular way that corresponds to the sounds of the language ('ritar sínvm stofvm hverr þioð sina tv[n]gv').[41]

[39] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 36–40.

[40] Cf. Hreinn Benediktsson in his introduction to *The First Grammatical Treatise*, for instance, pp. 53–68.

[41] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 206.

When referring to the language spoken in Iceland, the First Grammarian calls it simply 'our tongue' (incidentally an expression also used in *Sverris saga* and in *Konungs skuggsjá*), implying an identity that distinguishes 'us' from 'them'. The First Grammarian declares that he has 'ritað oss islendíngvm staf rof' (written an alphabet for us Icelanders).[42] However, the language in question ('our language') is nowhere designated by the term 'Icelandic'; rather, it is referred to as 'dönsk tunga' (the 'Danish tongue'), implying a cultural reference beyond the confines of Iceland, a transnational linguistic identity as it would be called today. The language spoken in Iceland is not a national one but a common Nordic language.

One would expect that the alphabet best adapted to the writing of 'Danish' would be that of the runic letters. Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, and 'Danes' would have their different sets of letters that match the sounds of their respective languages. But that is exactly the problem the First Grammarian is trying to resolve: neither runes nor the rudimentary Latin alphabet used on the basis of the runic one represent the phonological distinctions of 'our tongue' with sufficient exactitude. They do not match the language: they render the written text ambiguous and subject to interpretation. 'Eigi er þat rvnanna kostr [...] helldr er það þinn kostr' (it is not the virtue of the runes but your virtue, i.e. that of the reader), if the meaning is correctly interpreted; and this matters when it comes to writing and reading texts of importance, such as the law.[43] The idea, then, is to find a way to write the language in a less ambiguous way than the previous adaptation of the Latin alphabet permitted; to use Latin letters to write 'our tongue'. Now, the Latin alphabet consists of letters designed to write the sounds of another tongue. Inevitably, therefore, there will be some sounds in 'our tongue' that have no corresponding Latin letters and, conversely, there will be some Latin letters that do not correspond to any sound in 'our' language. Some sounds will lack Latin letters and some Latin letters will be redundant. This is inevitable when writing one language with the letters of another. However, the problem created by the mismatch between the different languages can be solved by adding some letters to the alphabet and subtracting others.

As the First Grammarian knows very well 'our tongue' is not the first to have adopted the Latin alphabet for its own use, so he looks for an example to follow. The idea is to take a language that is related to the one you speak and follow the methods developed there. Perhaps surprisingly, the First Grammarian chooses

[42] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 208.

[43] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 214.

to follow the example of the English; more surprisingly, he does so because, in his opinion, English and 'our tongue' are the same language: 'allz ver ervm æinnar tvngv' (since we are of one tongue).[44] For the First Grammarian, English and 'Danish' turn out to be not two different languages but fundamentally the *same* tongue, the qualification being that they may have changed to a greater or lesser extent over time.[45] In this case, the First Grammarian is *not* referring to the sudden separation of languages that was supposed to occur, according to the Old Testament, when mankind tried to construct the Tower of Babel, but is deploying a different idea, that of a gradual development of languages, in order to argue his point.[46] The clue is found in the story of the migration of Óðinn and the Æsir from Troy in Turkey to Saxony and Scandinavia, where they settled. In the so-called 'Upphaf allra frásagna', considered to derive from *Skjöldunga saga*, it is stated that the 'Asian' people brought the Norse language to the North and that language spread across Saxony, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and a part of England.[47] The same legend is found in the prologue of the Prose Edda where it is said that the Æsir brought the language to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Saxony, and that 'in England there are ancient names for regions and places which one can tell come from a different language from this one'.[48]

Thus, the 'Danish' tongue is a variant of the language of the Æsir, spoken in Saxony and England as well as in the Scandinavian countries. That is the reason why it is possible to adopt the English practices in writing the Latin alphabet: 'We are of one tongue'.

[44] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 208. For further arguments see my article 'Alls vér erum einnar tungu', pp. 11–30.

[45] On the difference between the modern concept of 'language' and the medieval concept of 'tongue' as a dialect continuum in the *First Grammatical Treatise* see Pétur Knútsson, 'Beowulf and the Icelandic Conquest of England', pp. 279–80.

[46] On this topic see Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel*.

[47] 'Upphaf allra frásagna í norrænni tungu, þeira er sannendi fylgja, hófsk, þá er Tyrkir ok Ásíámenn byggðu norðrit. Því er þat með sönnu at segja, at tungan kom með þeim norðr higat, er vér köllum norrænu, ok gekk sú tunga um Saxland, Danmörk ok Svíþjóð, Nóreg ok um nokkurn hluta Englands.' (*Danakonunga sögur*, ed. by Bjarni Guðnason, p. 39); cf. Faulkes, 'Descent from the Gods', pp. 4, 24, 26; cf. Magnus Fjalldal, 'How Valid is the Anglo-Scandinavian Language Passage in *Gunnlaug's Saga* as Historical Evidence?'

[48] *Edda*, trans. by Faulkes, p. 5: 'þeir æsir hafa haft tunguna norðr hingat í heim, í Nóreg ok í Svíþjóð, í Danmörk ok í Saxland, ok í Englandi eru forn landsheiti eða staðaheiti þau er skilja má at af annarri tungu eru gefin en þessari'. *Edda*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 5.

Thus, the inconspicuous causal phrase ('since we are of one tongue') that the First Grammarian presents as the prerequisite for following the English example involves not only the reference to a common language but implicitly to a myth of origin, to the language spoken by the Æsir in the migration legend that occurs both in *Skjöldunga* saga, in the prologue of ~~the~~ *Snorra Edda*, and in *Ynglinga saga* in *Heimskringla*, the language of Old Norse mythology and poetry. Even Ari the Learned, in the genealogy following his *Íslendingabók*, traces his ancestry to Yngvi, king of the Turks, implying the same legend, a variant of the one that is known to have traced the origin of the Franks to the Trojans.[49]

The idea of the *translatio* from Asia Minor to Scandinavia is paralleled in other European constructions of identity.[50] Let us note, however, that for the First Grammarian it becomes an implicit theoretical presupposition for the possibility of constructing an alphabet for the writing of the Norse language. The *First Grammatical Treatise* deals only with the language, but *Ynglinga saga* mentions the poetry and the prologue of ~~the~~ *Edda* has the Æsir bringing with them the political structure of the society as well: together these imply the whole culture. The idea still serves as a point of reference in the mid-thirteenth century for the analysis of skaldic poetry. This can be observed in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* of Ólafr Þórðarson, where it is stated that the poetry that the Romans learnt in Athens and then gave Latin form is the same as that Óðinn and the Æsir transported to the North and gave a Norse form.[51] Thus, a highly original linguistic and phonological analysis of the Old Norse language with the view of improving the alphabet for writing and reading texts in the vernacular — law, genealogy, history, translations of Christian literature — is formulated with reference to the common European idea of descent from Troy. The making of Icelandic, or Scandinavian, intellectual culture *presupposes* the appropriation of a European literary and cultural idea, a *narrative of origin*, that situates the Norse — or at least their aristocracy, including the Icelandic chieftains — in the larger context of universal history. Linking identity to the foun-

[49] *Íslendingabók*, ed. by Jakob Benediktsson, p. 27. In 1936, Anne Holtsmark (*En islandsk scholasticus fra det 12. århundre*, p. 112) pointed to Páll Jónsson, bishop of Skálholt, as a possible author of the *First Grammatical Treatise*, and in 1963, Bjarni Guðnason (*Um Skjöldungasögu*, p. 279) suggested that Páll Jónsson might be the author of *Skjöldunga saga*. It should also be mentioned that in 1993 Sveinbjörn Rafnsson (*Páll Jónsson Skálholtsbiskup*, p. 10) argued that Bishop Páll is the author of *Hungrvaka*.

[50] The Romans, the Franks, and the British were all considered to be the descendants of Trojans, cf. Heusler, *Die gelehrte Urgeschichte*.

[51] 'Den tredje og den fjærde grammatiske Afhandling', ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 60.

dational myth serves to emphasize the *great age* and thus the *nobility* and *value* of the cultural and intellectual products of the 'Danish' tongue.

So the First Grammarian's innovative attempt to find a way to improve the Icelandic alphabet — the 'stafróf', a loanword from Old English, *stæfrew* — paradoxically presupposes the appropriation of the Latin idea of *translatio studii et imperii* in such a way that it creates a transnational linguistic identity and at the same time integrates the Nordic past into classical and universal history. In turn, the dignity and value of the poetical and mythological tradition, preserved by the Icelandic poets and scholars, themselves putatively descendants of kings and gods, is ensured.[52]

Instruction and Metaphor

No wonder, then, that the vernacular was held in high esteem and that as a language of the community it was of no less importance or value than Latin, the language of the Romans. Translation and appropriation of valuable or necessary Latin material would be seen as a natural thing to do. To translate is to render something foreign and incomprehensible familiar and intelligible by means of interpretation that can take on the form of discourse. Possibly, the phrase *þýðingar helgar* (holy translations), as used by the First Grammarian, can be interpreted as referring to translations of saints' lives, the earliest preserved contained in the manuscript AM 645 4to, dated to *c.* 1225, or to translations of works such as ~~the~~ *Elucidarius* by Honorius Augustodunensis, or of Alcuin's *De virtutibus and vitiis*, found in the Old Norwegian Homily Book, or, of course, of sermons. These pose different challenges. The saint's life becomes a form and an example for vernacular saints; ~~the~~ *Elucidarius* necessitates to some extent the translation and rethinking of philosophical and theological concepts, much as the *First Grammatical Treatise* did in its field. The Alcuin text was perhaps more easily translated, since it deals with the virtues. Still, the main challenge — how to render a system of concepts that builds upon Roman and ecclesiastical theories into the Old Norse vernacular context — demands an inventiveness and a grasp of similarities and differences: to translate word for word or to translate the meaning, as stated in the *Speech against the Bishops*: 'En allir hlutir eru svá til þýðingar dregnir sem rétt skilning málsins stendr, þó at sumir hlutir hafi önnur orð á atkvæði heldr en latínu sjálfri gegnir í þýðingu'. (But all things are translated so as to render the correct understanding of the

[52] See Mikael Males' contribution in this volume.

discourse, even if some things are worded differently than the translation from the Latin in itself).[53]

But translation can take on different forms. Among the earliest Old Norse manuscripts preserved, we have two books and a few fragments of homilies: the fragments AM 257a fol. and AM 624 4to, Stockholm Perg. 4to nr 15 (the Icelandic Homily Book), and AM 619 4to (the Old Norwegian Homily Book). Although they go by the name of homily books, the contents of these manuscripts are in fact for the most part sermons, not homilies, although some homilies proper are contained in the Old Norwegian Homily Book. As sermons they are pieces of oratory, speeches, intended to be read aloud — preached — to an audience that understands the vernacular but not necessarily Latin. They imply some kind of performance: they are intended to have an effect on the audience, not only an aesthetic or emotional effect, but one of persuasion, conversion, a change in the mind and heart so that the individuals in the audience will mend their ways and live their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Church. Their purpose was not only to have an illocutionary force but also a perlocutionary effect. In order to bring this about, the sermons use various rhetorical devices. They are uneven as compositions; some of them seem to have no structure at all while others bear the mark of skilful composition. It is of course questionable to what extent they can be regarded as independent or original compositions.[54] Some of these sermons have a logical structure, with a clear presentation of the problem to be discussed in an introduction followed by an orderly treatment of the topic, thus providing instruction and guidance to the audience through the explanation of practices and church matters in a vivid and concrete way. I will shortly take as an example the sermon on the dedication of a church — *Kirkjudagsmál* — perhaps the single most famous sermon in the textual tradition.

First, however, some general comments. The implied audience of the sermons contained in the Icelandic and Norwegian Homily Books is not monastic. For instance, the audience is encouraged to give away money for charitable purposes and not sleep with their wives on certain days; neither applies to monks (who had renounced all private property and taken a vow of chastity). On the other hand, the Icelandic Homily Book contains sermons that partially consist of translations from the *Rule of St Benedict* — so there is a monastic connection, even if the audience is not a monastic one.

[53] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, Sverrir Jakobsson, and Tor Ulset, p. 296.

[54] *The Icelandic Homily Book*, ed. by de Leeuw van Wenen, pp. 17–18, cf. Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature*, pp. 115–21.

For the same reason these sermons are not directed at regular canons. In the Old Norwegian Homily Book, on the other hand, there is at least one sermon that contains a possible reference to canons regular, since the sermon seems to have an implied audience of this sort: it is stated that 'we' have adopted the ways of living of the apostles, renounced private property, and own everything in common, the apostolic life being the hallmark of the canons.[55] It has been suggested that one sermon was composed in St Olaf's in Stavanger, which was an abbey of canons regular. Canons regular were expected to fulfil the spiritual needs of society by, for instance, preaching to lay people outside the confines of the monastery or serving as confessors. A mixture of sermons intended for canons regular and laity would perhaps be expected at a cathedral — a bishop would preach both to the canons of the cathedral chapter and to the nobles or a lay audience. It has been argued that the Old Norwegian Homily Book was in use in Bergen,[56] whereas the Icelandic Homily Book has been thought possibly to derive from the Benedictine monastery of Þingeyrar: but even if so, it would not have been *in use* at that monastery for the reasons mentioned above.[57] From the introduction to the Icelandic Homily Book, it can in fact be gathered that the intended audience is not a monastic one, but rather lay people who understand the vernacular but not Latin. Within the audience there are notable people who appreciate the quality of a sermon. They have heard others speak before and can compare. Still, the preacher is invested with an authority with which they have to comply: the message, the content of the sermon, must be taken seriously whether or not the preacher manages to give it its proper rhetorical form.[58] How does the preacher go about teaching and instructing this audience? How is one to make understandable what has to be said? The main tool is the use of metaphors that illustrate the teaching in a memorable way, making the invisible visible and the abstract concrete — in short, by using conceptual metaphors. Let us take *Kirkjudagsmál* as an example.

The sermon on the dedication of a church, *Kirkjudagsmál*, is preserved in the two homily books and in two fragments, one of which dates from the middle of the twelfth century and is thus among the earliest Norse texts pre-

[55] 'In die pentecosten sermo', *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 94.

[56] Cf. Berg, 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?'

[57] Andrea de Leeuw van Weenen accounts for the scholarly discussion on the Old Icelandic Homily Book in her introduction to *The Icelandic Homily Book*, ed. by de Leeuw van Wenen, pp. 3–19.

[58] *Íslensk hómilíubók*, ed. by. Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Gunnlaugur Ingólfsson, pp. 3–4.

served. In the sermon, which was read out on the days when churches were dedicated, the symbolic meaning of the church building, a wooden church of traditional Norse construction, is deciphered and translated into discourse where it is interpreted on two levels, one general and one personal. The process of interpretation follows the method of tripartite biblical interpretation, where the construction functions as text (*historia*) and the symbolic interpretation corresponds first to allegorical or typological interpretation and then to the tropological or moral sense. The preacher first interprets the meaning of the church with reference to Christianity in general. Going through the details of the architectural construction of the building it is first shown how the church signifies elements of the Christian religion: the altar signifies Christ, the altar cloth signifies the saints, the sill beams signify the prophets and apostles, the door signifies the true faith, the four corner posts signify the four evangels, and so on. After itemizing the structure of the church in a manner precise enough to allow us to reconstruct the building,[59] the focus shifts to the level of the individual Christian, and the church building becomes a model for the individual who, out of his good works, builds for himself a spiritual church of his own.[60] The catalogue of virtues, Christian as well as classical, is put to work. For example, the sill beams, roof, and altar signify the three Christian virtues, faith, hope, and charity; the cloth signifies good works, because its origin is charity; the floor signifies humility, obedience, and patience; the benches signify works of charity, the wall plates persistence, the rafters attendance, the beams peace and agreement with other men. The church bells signify doctrines that incite good works, while the door signifies reason that distinguishes between good and evil and does not grant entry to anything other than good works.

In this spiritual church the corner posts no longer signify the four evangels, but the four cardinal virtues: 'vitra' (wisdom) and 'réttlæti' (justice), 'styrkð' (fortitude) and 'hófsemi' (temperance). Thus, in the tropological interpretation, the four cardinal virtues, *prudentia*, *justitia*, *fortitudo*, and *temperantia*, are translated into Old Norse and assigned a place in the construction that corresponds to the place of the four evangels in the allegorical interpretation; the Gospel and the cardinal virtues become the 'corner posts' of religious belief and moral behaviour. The cardinal virtues and Christian narrative have been

[59] Hörður Ágústsson, 'Hús í hómilíu', 60–89 (Norw. trans., 'Kyrkjehus i ei norrøn homilie', 1–38) does precisely this.

[60] *Íslensk hómilíubók*, ed. by. Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Gunnlaugur Ingólfsson, p. 150.

incorporated into the structure of a wooden church of traditional form, and, conversely, the parts of the construction of the building are translated into a system of religious and moral concepts that give them a new or at least a supplementary signification.[61] We see there this double transposition implied in the concepts of translation and appropriation: by means of the cognitive metaphor the Nordic reality is placed in the context of the Latin intellectual world and a Nordic form is given to the common Latin and European conceptions.

The Norse terms for the four cardinal virtues — 'vitra', 'réttlæti', 'styrkð', and 'hófsemi' — appear to be found together, in this order, only in *Kirkjudagsmál* and in the system of virtues in the translation of Alcuin's work on virtues and vices, preserved as a separate treatise at the beginning of the Old Norwegian Homily Book.[62] The main vices are eight in number, and Alcuin teaches us that we can surmount them with opposing virtues: pride with humility, fornication with purity, avarice with fasting, sloth with good works, and so on. In Alcuin, the four cardinal virtues are defined in a separate chapter, titled 'Um fjóra krafta' (On Four Virtues), where the word 'kraftr' (and not 'dugnaðr' or 'kostr') is used to render the concept of virtue.[63] The four virtues are briefly defined so that we can form a better idea of their significance. These definitions are also an attempt to render into Norse some fragments of a philosophical definition of moral concepts. 'Vitra' (wisdom or prudence) is defined as 'hyggjandi guðlegra hluta' (attention to things divine) and is the understanding of what a man is to do and what to refrain from. It is thus the virtue of intelligence in moral matters. 'Réttlæti' (justice) is defined as nobility of the mind, giving to each and every thing its 'eiginlegan metnað' (its proper ambition or worth, i.e. merit). There we have the classical definition of justice as attributing to each his due. But Alcuin adds a few words on the importance of justice, which guarantees the worship of God, the respect for human law, correct judgements, and equality

[61] See Kristin Aavitsland's chapter in this volume for a discussion of the links between the interior of a Danish church and Christian virtues.

[62] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, pp. 1–31; cf. *Alkuin i norsk-islandsk overlevering*, ed. by Widding.

[63] Virtue (Craftr) is described as 'gørfi hugar. Pryði øðles. skynsemi lifs. Mildi siða. Gofgan guðdóms. Vægr mannz. oc værðlæicr æilifrar sælo.' (*Alkuin i norsk-islandsk overlevering*, ed. by Widding, p. 131). The phrase is actually not very understandable apart from the Latin and it is not certain that the translator was familiar with the reference of all the concepts. For example, what is translated as 'gørfi hugar' is in Latin 'habitus animi' and means an ingrown habit of the mind, not that far from the original Aristotelian meaning. The literal meaning of the Norse would, on the other hand, be 'the dress of the mind'.

of all life. 'Styrkð' (fortitude) on the other hand is perhaps the most important virtue in this context: a great patience of mind, constancy in good works, and victory against all kinds of vices. Whereas 'Hófsemi' (temperance) is 'háttur alls lífs', an imprecise translation of *totius vitae modus*, that is, moderation in everything, especially in the desire of worldly things. It is the virtue that restrains the passions: an important virtue considering the bad habits of Norwegians and Icelanders evoked in a sermon in the Icelandic Homily Book — drunkenness in Norway and lasciviousness in Iceland.[64]

What happens when a system of concepts expressed in one language is transposed or translated into another? The main question concerns the relationship between the word, the concept, and the conceptual system. The concept, it is assumed here, is a relation: it is never independent, never without relations to other concepts. Consequently, it becomes part of a network of two or more concepts that between themselves form a system of concepts, more or less coherent, from which the individual terms receive their signification. One or more words could thus be employed in one context without expressing a definite concept while in another context they would form a part of a system of concepts. In the case of the vocabulary of religious or didactic writings in Old Norse, this system or framework would, fundamentally, be Latin and philosophical, albeit expressed in Norse terms. Now, the virtues and the vices, as in Alcuin's system, are characteristics of the temperament, as they were understood in the Middle Ages; they are qualities of the soul and stand in a relation to free will and natural tendencies. The conceptual system is in fact never independent, there is always *someone* who *has* the virtues or vices. For instance, the virtue 'hófsemi' (temperance), at least as it is presented in Alcuin's system, is defined in opposition to desires, manifested by the natural tendency of the human being to seek pleasure in things of the world; it thus concerns man in relation to himself and implies an inner struggle of some kind.

In the Icelandic Homily Book there is a passage that mentions the philosophical presuppositions of this idea of humanity. The passage states that man should know the nature of his being: 'Það er eigi fjarla manvit að maðurinn viti það, hvað hann er eða hverjar greinir hans vesningar eru' (It is not far-fetched wisdom that man should know what he is and which are the distinctions of

[64] 'Líkamslosti á þessu landi er hafður í ræðum á milli manna að gamni svo sem ofdrykkja í Norvegi' (Lasciviousness in this country is talked about among people as drunkenness in Norway), *Íslensk hómilíubók*, ed. by. Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Gunnlaugur Ingólfsson, p. 294, cf. the admonition of Archbishop Eysteinn to the Icelandic chieftains (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*, I, nr 54 (1180), pp. 262–64) and the temperance speech in *Sverris saga*.

his being).[65] Let us note that the word 'vesning', coined from the older form of the verb to be, *vesa*, is probably a translation of the Latin concept of *essentia* which, in turn, is a translation of the Greek concept of *ousía*. The sermon continues in an Augustinian, and beyond that, Plotinian, mode, distinguishing 'líkami' (body), 'önd' (soul), and 'andi' (spirit). The body is the lowest part and the external one, the soul is an inner and more noble part, but the spirit is by far the highest and most noble part of man. The body is visible, and receives its sensitive faculties from the soul; but even if the soul is not visible and is spiritual in nature, it is only conscious of what is bodily and sensible. Together, body and soul form the outer man. The spirit, on the other hand, 'gefur hugkvæmi og skilning, dómspekt og minni, mál og skynsemi, næmleik guðstrúar og sjálfræði manninum' (gives thinking and understanding, sound judgement and memory, speech and reason, sensitivity to belief in God and autonomy to man). The spirit is called the inner man and angel, and to it is entrusted the direction of man as a whole, both inner and outer.[66]

These three dimensions of natures and tendencies are thus seen to constitute the individual person. The individual is split into different forces that draw the person in different directions. If we consider only the names of the virtues and vices (temperance, for instance) they sound as if they furnish an objective description of human behaviour. But placed in the context of the person who is their subject — a person that has the three distinctions of the essence of the human being — they take on a subjective form and can be interpreted as describing an inner tension of a man who struggles with his own inner forces. One could perhaps reveal the presuppositions of the tension behind the battle of the virtues and the vices with this, or a similar, metaphysical doctrine of human nature. The system of moral concepts turns out to be not altogether an innocent import: it is accompanied by a metaphysical conception of the individual, involving an interiority where it becomes of importance to know the inner forces of the soul and to take control of them by means of the virtues so as to prepare the inner man for his salvation: a goal that perhaps was not evident — without the intellectual activity of interpretation — when rustic and materially oriented farmers or chieftains contemplated the wooden pillars of a stave church.

[65] *Íslensk hómilíubók*, ed. by. Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Gunnlaugur Ingólfsson, p. 174 (correcting the emendation 'fjallamannvit' to 'fjarla manvit').

[66] *Íslensk hómilíubók*, ed. by. Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Gunnlaugur Ingólfsson, p. 174.

Argumentation and Dialogue

The effort to persuade by means of the spoken word is prominent both in the sermons and the speeches in the sagas. Sturla himself uses speeches to make conceptual distinctions and present different points of view.[67] In some sagas, such as *Sverris saga*, composed by Karl Jónsson, abbot of the monastery of Þingeyrar, speeches are particularly important, and the author's learned rhetorical skill is put to use portraying the personalities of the protagonists in the narrative by making them give a speech. Even if the writing of *Sverris saga* presupposes oral transmission, first by the king himself, then by people acquainted with the events, it is also based on Latin rhetorical training, that is, schooling in the liberal arts, and, possibly, acquaintance with speeches in Roman historiography. It also presupposes a close collaboration between clergy and the secular. This vernacular saga, reporting battles and warfare, was written by a Benedictine abbot who has had fairly good training in Latin rhetoric and speech writing, presumably as part of his studies; rhetorical composition is manifested in different fields: homilies and saga writing.

The strife between the Icelandic chieftains and the bishops, instigated by the reform policy of the Niðarós archbishops, is expressed on a larger scale in Norway, in the dispute between King Sverrir and the archbishops, particularly in the so-called *Ræða gegn biskupum* (*Speech against Bishops*), preserved in a fourteenth-century copy, AM 114 4to, which has the characteristic force of Sverrir's other speeches. In this speech, Sverrir uses rhetorical devices such as metaphors, comparisons, and amplification, and composes them by means of a tripartite syllogistic structure that possibly reveals some knowledge of Aristotelian logic.[68] Besides knowledge of canon law, the *Speech against Bishops* reveals a vision of the function of the king, an interpretation of the meaning of the idea of kingship. It not only manifests a skill in composition and argumentation, in the form of deployment of figurative language and rhetorical techniques, but also an aptitude for topical argumentation: for example the use of the *topoi* of *a minore* (if Christians were commanded by the New Testament to respect pagan kings, there is all the more reason to respect Christian kings) and the *a majore* (the king has his office from God and he would not be elevated above others unless God had made him so). The idea that the king receives his status directly by the grace of God was to become the ideology of the Sverrir dynasty

[67] *Hákonar saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, Sverrir Jakobsson, and Tor Ulset, I, 258–66.

[68] Cf. Knirk, *Oratory in the Kings' Sagas*, pp. 56–57.

and is later expressed in ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* (*King's Mirror*) and *Landslög* (Laws of the Realm).[69] Sverrir's use of metaphor as a tool of understanding is sometimes remarkable. In order to make the auditor understand the situation — the sickness of the country — he resorts to a comparison of the Church to a body where the normal functions have been disabled: those who should see have become blind — a clear reference to the blindness of Archbishop Eiríkr — and so on. The use of such cognitive metaphors, that are designed to convey the essence of the meaning of the message, are found in many other instances in his speech as well as in many of the speeches in *Sverris saga*.[70]

Dialectical argumentation is one thing; dialogue is another. Medieval texts abound in dialogues of all kinds, some philosophical, some theological, and some simply didactic. Even the most rudimentary form of Latin grammar was given the form of dialogue. But some dialogues were more important than others and had widespread influence, such as ~~the~~ *Elucidarium*, composed by Honorius Augustodunensis in the early twelfth century.[71] ~~The~~ *Elucidarius*, as it is called in the Old Norse tradition, was translated already in the twelfth century and survives in a contemporary manuscript as well as in some later ones, none of which are complete. It consists of a dialogue between master and disciple which in three books covers the whole of the Christian world view in a systematic way, starting with the nature of God, the creation of the world and of man, and encompassing the Fall and redemption, the Church, good and evil, the sacraments, the end of world, the Antichrist, the Last Judgement, and the future life. As in many translations of a theoretical nature, the more abstract passages are sometimes omitted or paraphrased. Still, there are efforts to render abstract concepts and their definitions, such as free will or self-governance ('sjálfræði'): 'í veldi manns að vera, vilja eða gera gott eða illt' (in one's power to be, will, or do good or evil), the distinction between creature, nature, and facture ('skepna', 'eðli', 'verk'), and between natural and voluntary necessity ('eðlisnauðsyn' and 'vildarnauðsyn'), to name but a few. Even if the value of the translation consists first and foremost in its transmission of a systematic world view, it is important to note that the effort to render the conceptual thought demands the creation of new concepts in the vernacular, in order to be able to think and speak about the understanding of world and man that the text implies.

[69] Cf. Bagge, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*.

[70] For instance the speech by Svína-Pétr. *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, Sverrir Jakobsson, and Tor Ulset, p. 148.

[71] See also Stefka G. Eriksen's chapter in the present volume.

Translations thus create a vocabulary, a precondition for a conceptual approach to Latin learning, theology, and philosophy, which draw on the resources of the vernacular language. Some fields, such as ethics and morals, might have been easier to deal with than others, but juridical terminology would also have been one field in which technical concepts and distinctions were likely to have been established before being influenced by Latin thought, civil or canonical, even if the surviving legal codexes may have been influenced by Gratian's *Decreta* and Roman law.[72] The need to discuss religious teachings and explain them to a lay public would also have been an important factor in the creation of a new vocabulary. But even if the Norse language possessed a creative adaptability, the task was made easier by many of these terms being already in use in the languages of missionaries, such as the following, derived from Old Saxon and/or Old English: 'kristni', 'páfi', 'biskup', 'prestr', 'djákn', 'munkr', 'nunna', 'messa', 'engill' (Christianity, pope, bishop, priest, deacon, monk, nun, Mass, angel).[73]

Although there are dialogues to be found in some of the eddic poems, the idea of writing a dialogue in prose and in the vernacular might have originated through the influence of translations of texts such as ~~the~~ *Elucidarius* or ~~the~~ *Dialogues* of St Gregory the Great, another work translated into Old Norse in the twelfth century, or even ~~the~~ *Disciplina clericalis* by Peter Alphonsi, which also exists in Norse translation. ~~The~~ *Dialogues* — or 'Dialogus' as the work is referred to in Old Norse texts — presents the conversation between Gregory and Peter as a fictional framework which serves as a pretext for telling stories. The concept of a fictional framework was recycled by Snorri Sturluson in his *Edda*, where he has the itinerant King Gylfi questioning the ~~Ae~~sir who reply by telling the mythological tales of Old Norse paganism and poetics. If ~~the~~ *Dialogues* were more attractive as a literary model than ~~the~~ *Elucidarius*, which is a rather dry dialogue between master and pupil, ~~the~~ *Imago Mundi*, also composed by Honorius, may have informed the structure and order of topics in ~~the~~ *Snorra Edda*. The idea that some myths are a form of explanation of natural phenomena in mythological disguise may be due to a similar kind of influence.[74]

~~The~~ *Dialogues* of St Gregory the Great are directly referred to in ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá*, or *Speculum Regale*, as it is also named in the prologue. The work is given the form of a dialogue between father and son and has been described

[72] See Kristoffer Vadum's article in this volume.

[73] Jakob Benediktsson, 'Þættir úr sögu íslenzks orðaforða', p. 95.

[74] Clunies Ross, *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 167–73.

as a philosophical-didactic dialogue, which to a certain extent it is. Probably composed in the 1250s by an author connected to the Norwegian court, it introduces the reader to the professions of the merchant, courtier, and king and in passing discusses natural philosophy, morals, and juridical principles. The principal virtues to be sought are 'manvit' (wisdom), 'siðgœði' (good manners), and 'hœverska' (courtly bearing).[75] The author has had access to sources in Norse as well as Latin, both *Hávamál* and ~~the~~ *Speech against Bishops*, and also the Bible. The relationship between ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* and *Stjórn*, the Norse translation of some books of the Old Testament, has frequently been discussed, and it seems that it is actually the translator of the Bible that makes use of ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* and not vice versa. Even if modelled on Latin dialogues, ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* is a thoroughly original work, of both theoretical and practial nature, and some of its philosophical and moral teachings reappear in *Landslög* (Laws of the Realm) and *Hirðskrá* (Court Law), composed during the reign of King Magnús the Lawmender. The author's attitude to wondrous tales from other parts of the world demonstrates the experience of someone who has had to explain the Nordic conditions to a more southern audience: who would believe that if you tie wooden planks under your feet you can travel much faster than ordinarily!

In the section of ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* that deals with the king, the discussion has its roots in the idea that ethical qualities, no less than prowess in military matters, are necessary to the courtier. The discourse on wisdom includes the picturing of wisdom as a tree having branches of different sizes, the most practical of which are moderation and discernment, leading to the ability to give each his due.[76] The dialogue then moves to illustrative examples of pride and humility as revealed in stories about Joseph and Potiphar's wife, Assverus and Wastes, Esther and Mardocheus, and Constantine and Helena. Having dealt with the virtues necessary for the courtier, the discourse moves in a rhetorical ploy from the courtier to the king: we now understand the obligations of the lesser, so what about the greater? How is the king to lead his life? It is notable that the discussion is driven by the son's perceived *contradictions* in the discourse of the father. For instance: how can it be that the taking of human life is both forbidden and a just and laudatory thing? How is it that animals speak in the Bible when they do not speak in reality? Why did God, being the

[75] *Konungs skuggsiá*, ed. by Holm-Olsen, p. 64. Cf. Eriksen, 'Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King's Mirror*', p. 148, and references there.

[76] *Konungs skuggsiá*, ed. by Holm-Olsen, p. 65.

highest authority, subject himself, while incarnate, to earthly kingdom? In the first case, the answer is that the king is authorized by divine right to rule over the lives of men, but in consequence, the king must necessarily be very wise and just. This leads to the problem of how to deliver just verdicts, neither too strict nor too lenient. Thus, the text moves from an apparent theoretical contradiction to a more practical problem. The author resolves the problem in the manner of a jurist, by the recourse to a series of examples, mostly drawn from the Bible. The first of these involves the legend of the Four Daughters, known from various medieval works, including a Psalm commentary by Hugues de Saint-Victor, a sermon by St Bernard of Clairvaux, and Robert Grosseteste's *Chateau d'amour*.[77] In ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* the purpose of presenting this legend is to picture a way of achieving a balanced view of the issue at hand where the contributions of Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Peace are, at least ideally, in harmony. The author recounts at length their debate about Adam's sin and punishment in Paradise. These four virtues, not the classical ones, form the framework for a just verdict.

Another remarkable intellectual process in this part of ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* is the way the author approaches the distinctions between discourse, commentary, verbal expression, and thought. Again he resorts to the image of the tree, where commentaries are compared to branches that grow out of the trunk of discourse. The commentary aims at explicating the thought that accompanied the discourse as expressed in words. It does so 'eptir ætlan', according to the way in which things can reasonably be supposed to have been or have happened.[78] Perhaps one has here a general principle of historical reconstruction of past events: they are recounted as they are supposed, in all probability, to have taken place.

Both ~~the~~ *Snorra Edda* and ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* are complex and intricate compositions. In this respect they share a feature that can also be observed in skaldic poetry and decorative wood carving from churches and furniture and that is sometimes expressed in illuminated manuscripts. One could perhaps speak of an aesthetics of the intricate as characteristic of the artistic and intellectual sensibility of the supposedly rude and rough 'berserks' of the North.

[77] *Konungs skuggsiá*, ed. by Holm-Olsen, pp. 75–78.

[78] *Konungs skuggsiá*, ed. by Holm-Olsen, p. 85.

Encyclopedic Knowledge and Juridical Reasoning

In the State Archives in Oslo there are preserved fragments of the *Laws of the Gulaþing*-district, together with fragments of the *Laws of the Merchants* and the *Court Law*.[79] It so happens that we know in whose hand these fragments are written: they are the work of Haukr Erlendsson, who also wrote the major part of the collection of texts known as *Hauksbók*.[80] Haukr Erlendsson was an Icelander who served for a long time in Norway under King Hákon Magnússon (1299–1319), first in Oslo, then as magistrate of the Gulaþing with residence in Bergen. He was knighted around 1306 and was a member of the royal council and one of the high magnates that led the negotiations concerning the succession of the Crown with the Swedes in 1320. Besides *Hauksbók* and the copy of the Laws, we have from his hand two original charters containing his juridical verdicts as magistrate.

A distinctive feature of *Hauksbók* is the presence of encyclopedic and religious texts together with copies of works of a historical nature, some of which go back to Sturla Þórðarson, such as a redaction of *Landnámabók* and, possibly, *Kristni saga*, as well. Sturla is also credited with having possessed a manuscript of an encyclopedic nature, ~~the~~ *Membrana Reseniana* 6, now only extant in copies.[81] In this respect Haukr continued the work of Sturla and passed it on to posterity. In other respects, the historical works of *Hauksbók* cover the extent of the Atlantic realm of the Norwegian kingdom — stories from Greenland and America, Iceland, and of northern Norway, along with the stories of Troy and Britain; in short, the western and northern parts of the kingdom — somewhat reminsicent of the ordering principle of the later saga manuscript *Flateyjarbók* (1387) that covers Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and Orkney, as well as Norway and Eastern Europe.[82] *Hauksbók* also contains a copy of ~~the~~ *Elucidarius*, written in a different hand, and the translation of a work of Hugues de Saint-Victor, written in Haukr's own hand. In addition, encyclopedic material, that is, geography, cosmology, and natural history, is present in leaves that have been incorporated into the manuscript at some unknown date, whereas one mathematical work, *Algorismus*, is clearly written under Haukr's supervision. One treatise,

[79] NRA Gamalnorske membranfragmenter nr. 2, printed in *Norges gamle Love*, 4, pp. 117–34. Cf. Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, p. 41 n. 7.

[80] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eiríkur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson.

[81] Stefán Karlsson, 'Alfræði Sturlu Þórðarsonar', pp. 54–60 (295–99).

[82] Cf. Ólafur Halldórsson, 'Af uppruna Flateyjarbókar', p. 429, cf. Rowe, 'Cultural Paternity in the Flateyjarbók *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*', p. 4.

Af náttúru manns ok blóði (Of Man's Nature and Blood), concerns the four elements and the four humours, involving the theme of man as a *minor mundus*. *Hauksbók* manifests theoretical interests in man and the world, in natural science, mathematics, and history. It is a fine example of the personal intellectual culture of an aristocrat in the Norwegian fourteenth century.[83]

In his study of *Hauksbók*, Sverrir Jakobsson suggests that it be viewed as typical of the world view of the Icelandic aristocracy.[84] He points out some interesting features. On the one hand the book is an expression of what he terms the Catholic world view, typified by biblical history, universal chronicles (such as, for example, the so-called *Veraldar saga*), and *mappaemundi*, that is, Latin and Catholic history and geography, supplying a European frame of reference that integrates the northern world and places it at the outer edge of the geographical map — on its periphery, rather than at its centre. On the other there are some specific additions that integrate the North into this world view. From the point of view of the relationship between centre and periphery, Sverrir notices that the question of origin is a recurrent theme in *Hauksbók*, expressed in *Landnámabók* and in the prehistoric sagas; and the genealogies trace the generations of the Icelandic aristocrats back to the known origin of humanity, thus allowing them to bridge the gap between the periphery and the centre. The mediating element is the theme of *translatio* from Troy to the West, already mentioned, which furnishes the idea of a migration from the centre to the periphery. By grafting themselves onto this myth of origin, the Scandinavians turn out to be descendants of Troy, just like other civilized Europeans, be they Italian, French, or British. In *Hauksbók* the story of this migration is found in the encyclopedic section, and it is implied in the genealogies of Haukr and his wife, Steinunn Áladóttir, preserved in seventeenth-century copies.[85]

[83] For a further discussion on Haukr as an individual intellectual, see the chapter by Stefka G. Eriksen in this book. On other literate civil servants, cf. Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, pp. 163–83.

[84] Sverrir Jakobsson, *Við og veröldin*, pp. 360–62; Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View', pp. 29–33.

[85] 'A Tracia bygði fyst Tiras sonr Iafeths Noasonar. fra honum er komen þioð su er Tyrkir heita. þat er oc mioc margra manna mal at þuí er fornar bœkr visa til at af þui lande bygðist Suiþíoð. en Noregr af Suiðioð. en Island af Noregi. en Grœnland af Islande', *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eiríkur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 155 (cf. Isidore, *Etymologiæ*, XIV, 4, 6), and on p. 504, the genealogies trace Haukr ancestry from Adam through the Trojans to him and his wife, Steinunn.

One could add that this preoccupation might possibly have its roots in a more philosophical question: why are we here, on the edge of the inhabitable world? Why do we speak this language and recite this (pagan) poetry? The roots of the questions are not merely the distance of Iceland from the neighbouring countries but a concept of the world, a 'grand narrative' of universal history, based on the biblical story, that starts with the creation of the world and the two human beings at its centre and recounts the consequent dispersion of the people throughout the *orbis terrarum*. However, there is a certain contradiction inherent in this conceptualization of the world. European world maps place the centre in the near east and relegate the North to a peripheral position, whereas the consciousness expressed by the historical narratives that comprise the whole reach from America through Greenland, Iceland, and Scandinavia to Russia and Byzantium indicate a different space of consciousness that does not square with the Roman world. This world has a cultural and intellectual geography of its own, centred in the southern Scandinavian peninsula from where the first Viking expeditions originated but extending to the diasporas in the east and the west, and likewise expressed in the Trojan myth, that sidesteps the Roman Empire, although it has its origin in a parallel movement.

One of the results of the migration from Asia was the organization of society, including the laws. One tends, perhaps, to forget that, like Sturla Þórðarson, the principal function of Haukr Erlendsson was that of a 'lögmaðr', a magistrate, which made necessary a profound knowledge of the laws and the principles of their application. The leaves of the *Laws of the Gulaþing* that Haukr copied contain some interesting passages of a philosophical nature concerning the idea of man and the person that underpinned Norwegian, and to some extent also Icelandic, society at this time. This is the so-called 'Mannhelgibálkr' (The Section on the Sanctity of Human Life) that is philosophically much more elaborated in the *Laws of the Gulaþing* than the Icelandic codex *Jónsbók* (1281), even if the latter is founded on the Norwegian legislation.[86] One of the chapters copied by Haukr discusses the 'four daughters' (or four regulatory principles) that were introduced in the exemplary tale in ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá* and have found their way to this section of the Laws: these sisters, or daughters, should accompany all just judgements and so to speak furnish their principles.[87] A first general principle consists of moderation, measure, and the just

[86] *Jónsbók*, ed. by Már Jónsson, pp. 101–20; cf. *Járnsíða*, ed. by Haraldur Bernharðsson and others, pp. 75–94; cf. *Norges gamle Love indtil*, 1387.

[87] Derived from the Jewish Midrash through Hugues de Saint-Victor and discussed in

mean. The four regulatory principles are, as in ~~the~~ *Konungs skuggsjá*, mercy, truth, justice, and peace. However, the presentation of the four principles in the law text differs in some respects from the *King's Mirror*. Mercy has to be taken into account so that cruelty or wrath do not affect the adjudication of the case in question; truth in order to prevent false testimony; justice so that injustice will not have any effect on the correct judgement; and peace so that one will have the patience to wait until the process is complete. In particular, one has to avoid unjust or false judgements, and be aware that such errors usually have four causes: fear (because one fears the one accused), avarice (that may result in the acceptance of bribes), anger (if one hates the accused), and friendship (if one wants to be of assistance to one's associate). These are principles that we know would have been familiar to Haukr Erlendsson, not only because they were written in the law, but because he has himself copied the passages in his collection of the *Laws of the Gulaþing*. The other parts Haukr has copied concern more practical matters such as 'Landvarnarbálkr' (the defence of the country), 'Erfðabálkr' (inheritance), 'Landleigubálkr' (tenancy of farms), 'Þjófabálkr' (theft), 'Farmannalög' (merchants), and *Hirðskrá* (court law). Concerning the last point one has to remember that as a member of the Council of the Realm, Haukr would know the regulations concerning the rules of succession as well as the organization and behaviour of the officials of the royal court. These chapters give a vision of Haukr as magistrate and courtier and make it possible to focus on the different fields of activity that concerned him and the principles on which his work was founded.

The idea of 'mannhelgi' (human sanctity) is actually a human rights concept, the moral claim a man has to his right to life, to be 'untouchable', the right to be left in peace by others; 'mannhelgi' refers in some way to the holiness of human life; it is a principle of the law that each and everyone who pertains to the kingdom of Norway is to be 'friðheilagr' (sacrosanct), a principle that guarantees non-aggression towards each and every one and condemns the violation of this principle; it is actually closely related to what goes today by the name of negative liberty — liberty as the right to non-interference by others, society, or the state. It is, however, not a guarantee of positive liberty, the liberty of action, since medieval society was a hierarchical structure, where each level of the people has its own obligations.

detail in *Konungs skuggsjá*; from there, probably, incorporated as principles in the Laws of the Realm. See Molland, '"Les quatre filles de Dieu" dans le Miroir Royal norvégien', and Tveitane, 'The Four Daughters of God'; cf. Moore, 'Jewish Influence on Christian Biblical Interpretation'.

Let us analyse the judgements of Haukr Erlendsson from the point of view of the principles explained in the 'Mannhelgibálkr'. Does Haukr practise what the Law preaches, does he apply the principle in his judgements? We happen to have charters where he has been present as magistrate or a witness, two of which are written in his own hand: the charters written in Oslo in 1302 and in Bergen in 1310.[88] The two charters concern disputes over the right to property and rent. In the former a certain Bóthildr — a woman who pleads on her own in her capacity as a juridical person — has complained because she has not been able to obtain her part of a farm given to her by her father; the judgement of Haukr is that her part of the farm is to be restituted to her. The second concerns disputes about fishing in a lake; Haukr judges that the owner has the right to fish and that his opponent has to pay.

If we look at the charter from 1302 it reveals a logical procedure based on proof and sworn testimonies. It starts with a *salutation* and a *notification* of the complaint of Bóthilldr that has been filed with the magistrate. The complaint is corroborated by proof in the form of two testimonies, that of Hallkell and Þórðr who assisted at the original act. The complaint is therefore justified, based on guarantees of truth. Then, Haukr examines the *facts* of the case on the basis of proofs that make up the *reasons* on which his conclusion is based. These testimonies take place not with the magistrate, but before the parliament of Oslo where three persons, Þórðr, Ámundi, and Hallvarðr, have sworn that they were present during an attempt to claim the sum of the farm but that they were met with the threat of violence. A second testimony before the parliament is also cited on a prior attempt to take the case to court, where Bóthildr was present but her opponent not. After this exposition of the facts, Haukr reviews briefly the reasons presented and proceeds to the consequence, his *verdict*. The verdict has the form of a logical chain of reasoning from the facts, through the articles of the Law to the verdict. We thus have a threefold structure: the establishment of the facts on the basis of testimony, the declaration of the general law, and the judgement of the particular case based on the application of the general rule. And the verdict is that Bóthildr gets her part of the farm, not without reservations, though, but on the condition that the opposing party cannot prove by valid testimony that her father owned a smaller part of the farm, and maintaining the just proportion: to Bóthildr is restituted exactly what her father owned (not more, not less) and the revenue

[88] *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*, I, nr 93, p. 86; II, nr 103, p. 89; cf. *Islandske originaldiplomer indtil 1450*, ed. by Stefán Karlsson, I, 4–6; II, 3.

that was his due. Finally, Haukr proclaims a *sanction* against anyone who does not respect his verdict and the judgement of the jury, and he validates the charter by his seal and a record of the date of the act.

One can thus distinguish (1) the acceptance of the complaint on the basis of proof in front of the magistrate prior to the legal process itself, (2) the establishment of the facts before the court during the legal process, (3) the enunciation by the magistrate of the general rule based on the Law, and (4) the judgement of the particular case by the jury (normally six or twelve persons). It seems that, in this case, an effort is being made to find out the truth of the matter: to establish the facts, to verify the accusations and the complaints, to keep the just proportion, to give each one his or her due, and to resolve the problem by means of the Law as far as possible. The process is a neutral one, involving mercy towards the opposing party, an effort at truth, a taking into account of the circumstances, proportion, and the rights of the opposite party; thus, a respect for justice, and an insistence on order and respect for the verdict, in furtherance of keeping peace in society.

Thus, on close examination, everything seems to point to Haukr's having made an effort to respect the principles he has copied in the codex of the *Laws of the Gulaþing*. He has appropriated the philosophical principles that lead to justice and peace in the community, he has made them his own. He is a magistrate who respects not merely the formalities but who also understands the importance of the correct procedure of verification, evaluation, the taking into account of different points of view and tries to find the just solution, and who makes an effort to implement and respect the law of which he has taken it on himself to be the guardian.

Is it possible to see a connection between the lawman and magistrate and the collector and compiler of theoretical and historical texts, as exemplified in Haukr and, indeed, in Sturla? In fact a certain encyclopedism is so to speak implicit in the juridical profession, in knowledge of the laws and their dimensions, because the laws try to cover as much as possible about conflict and resolution in society as a whole; one can say that the leaning towards a complete knowledge of the natural and/or historical world mirrors, so to speak, the study of all the fields of social life and interactions between people that the mastery of the law requires. The nature of juridical knowledge and encyclopaedic interest manifest the same effort of completeness and rational organization of knowledge: one from the point of view of practice in active society, the other from the point of view of theoretical knowledge of the natural world and universal history. The disposition towards an encyclopaedic mode of thought would thus be in a certain manner congenial to the type of knowledge required by juridical

practice, at least as it was exercised in medieval Iceland and Norway by intellectual figures such as Snorri, Sturla, or Haukr.

Towards a Conclusion

Sturla Þórðarson's family eventually joined him in Norway: his wife Helga and his son, Þórðr who was a priest and became a chaplain of King Magnús, one of the king's two confessors as prescribed by ~~the~~ *Hirðskrá*. Sturla himself became lawman for the whole of Iceland on his return in 1272. The exiled poet had become the highest political authority in Iceland. Earlier distrust had been transformed into a remarkable confidence manifested in these arrangements.

In this chapter we have tried to explore some features of the background that made possible the cooperation of the king and the poet, focusing on the fusion of Latin learning and vernacular textuality as manifested in some examples taken from the traditional disciplines of *grammatica*, *rhetorica*, *dialectica*, theology, and law. They all demonstrate that the contributions by the individual authors or scholars were highly original, and yet they share a fundamental presupposition, that of the appropriation of European and Latin ways of knowing. They draw upon their Latinity as they put it to use for their own purposes. Unlike Danish and Swedish intellectuals, the Norwegians and Icelanders did not contribute directly to European Latin culture, even if they had received their education at French, English, German, or Italian universities or institutions.[89] Their work was based to a large extent on European common culture. However, their intellectual productions were not intended as contributions to this common culture, but as something of their own, made for their own purposes. The idea of a noble origin places these authors on an equal footing with European intellectuals and furnishes the concept of a cultural tradition that has a value of its own. Their fundamental conceptual structure seems to be that of different manifestations of the same phenomenon: they are one manifestation of *translatio studii* and *imperii* that served to give identity to Europeans; their Christian religion is a new and better manifestation of what the old pagan religion tried to express in its own way; and the pleasure in literary, artistic, and intellectual intricacy is something that goes back to the same fundamental mindset that lies behind the composition of poetic terms and metaphors. As, in our imagination, the ship of King Magnús continues on its way southwards, along the Norwegian coast, with Sturla telling other stories, we can wonder

[89] See also Mats Malm's chapter in the present volume.

whether the outcome ~~had~~ been different had Magnús and Sturla not shared a common cultural background; but instead of the disgraced poet finding himself in prison, the course was set on emending the laws so as to form a peaceful and just society and leave the turbulent periods of civil war behind, and to apply the writer's and historian's skill to commit to parchment the remembrance of things past.[90]

[90] Thanks to Stefka G. Eriksen, Sverrir Jakobsson, Pétur Knútsson, Emily Lethbridge, Mikael M. Karlsson, and an anonymous reader on behalf of Brepols. Some of the ideas in this chapter represent developments of points I made in lectures delivered at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris in 2014. I am grateful to Professor François-Xavier Dillmann for inviting me to speak on those occasions.

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Negotiating Identity

Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Academic Discourse, Marriage, and Money

Ian P. Wei*

When Scandinavian scholars encountered the university that emerged in Paris at the end of the twelfth century and took shape during the thirteenth century, they were faced by an institution that assiduously cultivated its own authority and sought to shape lives throughout Christendom. Historians have tended to detect authority and potential influence upon society when masters made formal determinations, definitive judgements, and grand normative assertions. And the higher the degree of consensus, the more likely it has seemed that their thinking would have had an impact beyond the university. Because no universities were to appear in Scandinavia until significantly later, it might be supposed that Scandinavian scholars could only bring back the normative assertions which commanded consensus in Paris, and that their intellectuals would be quite unlike the university men of Paris. It is important to grasp, however, that there was much more to Parisian academic discourse than grand normative assertions. Equally characteristic were ambivalence, inconsistency, understatement, implicit shifts not articulated clearly, tensions between different positions, and failures to resolve differences. The intellectual culture of the Paris masters was therefore far more 'translatable' than

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might be supposed, offering a complex and multilayered discourse that could be adapted to very different contexts. I will make my case by looking at how the masters constructed their authority, at what they had to say about money, and finally at their treatment of marriage problems.

Authority

When seeking to defend their common interests, the masters and students of Paris acted collectively and were extremely successful at securing formal privileges that asserted the authority of the university as a whole. The events leading up to these grants were often rooted in abiding tensions between the people of the town and students who were prone to disorderly behaviour. In 1229, for example, an argument over a bill in a bar on the Rue Saint Marcel escalated into a series of violent clashes. When the provost and his men attempted to restore order, several students were killed, some of whom had apparently not been involved in the previous disorder. The masters suspended their lectures and demanded redress. When Louis IX's regent, Blanche of Castile, the bishop, and the papal legate backed the provost, the majority of students and masters departed in what is often called the 'great dispersion', pursuing their studies in a range of other cities in Western Europe. It took Pope Gregory IX two years to sort out the mess. The university resumed its teaching in 1231, and Gregory IX issued a series of bulls establishing order, the most important of which was *Parens scientiarum*, 'Parent of Sciences'.[1]

The constitutional significance of this bull has frequently been noted: it recognized the university's legal status as a corporation, allowed masters to make and enforce their own rules, acknowledged their right to strike, and regulated some essential aspects of university life. The opening of the bull merits close attention, however, because it made a powerful claim to authority and set out the core of Gregory IX's message.

> Parens scientiarum Parisius velut altera *Cariath Sepher, civitas litterarum* [Joshua 15. 15. Judges 1. 11], cara claret, magna quidem sed de se majora facit optari docentibus et discentibus gratiosa, in qua utique tamquam in officina sapientie speciali *habet argentum venarum suarum principia, et auro locis est in quo rite conflatur* [Job

[1] *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. by Denifle and Chatelain, I, no. 62, p. 118; no. 64, p. 119; nos 69–71, pp. 125–29; no. 75, pp. 133–34; nos 79–95, pp. 136–47; Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges*, pp. 92–94; Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities*, p. 31; Pedersen, *The First Universities*, p. 172; Rashdall, *Universities*, I, 334–40; Young, '"Consilio hominum nostrorum"', pp. 7–8.

> 28. 1], ex quibus *prudentes eloquii mistici*[2] *murenulas aureas vermiculatas argento* [Song of Songs 1. 10] cudentes et fabricantes monilia ornate lapidibus pretiosis, immo nulli pretio comparandis sponsam Christi decorant et decorant. Ibi *ferrum de terra tollitur* [Job 28. 2], quia dum terrena fragilitas fortitudine solidatur, lorica fidei, gladius spiritus et cetera inde fit christiane militie armatura, potens adversus aereas potestates. Et *lapis calore solutus in es vertitur* [Job 28. 2], quia corda lapidea Sancti Spiritus afflata fervore dum ardent, incendunt et fiunt predicatione sonora preconantia laudes Christi.[3]
>
> Paris, parent of sciences, like another *Cariath Sepher, city of letters* [Joshua 15. 15. Judges 1. 11], and precious, shines forth. It is great indeed but concerning itself raises hopes for greater things that are pleasing to those who teach and those who learn, where, surely as if in wisdom's special workshop, *there is a mine for silver, and a place for gold which they refine* [Job 28. 1], from which those *prudent in mystical eloquence*, stamping *ornaments of gold, studded with silver* [Song of Songs 1. 10], and making necklaces elaborately, adorn and make beautiful the bride of Christ with precious stones, or rather stones beyond price. There *iron is taken out of the earth* [Job 28. 2], because when its earthly fragility is solidified by firmness, from it is made the breastplate of faith, the sword of the spirit, and other armour of Christian soldiery, potent against the aerial powers. And *copper is smelted from the ore* [Job 28. 2], because while stony hearts burn, blown on by the fervour of the Holy Spirit, they take fire [...]
>
> a. and are made to proclaim the praises of Christ with resonant preaching.
>
> [or/and]
>
> b. and by preaching are made resonant, proclaiming the praises of Christ.[4]

Gregory IX emphasized the general way in which the university served the Church. The university was associated with wisdom, and it was credited with producing precious adornments for the spouse of Christ, in other words the Church. It also manufactured the armour and weaponry that the Church needed in its fight against evil. The complex final line, however, asserted a more specific role. Read one way, those who studied at the university were trans-

[2] Rupert of Deutz, *De Gloria et Honore Filii Hominis Super Mattheum*, ed. by Haacke, Book III, p. 72.

[3] *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. by Denifle and Chatelain, I, no. 79, pp. 136–39. The embedded quotations are not identified here or in *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, ed. by Auvray, I, no. 607, cols 385–88.

[4] The translation is mine, but I owe a debt to *University Records*, ed. by Thorndike, no. 19, p. 36.

formed by the Holy Spirit to become preachers. Read another way, they were transformed by preaching as well as the Holy Spirit. Both readings make grammatical sense, so there was probably a double meaning rather than ambiguity: university scholars were transformed into preachers by preaching.[5] The primary meaning, however, is that university men were transformed into preachers because the passage was clearly modelled on a section in Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job* that discussed men being transformed into preachers.[6] With its embedded quotations from Job, *Parens scientiarum* invoked a much more substantial vision of the way in which men could be changed to become preachers. The opening of *Parens scientiarum* thus offered a strong programmatic statement of the transformative power of the university, specifically the power to produce preachers. The university's obligation to train preachers was frequently asserted, and preaching quickly became an enduring feature of university life, but the opening of *Parens scientiarum* was the most public expression of this ideal. Not everyone shared this ideal: most students did not go to university to become preachers. Nevertheless, the formal statement of this ideal, the public vision, in *Parens scientiarum* mattered a great deal. First, it offered a set of values in which many university men, including those in leadership roles, sincerely believed, which many actively sought to implement, and which everyone understood and generally respected, even if they had other priorities. It was genuinely meaningful within the university. Second, it was publicly elaborated when secular and religious authorities gave their backing to the university. Those who supported the university either believed in its pastoral mission, or had to be seen to believe in it in order to preserve their own standing. So this public vision offered a discourse through which to negotiate effectively with those who held power outside the university.

Primary responsibility for the production of preachers in the university rested with the masters of theology, and they consistently articulated a compelling vision of their own special authority, especially during their quodlibetal disputations. Quodlibets, as they are also known, could only be held at Advent or Lent by actively teaching (or 'regent') masters of theology, though they were not obliged to hold them, and very few ever held them twice a year. The dis-

[5] In version a, *sonora* is taken to be ablative singular with *praedicatione*. In version b, *sonora* is understood to be neuter plural referring back to *corda*. I am grateful to Professor Gillian Clark and Professor David d'Avray for their advice on the meaning of this passage.

[6] Gregory, *Moralia in Iob*, ed. by Adriaen, 18.27–28, p. 914. See Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 104–07; Wei, 'From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities', pp. 73–78.

putations were solemn, public occasions and the audience was not confined to members of the university. Given that proceedings were conducted in Latin, however, it is safe to assume that the audience consisted entirely of men with clerical status, and this is confirmed by all surviving references to those who were present. Each quodlibet consisted of two distinct sessions. At the first, the *disputatio*, the audience had a crucial role to play because it dictated the subject matter of the disputation: questions were asked by anyone (*a quolibet*) about anything (*de quolibet*), hence the name. These questions reflected the interests and preoccupations of the audience, and they ranged from abstract questions of philosophy and theology to questions which looked beyond the university, referring to contemporary events and dealing with political and social issues at all levels of society. At the first session these questions would be discussed, and the presiding master might or might not say very much. But at the second session, the *determinatio*, which was held within a few days, only the master spoke. He reordered the questions that had been raised haphazardly at the first session within a meaningful framework, and gave a definitive *solutio* or *determinatio* to each one in turn. Surviving manuscripts and library lists indicate that these determinations passed to other schools and universities. Furthermore, quodlibetal questions were collected in manuscripts intended for use outside the university. There are also references to masters putting their determinations in writing and under seal, although no quodlibetal question is known to survive in this form. Quodlibetal questions were also included in *summas* and manuals designed to assist confessors. Quodlibets therefore reflected both a magisterial response to the needs of a wider clerical audience and the first step in a process of transmission beyond the university.[7]

In these disputations, masters of theology were often asked about themselves collectively, and in response they articulated a common ideal. They benefited the whole Church by teaching others, elucidating the truth, removing doubt and error, defending the faith against heretics, and teaching others how to preach, teach, and save souls throughout society. They were at the top of a hierarchy of knowledge into which others could tap for expertise and authoritative judgement. Their job was to direct ordinary priests and preachers, and

[7] On quodlibetal disputations, see Boyle, 'The Quodlibets of St. Thomas and Pastoral Care', pp. 232–56; Glorieux, *La littérature quodlibétique de 1260 à 1320*; Glorieux, 'L'enseignement au moyen âge', pp. 128–34; Hamesse, 'Theological *Quaestiones Quodlibetales*', pp. 17–48; Wei, 'The Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries: An Authority beyond the Schools', pp. 39–44; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 228–29; Wippel, 'The Quodlibetal Question as a Distinctive Literary Genre', pp. 67–84; Wippel, 'Quodlibetal Questions, Chiefly in Theology Faculties', pp. 151–222.

they likened their role to that of an architect in a great building project. This directing role gave them a status comparable to that of bishops in this life, and meant that they would enjoy special status in heaven alongside martyrs and virgins. Here there was a powerful consensus.[8]

It might therefore seem that Scandinavian scholars visiting Paris would have encountered a monolithic institution, and that drawing upon its intellectual culture would have meant first accepting the knowledge that it produced and implementing the normative assertions of its leading members, and then seeking to establish universities that would assert authority in the same way as Paris. This, however, would be to misunderstand the ways in which the authority of the Parisian masters was expressed in terms of their literary production, at least with regard to moral theology.

Money

From the early thirteenth century, Parisian theologians made huge efforts to get to grips with the moral problems posed by the growing money economy. An ambivalence in their assessment of trade and merchants was immediately apparent. From the Bible and the Fathers, they inherited a legacy of distrust, and this negative view was articulated repeatedly. On the other hand, the masters also did much to justify trade and the work of the merchant. They began to stress that while individual merchants might well be sinners, the nature of trade was not such that all merchants were bound to sin simply by being merchants. Moreover, they emphasized the social utility of trade: merchants deserved a profit for their labour, their expertise, their risks, and in order to support their families and to make charitable donations. In terms of how trade should be conducted, the crucial point was that there should be justice in exchange. Historians exploring this material discover many disagreements, new arguments, reformulations in the light of the latest bit of Aristotle to become available, but they present an emerging consensus.[9]

[8] Marmursztejn, 'A Normative Power in the Making', pp. 345–402; Wei, 'The Self-Image of the Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries', pp. 398–431. For more general studies of masters at all universities and not only in theology, see Gabriel, 'The Ideal Master of the Mediaeval University', pp. 1–40; Guelluy, 'La place des théologiens dans l'église et la société médiévales', pp. 571–89; Le Bras, '*Velut splendor firmamenti*: le docteur dans le droit de l'église médiévale', pp. 373–88; Leclercq, 'L'idéal du théologien au moyen âge. Textes inédits', pp. 121–48.

[9] Key works include: Baldwin, 'The Medieval Theories of the Just Price', pp. 1–92;

The other huge area of concern for the masters of theology was usury. The sin of usury occurred whenever a loan required the borrower to repay the lender more than had been lent in the first place. Whatever the actual outcome of the transaction, the intention to receive more than had been originally lent made the lender a usurer. The condemnation of usury rested in the first instance on biblical authority, but the masters articulated a host of arguments to demonstrate that usury was sinful. Some arguments were compatible with others, but some new arguments contradicted older ones. Against this, some masters began to moderate their position quite significantly by coming up with justifications for charging for credit. The most significant way in which they did this was by scrutinizing a whole host of financial contracts to establish whether or not they were usurious. Partly they needed to know how to advise merchants and bankers so that they could avoid sin, and partly they knew perfectly well that some contracts were designed specifically to conceal usury, and they wanted to expose usurers. The effect, however, was also to establish that some practices were perfectly licit, or licit if conducted in the right way. The overall effect was to legitimize a significant part of the urban economy. There was therefore an ambivalence or tension: they reinforced the condemnation of usury, but reduced the range of practices to which it applied.[10]

A more detailed look at their treatment of a particular type of contract reveals more about the moves that they were making. In the second half of the thirteenth century, the masters conducted a long-running debate about life annuities and perpetual annuities, which they called life rents (*redditus ad vitam*) and eternal rents (*redditus perpetui*). The buyer of a life rent gave a lump sum of money to the seller in return for annual rent payments for the rest of the buyer's life. In the case of an eternal rent the seller made annual payments to the buyer and his or her heirs in perpetuity. The debate, conducted primarily in quodlibetal disputations, concerned whether or not this kind of contract was licit.

In 1276 Henry of Ghent, the leading secular master of his generation, argued that life and eternal rent contracts were usurious.[11] He pointed out that

Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*; Le Goff, *Your Money or your Life*; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 296–305; Wood, *Medieval Economic Thought*.

[10] Key works include: Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*; Le Goff, *Your Money or your Life*; Noonan, *The Scholastic Analysis of Usury*; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 306–23; Wood, *Medieval Economic Thought*.

[11] Henry of Ghent, *Henrici de Gandavo Quodlibet 1*, ed. by Macken, quodlibet 1. 39, pp. 209–18. See also Kaye, *Economy and Nature*, pp. 108–09; Langholm, *Economics in the Medi-*

if someone gave a sum of money in return for an annual payment for the rest of his life, after a certain number of years he would have recovered his principal and received an additional sum, which was usury. He stressed that what the buyer of the life rent eventually received was irrelevant; usury lay simply in the hope of receiving more than the principal.

Numerous other masters were asked about this and they insisted that life and eternal rents were licit in the right circumstances. First, they argued that the rents constituted sales. They were therefore perfectly licit provided that there was justice in exchange, in other words provided there was equality in the deal. For Matthew of Aquasparta this meant giving due consideration to age, health, and infirmity to establish a probable equality.[12] Servais of Mont Saint Eloi said the buyer of a life rent must not proceed if he estimated that he would probably receive substantially more than he paid out.[13] Richard of Middleton wanted due weight to be given to the buyer's age and health, risk to his life, and other circumstances.[14] Godefroid de Fontaines took the just price to be a common estimate established in the marketplace.[15] All these masters said that life and eternal rent contracts were sales and therefore legitimate provided a fair exchange took place. But there was an obvious objection: it could be argued that they were selling money, and that this was improper because money was

eval Schools, pp. 266, 272, 273, 298; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 196–98, 201, 206; Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 55–62; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 74–76; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 325–26.

[12] Veraja, *Le origini*, quodlibet I. 9, pp. 201–03. See also Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 69–73; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 325–27; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 208–09; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 77–79; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 327–29.

[13] Veraja, *Le origini*, quodlibetal question 25, pp. 203–04. See also Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 101–06; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 287–88; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 209–10; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 79–80; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 329–30.

[14] *Quolibeta doctoris eximii Ricardi de Mediavilla ordinis minorum*, quodlibet II. 23, pp. 65–71 (Glorieux, *La Littérature quodlibétique*, vol. I, II. 22, p. 269). See also Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 330–41; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 210–11, 213; Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 111–23; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 82–85; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 332–35.

[15] Godefroid de Fontaines, *Les quodlibet cinq, six et sept de Godefroid de Fontaines*, ed. by Wulf and Hoffmans, quodlibet V. 14, pp. 63–69. See also Kaye, *Economy and Nature*, pp. 110–15; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 293–94; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 211, 213; Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 131–43; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 86–89; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 337–40.

meant to be a medium of exchange. Second, therefore, a number of masters justified life and eternal rents by redefining what was sold: it was not money, but the right to receive money. Whereas money was a measure that could not properly be sold, a right was a legitimate object of sale. This extra layer of analysis had simply to be inserted, and the contract was fine.[16]

Henry of Ghent, however, thought this was just playing with words, and he resisted the strategy by carefully scrutinizing the ways in which a right to receive money might be generated. Henry envisaged only two circumstances in which a right to receive money could be created and subsequently sold to establish a life or eternal rent. First, a right to receive money could be created when a farm was sold in return for annual monetary payments, and the right thus established could then be sold for a lump sum.[17] Second, a king could create a right to receive money when he promised annual monetary payments as a reward for service or out of pure generosity, and this right too could be sold subsequently for a lump sum.[18] Henry's analysis had important social implications. In the first case, he tried to retain a link between the right to receive money and corporeal, fruitbearing property; in effect he tied legitimation of the money economy to agrarian society. In the second case, Henry bound this same legitimation to traditional forms of authority. Other masters, however, were not concerned about how rights to receive money were created. They were content simply to redescribe current practices in terms of incorporeal rights. This made life and eternal rents acceptable within their existing intellectual framework. The social implications of their strategy were, however, far more radical: no longer bound to land or royal authority, the money economy was permitted a kind of autonomy. Overall, despite Henry of Ghent's resistance, a clear consensus emerged. The unstated assumptions, however, were more significant than the formally stated conclusions. The most significant aspects of the masters' analysis remained implicit.

[16] Servais of Mont Saint-Eloi, Richard of Middleton, and Godefroid de Fontaines took this view; see notes 13–15.

[17] Henry of Ghent, *Aurea quodlibeta*, vol. II, quodlibet VIII. 24, fols 46v–47r. See also Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 271, 274, 298, 339; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 209, 212–13; Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 106–11; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 80–82; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 330–32.

[18] Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet XII, quaestiones 1–30*, ed. by Decorte, quodlibet XII. 21, pp. 109–15. See also Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 274–75, 293, 298, 340; Marmursztejn, *L'autorité des maîtres*, pp. 213–14; Veraja, *Le origini*, pp. 125–31; Wei, 'Intellectuals and Money', pp. 85–86; Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 335–37.

Understatement and implication were again deployed by the masters of theology when they answered quodlibetal questions about usurious money. Historians have previously stressed the ways in which learned churchmen characterized money as sinful, filthy, and disgusting. Money was indeed presented this way in many treatises, sermons, satirical works, church sculptures, and marginal drawings in prayer books. Apes were shown defecating coins. Representations of Avarice and of rich men being tortured in the afterlife used coins, money bags, and money chests as key markers. Avarice increasingly took over from Pride as the vice that bred all other vices.[19] Many quodlibetal questions were asked about moral problems that stemmed from the presence of usurious money and other usurious goods in society, and in response the masters displayed a very different attitude to money.

The questions reveal deep anxiety about the threat that usury posed to the salvation of people who were not usurers themselves. A whole range of people faced moral difficulties because of the use of usurious goods and above all usurious money. Members of usurers' families were sure to be in an awkward position because they could hardly avoid living off money or property that had been acquired through usury. People who were employed by usurers, including scholars who were paid to teach the sons of usurers, faced similar difficulties. Those who received charitable gifts or alms from usurers were endangered. Ecclesiastical and secular rulers might also be in trouble when usurers paid their taxes with usurious money or goods. As usurers parted with their usurious money and property, other people began to sin by living off ill-gotten gains. Matters were especially serious because usurers were supposed to make restitution of usurious gains to those from whom they had taken them, and other recipients were in a spiritually dangerous position if that obligation was transferred to them and they failed to meet it. On the face of it, money increased the danger because it circulated quickly and easily. Close reading of the masters' responses to these quodlibetal questions indicates, however, that the masters envisaged ways in which it was possible to maintain normal social relations with usurers without committing sin, and moreover that using money was deemed the safest manner of doing business in moral terms.

A number of problems were addressed by using Thomas Aquinas's concept of money as a good consumed in use. This was the case, for example, when

[19] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, pp. 258–71; Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*, pp. 34–38, 178; Little, 'Pride Goes before Avarice: Social Change and the Vices in Latin Christendom', pp. 16–49; Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages*, pp. 59–80; Yunck, *The Lineage of Lady Meed*.

masters considered what usurers were to do with profits made by spending or investing usurious goods in ways that were perfectly licit in themselves. The problem was that usurers did not simply hoard their usurious gains. On the contrary, they used usurious money and property to make more profit, and the status of this profit was uncertain. Could the usurer legitimately keep them, or should he give them to the rightful owner of the usurious money or property that he had used as capital? Most theologians and lawyers in the first half of the thirteenth century had argued that profits made from usurious gains grew from a rotten root and were therefore rotten themselves, concluding that the profits should be restored to the original borrower after the original lender had deducted due recompense for his labour.[20]

In 1270 Thomas Aquinas was asked whether someone could licitly retain the profits of lawful business that had been financed by usury.[21] He began by presenting his argument against usury based on the distinction between goods that were consumed in their use and goods that were not. According to Aquinas, some goods were consumed in their use, and these included wine that was drunk in its use, and wheat or bread that was eaten. Money fell into this category because it was spent when used in exchange. In such cases use and substance were identical. There were, however, other goods whose use did not entail their consumption, and these included houses, horses, and clothes. If they deteriorated through use, this was accidental because using a house by living in it, for example, did not necessarily lead to its destruction. In such cases use and substance were distinct and could be treated separately. It was therefore permissible to sell the use of a house, while retaining ownership of the substance, as in a lease. The situation was entirely different with goods that were consumed in their use. Because their use and substance were identical, anyone who made a loan expecting the principal (or substance) to be restored plus a further payment for the use of the money was either selling something that did not exist (use distinct from substance) or selling the same thing twice, which was contrary to natural justice and a mortal sin. This was an original argument against usury that Aquinas introduced and others adopted.

[20] See Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*, I, 303–04; Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 49, 57, 86–87, 110, 114, 244–45; Noonan, *Scholastic Analysis of Usury*, p. 111.

[21] Quodlibet III. 19: 'Utrum aliquis possit licite retinere illud quod acquirit licitis mercimoniis de pecunia usuraria'. Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Quaestiones de Quolibet*, II, 275–76. See Noonan, *Scholastic Analysis of Usury*, pp. 111–12.

Aquinas then turned to the actual question. If usurious money were used in legitimate business, could the ensuing profits be retained or must they be handed over to the original borrower from whom the usurious money had been wrongfully taken? Clearly the original lender was bound to restore whatever had been taken beyond the principal: this was straightforward restitution. Moreover, he must compensate the original borrower for losses suffered through being deprived of the money paid in usury. According to Aquinas, however, nothing more should be paid. Because the use and the substance of the usurious money were identical, one could not give back the substance and then pay something for its use. It was different if one had profited from wrongful possession of someone's house or horse. One was obliged not only to return the house or horse, but also to hand over the profits made from them because the thing and its use could be valued separately. Aquinas had thus applied his theory of money as a good consumed in its use to explain why profit derived from usurious money could be retained by the usurer, while profit derived from other types of usurious property had to be handed over to the original borrower. Some concern was expressed that people would be encouraged to make usurious loans if they only had to return the usury and were permitted to keep whatever they made out of it.[22] The prevailing view, however, treated usurious money as different from most other usurious property, and stated specifically that profit derived from usurious gains could be retained if usury had been taken in the form of money. Most masters did, in effect, encourage the taking of usury in the form of money because subsequent profits could licitly be kept. It was safer for the usurer to deal in money rather than other forms of property because less moral danger would surround subsequent transactions.

Other problems were solved by classifying money as a fungible. To quote the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a fungible is something 'that can serve for, or be replaced by, another answering to the same definition'.[23] So if I lend you one hundred sheets of blank paper, I will be happy to receive back any one hundred sheets of blank paper, not necessarily the very ones that I gave you; blank sheets of paper are fungibles. But if I lend you my house, I expect that particular house back; houses are non-fungibles. This was often crucial when deciding whether or not an obligation to make restitution had passed from the usurer to other people. It came into play when masters assessed the position of someone who

[22] See, for example, Servais of Mont Saint Eloi, quodlibetal question 71. BnF, MS lat. 15350, fol. 285rb–vb. See also Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools*, pp. 283, 286–87.

[23] *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

was employed by a usurer. In 1279, for example, Henry of Ghent was asked whether it was licit to accept usurious money in return for teaching a usurer's son.[24] According to Henry, provided the usurer had acquired some of his possessions justly, it was licit to accept money which one knew to be acquired through usury because the usurer could make restitution by other means. The nature of money meant that the usurer could restore an equivalent sum and not necessarily exactly the same money. It was different with non-fungibles like books and horses because precisely the same thing had to be restored to its rightful owner. This meant that anyone who received it in return for a service was now bound to return it to its rightful owner. An unjust possessor of money, however, was not bound to return the same coins, as long as he was capable of making adequate restitution in another way, so the obligation to make restitution did not pass to others who received the money. According to Henry, the fungibility of money thus saved the teacher from implication in usury. In general, an employee was less likely to be implicated in usury if paid in the form of money.

The fungibility of money was again the critical factor when the masters considered the position of someone who received alms from a usurer. If a usurer took usury in the form of a non-fungible like a horse or a book, he was obliged to restore that item to its rightful owner. If the usurer gave that non-fungible as alms, the recipient was now bound to make restitution. If, however, the usurer took usury in the form of money, its fungibility meant that he did not have to return those exact coins, and nor did someone to whom he gave those coins as alms.[25] The fungibility of money meant that obligations were not invariably attached to it. It was licit to accept usurious money more often than most other usurious goods.

Disputations about usurious money, by stressing money's consumptibility in use or its fungibility, demonstrated that in a sinful world, sullied by usury, it was morally safest to do business in money. By using money, it was possible to maintain normal social relations with usurers. This encouragement to deal in money contrasts sharply with the more familiar demonization of money. The masters did not, however, present their analyses so as to give prominence to this new view of money; it remained understated or simply implied, built into the conclusions drawn when considering particular situations. Why? The most likely explanation is that this strategy served their pastoral aims. They still

[24] Quodlibet IV. 27: 'Utrum liceat sumere pecuniam usurarium pro servitio in filio foeneratoris instruendo'. Henry of Ghent, *Aurea quodlibeta*, I, fol. 212r–v. For this and other relevant examples, see Wei, 'Discovering the Moral Value of Money', pp. 22–26.

[25] See Wei, 'Discovering the Moral Value of Money', pp. 26–33.

wanted people to fear the spiritual consequences of usury, rather than suggesting that the problem was easily containable as long as business was done with money. While annuities were deemed acceptable, they did not want people to suppose that every financial practice was now bound to be free of sin. Moreover, it was a way of respecting tradition while responding innovatively to new social conditions. At one level, the most overt and explicit, the masters privileged tradition. At another level, the implicit and the understated, the social implications of their ideas constituted new responses to social change.

Marital Problems

Turning to quodlibetal questions about problems experienced by married couples, the implicit and the understated are again significant, but there was much less consensus amongst the masters. This is perhaps a surprising claim because the standard accounts of theological ideas about marriage and sex identify an emerging consensus.[26] While these accounts underplay disagreements about the nature of women and the legitimacy of sexual pleasure, they nevertheless remain convincing as long as the focus remains upon the masters' normative conclusions.[27] There was, however, a great deal more going on in the texts that they produced.

A substantial number of quodlibetal questions concerned marital problems. They focused on problems that arose when one or both parties to a marriage deviated from the norm, either by committing sin or by acting or seeking to act virtuously. Some problems stemmed from actions that could be performed by either the wife or the husband. Thus either could take a vow of chastity before marriage, seek to enter religion after marriage, have illicit sex, commit bigamy, or take usury. Questions about these issues were sometimes asked in such a way that they applied to both wives and husbands, and sometimes with specific reference to either wife or husband. Some problems, however, related only to the wife: only she could give alms without her husband's consent; only she could bear a child through fornication or adultery, and be the only person to know the true identity of the father, at least in the opinion of the masters. Other problems were particular to the husband: only he could marry and then become a priest.

[26] See, for example, Payer, *The Bridling of Desire*, esp. pp. 9–12, 179–83; Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe*, p. 485.

[27] For lack of consensus regarding the nature of women and the legitimacy of sexual pleasure, see Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, pp. 248–60, 265–72.

The texts that resulted from these quodlibetal questions were striking in their instability. The question might be gender neutral, about women, or about men, but the focus could slip considerably. It is important to recall how gender could be signalled. First, gender could be signalled by the use of nouns that referred unambiguously to either a woman or a man: *vir*, sometimes *maritus*; *mulier*, *uxor*, very occasionally *puella*. This form of gender denotation was explicit and straightforward. Second, an argument could be presented in language that was neutral with regard to the gender of the married person involved. By discussing the nature of, for example, marriage or vows, direct reference to either wife or husband could be avoided. Verbs could also be used without a noun or pronoun that would give away the gender of the spouse under discussion. Thus *dico quod peccat* might be translated 'I say that he sins', 'I say that she sins', or 'I say that she or he sins'. Third, some nouns were gendered themselves but were neutral with respect to the gender of the person signified: for example, *homo*, a masculine noun meaning 'person'; *persona*, a feminine noun also meaning 'person'; *coniux*, a masculine noun meaning 'spouse'. Fourth, a person could be discussed in gender neutral terms and then be referred to as having a marriage partner of specific gender, implying a specific gender for the original person. Thus a *homo* with a wife was a man. Fifth, gendered examples could be introduced to support specific arguments. Feminine examples included a woman who had entered religion then being given in marriage to a violent pagan ruler in order to bring about peace. Masculine examples included a man taking orders.

When these various means of denoting gender were deployed, a question that was initially gender neutral or about either the wife or the husband could develop a very different focus, and the slippage was sometimes considerable. It rarely happened when the question was specifically about men, even if it could in theory have been asked about women too, or when the question was about women because it was thought applicable only to women. The most striking examples of slippage occurred when the issue applied to both women and men, and the question was either gender neutral or asked about women.

In 1257, for example, Aquinas was asked whether a simple vow of chastity invalidated a marriage contract, a question framed in gender neutral terms.[28] Although his analysis applied equally to men and women, Aquinas used masculine pronouns (*aliquis*, *ille*), referred to the vow-maker's wife, and considered the possibility of the vow-maker taking orders. He thus chose to make his

[28] Quodlibet VIII. 10: 'Utrum votum simplex (continentiae) dirimat matrimonium contractum'. Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Quaestiones de Quolibet*, I, 71–72.

case with reference to a man, but it is extremely difficult to give an account in English that conveys the way in which the text slides away from the gender neutrality of the question as the masculine identity of the vow-maker becomes increasingly explicit. At the very end gender neutral terms were reasserted, 'and thus a marriage is invalidated by a solemn vow, but not by a simple one'. The surviving text does not state explicitly that the argument applied to women as well as men.

The slippage was not always towards a focus on the man, however. In the 1280s Servais of Mont Saint Eloi was asked whether the pope could dispense a vow of chastity that had been solemnized by professing religion.[29] He began in neutral terms, but turned to a gendered example: the pope could grant a dispensation for a nun to marry when the faith was in danger, either universally or in a particular country. Thus Servais went from neutral to feminine.

The shifts could be more complicated. In 1270 Aquinas was asked about a woman who married *in facie ecclesiae* (before the Church) after previously taking a vow of chastity. Could she have carnal relations with her husband without sin?[30] Aquinas began his reply in neutral terms, using the distinction between a simple and a solemn vow of chastity. A solemn vow of chastity was an impediment to marriage and invalidated the contract so that a marriage contracted after a solemn vow was in fact no marriage at all. Contracting such a marriage was therefore a sin, even if it was made *in facie ecclesiae* and consummated. A simple vow, on the other hand, was an impediment to marriage but did not invalidate the contract so that a subsequent marriage stood, although entering into it was a mortal sin. Once the marriage was established, however, the woman (*mulier*) did not have power over her own body, rather the man (*vir*) did, and vice versa. Aquinas then addressed the question directly, using its gender specific terms. Since no one could deny someone what belonged to them, the wife (*mulier matrimonio coniuncta*) could not deny her husband (*viro sui*) use of her body, despite her earlier vow. This was especially true after the marriage had been consummated. Furthermore, since no one sinned in doing what they ought, it was universally recognized that a woman who had consummated

[29] Servais of Mont Saint Eloi, Quodlibetal question 41: 'Utrum papa possit dispensare in voto continentiae solemnizato per professionem religionis'. BnF, MS lat. 15350, fols 277vb–278ra. For the date, see Glorieux, 'Les quodlibets de Gervais de Mont-Saint-Eloi', pp. 129–34; Sullivan, 'The *Quodlibeta* of the Canons Regular and the Monks', pp. 363–65.

[30] Quodlibet III. 18: 'Utrum mulier quae post votum continentiae emissum contraxit matrimonium in facie Ecclesie, possit absque peccato viro suo carnaliter commisceri'. Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Quaestiones de Quolibet*, II, 274–75.

a marriage contracted after a simple vow of chastity did not sin in rendering the conjugal debt to her husband. Whether she sinned in exacting the debt was less clear. Some maintained that she could also exact the debt without sin, otherwise the burden of marriage might prove intolerable for her, but Aquinas insisted that she sinned because she exercised her own will in exacting the debt and her will remained bound by her earlier vow. Aquinas then drifted back to neutral language, but introduced the masculine example of taking holy orders. Rather than focusing on the woman in the question, he now referred to the taker of the vow as *homo*, *aliquis*, and *persona*, and to the subsequent marriage partner as *coniux*, while also introducing a purely masculine example, the taking of holy orders. His terms were primarily gender neutral, with *homo* used both for the taker of holy orders, necessarily a man, and for someone professing religion, who could be a woman or a man. Without going through the Latin, it is hard to convey how the focus drifts, and there are degrees of neutrality and specificity.

Why did these slippages take place? Despite occasional examples to the contrary, it is clear that in general masters preferred to solve problems in relation to men. More often than not, slippages went from neutral or feminine language and examples to the masculine. It may be that they preferred to see men taking the active part in the problems they discussed, that the situation for women was always complicated by their subordination to men so that the problem was not entirely theirs, or that they regarded the masculine as more universal. Or it may simply have been the register in which they felt most comfortable.[31] The crucial point, however, is that these texts slip and slide: they are profoundly unstable.

There were also some critical matters upon which no consensus was achieved. The masters were frequently asked whether a wife could give alms without her husband's consent. They disagreed completely about whether or not a wife was entitled to control of her dowry, her earnings, or any other property that she acquired, and they frequently noted that custom might allow women more independence than they possessed in principle. In 1285, for example, Adénulfe of Anagni was asked whether a wife could give alms without her husband's express or presumed consent.[32] He argued that the wife could give alms without her husband's consent if she had property because of her dowry which was meant to sustain the burdens of marriage, or if she made a profit by her own efforts, or if she gained property in any other licit way. In 1286 Godefroid de

[31] For a different reading of these quodlibetal questions, see Karras, 'Using Women to Think with in the Medieval University', pp. 21–33.

[32] Quodlibet I. 13: 'Utrum uxor possit facere elemosinas sine consensu viri uel mariti sui expresso uel presumpto'. BnF, MS lat. 14899, fols 147vb–148ra.

Fontaines was asked whether a wife could give alms if her husband were unwilling and forbade it.[33] In principle Godefroid permitted the wife no independence at all in the giving of alms, but his position softened when he considered the importance of custom. He noted that in some places the wife was permitted to own property apart from her dowry, and he said that she could give alms freely from such property even if her husband were unwilling. In other places, however, no such category of property existed and all the wife's possessions were understood to be part of the dowry; here everything that she acquired or earned after the marriage passed into the power and ownership of the husband. In the 1290s a master known only as R. of Arras was asked whether a woman could give alms without her husband's consent from goods which they held in common.[34] His answer was 'no' — in these matters the woman was a servant, despite the fact that she enjoyed the same rights over her husband's body as he did over hers. The only exception was that in some places her dowry belonged to her and there she could give alms from her dowry without her husband's consent, but not elsewhere. As for her earnings, they belonged to her husband so she could never give alms from them without his permission. The masters were nowhere near a consensus, which left this issue wide open. They did, however, take account of social realities, noting that custom might allow women more independence than they possessed in principle.

Another set of questions concerned the woman who bore a child through adultery. She was believed to be the only person to know that the child had been conceived illicitly and to know the true identity of the father. This knowledge created moral problems for the woman and for those to whom she imparted her knowledge. Above all, should she tell others that one of her offspring was illegitimate? In the 1290s, a Franciscan called John, perhaps John of Murrovalle, was asked about a situation in which a married woman bore a son

[33] Quodlibet III. 12: 'Utrum uxor possit dare eleemosynam invito et contradicente marito'. Godefroid de Fontaines, *Les quatres premiers quodlibets de Godefroid de Fontaines*, ed. by de Wulf and Pelzer, pp. 222–25 and pp. 319–20.

[34] 'Collection of Nicholas of Bar', q. 55: 'Utrum mulier possit facere elemosynam de bonis communibus sine consensu mariti', BnF, MS lat. 15850, fols 25vb–26ra. This collection of quodlibetal questions survives in a manuscript that belonged to Nicholas of Bar-le-Duc, bishop of Mâcon, who left it to the Sorbonne where he had studied. Groundbreaking work on the collection was carried out by Glorieux, 'Notices sur quelques théologiens de Paris de la fin du xiiie siècle', pp. 201–38. Much of his analysis, especially his dating of the questions, has been substantially revised by Piron, 'Nicholas of Bar's Collection', pp. 333–43. For R. d'Arras, see Glorieux, 'Notices', pp. 222–23; Piron, 'Nicholas of Bar's Collection', p. 342.

as a result of adultery and her husband believed the son to be his. If the woman confessed the truth to her priest, should he tell the husband to reject the son and to announce that he must not inherit?[35] John's advice to the wife was that she should wait until her son reached adulthood before informing him of the truth in secret and telling him to leave for foreign parts or to enter religion because he was not the true heir of her husband's property. If he refused, however, she must keep quiet and he must have the inheritance.

In the early 1300s Eustace of Grandcourt was asked about a woman whose adultery resulted in a child whom everyone else believed to be her husband's legitimate offspring. The question took the form of a case: a woman had a daughter by an enemy of her husband while this enemy had a son by his wife; the families decided to make peace by means of a marriage between the children who were in fact half-brother and sister; seeing this, ought the woman to remain silent, permitting matters to proceed?[36] He concluded that the woman must, if possible, act towards the enemy's son in such a way that her daughter would not accept him. If, however, she could not do this, she must reveal her sin rather than allow the marriage to go ahead.

In questions such as these, the wife's obligation was not simply to tell the truth, but rather to tell specific people in order to persuade them to behave in ways that would bring about the best possible resolution of the situation that had arisen. In 1986 Sharon Farmer wrote a brilliant article explaining how Paris theologians in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries stressed the ability of virtuous wives to use spoken language to influence their husbands, persuading them to lead better lives.[37] Parisian quodlibets later in the thirteenth century also sought to harness what Farmer termed their 'feminine persuasive power'.[38] But these sinful wives were to persuade not only their husbands, but

[35] 'Collection of Nicholas of Bar', q. 45: 'Queritur si constante matrimonio mulier ex adulterio suscipiat filium, vir suus credat esse suum et mulier in confessione dicat sacerdoti sic esse, utrum sacerdos debeat ei dicere quod filium illum repellat a se et quod dicat talis non debet esse heres', BnF, MS lat. 15850, fol. 23va. See Glorieux, 'Notices', pp. 206–07, 219–22; Piron, 'Nicholas of Bar's Collection', pp. 341–42.

[36] 'Collection of Nicholas of Bar', q. 125: 'Ista mulier habet filiam ab inimico mariti sui, et ille inimicus habet filium; parentes decreverunt facere pacem per contractum istorum puerorum, qui secundum veritatem sunt fratres, seu frater et soror. Hoc videns mulier, utrum hoc debeat tacere et permittere istud facere', BnF, MS lat. 15850, fol. 37rb–va. See Glorieux, 'Notices', pp. 226–29; Piron, 'Nicholas of Bar's Collection', p. 341.

[37] Farmer, 'Persuasive Voices', pp. 517–43.

[38] Farmer, 'Persuasive Voices', p. 539.

also other members of the family, and they were to do so above all by selectively revealing and withholding knowledge that they alone possessed. This is another view that only emerges cumulatively rather than through the formulation of a general rule. Presumably the masters did not want to seem to grant approval to adultery by setting out guidelines for the adulterous wife to follow. As with their take on usurious money, they did not want to seem to undermine basic prohibitions. When it came to coping with the consequences of sin, important views were not articulated 'up front'.

Conclusion

The authority of the University of Paris rested in part upon the public vision of the university's power to transform men into preachers, and upon the deployment of this vision as an effective discourse of negotiation with those who could give the university powerful support. The masters of theology reinforced this discourse with a strong sense of their own status at the top of a hierarchy of knowledge, and of their directing role in the pastoral work of the Church. The authority of the masters was not just expressed through formal determinations and consensus, however. Some of their most innovative and significant responses to the society that they aspired to shape remained implicit, operating as unstated assumptions, or understated, never formulated in general normative assertions, buried in treatment of specific cases. It is important to grasp that their texts could be much less stable than usually supposed, and that there were issues on which there was no consensus, with failure to resolve issues leaving space for custom and personality. Indeed, it was precisely when masters sought to engage with perceived social realities that their discourse became unstable and multilayered. And by operating at different levels, the explicit and the implicit, academic discourse informed a pastoral strategy that also functioned at more than one level. The masters of theology still wanted people to fear the spiritual consequences of usury and adultery, hence the emphatic condemnations of usury and adultery that remained upfront, in sermons for example. Nevertheless there had to be hope of salvation in a changing world, and in confession advice could be offered based on their quiet re-conceptualization of money, or the special knowledge and persuasive power that women possessed. The masters' engagement with society was far more nuanced and subtle than their grand normative assertions suggest. Scandinavians who came to Paris and engaged successfully with the intellectual culture generated by the university did not have simply to be passive receivers of normative assertions that might or might not address social and spiritual needs at home. Rather the understated

and the implicit within academic discourse made it possible to adapt to specific circumstances by introducing ideas in addition to and sometimes in tension with normative conclusions. The intellectual culture of the University of Paris was not merely 'translatable', it required translation if its full potential were to be realized.

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A Deliberate Style: The Patronage of Early Romanesque Architecture in Norway

Kjartan Hauglid

The research on Romanesque architecture in Norway focuses largely on stave churches. This is not surprising, as art historians since the early nineteenth century have regarded the stave churches as representing the essence of the national style in Norwegian medieval architecture. Norwegian wooden architectural decoration of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries was largely dependent on the legacy of the Viking Age, as in the Ringerike and Urnes styles (Fig. 4.1). By the late eleventh century, new Romanesque impulses made their mark on Norwegian stave churches, and the stave church with a raised roof, combining both local and foreign elements, appears first in the thirteenth century.[1]

Compared with the study of Old Norse literature, the stave churches can be viewed as the architectural analogy to the indigenous kings' sagas (*konungasögur*) and the Icelandic family sagas (*Íslendingasögur*). Old Norse philologists have largely focused on the saga tradition in their research because of their

[1] There is a huge body of literature concerning the foreign influence on certain aspects of Norwegian Romanesque art, the most thorough of which is Erla Hohler's discussion on the capitals of the stave church at Urnes and their European background. See Hohler, 'The Capitals of Urnes'. As Hohler argues, the architectural decoration of the stave churches makes use of many forms inherited from the Scandinavian art of the eleventh century in combination with new and imported forms.

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Figure 4.1.
Urnes Stave Church (Sogn og Fjordane). Decorated door-jamb reused in the north wall of the twelfth-century church. Dated by dendrochronology to *c.* 1070. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

indigenous origin, while for many years translated textual material like the chivalric sagas (*riddarasögur*) and the vast corpus of Latin texts have received less attention. This tendency has changed in recent years, when various aspects of the translations and the translation process have been discussed. A similar development has not taken place in the study of Norwegian architectural decoration in stone; the standard work is still Martin Blindheim's *Norwegian Romanesque Decorative Sculpture*, published in 1965.

As mentioned, a strong foreign influence on Norwegian art and architecture appears in the late eleventh and the first half of the twelfth centuries — the period after the Viking Age but before the Latin Church gained a secure grip on Norway with the establishment of the archbishopric of Trondheim (Niðaróss) in 1152/53.[2] In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Norwegian

[2] The Old Norse name for the medieval town of Trondheim was *Niðaróss*, and the official modern name for the cathedral of Trondheim is *Nidaros Domkirke*, often abbreviated as *Nidarosdomen* in modern Norwegian.

royalty and aristocracy virtually competed in building small, but splendid and sumptuous churches all over Norway.[3] Many of these churches are lost today, but the fragmented material informs us about patrons who were conscious in their choices of architectural plan and style. Among the decorative architectural features that were introduced with stone architecture in the late eleventh century are non-figurative friezes and geometric patterns. One such imported or 'translated' architectural decorative feature is 'the sunken star', which will be the main focus of this article. This, together with other architectural ornaments, may be regarded as the artistic equivalent of the rhetorical style in the chivalric sagas and Latin texts.

The sunken star is an ornament which developed in the architectural sculpture of Normandy in the 1060s and 1070s, under the patronage of William the Conqueror, and was at the time a novelty in European Romanesque architectural decoration. The earliest and most important monuments are the castle of Caen and the two abbey churches Saint-Étienne and La Trinité.[4] The Norman 'geometric style', in French named 'le géométrisme Normand', can be identified by the repetition of simple geometrical shapes, such as stars or the chevron (a V-shaped zigzag pattern).[5]

The Norwegian patrons of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries obviously had numerous Romanesque stylistic features to choose from, but the Norman 'geometric style', and particularly the sunken star, is a recurring architectural ornament in the first generation of Norwegian stone churches. The transference and adaptation of cultural symbolism, as demonstrated by the use of the sunken star, illustrates that the intellectual activity of the time resulted not only in literary production, but also in the commissioning of architectural decoration. By tracing the evidence of the patronage of these sites available in literary sources, I will argue that the Norwegian kings of the late eleventh century used this motif consciously in order to propagate their own political identity, as well as to emphasize their status as secular rulers in juxtaposition to the Church.

[3] Bugge, 'Norge', pp. 189–229; Lidén, 'Middelalderens steinarkitektur i Norge', pp. 7–125; Ekroll, *Med kleber og kalk*, pp. 24–28, 129–302 (includes a catalogue of Norwegian medieval buildings in stone).

[4] Baylé, *Les origines et les premiers dévelopments*, pp. 102–05.

[5] Baylé, *La Trinité de Caen*, p. 105.

Previous Research on Early Patronage in Norway

The patronage of Romanesque art and architecture in Norway before the middle of the twelfth century is a topic little explored, to some extent because of the scarcity of written sources. In the multiple volumes of *Norges Kirker* (1959–), there are hardly any comments on the patronage of churches, though in some cases a church is attributed to the king or a local unnamed lord (*stormann*). In Hans-Emil Lidén's survey on medieval architecture in the seven-volume work *Norges kunsthistorie* (1981), only one Norwegian aristocrat is identified as the patron of a Romanesque church building. Lidén's example is the ruined church at Bratsberg Manor (Telemark), where he concludes that one of the local lords, Dagr Eilífsson or Gregorius Dagsson, 'must have built the church'.[6] A more recent contribution to this discussion is Lena Liepe's *Medieval Stone Churches of Northern Norway* (2001). Liepe discusses the patronage of the early churches and states that:

> Today, Norwegian scholars [...] seem to agree that the earliest church-building in the country was initiated by the Crown and among the highest levels of the local magnates. This assumption is made for early church building in general, as well as for the building of churches in stone.[7]

I find Liepe's conclusion convincing, as the early Norwegian Church was highly dependent on support from the king and wealthy landowning families until the middle of the twelfth century. It was only after the establishment of the Norwegian church province in 1152/53 that the Norwegian Church became more powerful and independent.

Archaeological excavations have proved that churches were built in Norway as early as the tenth century, even if these early wooden structures can only be confirmed by postholes or the location and orientation of graves.[8] The stave church at Urnes is often referred to as the oldest preserved wooden church in Norway, dated by dendrochronology to 1129– *c.* 1135.[9] It is more difficult to give precise dates to monuments in stone, and Norwegian scholars are

[6] Lidén, 'Middelalderens steinarkitektur i Norge', pp. 7–125.

[7] Liepe, *Medieval Stone Churches of Northern Norway*, p. 57.

[8] Christie, 'Den første generasjon av kirker i Norge', pp. 93–100; Lidén, 'De tidligste kirkene', pp. 129–41; Solli, 'Narratives of Encountering Religions', pp. 89–114; Reitan, 'Faret i Skien'.

[9] Anker, *The Norwegian Stave Churches*, p. 116; Christie, *Urnes stavkirke* ; Krogh, *Urnesstilens kirke*.

generally cautious about giving early dates to the surviving monuments. In the two most recent surveys of medieval stone churches in Norway, by Hans-Emil Lidén (1981) and Øystein Ekroll (1997), very few preserved churches are dated to before the middle of the twelfth century. Two examples are the Romanesque nave of Stavanger Cathedral and the choir of the old county church (*fylkiskirkja*) at Værnes (Nord-Trøndelag).[10] Lidén characterizes these churches as the 'first generation' of medieval stone churches in Norway, while 'a second generation' only began in the second half of the century. In my view, it gives the wrong impression to apply the term 'early' to stone churches built in the second half of the twelfth century, because the textual evidence indicates that the earliest Norwegian stone churches were built as early as the middle of the eleventh century. A hundred years later, by the middle of the twelfth century, cathedrals in stone had been built in Bergen, Oslo, Selja, Stavanger, and Trondheim, and there were about nine religious houses of the Benedictine or Cistercian orders spread throughout the country.[11]

Textual Evidence for Royal Patronage

Almost all Norwegian stone churches dated to prior to the second or third decade of the twelfth century are in a ruined or fragmentary state, and it has been very difficult to give precise dates to the surviving material. More substantial information may however be found in medieval narrative texts such as the Old Norse king's sagas and the Icelandic annals, as well as in regional laws, diplomas, and inscriptions. One must be cautious when using these texts as historical sources, as they are no doubt written for political or other purposes. The availability of independent literary and archaeological sources increases the plausibility of the information given in the literary material and thus legitimates its use. In the following, I will give some examples from the sagas describing the

[10] Lidén, 'Middelalderens steinarkitektur i Norge', and Ekroll, *Med kleber og kalk*, pp. 284–85. See also Skre, *Herredømmet*, Skre 'Kirken før sognet', and Brendalsmo, *Kirkebygg og kirkebyggere*.

[11] The nine religious houses that with certainty were established in Norway before the middle of the twelfth century were: *Niðarholmr* (*monasterium de Holm*), *Nunnusetr* in Trondheim (*nunnusetr á Bakka*), St Albani at Selja, *Munkalif* in Bergen (*monasterium sancti Michaëlis Bergis*), *Nunnusetr* in Bergen (*claustrum monialium sancte Mariæ ordinis sancti Bernardi*), Lyse (*coenobium vallis lucidæ*), *Nunnusetr* in Oslo (*claustrum monialium sanctæ Mariæ*), Hovedøya (*Mariu-klaustr í Höfudey*), and Gimsøy (*Claustrum sanctimonialium in Gimbisey*). See Lange, *De norske klostres historie*.

church-building activities of the first Christian Norwegian kings, the kings' outward orientation, through fosterage, education, or political relationships, and the political significance of the sites they chose for their churches.

The earliest reference to royal patronage in Norway is found in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*, and concerns churches built during the reign of King Hákon *góði* (r. *c.* 933–61). Hákon was fostered by King Æthelstan in England, hence the epithet *Aðalsteinsfóstri*, and he was educated at the abbey of Glastonbury.[12] In *Hákonar saga góða*, Snorri states that 'Hákon konungr var vel kristinn, er hann kom i Nóreg [...] lét þá vígja kirkjur nǫkkurar ok setti þar presta til' (King Hákon was a good Christian when he came to Norway, [...] then had some churches consecrated and set priests in them).[13] Snorri also mentions three churches in Møre on the northwest coast of Norway, burned down in a rebellion in the 950s. Since the Middle Ages, the region of Møre has consisted of three regions: Sunnmøre, Romsdal, and Nordmøre, and Brit Solli has postulated that the three churches referred to by Snorri were built in each of the three regions. None of these churches are reliably identified, but remains of a tenth-century church are found on the island of Veøy (Møre og Romsdal), where the county church is still located today. The only trace of the church is a platform of hard-packed soil within an enclosure with graves dated to the tenth century. No traces of postholes were uncovered, but as Brit Solli has argued, the posts may have been placed on foundation stones, as in later stave churches.[14] From an English source, we also know that in the third quarter of the tenth century there was a Norwegian bishop with the name *Sigefridus norwegensis episcopus*.[15]

Another reference in *Heimskringla* to the patronage of a church before the year 1000 can be found in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*. According to Snorri, King Óláfr Tryggvasson (r. 995–1000) arrived at the island of Moster in 995, had Mass sung in a tent, and later a church was built at the same place.[16] Nineteenth-

[12] Kolsrud, *Den norske kirkes erkebiskoper*, pp. 189–90; Birkeli, *Tolv vintrer*, pp. 69–72; Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia*, p. 102.

[13] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Hákonar saga Góða*, 13, pp. 78–79; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 529.

[14] Solli, *Narratives of Veøy*, p. 187.

[15] Sigefridus is mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon list of Glastonbury monks who later became bishops. Fridtjof Birkeli has convincingly argued that he lived at the time of King Edgar (r. 959–75) and that he was probably one of King Hákon's bishops. William of Malmesbury, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, ed. by Scott, p. 67; Birkeli, *Tolv vintrer hadde kristendommen vært i Norge*, pp. 69–72.

[16] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, 47, p. 139.

century historians identified the present church at Moster as this early church, but the Romanesque stone church of Moster is, however, now dated to the first half of the twelfth century, which suggests that the earliest church might have been a wooden structure.[17]

In 1023/4, in the reign of King Óláfr Haraldsson (r. 1015–28/30), an important meeting took place at Moster where Christianity was officially introduced into Norway by law. The parts of the law concerning Christianity were most likely written by Bishop Grimkell, one of the four bishops King Óláfr had brought from England. The new laws introduced such concepts as *county* and *hundred* churches (*fylkiskirkja* and *heraðskirkja*) and prescribed that churches had to be built in every county.[18] None of these churches have survived, but several traces of early wooden churches have been found in archaeological excavations on the relevant sites during recent years.[19]

Helgisaga Óláfs konungs Haraldssonar informs us that King Óláfr strengthened the town of Niðarós, built a church there, and donated much land. The saga also claims that the king had churches built in every county and assured them good prebends.[20] It is unlikely that King Óláfr managed to build churches in every county throughout the country, but a few of these churches are mentioned by other sources, such as the church of St Mary in the medieval town of Borg (Sarpsborg). In *Óláfs saga Helga*, Snorri reports that King Óláfr built a large stronghold of earth in Borg and within the stronghold he built a royal residence and the church of St Mary.[21] All the churches built by King Óláfr Haraldsson were most probably made of wood, but the royal chapel of St Mary at Borg is a possible candidate for being the earliest stone church in Norway. This is indicated by a brief mention in *Sverris saga*, where in a dream Sverrir entered St Mary's for the service. As he was at prayers in the church, there appeared to him a man who came and took him by the hand, and conducted him into a chapel that lay north of the choir door.[22] If one can trust this brief description, the church had a nave, a chancel with altar niches or an apse, and a chancel door in the north wall. This may indicate that it was a stone church, but

[17] Ekroll, *Moster: Trygg hamn i 1000 år*, pp. 14–18.

[18] *Norges gamle Love indtil 1387*, I, 10.

[19] See Solli, *Narratives of Veøy*; Reitan, 'Faret i Skien'.

[20] *Olafs saga hins helga*, ed. by Johnsen, 45, p. 43. See also Andersen, *Samlingen av Norge og kristningen av landet*, pp. 320–21.

[21] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Óláfs saga Helga*, 61, p. 220.

[22] *Det Arnamagnæanske Haandskrift 8lA fol.*, ed. by Kjær and Holm-Olsen, p. 11.

it could also have been rebuilt in stone sometime in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. The church is mentioned under the year 1204 in *Bǫglunga sǫgur*,[23] but it is not listed in Bishop Eystein's cadastre (1379), and has since disappeared without trace.[24] The first stone church in Scandinavia which we can date with certainty was built at about the same date at the site of the present Roskilde Cathedral in Denmark. According to the Danish archaeologist Olaf Olsen, the church had royal patronage and was built in 1027 by Estrid, sister of King Cnut the Great (r. 1018–35). Excavations at the stone church originally dedicated to St Clement in Roskilde (now St Jørgensbjerg) indicate a similarly early date.[25]

The earliest literary reference to a building in stone in Norway is found in *Heimskringla*, where Snorri states that King Magnús Haraldsson *góði* (r. 1035–47) had a royal residence erected in Trondheim, and 'lét ok efna þar í garðinum at gera sér steinhǫll' (and he also had a stone hall built by the king's residence).[26] If one can rely on Snorri's account, it is interesting that this was a secular hall in the royal residence. According to Snorri, King Magnús also built the church of St Óláfr above the town of Trondheim (i.e., higher up the river), at the spot where the body of King Óláfr was set down the first night after the body was moved to Trondheim.[27] King Magnús fell ill and died in Denmark in 1047 and his body was moved north to Trondheim where he was buried in the church of St Clement, together with his father, St Óláfr.[28] King Magnús's unfinished stone hall was then completed by King Haraldr *harðráði* (r. 1045–66) and, according to his saga, it was consecrated as a church and dedicated to St Gregory.[29]

The second stone church in Trondheim referred to in the narrative sources is Old St Mary, built by King Haraldr *harðráði* and finished by the 1050s. It is first mentioned in the Latin *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium*, most probably written in Trondheim in the 1170s. Here it is stated that 'Haraldr

[23] *Det Arnamagnæanske Haandskrift 8lA fol.*, ed. by Kjær and Holm-Olsen, p. 280.

[24] Christie, *Østfold*, II, 213.

[25] Olsen, 'Christianity and Churches', pp. 157–58.

[26] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 529.

[27] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471.

[28] The tomb of Magnús *góði* was moved to Christ Church, erected by King Óláfr *kyrri* before 1093. See Nicolaysen, *Om de kongelige begravelser i Norge*, p. 2.

[29] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471.

had built a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which may be seen to this day'.[30] This information is also supported by Snorri, who states that 'Haraldr konungr lét reisa af grundvelli Máriukirkju uppi á melinum, nær þvi er heilagr dómr konungsins lá i jǫrðu inn fyrsta vetr eptir fall hans' (he began to build St Mary's Church up on the sandhill near the place where the king's holy remains had lain in the earth the first year after his death).[31] Snorri also informs us that the church was a 'mikit musteri ok gǫrt sterkliga at líminu, svá at varla fekk brotit, þá er Eysteinn erkibyskup lét ofan taka' (a great minster and was built so strongly with cement that it could scarcely be broken up when Archbishop Eystein had it taken down).[32]

After the death of Haraldr *harðráði* at Stamford Bridge in 1066, his two sons Magnús and Óláfr shared the kingdom until Magnús died in 1069. When Óláfr became sole king in 1069, Norway entered a long period of stability, and Óláfr received the epithet *kyrri* (peaceful). Shortly after his return from England in 1067, Óláfr *kyrri* turned Selja into the residence of a bishop, Bernhard the Saxon (*Bjarnhardr hinn saxlenzki*).[33] The ruined cathedral church at Selja has recently been dated to the end of King Óláfr's reign (*c*. 1090), which makes it another of the oldest stone buildings in Norway.[34] Snorri also states that, in Bergen, King Óláfr 'lét reisa þar af grundvelli Kristskirkju' (laid the foundation of Christ Church).[35] Snorri added that it was 'ina miklu steinkirkju' (the great stone church).[36] In Trondheim, King Óláfr built a new and extensive cathedral close to his father's church of St Mary. Theodoricus Monachus informs us that 'he built a basilica in honour of the Holy Trinity in the metropolitan city of

[30] Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium*, trans. by David and Ian McDougall, 29, p. 46.

[31] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 529.

[32] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 529.

[33] Helle, *Kongssete og kjøpstad*, p. 92.

[34] Nybø, 'Albanuskirken på Selja: nye resultater – nye perspektiver', p. 124.

[35] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Olafs saga kyrra*, 2, p. 514; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 576.

[36] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Olafs saga kyrra*, 2, p. 514; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, trans. by Monsen, p. 576. The cathedral was demolished in the sixteenth century and all that remains of the church is little more than its location and the outlines of its plan.

Niðaróss, where the body of the blessed martyr Óláfr now rests'.[37] Theodoricus adds that King Óláfr *kyrri* 'is said to have been buried in the aforementioned church of Niðaróss which he himself had built'.[38] *Ágrip* agrees that the cathedral was built of stone and that King Óláfr saw to its completion before he died: 'Hann gerði upp steinkirkju at byskupsstólinum í Niðarósi yfir líkam ens helga Óláfs frænda síns, ok bjó hana til lykða' (At the bishop's seat in Niðaróss he erected a stone church over the body of his uncle St Óláfr and saw to its completion).[39] After his death, he was 'jarðaðr í kirkju Þeiri er hann hafði látit gera' (buried in the church he had had built).[40] During excavations in the 1860s, the foundations of the church were found in a well-preserved state beneath the present cathedral.[41]

After the death of King Óláfr *kyrri* in 1093, Hákon *Þórisfóstri* ruled Norway together with his cousin Magnús berfœttr. Hákon, the son of King Magnús *góði* and foster-son of Steigar-Þórir, died suddenly only a year later and was then buried in the new cathedral.[42] The translation of the shrine of St Óláfr to the new cathedral in the 1080s and the burials of the two kings, Óláfr *kyrri* (1093) and Hákon *Þórisfóstri* (1094), indicates that the cathedral of Trondheim — following European models — was now in use as a royal pantheon for the Norwegian kings.

The Norwegian narrative sources before 1100 are mainly concerned with secular and royal patronage, but it is reasonable to assume that there were important patrons within the Church, such as Sigefridus in the mid-tenth century or Grimkell in the early eleventh century.[43] The Old Norse sources are silent about this, but again, one should keep in mind that the literary nature of the sources discussed may have conditioned their content: to build a church is certainly something a Christian king was expected to do in the European liter-

[37] Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium*, trans. by David and Ian McDougall, 29, p. 46.

[38] Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium*, trans. by David and Ian McDougall, 29, p. 47.

[39] *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasǫgum*, ed. and trans. by Driscoll, 44, pp. 60–61.

[40] *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasǫgum*, ed. and trans. by Driscoll, 45, pp. 60–61.

[41] Fischer, *Domkirken i Trondheim*, pp. 23–42.

[42] *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasǫgum*, ed. and trans. by Driscoll, 47, p. 65.

[43] According to Per Sveaas Andersen, twenty-eight bishops are known by name in Norway during the eleventh century. Of these, only three or four were Norwegians; the others were foreigners: eleven or twelve Englishmen, seven or eight Germans, an Irishman, a Dane, and one Icelander. See Andersen, *Samlingen av Norge og kristningen av landet*, p. 333.

Figure 4.2. St Peter, Vågå (Oppland). Blind arcade on the west facade, reused from previous stave church. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

ary tradition. The many references to kings building churches in the kings' sagas could of course have been borrowed, 'translated' by twelfth- and thirteenth-century Christian authors in the literary creation of their own forefathers. But because other independent sources such as the Latin texts of the twelfth century and archaeological finds corroborate the information in the literary sources, it certainly seems reasonable to assume that building churches was one of the 'languages' the Norwegian kings of the eleventh century mastered and used in order to communicate their political ambitions to competitors, both secular and from within the Church itself.

The Sunken Star

We have established that church-building in stone became part of the intellectual repertoire of the Norwegian kings in the eleventh century; let us now look

Figure 4.3. The castle at Caen. Voussoirs and other stones with sunken stars from William the Conqueror's palace built in the 1060s. Reused in the portal of the twelfth-century *Salle de l'Échiquier* within the castle. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

at the rhetoric of this language. As with literary translations, church-building in stone was a 'translated' rhetoric which introduced something new. In the following, I will focus on one specific architectural ornament, the sunken star. Scandinavian scholars have previously regarded this motif as a minor feature without significance, but I believe that this decorative architectural ornament is one important aspect of the early churches which can be seen as contributing to their rhetoric.

The sunken star is an engraved design distinguished by smooth single facets, clean grooves, and sharp ridges. The sunken star has been known in Europe since antiquity, but in Scandinavia it appears to have been unknown until the last decades of the eleventh century. A design with similar appearance is termed *chip-carving* when applied in wood (French: *encoche*, German: *Kerbschnitt*, Norwegian: *karveskurd*). The Norwegian art historian Erla B. Hohler states that in woodcarving of the Viking Age, 'chip-carving, which became so impor-

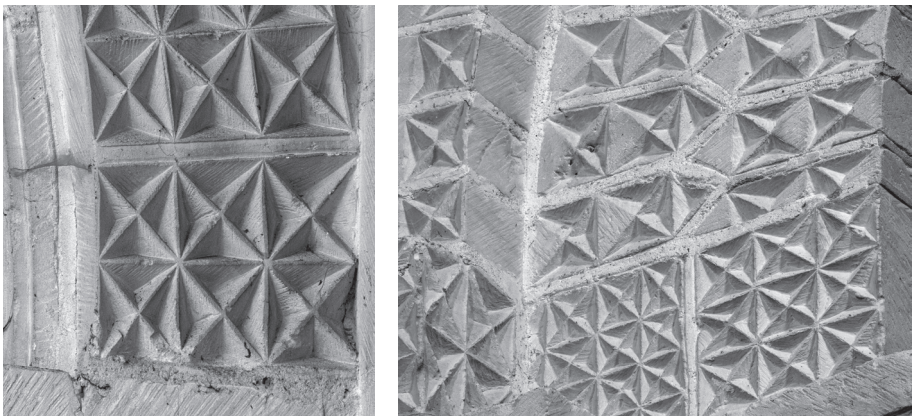

Figure 4.4. La Trinité, Caen. Detail of voussoirs in the tower arch, 1060s. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

tant in all countries in the Late Middle Ages, is totally absent'.[44] The earliest known occurrence of the sunken star in wood in Scandinavia is the reused wall arcade at Vågå (Fig. 4.2) dated to the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries.

There is evidence to suggest that the sunken star was a novelty in Norway in the late eleventh century, and that there were no Scandinavian predecessors in wood prior to the use of this motif in Romanesque architectural sculpture.

Maylis Baylé has shown that the sunken star as an architectural decorative feature in Romanesque art first appeared in Caen in Normandy in the 1060s: Norman monuments of the previous decades — Bayeux, Rouen, and Jumièges — all have a different vocabulary of architectural decoration.[45] Rouen had been the capital of Normandy until William the Conqueror established the castle at Caen in the 1060s. The legendary background to the monuments in Caen is that William wanted to marry Matilda of Flanders, but Pope Leo IX forbade the union on unknown grounds, possibly of consanguinity. William and Matilda married in 1050/1, and in 1059 Pope Nicholas II retrospectively approved the marriage on condition that the couple founded two monasteries. Queen Matilda founded La Trinité (Abbaye-aux-Dames), which was dedicated in June 1066, and King William Saint-Étienne (Abbaye-aux-Hommes), dedicated in 1077.[46]

[44] Hohler, 'Wood-Carving', p. 206.

[45] Baylé, *La Trinité de Caen*, pp. 105–10; Baylé, *Les origines et les premiers développments*, p. 102.

[46] van Houts, 'Matilda (d. 1083)'.

Figure 4.5. La Trinité, Caen. Volute capital with sunken stars, 1060s. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

Together with the castle at Caen, the two monastic churches in Caen are the main exponents of this new architectural style (Figs 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5).[47]

The sunken star is unknown in Anglo-Saxon art and appears in England only after the Norman Conquest. By the 1070s, we find it in early Norman monuments connected with King William: St John's Chapel in the Tower of London and the Norman chapel in Durham Castle (Fig. 4.6).[48]

In Chepstow Castle (Monmouthshire), the main portal is decorated in the Norman geometric style, and the tympanum and the voussoirs consist entirely of a pattern made by the sunken star (Fig. 4.7). Chepstow, which is situated on the English–Welsh border, is one of the oldest surviving Norman castles in Britain, and was probably begun in 1067 by William FitzOsbern, a Norman lord and close ally of King William. While other Anglo-Norman ornaments like the chevron continued in their popularity, the sunken star went out of use by the second quarter of the twelfth century. By the mid-twelfth century, the

[47] Baylé, *Les origines et les premiers dévelopments*, pp. 102–05.

[48] Turner, 'The Norman Great Tower', pp. 37–38; Wood, 'The Norman Chapel of Durham Castle', p. 17.

Figure 4.6. Norman chapel, Durham Castle (County Durham). Capitals decorated with sunken stars in the 1070s, only a decade after La Trinité in Caen. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

portal of Chepstow Castle was remodelled and the decorations were covered with mortar and plaster. The carvings had been hidden for centuries but were in a well-preserved state when the portal was restored in 1956.[49]

The subject seems to be little discussed, not only in Norway, but also internationally. The two comprehensive studies of Norman architecture of the nineteenth century — John Sell Cotman's *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy* (1822) and Victor Ruprich-Robert's *L'architecture normande aux XIe et XIIe siècles en Normandie et en Angleterre* (1884/89) — are still relevant overviews. The main work on the *gèométrisme normand* is Geneviève L. Micheli's doctoral thesis 'Le Décor Géomêtrique dans la sculpture de L'Aisne et de L'Oise au XIe Siècle: Recherches sur Morienval et son groupe' (1939). A generation later, Maylis Baylé discussed the geometric style of the Normans in her monograph

[49] Rainsbury and Turner, 'The Victorian Period and the 20th Century', pp. 266–67.

Figure 4.7. Chepstow Castle (Monmouthshire). Tympanum and voussoirs with sunken stars on the main portal to the castle, dated 1067– *c.* 1090. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

on *La Trinité de Caen* (1979), and she has also dealt with the subject in several works on Norman architecture.[50] Baylé suggests a Scandinavian origin for the sunken star, but she is not aware that the motif was not found in Scandinavian art before it appeared in Normandy.

Medieval sculpture was usually painted in bright colours or gilded, and this applies to both stone and wood. It is unknown to what extent polychromy was added to Norman architectural sculpture, but the use of strong colours would have given the architectural sculpture a visual appearance similar to ornamental borders found in contemporary manuscripts. Another visual parallel could be the inlaid floors of the thirteenth century with polychrome geometric ornament, often associated with Italian Cosmatesque workshops.[51]

In Norway, more than a dozen Romanesque churches are known to have had the sunken star as part of their architectural decoration. The ornament is distinctive and easily recognizable and is also easy to copy. It is therefore interesting that the application of the sunken star does not occur outside the

[50] *L'Architecture normande au Moyen Age*, ed. by Baylé.

[51] Alvarez, *Cosmatesque Ornament*.

Figure 4.8. St Nicholas, Bokenäs (Bohuslän). Stones with sunken stars reused in the south chancel door. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

Anglo-Norman sphere of influence. In Scandinavia, only Broddetorps kyrka (Västergötland), close to the medieval city of Skara, is known to include the sunken star as part of the architectural decoration outside the medieval borders of Norway.[52]

Scandinavian scholars do not agree on the origin of the motif or the dating of the Norwegian monuments. The Swedish antiquarian Gustaf Brusewitz was the first to identify the motif in his description of the former Norwegian churches in Elfarsýsla (1864), the southern part of the medieval Norwegian province Bohuslän (Old Norse: *Ranafylke*).[53] Brusewitz described the sunken

[52] Only one Scandinavian baptismal font with the sunken star is known outside the medieval boundaries of Norway; in *Fänneslunda* (Västergötland). Pettersson, 'Stjärnformiga karvsnittsornament'; Aasma, *Dragsmarks och Bokenäs kyrkor*, p. 47; Solhaug, *Middelalderens døpefonter i Norge*, I, 119.

[53] Bohuslän belonged to Norway until the Treaty of Roskilde in 1658.

Figure 4.9. St Óláfr, Trondheim. Plinth decorated with sunken stars on the foundations of the ruined church. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. Plaster cast in NTNU University Museum. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

star as a checkered (*rutformigt*) ornament and reproduced drawings of the chancel door of St Nicholas, Bokenäs (Bohuslän) (Fig. 4.8) and a decorated stone from the church in Tegneby (Bohuslän).[54]

In the years from 1885 to 1889, a ruin of a church in Trondheim was excavated and the well-preserved plinth *in situ* on the north side of the choir was discovered to be decorated with the sunken star (Fig. 4.9). The results of the excavation were published in 1890 by the archaeologist Otto Krefting, who described the motif as a 'star-moulding' (*stjernelist*).[55] Because of similarities in the foundations with the cathedral built by Óláfr *kyrri* in the 1080s, scholars seem to agree that the excavated ruin is related to the legendary church of St Óláfr, described by Snorri in *Heimskringla*.[56]

The earliest and still most comprehensive discussion on the sunken star in Scandinavia appears in an article on early Norwegian church architecture by the architect Herman Major Schirmer (1903).[57] With support from John Sell Cotman's *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, Schirmer described the motif as 'sunken stars' (*forsænkede stjerner*), and stated that the motif belonged to Norman art from its earliest stages. His main argument was the close similarity to the crossing arches in La Trinité at Caen, as published by Cotman (Fig. 4.10).[58]

[54] Brusewitz, *Elfsyssel*, pp. 272–73, 313–14.

[55] Krefting, 'Undersøgelser i Trondhjem', p. 1.

[56] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, 38, p. 471. Lunde, *Trondheims fortid i bygrunnen*; Ekroll, *The Archbishop's Palace Museum*.

[57] Schirmer, 'Mer om vore ældste kirkebygninger'.

[58] Schirmer, 'Mer om vore ældste kirkebygninger', p. 11. See Cotman, *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, I, pls 28 and 30.

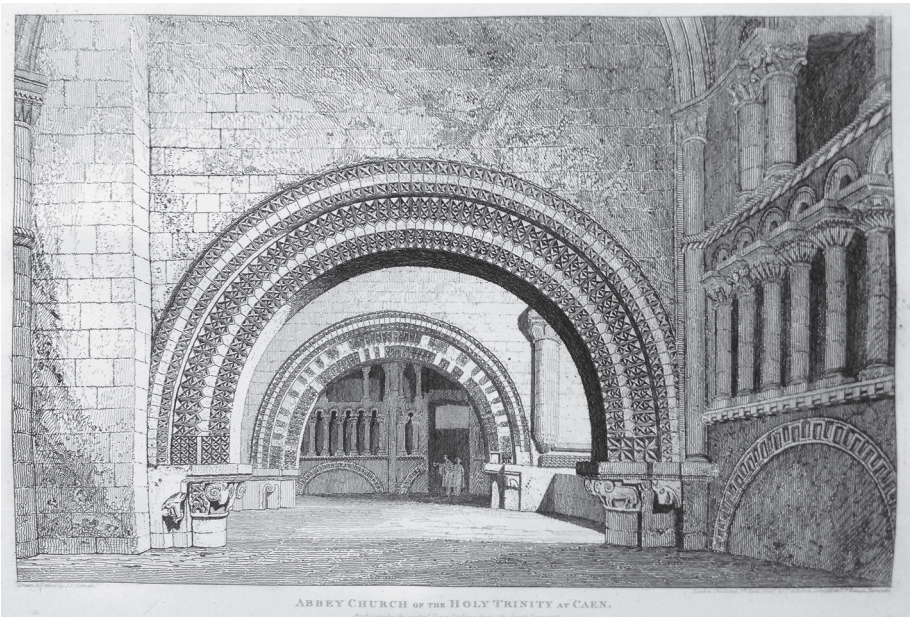

Figure 4.10. La Trinité, Caen. Arches with sunken stars under the central tower, before restoration. 1060s. After Cotman, *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, pl. 28 (1822).

Schirmer had searched in vain for models in older Irish or Anglo-Saxon art, but he found a possible prototype in two altars dating from Roman Britain.[59] As Schirmer correctly observed, the architectural application of the ornament had its peak in the second half of the eleventh century, and by the middle of the twelfth century the sunken star had fallen out of favour, being superseded by other Norman ornaments such as the chevron.[60] Schirmer discussed the use of the motif in the church of St Óláfr, and he was the first to bring the blind wall arcade from the old stave church of St Peter in Vågå into the discussion. Schirmer was also aware that the sunken star had been used as a decorative pattern on baptismal fonts in soapstone in the Gudbrandsdalen valley, such as in the Ringebu font.[61]

[59] The two altars with the sunken star were found in Lanchester in 1893 and in Greatchester in Cumberland in 1897. Schirmer, 'Mer om vore ældste kirkebygninger', p. 13.

[60] Schirmer, 'Mer om vore ældste kirkebygninger', p. 12.

[61] Schirmer, 'Mer om vore ældste kirkebygninger', p. 14. See also Solhaug, *Middelalderens døpefonter i Norge*.

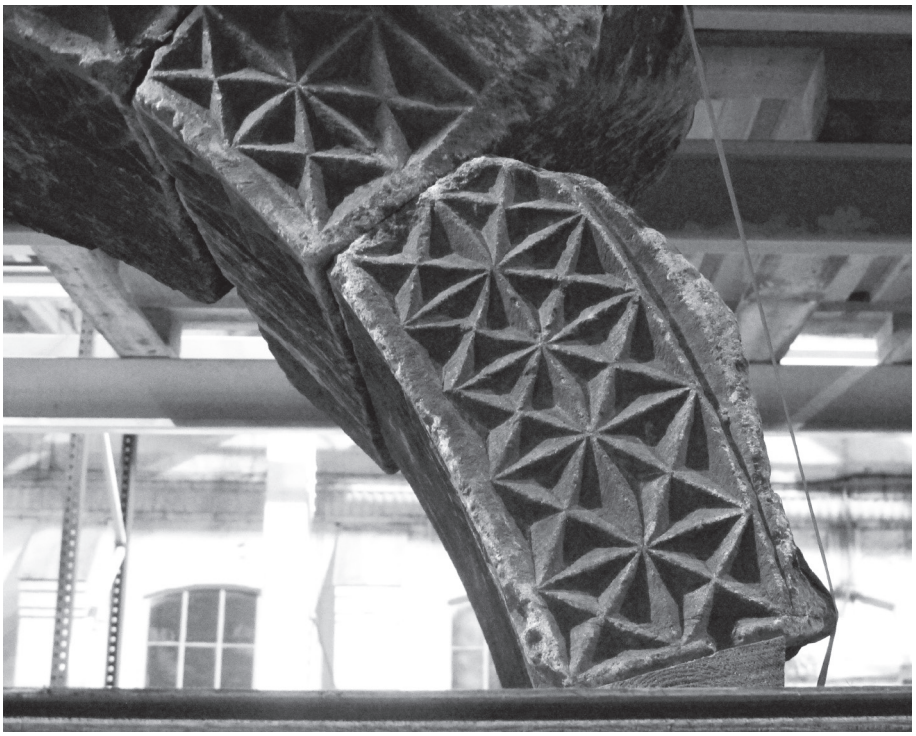

Figure 4.11. St Mary, Vestby (Akershus). Fragments from chancel arch. Late eleventh century? The style of the carving is close to the tower arch of La Trinité in Caen. Museum of Cultural History, Oslo, inv. C17798. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

In 1955, the Swedish priest and ethnologist Johan Pettersson wrote an article which dealt exclusively with the motif in Scandinavia.[62] His article relied heavily on the work by Schirmer, but Pettersson could add several other churches, such as Gamla Lödöse and Broddetorp (both in Västergötland), St Mary at Vestby (Akershus) (Fig. 4.11), Stavanger Cathedral (Rogaland), St Mary in Bergen (Hordaland), Kinn (Sogn og Fjordane), Værnes and Nærøy (Nord-Trøndelag) (Fig. 4.12), Alstahaug (Nordland) (Fig. 4.13), and St Cnut at Tilrem (Fig. 4.14).[63]

Concerning the church of St Cnut at Tilrem (Fig. 4.14), Pettersson referred to an interesting discussion on the patronage. Einar Høvding, who had led the excavations at Tilrem in the 1930s, believed that the church had been built in

[62] Pettersson, 'Stjärnformiga karvsnittsornament i sten'.

[63] Pettersson, 'Stjärnformiga karvsnittsornament i sten', pp. 71–72.

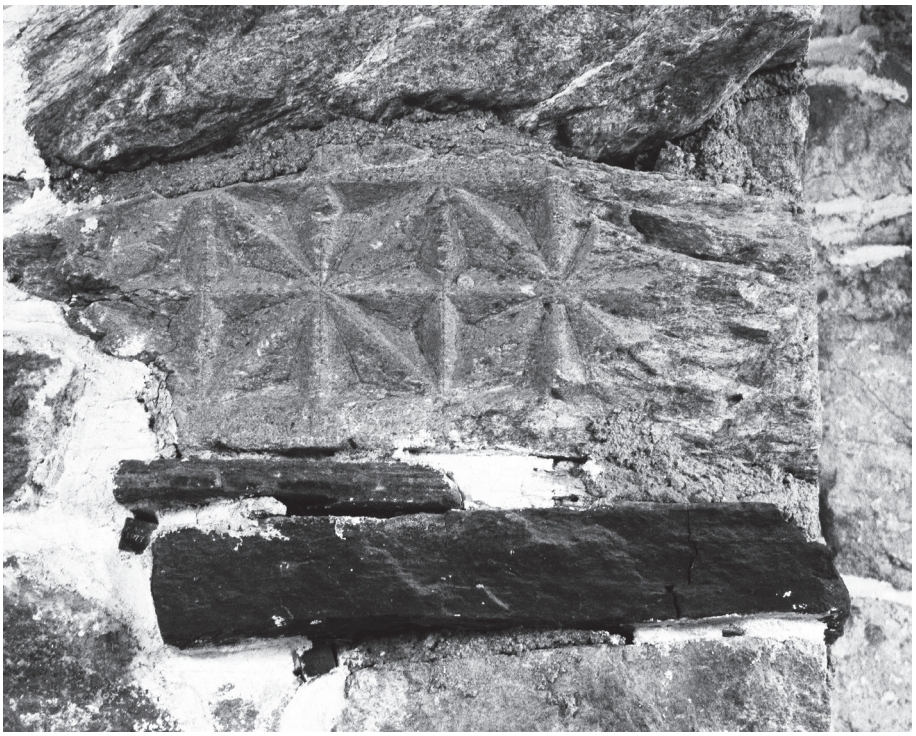

Figure 4.12. Nærøy (Nord-Trøndelag). Fragment from previous church, reused in the choir wall. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

the late eleventh century by Ketill *krok*. According to *Morkinskinna*, the two brothers Ketill and Skúli sought refuge in Norway after the Battle of Hastings in 1066, and they were presented as the sons of Earl Tostig Godwinson, King Óláfr *kyrri's* foster-father.[64] For the church of St Nicholas at Bokenäs, Pettersson suggested a date in the second half of the eleventh century.[65] Pettersson was wrong in his conclusions when he assumed that the origin of the ornament was due to Western influence from Anglo-Saxon England and early art from Ireland.[66] His article is essentially a presentation of the material; however, it is still a standard reference concerning the architectural use of the sunken star in Scandinavia.

[64] *Morkinskinna*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 283. Skúli *kongsfostre* later became one of the leading men in King Óláfr's court.

[65] Pettersson, 'Stjärnformiga karvsnittsornament i sten', p. 80.

[66] Pettersson, 'Stjärnformiga karvsnittsornament i sten', p. 80.

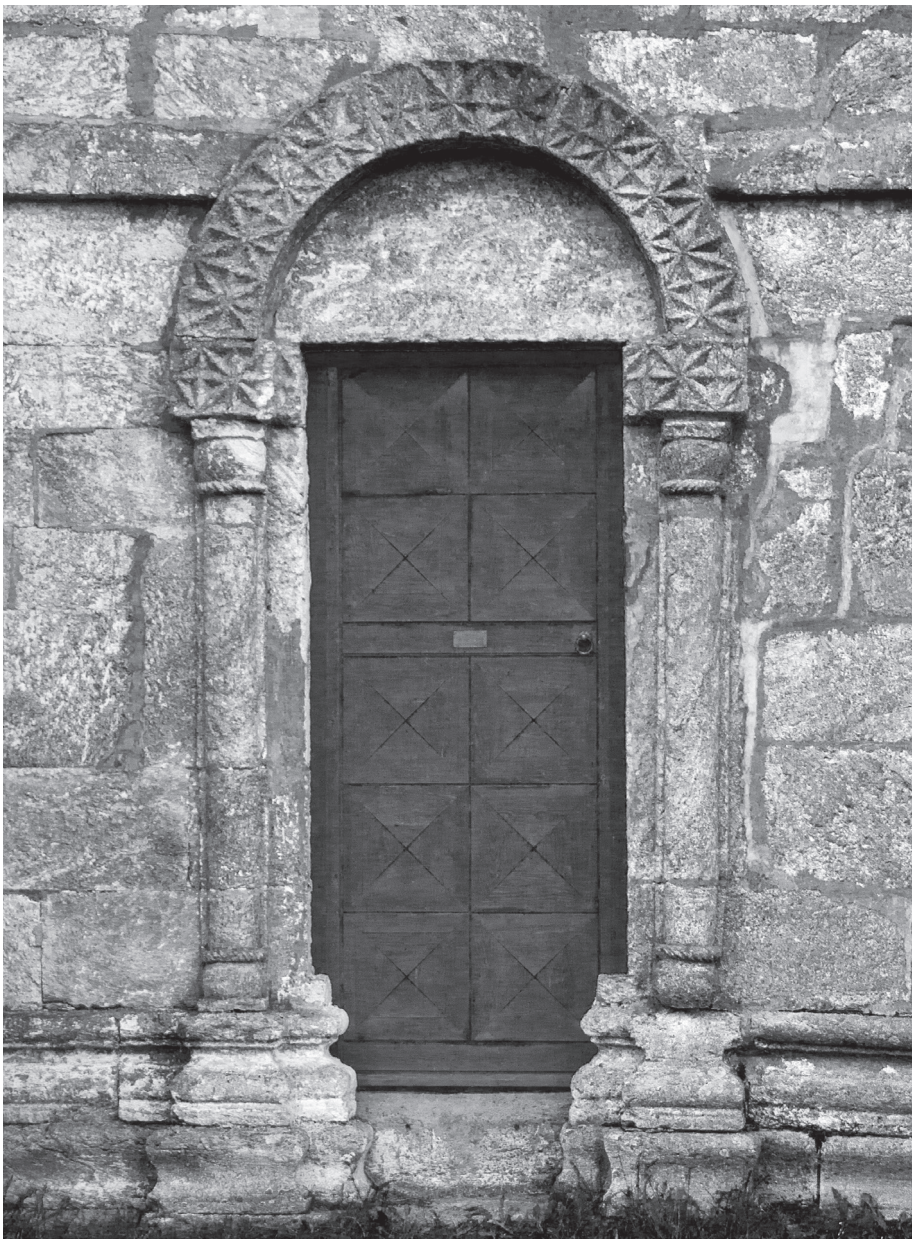

Figure 4.13. The church of Alstahaug (Nordland). South chancel door. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. The dedication of the church is unknown. The preserved portal is a solitary exception, as almost all the early churches decorated with sunken stars are ruined or in a fragmentary state. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

Figure 4.14. St Cnut at Tilrem, Brønnøy (Nordland). Fragment from portal or chancel arch. Late eleventh or early twelfth centuries. The church and the estate feature several times in Old Norse narrative texts, either as 'the church of St Cnut in Harm' or *Tjalgarheim*. The ruin was excavated in the 1930s, and the archaeological finds are now in Trondheim, NTNU University Museum, inv. T. 20243. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

The most remarkable collection of early Romanesque architectural sculpture in Norway was found reused in the upper part of the tower of Trondheim Cathedral in the 1880s. The original context is not known, and scholars have tentatively attributed the stones to most of the churches in Trondheim that are known from literary sources.[67] Several stones are decorated with the sunken star, but since the 1880s these fragments have been stored in the *lapidary* of the cathedral, largely inaccessible to scholars (Figs 4.15 and 4.16). The research has focused on the fourteen fragments with figurative sculpture exhibited in the Archbishop's Palace Museum.[68] Several of these have carvings of exceptional quality, and the fragmentary material has been discussed by numerous Norwegian scholars since the publication by Otto Krefting in 1890.[69]

[67] Lunde, *Trondheims fortid i bygrunnen*; Ekroll, *Med kleber og kalk*.

[68] Ekroll, *The Archbishop's Palace Museum*, cat. nos 1–8, 11–14, 25, and 28.

[69] The most important contributions to the discussion of the fragments are Bugge, 'Norge'; Holmqvist, 'Sigtunamästaren och hans krets'; Fischer, 'Tyldalstolen'; Fischer 'Tidlig-romanske stenfunn'; Fischer, *Domkirken i Trondheim*; Blindheim, *Norwegian Romanesque Decorative Sculpture*; Andersson, *The Art of Scandinavia*; Lidén, 'Domkirken i Bergen'; Hohler, 'The Capitals of Urnes Church'; Lidén, 'Middelalderens steinarkitektur i Norge'; Andersen, 'Olav Kyrres bispekirke i Trondheim i det 11. århundre'; Andersen, *Olav Kyrres Kristkirke i lys av liturgy og bibeltolkning*; Harket, 'Romanske dekorfragmenter fra domkirkens steinsamling i Trondheim'; Ekroll, *The Archbishop's Palace Museum*; Hohler, *Norwegian Stave Church Sculpture*.

Figure 4.15. Capital with sunken stars and volutes, possibly from the church of St Nicholas in the Royal Palace, built by King Eysteinn (r. 1103–23). The cable ring-moulding is also a Norman feature, compare with the capital in Durham Castle. Archaeological find, exhibited in the Archbishop's Palace Museum in Trondheim, cat. no. 6. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

Dorothea Fischer argued convincingly that most of the stones came from the palatine chapel of St Nicholas in the royal residence (*konungsgarði*) in Trondheim, close to the church of St Mary.[70] According to Snorri Sturluson, St Nicholas was built by King Eysteinn (r. 1103–23) when his brother King Sigurðr (r. 1103–30) went to Jerusalem between 1107 and 1110.[71] Later, Dorothea Fischer abandoned this theory in favour of another theory proposed by her husband Gerhard Fischer, who argued that the majority of the stones came from the old cathedral built by King Óláfr *kyrri* in the late eleventh century.[72] Martin Blindheim emphasized the relationship with Anglo-Norman art and dated most of the stones on stylistic grounds to *c.* 1090–1120, a date which

[70] Fischer, 'Tyldalstolen'.

[71] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Magnússona saga*, 14, p. 540.

[72] Fischer, 'Tidlig-romanske stenfunn', pp. 549–64.

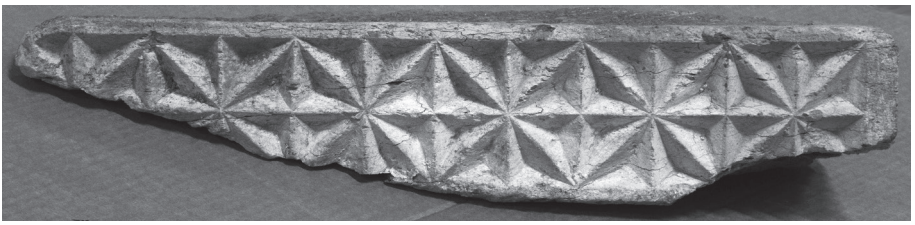

Figure 4.16. Fragment of a decorated cornice which belongs to the same group of fragments as the capital in Fig. 4.8. Archaeological find, now in *lapidarium* of the Restoration Workshop of Trondheim Cathedral. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

coincides with the reigns of Magnús *berfœttr* (1093–1103) and his three sons, Sigurðr, Magnús, and Óláfr (1103–30).[73]

The high quality of the stonework and the small scale of the capitals are, in my view, indications that most of them belong to the palatine church of St Nicholas. Snorri rarely gives descriptions of architecture, but regarding the church of St Nicholas he states that: 'var þat hús allmjǫk vandat at skurðum ok allri smíð' (this building was very carefully finished with carvings and all kinds of work).[74] Snorri's information on both the church and the royal residence may be based on a personal observation during his visit to Trondheim 1218/20. The church is mentioned at least three times in *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, but it seems to have been demolished in the fourteenth century and the site has never been subject to archaeological excavations.[75] Both Martin Blindheim and the Swedish art historian Aron Andersson accepted Dorothea Fischer's theory that the stones were related to St Nicholas, but they did not comment on the fragments decorated with the sunken star.[76]

[73] Blindheim, *Norwegian Romanesque Sculpture*, pls 1–7.

[74] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, *Magnússona saga*, 14, p. 540.

[75] *Det Arnamagnæanske Haandskrift 81A fol.*, ed. by Kjær and Holm-Olsen, pp. 311, 539, 579.

[76] 'According to one most attractive theory, the oldest fragments came from the palace which King Eystein (1103–23) built at Trondheim some fifty yards to the south-east of the cathedral. And indeed, the historian Snorre praises the rich sculptural decoration of the palace chapel dedicated to St Nicholas. [...] The sculptor who carved this decoration (clearly intended for door and window recesses) was inspired by the Anglo-Norman art contemporary with Eystein's reign or slightly earlier. [...] We can easily envisage the entrancing effect produced by these sculptures which adorned the narrow openings in the smooth walls of a tiny Palatine chapel with gemlike richness.' Andersson, *The Art of Scandinavia*, II, 150.

Figure 4.17.
Chapel of St John, Trondheim Cathedral. Scalloped capital with sunken stars. Mid-twelfth century. Photo Kjartan Hauglid.

Peter Anker barely mentioned the sunken star in his survey of Norwegian Romanesque architectural sculpture (1981), but he correctly noted that the sunken star was typical of Anglo-Norman architecture from the 1070s onwards, but lost its relevance in England before 1120.[77] Anker did not consider the consequences of his own statement in his dating of Norwegian Romanesque architectural sculpture, which, almost without exception, he believed to have been produced after the 1120s. The most recent discussion on this topic in Scandinavian literature is Mona Solhaug's doctoral thesis on medieval Norwegian baptismal fonts (2001). Solhaug proposes that the motif was introduced into Norway along with other Anglo-Norman features, and that the workshop in Trondheim was the nucleus of this new architectural style.[78]

[77] Anker, 'Høymiddelalderens skulptur', p. 138.

[78] Solhaug, *Middelalderens døpefonter i Norge*, pp. 118–19 and Table 7. During the twelfth century this motif also became a popular decorative element on Norwegian baptismal

This brings the discussion around to the idea of 'centre and periphery' — that it was the cathedral towns which attracted new artistic impulses. If we look at the fragments from the early church of St Mary in Vestby (Akershus) (Fig. 4.11), the architectural style and quality of these ornaments are in some respects closer to the Norman prototypes as found at Caen (Fig. 4.3), than to the fragments in Trondheim.[79] Unfortunately the written sources are completely silent about the patronage of many of these early churches, and a future examination of the individual churches and their context in the eleventh century is necessary in order to test this hypothesis. Four of the churches discussed in this article — Bokenäs, Vågå, Nærøy, and Tilrem — are examples of places which also are known as early centres of power.

The sunken star was still in use in Norway into the 1130s and 1140s, but then in a simplified form, and always secondary to other architectural forms, such as the chevron or the scalloped capital. This is the case in the cathedral at Trondheim (Fig. 4.17), the cathedral at Stavanger, St Mary in Bergen, and the church at Værnes, monuments that can safely be dated to within the second quarter of the twelfth century.[80]

Summary and conclusion

Why Norway is the only area outside Normandy or Anglo-Norman England where the sunken star is used as an architectural decorative feature in Romanesque sculpture is not easy to explain. A clue may be that the Norwegian royal family felt a kinship to the Normans: during the Middle Ages, there was a widespread belief that the Norman ducal family had Norwegian ancestors. The earliest surviving source for this claim is a Latin treatise known as *The Laws of Edward the Confessor* (*Leges Edwardi Confessoris*), written in England in the 1130s. The anonymous author states that the ancestors of 'all the barons of Normandy came from Norway'.[81] Some years later, in *Historia Norvegiae*, a

fonts, of which sixteen are preserved. The fonts are: Dovre, Fåberg, Garmo, Hedalen, Hegge, Heidal, Hobøl, Hove, Kvam, Listad, Reinli, Resteröd, Ringebu, Røn, Sandbu, Venabygd, Østre Gausdal. See Solhaug, *Middelalderens døpefonter i Norge*, I, Table 7. The font from Resteröd is now in Göteborg Museum, inv. G.M. 303.

[79] Christie, *Akershus*, I, 56.

[80] Lidén, 'Middelalderens steinarkitektur i Norge'; Ekroll, *Med kleber og kalk*; Harket, 'Romanske dekorfragmenter'; Brendalsmo, *Kirkebygg og kirkebyggere*.

[81] *Leges Edwardi Confessoris*, ed. and trans. by O'Brien, p. 192.

short Latin history of Norway, the anonymous author outlines the genealogy of the counts of Normandy from the Norwegian Earl Rǫgnvaldr and his son Gǫngu-Hrólfr to King Henry I.[82] The view that Gǫngu-Hrólfr was the son of the Norwegian Earl Rǫgnvaldr from the county of Møre can also be found in Old Norse narrative texts like *Orkneyinga saga*, dating from the early thirteenth century.[83] The interest in the genealogy of the Normans in Old Norse literature suggests that the Norwegians supported the idea of a Norwegian origin for the dukes of Normandy. The notion of a close relationship between the Norwegian royal family and the dukes of Normandy is also indicated by Theodoricus Monachus and the anonymous author of *Passio Olavi*, who both relied on Guillaume de Jumièges and stated that St Ólafr was baptized in Rouen.[84]

Who had the decisive authority in medieval architecture is a question which has attracted much attention in the art historical literature. Art historians like Richard Krautheimer and Günter Bandmann have stressed the role of the patron in the production teams which stood behind early medieval church architecture.[85] Bandmann argued that architectural elements were often 'charged with historical meaning', and when Charlemagne took great care in reproducing the building types of earlier Roman rulers, his intention was 'to support his aspirations to the same rank and status'.[86] A similar argument can be claimed for the Norwegian patrons in their adaptation of the architectural rhetoric of the Norman ducal family.

I consider the introduction of 'le géométrisme Normand' and more specifically the sunken star into Norway as a deliberate choice by the Norwegian royal patrons. The very high quality of the stonework and the close similarity in style argue for a direct impulse from Normandy and Anglo-Norman England in the late eleventh century. The introduction of architecture in stone to Norway could have resulted in old forms in a new material, but instead it represented a definite breach with the old Scandinavian architectural ornamentation, which was largely based on the Germanic animal style with interlacing of animals'

[82] *Historia Norwegiae*, trans. by Kunin, p. 9.

[83] *Orkneyinga Saga*, ed. Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, 4. See also Dudo of St Quentin, *History of the Normans*, trans. by Christiansen, p. 187 n. 114, and Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity*, p. 27.

[84] Kraggerud, 'Hellig-Olavs dåp'.

[85] Bandmann, *Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning*, p. 17.

[86] Bandmann, *Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning*, pp. 39–48.

bodies and gripping beasts. The new architectural idiom represented completely different concepts, such as geometry, repetition, symmetry, and order.

Norwegian churches decorated with the sunken star are in many cases closely linked with the political centres. The introduction of a new architectural rhetoric testifies to an active intellectual process behind the development of the political and religious institutions. These were not just institutions where learning and intellectual or theological activities based on European models took place (as will be discussed in many of the articles in this volume that treat literary sources produced in such institutions); they themselves, with their translated and adapted stylistic rhetoric, are sites directly pointing to this dynamic dialogue. They incorporate the *translatio* programme in themselves and thus illustrate the intellectual processes that went hand in hand with political development.

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Situated Knowledge: Shaping Intellectual Identities in Iceland, *c.* 1180–1220

Bjørn Bandlien

At the end of the twelfth century, Icelandic teachers, students, and scribes were reading and utilizing many of the same textbooks, theological compilations, law collections, and grammars as elsewhere in Europe.[1] Some Icelanders studied abroad, in Paris, Herford, or Lincoln, and became part of European communities of learning.[2] Still, the Icelandic context of learning differed from the rest of Europe. Iceland was a rural community with no cities, and farms were important sites for teaching. Episcopal churches had close connections to chieftains. At least until the end of the twelfth century, many chieftains were ordained themselves. Recent studies suggest that the elite's connections to the Church made learning an important part of the social prestige of the Icelandic aristocracy.[3] Priests such as Sæmundr *fróði* Sigfússon (d. 1133) at Oddi, Teitr Ísleifsson (d. 1110) at Haukadalr, and Ari *fróði* Þorgilsson (d. 1148) were all ordained and chieftains, constituting what Peter Foote labelled a 'clerical gentry'.[4]

[1] Lehmann, *Skandinaviens Anteil an der lateinischen Literatur und Wissenschaft des Mittelalters*, I, 8–24; Gottskálk Jensson, 'The Lost Latin Literature of Medieval Iceland'.

[2] Nederman, 'Textual Communities of Learning and Friendship Circles'.

[3] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*; Torfi H. Tulinius, 'Kapital, felt, illusio'; Wanner, *Snorri Sturluson and the Edda*.

[4] Foote, 'Secular Attitudes in Early Iceland', p. 32.

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The episcopal estates and cathedral churches were organized as large households. In a list of priests written in 1143, no fewer than forty high-born priests are mentioned, ten from each quarter. These forty were probably the elite from a total of around 400 priests at that time. This implies that the status of the ordained was linked to their family background and depended on economic means and well-run property. This would make the clerical elite powerful, but on the other hand their families exerted influence on them. The bishops' and priests' involvement in the political networks of their friends and families made the late twelfth-century bishops, clerics, and monks deeply involved in conflicts and power struggles where the ethics of honour were also important.

Michel Foucault stated that while the great obsession of the nineteenth century was history 'with its themes of development and of suspension, of crisis and cycle, themes of the ever-accumulating past', the 'present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space'.[5] In the social studies of science, space and location in the production of knowledge, ideas, and intellectual identities have received more attention in recent years. In modern times, spatial centres of knowledge might include laboratories, schools, zoological gardens, nightclubs, and museums, while in medieval Europe we could mention monasteries, cathedral schools, universities, and royal courts. This is also relevant to our understanding of how knowledge is transmitted and used in different contexts, often dependent on the links between knowledge, power, and the practice of everyday life.[6] As developed by the research project 'Lieux de savoir', knowledge is seen as placed in various yet interrelated spaces, in physical locations, architecture, cosmography, geography, organization, and networks.[7]

This line of reasoning is based on the notion of space as socially constituted. In his influential study on spatial theory, Henri Lefebvre argued that spaces are not merely a given 'container' in which knowledge and human activities take place, but rather constituted by social life in such a way that 'mental' and 'material' spaces are brought together as 'at once result and cause, product and producer'.[8] According to Pierre Bourdieu, the physical spatial arrangements

[5] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', pp. 22–23. On this 'spatial turn' in historical studies, see Withers, 'Place and the "Spatial Turn"'.

[6] On the link between disputes of royal power and making cement in Restoration England, see Shapin and Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump*. See also Ophir and Shapin, 'The Place of Knowledge'; Livingstone, *Putting Science in its Place*; Secord, 'Knowledge in Transit'.

[7] Jacob, 'Introduction', p. 20.

[8] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 142.

and social practices evolve together. Within a given social space, there are several subfields, both overlapping with each other and forming groups and group identities. These social fields are furthermore linked to physical spaces organizing social behaviour and relations.[9]

In the context of numerous cultural fields or spaces, Foucault's concept of *heterotopia* might be useful. This is a place somewhat segregated from other, ordinary social spaces, but also interacting with them, such as theatres, cemeteries, gardens, places for holidays, and sites connected to *rites de passage*. It is also a place where different spatial settings coexist; *heterotopia* 'is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible'.[10] The sites of teaching in medieval Iceland can be seen as a kind of *heterotopia*, in the sense of consisting of several social spaces at the same time, both Icelandic and European, both clerical and secular.[11]

This implies that most texts produced in learned communities were directed towards a mixed audience of clerics and laity. This, I will argue, encouraged the writing of texts that would have appealed to laymen to whom honour and household were important, and at the same time a learned audience would recognize passages from Sallust, Ovid, biblical commentaries, saints' lives, and theological writings from continental schools. The creation of space and identities in the texts produced at centres of learning in Iceland might show how the learned elite situated themselves at the centre of a society dominated by the household as a social, economic, and physical space. What strategies did the Icelandic clerical and monastic communities use to adapt their learning to their household society?

This study will focus on two learned centres in Iceland, the cathedral school of Skálholt in the south and the Benedictine monastery Þingeyrar in the northern diocese, since both were very active in the decades around 1200. The learned had at least three different models when constructing their identities in Iceland: the courtly, the ascetic, and the heroic. Stephen Jaeger has argued that the cathedral schools and the episcopal courts became important centres for the development of ancient learning and courtly manners. Through noble conduct and elegance, the learned elite would distinguish themselves

[9] Bourdieu, 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups'; Bourdieu, *Physical Space, Social Space and Habitus*.

[10] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', p. 25.

[11] Sverrir Jakobsson has recently used the concept of *heterotopoia* to analyse spatial categories in 'Heaven is a Place on Earth' and 'State Formation and Pre-Modern Identities in the North'.

from the simple and boorish lives of warriors. Young students who wanted to enhance their positions at court had to learn this social code.[12] Second, there is the ascetic cleric who both studied liberal arts and pursued monastic virtues. This approach was inspired by Hugues de Saint-Victor who 'demonstrated that it was possible to combine the very different types of learning developed in schools and monasteries'.[13] The abbey of St Victor had a significant impact on twelfth-century Iceland, since Icelanders studied at its abbey school and established houses for canon regulars according to this rule. Third, we have the heroic cleric defending society against the demonic forces in the wilderness. This is an image found since early Christianity, when hermits faced the dangerous desert. In the twelfth century, both Benedictines and Cistercians were supposed to fight 'well against their own vices and the enticements of malign spirits' in the 'place of horror and of vast wilderness'.[14] Common to all these potential strategies was that the learned elite in Iceland had to situate their identities within a world view centred on farms and a discourse of authority connected to honour.

Courtly Bishops in a Household Context

The first Icelandic diocese was established at Skálholt in the wake of the consecration of Ísleifr Gizurarson (d. 1080) as bishop in 1056. Ísleifr was the son of Gizurr *hvíti* Teitsson, one of the first Icelanders to be baptized. Ísleifr had studied at Herford in Westphalia. According to Ari *fróði* Þorgilsson (1067–1148), who himself was the foster-brother of the son of Bishop Ísleifr, shortly after Ísleifr's consecration the chieftains started to send some of their sons to Skálholt.[15] Two secular schools were closely linked to the diocese of Skálholt. They were situated at the farms Oddi and Haukadalr. The school of Oddi was founded by Sæmundr *fróði* (1056–1133), who had studied on the Continent, possibly at Fulda, late in the eleventh century. Sæmundr's son Eyjólfr (d. 1158) became a priest as well as a chieftain and continued to run a school there. In his youth, Bishop Þorlákr Þorhállsson (d. 1193) of Skálholt received his earliest education from Eyjólfr. Later, Oddi was run by Eyjolfr's nephew and Snorri Sturluson's foster-father, the powerful chieftain Jón Loftsson (d. 1197), himself ordained a deacon. Jón has been said to 'epitomize the situation of the Icelandic chieftain,

[12] Jaeger, *Origins of Courtliness*; Jaeger, *Envy of Angels*.

[13] Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris*, p. 85.

[14] Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, pp. 138–44.

[15] *Íslendingabók*, ed. by Jakob Benediktsson, 9.

who since the conversion had made the Church and its learning and literature a part of their lives, but had done so essentially on independent, native terms'.[16]

The same may be said no less of the contemporary Gizurr Hallsson (d. 1206) at Haukadalr. Gizurr had been fostered by Bishop Þorlákr Runólfsson of Skálholt (d. 1133). He was a great-grandson of Bishop Ísleifr of Skálholt. His grandfather Teitr had been the foster-brother of, and a student with, Ari *fróði*, and his father Hallr Teitsson had been elected bishop in 1149. On his journey to receive his pallium, Hallr is said to have spoken the tongue of all the people he met. Gizurr himself accompanied Bishop Klængr Þorsteinsson of Skálholt (d. 1176) in 1151 to Rome and Bari. He later wrote *Flos peregrinationis* about this journey. This work is now lost, but it was probably a guide for pilgrims. Gizurr's name is also mentioned in connection with several other writings, a world chronicle (*Veraldar saga*), a legendary saga (*Yngvars saga víðfǫrla*), and the first saga of Óláfr Tryggvason. Moreover, his father Hallr Teitsson has been suggested to be the author of the so-called *First Grammatical Treatise*, probably from the third quarter of the twelfth century, a work that demonstrates knowledge of the grammars of Donatus and Priscian, as well as the Paris master Petrus Helias's *Summa super Priscianum*.[17]

Three *biskupasǫgur* (bishops' sagas) are connected with Skálholt from the early thirteenth century, all of them about the bishops of Skálholt. Probably the earliest of these sagas was concerned with the life and miracles of Bishop Þorlákr Þórhallsson (1178–93). These texts were most likely written in connection with his sanctification in 1198. The two other sagas, *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga biskups*, are less hagiographic in tone. *Páls saga* describes the life of the successor and nephew of the holy Þorlákr, Páll Jónsson (1195–1211). *Hungrvaka* (Appetizer) is a short chronicle on the first five bishops of Skálholt: Ísleifr Gizurarson (1056–80), Gizurr Ísleifsson (1082–1118), Þorlákr Runólfsson (1118–33), Magnús Einarsson (1134–48), and Klængr Þorsteinsson (1152–76). The text demonstrates a familiarity with Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria*, Adam of Bremen's *History of the Archbishops of Bremen*, and the genre *gesta episcoporum*.[18] The author of *Hungrvaka* rounds off with the introduction of St Þorlákr, whose saga was known to him. *Páls saga* and

[16] Foote and Wilson, *The Viking Achievement*, p. 63.

[17] Other candidates are Bishop Þorlákr Þórhallsson, who had studied in Paris and Lincoln in the 1150s, and Bishop Páll Jónsson; see Holtsmark, *En islandsk scholasticus fra det 12. århundre*.

[18] Wellendorf, 'Whetting the Appetite for a Vernacular Literature'.

Hungrvaka show a range of similarities that have led some scholars to suggest that they were perhaps written by the same author.[19] Although this is impossible to verify, the close relationship between these two texts indicates a similar purpose and audience.

The main purpose of *Hungrvaka*, as stated by the author in the introduction, was to motivate the youth to read laws, genealogies, and sagas, so that the 'unlearned', but not 'unable', could learn from the deeds of great men of the past. When he was about to write something with this didactic intent in mind, he found the lives of the bishops of Skálholt to be very useful. The history of the see of Skálholt is presented as a history of prosperity, and the author linked this success to the exceptional qualities of the bishops themselves, as well as to their lineage.[20] *Hungrvaka* opens with the story of the foundation of the farm at Skálholt. In the first five generations of the see, from the immigrant Norwegian farmer Ketilbjǫrn *hinn gamli* at Mosfell to Bishop Gizurr Ísleifsson, the site is transmitted from father to son like a regular household. Teitr Ketilbjarnarson was the founder of the farm at Skálholt, while his son, Gizurr *hvíti*, built the first church there. The inhabitants at Skálholt were part of a family belonging to a farm that stretched back into the age of settlement.[21] From the start, the bishops are presented as head of a household with an old genealogy, making the episcopal site a central place comparable to other prominent farms in Iceland.

The first bishop of Skálholt, Ísleifr Gizurarson, is presented as the son of the man who introduced Christianity to Iceland. Of course, there are several contestants for that honour in other sources, but in *Hungrvaka* this genealogy confers authority on the site of Skálholt. The household is made the very epicentre of Christianity in Iceland, or in the saga's terms, the 'andlig móðir allra annarra vígðra húsa á Íslandi' (spiritual mother of all other consecrated houses in Iceland).[22]

[19] Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature*, p. 211. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, *Páll Jónsson Skálholtsbiskup*, pp. 33–44, suggests that the author of *Páls saga* was Páll's son Loftr, also a cleric. See also the comments by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 'Formáli', pp. cxxx–cxxxii.

[20] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 4.

[21] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 5. It has been suggested that the author modelled his work on Ari's *Íslendingabók*, seeking out the genealogy of the see as far back as possible, cf. Bekker-Nielsen, 'Hungrvaka and the Medieval Icelandic Audience'; Jørgensen, 'Hagiography and the Icelandic Bishop Sagas', pp. 10–11; Hermann, '*Hungrvaka* og islændingesagaer'.

[22] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 9: all translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.

Hungrvaka does not hide the fact that the authority of Ísleifr was contested in Iceland during his episcopacy. However, the author of *Hungrvaka* shows that Ísleifr had all the qualities that Icelanders wanted a bishop to have. He is said to have been 'vænn maðr at áliti ok vinsæll við alþýðu ok alla ævi réttlátr ok ráðvandr, gjǫfull ok góðgjarn en aldrigi auðigr' (a beautiful man in appearance, friendly to all, and always righteous and upright in counsel, generous and good-natured).[23] But far from all men respected his authority; many were disobedient and lived immorally. He is also said to have lived in constant poverty. To the author this was a sign of the unjustified disdain the Icelanders had towards their outstanding bishop and something that was to change during his son's episcopacy when tithes were introduced. Again the saga shows great concern with how the bishop was an able householder.

Ísleifr had originally appointed a priest, Guthormr Finnólfsson, to be his successor. After the bishop's death, however, Guthormr stated that no one was more suited to become bishop than Gizurr, son of Ísleifr, who had returned from his travels abroad just in time for the election. The way he is presented is of interest. He is said to have been 'mikill maðr vexti ok vel bolsvexti, bjarteygr ok nokkut opineygr, tígulegr í yfirbragði ok allra manna góðgjarnastr, ramr at afli ok forvitri' (a great man of stature and well proportioned, with clear and somewhat wide eyes, with dignified manners and most friendly, strong and wise).[24] It is also emphasized that King Haraldr *harðráði* of Norway (1046–66) had prophesized that Gizurr would be well qualified for whatever distinguished position he would achieve, whether chieftain, king, or bishop. Through such statements the author was able to show that Gizurr had the virtues required not only of a cleric, but also a chieftain.[25] According to *Hungrvaka*, he was the best man who had ever lived in Iceland, 'both of learned and unlearned men' (bæði lærðra manna ok ólærðra).[26] His authority was so great that all Icelanders submitted to his rulings — the author claims he was as much a king as a bishop over Iceland.[27] During Gizurr's episcopacy, Skálholt began to prosper, and with it, all of Iceland. *Hungrvaka* stresses the many bad omens that accompanied Bishop Gizurr's death. The golden age had passed and the reader is prepared for the tribulations of the twelfth century. The unlucky third bishop of Skálholt

[23] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 7.

[24] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 14.

[25] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 14.

[26] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 20.

[27] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 16.

who had to face these omens hardly seemed up to the task. Þorlákr Runólfsson (1118–33) lacked all the physical characteristics of authority that Gizurr had possessed. Nor was he found to possess the honourable abilities expected in a chieftain, not least *skǫrungskapr* (nobleness, manliness).[28] Among Þorlákr Runólfsson's positive features, the author mentions his steadfastness in prayers, and he is hailed for his gentleness (*linr*), humility (*lítillátr*), and meekness (*mjúklátr*).[29] However, his meekness is not seen as sufficient for the diocese to prosper or to prevent the chieftains from falling back into disobedience towards the bishop.

In contrast, his two successors, Magnús and Klængr, are both depicted as glorious men whom people respected. Magnús Einarsson was humble (*lítillátr*), but he was also steadfast, a good speaker, and had great authority in disputes. The people of Iceland were impressed by his *skǫrungskapr*, the quality that his predecessor had lacked.[30] He was honoured wherever he went, both at the archbishopric in Lund and at the court of King Haraldr *gilli* of Norway. His abilities as a householder greatly improved the economy of Skálholt, and his generosity made the see central in political networks based on friendships. The author states that, in many respects, there had never been a man more able (*skǫrungr*) than he was in Iceland.[31]

Hungrvaka was most likely intended for young students at the school at Skálholt, many of them sons of chieftains. Its vernacular stance may suggest a kind of self-promotional use, presenting Skálholt as a prosperous household headed by able men. It is likely that by writing a little book on the indigenous heroes of Skálholt, the author hoped to entertain his audience more than other books did. The author emphasizes *skǫrungskapr*, while celibacy or sexual abstinence is not mentioned at all. This is particularly interesting, as two of these bishops, Þorlákr Runólfsson and Magnús Einarsson, never married. These bishops presented the author with a very good opportunity to hail celibate bishops if he had wanted to.

The contemporary *Páls saga byskups* develops this chieftain-like ideal of Icelandic bishops. Páll was the son of the chieftain Jón Loftsson at Oddi, and the saga shows how Páll also acted as an arbitrator in conflicts concerning

[28] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 23.

[29] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 23.

[30] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 29.

[31] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 42. See also Orri Vésteinsson, *Christianization*, pp. 162–63.

the farmers in the district. Even more than in *Hungrvaka*, the bishop's wife, in this case Bishop Páll's wife Herdís Ketilsdóttir, is given a prominent position in the saga; she is said to be the best match in all Iceland. Her abilities did not lag much behind those of Páll himself.[32] Herdís thus received much of the credit for Skálholt prospering as never before. Páll is depicted as a man of great *skǫrungskapr*, an ability that is here connected with his position as head of a prosperous and powerful household. Páll is also said to have been ascetic and pious, but these qualities are mentioned in passing and play little role in the narrative. Rather, his behaviour is contrasted to that of his colleague in the northern see of Hólar, Bishop Guðmundr Arason (1203–37).[33] *Páls saga* claims that Guðmundr became quite unpopular because of his failure as a householder. He increased taxes to obtain more income for his see, and people soon realized ever more clearly how lucky those in the south were to have such a friendly and undemanding bishop. While Bishop Guðmundr excommunicated everyone who opposed him, Páll was far more diplomatic and patient with the people, building social networks in the same manner as successful chieftains. In this way, Páll is represented as a model of leadership connected more to the household than to purity.

Besides connecting episcopal authority with the household, *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga* both used the discourse of courtliness. According to Stephen Jaeger, courtliness developed in the bishops' courts at the cathedral schools and at episcopal courts in Germany. In this context, *disciplina* aquired the meaning of 'courteous, restrained good manners, the result of a courtly education'.[34] This often had a counterpart in physical beauty, suggesting a harmony between inner and outer qualities. Related to this ideal was *elegantia morum*, elegant manners. This term refers to the aesthetization of courtly ethics; it can be defined as 'harmonious self-government based on principles of respect for the social order and for the rights of other men'.[35] This should be shown in speech, gesture, and dress. *Urbanitas* indicated sophistication, especially in connection to speech — both in the sense of a well-educated manner of speaking, and exerting urbane wit and sarcasm. The virtue of *mansuetudo* — gentleness in spirit — was also important. This implied the ability to bear offences, abuses, and

[32] 'Páls saga', ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 297, 300, 305, 315.

[33] 'Páls saga', ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 312–13, 321–23.

[34] Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness*, p. 130.

[35] Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness*, p. 139.

disgrace patiently and with meekness. Showing *mansuetudo* made it possible to show superiority in modesty.[36]

Hungrvaka introduces every bishop with a literary portrait, emphasizing his physical appearance, abilities, and virtues. For instance, Klængr Þorsteinsson is one of the bishops who is praised as one of the best Icelanders ever born:

> Klængr Þorsteinsson var vænn maðr at áliti ok meðalmaðr at vexti, kvikligr ok skǫruligr ok algǫrr at sér ok ritari góðr ok inn mesti lærdómsmaðr. Hann var málsnjallr ok øruggr at vinfesti ok it mesta skáld [...] Linr ok lítillátr var hann við alla, kátr var hann ok keskifimr ok jafnlyndr maðr við vini sína [...] Klængr byskup var svá mikill málafylgismaðr, ef hann var at sóttr til ásjá, at hann var bæði hǫfðingi mikill sakir vizku ok málsnilldar [...] Klængr byskup átti ok gjafavíxl við ina stærstu hǫfðingja í ǫðrum lǫndum.[37]

> Klængr Þorsteinsson was a beautiful man to look at, of middle stature, lively, great-minded, and perfect. He was a good writer and a man of greatest learning. He was eloquent and held friendship firmly and was a great skald [...] He was patient and meek towards everyone, he was merry and made jokes and was easy with his friends. [...] Bishop Klængr was such a great arbiter if he was asked to help, that he was a great chieftain both because of his wisdom and eloquence [...] Bishop Klængr also exchanged gifts with the greatest chieftains in other countries.

His fondness for jokes is also emphasized, indicating *facetiae* — the ability to be eloquent and witty.[38] Páll Jónsson is also said to have been pleasing to his followers, arranging splendid feasts where he could please his family and friends.[39] Even St Þorlákr of Skálholt enjoyed a good feast, even though he did not drink, nor was he eloquent and witty. But he liked musical entertainment, storytelling, and jokes told by good people.[40] One of the very few examples in the contemporary saga compilation *Sturlunga saga* where the epithet *kurteis* (courtly) is used to describe a person concerns a priest, Ingimundr Einarsson, who is also said to be friendly, cheerful, and who performs entertaining stories.[41]

[36] Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness*, pp. 36–42.

[37] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 34–35, 37. This emphasis on beauty is also found in other bishops' lives, for example in *Ísleifs þáttr byskups* (ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 338), *Páls saga* (ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 297), and *Jóns saga* (ed. by Foote, p. 113).

[38] *Hungrvaka*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 37–38.

[39] 'Páls saga', ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 303–04.

[40] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 76–77.

[41] *Sturlunga saga*, ed. by Jón Jóhannesson, Magnús Finnbogason, and Kristján Eldjárn, I, 18: 'Ingimundr var it mesti gǫfugmenni, skáld gott, ofláti mikill bæði í skapferði ok annarri

This link between courtliness and cheerful and friendly performance was even more important when Icelandic bishops went abroad. The familiarity with the customs of foreign courts is an important part of the portrait of the bishops Gizurr Ísleifsson and Klængr Þorsteinsson in *Hungrvaka*.[42] Páll Jónsson had studied in England and was able to impress nobles everywhere with his learning, including King Sverrir of Norway and Archbishop Absalon of Lund. *Páls saga* specifically mentioned that his education was not confined to book learning, but also included courtliness (*kurteisi*).[43] Among the bishops' sagas from around 1200, the virtue of *kurteisi* is specified only in *Páls saga*. While the best bishops of *Hungrvaka* were connected with traditional honour, Páll is twice termed *kurteis* along with his *skǫrungskapr*. While Herdís, his wife, had *skǫrungskapr* as an able housekeeper, Páll had acquired his *kurteisi* during his studies abroad.

The literary portraits of the bishops indicate the strong influence of the ideals from continental schools. Lars Lönnroth has argued that all the portrayals in saga literature were influenced by Latin European literature.[44] He gives special attention to the bishops' sagas, since the literary portraits here accord very well with those we find in the clerical writing of the twelfth century elsewhere in Europe. He points especially to the similarities between the portraits of the translated works *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sǫgur*, both from the last decades of the twelfth century, and the portraits in *Hungrvaka*, *Páls saga*, and *Þorláks saga*.[45] Lönnroth suggests that the clerical works of Skálholt were crucial as transitional texts from Latin to Norse literature. He is, however, most interested in the literary impact of the portraits on the sagas, and less in the reasons behind such imitations.

It could be argued that bodily appearance also had great importance before the impact of Latin literature on Norse culture. In a society where honour was at stake in every interaction, a strong body of great stature was most likely

kurteisi, inn mesti gleðimaðr ok fekk margt til skemtunar. Hann var inn vitrasti maðr ok helt sér mjǫk til vinsælda við alþýðu; hann var ok mikils virðr af mǫrgum gǫfgum mǫnnum.' (Ingimundr was a most excellent man, a good skald, great both in his character and other courtliness, most cheerful and got much out of entertaining. He was a most wise man and had much friendship with the common people, and he was also much esteemed by many prominent men.)

[42] For example, St Jón was also well received at the court of Norway, *Jóns saga*, ed. by Foote, pp. 111–12; 'Páls saga', ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 301–03.

[43] 'Páls saga', ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 298.

[44] Lönnroth, 'Det litterära porträttet'; Lönnroth, 'Kroppen som själens spegel'.

[45] Lönnroth, 'Det litterära porträttet', p. 75.

to have had some importance. The emphasis on the great strength of Gizurr Ísleifsson and Páll Jónsson suggests that their portrayals would appeal to an audience who expected such abilities in a chieftain-bishop. However, there are comparably few direct descriptions of the body in the skaldic, heroic, and mythological poems.[46] Although elements in the portrayals of the bishops were directed at a lay aristocratic audience, the stress on the proportions of the bishops' body, their bright eyes, and beautiful feet are strikingly more similar to the bodily ideals of cathedral schools and episcopal courts elsewhere in Europe. While the literary portraits of the bishops are an adaptation to an Icelandic ideal connected with honour, the emphasis on the courtly body and qualities only learned at school is an additional layer of the texts, intended for an audience familiar with, for instance, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, attributed to Cicero. *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga* are not merely transmitting ideals from classical literature to saga literature; in addition, they manage to situate the educational ideals of the cathedral schools within a household context.[47]

St Þorlákr — the Ascetic and Humble Exception

Although the hagiographic *Þorláks saga* was written in the same milieu (it has indeed been suggested that his successor Páll Jónsson was the author), it differs from the two other texts concerning the literary portrait of the bishop. The saga was probably written around the time Þorlákr was translated in 1198. Although it has obvious hagiographic traits, and thus differs from the other texts when it comes to genre, the saga still discusses the issues of clerical identity and the bishop's household as a site of authority.

It has been suggested that Þorlákr embodied the conflation of a monastic life and the performance of church leadership.[48] More than the previous bishops at Skálholt, he is presented as being predestined for a clerical career from his youth. According to the saga, he was clever and quick to learn as a boy. Before he turned fifteen, Þorlákr was already a deacon, and when he was nineteen he entered the priesthood.[49] He became a priest at Kirkjubær, and was later

[46] Lönnroth, 'Det litterära porträttet', pp. 69–70.

[47] See Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, *Páll Jónsson Skálholtsbiskup*, pp. 14–18 on the possible uses of *Ad Herennium* in *Páls saga*.

[48] Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 'Formáli', p. lviii.

[49] Candidates for ordination to the priesthood were supposed to have reached thirty years of age, but becoming a priest around the age of twenty was not unusual in Scandinavia, see Johnsen, 'The Age of Ordination'; Gunnar F. Guðmundsson, *Íslenskt samfélag og Rómakirkja*,

canon and prior of the Augustinian house at Þykkvabær. He was then elected as bishop in 1174. According to the saga, his days were filled with prayers, Masses, fasting, and charitable works.

Still, his saga also refers to the questions raised by the chieftains, about whether he was suitable, indeed whether he was *skǫrungr*, to become a bishop.[50] According to a later version of the saga, Þorlákr himself confessed on his deathbed: 'Ek hefi verit alla gǫtu lítill skǫrungr ok til lítils færr ef eigi hefði aðrir menn mik studdan' (In all matters, I have been a man of little ability and of little use if other men had not supported me).[51] Moreover, the saga tells that Þorlákr was weak in his body and lacked oratory gifts.[52] Indeed, it is made clear that Þorlákr was not like other men and that this was already evident in his youth.[53] In view of the importance of *skǫrungskapr* in *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga*, Þorlákr's lack of courtly qualities is striking.

However, the saga goes to great lengths to show that Þorlákr was not studying for his personal career. The rationale for describing Þorlákr's youth is to juxtapose worldly pride and clerical humility. Þorlákr is said to have enjoyed the humility and service of the lower clerical orders so much that he preserved this lifestyle even after being elevated to higher offices, rather than pursuing worldly honour.[54] Even after years of study in Paris and Lincoln, he returned to Iceland with as much humility as before. This is contrasted with the practice of other travellers, who show off with weapons and fashionable clothes from the foreign countries they have been to; the comparison of Þorlákr with these men indicates that some of them were students who used their travels to gain prestige. What Þorlákr brought home was of greater value; 'lærdóm ok lítillæti ok marga góða siðu' (knowledge, humility, and many good habits).[55] This is the introduction of a major theme in the saga: humility as opposed to worldly pride.

An important feature of the virtue of humility was silence. The saga claims that Þorlákr followed the example of David, who, according to Psalm 39. 2, did

p. 210; Orri Vésteinsson, *The Christianization of Iceland*, p. 237.

[50] Cf. *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 9.

[51] *Þorláks saga B*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 187.

[52] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 13, 16.

[53] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 2.

[54] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 3. When consecrated as a priest shortly afterwards, and he himself administered the offices of the Church, he still preserved the same lowliness of life as before, see *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 51.

[55] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 53.

not want to sin with his tongue as long as the 'godless' could see him.[56] In the case of Þorlákr, he wanted to conquer evil with good, and anger with patience.[57] It was his good manners and humility that were the prime signifiers of his virtue, not words that could be interpreted falsely by the heathens. The reason for his silence is also explained by the fact that Þorlákr was a poor speaker. When he became bishop-elect in 1174, men asked whether he was an eloquent orator, as would be expected of men with authority, but it was said that his deeds should speak louder than his words.[58] This was in contrast to the two other candidates who had, according to the saga, a tendency to brag about their own eminence (this vice is called *sjálfvirðing*, i.e. self-conceit). Again, Þorlákr is juxtaposed with men of worldly pride.[59]

An important issue in the saga is the relationship between Þorlákr's lack of chieftain-like abilities and his position as head of a household at the see. After his return to Iceland, he established himself as a successful householder.[60] Through the instigation of his family, he was about to make one of the best matches in the district. However, on his journey to meet his future bride, he had a vision that it was *ecclesia* that should be his bride — that his household should not be like other households, and he should not be a husband like other husbands. He returned home and refused to marry. After this, Þorlákr was accused of excessive pride by many people, something the saga author refutes. Why Þorlákr should be accused of excessive pride is not evident, but examples from other sagas suggest that a refusal to marry could be interpreted as humiliating for the other party's family.[61] The concept behind this was the ideal of balancing the status of the marital candidates and their families. Refusing such a balance would suggest superiority on the part of the one who withdrew from

[56] David's humbleness and vow of silence in Psalm 39. 2 is cited in *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 60.

[57] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 13.

[58] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 9.

[59] His lack of eloquence became clear through his sermons; they are said to have been a great trial to him because he was slow and stuttering in words (*Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 12). This handicap is used to show that it was the *words* themselves that were sweet and well put together. This ought to be evident for every true believer. A similar case concerns his enduring sickness; we are told that he was never in his full health at any time (*Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 16). This further contributed to his tribulations and humility.

[60] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 5.

[61] Contemporary examples are found in *Guðmundar saga dýra*, *Hallfreðar saga*, and *Kormáks saga*; see Bandlien, *Strategies of Passion*, pp. 67–85.

the marriage. With this logic in mind, it is crucial that the saga emphasizes that in this Þorlákr 'heldr jók hann sik þá því fastara í lítillæti' (exercised himself with even more humility).[62] The saga does not ban clerics from marrying but rather it explains to the audience that Þorlákr compensated for his lack of marriage with his meekness. Although it is said that Þorlákr remained close friends with the woman afterwards, Skálholt became an all-male community devoted to the daily cycle of prayer and Masses. This allows the writer the opportunity to dwell even more on his piety. He was an able householder despite his lack of a wife; Skálholt prospered as long as he was bishop there.[63]

The ideal of humility and meekness in *Þorláks saga* accords with the paradoxical character of authority through asceticism. The monastic virtues of humility, sexual abstinence, and distancing oneself from worldly pride are virtues which, through Þorlákr, were linked to the episcopal seat. He became the first Norse saint who was a bishop, and the first who was not sanctified because of his violent death (e.g., St Óláfr, St Magnús, St Hallvard), but due to his way of living. Through his meekness, the see of Skálholt acquired a holy atmosphere. As the early collection of miracles showed, Skálholt became a centre for devotion where men could visit in hope of a cure, or where they could give gifts in exchange for healing or good weather.

Still, Þorlákr represents a monastic way of living less than a new clerical life. The saga places Þorlákr in a very recognizable Icelandic context, managing the household, negotiating a marriage, and confronting ambitious rivals. Þorlákr is said to have enjoyed a good feast, and took great pleasure in the reciting of sagas, poems, all kinds of music and songs, and the conversation of wise men, especially concerning dreams.[64] But within this setting, Þorlákr is presented as a man with a more distinct clerical identity. After explaining why he did not marry, the saga describes how he sought the companionship of the pious priest Bjarnheðinn. They both yearned to live together in a manner that distinguished them from all other men. He took great care of both seculars and clerics, introducing confession and a penitential code, admonishing everyone to be as pious

[62] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 55. The saga adds that this followed the example of the best and most humble men in the world. All these men followed the command of the Lord himself, who had said, 'nemi þér at mér, því at ek em mjúkr ok lítillátr í hjarta mínu' (learn from me, because I am mild and humble in my heart), *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, p. 55, cf. Matthew 11. 29.

[63] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 12.

[64] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 16.

as they could be according to their position and order.[65] Þorlákr becomes an example for both the regular clerics at Skálholt and other secular clerics, in the best Augustinian tradition.[66] Through Þorlákr, the distinguished clerical way of living was made holy.[67]

Þorlákr was a special case among Icelandic bishops, and although he was praised as holy, the saga seems to promote Þorlákr's asceticism as an exception. Even though he endured the opposing and 'evil' chieftains despite his bodily weakness and lack of oratory gifts, the saga writer describes a stronger and more able leader of the Church.[68] As Þorlákr himself stated on his deathbed, he had been a man of few chieftain-like abilities and had to rely on the support of others. This suggests an alternative way of constructing a more specifically clerical identity, but his abilities as a householder and his opportunity for a good marriage may still have appealed to the same audience as *Páls saga* and *Hungrvaka*.

Defending Civilization against the Wilderness in Northern Iceland

The first bishop of Hólar, Jón Ǫgmundarson (1106–21) had been a pupil of Bishop Ísleifr Gizurarson in his youth and later a student on the Continent. Jón established a renowned school at Hólar headed by a priest from Götaland who was a grammarian of some renown. Among the other teachers was Ríkini (or Ricwine), probably a priest from the Rhineland or Lotharingia, who taught music. In northern Iceland, the school at Hólar remained important during the twelfth century, and the indications that a mathematician (Bjarni tǫlvísi) and an astronomer (Stjǫrnu-Oddi) can be connected to Hólar at this time suggest that the *quadrivium* was taught there. While the earlier schools at Oddi and Skálholt seem to have depended on one or two tutors, the school at Hólar was the first school founded on an institutional basis.

Jón came from a good family, but he abandoned his farm Breiðabólstaðr in favour of the newly founded see of Hólar in 1106.[69] It is likely that the transla-

[65] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 6, 12, 15.

[66] See Nenseter, *Augustinerordenen*, pp. 125–27.

[67] Indeed, Þorlákr himself was probably a greater reformer of the Icelandic Church than suggested in the saga. This is indicated, for instance, by his penitential, which detached sexual transgressions from their household context for the first time. See Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'Skriftaboð Þorláks biskups'; 'The Penitential of St Þorlákur'; Bandlien, *Strategies of Passion*, pp. 136–37.

[68] *Þorláks saga A*, ed. by Ásdís Egilsdóttir, 13, 16.

[69] See Orri Vésteinsson, *The Christianization of Iceland*, pp. 146–47.

tion of the relics of Jón in 1200 was inspired by the events in the south two years earlier, when Þorlákr was canonized. Of the known protagonists behind the cult of Jón was Bishop Brandr Sæmundarson (1163–1201) and Guðmundr Arason, the future bishop of Hólar (1203–37).[70]

The Benedictine monasteries in the diocese of Hólar were no less important as scribal centres in northern Iceland, especially Þingeyrar, founded in 1133, and Munkaþverá, founded in 1155. A Latin *vita* of St Jón was written at Þingeyrar by the monk Gunnlaugr Leifsson (d. 1219), probably on the initiative of Bishop Guðmundr Arason.[71] Gunnlaugr is also the likely author of a Latin version of *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrli*.[72] This work balances the picture given in *Íslendingabók* where the missionary efforts are described as situated in the south; *Þorvalðs þáttr viðfǫrli* shows that missionary efforts occurred even earlier in the north.[73] Oddr Snorrason of Þingeyrar wrote a *Vita Olavi* about King Óláfr Tryggvason in the 1190s. This was possibly intended as a hagiographic work, although King Óláfr was never acknowledged as a saint. The Latin *vita* was translated into the vernacular and later used as a source by other saga writers. In addition, the historical romance *Yngvars saga víðfǫrla* is linked to Oddr Snorrason.[74] Munkaþverá has been suggested as a scribal centre specializing in early secular historical narrative. These two monasteries were both important for the early development of the sagas of Icelanders, kings' sagas, and legendary sagas.[75]

[70] *Jóns saga A*, ed. by Foote, 31–32; *Guðmundar saga A*, ed. by Stefán Karlsson, 76, 79.

[71] See Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*, pp. 339–43. Gunnlaugr Leifsson also wrote the poem *Merlinuspá*, an adaptation of *Prophetiae Merlini* by Geoffrey of Monmouth; some miracle stories which described St Þorlákr's posthumous apparitions; an *officium* to St Ambrose, probably a version of the saga of St Ambrose, now lost, which is referred to as a source in *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrla*. See Bekker-Nielsen, 'Nova Historia Sancti Ambrosii'; Katrín Axelsdóttir, 'Gunnlaugur Leifsson og Ambrósíus saga'. Karl Jónsson, the author of *Sverris saga*, also came from Þingeyrar (see below).

[72] The original Latin version is now lost but a Norse translation is preserved in the manuscript *Flateyjarbók* from the 1380s. By the literary echoes in other texts in the thirteenth century (above all *Kristni saga*), it is presumed that this manuscript reproduces an early version of the story.

[73] Þorvaldr Koðránsson came from the farm Giljá in Vatnsdalur, not far from Þingeyrar. See Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'Um kristniboðsþættina' concerning the interest in Þorvaldr's story in the north around 1200.

[74] On this saga, see Hofmann, 'Die *Yngvars saga víðfǫrla* und Oddr munkr inn fróði'; Glazyrina, 'Viking Age and the Crusades Era in *Yngvars saga víðfǫrla*'; Phelpstead, 'Adventure-Time in *Yngvars saga víðförla*'; Haki Antonsson, 'Salvation and Early Saga Writing', pp. 74–93.

[75] Andersson, 'Snorri Sturluson and the Saga School at Munkaþverá'; Andersson, *The Growth of the Medieval Icelandic Sagas*; Torfi H. Tulinius, *The Matter of the North*.

Even though the saga of Jón was contemporary with and of the same genre as *Þorláks saga*, it offers a very different world view. To some extent, *Jóns saga* presents the protagonist like many of the other bishops, who are presented as good chieftains. He had loyal supporters among the farmers, powerful friends, important political alliances, and was a successful speaker and arbiter.[76] Because of his generosity and benevolence towards women, orphans, and sinners he was loved by all.[77] On the other hand, the saga links the respect people had for him to his self-control. Since he suppressed his own desires, God subjected his people to holy obedience.[78] However, the writer encountered a problem on the issue of ascetic self-control; Jón married twice. This was the only flaw Archbishop Ossur of Lund could find.[79] But Jón went himself to the pope, Paschalis II, and obtained a dispensation.[80] This explains why Jón's wife followed him to Hólar and helped him in the administration of the see.[81] The saga is clearly at pains to explain his marriages. The matter of Jón's marriages may have been a delicate issue at the beginning of the thirteenth century because he was considered a saint, and was not meant as an example for other clerics or bishops to follow.[82]

Even more influential than the doubts about his celibacy was his leadership of the cathedral school. *Jóns saga* gives a detailed description of the community and its administration at Hólar.[83] The laymen working for him were skilled, and the teachers were very learned. The older men taught the younger students

[76] The most memorable performance by Jón as an arbiter was performed in Norway at the time of Magnús *berrfættr* (d. 1103). Gísl Illugason had killed a man in the king's retinue, and was given peace only because of Jón's eloquence, *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 5 and much more elaborate in the L-recension of *Jóns saga*, ed. by Foote, 9–14.

[77] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 13.

[78] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 13.

[79] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 8.

[80] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 9. In the early redaction, Jón is said to have had children who died young (ch. 5). A later redaction interprets his childless marriage as indicating sexual abstinence. Although 'failing' to produce an heir, Jon succeeded in a more lasting glory over the family (*Jóns saga* (L), ed. by Foote, 17). In this, he fulfilled the prophecy that St Óláfr himself had proclaimed to Jón's grandfather, Egill Hallsson. From Egill's daughter a truly blessed offspring would come (*Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 2). And Jón fulfilled this, because he was adorned with so many virtues and was honoured with episcopal rank.

[81] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 14.

[82] This story hardly reflects the practices of the papal curia in the early twelfth century; see Kuttner, 'St. Jón of Hólar'.

[83] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 14.

by example and harsh discipline. Under the auspices of Jón, no one idled in laziness and at all times prayers could be heard. Indeed, Jón himself excelled in clerical skills, especially those of singing and preaching.[84] These skills, as well as the discipline of the clerics and students at Hólar, are seen in the saga as the cause of the cathedral becoming a centre for the people in the northern diocese. Because of Jón's sermons, hundreds of people came to Hólar every Easter. Many of these were fed at the bishop's expense; others gave donations to the see. The observance of Christian conduct guaranteed this popularity and the economic benefits.[85] When the pupils and other members of the household at Hólar failed in the observance of Mass and prayers, this not only threatened to undermine the authority of the episcopal centre but also made it vulnerable to attacks from demons. The dangers of inattentiveness to good conduct are shown when the servants failed to understand that a demonic spell had been cast on a cowshed at Hólar. Cattle died, and only Jón's strong faith and steadfast prayers lifted the spell.[86] Later, the spiritual strength of Hólar was again put to the test when an outstandingly beautiful woman had bewitched a layman attached to Hólar, Sveinn Þorsteinsson.[87] The saga informs us that this female creature was demonic; it lured Sveinn into the wilderness and let him wander senselessly for a long time. The saga writer explains that because of Sveinn's love for this creature, the Devil made him forget his Christian duties. Divine grace — and the help of some farmers — finally led Sveinn to Hólar, where Jón made him pray and go to Mass again. Eventually, he came back to his senses.

These cases indicate that Hólar was constructed as a centre that represented a bulwark against the demonic wilderness. In *Jóns saga*, sexual desire is a weakness that could lead men away from the stable household society. Itinerants, such as Sveinn Þorsteinsson, were also a problem in *Grágás*, but are here regarded as failing to control their desire. It was then only the bishop who could

[84] An episode which occurred in Denmark is revealing. The priest who was to sing Mass read the account of Christ's Passion with such difficulty that all thought it was boring and even laughable. Jón 'humbly' took the book from the priest and continued to read with such understanding that all marvelled (*Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 3). To most clerics, this gift of speaking must have appeared in marked contrast to the speech-gifts which St Þorlákr lacked (see above).

[85] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 12.

[86] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 17. The role of the Devil is enhanced even more in the L-recension of *Jóns saga*, ed. by Foote, 32.

[87] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 16; *Jóns saga* (L), ed. by Foote, 30.

lead such men back into the Christian community.[88] As in the case of Sveinn Þorsteinsson, the Devil lurked in the wilderness thinking of ways to lure men from their homes and forget about the Church. Jón's marital chastity was only one of several other elements his biographer used to show how he defended Hólar, and thus also all Icelanders in the north, from evil.

The picture of the buzzing and blessed life at Hólar at the beginning of the twelfth century reflects an ideal image of a clerical milieu a century later. It is thus striking that there is a clear criticism of courtliness in the saga. Jón caught a young student reading a work by Ovid. The bishop acted swiftly; he immediately warned the students at Hólar against reading such books. Ovid kindled carnal lust and evil passion in a way that led young men away from proper Christian conduct.[89] The student was Klængr Þorsteinsson, who was later consecrated bishop of Skálholt.[90] Although Klængr's knowledge of Ovid is not mentioned in *Hungrvaka*, his portrayal there situates him firmly within the pan-European textual community and the episcopal court culture of the cathedral schools, monasteries, and the universities that had Ovid on the curriculum.[91]

Jón also condemned the reciting of love songs (*mansǫngr*). According to the saga, such songs had become fashionable among the laity.[92] In most other contemporary sources, *mansǫngr* was perceived as libellous poetry against the honour of the woman's husband or guardian, and not as entertaining love poems. In *Jóns saga*, these poems are condemned not as libels against men, but as sinful to perform. Jón's biographer set the scene of a fight between good and evil at Hólar, between the saintly bishop and demonic forces, between love of God and love of the flesh. In this version, sexual desire was seen as dangerous because it opened the gateway for the Devil into the Christian fortress, and

[88] This attitude is also found in the early Christian laws of Norway, where the orientation towards the churches and Christian rituals made the people less vulnerable to 'heathendom'. See Bandlien, 'Sexuality in Early Church Laws'.

[89] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, p. 19; *Jóns saga* (L), ed. by Foote, p. 84; *Jóns saga* (H), p. 125. According to the S- and H-recensions of the saga, the work was *Ovidius Epistolarum*, probably indicating *Heroides*. A copy of *Heroides* is mentioned as the property of Hólar in 1525. The L-recension says the title was *Ovidiues de arte*, i.e., *Ars Amatoria*.

[90] The allegations of Bishop Jón may not have been wholly unfounded: Bishop Klængr is known to have had a daughter, Jóra Klængsdóttir, born out of wedlock through his extramarital relations to Yngvildr Þorgilsdóttir.

[91] Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*; Clark, 'Introduction'.

[92] *Jóns saga* (S), ed. by Foote, 13; *Jóns saga* (L), ed. by Foote, 24.

love poems were the opposite of steadfast prayers. In *Jóns saga*, the spatial discourse of Christianity was as a community defended against demonic intrusion by praying and performing the perfect Mass, and hence the holy bishop had to distance himself from the learned tradition of love.

Three other narratives produced at Þingeyrar deal with the conflict between heroes and evil forces. They all concern laymen at the time of conversion, who were eager to accept the new religion and who ended up as monks. These men were Þorvaldr Koðránsson *inn viðfǫrli* in *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrla* written by the monk Gunnlaugr Leifsson, the missionary king Óláfr Tryggvason in Oddr *munkr*'s *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, and the Swedish king's son Yngvarr *víðfǫrli* Eymundsson in *Yngvars saga víðfǫrla*.

Þorvaldr Koðránsson travelled widely in Europe, was baptized, and brought the Saxon bishop Friðrekr back to Iceland. Friðrekr was able to impress Þorvaldr's father, Koðrán, with his beautiful voice, white clothes, and appearance. At first, Koðrán refused to be converted since Koðrán already had his own *spámaðr* (soothsayer), who, according to *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrla*, lived in a stone near the farm and could predict future events and protect his cattle. Friðrekr then sprinkled the stone with holy water, and the *spámaðr* soon appeared to Koðrán in his dreams, complaining that heated drops burned him. He urged Koðrán to send Friðrekr away.[93] But the sprinkling went on and the appearance of the *spámaðr* changed each night, becoming darker and uglier. In the end, he was forced to move out into the wilderness like an outlaw.[94] Koðrán could now see that his *spámaðr* had been a deceiver who had led Koðrán away from the light and into the dark. By showing the true nature of the *spámaðr* in the stone, Koðrán's inclination to resist conversion also crumbled. But the demon in the stone did not vanish; he was banished to the wilderness, and the author seems to imply that he threatened to return if Christians abandoned their Masses and prayers.

However, at the end of the *þáttr*, Friðrekr and Þorvaldr themselves fail to meet a challenge with piety and humbleness. Þorvaldr killed two men who had recited libellous verses against him and Friðrekr, and they were both outlawed

[93] *Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, p. 67.

[94] *Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, p. 68. Bishop Friðrekr's next feat is a variant of this theme. Two heathen berserks, both skilled in magic, were most eager opponents of Christian conduct, and at a wedding they challenged Friðrekr to walk through fire. Friðrekr put on his liturgical clothes and sprinkled water on the fire, while the berserks were burned badly and died. Physical force is not enough in itself; it had to be acquired through faith in God.

and condemned to live like wolves.[95] Friðrekr returned to his homeland, while Þorvaldr left Iceland simply because he wanted to live like a good Christian. He could not be the meek and loving man he wanted to be if he remained in Iceland.[96] Instead, he travelled to Jerusalem and Constantinople, before he founded a monastery in Russia where he died as a monk.[97] The heathens and the evil spirits still inhabited his homeland, not only the wilderness but also the areas where people lived, and in this fight he did not have the necessary meekness. In Gunnlaugr's version of his life, as long as Iceland was heathen, the only way Þorvaldr could find a safe haven in his search for salvation was to become a monk. The message to Gunnlaugr's audience was that heroic monks and bishops who could resist demonic forces in the wilderness were essential for Icelandic society.

In the version of Óláfr Tryggvason by Oddr Snorrason, the missionary hero survived the Battle of Svǫldr and first became a pilgrim and then ended his days as a monk in Greece or Syria.[98] Most other saga authors considered such rumours suspicious and unfounded. Oddr was well aware of the uncertainty surrounding the fate of Óláfr, but he thought it likely that the king had voluntarily laid down his arms because he was inspired by the Holy Spirit and had started doing penance for sins, as he had done before he became a Christian.[99]

[95] Friðrekr tells Þorvaldr that he could now interpret the dream his mother had when he was young; she dreamed that she found a wolf's hair on Friðrekr's head. The Icelanders had now made him an outlaw, which in the legalistic discourse was close to being a wild wolf (*Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, pp. 85–86). However, he died in Germany in *háleitum heilagleik* (utmost holiness), *Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, p. 88.

[96] *Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, pp. 87–88. The saint-like closing of his life seems proper, since Þorvaldr is shown to have been the first missionary of Iceland. It was he and not the German-speaking Friðrekr who preached the gospel to the Icelanders. However, Þorvaldr is still presented as a warrior who wants to defend his honour.

[97] *Þorvalds þáttr*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, pp. 88–89. *Kristni saga*, ed. by Sigurgeir Steingrímsson, Ólafur Halldórsson, and Foote, p. 37 cites a verse from an otherwise unknown Brandr *inn viðfǫrli* who visited the monastery, close to Polotsk, where Þorvaldr died as a holy man. It is proper that the monastery in Russia was dedicated to St John the Baptist, since Þorvaldr had prepared Iceland for conversion. See also the discussion in Sverrir Jakobsson, 'The Schism that Never Was'.

[98] Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, pp. 241–43.

[99] Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 242 (A). Oddr is telling the same story about the English king Haraldr Gudinesson (Harold Godwinsson). According to Oddr, the king actually survived the Battle of Hastings and, reminded of the fate

Óláfr was a king, not a bishop, but Oddr depicted his fight against the heathen forces in Norway in a manner very similar to that of Friðrekr in *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrla*. Some of Óláfr's qualities would also be valuable for a bishop or monk, such as his gift of speech, given to him by St Martin.[100]

Like Þorvaldr *inn víðfǫrli*, Óláfr chose to avoid the worship of heathen gods even before hearing about Christianity, because he sensed that they represented evil. His determination to face and conquer the evil spirits and heathen gods of Norway is of great importance. Oddr Snorrason tells remarkable stories about the opponents of Óláfr — some of them were not even human, but spirits of 'another nature' that appeared as men.[101] Evil spirits lurked everywhere,[102] magicians (*seiðmenn*) threatened the king repeatedly,[103] and the power of the heathen gods could materialize, as storytellers or beautiful women, in order to break down Christian practice and conduct.[104] Indeed, the whole conspiracy against Óláfr at Svǫldr is said to have been a deception by a lying spirit.[105] This

of Óláfr Tryggvason, he became a monk (pp. 245–46). Oddr was quite harsh to those who doubted that King Óláfr ended his life as a monk. The best comparison he could think of was to the 'most unclean animals' (pp. 246–47).

[100] Oddr Snorrason, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 113.

[101] See esp. Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, pp. 139–40, about Eyvindr *kinnrifa*, who was actually an unclean spirit caught by a Sámi and placed in a womb to become a chieftain. Another opponent from Hálogaland was Þórir *hjǫrtr* who, after being hit by an arrow, escaped in the shape of a hind (pp. 140–41). Oddr thought it was legitimate to kill those who actively resisted the Christian faith or refused to give up sacrificing to the heathen gods; cf. the case of Hróaldr í Goðey (pp. 117–19); Hróaldr í Moldafirði (pp. 165–66); Járn-Skeggi (p. 164); an anonymous speaker against Christianity who was forced to swallow a snake (pp. 166–67); Guðrǫðr Eiríksson (pp. 170–72). However, he let the Sámi *spámaðr* who helped him on his arrival in Norway be spared – it is explained that this man had another nature (pp. 67–69). He may have been spared from both conversion and death because he was perceived as ethnically different – as a non-Norwegian and outside the political arena of 'Norway'. Oddr also questioned whether Óláfr should kill a man who killed one of his retainers. In an instance where he did kill a man, Oddr was unfavourable (pp. 167–70). This issue is also discussed in *Jóns saga* in the episode of Gísl Illugason.

[102] Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 140.

[103] Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, pp. 114–16 and 134–36.

[104] This is especially evident in two episodes. First when the Devil, in the shape of Óðinn disguised as a man, told stories to the king. The purpose was to make him tired during Mass the next day (pp. 131–36). Second in the *Trolla þáttr* (Story of the Trolls), where a group of trolls tell each other their failures to seduce or threaten King Óláfr away from Christian conduct (pp. 174–79).

[105] Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, pp. 193–94.

world view is very similar to Gunnlaugr Leifsson's, where evil awaits in the margins of society and the landscape, and where seductive women, who most often were demons, may lead Christians into the wilderness — both in a geographical and theological sense.

Yngvars saga víðfǫrla shares many of the same traits as Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, even though the main section is set in a fantastic landscape in the East.[106] *Yngvars saga* is often grouped with the legendary sagas, but it is also a story about conversion. The protagonist Yngvarr and his son Sveinn travelled in the company of bishops on what appears to be something like a crusade. Although the heroes encountered dragons rather than trolls, the audience was reminded of the achievements of Óláfr Tryggvason when Yngvarr was explicitly compared to the Norwegian missionary king: 'frægazstur madur hefer uerit ok mun vera a nordurlaundum um alldr ok æfi, bædi fyrir gudi ok monnum' (the most famous man in the eyes of God and men ever to have come out of Scandinavia, or whoever will, to the end of time).[107]

On his way eastwards from Russia, Yngvarr encountered many dangers which were all distinctly heathen and diabolic. For instance, the flying dragon Jákulus could only be shot down by a spear with consecrated fire on it, piercing the dragon down the throat and right into its heart.[108] Yngvarr strongly condemned and prohibited any contact with heathens or even the slightest interest in their practices, as well as warning against approaching monsters of the land. He even killed his own men who failed to obey his prohibition.[109] Most of Yngvarr's followers died due to their involvement with heathens, despite his warnings, especially in their encounters with heathen women.[110] In *Yngvars saga*, the threat is the failure to resist the seduction of heathen women.

[106] On the historicity of the journey and the Byzantine and Armenian contexts, see Shepard, 'Yngvarr's Expedition to the East'.

[107] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, pp. 9–10. A translation is found in Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, *Vikings in Russia*, p. 49. The portrayal of Yngvarr here is similar to Oddr's description of Óláfr Tryggvason.

[108] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, p. 42; cf. p. 21. Jákulus is also mentioned in a small treatise on *ormur* (snakes/dragons), printed in *Alfræði Íslenzk*, ed. by Kålund, I, 39. Both these passages are generally believed to draw on Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*. On the reception and appropriation of the learned ethnography of monsters in the late-twelfth to fourteenth centuries, see Simek, *Altnordische Kosmographie*, pp. 237–49; Simek, 'Wunder des Nordens'; Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Black Men and Malignant-Looking'.

[109] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, p. 16; also p. 41.

[110] This is especially evident when they meet women on the shores of the great river. First

Sveinn Yngvarsson later followed in his father's footsteps to the East with a whole army of Christian bishops and priests. He married the queen, Silkisif, but made sure that she was baptized before the marriage.[111] Finally, Silkisif built a church in her city and dedicated it to the blessed King Yngvarr.[112] The bishop doubted the sanctity of this king, since he knew of no miracles after Yngvarr's burial. Silkisif countered by citing the words the bishop himself had taught her: that the steadfastness of true faith and the constancy of holy love are worth more in the eyes of God than the glory of miracles. Frequent Masses were then sung for the soul of Yngvarr.[113]

A good and heroic Christian is thus one who rejects any kind of seductive tricks by the Devil. Þorvaldr, King Óláfr, and Svein Yngvarsson confront evil spirits no less than showing bravery on the battlefield. Though this latter quality remains necessary for laymen, the former determines if the bravery should be attributed to a Christian identity.[114]

they came to the city ruled by the beautiful Queen Silkisif. Yngvarr told his men to stay away from the heathen women of the land, but instructed the queen in the Christian mysteries himself. She fell in love with Yngvarr, but she had to wait until he came back from the source of the river. In the meantime, Yngvarr and his men had approached another city full of beautiful and seductive women. Many of his men were unable to resist the charm of these women, and as a consequence eighteen were found dead the next morning. Yngvarr himself stabbed a heathen woman in her genitals (*kvenskǫpin*) with a knife, because she had intended to seduce him. Soon after almost everyone was afflicted with disease, even Yngvarr. *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, pp. 26–27. The women Yngvarr confronted are similar to the feared Amazons on the margins of Europe. *Yngvars saga* refers to this tradition, citing the *Gesta Saxonum* (generally thought to be a lost work of Einhard), which tells of a Swedish king who was killed by these female warriors in the East (pp. 47–48). On this episode and its biblical references, see now Haki Antonsson, 'Salvation and Early Saga Writing', pp. 79–82.

[111] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, pp. 43–44.

[112] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, p. 45.

[113] *Yngvars saga*, ed. by Olson, pp. 45–46. On the *Yngvar saga*'s concern with Yngvarr's sanctity and lack of miracles and the correspondence to Oddr Snorrason's attitude towards the lack of miracles by King Óláfr Tryggvason, see Haki Antonsson, 'Salvation and Early Saga Writing', pp. 88–91.

[114] Literary scholars have noted that Oddr's saga is full of allusions to biblical and European heroic legends; see esp. Lönnroth, 'Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga'. On the other hand, the saga also draws heavily on the structure of fairy tales, e.g., the triad pattern and the hero marrying the princess. This hybridity of European Christian and indigenous mythical traditions makes Russia the territory of the unknown, of monsters and of heathens. On the Norse conceptions of the East, see Simek, 'Elusive Elysia, or: Which Way to Glæsivellir'; Sverrir Jakobsson, *Við og veröldin*.

In a study of visions and demonic attacks in the sagas of Icelandic saints (*Þorláks saga*, *Jóns saga*, and *Guðmundar saga*), Margaret Cormack points out that supernatural beings only tried to seduce men and that there are comparatively few examples of seduction of women by male demons.[115] She argues that in these sagas it was only through stories of supernatural beings that female sexuality could be experienced as a threat, since men elsewhere in Icelandic sources are most often represented as sexual aggressors and not the 'victims'.[116] She also suggests that this kind of monastic identity, with special emphasis on battles between men and demons, was developed at the monastery of Þingeyrar.[117]

The dangerous seductress is a figure also found in other contexts and genres, and of course not only as a supernatural being. However, at Þingeyrar, a clear link was made between resisting sexual attacks from the periphery, and defending the Christian identity of the individual and the community. The spatial organization in these texts placed the bishops or missionaries in the centre, defending not only themselves but all Christian men against the temptations of evil found on the margins of the community.[118] In this way, the clerics' relations with women were primarily dangerous when the cleric was defined as inferior to a seductress from the periphery. The cleric then had to defend his Christian identity, which was put to the test. As a consequence, clerical celibacy was of secondary importance, since marriage to a good, Christian woman strengthened the episcopal household as a central place.

This difference between the literature connected with Skálholt, where the episcopal identity was connected to courtly learning and the household, and that of Hólar, might be related to the strong Benedictine influence in the north. A traditional vogue in medieval monasticism, from the time when Antony walked into the Egyptian desert *c.* 270, was to confront the lures of demons and sexual temptations in the wilderness. The desert, or any kind of wilder-

[115] Cormack, 'Visions, Demons and Gender'.

[116] Cormack, 'Fjölkunnugri konu skallatu í faðmi sofa', pp. 221–28; Cormack, 'Visions, Demons and Gender', p. 202.

[117] Cormack, 'Saints' Lives and Icelandic Literature', pp. 38–39.

[118] Episodes concerning supernatural women include the story of Selkolla, a seal-headed woman who tried to seduce a man (*Miðsaga Guðmundar biskups*, ed. by Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Jón Sigurðsson, 34–35); trolls at Eiði in Kerlingarfjǫrðr (*Miðsaga Guðmundar biskups*, ed. by Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Jón Sigurðsson, 28); Snorri of Skálavík who was attacked by a troll-woman, but rescued by Guðmundr (*Guðmundar saga A*, ed. by Stefán Karlsson, 85). The wife of Kolbeinn Tumason was also seized by trolls (*Miðsaga Guðmundar biskups*, ed. by Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Jón Sigurðsson, 2; cf. Cormack, 'Visions', p. 197).

ness, became the prime arena for testing spiritual steadfastness and faith in God when facing the evil forces of the periphery.[119]

Court Criticism and Marginal Space in Sverris saga

In 1152 or 1153, the new archbishopric in Trondheim was established. It became a centre of learning and writing under the leadership of Eysteinn Erlendsson (1157–88) and Eiríkr Ívarsson (1188–1205). They had both been students at St Victor in Paris and supported the foundation of a number of Augustinian houses in Norway.[120] The new archdiocese cooperated closely with the royal power, supporting the coronation and salvation of the young King Magnús Erlingsson in 1163 or 1164. A royal ideology centred on the cult of St Óláfr and the kings being the *miles* of the royal saint and protected by him was developed in these years.

However, this alliance between the kingdom and the Church was challenged by Sverrir from the Faeroes, who claimed to be the son of King Sigurðr *munnr*. Sverrir was victorious over King Magnús in the Battle of Fimreite in 1184 and, despite stern opposition from the archbishops of Niðaróss and papal excommunication, he remained king until his death in 1202. Soon after his victory at Fimreite, he commissioned the Icelander Karl Jónsson to write a saga about him. Karl was abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Þingeyrar from 1169 to 1181 and again from 1188 to 1204. He must have known the monks Oddr Snorrason and Gunnlaugr Leifsson well. From 1185 to 1188, he was in Norway and stayed at the court of King Sverrir, where he started work on the part of *Sverris saga* called *Grýla*.[121]

[119] On the symbolic meaning and political relevance of the desert in Athanasius's *Vita Antonii*, see Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony*; Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*; Endsjø, *Primordial Landscapes, Incorruptible Bodies*. The ideal of ascetic exclusion in *Vita Antonii* had a strong influence on early medieval hagiography, such as the central *vitae* of Sts Martin, Benedict, and Columba; see Jean Leclercq, 'Saint Antoine dans la tradition monastique médiévale'.

[120] On the Augustinians in Scandinavia, see Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*.

[121] It is disputed how far *Grýla* extends in the preserved versions of *Sverris saga*. The latest editor suggests that it contains the first hundred chapters, and that Karl Jónsson added the rest not long after his visit to Norway shortly after 1200. See Þorleifur Hauksson, 'Formáli'. The title *Grýla*, meaning something like 'terror' or 'terror-maker', probably alludes to how Sverrir struck terror into his opponents, as St Óláfr did in disbelievers and heathens in the contemporary *Legendary saga of St Óláfr*.

In order to legitimate Sverrir's rulership at a time when the king met severe opposition from the archbishop and several of the bishops, Karl Jónsson had to adjust the presentation of Sverrir according to biblical images. To do this, the monk used several themes in common with the sagas of Þingeyrar discussed above. First, there is an emphasis on self-control. Sverrir may be the first Norwegian king to proudly claim monogamy in the sense of not having concubines alongside his queen. The motivation for his monogamy may have been partly political, trying to stop the internal struggles and secure his son's succession. This is the logic behind the oath he swore on his deathbed, that he had no son alive other than Hákon. However, the other instances of exclusion of women from Sverrir's life story indicate that sexual relations with women were a moral issue. An indication of this may be found in the pro-Sverrir *Speech against the Bishops*, probably written in 1199. Here, the author condemns clerics who 'seduce other men's wives and daughters or other relatives, more than any simple-minded and unlearned man would do'.[122] Sverrir thus used a discourse where his distance from women clearly had a moral stance; he obeyed the laws of the Church more than the priests.

Sverrir's avoidance of women is in stark contrast with how Magnús Erlingsson is depicted in *Sverris saga*. He is said to have dressed in a fashionable way and was fond of splendour, and was moreover a notorious womanizer (*kvennamaðr mikill*).[123] Rumours concerning his fondness for women were widespread, something that became evident when several pretenders later claimed to be his illegitimate sons.

Related to self-control in relations with women is Sverrir's hostility towards heavy drinking. Sverrir never drank so much that he lost self-control.[124] Sverrir's exceptional moderation in drinking is also evident at the start of the saga, when people were trying to figure out who he actually was during feasts. Sverrir, however, remained sober and found out more about his opponents than they did about him.[125] His moderation in drink was, as Sverre Bagge has pointed out, a political innovation that signalled a more authoritarian monarchy, 'stressing respect and obedience to the king rather than the egalitarian solidarity of the drinking parties.'[126] But the saga also values this as a sign of self-control and

[122] *En tale mot biskopene*, ed. by Holtsmark, p. 3.

[123] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 98, p. 151.

[124] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 181.

[125] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 7.

[126] See Bagge, *From Gang Leader to the Lord's Anointed*, pp. 73–74, on the political significance of drinking fellowship and segregation.

firmness, and indicates that it made Sverrir morally and militarily superior to his enemies. This is especially clear when the saga writer gives us glimpses of Erlingr *skakki*'s leadership before the Battle of Kalvskinnet in 1179. He thought that Sverrir's men were far away and that his men could sleep safe that night. But one of Erlingr's men asked him to reconsider: 'herra, at þér gefið meira gaum at gera yðr mjok drukkna af miði eða víni en gera staðfastlig ráð fyrir liði yðru' (my lord, that you give more attention to getting drunk on ale and wine than to giving your men firm orders to rely on).[127]

Perhaps the clearest criticism of the morals of courtly life is found in the story of the Icelandic skald Máni and his encounter with jongleurs at the court of King Magnús Erlingsson. Máni *skáld* had returned from a pilgrimage to Rome and appeared at the court of Magnús Erlingsson as a poor man in ragged clothing.[128] On the king's request, he performed a poem to the court about King Sigurðr Jórsalafari's journey to the Holy Land. Two jongleurs also entertained the court, making their dogs jump in front of each man: the higher the jump, the higher the status of the man in front of them. King Magnús was somewhat amused when the dogs did not jump very high for Máni, but Máni responded by reciting two libellous stanzas about the jongleurs. He presented their way of playing instruments as ludicrous; their eyes rolled, and their cheeks became swollen. The contrast between the ascetic pilgrim and skald who praised the deeds of a great crusader, and the performers who sought to please the ambitions of the aristocracy at home while defaming a good Christian, is transparent in this story. The conflict between Máni and the jongleurs not only reflected a tension between skaldic art, praising warrior qualities, and court entertainment, but also a new criticism of court culture that was widespread elsewhere in Europe. Here the ideology is in line with the politics of the French king Philip Augustus (1180–1223), who banned jongleurs from his court, and promised as a good Christian to give garments to the naked and the poor instead.[129]

On several occasions, Norway is presented as a space similar to the Holy Land itself, and Sverrir's struggles as similar to crusades. First of all, the saga presents Sverrir as loading his battles with religious symbols, as well as using

[127] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 34, p. 56.

[128] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 85. This *þáttr* is only found in the main manuscript of the saga, Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 327 4to from *c.* 1300 and is possibly a later interpolation. Jakobsen, 'Tåtten om Måne skald' points to several misspellings in the *þáttr*, something that suggests it was interpolated sometime in the thirteenth century.

[129] See Baldwin, 'The Image of the Jongleur', p. 640.

the battle cry of St Óláfr. He also showed exceptional esteem for the Virgin Mary.[130] His great warship Maríusúðin was dedicated to her, and Sverrir prayed for strength and luck to all those who sailed in it.[131] Relics were built into the ship, and this later helped him in the Battle of Fimreite in 1184.[132] This ship can be compared to the legendary sword Durendal, used by Roland in the service of Charlemagne. Durendal contained a tooth of St Peter, some blood of St Basil, hairs of St Denis, and a piece of Mary's clothing, and Roland did his utmost to stop the heathens from acquiring it. Like that famous sword, Sverrir's Maríusúðin was a floating reliquary designed for battle against the enemies of St Óláfr and his 'son'.

Sverrir never went to the Holy Land, although he intended to do so.[133] Instead, he made the Holy Land come to him. He built a castle at Niðaróss that was called Síon, a manifestation of the analogy between Sverrir and David. This emphasized that Sverrir was indeed chosen by God to rule Norway.[134] Nearby was the hill called Feginsbrekka (Hill of Grace), where Sverrir is said to have knelt down in prayers.[135] This place may be analogous to the famous Montjoie in the Holy Land.[136] The name was hardly an invention by Sverrir but rather a reflection of the status of the church of St Óláfr as one of the main pilgrimage centres. By connecting the castle Síon to the relics and church of St Óláfr, Sverrir emphasized his special connection with this religious centre.

In the first part of the saga, Sverrir is situated in the wilderness, while his opponents are most often found in central places. He came from the remote Faroe Islands, called the 'outer skerries' in the saga, and he repeatedly had to walk in deep, unknown woods, suffering from cold and hunger.[137] However, Sverrir's initial marginalization in his career as king is more concerned with the voluntarily tribulations he had to undergo. To Karl Jónsson, the king's trials in the wilderness could be used to invoke the monastic ideal of the Christian hero

[130] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 15, 18, 20.

[131] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 80.

[132] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 91. When this ship was later burned by Sverrir's opponents, it was said that the holy cross in the church was sweating as a consequence, *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 102.

[133] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 9.

[134] Christophersen, 'Borgen på Berget'.

[135] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 35.

[136] Gunnes, *Erkebiskop Øystein*, p. 177.

[137] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 7, 12, 18–20.

as found in the writings connected with Þingeyrar and Hólar. Although himself a Benedictine, he might have been influenced during his stay in Norway by the Cistercians, who revitalized the ideal of ascetic life on the edge of civilization, renouncing all forms of luxury and splendour. Sverrir himself had close connections with the Cistercian abbey at Hǫfuðey close to Oslo. He is said to have heard Mass there, and he trusted the abbey so much as to leave his treasure in the wall of its church.[138]

In *Sverris saga*, Sverrir and his men did indeed meet the forces of the Devil. During a terrible storm in the mountains, the situation became so desperate that many considered suicide. Some men wanted to jump off cliffs to end their sufferings, while others thought it more proper to follow the example of brave men in the past in carrying weapons against themselves.[139] Sverrir, however, thought that the temptation to commit suicide was merely the Devil's trap, and called suicide a madman's deed, something one does if he has no self-control.[140] One was instead to repent his sins and beg for mercy with piety and humility. The saga says that the weather then cleared up so that they were able to see their path down from the mountains.

The uses of the periphery, anti-courtliness, and an ascetic rhetoric conform to the saga school of Þingeyrar. Karl Jónsson was familiar with the rhetoric of the margins of society, as evident in, for instance, Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* and *Yngvars saga víðfǫrli*. He may also have had an interest

[138] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 132, 134, 136. In September 1200, the Cistercian General Chapter condemned monks for holding Masses for the excommunicated King Sverrir, and punished them harshly (three days *in gravi culpa*). Other monks who had exchanged kisses of peace or had conversation with the king were to be whipped and fast for three days. Johnsen, *De norske cistercienserklostre*, pp. 80–81.

[139] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 19. Hermann Pálsson suggested that the 'brave men in the past' who killed themselves may have been those found in the account of *Rómverja saga*, based on Sallust's *Jugurtha* and *Catiline* and Lucan's *Pharsalia*, where Vulteius and his men killed themselves rather than being captured by Caesar. See Hermann Pálsson, 'Boklig lærdom i Sverris saga', pp. 61–62. It is likely that both Sverrir and Karl Jónsson had read the works by Lucan and Sallust that *Rómverja saga* was based on. A likely source of this saga is a manuscript from the Benedictine monastery Echternach, and the manuscipt evidence indicates that *Rómverja saga* was most likely translated at the diocese of Hólar. It has been questioned whether the Old Norse *Rómverja saga* was used as a source in *Sverris saga* and, more specifically, whether the suicide scene was from a learned source rather than oral tradition, see Wellendorf, '"Ancient Traditions" in *Sverris saga*'. However, in *Sverris saga* there are many scenes that alluded to both oral tradition and learned writings, see Bandlien, 'Hegemonic Memory'.

[140] *Sverris saga*, ed. by Þorleifur Hauksson, 20.

in presenting Sverrir as a virtuous ruler showing power in a new way, avoiding sexual transgressions and worldly pride.[141] In this way, the world view of the Benedictines in northern Iceland could be used as counter-rhetoric to both the outlook of the Augustinian view of society which was more distant from an audience of warriors, and the courtliness of the cathedral schools.

Conclusion

At the turn of the thirteenth century, Icelandic centres of learning were familiar with many of the same texts as elsewhere in medieval Europe. As sites of knowledge, the monasteries and cathedral schools in Iceland were closely linked to a world view where the autonomous chieftain's household was the hegemonic centre. This is especially evident in *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga* written at Skálholt, where the ideal bishops are presented as able householders. Even in *Þorláks saga* this ideal is important, although it is almost apologetic on behalf of the holy protagonist when he fails to marry. The texts written at Þingeyrar in the north also presented the episcopal household as the centre, on which the peace and prosperity of the whole district depended.

However, in this period the Icelandic Church also strove to become independent from the control of chieftains and to shape distinct episcopal and clerical identities. The strategies used by the authors in the dioceses of Skálholt and Hólar differed in how they applied classical and theological learning to achieve this. In *Hungrvaka* and *Páls saga*, the image of the courtier bishop, connected with the development of the cathedral schools in Germany from the end of the tenth century, became important. The leaders of these schools were 'charismatic', in the sense of being admired for their eloquence, dress, and manners. In the intellectual milieu of the Benedictine monastery of Þingeyrar and the bishopric of Hólar, the ideal bishop and the Christian hero are constructed as protectors of Christianity against the demonic wilderness. In these texts, the correct use of sacraments and prayers is crucial for upholding Christian society. The third strategy, represented by Bishop Þorlákr of Skálholt, depicts the ascetic, saintly bishop who is less impressive in outer appearance and speech, but gains authority through self-control, displaying virtues such as meekness, steadfastness, and sexual abstinence. All these strategies could also be applied

[141] On *Sverris saga* against the context of the contemporary royal ideology, see Weiler, 'The *Rex renitens* and the Medieval Ideal of Kingship'; Weiler, 'Kingship, Usurpation and Propaganda'.

to various degrees depending on the context, as shown in *Sverris saga*. This royal biography is partly characterized by the Benedictine world view attached to Þingeyrar, but elements of self-control and court criticism are also used to portray this controversial king as a Christian hero.

This diversity leads to the conclusion that the development of intellectual culture and clerical identity was a complex process in the Icelandic centres of learning. Tensions and negotiations between the different strategies of identity are visible in such issues as reading the amorous Ovid, clerical marriage, and the relationship with a powerful aristocracy. Such negotiations were also found elsewhere in Europe at this time, but in the Icelandic context these issues had to be balanced against the household as an economic, social, and symbolic centre, not only within the Church, but also in the world of the laity.

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Canon Law and Politics in Grímr Hólmsteinsson's *Jóns saga baptista II*

Kristoffer Vadum
Translated from Norwegian by Alan Crozier

Hidden deep in the Icelandic Diplomatarium (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*, henceforth DI) there is a document (DI II, 93) which shows how canonistic literature towards the end of the thirteenth century manifested itself as part of a learned culture in Iceland, not just in internal ecclesiastic circles, but also in the public space. It is a translated extract from Raymond of Peñafort's confessional manual *Summa de casibus*, containing an exposition of the dangers to which lay people can expose themselves by consorting with excommunicated persons.[1] Since the extract explicitly refers to *meistari Remundus*, this makes it rare testimony to the reception of canonistic texts in Iceland.[2] The significance of this is obvious, since Raymond's confessional manual was one of the most widely spread canonistic treatises in the thirteenth century and can be documented early in Norse book collections.[3]

[1] *Diplomatarium Islandicum* (henceforth DI), II, 93, pp. 216–17; *Summa de casibus* (henceforth SdC) tit. 3.33.28, col. 767. The general argument in this article is based on ch. 3 in my PhD dissertation, 'Bruk av kanonistisk litteratur i Nidarosprovinsen ca. 1250–1340', pp. 163–225.

[2] See the reference in DI II, p. 216, and Westergård-Nielsen, 'Introduction: The Contents of the Manuscript', pp. 20–21.

[3] On the spread of the work in Europe, see Roblès, 'Escritores dominicos de la Corona de Aragón', pp. 14–33; Bertram, 'Goffredo da Trani', pp. 545–49; Bertram, 'Nochmals zum Dekretalenapparat des Goffredus Tranensis', p. 644.

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But although the provenance of the text has been known for a long time, the most striking aspect of the document has not received any attention, namely the clergy's *active reworking* of canonistic literature as a basis for argumentation aimed at lay people. When God's law was to be measured against the law of the land, the canonists' commentaries offered an arsenal of arguments suitable for asserting the Church's views in almost every conceivable field. The legal commentaries could thus glide seamlessly into political ideology.

In this connection we shall look more closely at another text, strangely overlooked, which shows that DI II, 93 was not an isolated example, but that the works of *meistari Remundus* were actively used in public debate in Iceland towards the end of the thirteenth century. The searchlight will be pointed at *Jóns saga baptista II* (henceforth referred to as *Jóns saga baptista*), a hagiographic saga compiled from various sources by the Icelandic priest Grímr Hólmsteinsson (d. 1298), in which chapters 19–21 incorporate a large amount of material from *Summa de casibus*.[4] Since parts of the argumentation contain a violent polemic against secular authorities infringing the freedom of the Church, and since this polemic was transferred to a medium and a linguistic form that was evidently intended to be widely disseminated, I shall argue that the saga must be regarded as an ideological mouthpiece in an ongoing conflict.

The historical context for the argumentation in the saga is the movement for ecclesiastical reform initiated during Árni Þorláksson's time as bishop of Skálholt (1269–98). The system of private churches, which by this time had long been abolished in the rest of Europe, was still vigorous in Iceland, and for the remainder of the century Bishop Árni waged a persistent campaign to wrest control over church property from the Icelandic magnates. These efforts were nourished by the dramatic changes taking place in the political structure in Iceland in this period. In 1264 the commonwealth ruled by the *goðar* was abolished, and the country became subject to the Norwegian Crown. The entry of the king into the political arena gave the Church a powerful ally in the struggle to achieve its reforms, but there was a reverse to the medal. This was emphatically demonstrated when in the 1280s the Norwegian ecclesiastical province was torn by a violent conflict between the king and the Church, with disastrous consequences for Bishop Árni's reform programme.[5] The canonistic argumen-

[4] *Jóns saga baptista II* (henceforth JBapt) is edited in Carl Richard Unger's *Postola sögur*, pp. 849–931. On the shorter forerunners of the saga, see Johannessen, 'Litt om kildene til Jóns saga baptista II'.

[5] Magnús Stefánsson, 'Frá goðakirkju til biskupskirkju, Staðamal'; Beistad, *Kirkens frihet: Biskop Arne Torlaksson som Islands reformator*; Bagge, '"Salvo semper regio iure": Kampen om Sættargjerden 1277–1290', pp. 201–24.

tation in the saga should therefore be understood against the background of the critical situation in which the Church found itself in the late 1280s. The vehement assaults on secular powers infringing the Church's property rights, jurisdiction, and immunity derive from the political problems about which we can read in contemporary sources.

Against this background it is astonishing that the political argumentation in the saga has not attracted more attention in research.[6] The clearly addressed political tone in the saga is virtually unparalleled in the numerous hagiographical sagas extant in Old Norse. This applies in particular to the older hagiographical sagas, which tend to be rather simple accounts of saints' lives and miracles. But the same also applies to the sagas in so-called florid style, of which *Jóns saga baptista* is an early example, where the hagiographical narrative is spiced with large portions of doctrinal material, chiefly from patristic and theological texts.[7] Compared with these saga texts, *Jóns saga baptista* seems like a political bomb. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the saga contains perhaps the strongest concentration of scholastic law that can be identified in any medieval Norse source. It thus gives insight into how canonistic commentary literature served as a foundation for political ideology in one of the most turbulent phases of Icelandic church history.

[6] A recently completed doctoral dissertation by Astrid Marner at the University of Bonn in 2013, 'Glosur lesnar af undirdiupi omeliarum hins mikla Gregorij, Augustini, Ambrosij ok Jeronimi ok annarra kennifedra: Väterzitate und Politik in der Jóns saga baptista des Grímr Hólmsteinsson', was not yet available when the research for this article was undertaken. Apart from this, the political argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* is considered briefly by Einar Ólafur Sveinsson, *Sturlungaöld*, p. 156; Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'Um Hrafnkels sögu Freysgoða, heimild til íslenskrar sögu', p. 74, and Helgi Þorláksson, 'Ambitious Kings and Unwilling Farmers: On the Difficulties of Introducing a Royal Tax in Iceland', p. 138. No scholar has previously investigated how the political argumentation has a background in canon law. See in general Finnur Jónsson, *Den oldnorske og oldislandske litteraturs historie*, pp. 875–76; Paasche, *Norges og Islands litteratur indtil utgangen av middelalderen*, p. 446; Agerschou, 'Et fragment af Jóns saga baptista'; Widding, Bekker-Nielsen, and Shook, 'The Lives of the Saints in Old Norse Prose: A Handlist'; Johannessen, 'Litt om kildene til Jóns saga baptista II'; Hermann Pálsson, 'Malum non vitiatur, nisi cognitum'; McDougall, 'Pseudo-Augustinian Passages in Jóns saga baptista 2 and the Fourth Grammatical Treatise'; Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar Íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum: rannsókn bókmenntahefðar*; Heizmann, 'Die Nahrung des Täufers in der Jóns saga baptista: Wort- und kulturgeschichtliche Anmerkungen zum altisländischen Pflanzennamen Buxhorn'; Battista, 'The Ten Names of John: A Theological Passage of *Jóns Saga Baptista*'.

[7] On the development of hagiographical literature, see Bekker-Nielsen, 'Legender – helgensagaer', p. 118; Widding, 'Jærtegn og Maríu saga. Eventyr', p. 132; Collings, 'The Codex Scardensis: Studies in Icelandic Hagiography', pp. 3–4; Jónas Kristjánsson, *Eddas and Sagas*, p. 139; Cormack, 'Sagas of Saints', p. 302.

The significance of this canonistic undercurrent in *Jóns saga baptista* is obvious from the Icelandic and Norwegian historiographical context, because we know very little about how canonistic literature was used in a Norse context. Whereas the study of canon law was a natural driving force in intellectual development on the Continent, this has been a black hole in Norwegian and Icelandic historiography.[8] This has to do with the source situation. For whereas canon law in the sense of 'collected ecclesiastical law' is relatively well documented, the source material tells us very little about the reception of the learned juridical literature that discussed the laws of the Church. If we look at the province of Niðarós we find that inventories and wills contain about fifty references to canonistic commentaries in Norwegian and Icelandic book collections in the period *c.* 1300 to 1550, distributed along a relatively narrow range of the most widespread works.[9] The collection of juridical membrane fragments in the National Archives in Oslo could potentially enlarge this figure, but it is limited to around seventy remnants of Latin law books, just a few of which have been identified.[10] We are left with a hazy idea of the books that were once in circulation, but we have very limited potential to investigate their impact on intellectual Norse culture. The canonistic material in DI II, 93 has thus stood out as a curiosity. It affords a glimpse of a learned culture that must have made active use of canon law in the public space, but is simultaneously so isolated that it is virtually impossible to use for any profound analysis.

[8] In a Nordic context there has been a great deal of research on the influence of canon law in recent years, but chiefly on the general influence of canonical doctrine or with reference to the large collections of ecclesiastical law. No one has specifically studied the influence of canonistic commentaries in the province of Niðarós.

[9] See in general Johnsen, 'Norske geistliges og kirkelige institutioners bogsamlinger i den senere middelalder'; Storm, 'Den Bergenske Biskop Arnes Bibliothek'; Kolsrud and Reiss, *Tvo norrøne latinske kvæde med melodiar*, p. 62; Tveitane, 'Bøker og litteratur i Bergen i middelalder og reformasjonstid', p. 108; Olmer, *Boksamlingar på Island 1179–1490: Enligt diplom*; Hörður Ágústsson, 'Bækur', pp. 292–93; Sigurður Líndal, 'Um þekkingu Íslendinga á rómverskum og kanónískum rétti frá 12. öld til miðrar 16. Aldar', pp. 253–54.

[10] The following canonistic texts can be identified in the National Archives in Oslo: Gratian's *Decretum* with *Glossa ordinaria* (Lat. fragm. 165, 166/169, 168, 192); *Glossa ordinaria* to *Decretum* as a separate commentary (Lat. fragm. 160); *Liber extra* with *Glossa ordinaria* (Lat. fragm. 155, 156, 176, 190); *Liber sextus* with *Glossa ordinaria* (Lat. fragm. 158); *Clementinae* with *Glossa ordinaria* (Lat. fragm. 183); Stephan of Tournai's *Summa decretorum* (Lat. fragm. 159); Bernard of Parma's *Casus longi* (Lat. fragm. 162); Pope Innocent IV's *apparatus* to *Liber extra* (Lat fragm. 161); Hostiensis's *Summa aurea* (Lat. fragm. 163); Johannes Andreae's *Novella* to *Regula iuris* (Lat. fragm. 175). There has been no systematic research on this as yet. A large proportion of the fragments contain material on Roman law.

That is precisely why the canonistic excerpts in *Jóns saga baptista* are of special interest. Unlike other canonistic sources surviving from the province of Niðarós, *Jóns saga baptista* gives us an exceptionally good opportunity to contextualize the material. For one thing, it can be linked to one of the legal works that is already best documented in the inventories, namely *Summa de casibus*.[11] Secondly, it is possible to analyse the use of the canonistic material as part of more comprehensive argumentation. Most importantly, however, it is also possible to link the content directly to a specific political setting, because — in contrast to most other hagiographical texts written in Norse — *Jóns saga baptista* was written by a named author about whom we know quite a lot, who was closely associated with the radical circle of church politics that gathered around Árni Þorláksson of Skálholt.[12]

On his mother's side Grímr Hólmsteinsson was grandson of the powerful chieftain Jón Loptsson from Oddi, the old seat of learning in Rangárvellir. He thus belonged to the powerful family of chieftains, the Oddaverjar. On his father's side he was connected to a family of wealthy farmers whose seat was at Holt at Eyjafjöll.[13] Through these family links, Grímr became involved in

[11] 'Summa Remundi' is mentioned six times in inventories and wills from the province of Niðarós, more than any other canonistic text: Bishop Árni [Sigurdsson's] library *c.* 1300, see Kolsrud and Reiss, *Tvo norrøne latinske kvæde*, p. 62; the Oslo canon Gerlak's will from 1304, *Diplomatarium Norvegicum* (henceforth DN) II, 75; the inventory for Hólar from 1396, DI III, 511, p. 612; the inventory for Möðruvellir 1461, DI V, 233, p. 288; the inventory for Skálholt, probably before 1588, Hörður Ágústsson, 'Bækur', p. 293.

[12] On the relationship to the bishop, see *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 3, 29, 81, 127, 142.

[13] A *máldagi* (covenant) for the church of Holt *c.* 1270, DI II, 33, p. 85, starts by saying that 'Grimur prestur holmsteinsson for med þetta maal þa er þetta dæmdist med stadnum' (The priest Grímr Hólmsteinsson presented this case when it was judged conderning the *staðr*). The editors of DI take this as evidence that Grímr was a priest at the church, but it is more likely that he brought the case because of his family connections to the area, presumably as part of the dispute about church property. It should be mentioned that Holt at Eyjafjöll seems to have had a special connection to John the Baptist. Although the church there was not dedicated to John the Baptist, sources testify that the saint was the subject of a special cult: they had an image of him, and they commemorated his beheading as an obligatory feast day on 29 August, in addition to his primary feast day on 24 June, which everyone had to celebrate. Margaret Cormack has found only one other church that commemorated the beheading of John the Baptist in Iceland, so this was highly unusual. Perhaps it was because of Grímr's uncle, Þorgeir Grimsson, that Bishop Magnús Gissursson of Skálholt (1216–37) allowed people to commemorate John the Baptist's beheading in addition to the ordinary saints' days, DI II, 33, p. 85. A connection of this kind is suggested by the fact that Þorgeirr called one of his daughters

the Church's political conflicts in two ways. Through his father's family one can see the basis for an alliance with Bishop Árni, in that Grímr's cousin Ellisif was married to Árni's brother, Magnús Þorláksson.[14] Consequently, Grímr is named early as an important person in the learned milieu around the bishop. After Árni as a young man had moved with his family to Svínafell, he had a great deal of contact with Grímr, who at that time was a priest at the convent of the Benedictine nuns at Kirkjubær.[15] At the same time, the links with the Oddaverjar made Grímr a valuable ally in the bishop's struggle against the system of private churches in Iceland. As the richest and finest of the Icelandic *staðir* (sg. *staðr*, a technical term referring to a church together with surrounding grounds owned by it), Oddi was the hub of the bishop's endeavours to detach ecclesiastical property from secular control.[16] It is therefore not surprising that it was Grímr who was placed at Oddi when the bishop gained control over the *staðr* in 1273.[17] From a political point of view, this can be regarded as a compromise, since Grímr, through his kinship with Jón Loptsson, was a second cousin of Sighvatr Steinvarsson, the bishop's opponent in the conflict. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that Grímr was unsuited to be head of the old seat of learning. Grímr's reputation as a scholar is evident not least from the fact that the saga about John the Baptist was written at the behest of Abbot Rúnolfr Sigmundsson of Þykkvabær, who had undertaken a similar work.[18] At the same time, this confirms Grímr's links with the network around Árni, since Rúnolfr was likewise one of the bishop's closest allies in the

after John the Baptist's mother, Ellisif (Elizabeth), which according to Cormack is the first documented example of this name in Iceland. This is the same Ellisif that married Magnús, brother of Bishop Árni Þorláksson. A similar link to John the Baptist can be found on the maternal side: according to the B-version of *Þorláks saga*, Grímr's grandfather, Jón Loptsson, nourished an unfulfilled desire to build a monastery dedicated to John the Baptist. Cormack assumes that Jon felt a special attachment to John the Baptist, and that he had been called after the saint. Cormack, *The Saints in Iceland: Their Veneration from the Conversion to 1400*, pp. 17, 61, 95, 109–12. All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

[14] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 3. Ellisif was the daughter of Þorgeirr Grimsson of Holt, Grímr's uncle.

[15] This was before Árni went to Abbot Brand to become his clerk, that is, sometime before 1262. Grímr must have been quite a lot older than Árni, who was born in 1237.

[16] For the term *staðir*, see Magnús Stefánsson, *Staðir og staðamál: studier i islandske egenkirkelige og beneficialrettslige forhold i middelalderen*, pp. 19–36.

[17] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 29, cf. 23.

[18] JBapt, pp. 849–50, cf. DI II, 76, pp. 166–67.

struggle against the private churches. These liaisons are also indirectly visible in 1284, when a new round in the conflict meant that Grímr had to leave Oddi.[19] Árni then ensured that he was immediately transferred to the rich church at Breiðabólstaðr in Fljótshlíð, which was already under the Church's control. And when Árni regained Oddi in 1289 he was furious to hear the news that Archbishop Jørund had tried to give the *staðr* to another priest.[20] The archbishop's move was a deliberate violation of the bishop's jurisdiction, but at the same time it is clear that it was Grímr who was supposed to be at Oddi. Through family connections and political alliances, Grímr followed the bishop all his life, and in 1298 his death is mentioned in the Icelandic annals, on an equal footing with the record of Árni's death that same year.[21] Grímr thus moved like an *éminence grise* in the background of Árni's political work, and even though he never speaks directly in the ordinary sources, in *Jóns saga baptista* he has left us a document that makes it possible to get close to the man and the milieu in a way that is rather unique.

Grímr's Use of Summa de casibus *in* Jóns saga baptista

The following analysis seeks to show how Grímr used elements from *Summa de casibus* to comment on controversial political issues in his own time. He not only cites *Summa de casibus* as a source for his general argumentation. Grímr also has specific approaches in his reworking of the source, angling the arguments more clearly towards local problems. In the following part of the chapter I will analyse this from three perspectives. I will first briefly consider how *Summa de casibus* plays a part in the saga as a whole, with particular attention to how the relevant passages from *Summa de casibus* interrelate with the general argument in chapter 19 of *Jóns saga baptista*. Next, I will use the relevant material from *Summa de casibus* to analyse how the argument in the saga relates to current political issues in the 1280s, primarily in an Icelandic context, but also with reference to a more general ecclesiastical ideology throughout the church province. Finally I will draw attention to parallel uses of *Summa de casibus* in other Icelandic translations from approximately the same time. In

[19] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 81.

[20] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 142. Ch. 127 also mentions Grímr among those who signed the previous settlement between laymen and clergy at the ~~Althing~~ in 1288.

[21] *Islandske Annaler*, ed. by Storm, pp. 145, 198.

addition to DI II, 93, a previously unidentified extract from *Summa de casibus* in DI II, 91 suggests that *Jóns saga baptista* is not an isolated example, but that the Church actively used canonistic texts in various documents intended to be presented to a lay audience.

Jóns saga baptista II is extant in a single complete manuscript from around 1350 and several fragments from between *c.* 1350 and 1600. The extracts from *Summa de casibus* appear in all manuscripts that contain chapters 19–21 of the saga.[22] Apart from the usual variations in different manuscripts, there is nothing to suggest that the saga ever circulated in another version.

Altogether the politicized elements make up a relatively limited part of the saga. Both before and after chapters 19–21 (of the total forty-one chapters) Grímr's argumentation is fully in line with what can be found in other sagas in florid style. The saga here takes the form of a chronological account of John the Baptist's life, as Grímr proceeds from different biblical quotations and spices this with large amounts of theological exegesis and additional historical information from *Historia scholastica* and *Speculum historiale*.[23] That is precisely why the sudden turn towards current issues in church politics in chapters 19–21 seems like a rude interruption in the general narrative, an interruption that is further reinforced by the way that Grímr now bases the argumentation on completely different source material. There is no reason to underestimate the intended effect of this narrative turn. The change in literary pace that arises when scholastic law creeps in under the Norse prose is so striking that a fragment of the saga that covers only these passages was once wrongly categorized as 'considerations on canon law'.[24] Although that error

[22] Main manuscript Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 232 fol., *c.* 1350; fragments, Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 233 a fol., *c.* 1350–60; AM 236 fol., *c.* 1600; AM 239 fol., *c.* 1350–1400; AM 385 I 4to, *c.* 1375–1400; AM 651 II 4to, *c.* 1375–1400. Of these, only AM 232 fol., AM 233 a fol., and AM 385 I 4to cover *Jóns saga baptista*, 19–21. The latter fragment, AM 385 I 4to, was still not identified when Unger edited the saga in *Postola sögur*, and as a consequence a passage that originally belonged at the end of ch. 21 was mistakenly placed at the end of ch. 19 (JBapt, p. 881.9–18), cf. Agerschou, 'Et fragment af Jóns saga baptista', pp. 100, 103.

[23] On elements from *Historia scholastica* and *Speculum historiale*, see Johannessen, 'Litt om kildene til Jóns saga baptista II'. The theological material has seen little research, with the exception of McDougall, 'Pseudo-Augustinian Passages', who demonstrates influence from Petrus Chrysologus, *Sermo 127*.

[24] 'Kirkeretlige betragtninger', *Katalog over den arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, II, 598 (Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 385 I 4to), later corrected by Agerschou, 'Et fragment af Jóns saga baptista', p. 97.

was subsequently corrected, the following analysis will demonstrate that the description still has some relevance.

The scriptural background to chapters 19–21 can be found in Luke 3. 12–14, where John the Baptist has intensified his preaching and gives firm instructions to perplexed tax collectors and soldiers:

> Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.[25]

The instructions to these two professional groups serve as a starting point for two lengthy exegeses. Chapter 19 concerns the message to the tax collectors, with comments from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.13, 2.5.15, and 2.5.43. Chapters 20 and 21 cover the message to the soldiers, the first with matter from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.35, 2.5.36, and 2.5.41, the second based on *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.42.[26] Although there are obvious elements of *Summa de casibus* in chapter 19, the agreement is clearest in the discussion of the abuse of power by soldiers and other officials in chapters 20–21, where large parts of the argumentation is taken almost verbatim from the source. The content of these chapters, however, is less interesting for political analysis in that Grímr

[25] Luke 3. 12–14, *The Bible: Authorized King James Version*, p. 75.

[26] Passages in *Jóns saga baptista*, 19–21 with relevant parallels in Ochoa and Diez's edition of *Summa de casibus*, 19: JBapt, p. 879.11–22 (SdC tit. 2.5.13, cols 479.21–29 and 478.32–479.10); JBapt, p. 879.22–26 (SdC tit. 2.5.15, col. 482.30–37), JBapt, p. 880.18–28 (SdC tit. 2.5.43, col. 523.10–25). Ch. 20: JBapt, p. 882.14–18 (SdC tit. 2.5.41, col. 521.14–20); JBapt, p. 882.18–25 (SdC tit. 2.5.35, col. 511.2–12); JBapt, pp. 882.26–883.17 (SdC tit. 2.5.36, cols 511.34–513.2). Ch. 21: JBapt, p. 884.1–10 (SdC tit. 2.5.42, cols 521.21–522.3); JBapt, p. 884.12–15 (SdC tit. 2.5.42, col. 522.8–12); JBapt, p. 884.22–25 (SdC tit. 2.5.42, col. 522.12–17). One passage in ch. 21 suggests that Grímr used a version of *Summa de casibus* provided with commentary by William of Rennes. The statement 'Enn ef þeim er lifshaski at tala við sinn sokudolg, geri hann þat fyrir milli setta personu' (But if it is dangerous to talk to the other party he can use a middleman), JBapt, p. 884.18–19, has no direct support in *Summa de casibus*, but seems to have been derived from William of Rennes' glosses to SdC tit. 2.5.42 v. *recognoscat* and *postulare*, see Raymond of Peñafort, *Summa Sancti Raymundi de Peniafort de poenitentia et matrimonio cum glossis Ioannis de Friburgo*, ed. by Ioannes Tallinus, p. 215. Material from *Summa de casibus* was incorporated into a number of other texts later in the thirteenth century, including Vincent de Beauvais's *Speculum doctrinale*. The latter cannot have been Grímr's source since the text differs in some respects from *Jóns saga baptista*.

follows his source relatively closely without angling it for his own purposes.[27] Much more interesting is the highly rhetorical tirade about tax and infringements of the Church's freedom in chapter 19, since Grímr on this occasion uses his source creatively in order to adapt the argumentation to a contemporary conflict. In the following we shall therefore confine ourselves to Grímr's use of *Summa de casibus* in chapter 19.

The Relationship between Summa de casibus *and* Jóns saga baptista *Chapter 19*

Grímr's manipulation of his original is clear at the very beginning of chapter 19, as he twists the message to the tax collectors into a general discussion of the king's right to impose new taxes, a topic that caused some controversy in the time after Iceland had come under the Norwegian king. Grímr connects two passages from *Summa de casibus* which give a concise account of the doctrine of the king's right to impose new taxes on his subjects in *Summa de casibus* tit. 2.5.13, supplemented with a passage about extraordinary taxes paid to local feudal lords in tit. 2.5.15.[28] The parallel text below shows how the matter in *Jóns saga baptista* echoes *Summa de casibus*:

> En nyiar alǫgur ma konungr eða hofðingi fyrir nauðsyn at eins a leggia oc einkanliga med roksemð heilagrar kirkiu oc fyrir retta sok, ef menn þurfa fostrland sitt at veria fyrir ransmonnum eða vikingum a landi eða sio eða fyrir vorn rettrar truar moti heiðingium oc villumonnum eða annarri þvilikri sok, ma þa konungr þat frealsliga gera eptir stilling eða atvikum. Enn þa er lond eru reinsut oc goðr er friðr, a ekki nyia tolla at auka.
>
> *Jóns saga baptista* (p. 879.15–22)

> The king or ruler may only impose new taxes when necessary and especially with the authority of the Holy Church and for a just cause, if men need to defend their country against robbers or pirates from land or sea, or to defend the true faith against heathens and heretics, or other such causes, then the king can do this freely in moderation and according to circumstances. But when the countries are cleansed and peace reigns, no new tolls shall be raised.

[27] The use of *Summa de casibus* in these chapters is discussed in more detail in my PhD dissertation: 'Bruk av kanonistisk litteratur i Nidarosprovinsen ca. 1250–1340'.

[28] SdC tit. 2.5.13, with the heading *de pedagiis et teloneis* discusses tolls exacted by 'principibus vel regibus' (rulers or kings). SdC tit. 2.5.15, with the heading *de quaestis et talleis* discusses duties imposed by a 'dominus' (feudal lord).

> [col. 479] novum pedagium vel teloneum, nullo modo [...] nisi certum sit illud a principe vel rege statutum, et propter imminentem necessitatem aliquam de supradictis in principio paragraphi.
>
> [col. 478] et praesertim auctoritate Ecclesiae, et ex iusta causa, ut pro defensione stratae publicae contra praedones in terra, vel contra piratas in aqua, vel pro defensione fidei et patriae contra paganos vel haereticos, vel pro alia simili causa, et recipiens facit illud propter quod fuit impositum, libere et sine scrupulo conscientiae potest recipere [...] nec facit expensas quia non est necesse, cum terra sit bene purgata et in pace.
>
> *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.13 (cols 479, 478)

> new pedages and tallages, in no way [...] unless it is instituted by a prince or a king and due to the imminent necessity that was mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph.
>
> and in particular with authority from the Church and for a just cause, such as defence of public roads against robbers at land, or against pirates at sea, or in defence of faith and fatherland against pagans or heretics, or for a similar cause, and if received for the cause it was imposed it can be kept freely and without bad conscience [...] and not make impositions when it is not necessary, when the land is well purged and in peace.

In *Jóns saga baptista*, the passage from *Summa de casibus* tit. 2.5.13 is immediately followed by another set of arguments from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.15:

> Enn i vorn fostriarðar sinnar oc einkannliga borgar sinnar, biar eða kastala, þorps eða heraðs, er maðr eigi skylldr at eins penninga sina til at leggia, helldr oc starf sitt oc vokur til varðhallds oc at giora varnir, oc þar með likama sinn, ef þǫrf er a, at hann megi hallda ser heilum oc sinni eign.
>
> *Jóns saga baptista* (p. 879.22–26)

> But for the defence of the native country and especially its cities, towns or castles, farms or districts, a man is obliged not only to contribute his money but also his labour and sleepless nights in guarding and defence, and also stake his body if necessary to retain health and property.

> Sunt enim quaedam causae iusta: Una pro defensione patriae et maxime suae civitatis, castri vel villae; ad hoc enim tenentur omnes non solum res suas partiri, sed etiam corporaliter laborare, munire se in castro vel civitate, et vigilare ut sic seipsos et res suas salvent.
>
> *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.15 (col. 482)

> For there are certain just causes: one is defence of the fatherland and especially your own town, castle, or farm; to which each and everyone is obliged not only to share their possessions but also to work physically, entrench themselves in a castle or city, and keep watch in order to save themselves and their possessions.

Although the concluding section from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.15 deals with local contributions to the feudal lord (*dominus*), this nuance is not reflected in the Norse translation. The two excerpts are integrated to give a combined statement of the kinds of extraordinary demands a king or ruler (*rex* or *princeps*) is entitled to make of his subjects. At the same time, Grímr underlines that no one else has a right to make such demands.

In this way the argumentation establishes a balanced foundation for the subsequent attack on all those who abuse these rights. After a forceful salvo from Isaiah 10. 1–4, Grímr declares that this kind of taxation is a deadly sin which cannot be forgiven without restitution for the damage.[29] Nor can the revenue be used for anything but the stated purpose, otherwise the sin is greater, regardless of how good the purpose is.[30] The political intention behind this argumentation is emphasized by a rhetorical question roughly half-way through the chapter, where Grímr diverts the topic to church matters:

> Enn þar sem þessi pina gnæfir yfir þeim, er almuginn þrongva, hvat man þa, ef þeir hǫfðingiar, sem leikmanna vald hafa, leggia tolla eða alǫgur eða skatta uskyllda a klerka eða kennimenn ok a kirkiur, dragandi undir sig þeira logsogn, eða taka þat, sem kirkiur eða klerkar eiga, or kirkna vernd?[31]

> But since this torment threatens those who press the common people, how will it not then be if chieftains who have worldly power impose tolls or imposts or undue taxes on clergy or priests and churches, appropriating their jurisdiction or taking what belongs to the churches or the clergy from the protection of the Church?

Whereas what is said about the king's authority to collect taxes represents a relatively free reading of John the Baptist's command to the tax collectors, Grímr now moves several steps away from the frame story in the Bible. On one level this is expressed through the expansion of the topic, away from taxes to cover property rights and jurisdiction as well. More precisely, however, it is obvious that the matter is taken from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.43, which explicitly discusses secular legislation that infringes the freedom of the Church. The argumentation thus shifts from tolls and duties to anti-Church legislation. Anyone who passes such laws shall be excommunicated, and likewise all those who help

[29] JBapt, pp. 879.28–880.7.

[30] The same principles of restitution are thoroughly discussed in *Summa de casibus*, but it is difficult to find any direct models for what is said. At this point argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista*, 19, p. 880.9–13 shows similarities to Gratian's *Decretum*, C. 14 q. 5 c. 2–3.

[31] JBapt, p. 880.18–23.

him. The parallel text below shows how Grímr picks out elements from *Summa de casibus*, but simultaneously treats them with relative freedom:

> Eru oc þessi log ǫll eða skipanir onyt oc mega ekki eptir natturulǫgunum, þviat ekki logmal hefir neitt afl moti guði, oc enn minni hefir ekki valld moti enum meira. Verr oc þessa menn engi hefd ne landzsiðr. Eigu þeir eða þeira arfar þetta allt með fullu aptr at giallda oc rettri stǫðu at bæta oc skafa þessar skipanir af sinum bokum oc fullkomliga at onyta oc or logum taka, aðr þeir fai lausn af þeim, sem valld hefir til at leysa þess kyns mal.
>
> *Jóns saga baptista*, 19 (p. 880.18–28)

> All these laws or ordinances are void and without force according to the law of nature, because no law has any power against God, and the smaller has no power over the greater. And these men have the support of neither tradition nor custom. They or their heirs must repay all this in full and pay a fine according to the law and remove these ordinances from their books and make them totally void and take them out of the laws before they obtain redemption from those who have the authority to absolve this type of matter.

> ipso iure non valent leges suae, quia nulla lex potest valere contra Deum. Minor enim non habet imperium in maiorem. Facientes ergo et consentientes peccant mortaliter, et heredes eorum nisi destruant, nulla consuetudine obstante; immo videtur quod, nisi admoniti tales leges vel statuta eraserint, ipso iure sint excommunicati. Item, si aliqui damnificati sunt occasione talis legis vel statuti, tenentur conditores et eorum heredes ad restitutionem, sicut dictum est de pedagiis et quaestis, supra, eodem, § *Circa pedagia*, et § *De quaestis*, et sicut iudex de iniqua sententia, ut dixi supra eodem, § *Iudices*.
>
> *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.43 (col. 523)

> their laws are not valid *ipso iure*, for no law can have any validity against God. For the lesser does not have authority over the greater. As a result, those who make [the law] and their supporters are in deadly sin, and also their heirs, unless they destroy them, without regard to any custom; it also seems that, if admonished, they do not erase the laws or statutes, they are excommunicated *ipso iure*. Further, if anyone suffers any damages because of such laws or statutes, the funders and their heirs are obliged to make restitution, as said in relation to tolls and taxes, above, in the same title, § *Circa pedagia* and § *De quaestis* [= tit. 2.5.13 and 15], and in relation to a judge of an unjust sentence, as I said above, in the same title, § *Iudices* [= tit. 2.5.35].

No justification is given for diverting the topic from tolls towards questions of church politics, neither in the biblical original nor in *Summa de casibus*. On the other hand, it is worth noting the concluding reference in *Summa de casibus*, which points backwards to the material that Grímr has already used about tolls and taxes (SdC tit. 2.5.13 and 15), and also forward to material that serves as

a basis for the argumentation in chapter 20 (SdC tit. 2.5.35). In that context it may also be noted that the text in *Summa de casibus* is immediately followed by a quotation from Isaiah 10. 1–4, identical to what Grímr quotes a little earlier in the saga. The composition thus seems to be carefully planned. Almost as an alibi for the talk of politics, Grímr ends the chapter by specifying that this is actually an interpretation of John the Baptist's instructions to the tax collectors. He pauses to expand on this with some lines from Bede's *In Lucae evangelium expositio*,[32] but only as a brief transition before he fires off a series of longer passages from *Summa de casibus* in chapters 20 and 21.[33]

The Political and Ideological Context of Jóns saga baptista *Chapter 19*

On this foundation, let us now look more closely at how Grímr uses the material from *Summa de casibus* in a contemporary political and ideological context. Árni Þorláksson's time as bishop of Skálholt (1269–98) was marked by lasting tension and sometimes intense conflict between the Church and the magnates in Iceland. In isolation the individual elements in Grímr's argumentation can be linked to a number of different phases in this period of conflict. Some scholars, however, have suggested that the saga is of special relevance for the political situation that prevailed at the end of the 1280s or the start of the 1290s. In the book *Sturlungaöld* from 1940 Einar Ólafur Sveinsson points out that the argumentation about taxes may be connected to the summons of an Icelandic war fleet in 1286, and that the views found in the saga show similarities to a speech that Árni Þorláksson is said to have delivered to the Icelanders that same year.[34] In an article about *Hrafnkels saga* from 1996, Sveinbjörn Rafnsson claims that Grímr's argumentation about church politics may have its background in a new royal ordinance of 1283, which not only inflamed the conflict about the pri-

[32] JBapt, p. 881.3–6, probably based on Bede, *In Lucae evangelium expositio*, ed. by Migne, cols 354–55. The relevant passages in Bede begin and end ch. 19, and then appear again at the end of ch. 21.

[33] In Unger's edition, ch. 19 ends with a passage about the judge's right to be paid for his work, see JBapt, p. 881.9–18. As Agnes Agerschou has indicated, however, this belongs at the end of ch. 21, see Agerschou, 'Et fragment af Jóns saga baptista', pp. 100, 103.

[34] Einar Ólafur Sveinsson, *Sturlungaöld*, p. 156. With reference to what Einar Ólafur Sveinsson says, Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar*, p. 145, has objected that the political argumentation is just a small part of the total content of the saga, and that this is only one of many themes that interest Grímr. It is therefore not possible to claim 'that the saga is permeated with these opinions'. As will be evident from the following account, however, there is reason to believe that Grímr had a strong personal commitment as regards church politics.

vate church system, but also had personal consequences for Grímr, since he was forced to leave the old seat of learning at Oddi.[35] None of these researchers, however, has been able to study this closely against the background of Grímr's use of matter from *Summa de casibus*. Knowledge of the influence exerted by *Summa de casibus* makes it possible to identify Grímr's own tactics in relation to his source. Whereas previously there was a risk of drawing conclusions from statements that should actually be ascribed to Raymond of Peñafort, it is now possible to analyse the text on the basis of Grímr's own statements and additions. It is thereby possible to look more concretely at what he may have wanted to achieve by incorporating the canonistic material.

The Argumentation about Taxes: The King's Summons of Icelandic Forces in 1286

As we have seen, the argumentation in chapter 19 can be divided into two main parts. First Grímr discusses in general terms the right of the king to demand taxes from the common people, followed by a moral sermon about what happens if this right is abused. This is the foundation for Grímr's overall concern: resistance to secular ordinances that infringe the freedom of the Church. When illicit demands imposed on ordinary subjects are so fiercely condemned, how much worse must it not be when secular rulers make unjustified demands of the Church?

It is tempting to see this as a deliberate rhetorical strategy. Through the discussion about taxes at the start of *Jóns saga baptista* chapter 19, Grímr is able to play on the Icelanders' discontent with new tax burdens at the end of the thirteenth century, in his attempt to gain sympathy for similar discontent on the part of the Church. The argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista*, however, does not seem to be aimed at the taxes that were introduced just after Iceland was incorporated into the kingdom of Norway in 1264, but more specifically against the king's endeavour to get the Icelanders to provide a war fleet for a campaign against Sweden in 1286. The conscription of free farmers to take part in and contribute to a coastal fleet in national defence (*leiðangr*) was an old Norwegian institution, but unprecedented in Icelandic history.[36] It naturally became a disputed issue. A comparison with *Summa de casibus* reveals two things:

[35] Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'Um Hrafnkels sögu Freysgoða', p. 74.

[36] On tax and *leiðangr* in Iceland, see Helgi Þorláksson, 'Ambitious Kings and Unwilling Farmers', p. 138. Om *leiðangr* in general, see *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder*, x, cols 432–42.

Firstly, it is clear that Grímr is referring to *new* economic demands by the king. Although established duties are also mentioned, it is the king's right to impose new taxes that is questioned, and this is where Grímr seeks support in *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.13. In this context we should note that Grímr adopts a radical approach in his use of the original. In *Summa de casibus* the emphasis and the sequence are reversed: it is the *old* tolls that are discussed in detail, and in the continued discussion of new tolls the *summa* merely refers back to what has already been said.[37] Since Grímr has a different focus, he has to rearrange the matter in such a way that the emphasis in the argumentation is moved from the old to the new. It is therefore reasonable to assume that he is referring to a situation when new royal demands were the topic of debate.

Secondly, the *leiðangr* is hinted at in the way Grimr sharpens his argument against extraordinary taxes in connection with national defence (*vorn fostriarðar*).[38] Grímr declares explicitly that there is no reason to increase taxes when the countries are cleansed and peace reigns. New taxes can only be demanded when there is a compelling necessity, and moreover authorization by the Church is also required. To expand on what he means by compelling necessity, Grímr repeats arguments from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.13, which show that new tolls can be required to defend the country against robbers or pirates from land or sea, or to defend the true faith against heathens and heretics. But this is evidently not sufficient, for Grímr chooses to interleaf this with more or less identical matter from a later chapter about the right of a feudal lord to exact taxes, namely *Summa de casibus*, tit. 2.5.15, from a context that would hardly seem to be immediately transferable to Iceland, where the feudal system was unknown.[39] And it is on the basis of this material that Grímr asserts that subjects have a duty to provide personal service in defence of the country, a duty that comes in addition to the economic contributions that have to be made

[37] Raymond merely refers back to what he has already explained, SdC tit. 2.5.13, col. 479: 'In secundo casu, scilicet, si sit novum [...] propter imminentem necessitatem aliquam de supradictis in principio paragraphi, et exinde procedat ut supra dictum est de antiquo.' (In the second case, that is, if it is new [...] because of some imminent necessity, as mentioned above in the first paragraph, and then one should proceed according to what was said above with regard to antiquity.)

[38] JBapt, p. 879.22–26. For a discussion on this passage, see Helgi Þorláksson, 'Ambitious Kings and Unwilling Farmers', p. 138.

[39] One reflection of this is what Grímr omits from SdC tit. 2.5.15, cols 482–83: new taxes may be required when the *dominus* goes on a crusade; for ransom money if he is captured in war; or when he travels to the prince to negotiate privileges on behalf of the community.

in such situations. The entire discussion about royal taxation ends by specifying the duty of national defence, although the term *leiðangr* is not explicitly used. The combination of different elements from *Summa de casibus* shows how Grímr wished to divert the reader's attention in a particular direction.

Although tax was an important topic in the political debate in Iceland from early in the 1260s, the issue of summoning an Icelandic *leiðangr* emerged as a completely new demand by the king in 1286.[40] The summons, according to *Árna saga biskups*, concerns all of the king's liegemen, with an additional forty men from each quarter of Iceland; it was thus not an enormous number.[41] But the summons of the *leiðangr* was controversial because it was understood as the start of a new type of taxation, whereby the king, following the Norwegian pattern, would convert the *leiðangr* into a tax that had no established basis in the laws. The Icelanders therefore did not send a *leiðangr* in 1286. The controversy, however, did not end with this, and in the ensuing time the king exerted pressure to have the *leiðangr* enshrined in legislation.[42] The argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* thus concerns an issue that was of great topical significance for Iceland.

On this foundation we can approach Einar Ólafur Sveinsson's note on the connection with 1286, namely, that the saga's theory about taxation shows similarities to a speech delivered by Bishop Árni Þorláksson when the *leiðangr* was summoned that year.[43] After 1280 the Bishop had lost his support from the Crown, and this had given the Icelandic magnates free scope in the conflict about private churches. By making himself the spokesman for the king's cause in Iceland, however, the Bishop could reverse this tendency. Whereas the summoning of the *leiðangr* encountered fierce protests from most Icelanders, the Skálholt Church was on the side on the king in this issue. As a response to the Icelandic protests, Árni declared that the king must have the right to demand money when it was compellingly necessary, in other words, exactly the type of extraordinary tax that *Jóns saga baptista* approves in connection with national defence.[44] At the same time, Árni specifies that in such situations people not

[40] Helgi Þorláksson, 'Ambitious Kings and Unwilling Farmers', p. 138.

[41] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 110, p. 157.

[42] *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder*, x, col. 442.

[43] Einar Ólafur Sveinsson, *Sturlungaöld*, p. 156.

[44] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 110, pp. 157–58: 'En þar sem þér þrúið þetta fépynd vera, hví má sá ei, ef nauðsyn fullkomin kallar, at skynsamligra krefja fépenings er manninn má réttiliga leiða í hættu lífsins.' (But as you think this is extortion, why cannot he, in a situation of absolute necessity, demand a reasonable contribution of money which rightfully might help man in the perils of life.) JBapt, p. 879.15–16: 'nyiar alǫgur ma

only had a duty to contribute economically, but also 'through joint work, toil, and sleepless nights keep watch over their chieftains to maintain peace and perfect tranquillity',[45] an argument that Grímr touches on by claiming that a subject was not just obliged to contribute money, 'but also his labour and sleepless nights in guarding and defence, and also stake his body if necessary to retain health and property'.[46] Although parts of the argumentation are different, it is obvious that both texts refer back to a common idea. Both cases express, in principle, a pro-royal stance that differs from the general opinion prevailing in Iceland at the time. According to *Árna saga biskups*, the Bishop spoke about this whenever and wherever the issue came up and one can therefore assume that the argumentation was well known in ecclesiastical circles.

But even if the theoretical foundation is the same, *Jóns saga baptista* has a different focus from what we find in *Árna saga biskups*. Whereas Árni argues against the Icelanders' scepticism, Grímr seems more concerned with playing on their discontent. Árni talks positively about the king's right to demand necessary contributions, adding that this applies all the more in proportion to the necessity, until all of the king's and the subjects' property is held in common.[47] Grímr gives a more neutral account of the king's reasons for demanding such contributions, emphasizing that this applies solely when the situation requires it. This low-key approval of royal taxation is then contrasted with a violent condemnation of secular authorities imposing unlawful burdens on their subjects. Grímr's argumentation thus fans the Icelanders' suspicion that the summoning of the *leiðangr* was merely an excuse to squeeze money out of them.[48] Citing Isidore's *Etymologiae*, he implicitly asserts that anyone who is guilty of such an

konungr eða hofðingi fyrir nauðsyn at eins a leggia' (kings and chieftains may only impose new burdens in case of necessity).

[45] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 110, p. 158: 'ok þar á ofan á maðrinn fyrir sameignligt starf, vás ok vökur til varðhalds yfir sínum höfðingja sér ok sínu hyski til friðar og fullra náða.'

[46] JBapt, p. 879.23–26: 'er maðr eigi skylldr at eins penninga sina til at leggia, helldr oc starf sitt oc vokur til varðhallds oc at giora varnir, oc þar með likama sinn, ef þǫrf er a, at hann megi hallda ser heilum oc sinni eign.'

[47] On the context of this argumentation, see Bagge, '"Salvo semper regio iure": Kampen om Sættargjerden 1277–1290', p. 217; cf. Bagge, *The Political Thought of The King's Mirror*, pp. 189–93.

[48] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 110, p. 157: 'menn hugðu þetta ráð diktat eigi fyrir liðs þörf heldr fyrir fépynd.' (People thought this had been invented, not because of any need for crew, but rather to extort money.)

abuse cannot be called king, because it is only he who does right (Lat. *recte*) that can be called *rex*.[49] The rhetorical intensity is obvious in expressions such as 'it is intolerable that the defender becomes a pirate and the supporter becomes a destroyer',[50] and that he who does not respect this is punished by war, fire, captivity, death, loss of honour, and defeat in battle.[51]

Grímr builds up a double argument that he balances with great skill. On the one hand he is careful not to contradict the Church's support in principle for the summons of the *leiðangr*, while simultaneously presenting this in a way that could appeal to a critical Icelandic audience. In other words, Grímr sets up a form of *captatio benevolentia*, where the intention is to make the audience favourably disposed to what he is going to say about the violation of the Church's rights. The tax problem is thus an instrument in a more complex argument. It was of course an important issue at the time, but in the context of *Jóns saga baptista* the aim is primarily to establish a link between the Church's own problems and the Icelanders' scepticism about the increasingly oppressive royal power. This is explicitly expressed in the rhetorical question that comes at the transition to the subject of church politics: if secular rulers are punished so harshly for repressing the common people, how much worse is it if they infringe the freedom of the Church? As a prelude to what is said, the argumentation about taxation is thus shaped with great rhetorical dexterity.

The Argumentation about Church Politics: The Ordinance of 1283

Whereas the argumentation concerning taxes is limited to different types of economic burdens the king can impose on his subjects, the theme is expanded when Grímr goes on to talk about abuses against the Church. Then it is no longer a matter of tax, but also about violations of the Church's jurisdiction and property rights. A comparison with *Summa de casibus* nevertheless suggests that these are chiefly offshoots of a more fundamental problem, namely, secular legislation infringing the Church's freedom. This is clear when we look at the

[49] JBapt, p. 880.7–8: 'Þvi at sa heitir rex, þat er stiornari, er rett gerir, enn engi annarr.' (For he is called *rex*, that is ruler, who does what is right, and no one else.)

[50] JBapt, p. 880.6–7: 'þvi at þat er afskapligt, at varnarmaðr verði vikingr oc tænaðarmaðr at tapanarmanni'.

[51] JBapt, p. 880.15–18: 'ma i þessum orðum sia, hveria pinu hann eignaði þeim, sem vond lǫg skipaði, þat er <ofriðr> oc elldz bruna, lat sømða, bond oc bana, usigr i orrustum.' (in these words can be seen the kind of torment he attributed those who made bad laws, that is strife and burning fire, loss of honour, fetters and death, defeat in battle.)

overall theme of the material used by Grímr. As we have seen, the saga text in this case is based on material from title 2.5.42 in *Summa de casibus*, where the main theme is secular authorities issuing unjust laws in contravention of God's law or ecclesiastical liberty ('leges iniquas contra legem Dei et contra libertatem ecclesiasticam'). The core of the argumentation is that these laws are powerless in the face of God's law and natural law, they have the support of neither tradition nor custom, and they must therefore be removed from the law books. Anyone who enforces, supports, or enriches himself from these laws will suffer excommunication. And as Grímr specifies: the excommunication will not be rescinded until the Church has received restitution for the damage.

With reference to what has already been said about the summoning of the *leiðangr* in 1286, it is striking that this theme is so appropriate for the situation in church politics in the 1280s, when a series of secular laws that were passed just after the death of Magnús Lagabœtir led to a violent conflict between the Crown and the Church, with repercussions throughout the ecclesiastical province. At the same time, it is at least as obvious that the argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* seems less relevant to the climate prevailing in church politics in the previous decades. The reign of Magnús Lagabœtir in the years 1263–80 was indeed characterized by a clear awareness of royal legislative authority in matters of canon law, but the main tendency is nevertheless that these ambitions are combined with a pronounced willingness to compromise and negotiate with the Church. This is expressed not least in 1277, when the king and the archbishop agreed on a concordat that specified a long series of freedoms the Church could enjoy vis-à-vis the Crown. Precisely for that reason, the change in the political climate after the death of Magnús Lagabœtir seems like a noticeable turning point in the relationship between Crown and Church. The barons who, together with the dowager queen, ruled the kingdom on behalf of the king's minor sons, issued a series of new laws in the weeks after the king's death which effectively stripped the Church of many of the freedoms it had gained in 1277, and the violent conflict that took place in Norway between 1280 and 1283 can be seen as a direct consequence of this.[52]

At the same time the conflict spread in the ecclesiastical province, and in the ensuing years similar legislation gave rise to a strained relationship between temporal and spiritual powers in Iceland. In the winter of 1283 the regency, in consultation with Icelandic magnates, drew up a new royal ordinance (*skipan*) that gave secular property owners the right to take back church property; this was in direct conflict with the concessions that Bishop Árni Þorláksson

[52] See Bagge, '"Salvo semper regio iure"', pp. 202–24.

had won in the struggle against the private church system at the end of the 1270s.[53] When the prominent chieftain Hrafn Oddsson had the ordinance ratified at the Icelandic Althing in 1284, this also had direct consequences for Grímr Hólmsteinsson's own situation in that he was forced to leave his comfortable position at Oddi, the old seat of learning and definitely the richest and most prestigious of the disputed church properties at this time.[54] The highly rhetorical tone in the saga can thus be viewed against the background of Grímr's personal reasons for reacting vehemently.

It is clear, moreover, that the argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* refers back to ideas that circulated in the milieu to which Grímr belonged. The ratification of the ordinance by the Althing was a defeat for the reform programme that Bishop Árni had headed over a number of years, and the bishop's reaction is clearly in line with the argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista*. When Árni came to the Althing he accused the thing-men of having passed laws against the freedom of the Church:

> Svá er mer flutt at þér hafit greinarlaust allt þat lögtekit sem í konungsbréfi ok drottningar er ritat, því sem í fyrra sumar kom til Íslands, ok brotit byskupabréfit, þat sem ek lét lesa í þessari sömu lögréttu sem nú stöundum vér í, ok létu menn staðfest með lóftaki nýtt ófrelsi móti heilagri kirkju. Þat má ok eigi annat skilja en at þér sét af sjálfu verkinu, ef þetta er satt, í hit meira bann fallnir.[55]
>
> I have heard that you have unconditionally ratified everything written in the letter from the king and the queen, which came to Iceland last summer, and you thereby went against the episcopal letter that I had read aloud in the same court where we now stand, and that you have allowed people to confirm with a handshake a new attack on the freedom of the Holy Church. If this is true, it is not possible to understand it in any other way than that you have fallen into the deepest excommunication by that very act.

Although the Bishop often uses excommunication as a political tool, this is the only place where it is explicitly stated that the reason for excommunication is legislation against the freedom of the Church. The episode shows that the argu-

[53] According to Magnús Stefánsson, 'Frá goðakirkju til biskupskirkju, Staðamal', p. 187, Ravn and the other Icelandic king's men who were in Norway during this period had presumably taken part in drawing up the ordinance. It is thus reasonable to assume that *Jóns saga baptista* is particularly targeting 'chieftains with secular power' rather than the king directly.

[54] Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, 'Um Hrafnkels sögu Freysgoða', p. 74.

[55] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 84 (p. 123).

mentation in *Jóns saga baptista* does not just belong in a theoretical universe but was also translated into practice.

The bishop's statement is particularly interesting, however, because it accentuates links to a more general ecclesiastical ideology throughout the province of Niðarós. A concrete expression of this is seen in the bishop's justification for the excommunication: the decision of the Althing was in contravention of what he calls 'the episcopal letter', a provincial statute that he himself had helped to issue in Bergen just after the death of King Magnús Lagabœtir in 1280 and one of the central documents in the subsequent struggle against the regency. The last half of the statute consists of a detailed account of fourteen cases punished by ipso facto excommunication.[56] From the context it is clear that Árni is referring to the seventh of these cases, which, based relatively freely on the Honorius III's decretal *Noverit* from 1221 (X 5.39.49), threatens the excommunication of anyone who issues, or helps to issue, laws against the freedom of the Church. The significance of this point in the statute as a whole is suggested by the fact that the Norse version of the decree is supplemented with an amplificatory comment on what it means to infringe the Church's freedom, which may possibly be drawn from Innocent IV's *Apparatus in quinque libros decretalium*, ad X 5.30.49 v. *libertatem*.[57] In this respect it differs from the other thirteen cases

[56] *Norges gamle Love* (henceforth NgL), ed. by Keyser and others, III, 234–37.

[57] The commentary in the statute on X 5.39.49, NgL III, 235–36: 'En þat er vitanda at frelsi heilagrar kirkiu stendr saman i þeim priuilegiis sem henni hafa veitt werit yfir andligum lutum eða stundligum auðæfum almenniliga eða einsliga. Nu eru sum priuilegia veitt heiagri kirkiu af sialfum guði suo sem varr lausnari Ihesus Christus sagði Petro postula. huat sem þu hefir bundit á ioerðu þa skal vera bundit á himni. ok hvat er þu hefir leyst á ioerðu. þat skal leyst á himni. Sua ok þat at tiundir ok frumfornir ok allt offr heyra kirkium til. Þat priuilegium er enn af guði veitt heilagri kirkiu. at klerkar eigu valld ok ráð yfir hennar eignum ok auðæfum. ok hennar forstiorar eigu loeg skipa af andligum lutum ok hafa þar dom yfir ok fleira annat þat sem stendr i hinu nyia loegmáli ok hinu forna. Af herra pafanum eru ok priuilegia veitt heilagri kirkiu. sua sem þat at sa er i banni af sialfu verkinu sem heiptuga hoend leggr a lærðan mann. sua þat at tueir vattar vinni þoerf wm testamenta þau oell sem sálugiafir megu metaz. ok morg onnur priuilagia hafa pafarnir veitt heilagri kirkiu. <Sua hafa keisarnir veitt priuilegia heilagri kirkiu>, þuiat þat megu þeir vel gera af veralldligum lutum [...] Nu huerr sem motgang veitir þessu frelsi almennilighrar kristni. þa forðaz hann æigi bannz afelli.' (But it should be known that the liberties of the Holy Church are collected in those privileges, general or particular, that are given with regard to spiritual matters and temporal wealth. Now, some privileges are given to the Holy Church by God himself, as when our saviour Jesus Christ said to the apostle Peter, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Likewise, that tithe and first gifts and all offerings belong to the Church. God has also granted that privilege to the Holy Church, that clerics

enjoy power and disposal over its properties and wealth, and that her leaders shall legislate and judge in spiritual matters, as well as many other things that are written in the New and Old Law. Holy Church has also received privileges from the lord pope, such as the automatic excommunication of those who lay hateful hands on a learned man, also that two witnesses are enough in all testaments dealing with gifts to the Church, in addition to many other privileges popes have given to the Holy Church. <Likewise, emperors have given privileges to the Holy Church>, because they may do that in temporal matters [...] Now, anyone who acts against the liberty of common Christianity will not avoid the pain of excommunication.) The text in angle brackets comes from variants B and C in NgL III, 236 n. 11, which agrees with the formula in Jón Halldórsson's extended excommunication catalogue from 1326, cf. DI II, p. 586. By comparison, Innocent IV's *Apparatus in quinque libros decretalium* to X 5.39.49 v. *libertatem* (col. 558va-b) has: 'Nota quod ecclesiastica libertas consistit in priuilegiis super spiritualibus et privilegiis super temporalibus. Item consistit in priuilegiis generaliter ecclesiæ concessis, et etiam in priuilegiis singularibus cuiuscque ecclesiæ. Primo ergo dicimus de spiritualibus, quæ non potest concedere, nisi solus Deus, vel eius vicarius, quale est, quecunque liga super terram, etc. Hoc enim priuilegium Christus Petro in persona ecclesie concessit [...] Tale est priuilegium de decimis et primitiis et oblationibus, scilicet quod sint clericorum, 17. quæst. 1, reuertimini decimæ, sup. de deci. tua. Item credimus quod a Deo habet priuilegium ecclesia, quod ipsa sola res ecclesiasticas ministrare debet, 96. dist. si imperator, et quod de spiritualibus ius statuere et iudicare potest, 96. dist. cum ad, et c. denique, alia etiam multa priuilegia clericis date inuenies in nouo et in vetere Testamento. Super spiritualibus etiam prima priuilgia contulit ecclesiæ vicarius Christi, ut de verberatione clerici quod incidat in canonem, 17. quæst. 4. si quis., et quod in legatis ecclesiarum sufficiant duo testes, supra de testa. relatum, et sic multa alia priuilegia inuenies in iure canonico concessa eclesiæ per Papam. In temporali autem generaliter et generalis ecclesiæ solus Imperator, qui universis et clericis et laicis et in temporalibus præesse debet, priuilegium concedere potest [...] His igitur sic sparsis, nobis videtur, quod in hac excommunicatione indicat, qui veniunt contra libertatem vel privilegium Dei.' (Note that the ecclesiastical liberty consists in privileges related to spiritual matters and privileges related to temporal matters. Likewise, it consists in privileges that are generally conceded to the Church, as well as particular privileges to each church. First therefore we deal with spiritual privileges, which cannot be conceded by other than God or his vicar, such as Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, etc. For this is the privilege Christ conceded to Peter as representative of the Church [...] Of this kind we have the privilege of tithe and first gifts and offerings, which obviously belongs to clerics, 17. *quæst*. 1, c. *Revertimini decimæ*; above, in the title *De deci*., c. *Tua*. Likewise we believe that the Church holds the privilege from God that it alone should administer in ecclesiastical matters, 96. *dist.,* c. *Si imperator*, and that it has power to legislate and judge in spiritual cases, 96. *dist*., c. *Cum ad*, and last canon, as well as many other privileges given to clerics that can be found in the New and Old Testaments. With regard to spiritual matters, the *Vicarius Christi* conferred the first privileges to the Church, that beating of clerics incurs the rule [of papal excommunication in] 17. *quæst*. 4., c. *Si quis suadente*, and that two witnesses suffice with regard to gifts to the Church, see above, in the title *De testa*., c. *Relatum*, and in this way you will find many other privileges in canon law that are conceded by the pope. But in temporal matters, in general and with regard to the general Church, only the emperor, who ought to preside over all, both clerical and lay, and in temporal matters, can concede a privilege. [...] Scattered in this way it seems that this excommunication will incur those who go against the liberty and privilege of God.) Innocent IV's *apparatus* to *Liber extra*

of ipso facto excommunication in the statute, which seem to be based more directly on canonistic regulations. Precisely because the regency's legislation played such a central role in the unfolding of the conflict, this also became one of the central elements in the Church's ideological counteroffensive.

It is only reasonable to assume that Grímr knew of the content of the statute, both in view of his close relationship to the bishop, and because the statute was duly published at the Icelandic ~~Althing~~ in 1281 and thus must have been relatively well known among broad sections of the population.[58] It can also be shown with some probability that he had this rule in mind when he was working on *Jóns saga baptista*. The link to the statute in this context is not just the general condemnation of authorities that issue or help to issue laws that are hostile to the Church, but is also expressed through the demand that these rules should be removed from the law books.

> I siaunda stað er her skrifaðr sa atburðr ef menn gera skipanir moti frelsi heilagrar kirkiu. nema þeir hafi innan tua mánaði siðan er þeim war lyst tekit þat af sinum bókum ef þær woro ritaðar. eða hallda þeir fram þeim skipanum þo at þeir lutir væri af skafnir bokinni.
>
> *Provincial statute* (NgL III, 235)

> In the seventh place written here is the circumstance that men make ordinances against the freedom of the Holy Church. If they have not removed them from their books within two months after having been told to do so, if they were written down, or if they maintain the ordinances even if they have been removed from the book.

> Eigu þeir eða þeira arfar þetta allt með fullu aptr at giallda oc rettri stǫðu at bæta oc skafa þessar skipanir af sinum bokum oc fullkomliga at onyta oc or logum taka, aðr þeir fai lausn af þeim, sem valld hefir til at leysa þess kyns mal.
>
> *Jóns saga baptista*, 19 (p. 880.29–32)

seems to have been well known in the province of Niðarós. Manuscript AM 671 4to in the Arnamagnæan Collection in Copenhagen, which is usually dated to the period *c.* 1320–40, contains a series of Latin excerpts from Innocent's *Apparatus* on fols 40r–52v. A fourteenth-century fragment of Innocent's *Apparatus* to X 1.33.15–1.36.1 and X 1.38.9–12 is preserved in the National Archives in Oslo, Lat. fragm. 161. Apart from this, the work is mentioned in a small number of written sources: a reference in a letter from 1338, DN VII, 162; Botolf Asbjørnsson's will of 1370, DN IV, 494; the inventory for Skálholt, presumably before 1588, Hörður Ágústsson, 'Bækur', p. 293.

[58] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 63, p. 94.

> They or their heirs must repay all this in full and pay a fine according to the law and remove these ordinances from their books and make them totally void and take them out of the laws before they obtain redemption from those who have the authority to absolve this type of matter.

The demand for the removal of the rule from the law books has no explicit support in *Summa de casibus*: Raymond of Peñafort merely says that the people responsible are guilty of a mortal sin if the laws are not expunged (*nisi destruant*) and that this is followed by excommunication if the rules are not cancelled after due warning (*nisi admoniti tales leges vel statuta eraserint*). Nor is the demand satisfactorily covered by X 5.39.49, since the decree merely specifies that the rules must be removed from the capitularies within two months (*de capitularibus suis* [...] *amoveri*).[59] It is therefore likely that Grímr's mode of expression in this case is influenced by the wording of the statute, which probably appealed to Norse clerics at this time.

Other sources from the conflict suggest that the arguments were actively used in the political dispute. According to the account in a papal letter dated 12 April 1285, Archbishop ~~Jon Raude~~ expressed himself in a similar way at a meeting with the regency in the summer of 1280. Here he asks that laws infringing the freedom of the Church be removed from the books (*af skafa ydrum bokum*), and demands the restitution of property that the Church lost against law and custom.[60] This two-part demand, which first specifies that anti-Church laws must be repealed and then demands restitution, is fully in agreement with the argumentation put forward by Grímr in *Jóns saga baptista*. It is not enough for the ordinance of 1283 to be rescinded. The king's men must also ensure that confiscated property is returned to the Church. In other words: Grímr wants to go back to Oddi.

[59] X 5.39.49: 'qui de cetero servari fecerint statuta edita et consuetudines vel potius abusiones, introductas contra ecclesiae libertatem, et nisi ea, de capitularibus suis infra duos menses post huiusmodi publicationem sententiae fecerint amoveri' (those who hereafter cause to be observed statutes and customes, or rather abuses, made against the liberty of the Church, unless they cause them to be removed from their capitularies within two months after the publication of this sentence).

[60] DN XVII, 879. The meeting is mentioned in a witness letter from Bishop Narfi of Bergen, 17 March 1281, DN III, 21.

Similar Uses of Summa de casibus *in Other Icelandic Sources: DI II, 91 and 93*

All in all, we can conclude that the argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* chapter 19 refers back to central elements in the Church's ideological rearmament against the regency in the 1280s. On a higher level this can be seen in relation to an overarching conflict throughout the province of Niðarós. On a local level, the direct connection to matters in Iceland shows how ideological elements were applied to new problems as the conflict spread to new areas. This is significant for our interpretation of the powerful echoes of *Summa de casibus* in the saga. Grímr displays not just an ability to twist the argumentation in the original to suit problems that concerned him personally, but also alludes to an ideological context that was in itself based on canon law. That the ideological rearmament in the ecclesiastical province was at least partly based on canonistic literature is already hinted at in the provincial statute of 1280, where the quotation of X 5.39.49 is supplemented with a comment that may have been taken from Innocent IV's *apparatus* to *Liber extra*. A comparison with other sources that are assumed to come from the time around 1280 shows, moreover, that Grímr's use of *Summa de casibus* is not unique in an Icelandic context. Alongside the argumentation we have met in *Jóns saga baptista* we find elements of *Summa de casibus* in two other Norse documents concerning questions of excommunication, presumably intended for a lay audience.

One of these documents has already been touched on at the start of this study, namely, the translated excerpt from *Summa de casibus*, tit. 3.33.28 in DI II, 93, which accounts for the dangers of communicating with excommunicates. The active transmission of canonistic literature in the Norse language is evident in this case from the fact that the text in some manuscripts comes together with a similar translated excerpt from Goffredus of Trano's *Summa* to X 5.39 (DI II, 94), which specifies the different legal exceptions that make it possible to excuse this type of communication.[61] Since the document explicitly refers to 'Meistari Remundus' and to 'Meistari Goffridus', scholars have long been aware that the material must come from Raymond of Peñafort and Goffredus of Trano.[62] The

[61] The two texts are discussed in connection with each other in Westergård-Nielsen, 'Introduction', pp. 20–21. Both texts occur in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 350 fol.; AM 351 fol.; AM 175 4to; AM 688a 4to, and AM 42a 8vo. For DI II, 93, see SdC tit. 3.33.28, col. 768; for DI II, 94, see Goffredus of Trano, *Summa super titulis decretalium* to X 5.39 § *Sed queritur*, cols 245–46.

[62] See Westergård-Nielsen, 'Introduction', pp. 20–21, with references.

chance of contextualizing the material, however, has been limited by a lack of knowledge of any similar use of this type of literature in other Norse texts.

It is therefore all the more interesting that DI II, 93 is not the only example of the use of *Summa de casibus* in the Icelandic Diplomatarium. In light of the findings in *Jóns saga baptista* it is possible to demonstrate that an additional list of excommunication threats in DI II, 91 has its background in *Summa de casibus*, tit. 3.33.10–11.[63] This diploma is interesting not just for having its source in *Summa de casibus*; it also reflects the content of the provincial statute from 1280 in that it gives a similar list, albeit with minor differences, of threats of ipso facto excommunication. As regards content, then, a clear link can be seen with the ideological context to which *Jóns saga baptista* refers.

The text has a rather distinctive structure that differs from corresponding lists found in the works of other canonists. First of all, the list of reasons for excommunication is followed by a brief account of the exceptions to one of the cases, namely, circumstances that exempt assailants from seeking absolution in Rome after having attacked a cleric.[64] Secondly, the list of excommunication cases ends with a special account of some alternative rules that may still have been controversial when Raymond of Peñafort wrote *Summa de casibus*. The parallel text below shows how this uncertainty is reflected in the Icelandic text:

> Ero enn iij. atbvrdir þeir er slikt it sama liggr vid at þvi sem svmir meistarar gvdslaga segia: Einn er af þeim ef nockor samneytir bannsettum manni i sialfum glæpinum veitandi honvm fvllting eda radagerd þar til eda eptirmæli. Annar ef madr ferr med skot eda valslongur til þess at drepa kristna menn. Hinn sidazti atbvrdr er af þeim ef nockorir vardveita eda vid hafa lata setningar eda sidvenior þær sem helldr megv heita ovenior ok moti ero gvds retti ok heilagrar kirkio frelsi.
>
> DI II, 91 (p. 213)

> There are a further three cases that belong here, according to what some masters of God's law say: one is if someone associates with an excommunicated person in the actual crime, by giving him assistance or advice or taking his part. The second is if a person comes with archers or catapults to kill Christians. The last case is if someone preserves or maintains rules or customs that should rather be called bad habits and are against God's law and the freedom of the Holy Church.

[63] DI II, 91, pp. 212–14; SdC tit. 3.33.10–11, cols 746–51.

[64] DI II, 91, p. 214: 'Nv er greinandi af þeim atbvrd sem i fimta stad er skipadr ef madr slær klerk eda klavstra mann þa fellr hann i pafans bann. Þat falleraz i vii. tilfellum' (Now we should explain the case established in the fifth paragraph, if a man beats a cleric or a monk, then he is incurred by papal excommunication. This fails in vii. cases). Cf. SdC tit. 3.33.11, col. 750: 'Item circa illum articulum Cum quis verberat clericum [...] Hoc fallit in septem casibus' (Likewise with regard to the paragraph *Cum quis verberat clericum* [...] It fails in seven cases).

> Sunt et alii duo casus, quos quidam recipiunt, quidam non: Unus, de eo qui communicat excommunicato in crimine, impendendo ei consilium, auxilium vel favorem. Alius, de exercentibus artem ballistariorum vel sagittariorum contra christianos.
>
> Item adde novum casum [X 5.39.49], scilicet, de his qui servari faciunt statuta edita, et consuetudines, vel potius abusiones, introductas contra ecclesiae libertatem.
>
> *Summa de casibus*, tit. 3.33.10 (col. 749)
>
> There are also two other cases, which certain accept, certain not: the first, about those who communicate with excommunicates, taking part in the crime by giving advice, help, or favour. The other, about those who exercise the art of ballistas or archery against Christians.
>
> Likewise, add a new case [X 5.39.49], that is, about those who make people serve published statutes and customs, or rather abuses, introduced against the liberty of the Church.

DI II, 93 contains no explicit reference to the source from which it is taken, but the argumentation on this point is so distinctive that it can only come from *Summa de casibus*. None of the other canonistic texts that are known to have circulated in the Norse areas around 1300 mentions X 5.39.49 *Noverit* as a new addition to the excommunication articles. The argumentation is affected by the fact that *Summa de casibus* was written early in the 1220s and thus is able to mention the regulation from Honorius III in 1221 as a new case. In the slightly later lists of cases incurring ipso facto excommunication in the works of Goffredus, Innocent IV, and Hostiensis, the rule has had time to become consolidated and is thus presented as an ordinary item in the catalogue.[65]

It has been common to associate DI II, 91 with an episode in *Árni saga biskups* in which we are told that the Bishop read out a number of new rules

[65] Of these, Innocent is nearest, as he ends the catalogue with the same three points, but evidently thinks that the rule about archers does not belong there, *Apparatus in quinque libros decretalium*, ad X 5.39.1, col. 546va: 'Decimustertius, cum quis communicat excommunicato in crimine, infra e. nuper. Decimusquartus, exercens artem balistariorum et sagittariorum contra Christianum, supra de sagit. c. 1. Nos autem hunc casum non concedimus. Decimusquintus, illi qui faciunt seruari consuetudnies vel constitutiones contra ecclesiæ libertate' (Thirteen, when someone communicates with excommunicates, taking part in the crime, see below, same title, *Nuper*. Fourteen, those who excercise the art of ballistas or archery against Christians, see above, *de sagit.* c. 1. However, we do not concede in that case. Fifteen, those who make people serve customs or constitutions against the liberty of the Church.) See Goffredus, *Summa super titulis decretalium*, ad X 5.39, col. 241r–v; Hostiensis, *Summa aurea*, lib. 5, *De sententia excommunicationis*, cols 1880–84.

concerning excommunication at the ~~Althing~~ in 1281. From this perspective the content in DI II, 91 would seem to refer back to the list of ipso facto cases promulgated at the provincial council in Bergen 1280.[66] This interpretation does not seem convincing, however, because the content of DI II, 91 differs somewhat from what is found in the statute. Since Bishop Árni himself was one of those who issued the statute in Bergen, it seems improbable that he should use an alternative catalogue from *Summa de casibus* when he presented the message to the Icelanders the following year.[67] It is therefore more likely that DI II, 91 represents an earlier version that was later modified and expanded in the statute. A further argument for this is that the content of the document seems less relevant for the time after 1280. After the conflict with the regency had erupted, it appears improbable that the Church should choose to translate a text that suggested in one way or another that X 5.39.49 *Noverit* was not an integral part of the rules promulgated in the statute. As we have seen, DI II, 91 points out that X 5.39.49 is presented as an supplement to the ordinary list, added by some masters, but implicitly not by all (*ero enn iii. atbvrdir þeir er slikt it sama liggr vid at þvi sem svmir meistarar gvdslaga segia*). Since ipso facto excommunication of authorities who issued laws violating the freedom of the Church was one of the central points in the Church's ideological response to the regency, it seems reasonable that this would have been expressed in more forthright terms in the years after 1280.

Although the exact date of the DI II, 91 might be open for further discussion, the elements of *Summa de casibus* in different Icelandic diplomas show that three presumably independent sources dwell on the same canonistic argumentation in the years around 1280; *Jóns saga baptista*, DI II, 91, and DI II, 93. They have some features in common, in that they are presented in the mother tongue, presumably intended for people who would not normally have reason and competence to study *Summa de casibus* directly. The link between the centrally adopted doctrine in the statute and the Icelandic documents suggests that these canonistically based views represented a kind of consensus within the ecclesiastical province. Grímr was not operating in isolation. Both the aspect of dissemination and the argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* touch on what we can observe in other sources and probably point back to a more general

[66] *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, 63, p. 94; see DI II, 91, p. 212; Lára Magnúsardottir, *Bannfæring og kirkjuvald á Íslandi 1275–1550: lög og rannsóknarforsendur*, pp. 350–51.

[67] See NgL III, 229.

ideological rearmament towards the end of the thirteenth century. We can thus glimpse the outline of an underlying legal culture in which *Summa de casibus* and other canonistic texts were important suppliers of premises for argumentation about church politics throughout the province of Niðarós.

Communication to a Broader Audience

The political argumentation in *Jóns saga baptista* is in stark contrast to what is found in other hagiographic sagas, but nevertheless exploits the potential inherent in the genre. While other sagas in the florid style try to carry people away in religious terms, Grímr shifts to a polemical universe. By waging the polemic in the framework of a hagiographic saga, the criticism is at once mordant and unassailable. Like the fables of antiquity and the irony of the Enlightenment, Grímr is able to use the story of John the Baptist to voice an implicit critique of the authorities without the risk that this will backfire on him and the environment around Bishop Árni. John the Baptist must have been a suitable mouthpiece for this type of propaganda, as the forerunner of the saviour and also as a critical voice at the very top level of the hierarchy of Christian saints.

Margaret Cormack has postulated that *Jóns saga baptista* was intended to be used by the monks at Þykkvabær, and this is a reasonable assumption in that it was written at the behest of Abbot Rúnolfr Sigmundsson.[68] But Rúnolfr was not just abbot at Þykkvabær; he was also one of Bishop Árni Þorláksson's closest allies in the movement to reform the Church in Iceland. In view of the political polemic in chapter 19, one must therefore ask whether there could not also have been a wider target group, for example, that relevant parts were used as sermons or were read aloud to laymen on the feast of John the Baptist. Simonetta Battista takes the saga as a kind of encyclopedic project intended for priests who were unable to read the Latin commentaries.[69] In that context, the many theological explanations about different parts of John the Baptist's life provided a rich repertoire of sermon material. But in periods of conflict, more polemical matter could be cited from chapter 19, and so it is not unlikely that this material was actively imprinted in lay people's awareness during a period at the end of the 1280s.

The fact that one can find similar translations from *Summa de casibus* in the Icelandic Diplomatarium also speaks in favour of this interpretation. Even

[68] Cormack, 'Sagas of Saints', p. 305.

[69] Battista, 'The Ten Names of John', pp. 358, 363.

though these excerpts do not explicitly say that they were to be used in this way, we know from other sources that this type of material was read aloud to the congregation or written on boards attached to the church wall.[70] Both through the translation of canonistic material and in its transmission to a broader audience, the saga of John the Baptist is thus consistent with a widespread practice in the ecclesiastical province. But unlike the other texts, which stay relatively close to the original, the saga brings this up to a higher literary level. Letting Raymond of Peñafort talk to the Icelanders through the voice of John the Baptist produces a synthesis that is without parallel in the Norse saga tradition. Standing at the interface between scholastic law and the hagiographic saga tradition, and combining this with hammering home a political message, *Jóns saga baptista II* stands out as a unique source from medieval Iceland.

[70] DI II, 13, pp. 52–55 contains a number of translated regulations from Gratian's *Decretum*, ed. by Friedberg (C.1 q.3 c. 2, C.8 q.1 c. 7, C.10 q.1 c. 2–3) and *Liber extra*, ed. by Friedberg (X 3.38.4 and X 3.38.15). The content seems relevant to Bishop Árni Þorláksson's struggle against private churches and was probably intended for communication to lay people. In the same way, the text of the provincial statute of 1280 states that the rules for excommunication are to be read out in all main churches once a year, NgL III, 233. A provincial statute from 1327 quotes the conflict-related decrees in translation and orders that they be written on boards attached to the church wall, NgL III, 272–73 and III, 275.

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Thinking in Figures

Grammar, Rhetoric, and Figurative Language: Learned Innovations and Vernacular Receptions

Rita Copeland

In post-classical Europe the study of figurative language was an established tradition with deep roots. Whether through reception of sacred or secular texts, study of the figures and tropes remained a constant in schools and intellectual circles. But from the twelfth century onwards, intellectual and practical developments in the arts that taught the precepts of figurative language provided occasions for new kinds of inquiry about *improprietas* in discourse. In this essay I offer first an overview of some innovative methods in the study of grammar and rhetoric over the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Western Europe that contributed to new perspectives on figurative language. This historical overview provides the context for a closer view of the progress of one trope, *metalepsis* (Latin: *transumptio*), over the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, where it emerges at last as a kind of 'super trope'. The fortunes of *metalepsis/transumptio* can tell us a great deal about how new intellectual forces shaped practical, pedagogical approaches to poetry and poetics. In the last section of the essay I offer a comparative perspective on the study of figures and tropes in vernacular literary cultures before the end of the fourteenth century. A survey of different vernacular receptions of technical grammatical and rhetorical lore reveals that it was only the medieval Scandinavian tradition

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that fully embraced and embodied the medieval intellectual traditions of language study that descended from classical antiquity. The Norse translations of the late antique Latin grammarians show how Scandinavian culture — uniquely among European vernacular cultures — deeply registered the technical aspects of language study and incorporated them into a new tradition of vernacular linguistic thought.

Innovations in the Study of Grammar and Rhetoric, c. *1080–*c. *1210*

Grammar as Linguistic Thought

At the end of the eleventh century, the texts available for grammatical study were no different from what were available earlier on: primarily the *Minor* and *Maior* of Donatus, and the *Institutiones grammaticae* of Priscian. Donatus's *Ars maior* had been the standard fixture for grammatical study, and it remained so. Priscian's *Institutiones* was more difficult of access given the work's length and its philosophical resonances with Stoic grammar, which would have been unfamiliar to medieval readers. But Carolingian commentators, from Alcuin to Eriugena, Sedulius, and Servatus Lupus, had embraced Priscian, and as Vivien Law and Anneli Luhtala show, brought a philosophical depth to the study of the *Institutiones*, applying the dialectical categories that they knew from Aristotle, such as species, genus, and *differentia*, to Priscian's grammatical thought.[1] The Carolingian commentators raised questions about substance and accident, the relations between active and passive, and temporality that would remain live issues for the following centuries.

These innovations laid the grounds for a significant development of the late eleventh century, originating with masters in some of the cathedral schools of northern France and the Rhineland, and perhaps even northern England. This is a group of free-standing commentaries on Priscian's *Institutiones* known collectively to modern scholars as the *Glosulae* (not yet fully edited).[2] The *Glosulae*, produced over the years *c*. 1080 to *c*. 1100 in several redactions, present sys-

[1] Law, *Grammar and Grammarians*, pp. 60–61, 138–40; Luhtala, 'Early Medieval Commentary on Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*'; Gibson, 'Milestones in the Study of Priscian'.

[2] Hunt, 'Studies on Priscian in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries'; Grondeux and Rosier-Catach, 'Les *Glosulae super Priscianum* et leur tradition'; Fredborg, 'Notes on the *Glosulae*'. Selections from the *Glosulae* are translated in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 376–83; further selections are translated in Grondeux and Rosier-Catach and Fredborg (above).

tematic critical approaches to grammar, elaborating the logical dimensions of the science and focusing on the theoretical questions that Priscian's analysis raises. They constitute, in Margaret Gibson's words, a 'modern' and 'pioneering' grammar.[3] The *Glosulae* mount thorough discussions of Priscian's definitions to determine whether these apply just to words (*voces*) or to things (*res*), or to both, that is, whether these definitions represent logical categories or the things actually signified by the name of the category. Here, the *Glosulae* introduce a problem that was to occupy later twelfth-century linguistic analysis, the difference between *significata* and *nominata*, or what modern linguistics would call the intension (concept evoked by a sign) and extension (thing referred to by a sign) of a word.[4] The discussions break Priscian's definitions into the properties of things and the verbal signifying of such things: the mood of the verb, the number, gender, and person of the noun may operate in either sphere. For example, as Priscian says, mood (e.g. indicative, subjunctive) is a mental inclination, but Priscian also says that mood 'signifies' various affects of the soul, and signifying is a property of language, not of the thing (in this case, the affect).[5] The commentary reports the opinions of various masters, including a Master Durandus of Anglia, a Master Garmundus, a Master Guy of Langres, and a Lanfranc, who argue with Priscian and with each other over such issues as the purposes of the parts of speech, what is 'substantial' to a verb or noun and what is 'accidental' to it, or what is grammar's *causa inventionis*, that is, its raison d'être.[6] They raise issues that were important in dialectical analysis of predication. The philosophical interests of the *Glosulae* are continuous with the ascendant role of dialectic in the schools over the tenth and eleventh centuries.[7] But as Gibson suggests, this quality of intellectual inquiry was also enabled by the commentary form itself, a free-standing lemmatic commentary rather than the marginal glossing that was characteristic of Carolingian treatments of Priscian's *Institutiones*. The free-standing lemmatic commentary, while not new with the *Glosulae*, was put to new and liberating uses in the *Glosulae*, giving scope to the compilers to

[3] Gibson, 'The Early Scholastic *Glosule* to Priscian', p. 246.

[4] Kneepkens, 'Linguistic Description and Analysis in the Late Middle Ages', p. 552; Fredborg, 'Speculative Grammar', pp. 182–85.

[5] Rosier-Catach, 'The *Glosulae in Priscianum* and its Tradition', pp. 81–99 (at 85).

[6] Grondeux and Rosier-Catach, 'Les *Glosulae super Priscianum* et leur tradition', pp. 142, 147, 151; on *causa inventionis* see Fredborg 'Notes on the *Glosulae*', pp. 459–68.

[7] Marenbon, 'Logic at the Turn of the Twelfth Century: A Synthesis'; Kneepkens, 'The Priscianic Tradition', p. 242.

approach grammar in terms of sustained logical argument.[8] The *Glosulae* could also stand alone as a systematic textbook on grammatical theory that spoke to the philosophical interests of its contemporary audience. The commentary could use the Priscianic text to spark discussion of a significant point, but it was not bound to the order of Priscian's diffuse exposition.[9] The *Glosulae* spurred the raising of grammatical thought to the level of linguistics.

The discussions represented in the *Glosulae* were the channels through which twelfth-century theologians, notably Abelard and later Gilbert de la Porrée, turned to linguistic analysis as their starting points.[10] But more directly the *Glosulae* heralded two of the greatest achievements of twelfth-century grammar: Guillaume de Conches' free-standing gloss on Priscian (in two versions, one from the 1120s and one from the late 1140s), and Petrus Helias's formally innovative *Summa super Priscianum* (produced between 1140 and 1150), which took much of its direction from the gloss of Guillaume de Conches.[11] Guillaume de Conches gives considerable scope to the *causae inventionis* of the different parts of speech, and to questions about the conceptual and actual referents of verbal signs.[12] He also expresses a dialectical outlook in his discussions of the perfect sentence (*perfecta oratio*), which must find its completeness not merely in correct grammatical form but in its value as a dialectical proposition that can be judged true or false. The perfection of grammar is not one thing for the grammarian and another thing for the dialectician: what is philosophically meaningful is grammatically meaningful.[13] Guillaume also advances the theoretical question of a universal grammar by refusing the notion (held, he claims, by his predecessors) that the art of grammar can be resolved into 'species' composed of individual languages; for Guillaume the art of grammar is as universal as other arts.[14] Petrus Helias's *Summa super Priscianum* is also informed by

[8] Gibson, 'Milestones in the Study of Priscian'.

[9] Kneepkens, 'The Priscianic Tradition', pp. 242–43.

[10] On Abelard, see Grondeux and Rosier-Catach, 'Les *Glosulae super Priscianum* et leur tradition', pp. 146, 152 (Abelard's early teacher Guillaume de Champeaux used the gloss) and Rosier-Catach, 'The *Glosulae in Priscianum* and its Tradition', p. 90; on Gilbert de la Porrée, Kneepkens, 'The Priscianic Tradition', pp. 244–45.

[11] Fredborg, 'The Dependence of Petrus Helias' *Summa super Priscianum* on William of Conches' *Glose super Priscianum*'. The commentary by Guillaume de Conches has not yet been edited in full.

[12] See Fredborg, 'The Dependence of Petrus Helias' *Summa super Priscianum* on William of Conches' *Glose super Priscianum*', pp. 12–15, and Fredborg, 'Speculative Grammar', pp. 184–85.

[13] Fredborg, 'Notes on the *Glosulae* and its Reception', pp. 474–76.

[14] Fredborg, 'Universal Grammar According to Some Twelfth-Century Grammarians'.

logic, but it is not a captive of logic; for Helias, grammar constitutes its own scientific competence not to be measured by the dialectician's standard of a *perfecta oratio*.[15] The *Summa*, like its predecessors in many respects, offers a speaker-oriented perspective: words signify a speaker's understanding about reality, and thus signification is in the speaker's intention.[16] Helias also addresses the more broadly speculative question of a universal grammar by determining, *contra* Guillaume de Conches, that the 'species' of grammar are to be found in the *materiae* of individual languages.[17] Here Helias looks outward to the possibilities of a grammatical art in other languages, including vernaculars. But both, in their pursuit of the general properties of all the parts of speech, were assuming something towards a universal grammar.[18] Beyond this, as Kneepkens has demonstrated precisely, Helias was heir to an ontological discourse (and a Platonist-theological vocabulary) that shaped some of his reflections on substance and the parts of speech.[19] He does not go in the metaphysical direction of some of his theological contemporaries in his understanding of the kind of being that a part of speech signifies, but his grammar does represent a synthetic perspective on the philosophical interests of twelfth-century language thought.

These exemplify the innovative trends in grammatical thought that set the stage for scholastic *Sprachlogik* in the thirteenth century. The concerns of thirteenth-century masters were not identical or always continuous with those of their twelfth-century predecessors, but the underlying assumption remained consistent: grammatical thought could be philosophically grounded, whether in terms of the older logic and metaphysics of the twelfth century, or the new Aristotelian thought of the thirteenth century. As a component of advanced curricula, whether of the cathedral schools or the universities, grammar is a speculative science whose categories — word classes, semantics, and syntax — can be considered in abstract terms.[20]

[15] Fredborg, 'Notes on the *Glosulae* and its Reception', p. 477; Petrus Helias, *Summa super Priscianum*, ed. by Reilly, II, 602, 858.

[16] Fredborg, 'Speculative Grammar', pp. 181–82.

[17] Fredborg, 'Universal Grammar', p. 72.

[18] Petrus Helias, *Summa super Priscianum*, ed. by Reilly, I, 64, and Fredborg, 'Speculative Grammar', p. 183.

[19] Kneepkens, 'Grammar and Semantics in the Twelfth Century', pp. 239–55, 271–73. See also Fredborg, 'Notes on the *Glosulae* and its Reception', p. 478.

[20] Kneepkens, 'The Priscianic Tradition', pp. 247–51.

Pedagogical Grammars

The great normative or teaching grammars of the earlier periods had been Donatus's *Artes minor* and *maior*, supplemented at times with the grammatical information contained in some of the compendia of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages: Book IV of Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, Cassiodorus's *Institutiones*, and Book I of Isidore's *Etymologiae*. But with the expansion of teaching in the cities of the twelfth century, and the concomitant need to address student audiences that were increasingly diverse, more transient than in the older monastic environments, and professionally oriented, the late antique teaching texts were no longer deemed adequate as introductions to Latinity.

Across the spectrum of grammatical teaching, updated approaches supplanted ancient authorities. We have considered how Petrus Helias's *Summa super Priscianum* performed this function for advanced students and scholars, giving a rationalized, topical account of the theoretical aspects of grammar in Priscian's *Institutiones*. But for the practical aims of intermediate-level teaching in urban schools, there was a particular need to update and streamline the old grammars. The textbooks that met this new need were two verse grammars composed at the turn of the twelfth century: the *Doctrinale* by Alexander of Villa Dei (1199) and the *Graecismus* by Eberhard von Béthune (achieving its finished form *c*. 1212). These were not designed to be theoretical texts, but rather positive grammars; indeed Eberhard's prologue to the *Graecismus* states that its purpose is to clear away clouds of confusion by explaining simply 'in quibus scilicet dictiones sibi conveniant, in quibus a se different' (in which respects words fit together and in which respects they differ from each other), in other words, that it will lay out lexical *differentiae*.[21] Along similar lines, in his *Doctrinale* Alexander explicitly recognizes that his text is aimed at vernacular speakers: the teacher will read the *Doctrinale* to the students and explain it to them in *laica lingua*.[22]

Yet even as these mnemonically practical verse grammars seem to eschew the high theoretical developments of their era, they bear witness to new theoretical interests. Both follow the doctrine as laid out in Priscian's *Institutiones*, although substantially compressing it. But both also give distinctive attention to the figures and tropes. This second point is important for a number of rea-

[21] Eberhard von Béthune, *Graecismus*, ed. by Wrobel, p. 1.

[22] Alexander of Villa Dei, *Doctrinale*, ed. by Reichling, proemium l. 9 (p. 7).

sons. The figures and tropes were not treated in Priscian's *Institutiones*, but rather in Book III of Donatus's *Ars maior*, known as the *Barbarismus*. Thus the new pedagogical grammars recognized the superiority of Priscian's text, and this links them with the theoretical preferences of their era. But they also recognized the need to teach figures and tropes so as to prepare students for reading scripture as well as literary texts, and for this they drew upon the traditional teaching of Donatus's *Barbarismus*. However, their treatment of the figures and tropes represents an advance upon the ancient teaching of Donatus.

In Alexander of Villa Dei's *Doctrinale*, that advance may not be superficially obvious, because he places the account of the figures and tropes in much the same position that they have in Donatus's *Ars maior* and in other treatises of the imperial period: at the end of the work and in the course of *vitia* or errors in usage in written and spoken language.[23] The errors are either barbarisms, which occur in single words, or solecisms, which are mistakes in the connections between words. As mistakes, barbarism and solecism are signs of ignorance. In poetic practice, however, these become, respectively, metaplasm (*metaplasmus*) and figure (*schema*), and the figures are further divided into figures of speech and figures of thought, with a third category of poetic embellishment, tropes.[24] Alexander's *Doctrinale* follows this traditional account, but it also bears witness to a change of outlook. The final section of his treatise announces its subject as figures ('Pluribus est membris distincta figura loquelae', line 2361), not errors, and gives short shrift to barbarism and solecism (lines 2371–77).[25] Its remit of figures is greater than in Donatus. Under the rubric of *figurae* it accepts another Donatan grouping, the odd category of *cetera vitia*: these are figures that the rhetoricians traditionally taught as ornaments.[26] This may be a link with the enlargement, over the previous century, of the teaching of the figures and tropes, most distinctly registered in the rhetorical teaching of *De ornamentis verborum* by Marbod of Rennes (late eleventh century).[27] Perhaps the policing

[23] See *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric,* ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 84–85 and references there.

[24] *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, ed. by Holtz, pp. 653–74.

[25] Compare the length of Donatus's discussion of barbarism and solecism, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, ed. by Holtz, pp. 653–58.

[26] See lines 2365–68 and 2378–403; cf. Donatus, *Ars maior* in *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical*, ed. by Holtz, pp. 658–60 (the ten *vitia* in addition to barbarism and solecism), and Holtz's discussion, pp. 163–69.

[27] On Marbod's influence, see Camargo, 'Latin Composition Textbooks and *Ad Herennium* Glossing'.

of *vitia*, especially in pronunciation, also seemed less relevant to 'modern' audiences whose Latinities were continually under pressure from regional differences, and for whom scriptural and ecclesiastical Latin, rather than strictly classical usage, provided the norms. These may be some reasons why Alexander's *Doctrinale* downplays *vitia* in favour of *figurae*. But of even greater interest is the way that Alexander uses examples from scripture to illustrate the figures and tropes, a practice that places his work directly in the medieval tradition of grammatical lore on verbal embellishment, most importantly represented by Bede's *De schematibus et tropis*.[28]

More decisive in its foregrounding of the figures and tropes is the text of the *Graecismus*. Breaking with the tradition of imperial grammars as represented by Donatus's *Ars maior*, the *Graecismus* opens with the figures and tropes, thereby embodying modern interests. It classes all figurative speech under *figurae*: taking its terminology from Donatus but opening up the categories found there, the text presents the figures of metaplasm, the 'figures' of *schemata*, the 'figures' of tropes, even the 'figures' of barbarism and solecism, and finally a summary of the *colores* of rhetorical teaching based on Marbod's *De ornamentis verborum* (chapters 1–3).[29] These opening chapters are probably later interpolations into a grammatical manual that was considered unfinished, and are not by the hand of Eberhard himself.[30] But this assumption (now widely accepted) about the formation of the text helps us to fill in the picture of how ancient grammatical lore could be adapted to new interests. The redactors of Eberhard's original text (produced sometime around or before 1200) revealed some dissatisfaction or impatience with older presentations of the figures and tropes, and in revising Eberhard's grammar gave pride of place to the teaching of figurative language, effectively severing its long identification with 'errors' of usage. No longer simply permitted deviations from orthopraxis to be listed at the end of a treatise on correct usage, the figures now serve as the point of entry to knowledge about language. Moreover, the incorporation of the rhetorical *colores* from Marbod of Rennes, whose *De ornamentis* was based on Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad*

[28] For background on the Christianized teaching of the figures and tropes, see the chapter on Bede in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 256–71.

[29] Eberhard von Béthune, *Graecismus*, ed. by Wrobel, pp. 3–15. See Grondeux, 'Terminologie des figures'. Elsewhere Grondeux points to the 'disparition des catégories de vice et de figure' in both the *Graecismus* and the *Doctrinale*: see 'Les figures dans le *Doctrinale* et le *Graecismus*', p. 40.

[30] Grondeux, *Le Graecismus d'Évrard de Béthune à travers ses gloses*, pp. 7–36; *Glosa super Graecismum Eberhardi Bethuniensis*, ed. by Grondeux, pp. vii–viii.

Herennium, gives the *Graecismus* a certain hybrid character, a mix of rhetorical and grammatical approaches to figurative language.

The synthesizing of Priscian's grammatical thought with Donatus's teaching on figurative language was a factor in the attention that the *Doctrinale* and the *Graecimus* received in university as well as school milieus over the thirteenth century. The *Admirantes* gloss on the *Doctrinale* uses the grammatical text as a platform for exploring new interests in logic and semantics.[31] The *Graecismus* received extensive glossing that reflects its penetration into university study.[32]

Theoretical Rhetoric in the Twelfth Century

The history of innovation in the study of rhetoric from the late eleventh to the late twelfth centuries offers some spectacular highs. The twelfth century witnessed the first major re-evaluations of the Ciceronian rhetorics, the *De inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, since the fourth century. Rhetoric figured prominently in the expanded curricula of the northern cathedral schools, first in the Rhineland and then in the French cathedrals of Rheims, Laon, Chartres, and Paris. It formed part of the study of 'logic' understood as *logos* or language and reasoning. As in grammatical study so in rhetorical study: the great commentaries on the Ciceronian rhetorics by 'Magister Manegaldus', Guillaume de Champeaux, Thierry de Chartres, Petrus Helias, and a shadowy figure known as 'Magister Alanus', are full-scale, free-standing lemmatic expositions, enabling the masters to do more with Ciceronian thought than simply develop summaries of technical rhetoric from late antique compendia (as Carolingian teachers did) or rehearse definitions of terms in the margins. Unfortunately not all these commentaries have been edited. Thierry de Chartres' majestic commentary on the *De inventione*, along with his exposition of the *Ad Herennium*, were edited by Karin Margareta Fredborg, and an edition of the commentary by Guillaume de Champeaux is forthcoming.[33] The commentaries by Petrus Helias and 'Magister Alanus' await critical editions, although the critical literature on these texts provides us a great deal of information.[34]

[31] Heath, 'Logical Grammar, Grammatical Logic'. See also the selection translated in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 328–29.

[32] Grondeux, *Le Graecismus d'Évrard de Béthune à travers ses gloses*, pp. 401–52.

[33] Thierry de Chartres, *The Latin Rhetorical Commentaries by Thierry of Chartres*, ed. by Fredborg; Guillaume de Champeaux, *The Commentaries by William of Champeaux*, ed. by Scott, Ward, and Ruys.

[34] Fredborg, 'Petrus Helias on Rhetoric', pp. 31–34; Fredborg, 'The Commentaries on

Altogether over one hundred manuscripts preserve the records (in varying degrees of completeness) of some twenty different courses of lectures on Ciceronian rhetoric across the twelfth century.

Both Cicero's *De inventione* and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium* received attention from the commentators. During the first half of the century, the *De inventione* seems to have been the text preferred by commentators, perhaps because its exhaustive focus on the canon of invention was compatible with the theoretical interests of the scholars who taught the material. Invention is the most intellectual — or indeed philosophical — part of rhetoric, and it has most in common with the rational procedures of dialectic, the most abstract and intellectually austere art of the trivium. On this model, rhetoric is an aid for mastering the building blocks of argument, the topics or *loci* of invention, that are essential to the dialectical study that was an anchor of the cathedral school curriculum. But by the end of the century, interest in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* strengthened and superseded the earlier privilege of *De inventione*. Indeed the study of rhetoric in the cathedral schools reaches its own cultural maturity with the 'Magister Alanus' commentary on the *Ad Herennium*. The *Ad Herennium* is a comprehensive rhetoric (unlike the truncated *De inventione*), and with the maturity of rhetorical outlook in the century, the text probably came to be seen as a superior introduction to the art. We have already noted how the virtues of the *Ad Herennium* Book IV, on style, were recognized by the late eleventh century, when Marbod of Rennes chose this as his authority on the figures and tropes. But as much as the teaching of style and figurative language may have been an early impetus for reviving the fortunes of the *Ad Herennium*, more advanced theoretical interest in rhetoric was slower to appreciate the value of this work.

These masterpieces of exposition and evaluation are in their own ways the equals of the great fourth-century commentary by the Neoplatonist Victorinus. On account of their leisurely pace and expansive length, some of the commentaries develop their own argumentative force. The *De inventione* in particular, with its mythic prooemium about the origins of eloquence, prompted scholars to historicize epistemology: how knowledge takes shape in the individual human soul, and how culture might have given rise to knowledge.[35] Thierry de

Cicero's *De inventione* and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* by William of Champeaux'; Dickey, 'Some Commentaries on the *De inventione* and *Ad Herennium*'. On the 'Alanus' commentary, see Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric*, pp. 154–67, and selections in *The Rhetoric of Cicero*, ed. by Cox and Ward, pp. 413–27.

[35] Copeland, 'Thierry of Chartres and the Causes of Rhetoric'.

Chartres is powerfully attracted to the notion of eloquence in itself as the first stage of spiritual perfection in the image of the arts, drawing from Victorinus's Neoplatonic introduction to the *De inventione*. Rhetoric may not have had an application in legal persuasion, one of its main purposes in antiquity, but for twelfth-century teachers it was still a valued tool for sharpening reasoning skills.

The importance of rhetoric in the advanced curricula of the twelfth-century schools was inseparable from the way it was studied. From 'Magister Manegaldus' and Guillaume de Champeaux to Thierry de Chartres, Petrus Helias, and 'Magister Alanus', as well as many unnamed masters, we see the indisputable prestige of the primary classical texts by Cicero (or what was thought to be by Cicero), the authoritative works by the 'inventor' of the art, not the secondary summaries and handbooks on rhetoric produced in Late Antiquity. As in the grammatical turn to the challenge of Priscian's *Institutiones*, the rhetorical turn to the original Ciceronian works, the *De inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, is both symptom and cause of an epistemological transformation. It is symptomatic of a new scientific expansion and synthesis, visible also in the encyclopedism of the twelfth century, the growing dossier of Aristotelian philosophy, and the reception of Arabic science. It is cause of a new comprehensiveness in the understanding of rhetoric as the art that brings together logical reasoning, on the one hand, and proficiency in language on the other hand: in other words, that displays its fellow trivium arts of dialectic and grammar to advantage. Moreover, like the mid-century commentaries on Priscian by Guillaume de Conches and Petrus Helias, the Ciceronian commentaries by Thierry de Chartres, Petrus Helias, and 'Magister Alanus' provided the occasion for a profound exploration of the external and internal nature of the art itself, its place among the other arts and its internal properties.[36]

However, the commentaries on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* also enabled this advanced and theoretical level of rhetorical teaching to find some common ground with literary and pedagogical interests in the teaching of the figures and tropes. Such responses to the *Ad Herennium* would extend from the earliest commentaries by Manegaldus and Guillaume de Champeaux through the late twelfth-century 'Alanus' commentary. In Book IV of the *Ad Herennium* the masters would have seen a discussion of the *exornationes verborum*, the ornamental uses of language that strain 'proper' meaning, and would have found

[36] Hunt, 'The Introductions to the *Artes* in the Twelfth Century'; Ward, 'The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres', pp. 247–61; Fredborg, 'Ciceronian Rhetoric and the Schools', pp. 25–26.

in this an intersection with some of the questions raised by study of Priscian's *Institutiones*. The commentary by Thierry de Chartres exploits the discussion of terminology at *Ad Herennium* 4.8.11 to develop something like a 'universal grammar' of the levels of style, that is, trying to establish those aspects of an analysis that can be applied commonly:

> SUNT TRIA GENERA, etc. Nota, genera orationis alii stilos, alii figuras, alii characteres appellarunt; sed proprie figura ad orationem, genus ad elocutionem refertur, ut sic dicatur figura orationis, genus elocutionis cuius proprietates omni figurae debent inesse.
>
> THERE ARE, THEN, THREE *GENERA* [OF STYLE, CALLED TYPES (*FIGURAE*)]. Note that some call these genera 'manners', others call them 'types', and others call them 'characters'. But type [*figura*] properly refers to discourse, and *genus* to style, whence we say a 'type of discourse' and a 'kind of style', the properties of which ought to inhere in all types.[37]

Here Thierry grapples with the ambiguous presentation and terminology of the *Ad Herennium* (*figura* meaning here a kind or level of discourse, not a figure of speech). His resolution of the vocabulary is strikingly resonant with a contemporary pedagogical text, the *Materia* commentary on Horace's *Ars poetica*.[38] But the instinct to locate the *genus* of style that must inhere in all types of discourse reveals the same kind of dialectical thinking that motivated grammatical analysis. The increasing visibility of the *Ad Herennium*, from the commentaries of the early part of the century to the great 'Magister Alanus' gloss, facilitated contact between philosophical and literary rhetoric on the common ground of the figures and tropes.

Pedagogical Rhetoric and Compositional Handbooks

Like grammar in the twelfth century, rhetoric had its normative programme that developed over the course of the century culminating in a number of highly successful textbooks. In fact, at the level of intermediate preceptive teaching, grammar and rhetoric were more closely connected with each other than at the advanced, theoretical levels of learning. The compositional rhetorics that began

[37] Thierry de Chartres, *The Latin Rhetorical Commentaries*, ed. by Fredborg, p. 324. Translation from *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 436–37. In the translation I give the complete lemma from *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 4.8.11.

[38] Ed. in Friis-Jensen, 'The *Ars Poetica* in Twelfth-Century France'. For a translation of this passage, see *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 554–55.

to emerge around the last quarter of the century were hybrid productions, taking the teaching of classical poetry from the grammar curriculum and putting it to work in a prescriptive setting where literary texts would serve as models for compositions by students.

A classical resource for literary composition had long been Horace's *Ars poetica*. By the middle of the twelfth century, however, the limits of Horace's text for modern students become obvious in the attempts of teachers to update and streamline this complex and often elusive text. The principal example of this is the *Materia* commentary on the *Ars poetica*, studied and edited by Karsten Friis-Jensen.[39] As Friis-Jensen shows, this commentary seems to have been an important influence on the prescriptive teaching of style in the early *artes* by Matthew of Vendôme and Geoffroi de Vinsauf, its impact extending to the thirteenth century with John of Garland's *Parisiana poetria*.

There are now many valuable studies and surveys of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century explosion of the *ars poetriae* in the works of Matthew of Vendôme, Geoffroi de Vinsauf, Gervase of Melkley, John of Garland, and Eberhard der Deutsche, as well as Matthias of Linköping's mid-fourteenth century *Poetria*.[40] Since one of these treatises, Geoffroi de Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* (*c*. 1208–13), will be discussed in the following section of this essay, it is only necessary here to point to the larger contexts in which these innovative approaches found their audiences. Although they served a pragmatic rather than a speculative purpose, they drew on long traditions of commentary on grammar and rhetoric. They combined the formal and stylistic teaching of Horace's *Ars poetica* with the systematic Ciceronian precepts on composition and argument. They also advanced and consolidated the emergent interests in teaching the figures and tropes from both rhetorical and grammatical perspectives. For these various reasons the influence of the *artes poetriae* was not confined to elementary and secondary teaching, but reached into higher circles, including university and para-university teaching.[41]

Many of the same factors determined the impact of another preceptive genre, the *ars dictaminis* or art of letter writing and prose. The *ars dictaminis*,

[39] See Friis-Jensen, 'Horace and the Early Writers of Arts of Poetry'; and see also Copeland, 'Horace's *Ars poetica* in the Medieval Classroom and Beyond'.

[40] Among recent accounts of this tradition see Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, and Martin Camargo's introduction to Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf*, trans. by Nims.

[41] See for example Woods, 'A Medieval Rhetoric Goes to School—and to the University'.

which had its origins in the late eleventh century and its efflorescence in twelfth-century Orléans and thirteenth-century Bologna, may have aimed at a more heterogeneous audience than the *ars poetriae* (although both achieved a wide remit). Dictaminal treatises offered professional training in prose composition, and as such could serve in secondary teaching as well as in more advanced study of style.[42] Not all dictaminal works taught the figures and tropes, but some teachers of dictamen, including Guido Faba, Transmundus, and Bene da Firenze, incorporated instruction on ornamented language.[43] John of Garland's *Parisiana poetria* also offers a section on prose composition, so his treatment of the figures and tropes is relevant to prose as well as to poetry. The late treatise *Tria sunt* (composed sometime between 1256 and 1400), a hybrid textbook on poetry and prose drawing from the *artes poetriae* and the dictaminal tradition, also presents teaching on figurative language.[44]

Figurative Language in Grammar and Rhetoric: The Case of metalepsis/transumptio

Although theoretical and practical approaches to the language arts took different paths to innovation, serving different audiences and institutional needs, there is also considerable evidence of cross-fertilization between the two levels of teaching. As noted above, we see this in the fortunes of the *Doctrinale* and *Graecismus*, both of which proved useful as platforms for advanced linguistic thought. The same is true of the compositional *artes* of poetry and dictamen, which crossed over from intermediate to advanced audiences. The study of figurative language seems to have invited interaction between advanced and lower levels of teaching. The *Barbarismus* came to be so inscribed in advanced grammatical thought about semantics that it is not surprising that both levels of instruction, higher and lower, found common ground in studying the figures and tropes. The increased interest in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, with its account of figures and tropes in Book IV, would have reinforced the commonality between lower and higher levels of teaching.

Over the twelfth century, the question of how figurative speech signifies or conveys meaning was a semantic inquiry shared by thinkers in logic, theology,

[42] Camargo, *Ars Dictaminis. Ars Dictandi*.

[43] Camargo, 'Latin Composition Textbooks', p. 275.

[44] Camargo, '*Tria sunt*: The Long and the Short of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Documentum*'; see also Camargo's chapter on *Tria sunt* in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 670–81.

grammar, and rhetoric. In an important article, Irène Rosier-Catach traces the fortunes of one exemplary metaphor, the phrase 'prata rident' (the meadows laugh), which encapsulates the potential problems of impropriety (the verb 'laugh' moved from its proper application to humans) and equivocation (is the meaning ambiguous because 'laugh' acquires a meaning beyond its original 'imposition' or purpose?).[45] This illustrative metaphor seems to have originated with Abelard and was taken up by Guillaume de Conches, Alain de Lille, and Thierry de Chartres in his commentary on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

Thierry uses the phrase 'prata rident floribus' to illustrate the 'transference' of words (*verba translata*) from their 'proper' or literal meaning to another, non-proper meaning.[46] At this point in his commentary, Thierry is not concerned specifically with the trope metaphor (*translatio*), but with a general category of transference.[47] The influence of Thierry's commentary may be the reason why this particular example, 'prata rident' and its associated forms, became commonplace among the thirteenth-century arts of poetry.[48] But what is more interesting than the popularity of this example is the persistence of the overarching category of transference in semantic analyses of figuration. The term that some of the arts of poetry give to this super-category is *transumptio*.

In its earliest rhetorical usage, *transumptio* is the Latin equivalent that Quintilian provides for the Greek *metalepsis*, which he places among tropes that 'signify otherwise' (aliter significant), and which in particular he describes as a trope which 'in a way furnishes a transition (or pathway) from one trope to another' (quae ex alio tropo in alium velut viam praestat). *Metalepsis* or *transumptio* is a step on the way to a transference of meaning: 'ut inter id quod transfertur et in quod transfertur sit medius quidam gradus' (it is a kind of interim step between what is transferred and what it is transferred to).[49] Thus 'cano' is a synonym for 'canto', and 'canto' a synonym for 'dico', inviting 'cano' to be used for 'dico' (because it brings to mind the middle term, 'canto'). Quintilian does not like this trope very much, and he seems to be alone among the Roman rhet-

[45] Rosier-Catach, '*Prata rident*'.

[46] Thierry de Chartres, *Latin Rhetorical Commentaries*, ed. by Fredborg, p. 325 (at *Ad Herennium*, 4.8.11).

[47] For *translatio* the trope, see Thierry de Chartres, *Latin Rhetorical Commentaries*, ed. by Fredborg, p. 345, at *Ad Herennium*, 4.34.35.

[48] Cf. Rosier-Catach, '*Prata rident*', p. 160.

[49] Latin text quoted from Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. and trans. by Butler, 8.6.37–8 (I have revised the English translations).

oricians in discussing it as such. Yet despite his reservations, Quintilian gives *transumptio/metalepsis* very large scope, something like a trope whose job is to enable other tropes.

Were it not for Donatus's *Barbarismus*, this notion might have disappeared during the Middle Ages along with much of Quintilian's *Institutio*. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* does not include *metalepsis* or *transumptio* among its tropes. The *Barbarismus*, however, names *metalepsis* among the tropes, giving it the tersest but most intriguing definition: 'Metalempsis est dictio gradatim pergens ad id quod ostendit, ut *speluncis abdidit atris*' [*Aeneid* 1.60] (*Metalepsis* is a word proceeding by degrees to what it indicates, as in 'he hid [them] in sombre caverns').[50] 'Ater' is several steps away from the real meaning intended — it is a synonym for 'dark', which is a synonym for 'shadowy', which could be a synonym for 'deep'.[51] During the Carolingian period, at least one scholar, Sedulius Scottus, recognized the connection between Donatus's *metalepsis* and the Latin term *transumptio*, because his commentary on the *Ars maior* glosses the Greek word with its Latin equivalent.[52] Thus the link that Quintilian had made between the Greek and Latin terms may have been known to the Middle Ages even in the general absence of Quintilian's text.

In medieval logical and philosophical thought about semantics, the words *translatio* and *transumptio* were interchangeable: either could be used to introduce the intentional and interpretive problems involved in a term transferred from its imposed signification and proper meaning.[53] This is not necessarily the case, however, in the arts of poetry. In Geoffroi de Vinsauf's early prose work *De modo et arte dictandi et versificandi* (1198–99), *translatio* is the Latin name given for metaphor (a standard use in the Latin poetic tradition), while *transumptio* is used for the mechanics of transference that are involved in *translatio*/metaphor.[54] One could quibble that the terms are more or less synonymous here, both signifying a transference, but my point is that Geoffroi de Vinsauf names *translatio* as a trope, thus distinguishing it from the generality of *transumptio*.

[50] *Ars maior*, 3.6, in *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, ed. by Holtz, p. 668.

[51] See the discussion in *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement*, ed. by Holtz, p. 209.

[52] Sedulius Scottus, *In Donati Artem minorem, In Priscianum; In Eutychem*, ed. by Löfstedt, 373.10, 379.59.

[53] Rosier-Catach, '*Prata rident*', p. 156 n. 1.

[54] Text in *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle*, ed. by Faral, pp. 286 (*translatio*), 288 (*transumptio*).

This in turn is quite different from what we find in Geoffroi's later *Poetria nova*, written between about 1208 and 1213. In the *Poetria nova*, the word *transumptio* has been elevated to the status of a governing concept for all the functions of tropes.[55] Geoffroi has infused his poetics with a powerful philosophical aura, surely recruiting for *transumptio* the theoretical values the concept had acquired from the realms of logic and theology (and the associated theoretical levels of grammar and rhetoric). By *transumptio* in this context Geoffroi does not mean anything as specific as either *translatio* or (going back to Donatus or further back to Quintilian) *metalepsis*. In the *Poetria nova*, the specificities of individual tropes have given way to a 'super-trope', *transumptio*, as the general method of troping or transference, which may then take particular forms. It is not the theoretical dimension of *transumptio* that is new in Geoffroi: that had been established over the twelfth century in logic and theology. Rather, it is the bringing of that conceptual framework to a pragmatic compositional handbook (written in verse for easy repetition and memorization) that is new. In Geoffroi's *Poetria nova*, the study of tropes is now aligned with the highest levels of semantic thought. Individual tropes are named in passing, as particular instantiations of a higher general principle:

> Instruit iste modus transsumere verba decenter. | Si sit homo de quot fit sermo, transferor ad rem | Expressae similem; quae sit sua propria vestis | In simili casu cum videro, mutuor illam | Ex mihi de veste veteri transformo novellam. [...] *Transfero*, *Permuto*, *Pronomino*, *Nomino*, verba | Haec formant ex se verbalia suntque colorum | Nomina, quos omnes recipit transsumptio sola.
>
> This method teaches how to transume words. If it is a man about whom I speak, I will speak in terms of something similar to this subject. When I see what is its proper garment in a similar case, I will draw upon it and make a new garment from the old. [...] *Transfero*, *permuto*, *pronomino*, *nomino*: these form from themselves 'verbal expressions' which are the names of the figures of diction, all of which come under the heading of *transumptio*.[56]

William Purcell argues that in Geoffroi's *Poetria nova*, *transumptio* represents an enthymematic method for all kinds of tropes, because they link the term used and the term that has been supplanted; it is enthymematic because it

[55] See Purcell, '*Transsumptio*: A Rhetorical Doctrine'; and Purcell, *Ars poetriae*, pp. 71–84.

[56] *Les arts poétiques*, ed. by Faral, ll. 765–69, 952–54, pp. 221, 226–27. Translation based on Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *The Poetria nova and its Sources*, ed. and trans. by Gallo, pp. 55, 65. The tropes referred to here are metaphor, allegory, antonomasia, and onomatopoeia (the last was treated under the tropes).

implies, but does not express, the connection that is based on some similarity.[57] For example, in the phrase 'snowy teeth', the figurative term 'snowy' supplants the proper description 'white' by means of a similarity that is suggested but not stated. In this we can also find our way back to the notion, in Quintilian and Donatus, of *metalepsis*/*transumptio* as a stepping stone, and especially in Quintilian the role of *transumptio* as a kind of enabler of figurative expression. This is not to claim that Quintilian's concept of *transumptio* is an influence on Geoffroi de Vinsauf: that would be difficult to trace. Rather, I suggest that a conceptual model of *metalepsis* — known to the Middle Ages also as *transumptio* — as an enabler of figuration contributed to its elevation from mere trope to general category of troping. A more immediate context for Geoffroi's innovation was the extensive philosophical and theological interest in the semantics of figurative language.

The impact of this element in the *Poetria nova* is writ large on the compositional treatises that followed it. A commentary on the *Poetria nova* that circulated widely through the thirteenth century and beyond gives extensive attention to the doctrine of *transumptio*.[58] The *Ars versificaria* of Gervase of Melkley also uses the notion of *transumptio* to develop a generic theory of a type of trope based on what Gervase calls *identitas*.[59] The doctrine finds its most elaborate expression in later treatises. In the hybrid composition textbook *Tria sunt*, which derives much of its matter from Geoffroi de Vinsauf's works including the *Documentum* and the *Poetria nova*, the doctrine of *transumptio* now merits a chapter on the ten 'species' of transumption, that is, the key tropes, which are all governed by the transumptive principle of *similitudo*. The Aristotelian model of a fourfold movement of metaphor (which had been passed down through Donatus's *Barbarismus*), from animate to animate, inanimate to inanimate, animate to inanimate, and inanimate to animate, is here raised to the governing semantic paradigm for all transference. Even the terminology of twelfth- and thirteenth-century philosophical grammar finds its place here, as words being 'transumed' indicate their *rationes inventionis*.[60]

[57] Purcell, *Ars poetriae*, p. 80.

[58] *An Early Commentary on the Poetria nova*, ed. by Woods, pp. 69–81 and throughout.

[59] Gervase of Melkley, *Ars poetica*, ed. by Gräbener, pp. 108, 112, 123, 131–33, 141. Relevant parts of the text are translated and summarized in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 607–13.

[60] I draw from the edition of the *Tria sunt* in progress by Martin Camargo, who generously allowed me to see this section in typescript. I refer to chapter 5, sections 1–6 and 11.

Even more elaborate and calibrated is the treatment by the Bohemian master Nicolaus Dybinus in his *Declaratio orationis de beata Dorothea* (*c*. 1369), a treatise on embellished poetic language that synthesizes medieval rhetorical lore. Dybinus's quasi-scholastic treatise divides rhetoric into its potentiality, which is eloquence, and its realization through figurative language, which is comprised of the *colores rhetorici* (colours of rhetoric). The *colores*, in turn, constitute a broad genus, under which is a lesser genus, *transumptio*, which 'subalternates' to itself, as *species transumptionis*, eleven tropes.[61] The *Poetria nova*, and in its wake *Tria sunt* and *Declaratio orationis de beata Dorothea*, and their contributions to thought about literary language, raise the notion of transumption to a containing category of semantic theory, putting poetics in direct conversation with philosophy of language.

We might ask the reverse question of university-level linguistic thought: is there evidence that university masters absorbed any of the interests of contemporary poetics? One would think this would be a possibility because the *Barbarismus* was singled out as the only work of Donatus to be required in the earliest arts faculty curriculum, and because the similarly grammatical treatments of figurative language in the *Doctrinale* and the *Graecismus* attracted university-level glossing. But in fact this is a more difficult case to make. The arts faculty masters and students were interested in figuration because it tested and strained the semantic functions of language, a fact that the rhetorical theorists seemed to take as a given in their categorizations of levels of embellishment. Yet by focusing closely on the grammatical logic of such distortion, the arts faculty masters tried to grasp the essence of figurative speech as understood within the rules of grammar. The commentary on the *Barbarismus* formerly attributed to Robert Kilwardby shows how demanding the idea of *metalepsis* can be on the terms of a grammatical logic strictly conceived. The Pseudo-Kilwardby begins the examination of *metalepsis* by determining whether this trope differs from *metaphora* or *catachresis*, while acknowledging that all tropes operate by improper transference ('communis est in omnibus speciebus tropi, scilicet translatio').[62] But the Pseudo-Kilwardby is most intrigued by the peculiarity of Donatus's description of *metalepsis*, 'a word proceeding by degrees [*gradatim*]

[61] *Nicolaus Dybinus' Declaracio oracionis*, ed. by Jaffe, pp. 121–26. Translation in *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric*, ed. by Copeland and Sluiter, pp. 821–33.

[62] (Pseudo) Kilwardby, *In Donati Artem Maiorem III*, ed. by Schmücker, p. 145.342–43. On Kilwardby's grammatical thought and the problems of attributing this commentary to Kilwardby, see Kneepkens, 'Robert Kilwardby on Grammar', pp. 18–19, and Rosier, '"O Magister"', p. 4 n. 10.

to what it indicates'. He analyses Donatus's literary examples, including *Aeneid* 1.60, 'speluncis abdidit atris' (he hid [them] in sombre caverns), taking it apart to understand exactly the point at which one meaning gives way to another, that is — on Donatus's terms — how the transference of meaning seems to be a function belonging to the words:

> per speluncam intelligimus atrum per media; spelunca enim dat intelligere profunditatem in terra et profunditas remotionem a sole et remotio a sole obscuritatem et obscuritas atrum. Unde est hic similitudo in hoc, quod illud, quod transfertur ad significandum reliquum, et illud reliquum sunt similia sive eadem in aliquo tertio. Unde sumenda est hic identitas communiter, prout comprehendit illa, quae sunt inter se eadem et illa sunt eadem in aliquo tertio [...] et gratia huius similitudinis potuit fieri translatio in his.
>
> through cavern we understand sombreness in a mediated way; by cavern is understood a profound depth in the earth, and by profound depth remoteness from the sun, and by remoteness from the sun obscurity, and by obscurity, sombreness. Whence the likeness is in this: what is transferred to a subsequent signification, and the subsequent signification, are similar or the same in some third term. Thus this identity is to be considered common, as it comprehends these things which are the same between themselves and the same in some third term [...] and on account of this likeness a transference among these terms could be made.[63]

It is on the grounds of such analysis of a semantic *catena* that the Pseudo-Kilwardby can justify the dialectician's speculative attention to figurative speech.[64]

Technical Knowledge of eloquentia *and Embellished Style in Vernacular Contexts*

I conclude this essay by pointing briefly to the evidence that we have for the penetration into vernacular contexts of Latin technical lore about figurative language. Through generations of innovative teaching at intermediate and advanced levels, the technical vocabularies of the figures and tropes secured a stable place in Latin learning. The Latin lore of grammar and rhetoric was indisputably absorbed into vernacular learned and literary culture. Yet evi-

[63] (Pseudo) Kilwardby, *In Donati Artem Maiorem III*, ed. by Schmücker, p. 145 (my translation).

[64] On the speculative dimensions of this commentary, see Grondeux, *Le Graecismus d'Évrard de Béthune*, pp. 76–79.

dence for the reception of technical teaching about figurative language remains more elusive. Of course the use of tropes in vernacular writing hardly needs to be traced to Latin textbooks or learned semantics: the canonical tropes simply name the common figurative properties found in poetic language.[65] But given the diffusion of technical approaches to stylistic embellishment through the popularity of the *Doctrinale*, the *Graecismus*, the *Poetria nova*, and other treatises, it is interesting to consider the relative absence of stylistic *technai* in vernacular learning.

But let us begin with the most direct evidence: medieval Iceland. Western Scandinavia produced the earliest European translation of Donatus's *Barbarismus*, *c.* 1250, in the work of the so-called Third Grammarian. The Old Norse translations of Donatus's *Barbarismus* and of parts of Priscian's *Institutiones* are not just the earliest translations into a European vernacular of these late antique grammars but the only medieval translations of these works.[66] These works and their contexts in Old Norse literary and intellectual culture will be discussed in greater depth in this section of the volume by Mikael Males and Åslaug Ommundsen. Thus I pause here only over the *Barbarismus* translation and call attention to one key feature of it: the Old Norse translation

[65] The *schemata* or figures of diction treated in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and the *Barbarismus*, as opposed to the tropes, apply specifically to the grammatical structures and accent system of Latin, and thus would be less likely to carry over into vernacular precept. Thus I look for evidence of vernacular interest in the tropes, which are common to poetic language.

[66] In this connection we should note two other well-known vernacular grammars that do not fulfill this criterion of direct translation of the Latin grammars. Aelfric's *Excerptiones de arte grammatica anglice* (late tenth century) is based, not on Priscian, but on a Carolingian compilation from the *Institutiones*: see [Priscian], *Excerptiones de Prisciano: The Source for Aelfric's Latin-Old English Grammar*, ed. by Porter, pp. 12–33. The Welsh texts known as the 'Bardic Grammars', which rely on the tradition of Latin grammatical lore. The earliest manuscripts of these three vernacular grammars have been dated to the first quarter of the fourteenth century; thus at least the textual evidence for them is considerably later than for the Old Norse vernacular grammars. More important, however, is that the early Welsh grammars are not translations from Donatus's *Ars maior* or Priscian's *Institutiones*, but rather adaptations of a more general Latin grammatical knowledge, closer in character to Donatus's simplified *Ars minor*. The Welsh grammars present vernacular equivalents to some of the Latin technical grammatical terminology, but because they are not closely based on Donatus's *Ars maior*, they do not offer a case study for the penetration of Latin stylistic vocabulary into the vernacular. The treatises are in fact weighted in favour of stylistic matters (occupying the better share of each treatise); but the point of great interest here is the systematization of indigenous Welsh traditions of metre and style. See Matonis, 'The Welsh Bardic Grammars and the Western Grammatical Tradition'.

gives Donatus's technical vocabulary of *vitia*, *schemata*, and *tropi* in Latin, thus allowing the Greco-Latinate terms to enter the vernacular vocabulary (as they have entered into modern usage).[67] Moreover, the Third Grammarian uses the Greco-Latin precepts to discover the equivalents of the figures and tropes in Norse poetic usage.

The extent of Latin-vernacular interchange in the work of the Third Grammarian may be compared with two attempts in Romance languages later in the thirteenth century to take on the technical vocabulary of the figures and tropes. First around 1260, the Florentine Bono Giamboni translated the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* into Italian. This was not a close translation: one interesting liberty that Bono Giamboni took was to transfer Book IV on the figures and tropes to the opening sections of the vernacular version.[68] This approach has something in common with the foregrounding of the figures in the medieval grammatical tradition of Eberhard's *Graecismus*, and perhaps takes inspiration from that new emphasis. Although his rendering of this material was selective and shortened, Bono Giamboni attempted to incorporate the Latin terminology into Italian equivalents. His translation circulated broadly (in different recensions, not always complete), probably because there was a strong context for its reception in the dictaminal cultures of the Italian cities. A French translation, produced in Acre in 1282 by Jean d'Antioche, renders the whole of the *De inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. This is more faithful than Bono Giamboni's Italian version. Its coverage of the figures and tropes in Book IV of the *Ad Herennium* gives an accurate index of all the terms. These are often rendered in a Latinate French: *translatio*: *translacion*; *descriptio*: *descricion*. Sometimes a Latin term is rendered in a Latin-derived word in French: *imago*: *image*.[69] Thus the translation makes this learned material accessible in a vernacular *lingua franca*, or coins close Romance equivalents of the Latin terms. But if its survival in a unique manuscript is any indication, this translation had little or no impact, and its vernacularization of the terminol-

[67] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske afhandling i Snorres Edda tilligemed de grammatiske afhandlingers prolog og to andre tillæg*, ed. Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 100–19. An excellent account of this treatise in terms of shared interests with the continental *artes poetriae* is in Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 210–14.

[68] Bono Giamboni, *Fiore di Rettorica*, ed. by Speroni.

[69] I cite from the unpublished edition by Willy Van Hoecke, kindly supplied to me by Dr Michèle Goyens of the Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven. Readers may consult the published edition: Jean d'Antioche, *La 'Rectorique de Cyceron' tradotta da Jean d'Antioche*, ed. by Guadagnini.

ogy of the figures and tropes seems to have remained unassimilated to its own vernacular culture.

Neither of these Romance vernacular renderings of the ancient doctrines of the figures and tropes accomplished what the Third Grammarian was able to do for Old Norse literary culture: integrating the ancient doctrine of the figures and tropes into an existing vernacular programme through direct comparisons and linkages of the grammatical precepts with exemplary skaldic poetic practices. For the Third Grammarian, the Latin vocabulary of Donatus supplies the names for poetic techniques that are already to be found in the linguistic and rhetorical field of skaldic poetry.[70] The sharp contrast that I draw between the skaldic reception of the doctrines of figures and tropes and the continental translations of similar doctrines from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is not to suggest that the study of style was irrelevant to vernacular writers on the European continent. My point rather is that the technical language of figuration, which represented a common ground for Latin school masters and their speculative counterparts in the higher institutions of learning, found little place in continental vernacular milieus.

It is revealing to consider the extent to which the Greco-Latin names for figures and tropes penetrated into vernacular literary production. These names would be familiar to a moderately educated vernacular writer from many sources: on the grammatical side, the *Barbarismus*, the *Doctrinale*, the *Graecismus* (and commentaries on these works) or indeed from older sources including Isidore of Seville; on the rhetorical side, the works that would supply this vocabulary would include the *Poetria nova* and its many commentaries, dictaminal treatises on the *colores*, and other compositional arts including the *Tria sunt*. The terminology was certainly available up to a point in various vernacular contexts, including Spanish translations of Isidore's *Etymologiae*. But how much did such information travel among continental vernaculars? Did it remain a fairly localized knowledge? I offer as an example late Middle English, which — despite its absorption of a considerable vocabulary from many other literary sources — presents strikingly little evidence of the Greco-Latin vocabulary of figuration.

Martin Camargo has surveyed the references to eloquence and rhetoric in Chaucer's forty-year literary career in order to demonstrate that Chaucer

[70] A recent, highly detailed account of the Third Grammarian's reception of ancient grammatical lore is provided in the unpublished doctoral dissertation by de Pins, '"Hending ok kenning". Les théories linguistiques dans l'Islande médiévale (XIIe-XIVe s.). Lecture du Codex Wormianus'.

came late to a technical knowledge of rhetoric. Camargo attributes this late development to the influence of the *Tria sunt* in the late fourteenth century.[71] As he notes, Chaucer's early education about figurative language would have been based on the standard normative grammars by Alexander of Villa Dei and Eberhard von Béthune. But what we can also find in these various early as well as late references to eloquence or rhetoric is a non-specialized vocabulary. The early *House of Fame* refers to 'figures of poetrie' and 'colours of rethorike' (856); the Host's words to the Clerk in the later *Canterbury Tales* refer to 'termes', 'colours', 'figures' (*CT* fragment IV. 16); the Franklin disclaims any knowledge of 'colours' and 'colours of rethoryk' (*CT* fragment V. 723–26).[72] Even as such passages conjure a certain familiarity with technical training, the vocabulary remains curiously generalized.

Chaucer's invocations of the study of figurative language are of course purposed to the characters speaking (some of whom, like the Host and the Franklin, disclaim interest in or knowledge of ornamented language). So the Chaucerian evidence could be seen as skewed. But that evidence is affirmed if we look out to other literary contexts in Middle English. The terms 'figure' and 'colour' are relatively common in English.[73] But the names for particular 'colours' or 'figures' are uncommon. Some terms appear in connection with translations from more technical Latin. The term *metaplasmus* occurs in an anonymous fifteenth-century translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*.[74] The terms *transumpcioun* and *transumptive* appear rarely: *transumpcioun*, signifying either metaphor or simile, finds a very few appearances in the fifteenth century (perhaps under the influence of theological discourse); *transumptive* appears in Trevisa's translation of Bartholomeus Anglicus's *De proprietatibus rerum*. Perhaps surprisingly, the term 'allegory' seems to find only theological uses in Middle English; its associations (in Latin) with the rhetorical figure *allegoria* seem to have gone unremarked.[75]

As this evidence suggests, medieval vernacular literary cultures did not necessarily register the innovations of learned Latin culture, even in areas that would be crucial to literary self-understanding: language theory, grammatical

[71] Camargo, 'Chaucer and the Oxford Renaissance of Anglo-Latin Rhetoric'.

[72] All quotations are from Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Benson.

[73] *Middle English Dictionary* (electronic) <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/> s.v. 'figure' and 'colour'.

[74] *MED* s.v. 'metaplasmus'.

[75] *MED* s.v. 'transumpcioun', 'transumptive', 'allegorie'.

thought, theory of poetic style. Or at least their responses to intellectual innovation are not obvious; they may express themselves in new self-conscious attitudes to literary discourse, but not in a distinctive, learned vocabulary.

Thus the exceptional development among medieval vernacular cultures merits wide and intensive study. It is only in medieval Scandinavia that the intellectual traditions of grammar and figurative language find a decisive vernacular reception. For Old Norse poetic culture, the translations of Priscian's *Institutiones* and Donatus's *Barbarismus* provided a critical template for self-reflexive vernacular theories of language and literary style unrivalled by programmatic developments in England or on the European continent.

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Traces of Latin Education in the Old Norse World

Åslaug Ommundsen

It has long been recognized that Latin scribal culture and the education of ecclesiastical institutions played a vital part in the rise of vernacular literature. However, it is sometimes easy to forget that Latin education and the Latin language were a relatively stable presence all through the Middle Ages. Modern scholars are often afraid to overestimate the levels of learning and Latinity in Norway and Iceland, and one may wonder if we, in the name of caution, are instead underestimating the achievements of many students, teachers, and scholars of the past because of the poor survival of Latin manuscripts. An overview of Latin education and learning in Norway and Iceland 1100–1350 is yet to be written, although aspects of medieval Latinity have been treated in connection with Old Norse education and literature.[1] The knowledge base concerning Latin education and the availability of Latin learned texts in western Scandinavia is constantly growing as more of the texts and the fragmented source material in Latin is identified and analysed.[2] The ambition for this chap-

[1] See, for instance, a recent overview of Old Norse learned literature in Wellendorf, 'Lærdomslitteratur', where further references can be found. See also Bagge, *Da boken kom til Norge*.

[2] A few ongoing projects aim for a better understanding of the interplay between Latin and Old Norse, such as Gottskálk Jensson's 'Islandia Latina' project. There are *c*. 200 Latin fragments in Iceland, in addition to fragments from 144 different Latin manuscripts of Icelandic

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ter is to provide samples of some of the sources of education which have been discovered in recent years.[3]

The immense losses of medieval manuscript material have robbed us of most of the source material for medieval education, in both Latin and the vernacular. However, some leaves from manuscripts which were used for the teaching or learning of Latin are still extant, and can be pieced into a larger picture based on the curriculum of the rest of Europe. As shown by G. H. Brown, the way in which Latin was taught could change over time.[4] In Norway and Iceland, both the pedagogical methods and the quality of the teaching must have varied considerably from place to place and during the course of the centuries. In countries such as these, with a scattered population and relatively small centres of learning, one was highly dependent on the skills and pedagogical abilities of single individuals. Whether teachers were multi-talents or barely holding their heads above water, it is most likely that they reached for the same teaching-aids as their colleagues further south, and that education in the Old Norse world followed that of the rest of Europe.

Although pedagogical methods and the selection of texts could vary to a certain extent, basic schooling would have consisted of the alphabet, the *Pater noster*, *Ave Maria*, the Creed, followed by reading in the psalter and of some hymns, and only at a more advanced stage, grammar. After basic grammar instruction, most often using Donatus's *Ars minor* or equivalent instruction aids, pupils were supposed to read a variety of Latin texts and authors, and move on to higher rhetorical training.

primary and/or secondary provenance in the Arnamagnæaen collection in Copenhagen; see Ommundsen and Attinger, 'Icelandic Liturgical Books'. The *c*. 6500 single manuscript fragments in Norway, most of them liturgical, have attracted wider attention in recent decades; see *Latin Manuscripts of Medieval Norway*, ed. by Karlsen. Studies concerning the Norwegian Latin fragment material continues in the current author's four-year project (started in 2012), 'From Manuscript Fragments to Book History', at the University of Bergen, co-funded by Bergen Research Foundation.

[3] I would like to thank Jonas Wellendorf, Margaret Clunies Ross, Stefka Georgieva Eriksen, and the anonymous reader for their comments and improvements to this chapter. Any imperfections are solely mine.

[4] Brown describes three methods for attaining literacy during the Anglo-Saxon period: before 800, Latin instruction in Latin; during the ninth century, Latin taught through translation; and in the third period, Latin literacy aided by vernacular gloss and translation; see Brown, 'The Dynamics of Literacy'.

A Good Place to Start: The Psalter

Before a pupil could start learning his Latin grammar and start ploughing his way through Latin school texts, he or she needed to get the fundamental building blocks of reading and writing in place: first of all the alphabet; then how to use letters of the alphabet to form syllables; and finally how to use syllables to form words.[5] Between the basics of reading (and possibly writing), and the definitions and morphology found in Donatus, the psalter worked as an educational primer.[6] In addition to practicing one's reading, one would be learning selected psalms and some hymns by heart, as well as fundamental prayers like *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria*.

Among the ten to fifteen extant Latin manuscripts used in Norway in the Middle Ages, five are psalters.[7] That so many of the preserved manuscripts are psalters may be seen as indicative of the popularity of the genre, not only as a fundamental book for churches and monasteries, but also as a prized possession among the laity. In addition to the five surviving codices, we have fragments from approximately seventy-five psalters preserved in different institutions.[8] A relatively large number of psalters and psalter fragments have also survived from Iceland, even though the great manuscript collector Árni Magnússon (1663–1730) considered psalters more valuable for book binding than to be preserved as actual books, with the exception of the calendars, which he kept.[9]

[5] Although the *vox* (sound), the *littera* (letter), and the *syllaba* (syllable) in real-life teaching was the point of departure, Donatus pushed the actual definition of these terms to the first part of the *Ars major*, rather than including it at the beginning of the *Ars minor*. Lists of syllables are preserved on rune sticks, like this one found at Bryggen (no date): ÷ dadudodidedydædø ÷ gagugogigegygægø ÷ cac [...] ÷ iaiuioiiieiyiæiø hahuhohihehyhæhø sasusosisesysæsø (B 546). For a study on this topic, see Seim, 'Middelalderske runesyllabarier'.

[6] See Brown, 'The Dynamics of Literacy', p. 194.

[7] The Kvikne Psalter (Oslo, National Library, MS 8vo 102, Norway *c.* 1200); the Margrete Psalter (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 8, London *c.* 1220); the Christina Psalter (Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS 1606 4to, Paris *c.* 1230); a small psalter in the British Library (BL, MS Harley 745, England *c.* 1250); the Munkeliv Psalter (Prague, Archives of Prague Castle, Fond KMK Vita sing. B.4/1, Bergen *c.* 1450).

[8] There are fragments from sixty-eight different psalters in the Norwegian National Archives in Oslo, fragments from two psalters in Arendal (the cultural history collection of Aust-Agder), fragments from at least one Norwegian psalter in the Swedish National Archives in Stockholm, fragments from two are in the Norwegian National Library, and from two in Stavanger State Archives. I thank Gunilla Björkvall, Gisela Attinger, and Espen Karlsen for adding items to the known list of psalter fragments.

[9] See Gjerløw, *Liturgica Islandica*.

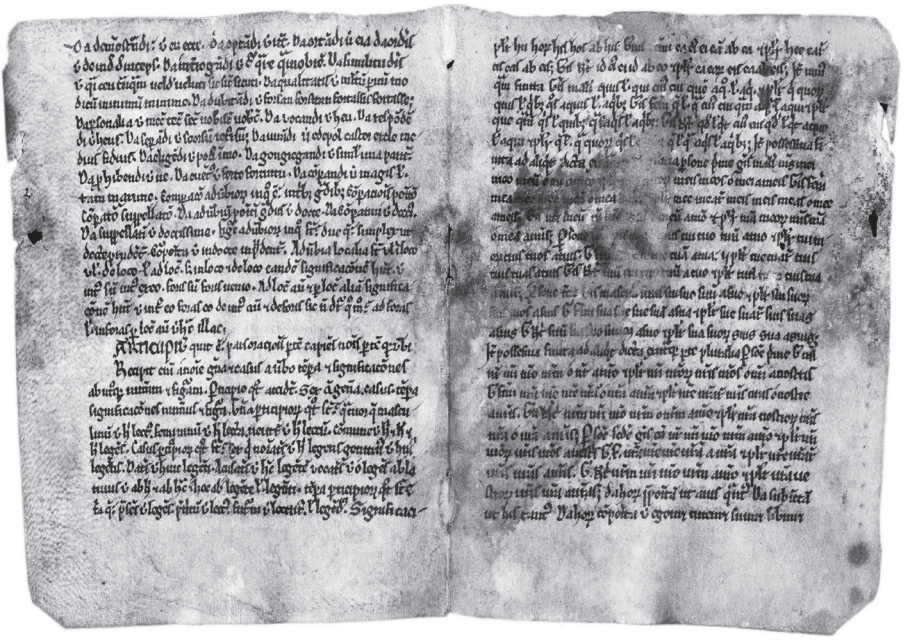

Figure 8.1. A bifolium from Donatus's grammar discovered under the floorboards of Lom stave church in 1973 (C 34738/B305/605). © Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo. Photo: Ann Christine Eek. Reproduced with permission.

It is difficult to know how many of the psalters we now have access to were actually used in teaching. What we do know is that psalters were generously distributed in churches, monasteries, and among laypeople, and that any of these books could be used for practicing reading on a basic or higher level.[10]

Although the 150 psalms of the psalter are fundamental, they are by no means an easy read or necessarily immediately understood, which could help explain the commentaries and glosses on the Psalms growing in number dur-

[10] In the few remaining book lists from Norway, there are examples of relatively small churches owning two copies of the psalter: one old and one new. Two church inventories from the early fourteenth century, one from Hålandsdalen (DN XXI, no. 7, dated 1306) and one from Ylmheim (DN XV, no. 8, dated 1321 and 1323), list psalters referred to as *forn* (old). Several documents tell of psalters with or without illuminated initials changing hands in wills, with male or female owners. The inventory of the bishop's chapel in Bergen from 1408 (DN XV, no. 42) describes one psalter as *fordærwadh* (damaged). Several documents mention psalters in wills or other transactions; see, for instance, DN VIII, no. 152 (1346); DN IV, no. 457 (1366); DN XI, no. 73 (1388), DN I, no. 537 (1391–92).

ing the twelfth century. Such commentaries on the Psalms are also represented among the fragments in the National Archives of Norway (Riksarkivet), and although the users are unknown, such commentaries could possibly be useful in teaching.[11]

Donatus under Stave Church Floorboards

Aelius Donatus's little treatise on basic Latin grammar, *Ars Grammatica*, was the most widespread grammar in the Middle Ages. The *Ars minor* explained the eight basic word groups, or 'parts of speech', while the *Ars maior* included instruction in style and rhetoric. *Ars minor* was structured as questions and answers, the most common form of medieval pedagogical texts:

> Partes orationis quot sunt? Octo.
> Quae? Nomen pronomen verbum adverbium participium coniunctio praepositio interiectio.[12]

> How many parts of speech are there? Eight.
> Which ones? Noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, participle, conjunction, preposition, interjection.[13]

With a general loss of manuscript material of well over ninety-nine per cent, at least in Norway (Iceland probably not being far behind), it is never self-evident that there are survivors of even the most popular texts, fragmentary or otherwise.[14] It was therefore a rare treat when a fragment from Donatus's *Ars minor* turned up underneath the church floor at Lom during excavations in 1973 (Fig. 8.1).[15] The church at Lom has been a virtual treasure trove for the study of medieval scribal culture. Not only are the walls of the church covered in runic inscriptions, the floors have 'protected' a large number of rune sticks, some

[11] Among the glossed psalters in Norwegian fragment collections are Gilbert de la Poirrée (Oslo, Riksarkivet, Lat. fragm. 50) and Peter Lombard (Oslo, Riksarkivet, Lat. fragm. 47, Lat. fragm. 53–54, Lat. fragm. 60b).

[12] Aelius Donatus, *De Partibus Orationis Ars Minor*, ed. by Keil, p. 355.

[13] All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

[14] The liturgical book types dominate the collections of fragments from medieval manuscripts. Among the non-liturgical fragments the more commonly used texts are more likely to be found than others, but can just as easily be among the thousands of manuscripts lost without trace. For a discussion on losses and survival, and the methodological implications, see Ommundsen, 'Books, Scribes and Sequences', pp. 80–82.

[15] Now kept at the Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo (C 34738/B305/605).

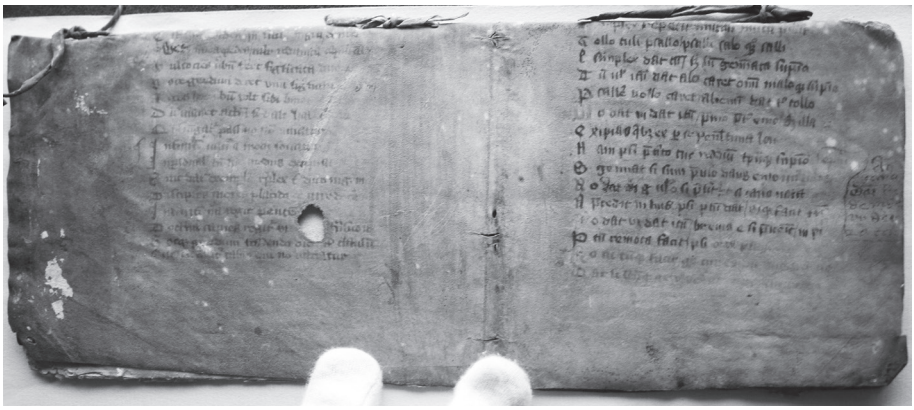

Figure 8.2. A Hansa fragment of Alexander's Doctrinale. For the quoted lines, see line six on the right hand side. Lübeck, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Bergenfahrer nr. 1409. Photo: Åslaug Ommundsen. Reproduced with permission.

fragments from liturgical books, and a unique parchment scroll containing the sequence of Thomas Becket, in addition to the fragment from the *Ars minor*.

What remains of Donatus's grammar at Lom is a bifolium from a pocket-size copy, the leaves measuring only about 11 × 8 cm. The fragment contains parts of four of the eight chapters: *De pronomine*, *De verbo*, *De adverbo*, *De participio*. The text was edited by Christopher Hohler in 1978, and the extant leaves led Hohler to draw the following conclusion: 'This sheet from Lom seems, alas! to show that Latin was taught widely, stupidly, and incompetently'.[16] The evaluation of the scribe is not much better: 'His own knowledge of grammar must have been non-existent, or he would have seen he was writing nonsense and changed things'.[17] The 'nonsense' mainly consists of a common enough scribal error, namely a *saut du même au meme*, i.e. omission of the content between similar or identical words: in the middle of one paradigm, i.e., for *hic*, the scribe jumps from the words *generis feminini* to the words *generis feminini* in the following paradigm, i.e., for *is*, and ends up setting out *ea* instead of *haec*. As confusing as the lacuna in the paradigms of the pronouns may be, the copy otherwise does not seem particularly provincial. The book once used at Lom was written about 1200 by a competent scribe, either French or French influenced.[18]

[16] Hohler, 'A Bifolium from a Latin Grammar', p. 173.

[17] Hohler, 'A Bifolium from a Latin Grammar', p. 173.

[18] A French influence can be seen in a number of fragments from manuscripts with a probable Trondheim affiliation around this time, which may or may not be relevant in this case.

Although the scribe missed part of the text, this highly abbreviated copy would have been impossible to write for somebody who had not mastered Latin. This particular copy of *Ars minor* does not include the paragraphs with inflections of verbs and participles, i.e., they are consciously left out and not missing because the leaves are missing. This suggests that the presentation of paradigms was not the primary purpose of this copy.

Grammar in Verse

In the twelfth century, a new trend becomes visible in works of Latin instruction in Europe. Many of the grammars produced after about 1100 were wholly or partly in verse. The technique reached its high point in the works of Alexander de Villa-Dei and Eberhardus Bethuniensis, who used it for large-scale grammars, the *Doctrinale puerorum* and the *Graecismus*.[19] These two were new authorities in the European grammatical arena, and their grammars were widely popular. The knowledge of these grammars in Iceland is testified to by a text known as *The Fourth Grammatical Treatise*, an Old Norse reworking of the *Doctrinale* which also includes material from the *Graecismus*.[20] Both authors have also been found in Latin fragments which can be linked (although not with one hundred per cent certainty) to Norway or Iceland.

A bifolium from Alexander de Villa-Dei's *Doctrinale* (*c.* 1200) was used to bind papers in the Hanseatic Bergenfahrer archive for the year 1410 (Fig. 8.2).[21] According to the prologue, the work is aimed at young clerks or children, and Alexander wrote the work while teaching Latin to the nephews of the bishop of Dol. With its 2645 lines in Latin hexameter, the *Doctrinale* would have been quite a mouthful for any student. One example from the 'verb' section which is extant on the Hansa fragment can be presented here:

[19] For more information about these authors and the use of their works, see, for instance, Orme, *Medieval Schools from Roman Britain to Renaissance England* and Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in 13th Century England*.

[20] A new edition is forthcoming: *The Fourth Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Clunies Ross and Wellendorf.

[21] Lübeck, Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Bergenfahrer nr. 1409 (Streitigkeiten zwischen dem Kaufmann in Bergen und den Ämtern der Hanse in Bergen, insbesondere den Schuhmachern (s. xv)). I thank the historian Prof. Geir Atle Ersland (University of Bergen) for making me aware of the Hansa fragments and providing me with preliminary images of the *Doctrinale* fragment. I also thank Jonas Wellendorf for identifying the text as that of the *Doctrinale*.

> Mó dat uí, dat itúm, premo práeter emóque; sed ílla
> Éxcipiás, quibus ést pér sé paenúltima lónga;
> Nám psí práeteritó tunc réddúnt ptúmque supíno.[22]

> Verbs of the third conjugation that in first person singular end in *-mo* [such as *fremo*], take the ending *-ui* in perfect tense [= *fremui*] and *-itum* in the supine [= *fremitum*], except *premo* [= *pressi*, *pressum*] and *emo* [= *emi*, *emptum*]. You should also exclude verbs that have a long second-to-last syllable, for they take *-psi* in the perfect tense and *-ptum* in the supine [= *dêmo*, *dempsi*, *demptum*].

The translation above presents in prose what in the original is laid out in three hexameter lines, and the content does not seem particularly clear, to a modern mind at least. As confusing as we may find this way of explaining Latin grammar, a medieval commentator on Alexander wrote: 'A metrical discourse is more useful because of its easier accessibility, its graceful and lucid beauty, and its easier retention in the memory'.[23] The copy of the *Doctrinale* used by the Hansa to bind their papers was written in the fourteenth century, and may have been used in Bergen, although it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion with regard to its origin.

The Eberhardus Bethuniensis: *Graecismus* (1212) is found in a rather interesting fragment collection in the British Library, namely that of Finnur Magnússon.[24] Finnur Magnússon was born at Skálholt in 1781, and divided his time and his professional life between Reykjavík and Copenhagen, as, among other things, a professor of literature and head of the king's private archive. In the years before he died, he solved some of his financial difficulties by selling off books to various collections, among them the British Library. There are fragments from works on law and medicine, copies of documents, liturgical fragments, a leaf from an Icelandic model book, in other words, a varied collection. The problem with the Finnur Magnússon fragment collection is that we know that *some* of the leaves were collected in Iceland, but we cannot be sure that all of them were.

From Finnur Magnússon's own catalogue (which still has a lovely smell of cigar), it is clear that he did not know which text the Eberhardus fragment represented. In the catalogue, it is assumed that it was unedited (*verisimiliter inedita et pro unicis habenda*), which may very well have be true at the time, since the earliest modern edition seems to be the Wrobel edition from 1887.

[22] See *Das Doctrinale des Alexander de Villa-Dei*, ed. by D. Reichling, ll. 873–75, p. 59. (Accents entered by me to indicate the long syllables in the hexameter). See also Fig. 2, right hand side, six lines down.

[23] See Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 90.

[24] BL, MS Add 11 250. The Eberhardus fragment has the subnumber 422.

The Eberhardus fragment is a leaf from a thirteenth-century manuscript, possibly written in France. The parchment is fine and thin, and distinguishes itself from other leaves in the collection made from thick Icelandic parchment. The writing is very small, with even smaller glosses. The text on the Finnur Magnússon fragment is from chapter 12: *De nominibus mixtis*. In the full work, this chapter follows *De nominibus exortis a Graeco* (ch. 8), *De nominibus latinis masculinis* (ch. 9), *De nominbus femininis* (ch. 10), and *De nominibus neutris* (ch. 11).[25] The topic of chapter 12 is words that are seemingly alike or very similar, but have various meanings and uses, like *malus*:

> Ad navem malus spectat malus est vitiosus,
> Faux est mala, malum vitium, malum quoque pomum.[26]
>
> *Malus* [a mast] is meant for a ship, *malus* [bad] is wicked,
> Pharynx is *mala* [the jaw], *malum* [anything bad] is wickedness,
> and *malus* [an apple tree] is also a fruit tree.

In addition to the Eberhardus leaf, Finnur Magnússon's collection also holds a leaf from the proverbs of Wipo of Burgundy from *c.* 1030, which is also relevant in this context as a text commonly used in education.[27] The leaf is written in a tiny hand and seems more like personal notes than anything else, and could perhaps be a school text, possibly Icelandic. The content is morally edifying, like many school texts:

> Valde decipitur qui numquam corripitur
> One who is never reproached is mightily deceived
>
> Vinum multum et forte parum distat a morte
> A lot of strong wine leads to mortal decline

Whether this copy is Icelandic or not, texts in the same genre as Wipo were no doubt used as reading material in Scandinavian schools from an early date. However, these types of texts have not been given a lot of attention and have not been sought out. This means that there is still room for new discoveries in known fragment collections.

[25] The text is available online in the edition by J. Wrobel: <www.mgh-bibliothek.de/etc/dokumente/088584.pdf>.

[26] Eberhardus Bethuniensis, *Graecismus*, ed. by Wrobel, chapter 12, ll. 224–25, p. 115.

[27] BL, MS Add 11 250, subnumber 430, 38.

Compendia and School Texts for Further Reading

When their knowledge of grammar was sufficient, pupils were supposed to read a variety of texts and authors.[28] The *Disticha Catonis* was a highly popular collection of moral verse for such reading, and the author was a late antique figure (not to be confused with the Cato of classical times). Cato's distiches often occurred in compendia of suitable poetry, which for this reason were often referred to as *Liber Catonianus*. While the compendium of the twelfth century (referred to as *Sex Auctores*) included mainly classical authors, there was a shift around 1200 favouring medieval Christian poets who were considered more suitable (*Auctores Octo*), although Cato's distiches and Theodulus's *Ecloga* were kept in both.[29] The new collection of eight authors provided the kind of material now desired in schools and was widely used down to the early sixteenth century. It included the *Facetus* on moral behaviour, the *Cartula* on the vanity of the world, Matthew of Vendome's versification of the biblical story of Tobias, the *Liber parabolarum* of Alain de Lille, *Aesop's Fables* versified (written about 1175 by an anonymous author often referred to as Anonymus Neveleti), and *Floretus*, a poem about faith, virtue, sin, and the sacraments.

Table 8.1. *Liber Catonianus*.

***Sex Auctores*, twelfth century**	***Auctores Octo*, thirteenth century**
Cato: Disticha	Cato: Disticha
Theodulus: *Ecloga*	Theodulus: *Ecloga*
Avianus: *Fabulae*	*Facetus* (*On Moral Behaviour*)
Maximianus: *Elegiae*	*Cartula* (*De contemptu mundi*)
Claudianus: *Proserpina*	Matthew of Vendome: *Tobias*
Statius: *Achilleis*	Alain de Lille: *Liber parabolarum*
	Anon. Neveleti: *Aesop's Fables*
	Floretus

[28] Brown mentions Prosper of Aquitaine's *Epigrammata*, the *Disticha Catonis*, Juvencus's *Evangelia*, the *Carmen Paschale* of Caelius Sedulius, the *De actibus Apostolorum* by Arator, the *Psychomachia* by Prudentius, and the *De ave Phoenice* attributed to Lactantius; Brown, 'The Dynamics of Literacy', p. 210.

[29] See Orme, *Medieval Schools*, pp. 97–101.

During a visit to the National Museum in Reykjavík in September 2010, I looked through all the Latin fragments in connection with a project on Icelandic liturgical books, together with the musicologist Gisela Attinger.[30] Since some of the texts in the Latin fragments had not yet been identified, we needed to look more closely at the content of each one. The fragments Þjms. fragm. 103 and 104 (both from the same book) were from a relatively modest book, and it was clear at first glance that the content was not liturgical:

Damnaris nunquam post longum tempus amicum,
Mutavit mores, sed pignora prima memento.
Never condemn a friend after a long time,
He has changed, but remember his first merits.

Gratior officiis, quo sis mage carior, esto,
Ne nomen subeas quod dicitur officiperdi.
Be more gracious in your affairs with those who are fond of you,
So that you will not attract the name of 'opportunity waster'.

Suspectus caveas ne sis miser omnibus horis,
Nam timidis et suspectis aptissima mors est.
Beware of being suspected so that you will not be miserable for all time,
For death is most proper for the timid and suspected.

Cum fueris proprios servos mercatus in usus,
Et famulos dicas, homines tamen esse memento.
When you have bought your own slaves for your use,
And you call them servants, remember they are still men.

The moral advice laid out in elegiac couplets in fragment 104 was identified as belonging to Cato's *Disticha*, Book IV.[31]

One question was whether the Reykjavík Cato was part of a compendium, and if so, whether it was the twelfth-century *Sex Auctores* or the thirteenth-century *Auctores Octo*. One remaining passage from fragment 103 went as follows (Fig. 8.3):[32]

[30] At that time, the Latin fragments were kept in storage outside Reykjavík, and I would like to thank the staff there for the help we received. The fragments have since been moved to the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies.

[31] The quoted distiches can be found in, for instance, *Phaedri Augusti Liberti Fabulae Aesopiae*, p. 215.

[32] The layout of the poem is noteworthy, as not only the first letter of each verse, but also the last letter, has been drawn into the margin to form a straight vertical line. A panegyrical

Rusticus urbanum mus murem suscipit ede [m]
commodat et mentem, mensaque mente mino r
In mensa tenui satis est inmensa uolupta s
n obilitat uiles frons generosa dape s[33]

In a prose translation the text reads:

> The country mouse receives the town mouse in his house. He welcomes him, and the table is more modest than the hospitality. On the rather plain table is provided great delight and the obvious generosity ennobles the simple meal.

And we know how the story continues: the town mouse starts to describe the wonders of the food in town, and the country mouse follows him there. But during the spectacular feast in town it becomes obvious that the plenty comes with more danger and risk than in the country. The country mouse runs home, happy to be safely back with what he is used to, the moral being that it is better to live a simple life in safety than have plenty, but live in fear. Even a modern reader will recognize this as one of Aesop's fables.

Since the versified *Aesop's Fables* was part of the *Auctores Octo*, it is likely that the two fragments in Reykjavík were once part of a copy of the compendium *Liber Catonianus* in accordance with thirteenth-century European fashion. Since the manuscript looks as though it could actually be dated within the thirteenth century itself, Icelandic school masters who could have used this book would have been equipped with the same texts as school masters on the Continent.[34]

Texts which were considered important were often translated from Latin into Old Norse, as was the *Disticha Catonis*. The Icelandic translation of the poem dates back to the thirteenth century. However, the *Disticha* was also known at a far earlier date: one distich was quoted and translated into Icelandic in the *First Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1150).[35]

poem for St Þorlákr from the fourteenth century, edited by Susanne Fahn and Gottskálk Jensson, is laid out in the same way, as is a Latin poem which ends the introductory letter to *Nikuláss saga*; see Fahn and Jensson, 'The Forgotten Poem', pp. 38 and 53.

[33] The fable about the town mouse and country mouse can be found in *Phaedri Augusti Liberti Fabulae Aesopiae*, p. 129.

[34] The general proportion and execution of the letters, as well as the lack of fourteenth-century characteristics, would indicate a date before 1300.

[35] The Icelandic version of the *Disticha Catonis* has been edited in vol. VII of the new skaldic edition, *Hugsvinnsmál*, ed. by Wills and Würth.

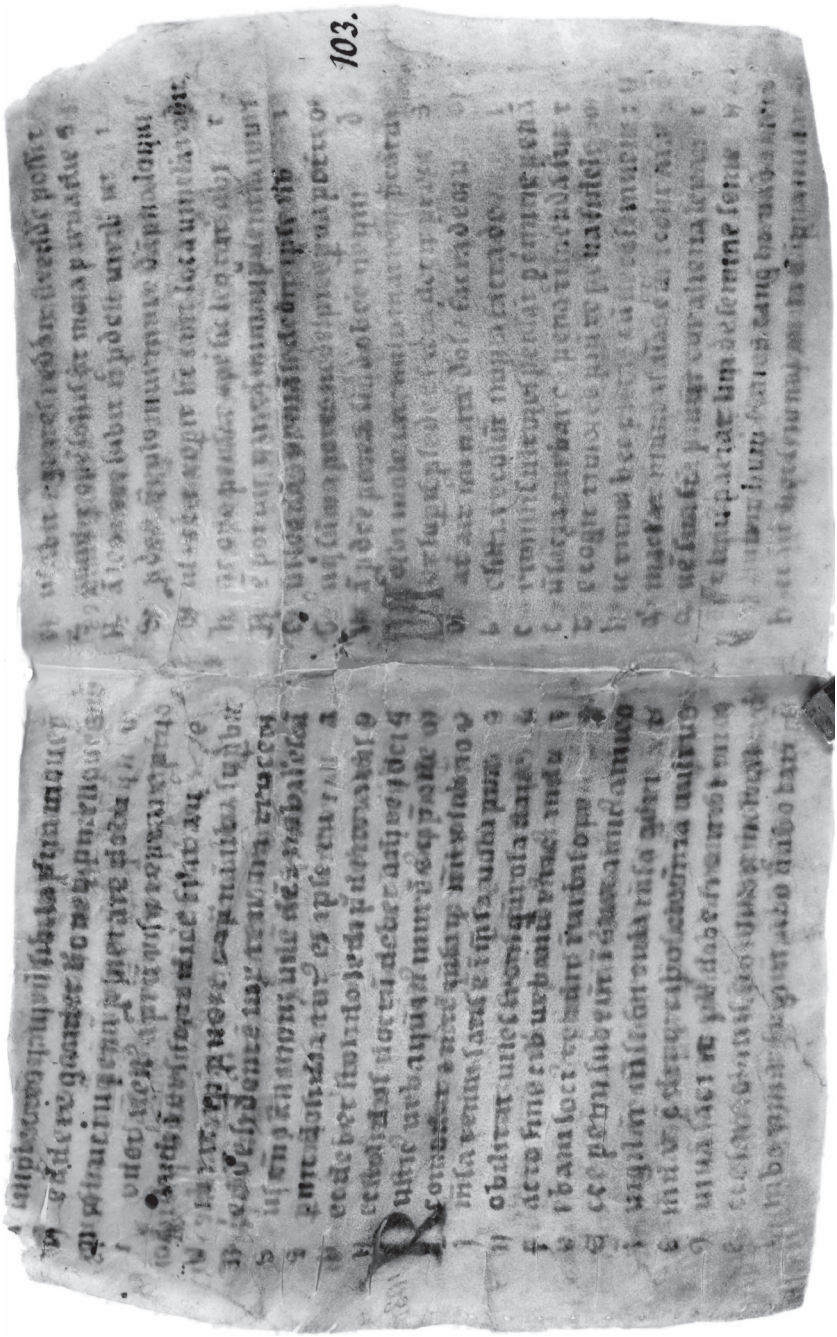

Figure 8.3. *Aesop's Fables* versified. The fable of the country mouse begins by the green initial 'R'.
The Árni Magnússon Insitute for Icelandic Studies, Reykjavík, Þjms. fragm. 103. Photo: Ívar Brynjólfsson. Reproduced with permission.

Because of their general popularity, we may assume that the *Disticha Catonis* and the *Liber Catonianus* compendium were also known in Norway. A reference to what appears to be one of the other texts in the *Auctores Octo* version can be found in a much debated book list referred to as 'Bishop ~~Arne~~'s book list', found in a manuscript in Uppsala University Library (C 564). The presumed owner is Bishop ~~Arne Sigurdsson~~ of Bergen (d. 1314), although the slightly mysterious reference to the book owner as 'b Aquila' has caused some controversy.[36] Fourteen titles are listed under the headline 'Grammaticales Libros', the first being *Flores grammaticales metricos*, which presumably can refer to any of the more popular versified grammars. The second title is *Thobiam metricum glosatum* — a glossed version of the versified Tobias, presumably the poem ascribed to Matthew of Vendome so often occurring in *Liber Catonianus* (see Table 8.1 above). The popularity of the versified Tobias may also explain some similarities between the account of Tobias of the Old Testament and the legend of St Hallvard of Oslo.[37]

~~Arne~~'s book list contains several composite books of the type that would have been useful as part of a learned man's book collection all over Europe, for instance a book on the divine office according to Roman use, bound together with Zozimas and Prudentius's *Psychomachia* (*Item librum de officiis ecclesie secundum usum Romanum et in eo Zozimas et Prudencius Sychomachie*). While Zozimas is rather obscure, Prudentius's *Psychomachia* was widespread (see n. 27), and as it describes the battle between vices and virtues, it is often given credit for starting the wave of medieval allegory. The book list also contains one book on the parts of speech and with it the glosses for Donatus (*Item de modis significandi parcium oracionis et in eo glosa super Donatum*). Another item on the list is the *Proverbia sanctorum*, which actually occurs in the very manuscript which contains ~~Arne~~'s book list (C 564), as well as another manuscript in Uppsala which has been connected to ~~Arne,~~[38] The *Proverbia* is a collection of brief quotes from biblical, classical, and medieval authorities, from Solomon and Seneca to Bede and Isidore of Seville:

[36] The book list is edited by Kolsrud and Reiss, *Tvo Norrøne Latinske Kvæde med Melodiar*. Although the identification has been seriously questioned, no one has come up with a more likely candidate.

[37] See Ommundsen, 'Saint Hallvard as the New Tobias'.

[38] Uppsala, University Library C 564 (fol. 240v) and C 233 (fol. 20v); Kolsrud and Reiss, *Tvo Norrøne Latinske Kvæde med Melodiar*, pp. 30–31 and 55–57.

> Ysiodorus. Primum studium scientie est querere dominum, deinde honestatem uite cum innocencie opere.[39]
>
> Isidore: The primary ambition of science is to seek the Lord, then an honest life with works of righteousness.

A Student in Medieval Norway

Medieval education could continue over a long period of time and consist of a combination of institutional and private teaching, if we are to believe the first description of a Norwegian student's curriculum.[40] An English account of the miracles of St Cuthbert, written by Reginald of Durham in the late twelfth century, mentions a student in Stavanger, who was sent to the king's court as a boy. After six years there, he was entrusted to a teacher for five years, although during this period he was instead transferred to be further educated at the monastery in Stavanger. After five years at the monastery, he was entrusted to another teacher for more worldly knowledge. During this period of secular education, he contracted a terrible illness after spending too much time in the local tavern. His family sought to cure him, and their efforts to find the right cure (= the right saint) met with success in 1172, when he was cured by St Cuthbert in Durham.

The educational scenario described by Reginald does not seem unlikely. It was probably not uncommon for members of wealthy families to reap benefits from learned individuals, as well as from local monastic institutions (presumably without the intention of ever taking up the religious life). A person with a background as described above — a proper *literatus* knowing his Donatus, his psalter, and whatever other suitable Latin reading his teachers supplied him with — was part of an exclusive group. In his discussion of early Norwegian literacy, Sverre Bagge estimates that possibly as few as one per cent of the population could read or write. At the same time, there could have been as many as two thousand priests in Norway around 1300.[41] Although this seems like

[39] Uppsala, University Library C 564, fol. 240v, from Isidorus's *Sententiae*, Book 1, 3 (which is also available on line: <http://la.wikisource.org/wiki/Sententiae_-_Liber_II#I._De_sapientia>); Kolsrud and Reiss, *Tvo Norrøne Latinske Kvæde med Melodiar*, p. 55.

[40] The text is edited with a translation in Haki Antonsson, Crumplin, and Conti, 'A Norwegian in Durham'.

[41] Bagge, *Da boken kom til Norge*, p. 19.

a high number of educated individuals, at this date the majority of Norway's *c*. 1200 churches would have been in use, the cathedral chapters were active, and most of the monastic institutions would have been flourishing. Although not all priests would have had their education from Norway, the pitiful remnants we have left from Latin teaching in Norway should not be taken as indicative of the level of activity. There are also documents which contain references to schooling, and it is not uncommon for men to be referred to with titles such as *skólameistari* or *scolasticus*.[42]

Conclusion

The Latin literature that has been treated in this chapter has not received much attention in Scandinavian scholarship. Grammars and moral poetry are perhaps not considered to be great literature, and copies of these texts can be found in great numbers all over Europe. Still, the story told by the remaining fragments from Norwegian and Icelandic schoolrooms is an interesting one and deserves more attention. Now that so much interesting work is being done on the learned literature in the Old Norse vernacular and the value of such works is being upgraded, the time is surely here to give a more prominent position to the evidence of Latin education. The remaining sources seem to corroborate the supposition that Norway and Iceland followed the trends in Europe regarding grammars and readers. The educational 'programme' of the twelfth century seems to have been a success, since both Norwegians and Icelanders from this time found the confidence to express themselves in Latin, in the form of both liturgy and narrative literature. The relentless copying of liturgical books shows that a relatively high degree of competence in Latin was upheld all through the Middle Ages (as the idea of 'mechanical copying' is a very unlikely scenario in the often highly abbreviated Latin scribal culture). We can always hope that more evidence will turn up and help us gain a clearer picture of how Latin was taught and used in the past. Still, in spite of great losses, the history of medieval education and Latin grammar can and should also be told for the Old Norse world.

[42] For the schooling of a boy, see DN II, no. 161 (1327). See also DN VIII, nos 52, 53; and DN VIII, no. 59 (1320) referring to *dominus Arno scolasticus Bergensis*.

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Applied *Grammatica*: Conjuring up the Native *Poetae*

Mikael Males

In the printed version of the 2001 Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture, Guðrún Nordal writes: 'The successful introduction of the oral, pagan heritage in Latin Christian culture in Iceland through the intermediary characteristics of skaldic verse is — I believe — at the root of the flourishing literary production of the thirteenth century'.[1] This statement may be taken as a starting point for the present chapter, where the interplay between Old Norse poetry and Latin learning will be analysed, albeit with somewhat different emphases than Guðrún Nordal's.

In the Middle Ages, the foundation for all academic disciplines was the study of *grammatica*, entailing grammar in the modern sense, as well as the study of written composition in general.[2] In the following, I shall analyse the impact of grammatical studies and perceptions on Old Norse, and more specifically Old Icelandic, poetry and literature. First, a three-phase development as represented by Old Icelandic grammatical texts will be outlined. Thereafter, these phases will be related to changes in Old Icelandic poetry which appear to have their background in grammatical studies. Pseudonymous compositions in prosimetrical, historical narrative will also be discussed. The synoptic view

[1] Guðrún Nordal, *Skaldic Versifying and Social Discrimination in Medieval Iceland*, p. 8. She further explores this subject in 'Samhengið í íslenskum fornbókmenntum', pp. 91–106. The most exhaustive treatment of the relationship between skaldic poetry and grammatical studies is her *Tools of Literacy*.

[2] See Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*.

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of Old Icelandic grammatical treatises, skaldic poetry, and prosimetrical sagas is intended to highlight stages in the literary development that would be less clearly visible in any isolated category of sources.

Three Phases of Attitudes toward Vernacular Text in Iceland

The Old Norse literary flowering of *c.* 1150–1350 produced, among other things, four grammatical treatises. They are all contained, together with Snorri's *Edda* (a work on poetry and mythology), in the largest Old Icelandic grammatical manuscript, Codex Wormianus (AM 242 fol.), probably originating at the Benedictine monastery of Þingeyrar *c.* 1350.[3] The works contained in Wormianus vary in age from about 1150 to the time of writing of the manuscript.[4] Two of the grammatical treatises, the *First Grammatical Treatise* and the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, as well as the prologue to all four in Wormianus, display features or contain passages that may be taken as indicative of shifting attitudes toward vernacular language and poetry. All three authors express these attitudes most clearly when presenting their opinions on the traditional, runic script. These works will here be used to convey a rough chronology of the development of attitudes towards vernacular texts:

1. The *First Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1150). Establishment of the vernacular as a written medium.
2. The *Third Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1250). Vernacular assertiveness and the establishment of a literary past.
3. Prologue (*c.* 1350). Vernacular literature fully established.

The earliest of the grammatical treatises, the *First Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1150), was written for the stated purpose of introducing a workable orthography for Old Icelandic.[5] The system arrived at is elaborate enough to have

[3] See Johansson, *Studier i Codex Wormianus*, pp. 10–18, 222–27.

[4] Snorri's *Edda c.* 1220–40 (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. xiv–xv), the *First Grammatical Treatise c.* 1150 (*The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, pp. 22–33), the *Second Grammatical Treatise c.* 1250–1300 (*The So-Called Second Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Rachellà, pp. 126–29), the *Fourth Grammatical Treatise c.* 1300–50 (*Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling i Snorres Edda tilligemed de grammatiske avhandlingers prolog og to andre tillæg*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. xliii–xliv), Prologue *c.* 1350 (Johansson, *Studier i Codex Wormianus*, p. 45, cf. pp. 39–42, 53; Males, 'Wormianusredaktören: Språk, tro och sanning vid 1300-talets mitt', pp. 41–53, 58).

[5] The fullest overview of the background and linguistic foundation of the *First Grammat-*

attracted the label proto-structuralist.[6] The First Grammarian recommends ordinary letters for short phonemes, accented ones for long, a dot above the letter for nasalization, and a dot plus accent for long nasalized phonemes. Vowel phonology is established through minimal pairs, i.e. words where only the phonemes under discussion change, such as *far* (vessel) and *fár* (danger, harm). The First Grammarian seems to have studied the core literature of Latin grammar, and even though earlier claims about his connection to scholastic grammar are tenuous, it seems likely that he had spent some time abroad.[7] His achievement lies not in his theoretical outlook, but in his methodological rigor, which, conversely, is of a quality beyond the ordinary.

The impetus to account for Icelandic phonology through minimal pairs seems to have come from Latin grammar, where differences in pronunciation would sometimes be highlighted by similar means (most famously in *De differentiis* by Serlo of Wilton, roughly contemporary to the *First Grammatical Treatise*).[8] The First Grammarian had, however, not only studied Latin. He also discusses skaldic poetry with a precision that shows that he was an avid student thereof, and phonetic variation reminiscent of minimal pairs permeates that entire tradition in the form of so-called hendings (a kind of internal rhyme, to be discussed below).[9] Through skaldic poetry, the ears of the First Grammarian

ical Treatise is in the edition *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson.

[6] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, pp. 35–38.

[7] On the *First Grammatical Treatise* and scholastic grammar, see *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 200. The First Grammarian mentions the Irish pronunciation of Latin *c* as /k/ in all positions. In so doing he refers to the Irish as *skotar* rather than *írar*, which must be based on the Latin designation *Scoti*, and he is also aware of the spelling *che* for /k/ before /e/. A Latin text or possibly an informant of insular provenance seems a likely source for both wording and spelling. He also shows some awareness of English orthography and pronunciation, and this, presumably, must derive from a source other than his knowledge of Irish Latin. While it is not inconceivable that he could have attained such variegated knowledge of insular matters in Iceland, the most likely explanation is probably that he, like his contemporaries Bishops Þorlákr and Páll, had studied in England (see Holtsmark, *En islandsk scholasticus fra det 12. Århundre*, pp. 56–59, 109–11; *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, pp. 189–200, 208, 234, though note that Hreinn Benediktsson is opposed to the notion of an education abroad).

[8] Holtsmark, *En islandsk scholasticus fra det 12. Århundre*, pp. 89–90; Law, *The History of Linguistics in Europe*, pp. 180, 201.

[9] For his study of skaldic poetry in connection to phonetic analysis, note in particular the discussion of the word *éarn* in a stanza by the poet Óttarr svarti (*The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, pp. 226–27).

would have been finely tuned to vowel harmony, and his stringent analysis, based on minimal pairs, was thus most likely achieved through a blend of the tools supplied by Old Norse poetics and Latin *grammatica*.[10]

The *First Grammatical Treatise* is a treatise on orthography, but there was probably more at stake for the First Grammarian than writing alone. *Grammatica*, or *litteratura*, the foundational discipline for all scholarly endeavours, could not exist without the letter (*γράμμα*, *littera*) and the product of letters, literature (*γράμματα*, *litterae*). Linguistic sounds, in turn, were in the Middle Ages generally perceived as the 'power' (potestas) of letters.[11] The tacit assumption in medieval *grammatica* is that a language without script could not, in principle, have a grammar, and failing grammar, it had no foundations for learning.[12] The pains taken in the *First Grammatical Treatise* to live up to the implicit ideal of the Latin grammarians of correlating single sounds (i.e. phonemes) to single letters is an indication of the pervasiveness of this scriptural mindset. What was at stake, then, was nothing less than the possibility of vernacular learning. Such a grammatical sentiment stands in stark contrast to the establishment of the younger runic *futhark* some four hundred years earlier. The lack of phonetic precision in that script indicates that pragmatism was at the core of the construction; unambiguousness was discarded for economy. In the words of the First Grammarian: if a reader manages to decode runes correctly, the reader rather than the runes is to be credited.[13] From his grammatical

[10] Cf. Frank, *Old Norse Court Poetry*, p. 37. Note, though, that she does not presuppose any Latin background. Unlike the scholars mentioned, I do not assume that the use of minimal pairs in the *First Grammatical Treatise* has to be derived from either the Latin tradition or from skaldic poetry, the two being mutually exclusive. Rather, while recourse to this strategy in a grammatical context is likely to have been inspired by Latin precedents, the analysis was no doubt aided by the skaldic training that the First Grammarian evidently possessed.

[11] See Donatus, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical*, ed. by Holtz, p. 605; Isidore, *Etymologiarum sive Originum*, ed. by Lindsay, 1, p. 31.

[12] Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, p. 7. This prejudice is borne out, for instance, in Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia*, where Dante argues against this and claims that vernacular poetry of the highest quality serves to show that a language can be elevated even though it does not have *grammatica*.

[13] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, p. 214. 'Eigi er þat rúnanna kostr þó at þú lesir vel eða ráðir vel at líkindum þar sem rúnarnar vísa óskýrt, heldr er þat þinn kostr' (It is not the virtue of the runes if you can read [them] well or interpret [them] well, according to probability, in cases where the runes give unclear indications, but rather it is your virtue) (my normalization and translation). All previous translations of this passage and dictionary entries quoting it translate *rúnar* with 'letters' rather than 'runes'. The

standpoint, such a script was completely inadequate; the constancy of the *littera*, rather than the fluidity of traditional lore, must serve as the foundation of learning and literature.

The *Third Grammatical Treatise* (*c*. 1250) was composed by Óláfr Þórðarson (d. 1259), nephew of the famous Snorri Sturluson and a member of the powerful Sturlung family. The Sturlung milieu in the first half of the thirteenth century seems to have been one of learned chieftains and their priests, collaborating in common intellectual endeavours.[14]

The first part of the *Third Grammatical Treatise* is based on Priscian's *Institutiones*, I–II and treats the topic of letters and sounds.[15] The second and larger portion of the treatise is a translation of Donatus's *Barbarismus* (Part III of his *Ars Maior*), dealing with figures and tropes. The prose there for the most part follows *Barbarismus*, but the examples given by Donatus, mainly Latin hexameters from Vergil's *Æneid*, are all replaced by skaldic poetry. These two poetic traditions differ radically in metre and style, but in the introduction to the translation of *Barbarismus*, their supposed common background is used to argue that they are the same art:

> Í þessi bók má gerla skilja, at ǫll er ein listin skáldskapr sá, er rómverskir spekingar námu í Athenisborg á Grikklandi ok sneru síðan í latínumál, ok sá ljóðaháttr eða skáldskapr, er Óðinn ok aðrir Asíamenn fluttu norðr higat í norðrhálfu heimsins, ok kenndu mǫnnum á sína tungu þesskonar list, svá sem þeir hǫfðu skipat ok numit í sjálfu Asíalandi, þar sem mest var frægð ok ríkdómr ok fróðleikr veraldarinnar.[16]

First Grammatical Treatise, however, uses *stafir* to designate 'letters', and a sudden and marked shift in terminology is very unlike this author. Indeed, the meaning 'letters' should probably be removed from Old Norse dictionaries; as a designation for script, *rúnar* can mean either 'runes' or 'the other script (e.g. Greek and monumental script)' as opposed to ordinary, Latin book script. I provide the full empirical evidence in Males, 'Kan fornisländskans *rúnar* betyda "bokstäver"?'.

[14] Snorri, for instance, was a friend of the prior Styrmir and used his saga of St Óláfr as the chief source for his own saga about him (Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature*, pp. 219, 222). Snorri was the foster-son of Jón Loptsson, who was himself both chieftain and deacon (Turville-Petre, *Origins*, p. 220). Óláfr Þórðarson was ordained subdeacon and had an interest in both the classics and skaldic poetry, and he was also the founder of some kind of school, presumably a grammar school (Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*, p. 35 and note 130).

[15] Gade, 'Ælfric in Iceland', has demonstrated that the source is Priscian's *Institutiones* rather than *Excerptiones de Prisciano*, which has sometimes been suggested.

[16] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 60.

> From this book it can be clearly understood that the poetry that the Romans learned in Athens in Greece and then translated into Latin, and the verse form or poetry that Óðinn and the other Asians transferred up here to the northern part of the world, is all the same art. And they taught people this kind of art in their own tongue, in the way they had arranged and learnt it in Asia itself, where there was more glory, riches, and wisdom than anywhere in the world.

Stories about Trojan descent were told all over Europe in the Middle Ages, the ultimate source of inspiration being the *Æneid*.[17] What is atypical about this description is the claim that Latin epic hexameter and skaldic poetry are 'the same art'. Indeed, Óláfr is implying more than mere equality. He does not activate the Trojan background for the Romans; their poetry was transmitted through Athens and based on translations. The ancestors of the northern peoples, on the other hand, were the original composers of this poetry and never had to translate it (note the careful opposition of 'Athens [...] translated [...] their *own* tongue [...] Asia *itself*').[18] With these claims, Óláfr proceeds to the second part of the treatise, where he supplants all Latin poetry with skaldic stanzas. In so doing, according to his own version of the Troy story, he is only restoring *Barbarismus* to the form it ought originally to have had.

This passage is famous and often quoted. Less attention has been accorded to similar claims made on behalf of the runes in the first part of the treatise — claims that differ radically from the First Grammarian's perception of runes. In this part of the treatise, Óláfr does for letters what he does for poetry in the second part; he supplants the Latin letters with runes and, furthermore, he takes every opportunity to argue for their respectable pedigree and their rational correlation to phonology.[19] His underlying assumptions are mostly implicit, but

[17] The fullest overview of the Old Norse version of the Troy story is Heusler, *Die gelehrte Urgeschichte im altislændischen Schrifttum*. In an addition to the prologue of Snorri's *Edda* in Codex Wormianus there is an explicit comment on this widespread practice: 'ok af þeira frægð gáfu eptirkomandi menn sér þeira virðingarnǫfn ok einkannlega svá sem Rómverjar' (and because of their [the Trojans'] fame, later people appropriated their dignified name for themselves, particularly so the Romans) (*Edda Snorra Sturlusonar, Codex Wormianus AM 242, fol.*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 6.).

[18] The same idea is presented in the prologue to Snorri's *Edda*; the Asians imposed their tongue on northern Europe, and this can be seen by place names in Britain that are clearly not from the same linguistic root as Old Norse (the reference seems to be to Celtic names) (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 6, 57).

[19] When discussing general features such as sound, the concept of the letter, accent, and quantity, Óláfr retains the ordinary, Latin letters, presumably because the individual letters have little bearing on these issues. When discussing matters involving single letters (including

come to the fore on closer scrutiny: when Óláfr seeks to justify different features of the runes, he refers to Greek and Hebrew, but when he wishes to clarify rather than defend a given feature, he compares the runes to Latin script.[20] Latin letters and runes are, by implication, on an equal footing in comparison to the hoary antiquity of Greek and Hebrew, and sometimes Óláfr even seems to imply that the runes are older than Latin script. Thus, he writes that the runes are sixteen in number, just like the alphabet of the earliest Greeks (this information goes back to Priscian). No comparison to the more numerous Latin letters is made at this point — partly, perhaps, because this might induce the reader to ponder which script is the more precise of the two. Rather, the implied connection to pre-Roman antiquity remains his only justification for the number.[21] Shortly afterwards he claims that when the masters of runes needed a sign for the phoneme /y/, they took it from Hebrew.[22] This is manifestly not the case.[23]

Óláfr also takes pains to describe the order of the runes as rational: in a twelfth-century commentary on Priscian, the physical rationale of the order of Latin vowels is given, namely that /a/ is spoken in the chest and the others progressively higher up, ending with the labial /u/.[24] Óláfr refers to this ordering principle among the 'authorities on Latin' (*latínumenn*), and he claims that the reasoning behind the order of runic vowels is the opposite one, beginning with /u/. When he reaches the last of the vowels, which in the runic alphabet is not /a/ but /y/, the argument is dropped, presumably because he cannot bring himself to claim that /y/ is spoken deep down in the chest. Instead, as noted above, he informs the reader that this vowel is taken from Hebrew. After some

their sound), however, such as categories of letters, the alphabet, and phonology, he uses runes (*Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 33–59).

[20] Apart from the references to Greek and Hebrew discussed above, Óláfr also justifies the imprecision of the rune *íss* (its values are /i/, /e/, and sometimes /æ/) with reference to Hebrew (he seems to have had some notion of Hebrew *matres lectionis*) (*Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 42). Typically of him, he does not say why he provides this information, but the reason may be inferred to be that Latin script displays no such imprecision (in theory at least).

[21] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 40 and footnote.

[22] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 42–43.

[23] The rune for /y/ normally coincides with the rune for /R/ and /r/, and although the rune for /y/ has a deviant form in the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, this has nothing to do with Hebrew (Larsson, *Yrrunan*, pp. 138–39, 185–86).

[24] *Notices et extraits de divers manuscrits Latins pour servir à l'histoire des doctrines grammaticales au moyen âge*, ed. by Charles Thurot, pp. 135–36.

further discussion, Óláfr states: 'ok hafa því hvárir tveggju meistarar vel ok náttúrliga skipat stǫfunum í sínu máli' (and thus the masters of both tongues have ordered the letters well and in accordance with nature in their respective languages).[25] He could, however, only reach this conclusion by withholding information about /y/ that he gives about the other letters.

Immediately after this discussion of order, Óláfr gives the reason for the different names of runic vowels; they all begin with the sound of the vowel and end with the sounds /r/ and /s/.[26] Here, he does not say two things. First of all, he does not make any explicit comparison to Latin, where the name and the sound of vowels are the same. In the grammatical tradition, that information would have been expected at this point, but in such a comparison the runic vowel names could hardly have come across as anything but awkward. In consequence, the ordinary definition of vowels is simply dropped. Furthermore, he does not say what we are actually dealing with here, namely the shortest possible words beginning with the vowel in question (for instance *íss* (ice), the name of the rune for /i/). Rather, he strives to find some pattern, and the /-r/–/-s/ one is the best he can come up with under the circumstances. Again, he can show that the runic alphabet is rational, and again, leaving out relevant details is essential to the argument.

The section on runes is the most independent part of Óláfr's adaptation of Priscian, and the topic is one that enables him to argue that Old Norse script is as rational as, and even older than, its Latin counterpart. This description of the runes is commented on in the last text to serve here as a chronological framework, namely the prologue to the four grammatical treatises. The comments, however, differ from the description in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* on one crucial point; the assertiveness in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* has now all but vanished and a position close to that of the First Grammarian re-emerges.

The Prologue was in all likelihood composed for Codex Wormianus (*c*. 1350), by the redactor of that manuscript.[27] It is thus about a hundred years younger than the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, and the context of its composition is no longer tied to chieftains, but to the Benedictine monastery at Þingeyrar, or possibly ~~Munka-Þverá~~.[28] In the Prologue, runes are briefly dis-

[25] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 43.

[26] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 43.

[27] Johansson, *Studier i Codex Wormianus*, p. 45, cf. pp. 39–42, 53; Males, 'Wormianusredaktören', pp. 41–53, 58.

[28] Johansson, *Studier i Codex Wormianus*, pp. 10–18, 222–27.

cussed as one of the topics of the texts to follow, and the reference is clearly to the *Third Grammatical Treatise*:

> Skal yðr sýna hinn fyrsta letrsháttt svá ritinn eptir sextán stafa stafrófi í danskri tungu, eptir því sem Þóroddr rúnameistari ok Ari prestr hinn fróði hafa sett í móti latínumanna stafrófi, er meistari Priscianus hefir sett. Hafa þeir því fleiri hljóðsgreinir með hverjum raddarstaf sem þessi er tungan fátalaðri, svá at þat má undirstanda með hljóði umbeygilegu, hvǫssu ok sljófu, svá at einnar tíðar fall væri í hváru tveggja stafrófi.[29]

> You will be shown the first way of writing, written down according to the sixteen letter alphabet of the Danish tongue [=Old Norse], following [the alphabet] that Þóroddr master of runes and the priest Ari the Wise have defined against the alphabet of the Latins, that master Priscian has defined. They [the runes] have more accents to every vowel in proportion to the fewer sounds of this language [Old Norse], so that it may be understood with circumflex or acute or grave accent, so that there will be one and the same accent in both alphabets.

The logic of the last sentence is not easy to follow, partly because the redactor seems to have confused sign and sound to a degree that was rare even in the Middle Ages. Its content is predicated on a somewhat selective reading of the *Third Grammatical Treatise*.[30] The redactor observes that accent can be marked

[29] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 154–55.

[30] One of these difficulties has induced the editor to emend 'fátalaðri' (with fewer sounds) to 'fástafaðri' (with fewer letters), based on the fact that Old Norse had more, not fewer, vowels than Latin (*Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 154, 306; see the discussion in Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*, I, 395; IV, 93). The basis for this passage, however, is the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, and the different number of vocalic phonemes in the two languages is on the whole suppressed in that text. Furthermore, since the text is contemporaneous to the manuscript, the emendation, resulting in a hapax, is unwarranted (Males, 'Wormianusredaktören', pp. 41–53, 58). What the redactor means by 'fewer [vowel] sounds', then, is that runes have no accents (sound and sign are here conflated). Another complication is the phrase 'einnar tíðar fall', which literally means 'the case of one time' and has here been translated as 'one and the same accent'. The background to this phrase is extremely complex, since its meaning and its form do not derive from the same text. I begin with the meaning: this seems to be drawn from the formally similar, but not identical 'tíðar tilfelli' (the accident of time), which is found in the section on accent in the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, but which is there mentioned as an aside about quantity (*Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, pp. 55–56). Its location in the chapter on accent seems to have suggested to the redactor the use of 'tíðar fall' to denote accent, but there is probably more to the story than sloppy reading. Óláfr's translation of 'tenor' (accent) is 'hljóðsgrein' (phonetic distinction), which, in the context of two writing systems, might convey a sense of

in Latin script, but not in runes, and that one must therefore silently supply it to the runes in order to make the two systems compatible. It is clear from other interpolations in different parts of Wormianus that the compatibility of different scripts and sounds was a primary concern for this redactor, and one through which he saw religious meaning in linguistic realities. As can be seen in the quotation above, difference was something to be overcome, not to be underlined. Furthermore, and this is the most blatant departure from Óláfr's outlook, when equating runes and Latin script, the redactor is perfectly happy to say that the runes lack a dimension of phonetic representation which Latin script possesses. In so doing, he starkly contradicts Óláfr's claims of a perfect fit between runes and sounds, as well as his general programme of vernacular superiority. This is true also with regard to the number of runes, where the redactor seems to find the comparison between the sixteen runes and the alphabet of the earliest Greeks irrelevant. The Prologue simply has it that the number was decided on by Þóroddr and Ari, two authorities of the twelfth century.[31] Ironically, the redactor's observations are made in reference to, and in a tone of general appreciation of, the *Third Grammatical Treatise*.

division between the two — precisely what the redactor wants to avoid. With the use of 'fall', on the other hand, he can hint that both belong to one and the same *case* (though precisely of what remains somewhat unclear), and thus retain an image of unity. Similarly, another instance of apparent confusion may be due not so much to a mistake as to adaptation. The redactor says that Old Norse has fewer sounds than Latin, which in practice means that there are no accents above the runes, but that one should understand the runes as if they had them, so as to arrive at the same system ('einnar tíðar fall') in both cases. The confusion between sound and sign is here seemingly complete, since understanding the runes as if they had accents can hardly change the Old Norse language as such. Without this confusion, however, the redactor could not have projected the image of unity so dear to him. The difficulties in this passage, then, are partly based on his source text, and partly on his wish to convey a unified phonographemic structure which covers both languages involved. On the verbal level, the phrase 'einnar tíðar fall' is derived from *Háttatal*, 16: 'Í þeima hætti skal velja saman þau orðtǫk er ólíkust sé at greina ok hafi þó einnar tíðar fall bæði orð ef vel skal vera' (in this metre [*refhvǫrf*], one should juxtapose those expressions that differ most in meaning, but that, if it is performed well, both have the same quantity [i.e. the same length, occupying the same number of metrical positions]). This is one of several examples that the redactor had thoroughly internalized *Háttatal*, but that he would use that text as he saw fit. (As for the translation of Snorri's text, I take 'orð' to refer back to 'orðtak', and that he means that the two expressions should occupy half a line each, which he strives to achieve in the stanza, though he is not successful in each line.)

[31] Ari died in 1148. Þóroddr is only known from this source, but since he is mentioned together with Ari and in relation to the seemingly grammatical activity of 'defining' an alphabet against that of the Latins, he is unlikely to have been active before the twelfth century (see, though somewhat uncritical, Björn M. Ólsen, *Runerne i den oldislandske Literatur*, pp. 44–46).

The redactor's high regard for the *Third Grammatical Treatise* has nothing to do with the claims to excellence presented there. Rather, he is here introducing the new learning that he wants young poets to imbibe in order to avoid barbarisms.[32] What interests him is the 'factual' information the *Third Grammatical Treatise* provides, and Óláfr's *aemulatio* of the classical past is simply bypassed. To the redactor, vernacular literature no longer needed any apologies; it was thoroughly established and experienced no threats from any Latin overlord. The only thing that he presents as new is the existence of a full vernacular coverage of basic grammatical learning, i.e. the four grammatical treatises themselves: 'því at þat er náttúrulegt at menn sé nú smásmuglari sem frœðibœkrnar dreifask nú víðara' (since it is natural that people are more judicious nowadays, when the books of learning are spreading more widely).[33] This statement again shows that the redactor has no interest in maintaining the superiority of native language and poetry, for it is with Latin learning, albeit in translated texts, that people become more judicious. He seems to feel no need either to question or to defend vernacular language and literature; they are simply there.

The three-phase evolution outlined above is necessarily simplistic, but it is on the whole confirmed by the general development of Old Norse literature. By the middle of the fourteenth century, Old Norse literature covered about as wide a scope as it ever would. In that sense, there was nothing left to establish. It is also true that this literature was in its infancy when the *First Grammatical Treatise* was written, and that the vast oral tradition had then yet to be shaped into written forms. The *Third Grammatical Treatise* was composed at a time when that process had recently issued forth in, for instance, the early prosimetrical sagas and Snorri's *Edda*. These literary works are quite different from the Latin chronicle and grammatical traditions that must to some extent have served as their models. The *Third Grammatical Treatise*, with its claims of vernacular superiority, gives an explicit justification for the process of substitution of Latin literature with vernacular equivalents that was reaching its zenith at the time of its composition.

The development from the second to the third phase — from an assertive creation of a literary past to a fully established vernacular literature — I understand as a largely spontaneous process of canonization of literary forms, and

[32] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 153.

[33] *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 153. As I have argued elsewhere, the references in the Prologue are probably all internal to the compilation, and the 'books of learning' are thus in all likelihood the four grammatical treatises themselves (Males, *Wormianusredaktören*, pp. 53–56).

it will not be the topic of analysis here. Rather, the main focus will lie on the transformation of the new medium of Old Norse text of the first phase into the confident carrier of history of the second phase, and the intellectual tools used in that process. Even if the unknowns were fewer, this topic could not be exhaustively covered in one chapter, and my scope is therefore restricted to poetry and its connection to history.

The Development of Grammatical Attitudes to Poetry

The aim of this section is to analyse how consciousness of metrics and certain features of diction interacted with historical and literary awareness from the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries, in order to compare these attitudes to the developments outlined above. In order to include only changes that may be indicative of the poets' own perception of poetry, the study is restricted to highly marked features that the poets are likely to have been aware of themselves.

The analysis of attitudes to poetry in the twelfth century and later depends on an understanding of earlier developments as well, since it is the relative congruity of the early period which brings the multimodality of the later period into focus as something new and different. This is of particular importance since the argument that conscious metrical innovation before the twelfth century mainly consisted in altering the length of the line has not been unequivocally put forward before. Accordingly, a brief description of early developments will first be given.

The kind of poetry under discussion here is so-called *dróttkvætt* and *dróttkvætt*-based metres. *Dróttkvætt* is highly regularized, which makes it possible to study the development of several features over time. The so-called eddic metres (*fornyrðislag* and *ljóðaháttr*; for the present purposes, *kviðuháttr* is also included in this group) are more flexible and lack internal rhyme, and they seem not to have changed much throughout the poetic tradition. They do not, therefore, lend themselves well to the study of conscious changes in the modes of composition and will be left out of the study.

In *dróttkvætt*, the smallest metrically self-contained unit is the couplet, whereas a half stanza is four lines and a full stanza is eight. A line has six metrical positions (which in practice tends to mean six syllables), and always ends in a troché.[34] The distribution of alliteration and internal rhymes in a classical

[34] In accordance with the practice of the new edition of skaldic poetry, I use the term *position* to denote one of the basic metrical elements of a line. Due to resolution, one position

couplet can be exemplified with the first couplet of the stanza on the Karlevi stone (late tenth century):

> **Folg**inn liggr hinn's **fylg**ðu
> – **flest**r vissi þat – m**est**ar

The odd line has two alliterations (f : f), placed freely in two of the three stressed positions.[35] The even line has one alliteration (f), binding the lines together, and falling on the first position. The penultimate syllables of both lines carry the second members of two pairs of internal rhymes — so-called hendings — whereas the first members of each pair are found in various positions within their respective verses.[36] Odd lines have a kind of half rhyme — *skothending* — where vowels are different but the following consonants (one or more) are identical (olg:ylg). Even lines have full rhyme — *aðalhending* — where both vowels and consonants are identical (est:est).

In the earliest skaldic poetry, the rules given above were not always strictly adhered to. Some odd lines might lack hendings, and some even lines might have only *skothendings* (i.e. be less prosodically marked than usual). There would sometimes be a light syllable or two before the alliterative syllable in even lines (*anacrusis* or *onset*). The opening half stanza from Bragi's *Ragnarsdrápa* may serve as an example. The distinctive features have been marked in bold, except that lack of hendings cannot be thus marked:

> Vilið Hrafnketill heyra,
> **hvé** hr[illegible]róit steini
> Þrúðar skalk ok þengil
> þj**óf**s ilja blað l**eyf**a.[37]

Here, the first verse lacks hending where one would expect *skothending*, whereas the second has *aðalhending*, as would normally be expected (ein:ein). The third verse again lacks hending, and the last has *skothending* where one would expect

may be occupied by one or two syllables, though one is far more common than two (see e.g. *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, ed. by Whaley, p. li).

[35] There is one restriction: both alliterations cannot fall before both hendings, and the placement of hendings will therefore to some extent affect the position of alliteration in odd verses (see Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, p. 89; Þorgeir Sigurðson, 'Þróun dróttkvæða', p. 10).

[36] They generally occur in positions carrying primary or secondary stress, but it would seem that they in exceptional cases can be found also in unstressed positions (see Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, pp. 85–89).

[37] *Skj* B I, 1 (1); *Skj* A I, 1.

aðalhending. The only verse which conforms to the normal hending pattern — the second — is deviant in another respect, since it has onset in *hvé* (/h/ in *hvé* does not count as alliteration, since the word does not carry stress). As a result, each verse exemplifies licences which would increasingly be disallowed in later poetry.

Though the stricter kind of *dróttkvætt* seems to have become the norm by the turn of the millennium at the latest, the laxer, archaic variety was known through transmission of earlier poetry until the thirteenth century, when it ended up in, for instance, Snorri's *Edda*. As we shall see, such archaic poetry became important in the shaping of a historical awareness of stylistics.

A fundamental precondition for the following discussion is that some poetry can be attributed to a poet or at least to his time with an acceptable degree of certainty, whereas other poetry cannot. The most fundamental criterion here is the distinction between corroborative and dramatic quotations of poetry in the sagas, as argued by Bjarni Einarsson in a seminal article of 1974.[38] When poetry was used to corroborate the truthfulness of historical narrative, authenticity seems to have been central to medieval Icelandic authors. Such quotations are typically introduced with the words *svá segir N. N* (as N. N. says) or the like. When, on the other hand, it was used for dramatic effect, authors seem not to have asked questions about authenticity.[39] These quotations are typically introduced with words like *þá kvað N. N vísu* (then N. N. recited a stanza). Dramatic quotation does not in itself imply that the poetry is inauthentic, but that it may be, since in such cases saga authors or redactors would not consider it a breach of narrative responsibility to compose the poetry themselves. Within the corpus of kings' sagas and sagas of Icelanders, Bjarni Einarsson's distinction has held up well; when scholars have argued for spurious poetry, they have almost exclusively done so with respect to dramatic quotations. In some cases, though, the distinction between corroborative and dramatic quotations is not clearly articulated in the sagas.[40]

Most of the poetry in the kings' sagas belongs to the corroborative kind, as do the poetic quotations in the part of Snorri's (d. 1241) *Edda* called

[38] Bjarni Einarsson, 'On the Rôle of Verse in Saga-Literature', pp. 118–25.

[39] Meulengracht Sørensen, 'The Prosimetrum Form 1: Verses as the Voices of the Past', pp. 183–90.

[40] Clunies Ross (*A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*, pp. 71, 78–80) is sceptical of Bjarni Einarsson's distinction, both on account of its crudeness and as a source critical tool. The model is crude indeed, but as long as the scholar judges each source and individual example in context, it remains a helpful guideline.

Skáldskaparmál, although Bjarni Einarsson does not discuss this work. In *Skáldskaparmál*, stanzas are quoted as examples of the kinds of poetic diction that Snorri is discussing. It seems that Snorri would sometimes interpret poetry in creative ways, to suit his views on poetry and mythology, but that he would not compose the poetry itself.[41] Snorri's *Háttatal*, on the other hand, is all his own composition.

The development outlined below is based on poetry that can be considered reliable according to these criteria. When unreliable poetry displays features that are only to be found much later in reliable poetry, the assumption is that the unreliable stanzas are not authentic. With this method, clear lines of development appear, albeit each individual instance cannot be done full justice here.

The Eleventh Century

In the eleventh century, the laxer kind of *dróttkvætt* was no longer productive. Strict *dróttkvætt* was now the norm, but it was also used as a basis for the development of new metres through alteration of the length of the line. The line could thus be contracted or extended to four, five, or eight positions, rather than the ordinary six. The contracted form with four positions is called *tøgdrápulag*, named, it seems, after the poem *Tøgdrápa* (which should perhaps be translated as 'journey-poem') by Þórarinn loftunga (probably the first poet to use this form, *c*. 1028).[42] In the same century, Sighvatr used it in his *Knútsdrápa* (*c*. 1038). In the twelfth century, it was used by Einarr Skúlason in his *Haraldsdrápa II* and by Þórarinn stuttfeldr in *Stuttfeldardrápa*. The form is otherwise rare.[43]

The contracted form with five positions is called *haðarlag* (which should perhaps be translated as 'the metre of Hǫðr') and is found in Þormóðr Trefilsson's *Hrafnsmál* (early eleventh century), in a stanza by Sigurðr *slembidjákn* (*c*. 1139), and in a few poems of the thirteenth century.[44]

[41] Snorri's interpretive creativity in itself supports the idea that he did not compose his examples; he would not have had to go to such lengths if the poetry were his own. For examples of Snorri's liberal interpretations, see Frank, 'Snorri and the Mead of Poetry', pp. 155–70; Holtsmark, 'Det norrøne ord *lúðr*', pp. 53–54.

[42] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 87, 156.

[43] See Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 87–88.

[44] See Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 89.

Another contracted form with five positions, *hálfhnept* (half-curtailed), differs from the others in that it lacks the last, unstressed syllable.[45] The form is attested in one early poem: Óttarr svarti's *Óláfsdrápa* (*c.* 1018). Some single stanzas in this metre are attributed to even earlier poets, but they belong to the dramatic type and are more likely to have been composed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries than in the tenth.[46]

The extended form with eight positions is called *hrynjandi* or *hrynhenda* (flowing rhyme form). It may possibly be attested as early as *c.* 986 in the fragment of a poem called *Hafgerðingadrápa*, though several factors indicate that the poem may rather be a pseudonymous composition of the twelfth century.[47] It is first reliably attested in Arnórr *jarlaskáld*'s *Hrynhenda* (1046), and later in Markús Skeggjason's *Eiríksdrápa* (*c.* 1104) and Gamli *kanóki*'s *Jónsdrápa* around the middle of the twelfth century. It would have a great future ahead of it, above all in the religious poetry of the fourteenth century.[48]

The length of lines seems to have been the main parameter of systematic change of highly marked features during the eleventh century. Another was end-rhyme. This may possibly have emerged as early as Egill Skalla-Grímsson's *Hǫfuðlausn* (*c.* 936), a poem which displays both monosyllabic and disyllabic rhymes. The first more reliable evidence is a poem by Þjóðólfr Arnórsson to Haraldr *harðráði* (middle of the eleventh century), though only one full and three half stanzas have been preserved.[49] The stanzas, presumably from different parts of the poem, exhibit monosyllabic end-rhyme only. Next comes the poem by Einarr Skúlason that has been given the name *Runhenda* (end-rhyming poem, *c.* 1155) by editors, again displaying only monosyllabic end-rhyme.[50]

A number of single stanzas with end-rhyme attributed to tenth-century poets are quoted in dramatic contexts.[51] It seems likely that these are later com-

[45] Some additional restrictions seem to have followed; see Kock, 'Ett kapitel nordisk metrik och textkritik', pp. 279, 291.

[46] Thus one stanza by Haraldr *hárfagri*, one by Bjǫrn *breiðvíkingakappi*, and two couplets in *Kormáks saga* (stanzas by Brynjólfr *úlfaldi*, Haraldr *harðráði*, and Magnús *góði* are more difficult to assess; for occurrences, see Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 88).

[47] Jakob Benediktsson, '*Hafgerðingadrápa*', pp. 27–32.

[48] See Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 85–86.

[49] *Skj* A 1, 368.

[50] This is obviously a praise-poem for King Eysteinn, and it is mainly quoted in the kings' saga *Morkinskinna* (*Skj* A 1, 473–75).

[51] See Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 89–91.

positions, but since end-rhyme may have emerged at an early date this is not a necessary conclusion. The reliability of the fragments of two longer poems attributed to poets of the first half of the eleventh century is difficult to assess.[52]

The eleventh century saw one more systematic innovation. A stanza by Þórðr Særeksson, active in the first half of the eleventh century, is both suggestive and elusive. It is composed in the simple metre *fornyrðislag*, but it also displays one additional feature; the first line is to be construed with the fifth, the second with the sixth, and so on. This arrangement of lines is sufficiently systematic to constitute what in the later metrical lists would be considered a metre (*háttr*).[53] The stanza is transmitted in the main witnesses to *Skáldskaparmál*.[54] In all of the skaldic tradition, we find nothing comparable before the composition of *Háttalykill* in the 1140s, and we thus here get a valuable indication of developments within skaldic poetry that preceded the learned compositions of the twelfth century. The uniqueness of this stanza could instill doubts about its authenticity, if it did not have contemporary parallels in the refrain of some longer poems. From the early eleventh century on, however, some poems with refrain (*drápur*) exhibit so-called *klofastef*, that is, only a part of the refrain is given each time, and the recipient of the poem must combine the lines from the different versions of the refrain to be able to extract their meaning. The earliest preserved poem of this kind may be *Bandadrápa* (*c.* 1010), and the form is thereafter identifiable in some nine poems from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries.[55] On the combined evidence of Þórðr's stanza and poems with *klofastef*, then, we may conclude that a third mode of experimentation in the eleventh century was the systematic splitting of lines.

The bulk of evidence reviewed here supports that the eleventh century saw the earliest phase of systematic alteration of highly marked features, although end-rhyme may have developed even earlier. It bears notice that the poets involved seem often to have had a connection to the British Isles (Þórarinn, Óttarr *svarti*, and Sighvatr composed in honour of Canute, Arnórr to the earls

[52] Gunnlaugr's *Sigtryggs drápa* and Bjǫrn Hítdœlakappi's *Grámagaflím* (see Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 90).

[53] Cf, for instance, the metre *Greppaminni* in *Háttalykill* and *Háttatal* (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 20 (40), 78; *Skj* B 1, 498; A 1, 521; *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 125–26).

[54] *Skj* A 1, 330 (3).

[55] Möbius, 'Vom Stef', pp. 134–37, 140–41; cf. Fidjestøl, *Det norrøne fyrstediktet*, p. 183.

of Orkney, and Egill dwelt in Northumbria for a time).[56] Cultural interaction is thus likely to have served as a catalyst. In the British Isles, Norse poets may have become acquainted with the rhythms and rhymes of Latin hymns; at least in the case of *hrynhenda* such a background seems highly probable.[57] As we have seen, though, experimentation was so far restricted to the parameters of line length, end-rhyme, and systematically split lines. The limited number of features, as well as the lack of indications of bookish learning in skaldic poetry before the twelfth century, makes it unlikely that awareness of form at this stage indicates theoretical study of it.[58]

Grammatical and Historical Awareness in the Twelfth Century and Beyond

In the twelfth century, poets of a new kind emerged in Orkney and Iceland. These were no longer warriors in the retinue of a king, learned in the craft of poetry, but lacking formal training in the analysis of literature and language. Rather, the new poets were either clerics themselves or were surrounded by and interacted with such. The result was a new way of viewing and producing poetry.

This development is best exemplified by the list of metres called *Háttalykill*, which, according to *Orkneyinga saga*, was composed by Earl Rǫgnvaldr of Orkney and the otherwise unknown Icelander Hallr Þórarinsson in the 1140s.[59] Though only preserved in a somewhat fragmentary state in paper manuscripts, several factors indicate that the poem we have is indeed the one mentioned in the saga.[60]

[56] See Jesch, 'Skaldic Verse in Scandinavian England', pp. 313–25 (pp. 317–18).

[57] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 85; Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, pp. 312, 337–41.

[58] The only reference to books which is earlier than the ones to be discussed below is in Þórarinn loftunga's *Glælognskviða* (1032), in the compound *bókamál* (book language, presumably Latin). The passage is obscure, but it would seem that the poet refers to the language of the clergy, and so to the language of a group to which he himself did not belong (*Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, ed. by Whaley, pp. 875–76; see also Clunies Ross, 'Reginnaglar').

[59] *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, p. 5.

[60] The poem is preserved in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 25 8vo and Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, R: 683, Salanska samlingen 28 fol., both from the second half of the seventeenth century and written by Jón Rugman (*Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 7–21; Gödel, *Katalog öfver Upsala universitets biblioteks fornisländska och fornnorska handskrifter*, pp. 27–29). Jón Helgason and Holtsmark have suggested that the name of the poem in the paper manuscripts is the guess of Jón Rugman (*Háttalykill enn forni*,

Háttalykill is a list of metres with two stanzas for each, and these metres are not only formed by altered line length, end-rhyme, and split lines, but also by other patterns of diction, as well as of hendings. With regard to hendings in particular, deviant lines in earlier poetry, that were the products of poetic licence at the time of composition, have obviously been classified and used as building blocks of new metres in the poem.[61] In earlier skaldic poetry, Anthony Faulkes has found only one and a half stanzas in what may represent alternative, hending-based metres. One of these is a relatively inconspicuous stanza, using only *aðalhendings*, and attributed to Bjǫrn *krepphendi* in the late eleventh century.[62] The half stanza, however, attributed to Hofgarða-Refr in the early eleventh century and transmitted in *Skáldskaparmál*, is truly remarkable.[63]

ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, p. 13). Nonetheless, this is clearly the poem that Snorri used as a model for his *Háttatal*, as can be seen by the additional structuring of the metres of *Háttalykill* in *Háttatal* (see Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. xiii–xv, 76–77, 85–86; *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 118–21, 140. There is one exception: *Háttlausa* has a more consistent placing of *hǫfuðstafr* in *Háttalykill* than in *Háttatal* (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 81)). Furthermore, in *Orkneyinga saga*, the poem is called *Háttalykill hinn forni* or *Háttatal hit forna* (the old metrical key; for the use of the two names, see *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, p. 5). Given Snorri's authoritative status, one may infer that *Háttalykill* is old in relation to the 'ordinary' metrical key, namely Snorri's *Háttatal* (the influence of Snorri's *Edda* can be inferred by the three fourteenth-century poets who strongly argue the case for breaking its rules (Foote, 'Latin Rhetoric and Icelandic Poetry', pp. 249–70 (pp. 265–66 and n. 42)). More specifically, with regard to *Háttatal*, see *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 96 ('í háttatali því, er Snorri hefir ort' (in the metrical exposition (*háttatal*) that Snorri composed)); *Den tredje og fjærde grammatiske avhandling*, ed. by Björn M. Ólsen, p. 155 ('kenningar eigi lengra reknar en Snorri lofar' (kennings that are not expanded beyond what Snorri allows); the reference is to *Háttatal*, 8)). The epithet *inn forni* implies that there was only one important older poem of the same kind as *Háttatal*. Since we have such a poem, and one that was clearly used by Snorri, there seems little reason to doubt the attribution. In the description of the poem in *Orkneyinga saga*, there is textual variation as to whether the poem contained two or three stanzas for each metre. The oldest variant seems to be three, whereas the actual poem has two. Even so, the passage supports, rather than contradicts, the attribution; the author would have known that in contrast to *Háttatal*, *Háttalykill* had more than one stanza for each metre (cf. *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 5, 118, though negative weight is there accorded to this incorrect description).

[61] Most notably *þríhent*, *munnvǫrp*, *háttlausa*, *iðrmælt*, *dunhent* (*Skj* B I, 487–508, stanzas 6, 8, 26, 29, 33). See Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 82–85.

[62] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 82; *Heimskringla*, ed. by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 3, p. 217. On *Vellekla*, see Kuhn, 'Vor Tausend Jahren. Zur Geschichte des skaldischen Innenreims', pp. 298–304.

[63] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 83; Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáld-*

It is composed in *alhent*, meaning that it has two rather than one hending pair in each verse. This extremely demanding form is otherwise not known to have been used before Snorri, and the content of the stanza — an apostrophe to Óðinn in thanks for the gift of poetry — makes one suspect that the half stanza is the refrain of the poem. This is an elusive hint that some of the metrical innovations that were later elaborated were based on refrains, where poets would amass as many effects as possible. In general, however, the vast majority of the metres in *Háttalykill* were not independent metres in the earlier tradition, even in refrains. This is true also of the features of diction construed as metres in *Háttalykill*, including fixed clause length, parenthetical sentences, or a structured question-and-answer format.[64] Earlier, if a poet wanted to go beyond standard *dróttkvætt*, he might choose to compose in a metre with altered line length, or he chose a simple metre and added end-rhyme, or he systematically split the refrain (the half stanza by Hofgarða-Refr is unique and not even *Háttalykill* attempts anything of the sort). During the eleventh century, these features had entered the toolbox of the practical craftsman who was then the poet. The structured and multimodal exposition of *Háttalykill*, on the other hand, indicates that poetry could now be the object of systematic study.

Háttalykill's approach to poetry can be compared to that of the contemporary First Grammarian. He notes that in skaldic poetry, unlike ordinary speech, the word *járn* (iron) may be scanned *éarn*, and he uses this observation to support his own orthographic system.[65] Here, skaldic poetry has become a tool for phono-graphematic investigation within the setting of Latinate *grammatica*. Both *Háttalykill* and the *First Grammatical Treatise* thus bear witness to the emergence of a new, systematic and analytic approach to skaldic poetry by the middle of the twelfth century.

skaparmál, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 9–10 (17), 155 (4), 159 (17).

[64] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 75–77. The only known antecedent to such fixed patterns is found in Kormákr's *Sigurðardrápa*, with its parenthetical mythological references in fixed position. This poem seems to constitute the basis for the metre *hjástælt* in Snorri's *Háttatal*, but Kormákr's poem is a *drápa* (poem with refrain; the name — *Sigurðardrápa* — is given in *Heimskringla*, ed. by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 1, p. 168), and it is therefore likely that its references formed an alternative kind of refrain and not, as in *Háttatal*, a metre of its own. *Hjástælt* is thus probably construed in a way similar to other metres in *Háttalykill* and *Háttatal*, namely by transforming earlier possibilities into fixed rules (see Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 10, 76; Finnur Jónsson, *Den oldnorske og oldislandske litteraturs historie*, 1, pp. 528–29; *Skj* A 1, 79–80).

[65] *The First Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Hreinn Benediktsson, pp. 226–27.

What, then, had happened? When our knowledge of the persons involved is taken into account, the most likely answer is that skaldic poetry had entered the realm of grammatical learning. Though the identity of the First Grammarian remains unknown, it is evident that he had undergone such training. The intellectual background of Rǫgnvaldr is sketchier. He had commenced the building of St Magnus Cathedral in 1137, and one can only surmise that he applied his active intellect and his interest in Old Norse court poetry to such learning as his churchmen could provide. In a stanza of his, he refers to his own acquaintance with books, indicating that he had at least some basic schooling (and that this was something to brag about among poets).[66] His knowledge of Latin *grammatica* need not have been profound, and he is far from mapping Donatan categories as they are onto skaldic poetry, as Óláfr Þórðarson would do in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* a hundred years later. *Grammatica* must here be understood in a more generalized way, as the idea of systematic textual study. What is grammatical about *Háttalykill* is not so much the individual sources of inspiration for the different metres, though Latin hymns and troubadour poetry have been suggested as exemplars for some metres.[67] Rather, what is truly grammatical is the method by which new metres are arrived at, namely through systematic study of earlier texts and the effort to transform these observations into rules. Such descriptive and prescriptive study, based on authoritative poetry, lies at the core of medieval *grammatica*, and *Háttalykill* provides the first clear indications of Old Norse poets taking this approach.

A contemporary of Rǫgnvaldr, Einarr Skúlason, was both poet and priest, composed poetry for several kings and earls, and clearly belonged to the social elite of his time.[68] He would have received some schooling through his profession. The most famous poem by Einarr is *Geisli*, composed in honour of St Óláfr

[66] The wording is: 'týnik trauðla rúnum | tíð's mér bók ok smíðir' (I hardly forget runes | I am well acquainted with books and crafts). *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 2: From c. 1035 to c. 1300*, ed. by Gade, pp. 576–77.

[67] *Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 121–34. Rǫgnvaldr had been to the Holy Land, stopping by the court of Ermengarde of Narbonne, where troubadour poetry thrived, and some of his poetry both within and outside *Háttalykill* seems to betray troubadour influence (*Háttalykill enn forni*, ed. by Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, pp. 127–35; Holtsmark, 'Kjærlighetsdiktning', p. 441). It should be noted, though, that *Háttalykill* was probably composed before this trip. With regard to content, rather than style, the validity of the observations of troubadour influence has been questioned (Frank, *Old Norse Court Poetry*, pp. 168–69; Finlay, 'Skald Sagas in their Literary Context 2', pp. 241–43).

[68] *Geisli*, ed. by Chase, p. 9; Guðrún Nordal, *Skaldic Versifying and Social Discrimination*, pp. 4–5.

and performed in Kristkirkja (Christ Church) in Þrándheimr (Trondheim) in the year 1153. As Martin Chase has shown, *Geisli* is deeply influenced by Latin hymns that were used in monastic grammatical education.[69] With regard to Einarr's learning, a stanza of his on cosmology also deserves mention.[70] Here, I wish to draw attention to another of Einarr's poems, preserved in Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál* and called *Øxarflokkr* (poem about an axe) by editors. The poem is, in one sense, very traditional, in that it is composed in thanks for an axe that Einarr had received. In another sense, though, it is fundamentally new, in that it is a highly contrived display of ways to say 'gold' by circumlocutions involving the name of the goddess Freyja.[71] The real topic of the poem, then, or at least the one that sets it apart from other poems, is diction. As far as we can tell, such a poem would not have been composed earlier in the Old Norse tradition.[72] Based on the learned character of Einarr's other poetry and the fact that he was a priest, it seems highly likely that the background to his innovation is to be sought in grammatical learning in the sense of a structured, analytical, and exemplifying approach to text.

Another poet, Hallar-Steinn, seems to have composed in the latter half of the twelfth century or possibly in the beginning of the thirteenth.[73] Here is a half stanza from his poem *Rekstefja*:

[69] Chase, 'Framir kynnask vátta mál: The Christian Background of Einarr Skúlason's "Geisli"', pp. 11–32.

[70] Clunies Ross and Gade, 'Cosmology and Skaldic Poetry', pp. 199–207.

[71] See Guðrún Nordal, *Skaldic Versifying and Social Discrimination*, pp. 9–11; Abram, 'The Post-Pagan Mythological Kenning', pp. 44–61.

[72] A few stanzas of the so-called *Bjarkamál in fornu* are quoted in *Skáldskaparmál* and consist largely of kennings for gold. They have much in common with the so-called *þulur*: lists of *heiti* and kennings attached to Snorri's *Edda* in some manuscripts. In *Bjarkamál*, however, these lists seem also to have formed part of the narrative, underlining the generosity of King Hrólfr (see *Skj* B 1, 170–71; the place of these lists in the narrative of the poem may possibly be gleaned from Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, ed. by Friis-Jensen, trans. by Zeeberg, 1, pp. 178–79). It is tempting to see the lists of names for gold as a twelfth-century expansion of the poem, in line with the grammatical tendencies of that age. This would explain why Saxo's admittedly very free translation of the poem shows no clear traces of them. For lack of further evidence, though, the stanzas in question will have to be left out of the analysis.

[73] See *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, ed. by Whaley, p. 894. Later dates have been proposed for Hallar-Steinn (*Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, ed. by Whaley, p. 894), but as he is quoted by name in the major manuscripts of *Skáldskaparmál*, these suggestions are untenable (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáldskaparmál*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 63; *Skj* A 1, 554).

Hǫrs **gnótt H**runda sléttum
hljóðs kveðk mér at óði
rand**hvéls r**ennu-Þundi,
Rekstefju tekk hefja;

This poem is composed in the metre *tvískelft* (double-shaken), not known from earlier poetry.[74] In odd lines, alliteration always falls in the first and third position, and there is always a heavy syllable in between. The first hending is found in the first or second position. In some earlier poetry these features appear in the third line of a half stanza, presumably because the metrical structure of such lines made it syntactically difficult to employ them before the third line.[75] *Tvískelft* is thus produced by using pre-existent metrical possibilities to arrive at a much more demanding metre, which imposed considerable syntactic constraints on the poet. In this case, the most conspicuous feature of the choice of metre is that of emulation; we see the poet proudly displaying his ability to outdo his predecessors in metrical dexterity. This need not in itself be indicative of a learned approach to tradition, but that seems indeed to be the case, since Hallar-Steinn in another stanza refers to manuscript illumination.[76]

The next example is a half stanza from Bjarni Kolbeinsson's *Jómsvíkingadrápa* (beginning of the thirteenth century):

Engan kveðk at óði
órum malma **rýr**i

(þó gatk hróðr of hugðan)
hlj**óð**s (atferðar pr**ýð**i);

This metre is called *munnvǫrp*; there are *skothendings* for *aðalhendings* in even lines and no hendings in odd lines. A couplet or even a half stanza in some of the earliest skaldic poetry may follow this pattern, but it is never regularized; in *Jómsvíkingadrápa* it runs through forty-five stanzas. Bjarni was bishop of Orkney, and we may thus presuppose a solid education.

[74] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 81. The poet himself refers to the rarity of the metre in the last stanza (see *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, ed. by Whaley, pp. 938–39).

[75] Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, pp. 333–34. For a description of the various occurrences, see Þorgeir Sigurðsson, 'Nýjar skjálfhendur á 12. öld'.

[76] In the kenning *bókar sól* (the book's sun [colour]) (*Two Versions of Snorra Edda*, ed. by Faulkes, 1, p. 307; *Skj* B 1, 535).

With *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, grammatical analysis has been combined with historical awareness. While the metre of *Rekstefja* may have been chosen mainly for metrical display, the metre of *Jómsvíkingadrápa* probably is not. Irregular hendings are typical of the earliest skaldic poetry, and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* treats of the Jómsvikings, heroes of old and, not least, heroes of an old kind — proud, heathen warriors. It would thus seem that Bjarni has striven to make the poetry reminiscent of that of the earliest poets, even if the Jómsvikings actually lived some time after the productive period of such poetry. There is, however, one important difference between their poetry and his; in early poetry, it is precisely the lack of regularization that has given rise to the occasional occurrence of this pattern. In *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, what used to be licence has become a rule. Similar observations have been made regarding the lexicon used in the poem, which is characterized by 'overuse' of archaic words and expressions.[77] In sum, Bjarni and the earliest poets composed at opposite ends of the scale of orderliness; they with considerable licence; he actively looking for rules and recurrent features.

This new amalgamation is best described by Snorri, writing a decade or two after Bjarni composed his *drápa*. In the following quotation, I have included the first couplet of two stanzas, to illustrate which features Snorri thought typical of the early poets after whom he named the individual metres (Egill's, Fleinn's, and Bragi's metres have here been excluded). The stanzas, however, are Snorri's own. In the translation, I briefly describe these features within brackets:

> Nú skal rita þá háttu er fornskáld hafa kveðit ok eru nú settir saman, þótt þeir hafi ort sumt með háttafǫllum, ok eru þessir hættir dróttkvæðir kallaðir í fornum kvæðum, en sumir finnask í lausum vísum, svá sem orti Ragnar konungr loðbrók með þessum hætti:
>
> Skýtr at Skǫglar veðri
> (**en** skj**ald**agi h**ald**ask)
> [...]
> Nú skal rita Torf-Einars hátt:
> Hverr sér jǫfra ægi
> Jarl fjǫlv**itrum** b**etr**a
> [...]
>
> Víða er þat í fornskálda verka er í einni vísu eru ymsir hættir eða háttafǫll, ok má eigi yrkja eptir því, þó at þat þykki eigi spilla í fornkvæðum.[78]

[77] Holtsmark, 'Bjarne Kolbeinsson of hans forfatterskap', p. 9.

[78] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 24–26.

> Now I shall write down the metres in which the early poets composed, and these are collected here,[79] even though they composed some with irregular metre. These metres are called *dróttkvætt* in old long poems, but some of them are to be found in single stanzas, as King Ragnarr *loðbrók* composed in this metre:
>
> Skýtr at Skǫglar veðri
> (**en** skj**ald**agi h**ald**ask)
> [...]
>
> [No hendings in odd lines and *aðalhendings* in even. Onset before the first alliteration in even lines]
>
> Now I shall write Torf-Einarr's metre:
>
> Hverr sér jǫfra œgi
> Jarl fjǫlv**itrum** b**etr**a
> [...]
>
> [No hendings in odd lines, *skothendings* in even lines and only one light syllable between them]
>
> It is common in the works of the early poets that the same stanza will display several metres or irregular metre, and we may not compose in that manner, even though it is not seen as unbefitting in old poems.

Snorri's attitude to the early poets is similar to Donatus's toward the classical poets; when the old authorities deviate from prescribed patterns, that is fine, but the student should abide by the rules.[80] This is the attitude one might expect from anyone with some grammatical training in the Middle Ages. Snorri's description of the metres of the early poets is composed in accordance with this prescriptive approach; he presents rules, not licence, and has thus taken features that were common in some of the earliest poetry, classified them and distributed them between the early poets, creating one metre for each.

[79] Faulkes translates 'which are now made into consistent verse-forms' (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, trans. by Faulkes, p. 198). I believe, though, that *setja saman* here retains its ordinary meaning 'collect, compile', the logic being that Snorri has collected their metres even though, in fact, they composed in an inconstent manner which does not exactly correspond to the metres which Snorri presents.

[80] This is implicit in Donatus's *Barbarismus*, where examples of the vices are taken from Vergil's *Æneid* — the most elevated of Latin poems (see, for instance, the first examples in Donatus, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical*, ed. by Holtz, p. 653). The point was not missed; Augustine, for instance, says that a boy guilty of barbarism, pledging the usage of Vergil, should be whipped (*Contra Faustum*, ed. by Migne, 22. 25, p. 417).

He could not have quoted the poets themselves, since all existing poetry indicates that their stanzas would have been irregular.[81] Indeed, as Jonas Wellendorf has shown, Snorri's terminology reflects his views on imitation; when he refers to the early poets, who are authoritative but should not be imitated, he uses the term *fornskáld* (early poet). When, on the other hand, he refers to authoritative, later poets who should be imitated, he uses the term *hǫfuðskáld* (main poet).[82] As we shall see, however, some saga authors would disregard Snorri's advice and make the *fornskáld* their object of imitation in order to achieve an air of historical plausibility.

The passage above constitutes the only explicit commentary in Old Norse literature on the diachronic development of metre. It is no coincidence that the features Snorri focused on are hendings, just as in *Jómsvíkingadrápa*. Irregular hendings are indeed the most striking formal difference between some of the earliest poetry and strict *dróttkvætt*. Another typical early feature is onset, i.e. one or more light syllables before alliteration in even lines, which Snorri has regularized in Ragnarr's metre.

Snorri's *Háttatal* is the culmination of grammatical experimentation with variants of skaldic poetry. His discussion of the early poets also shows how systematic observation was beginning to be combined with historical awareness. This is seen in practice also in *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, and the historical perspective ties Bjarni and Snorri to the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, with its historical justification of Old Norse poetry and language. In the twelfth century, as evidenced by the *First Grammatical Treatise* and *Háttalykill*, such historical views on poetry and language are not yet visible. From the beginning of the thirteenth century onwards, by contrast, not only Bjarni, Snorri, and Óláfr, but also saga authors were engaged in a build-up of the vernacular, poetic past,

[81] No poetry that is likely to be authentic is known by Ragnarr, and none at all by Fleinn. Even to Snorri, they may have been no more than authoritative names from antiquity. For the complex issue of irregular features in Egill's poetry, see Males, 'Egill och Kormákr – tradering och nydiktning', pp. 125–34.

[82] Wellendorf, 'The Formation of an Old Norse Skaldic School Canon in the Early Thirteenth Century'. Wellendorf has kindly allowed me to read this text, which is still in preparation. The term *hǫfuðskáld* is used four times in the *Edda* (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáldskaparmál*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 5, 6, 85; Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 3). Only in one of these cases does it refer to named poets, and it somewhat complicates the matter that the reference there is to both late and early poets (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáldskaparmál*, ed. by Faulkes, p. 6; *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar. Udgivet efter håndskrifterne*, ed. by Finnur Jónsson, p. 88. R, T, W, B have this reading, whereas *hǫfuð-* is dropped in U. The passage is left out in A). When Snorri explicitly discusses imitation, however, the distinction is upheld.

and the new systematic study of poetry served as a helpful instrument in this endeavour.

Historical Awareness in Old Norse Prosimetrum

Around 1200 and in the following decades, a new stylistic ideal for historical narrative emerged in Iceland; it was thought desirable to intersperse prose with considerable numbers of skaldic stanzas. From earlier quotations of a couplet or a few stanzas, the greater kings' sagas now quote hundreds.[83] The background to this ideal remains somewhat hazy.[84]

In Latin literature, it was within the historiography of the twelfth century that the prosimetrical form saw its greatest surge.[85] The emergence of a similar ideal only slightly later in related genres in Old Norse literature is striking, but no particular lines of influence can be ascertained. Furthermore, in Latin historical prosimetra, poetry mainly functioned as embellishment, to provide moral lessons, or to quote the classics for *auctoritas* (this is true also of the Norwegian Theodoricus's *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwegiensium*, *c.* 1180). In other instances, the poetry was composed by the author himself and presented as such. These features can on rare occasions be found in Old Norse prosimetra, but in the kings' sagas there is considerable emphasis on the stanzas as witnesses of truth, and in the Old Norse corpus generally the stanzas are attributed to the protagonists rather than to the author. The closest parallel to this within Latin historiography are quotations of epitaphs and, rarely, popular poetry for docu-

[83] The amount of poetic quotation in texts of the twelfth century is admittedly difficult to verify, since the texts are few and may have undergone subsequent adaptation. *Íslendingabók* (*c.* 1130) is an obvious example, quoting only one couplet. The *First Grammatical Treatise* (*c.* 1150), although not historiographical, quotes two. The Norwegian *Ágrip* (*c.* 1190) quotes six couplets, half stanzas, or stanzas. Around 1200, *Sverris saga* has eighteen poetic quotations. In *Morkinskinna*, *Fagrskinna*, and *Heimskringla* (*c.* 1220–30), hundreds of stanzas are quoted.

[84] Clover, 'The Long Prose Form', pp. 27–28, argues on typological grounds that the prosimetrical form of the sagas is likely to have an oral background. Regarding *fornaldarsögur*, an early prosimetrical form has been posited largely on the basis of a report about the entertainment given at a wedding at Reykjahólar in 1119. That report was written in the thirteenth century and is clearly indicative of expectations about the form of a saga at that time, but is no reliable evidence for prosimetrical sagas a century or more before then (for an early dating of the prosimetrical form, see, for instance, Harris, 'The Prosimetrum of Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives', pp. 145–48; Acker, *Revising Oral Theory*, pp. 85–110).

[85] See Laurence of Durham, *Consolatio de morte amici*, ed. by Kindermann, pp. 70–74; Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as a Latin Poet*, pp. 29–38; Ziolkowski, 'The Prosimetrum in the Classical Tradition', pp. 56–57.

mentary evidence, but the volume of such quotations is never nearly as prominent as it is in Old Norse literature.[86] The overall differences between Latin and Old Norse prosimetra indicate that while Latin prosimetrical historiography may have been a source of inspiration in a general sense, other factors are also likely to have been involved in the Old Norse development.

The differences between Latin and Old Norse prosimetra, however, partly break down when we get to Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* (beginning of the thirteenth century). Some of the poetry there is translated from the vernacular, and consists of speeches by the protagonists. The use of poetry in the *Gesta* is partly indebted to Latin literary tradition, but it is also reminiscent of the use and function of poetry in the *fornaldarsögur* — prosimetra with eddic poetry about pre-settlement times.[87] *Gesta* thus seems to indicate that there was some form of vernacular, prosimetrical tradition to draw on around the year 1200. More remotely, Irish prosimetra display a distribution of poetic functions that is similar to what we find in Old Norse, not least with regard to corroborative quotations.[88] Although the dating of Old and Middle Irish texts is a vexed issue, there is every reason to believe that the Irish prosimetrical form dates back to the early Middle Ages.[89] In both Irish and Old Norse literature, prosimetrum is a feature of local historical narrative, whereas translations are typically made into prose only.[90] The long-standing cultural exchange of the North Sea area, as well as the strong focus on poetry and poets within Irish and Norse culture alike, suggest that the similar treatment of poetry in prosimetra by both traditions may have deep roots in local culture.[91] Exactly what this entailed in a preliterary setting must however remain elusive.

[86] The nearest counterpart within Latin historiography to the Old Norse practice may be the six instances where Henry of Huntingdon translates what seems to have been an Old English poem about battles, introducing the quotations with 'unde dicitur' (whence it is said) and similar formulations. Again, though, these are marginal occurrences in a chronicle where most of the poetry is Henry's own (Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum. The History of the English People*, ed. and trans. by Greenway, p. cvii).

[87] See Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus*, pp. 29–38, 54–55, 60–62.

[88] For the functions of verse in Irish prosimetra, see Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum', pp. 111–12.

[89] Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum', pp. 99–110.

[90] Regarding Irish translations, see Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum', pp. 113–14. Old Norse translations are typically made into prose only or, rarely, into poetry only, such as *Vita sancti Eustacii* into *Plácitusdrápa* or the *Prophetiae Merlini* into *Merlínusspá*.

[91] For an assessment of the possibly preliterate background of Irish prosimetra, see Mac Cana, 'Prosimetrum', pp. 122–26.

There is thus some evidence to suggest that there was a pre-existent eddic prosimetrical tradition, whereas known works provide some negative evidence against such a tradition for skaldic prosimetra. Here, we see a sharp increase in poetic citation in the decades around 1200, and we also encounter composition of pseudonymous poetry for the sagas; as we shall see, this was not uncommon, and it would thus appear that the prosimetrical form, at least in some genres, was the result of considerable creative efforts.[92]

The prosimetrical ideal quickly gained strength. Even in the earliest prosimetra, the stanzas were not restricted to corroborative functions, and when sagas of local Icelandic history were composed, dramatic functions came to dominate almost exclusively. The amount of dramatic poetry in the sagas of Icelanders that modern scholars have deemed spurious indicates that the oral tradition was not as rich in poetry suitable for dramatic quotation as it was with regard to courtly poetry on martial themes, apt to corroborate narratives about kings and their battles. When saga authors set about fleshing out portions of the poetic heritage, grammatical awareness was a powerful tool.

In their efforts to pass off a stanza or a poem as old, saga authors would generally not use the regularized forms inspired by archaic poetry that we saw in *Jómsvíkingadrápa* and *Háttatal*.[93] Most commonly, perhaps, they would simply compose in ordinary, strict *dróttkvætt*, but since that form remained largely stable throughout the period under study, this proposition is difficult to verify (see below). It is also likely that they would sometimes compose in such variants of *dróttkvætt* as we saw emerge during the eleventh century (altered line length and end-rhyme), but the possibility of a somewhat earlier emergence of these forms makes the argument hazardous to sustain in each individual case.[94]

For something to pass as old poetry, though, it would obviously benefit from looking old, rather than conforming to grammatical ideals. Accordingly, one way of composing 'old' poetry was to use observations of typical features in early poetry, but to disobey the grammatical prescription of consistent metre.

[92] This is also the conclusion of von See, 'Skaldenstrophe und Sagaprosa', pp. 78–82.

[93] In two cases, *munnvǫrp* seems rather to signify the uncanny than high age, though given the Icelandic perception of the pagan past, the two may be related: it is used in a stanza by a dream-man in *Njáls saga* (*Brennu-Njáls saga*, ed. by Einar Ó. Sveinsson, p. 348) and by a newborn child in *Þorsteins þáttr tjaldstæðings* (*Harðar saga*, ed. by Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, pp. 425–26). In the greater saga of Óláfr Tryggvason, it is used in a dramatic quotation by Bárðr á Upplǫndum (*Eyfirðinga sögur*, ed. by Jónas Kristjánsson, pp. 122–23).

[94] For the use of these forms in earlier poetry, see Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Háttatal*, ed. by Faulkes, pp. 77–91, particularly 88–90 (*hálfhnept* and end-rhyme).

Such poetry is hard to identify, since it can easily come across as archaic rather than archaizing. In some cases, though, the poet betrays systematic observations of earlier poetry by grossly exaggerating the distinctive features. Here follow two examples, based on my study of *Egils saga* and *Kormáks saga*, where arguments and examples are given in full.[95] Stanza 12 of *Egils saga* reads:

Upp skulum órum sverðum
ulfs tannl**it**uðr gl**it**ra
eigum dáð at dr**ýg**ja
í dalm**isk**unn f**isk**a.
Leiti upp til Lundar
l**ýð**a hverr sem br**áð**ast
gerum þar fyr setr solar
seið óf**agr**an v**igr**a.

Hendings in the first half are regular, apart from the lack of hending in verse 1 (not an uncommon pattern in early regular poetry).[96] The second half is composed in *munnvǫrp*, i.e. with no hendings in odd lines and *skothendings* in even. The first half is attested elsewhere (Snorri's *Edda*), whereas the second half is only found in the saga. Only the second half ties the stanza to the action in the saga (the attack on Lund). The next two stanzas in the saga, the first by the anonymous daughter of an earl, the second again by Egill, display highly irregular hendings, akin to the second half of this stanza. It is thus not the individual poet, but the grouping of stanzas in the saga that accounts for the metre.

In sum, indications that the second half of this stanza was added to the first to fit the narrative are strong, and they are further supported by analogous examples elsewhere in the saga. It seems that the author used what poetry he knew by (or at least attributed to) Egill, and then expanded it according to his own preferences. The archaizing style was probably inspired by similar features in the original corpus, though he strongly exaggerated them.

In *Kormáks saga*, stanza 77 reads:

Vísu munk of vinna
áðr vér til skips gangim
senda sǫrva Rindi

[95] Males, 'Egill och Kormákr', pp. 115–46.

[96] ór : er do not rhyme here. -r- : -rð- do not rhyme generally, and the position of the rhymes, if such they were, would break with Kuhn's *Zäsurgesetz*, which has been further elaborated in Þorgeir Sigurðson's *milliregla* (this rule postulates that an alliterating stave must come between the *skothendings*) (Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, p. 89; Þorgeir Sigurðson, 'Þróun dróttkvæða', p. 10).

til Svínadals mína;
koma skulu ǫll til eyrna
orð mín Skǫgul borða,
betr ann ek siglis Ságu
an sjǫlfum mér hǫlfu.

This rich use of onset (unstressed syllable(s) before the alliteration in even lines), two–three times per stanza, is found in the group of stanzas 77–79 and in one stanza shortly thereafter (82). The occurrence of onset in these stanzas is twenty-five times higher than the average of the other stanzas in the saga. Only in stanza 18 is it otherwise used twice. Again, it seems likely that the author found this feature occasionally in the poetry he used when compiling the saga, and that he exaggerated it when trying to compose in the archaic style of Kormákr.

By collating the criteria of groups of stanzas, external attestation, and highly marked exaggeration of archaic features (9–25 times the average; extreme use of irregular hendings), seven stanzas and two half stanzas in *Egils saga* and seven stanzas in *Kormáks saga* can be postulated as archaizing compositions intended for the sagas.[97] Since the archaic features generally entail a relaxation of the strict rules of *dróttkvætt*, it could be argued that the authors used them simply to facilitate composition. Irregular hendings and onset are, however, used concurrently in these stanzas, and this, rather than a more random distribution, betrays an active effort at archaization.[98] In other poetry that we know to be late, the same blend of archaizing features is also found in the poetry in *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* and in the *drápa* in *Stjörnu-Odda draumr*.[99] The combination of irregular hendings and onset seems to have been the main archaizing style, based on the observation, made also by modern scholars, that these features tend to come together in the most archaic poetry.[100]

[97] Males, 'Egill och Kormákr', p. 141.

[98] Males, 'Egill och Kormákr', p. 140.

[99] For *Ragnars saga*, see Males, 'Egill och Kormákr', p. 131 n. 15. The *drápa* in *Stjörnu-Odda draumr* is a somewhat complex case, probably composed in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries and put in the mouth of a twelfth-century character, Stjörnu-Oddi. He, however, is said to have composed the poem in a dream about long-gone days in mainland Scandinavia and for that reason, one may presume, the poem displays archaic features (see *Harðar saga*, ed. by Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, pp. ccxxii–ccxxiv, 477–81, though note that a twelfth-century date is there proposed for the poetry).

[100] See, for instance, Kuhn, *Das Dróttkvætt*, p. 277.

Pseudonymous composition in this early, lax style seems mainly to have taken place when some poetry traditionally attributed to the poets in question displayed such features, or when the poet was perceived as composing at the very beginning of the skaldic tradition, such as King Ragnarr *loðbrók*.[101] In other cases, pseudonymous stanzas seem mainly to have been composed in the strict form of *dróttkvætt*, such as is the case with, for instance, the spurious poetry in *Grettis saga* and *Harðar saga*.[102] As strict *dróttkvætt* was the default form of skaldic poetry, it is possible that this was the most common form for composition in the name of the early Icelandic poets. Due to its lack of distinctive features, however, it is difficult to assess how extensive such composition was, at least with the parameters employed here. *Grettis saga* and *Harðar saga* are rare cases where most of the poetry was composed so late that it can be dated on linguistic grounds to the fourteenth century. A combination of stylistic and linguistic features indicates a fourteenth-century origin for the stanzas in *Víglundar saga* as well.[103] Such clear-cut cases are few, but at least they show that some saga authors would indeed compose poetry in the name of the earlier poets.

The body of pseudonymous compositions in archaizing and strict *dróttkvætt* presented above is restricted, so as to include only cases where a late date is highly plausible. Given the difficulties involved in discerning authentic (or at least old) poetry from later compositions, this is not an insignificant corpus. It indicates that composition in the name of the early poets was fairly common, and this activity was probably due, at least in part, to a wish to glorify the local literary past. In the case of archaizing poetry, grammatical (i.e. systematic) observations were used to give the stanzas an air of plausibility.[104]

[101] Males, 'Egill och Kormákr', pp. 133–34, 137.

[102] See the overview in *Grettis saga*, ed. by Guðni Jónsson, pp. xxxi–xlii; *Harðar saga*, ed. by Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, p. xix. On the pseudonymous poetry of Grettir, see further Males, '*Skáldskaparmál* as a Tool for Composition of Pseudonymous Skaldic Poetry', pp. 71–73.

[103] *Kjalnesinga saga*, ed. by Jóhannes Halldórsson, p. xxiv. Note that irregular hendings are there taken as indicative of young age, which is probably correct, but they were likely intended to be perceived as a sign of antiquity.

[104] The effort at plausibility does not imply outright falsification, since the authors seem not to have used such techniques to produce corroborative stanzas. In Isidorean terms, we are dealing here with *argumentum* — the plausible — rather than *historia* — what has actually happened (*Etymologiae*, 1. 44).

The Scope of Old Icelandic Grammatica

Even though runic inscriptions from Norway from the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries attest to a certain interest in skaldic poetry there, the remarkable fusion of native poetics and a grammatical mindset seems to have occurred only in Orkney and Iceland. Part of the explanation for this probably lies with the very close ties between Icelandic and Orcadian secular chieftains — predisposed toward traditional secular poetry and the vernacular — and the learned men whom they patronized. Even in Iceland, it is not primarily in the neighbourhood of the bishops that these innovations take place. Rather, as far as we can tell, it is in the dialogue between chieftains and their priests. The Icelandic system of privately owned churches (*staðir*) resulted in close interaction between the two groups, and some of these *staðir* saw a considerable output of vernacular literature and poetry (notably Oddi in the late twelfth and Reykholt in the early thirteenth centuries).[105] Sometimes the chieftains were clerics in their own right, as was the case with Gizurr Þorvaldsson — subdeacon, court poet, and first earl of Iceland.[106] More often, perhaps, they were younger brothers or half-brothers of a chieftain, such as Óláfr, poet and author of the *Third Grammatical Treatise*. He was ordained subdeacon, and similar schooling among chieftains seems to have been common throughout the Middle Ages.[107] Gradually, after 1275, the Church gained control over the *staðir* and the influence of chieftains over clerics diminished.[108] Though this break was far from absolute, ecclesiastical and monastic milieus dominate the literary landscape of the fourteenth century. When secular influence over ecclesiastical matters waned, so did some of the intrepid spirit of innovation.[109]

[105] About the *staðir* generally, see Magnús Stefansson, 'De islandske stadenes egenart og eldste historie', pp. 117–25; on the number of clerics on the *staðir*, see Benedikt Eyþórsson, 'Reykholt and Church Centres', pp. 105–16; on the *staðir* and literary activity, see Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, 'Høvdingene, storkirkene og den litteræare aktiviteten på Island fram til ca. 1300'.

[106] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 162–63.

[107] Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*, p. 35.

[108] This process is described in *Árna saga biskups*, ed. by Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir.

[109] With regard to poetry, the most noteworthy innovation of the fourteenth century is the reaction against obscure poetic language in favour of a clear religious message, i.e. a negation of the secular build-up of native poetic authority of the preceding century (Foote, 'Latin Rhetoric', pp. 265–66 and n. 42).

How the fusion of grammatical and traditional poetic learning took place on a practical level is difficult to tell, and it probably changed during the period under study and varied between secular seats of learning, cathedral schools, and monasteries. The most extensive studies of the relation between Old Norse poetry and vernacular *grammatica* have been conducted by Guðrún Nordal, who sees grammatical features in poetry and manuscripts as indicative of regular schoolroom use.[110] It should be noted, though, that such use would be a rarity indeed in medieval Europe, only matched, perhaps, by the activities of the *filid* in the Irish monasteries of an earlier period.[111] Furthermore, the sparse information given in the sources, almost exclusively found in the Icelandic sagas of bishops, indicates that the teaching of *grammatica* was concerned only with Latin.[112] Old Icelandic manuscripts in general contain little or no marginalia suggestive of schoolroom use, but this may be due to the fact that they were written in the vernacular and needed little additional explanation. On balance, Guðrún Nordal's claim that Old Icelandic grammatical texts were used in the schoolroom is somewhat tenuous, but the exact context of their use may not be all-important. Their composition must have answered to a perceived need, and their impact on other literature shows that they were studied extensively, whether or not they were actually present in the schoolroom or rather studied

[110] *Tools of Literacy*, p. 23; *Skaldic Versifying and Social Discrimination*, pp. 8, 15–16; 'Samhengið í íslenskum fornbókmenntum', pp. 93–95.

[111] For the *filid* and their connections to monasteries and monastic learning, see Sims-Williams and Poppe, 'Medieval Irish Literary Theory and Criticism', pp. 293–94; Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish Bards', p. 239; Charles-Edwards, 'The Context and Uses of Literacy in Early Christian Ireland', pp. 70, 76–77. For comparison, it may be noted that Occitan works on poetry and grammar do not seem to have been used in any formal way in schools until *c.* 1330, and when they were, this was in response to a perceived need to uphold Occitan culture in the face of the inquisition (Kay, 'Occitan Grammar as a Science of Endings', pp. 60–61). In some English fourteenth-century schoolroom manuscripts, there are examples of translations between vernacular and Latin poetry (Cannon, 'The Middle English Writer's Schoolroom'). While vernacular poetry may sometimes have served as a pedagogical asset in this context, the goal of tuition was proficiency in Latin language and literature. For grammatical schooling in Europe generally, see, for instance, Copeland, 'Naming, Knowing and the Object of Language in Alexander Neckham's Grammar Curriculum', pp. 38–39; Kraus, 'Grammatical and Rhetorical Exercises in the Medieval Classroom'; Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*; Tony Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in 13th-Century England*, I, 59–98.

[112] A good overview of schooling in medieval Iceland is Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*, pp. 15–35. In the saga that gives by far the most information on schooling, *Lárentíus saga* (ed. by Grímsdóttir), only Latin schooling, including poetic composition (*versificatio*), is mentioned.

by the interested in their spare time or in the generous time allotted to private reading in Benedictine monasteries.[113]

Icelandic grammatical manuscripts are late, from the early to late fourteenth century, but most texts within them can be dated with some degree of confidence and allow us to posit a prolonged, cumulative process that eventually issued forth in the full coverage of vernacular *grammatica* found in these manuscripts. The structural affinities between the content of these manuscripts and the fluid corpus of texts used within Latin *grammatica* suggests that the Latin discipline worked as a model for what to add to the vernacular corpus throughout the formative period of Old Icelandic *grammatica*.

Based on Guðrún Nordal's description, I list here the relevant content of the Old Icelandic grammatical manuscripts.[114] R (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, GKS 2367 4to; *c.* 1300–25) has Snorri's *Edda*, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, and *Málsháttakvæði*. As discussed above, *Jómsvíkingadrápa* treats of heathen warriors in archaizing metre. *Málsháttakvæði* is composed in end-rhyming *hrynjandi* and combines aphorisms with references to gods and heroes. One of the first texts that was generally read in the Latin grammatical curriculum after Psalms was also a collection of aphorisms, *Disticha Catonis*, which was translated into Old Norse as *Hugsvinnsmál*.[115] This aspect of *Málsháttakvæði* thus fits well into a grammatical context. The enumeration of gods and heroes is reminiscent of *Háttalykill*, *Øxarflokkr*, and Snorri's *Edda*. These descriptions and lists are probably both mnemonic and explanatory, serving as keys to poetic language. The placing of *Jómsvíkingadrápa* and *Málsháttakvæði* after *Háttatal* in R, furthermore, indicates that they may have been included not only for their content, but also for their form.

U (DG 11; *c.* 1300–25) has Snorri's *Edda* and the *Second Grammatical Treatise*. W (AM 242 fol.; *c.* 1350) has Snorri's *Edda*, the four grammatical treatises, *Rígsþula* (an eddic poem), and some stanzas on Mary with a fifteenth-century hand on the last page. A (AM 748 Ib 4to; *c.* 1300–25) has the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, *Litla Skálda* (a treatise on kennings), *Skáldskaparmál*, and *Íslendingadrápa*, a poem dense in mythological references, enumerating the Icelandic heroes of the Saga Age. The sister manuscript of A, AM 748 Ia 4to, is written with the same or a similar hand, and though the two may not have

[113] *Benedicti Regula*, ed. by Hanslik, pp. 114–19; Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St. Gall*, p. 106.

[114] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 44–72.

[115] See, for instance, Kraus, 'Grammatical and Rhetorical Exercises', p. 73; Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin*, I, 66–67. See also Åslaug Ommundsen's article in this volume.

been bound together originally, they seem to be intended to complement each other.[116] This manuscript contains eddic poetry on the gods. B (AM 757 4to; *c.* 1400) has an abbreviated version of the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, *Litla Skálda*, *Skáldskaparmál*, and devotional poetry. As compilations, A and B are closely related.

As seen from the above, Icelandic grammatical manuscripts contain:

1. Linguistic grammar (the *First*, *Second*, and *Third Grammatical Treatises*).
2. Figures and tropes (the *Third* and *Fourth Grammatical Treatises*).
3. Poetics (the *Third* and *Fourth Grammatical Treatises*, Snorri's *Edda*).
4. Mythological and heroic lore (Snorri's *Edda*, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, *Málsháttakvæði*, *Íslendingadrápa*, eddic poetry).
5. Aphorisms (*Málsháttakvæði*).
6. Longer poems of metrical interest (?) (*Jómsvíkingadrápa* and *Málsháttakvæði*).
7. Devotional poetry.

The content of these manuscripts is wholly consistent with a discipline dealing with language and poetry. Though the stanzas on Mary were added later in W, they presumably did not seem out of place, and the devotional poetry in B certainly did not. This may reflect the prominence of hymns in grammatical studies, attested to by many European manuscripts.[117] In a similar vein, Snorri included a section on religious language in *Skáldskaparmál*.

The focus on mythological and heroic lore is prominent, and becomes even more so if the manuscript containing the Poetic Edda (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, GKS 2365 4to; *c.* 1270) is drawn into the analysis. It contains only eddic poetry on the gods and heroes, and the inclusion of such poetry in the manuscripts above suggests that the Poetic Edda also belongs in the grammatical corpus. In high medieval Latin *grammatica*, mythology belonged to a relatively high level of schooling, and was studied above all in commentaries on Vergil's *Æneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[118] Some independent overviews

[116] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 58.

[117] See Gneuss, *Hymnar und Hymnen in englischen Mittelalter*, pp. 194–206; Zieman, *Singing the New Song*, pp. 1–39.

[118] See, for instance, Zeeman, 'In the Schoolroom with the "Vulgate" Commentary on "Metamorphoses" I', pp. 1–5.

were also written, such as — shortly before Snorri's *Edda* — the Third Vatican Mythographer.[119] In Icelandic *grammatica*, different levels of grammatical learning are mixed, probably because the language itself was not a problem. The substitution of native for classical mythology within grammatical studies is unique to Iceland within medieval Christendom, a situation likely prompted by the many and obscure mythological references in skaldic poetry and the strength of the poetic tradition in Iceland — classical mythology would not have been helpful in this context.[120] Apart from its general content, the Poetic Edda bears particular comparison with R, in that it includes a poem combining mythological lore and aphorisms (*Hávamál*).

Conclusions

Above, I have outlined the general development of what might be termed vernacular *grammatica* (though its study may not have been institutionalized like Latin *grammatica*). In the *First Grammatical Treatise* and in *Háttalykill*, orthography and metrics are analysed with new eyes, searching for rules and consistency where before there was licence. This tendency is borne out by other poetry of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. In the thirteenth century, such observations are put to the use of expanding the corpus of the early Icelandic poets in the prosimetrical sagas, creating an impressive literature about the local past. In the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, the story of the migration from Troy is adapted for the same purposes. At this stage, *grammatica* is no longer only a tool for analysis of language and authoritative poetry, but is also used to create the kind of authoritative poetry that is its object of study.[121] Aspects of the *Third Grammatical Treatise* and Snorri's *Edda* may be indicative of what is happening more broadly in Icelandic literature. The substitution in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* of skaldic for classical poetry betrays a view

[119] On the Vatican Mythographers, see *The Vatican Mythographers*, trans. by Pepin, pp. 1–13; Elliott and Elder, 'A Critical Edition of the Vatican Mythographers', pp. 189–207. On readings in the grammatical curriculum generally, see note 106.

[120] See, for instance, Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. by Faulkes, p. xvi; Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 22–23.

[121] It may be observed that *grammatica* here in effect has become *rhetorica*, but there are no indications that it was perceived in that way. In the Middle Ages, the *trivium* was generally not divided into its constituent parts (*grammatica*, *rhetorica*, *dialectica*), but rather, elements of rhetoric and dialectic were studied within the framework of *grammatica* (see, for instance, Kraus, 'Grammatical and Rhetorical Exercises', p. 85).

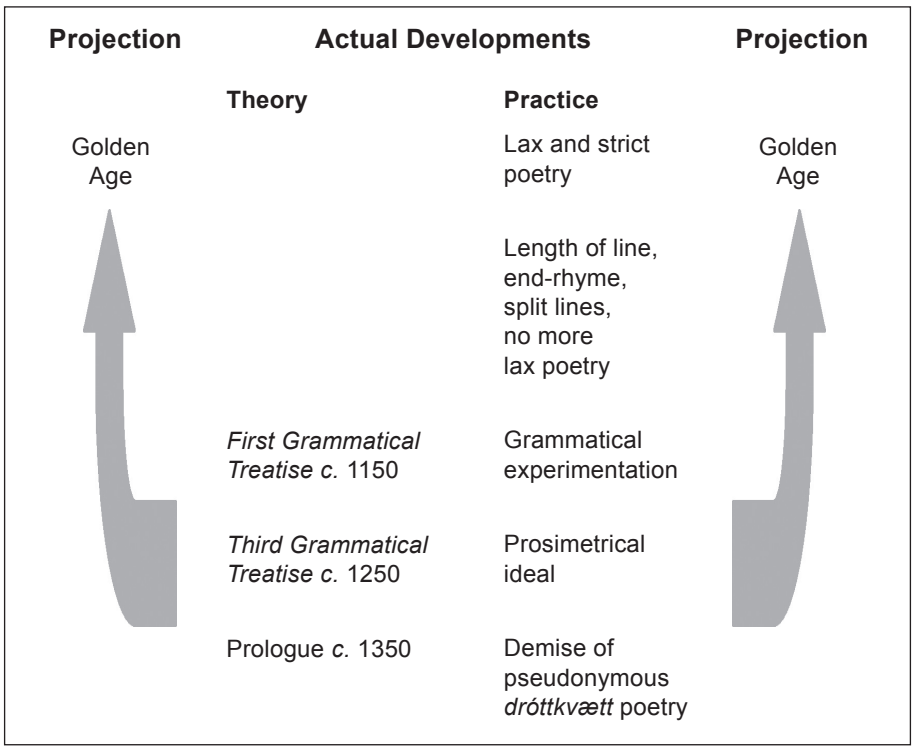

Figure 9.1. Theoretical and actual development of skaldic poetry. The vertical axis is (roughly) chronological, though I have refrained from giving other dates than those of the composition of the grammatical texts. The arrows represent, on the theoretical side, projections of vernacular superiority onto early indigenous poetry and language, and on the practical, new compositions attributed to the early poets. Both serve to transform the earliest period into a golden age. At the time of the prologue and the demise of pseudonymous *dróttkvætt* poetry, the need for a golden age as a foundation for vernacular authority had become less urgent, and the function of that age relapsed into the universal one of a receptacle for dreams of better days.

of the native poets as 'our' Vergil, Ovid, Horace.[122] Snorri presents us with a similar, albeit somewhat more complicated view. Old Norse poets are classics to him as well, but whereas the early ones (*fornskáld*) should be learned and

[122] Cf., in more general terms, Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 22. This may be compared to the appropriation of classical authority in Chaucer and Gower, as described by Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, pp. 179–220. As so often, though, the Old Norse authors are more reticent about what they are doing than their European counterparts.

enjoyed, only the slightly later 'main poets' (*hǫfuðskáld*) should be imitated.[123] Many saga authors would have been active in milieus close to or similar to those of Óláfr and Snorri, and they probably perceived their treatment of the early poets in much the same way. Whereas Snorri in his theoretical treatise upheld a distinction between who should and who should not be imitated, it was not expedient for the saga authors to do so. Although their methods differed somewhat from his, however, he and they were all engaged in the same endeavour, namely that of consolidating a literary past to rival the classical one, creating an Icelandic golden age of poetry.

A century later, in the prologue to the four four grammatical treatises, Óláfr's claims to vernacular excellence are completely bypassed, precisely on the topic of runes where they are so forcefully argued in the *Third Grammatical Treatise*. Around the same time, pseudonymous composition in the name of the early poets seems to have ended, indicating that less energy was now invested in the poetic past. If this were not the case, we would have many more instances like *Grettis saga*, where linguistic changes betray their date of composition. Historical poetry and literature continued to be composed, but no longer in the form of, or as part of, the past. By the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the vernacular past seems to have needed no further establishment, though history as identity and adventure would never lose its attraction.

[123] See above, note 73.

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B = Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, AM 757 4to
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R (Codex Regius of Snorri's *Edda*) = Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, GKS 2367 4to
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Two Cultures of Visual(ized) Cognition

Mats Malm

The power of words to create overwhelming visualization is a commonplace, thoroughly examined in classical rhetoric and onwards. The might of visualization mainly lies in its ability to lead the receivers into that world and that reality which the speaker or writer chooses to conjure up. In the rhetorical point of departure — the court — the decision as to whether or not the suspect had actually committed the crime in discussion depended partly on the state of the actual evidence, and partly on how efficiently the prosecutor could evoke an image of the suspect standing over his victim — regardless of whether it was factual or not. Obviously, it is no coincidence that the Latin term for visualization was *evidentia*. As Quintilian, master of rhetoricians, explains in the first century:

> ubi vero animis iudicum vis adferenda est et ab ipsa veri contemplatione abducenda mens, ibi proprium oratoris opus est. Hoc non docet litigator, hoc causarum libellis non continetur. Probationes enim efficiant sane ut causam nostram meliorem esse iudices putent, adfectus praestant ut etiam velint; sed id quod volunt credunt quoque. Nam cum irasci favere odisse misereri coeperunt, agi iam rem suam existimant, et, sicut amantes de forma iudicare non possunt quia sensum oculorum praecipit animus, ita omnem veritatis inquirendae rationem iudex omittit occupatus adfectibus: aestu fertur et velut rapido flumini obsequitur.
>
> But where force has to be brought to bear on the judges' feelings and their minds distracted from the truth, there the orator's true work begins. This is not something on which the litigant instructs him, or which is contained in the notes for

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> the Cause. Of course, Proofs may lead the judges to *think* our Cause the better one, but it is our emotional appeals that make them also *want* it to be so; and what they want, they also believe. For as soon as they begin to be angry or to feel favourably disposed, to hate or to pity, they fancy that it is now their own case that is being pleaded, and just as lovers cannot judge beauty because their feelings anticipate the perception of their eyes, so also a judge who is overcome by his emotions gives up any idea of inquiring into truth; he is swept along by the tide, as it were, and yields to the swift current.[1]

Manipulation of emotions is, according to Quintilian, the 'true work' of the orator, and the rhetorical figures that he points out as particularly efficient for exploiting the emotions are generally based on pretence and feigning: 'Commode etiam aut nobis aliquas ante oculos esse rerum personarum vocum imagines fingimus' (It may be convenient also to pretend to have before our own eyes images of things, persons, or utterances).[2]

Quintilian may be the one who describes the mechanism most pragmatically, but he is expressing common opinion. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle had heavily stressed the value of placing before the eyes (*pro ommatôn*) and clarified the techniques for doing so. Aristotle connected the technique of placing before the eyes with metaphor, a natural connection as both techniques play on visualization. This aspect was to be thoroughly developed in tradition; a metaphor or an allegory very much relies on the force of the image in order to effectively convey the impression intended.

The methods of visualization were thus naturally integrated in education, and they were absorbed by the Christian tradition, perhaps most concretely in homiletics — the preacher would need efficient tools to make people believe unreservedly — but also in other ways. As exegetics largely consisted of allegorical interpretation, it implied a constant attention towards God's manner of placing images of heavenly truth before the eyes of mankind. Images were not only considered a pedagogical instrument, but also a way of structuring thought. Christian practices of meditation explored the use of images for, as it were, living the scenes of the Bible, and these practices were developed out of the rhetorical art of memory, which exploited images as an aid for the speaker to recollect and structure his presentation. Mary Carruthers, who has forcefully demonstrated the effect of this, contests previous descriptions of 'static'

[1] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. by Russell, 6.2.5–6.2.6.

[2] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. by Russell, 9.2.33; see 9.2.26.

use of images and instead shows how the art of memory constituted a strongly creative means of thinking.[3]

* * *

Persuasive discourse, allegorical interpretation, mnemonics, and meditation all constitute aspects of visual cognition. The relation between these aspects of imagery — performative and interpretational, we might label them — and the weight attributed to them differs significantly in different cultural contexts, and may to an extent be said to actually define these very cultural contexts. In medieval Scandinavia, I would like to draw attention to two intellectual cultures which in very different ways develop the heritage of Latin learning into their own, highly congenial systems. In the first case — Icelandic learned culture of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries — a strong tradition of verbal gaze appears to have developed independently, but was then explicated and theorized with the help of Latin concepts. In the second case — Swedish fourteenth-century Vadstena — the visions of St Birgitta appear to be highly indigenous, but their very foundations were directly imported from abroad. Thus, they exemplify two very different ways of adapting and transforming Latin learning into a unique, locally situated, intellectual culture.

An Icelandic Culture of Verbal Gaze

Perhaps the most conspicuous literary phenomenon in Old Norse poetry is the *kenning*, this circumlocution with considerable potential to strongly evoke images of mythology or nature through two or more words. Always bipartite, it is constituted by one base-word which ranges from synonym to metaphor, and a determinant which may consist of more words than one. The kenning may use everyday images, such as when a 'ship' is called the 'sea's horse' (gjálfrstóð), or it may exploit mythological references, such as when the sea is called 'blood of Ymir' (Ymis blóð) because the creation myth states that parts of the giant Ymir became the world.[4] Kennings are attributed to poets dating back to the ninth century and are tokens of a culture strongly occupied with visual cognition and visualizing expression.[5] The question is how the kenning was handled as the domestic culture was fused with Latin culture.

[3] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*.

[4] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Skáldskaparmál*, ed. by Faulkes, 1, 36, 94.

[5] For wider recent discussions of imaginative and memorial aspects, see Stavnem, 'Hør Kvasirs blod! Kenning og metafor i den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning'; Bergsveinn Birgisson,

If one is to judge Icelandic education in the twelfth century from the few rhetorical texts that have been preserved for us, it would seem that the only aspect of rhetoric that made any impact was that of figurative language and adorned discourse — that which was actually counted as *grammatica*: 'the science of interpreting the poets and other writers and the systematic principles [...] for speaking and writing correctly'.[6] As is well known, there are clear traces in Iceland of textbooks in *grammatica*, since the so-called grammatical treatises of the twelfth century are based on Latin grammarians such as Donatus, Priscianus, Eberhard, and Alexander de Villa Dei. These textbooks were widely spread throughout Europe during the Middle Ages and constituted a kind of universal basic learning (for those who did receive education, obviously). In Iceland, these works were soon converted into Icelandic versions, not only written in Icelandic but also replacing the Latin examples with Icelandic ones, gathered from skaldic poetry. As Guðrún Nordal has shown, theoretical texts such as the third and fourth grammatical treatises and *Snorra Edda* were used together with skaldic diction as a corpus of teaching chosen Icelanders to compose in a way equal to the Latin masters, at the same time as equating the old skalds with the old Roman poets. In that sense, Guðrún points out, skaldic diction became a 'crucial link between the study of *grammatica* and the indigenous traditions in Iceland'.[7] The political and ideological aspects of this kind of textual culture were, of course, considerable and resulted in highly skilled authors in both Latin and Icelandic. Here, as elsewhere, *grammatica* was used to define a social and intellectual elite.[8]

Beside *grammatica*, however, *rhetorica* and *dialectica* also formed the basics of education. There are no traces of rhetorical textbooks similar to the remains of the grammatical ones, but we can rest assured that basic rhetorical training was a fundamental part of the emerging intellectual culture that was to produce the Icelandic sagas and mythological works. Obviously, the manuscripts that document the knowledge and use of certain Latin texts do not give the complete picture: texts have been lost, and books were rare items, far from being the property of every student.

The textbooks in *grammatica* of Donatus and others involve what was known in rhetoric as *elocutio*, in which the key word is *ornatus*, adornment — precisely that which is demonstrated in the examples from poetry that they

'Inn i skaldens sinn'; Males, 'Mytologi i skaldedikt, skaldedikt i prosa'.

[6] The definition is from Irvine and Thomson, '*Grammatica* and Literary Theory', p. 15.

[7] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 340.

[8] See Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, p. 461.

exhibit. The different literary techniques described and labelled — metaphor, metonymy, etc. — provided concepts both for analysing poetry and for creating poetry. Still, all basic learning, including the parts of rhetoric — *inventio* ('finding' topics and arguments), *dispositio* (arranging them), *elocutio* ('dressing' the topics and arguments in efficient words), *memoria* (command of the speech to be presented orally), and *pronuntiatio* (delivery) — would have been directed at efficiency in oral presentation. These basics, however, were taught in decidedly oral circumstances.[9] The basic skills of administering the Christian Church obviously included rhetorical instruction, but the written traces of this educational culture are scarce or non-existent compared to the remains of Donatus and Priscianus.

So, in Icelandic literary culture, it is easy to follow how, in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* from the middle of the thirteenth century, Óláfr Þórðarson adapts Donatus's *Ars maior* to Icelandic poetry, exchanging the Latin examples for domestic ones, and in his discussion of *metaphora* and *epitheton* (a descriptive word) provides insights into how the Icelandic literary device *kenning* was thought to work. As Óláfr connects it with metaphor, it is obvious that the visual impact of the *kenning* was considered vital. This mode of discussing the *kenning* as part of *grammatica* (or of rhetoric's *elocutio*) has been followed by scholars in our time.[10] There is, however, one problem with understanding the *kenning* as 'naming' or circumlocution, and that problem is inherent in the term itself. The term appears to proceed not from the base-word (that which can be connected with metaphor), but instead with the determining apposition. In a kenning such as 'sea's horse' for 'ship', it must be the genitive determinant 'sea's' that actually constitutes the kenning, because that is the part which 'characterizes' in a way congruent with the meaning of the words *kenning* and *kenna*. This circumstance gives us reason to ponder the possibility that the kenning should be understood not in connection with Latin *grammatica* and stylistics, but instead with *rhetorica* and its basic notions of mnemonics. For these parts of intellectual culture the Icelandic sources are scarce; thus, we need to supplement them with what we can infer from cultural situations outside Iceland.

[9] For example, Orme, *Medieval Schools from Roman Britain to Renaissance England*; Kraus, 'Grammatical and Rhetorical Exercises in the Medieval Classroom'; Fafner, *Tanke og tale*, p. 143; Murphy, 'The Teaching of Latin as a Second Language in the Twelfth Century'.

[10] See, primarily, Brodeur, 'The Meaning of Snorri's Categories'; Halldór Halldórsson, *Old Icelandic* heiti *in Modern Icelandic*; Clunies Ross, *Skáldskaparmál: Snorri Sturluson's Ars Poetica and Medieval Theories of Language*; Clunies Ross, *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*, pp. 236–45.

Memory and Culture

Even though the preserved grammatical and rhetorical texts in Iceland do not elaborate on memory, there is no reason to take this as a sign that memory was not considered essential; rather, as elsewhere in Europe, memory here will have been considered fundamental. As Rita Copeland and Mary Carruthers have most efficiently demonstrated, invention was the prerequisite of several central activities in medieval culture.[11] Inventing one's store of topics, arguments, examples, images, and so on, was the starting point not only for composing in writing, but also for creating, performing, and improvising in all kinds of endeavours. Of the other rhetorical parts, disposition became a natural part of invention: the things retrieved must be ordered in an efficient way. In the medieval material preserved, the least attention seems to have been devoted to *memoria* and *pronuntiatio*, the two parts that exclusively belong to oral performance.[12] However, if the prerequisite of learning and communication is invention, the prerequisite for all kinds of invention is memory. As Carruthers primarily underlines, all invention, all use of the resources of mind, was dependent on memory. Memory was not the ability to reproduce but the 'matrix of a reminiscing cogitation, shuffling and collating "things" stored in a random-access memory scheme, or set of schemes — a memory *architecture* and a library built up during one's lifetime with the express intention that it be used inventively'.[13]

For any knowledge to be kept or developed, memory was the prerequisite. This was encoded in the rhetorical treatises of antiquity, especially Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and thus concerned all parts of profane interaction. With Carruthers and the sources she adduces, we can also conclude that memory was the prerequisite for meditation and life in God. It is true that mnemotechnic advice from antiquity seems not to have been preserved to any extent, but the reason for this apparently is not that memory lost its importance.[14] The mnemotechnic systems of antiquity lost their place, and instead a basic insight into the importance and function of memory was

[11] Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, pp. 151–78; Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*.

[12] See Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, p. 236 n. 7.

[13] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 4.

[14] See Evans, 'Two Aspects of *Memoria* in Eleventh and Twelfth Century Writings'. In 'Rhetorical *Memoria* in Commentary and Practice', Carruthers points out that the remarkably concrete and conspicuous technique described in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 'is not generalizable,

more or less taken for granted, and basic techniques of memory were codified. The works first of Frances Yates and then of Mary Carruthers, as well as others, shed light on the medieval art of and outlook on memory not from elaborate treatises on the subject, but by finding clues in a variety of sources. Carruthers agreed with Yates' conclusion that 'the great principle of classical artificial memory [is] the appeal to the sense of sight',[15] but saw memory as a more dynamic part of medieval cognition:

> Monastic *memoria*, like the Roman art, is a locational memory; it also cultivates the making of mental images for the mind to work with as a fundamental procedure of human thinking. Because crafting memories also involved crafting the images in which those memories were carried and conducted, the artifice of memory was also, necessarily, an art of making various sorts of pictures. These pictures were in the mind, to be sure, but with close, symbiotic relationships to actual images and actual words that someone had seen or read or heard — or smelled or tasted or touched — for all the senses, as we will observe, were cultivated in the monastic craft of remembering.[16]

Memory, then, is a space or storage-room where everything is stored — thus we may wander through the space of a house, or a road along which we mark, *notamus*, images for all the things we wish to remember, with Quintilian's method.[17] It is crucial that the 'things' to be remembered be made into images, as is also stressed in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: 'Rei totius memoriam saepe una nota et imagine simplici conprehendimus' (Often we encompass the record of an entire matter by one *nota*, a single image).[18] A *nota* is a sign, but a sign of a particularly visual character. *Nota*, with derivatives such as *notatio*, is a key word to effective memorizing throughout tradition. A little further on it is stated:

> Imagines igitur nos in eo genere constituere oportebit quod genus in memoria diutissime potest haerere. Id accidet si quam maxime notatas similitudines constituemus; si non multas nec vagas, sed aliquid agentes imagines ponemus.

beyond a simple principle of marking the subject-matters [*res*] of an oration [...] with vivid images arranged in a coherent scene, which can serve the speaking orator as ready cues to recall the ordered points of his composition' (p. 210).

[15] Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp. 186–87.

[16] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 10.

[17] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. by Russell, 11.17–21.

[18] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. and trans. by Caplan, III, 33.

> We ought, then, to set up images of a kind that can adhere longest in the memory. And we shall do so if we establish likenesses as striking as possible; if we set up images that are not many or vague, but doing something.[19]

That is, the images are to be strong and memorable, and the word for this is *notatus*. *Notatio* is not only characterizing, but particularly powerful characterizing. In the same work, the term also designates a figure for visualizing a person through remarkable characteristics: 'Notatio est cum alicuius natura certis describitur signis, quae, sicuti notae quae, naturae sunt adtributa.' (*Notatio* [character delineation] consists in describing a person's character by the definite signs which, like distinctive marks, are attributes of that character.)[20] In the teaching of mnemonics, the advocation of *notae*, in Carruthers's word, was ubiquitous.[21] Although the classical artificial art of memory was not transmitted, the importance and nature of memory were a universal occupation, and regularly codified in the words for *nota*. Even Augustine used it in his *Confessions*.[22]

In a society such as twelfth-century Iceland, obviously memory was vital as the carrier of the whole culture before it came into writing. Even as literacy spread, books and parchment were rare and precious. Students needed to exploit memory not only to keep knowledge, but also to be able to use it. The medieval characteristic of a genius was largely built on memory, as Carruthers demonstrates by comparing descriptions of Thomas Aquinas and Albert Einstein.[23] This is an aspect of twelfth-century education and learning that is not evinced in the preserved manuscripts, but is part of the greater picture. And it appears to tie in closely with the early intellectual culture where Icelandic poetry was defined and related to Latin literariness.

The Kenning

The prime characteristic of skaldic diction, the *kenning*, is frequent in poems from very early on. However, although the term is used in other senses, it is not known as a designation of the poetic device before *Snorra Edda*, and the term should be able to reveal to us how the *kenning* was understood. The primary

[19] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. and trans. by Caplan, III, 37.

[20] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. and trans. by Caplan, IV, 63.

[21] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, pp. 122 and 313 n. 14; also Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 107–08.

[22] See Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 30.

[23] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 2–4.

meanings of *kenning* according to Fritzner are sense, sensation; knowledge, recognition; doctrine, teaching; and 'naming of the character that something has its name from'.[24] The last definition applies to Snorri's use in the *Edda*, and 'naming' has often been used as the translation of *kenning*.[25] However, while *kenning* has to do with naming, this translation tends to obscure the actual meaning of the word, which instead is 'characterization'.

Throughout the *Edda*, Snorri is fairly careful to use the word *kalla* (to call, name) when discussing the *heiti*, that is, the base-word that substitutes for the referent, and which is sometimes a metaphor. However, the base-word is often a fairly simple synonym which is not in itself of particular visual force. Especially in these cases, visual impact is achieved through the determinant. Snorri thus uses the word *kenna* when discussing the determinator which is employed to describe the *heiti*. That is, to Snorri, *kenna* means 'characterize':

> Hvernig skal kenna mann? Hann skal kenna við verk sín, þat er hann veitir eða þiggr eða gerir. Hann má ok kenna til eignar sinnar þeirar er hann á ok svá ef hann gaf, svá ok við ættir þær er hann kom av, svá þær er frá honum kómu. Hvernig skal hann kenna við þessa hluti? Svá att kalla hann vinnanda eða fremjanda eða til fara sinna eða athafnar, víga eða sæfara eða veiða eða vápna eða skipa.[26]

> How shall a man be characterized? He shall be characterized by his actions, what he gives or receives or does. He can also be characterized by his property, what he owns and also if he gives it away; also by the family lines he is descended from, also those that have descended from him. How shall he be characterized by these things? By calling him achiever or performer of his expeditions or activities, of killings or voyages or huntings, or with weapons or ships.[27]

Only when the base-word is in question, that is in the last sentence, does the quotation have *kalla*, 'call' or 'name'. When the determinator that characterizes the base-word is in question, the verb used is *kenna*. That is, the term *kenning* for a bipartite poetic circumlocution appears to derive not from the base-word

[24] Fritzner (s.v.) enumerates the following senses: (1) Følelse, Fornemmelse; (2) Kjenden, Gjenkjendelse; (3) Kundskab om, Bekjendtskab til noget; (4) Kundgjørelse, Erkjendelse, Tilstaaelse; (5) Lære, Lærdom; (6) Benævnelse af den Beskaffenhed, at Tingen er kaldet efter, har faaet sit Navn af noget (er kent við e-t), som udgjør en Del av selve Benævnelsen.

[25] For example, Clunies Ross, *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 50–60, and von See, *Mythos und Theologie*, pp. 50–52.

[26] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Skáldskaparmál*, ed. by Faulkes, I, 31.

[27] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, trans. by Faulkes, p. 94. The translation is that of Anthony Faulkes, but I have replaced his 'refer to' with 'characterize'.

but from the determinator, the word that characterizes. It thus corresponds to such meanings of the word *kenning* as concern 'knowledge', 'insight', and 'learning': the poetic device *kenning* adds knowledge about the referent, by characterizing.

Agency in the image as a whole is important: the base-word may be construed by 'calling him the achiever or performer', Snorri says. Latin descriptions of the act of *memoria* also stress activity; the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, as we saw, speaks of 'images doing something' (*agentes imagines*), in a manner similar to Snorri. But the greater correspondence is between Snorri's use of *kenna* and the Latin use of *notare* and *nota*. The *kenning* consists in a characterization collected from a sphere proper to the referent, just as the Latin *nota* may also consist in a characterizing image collected from a sphere proper to the referent, as Quintilian recommends for memorizing:

> Tum quae scripserunt vel cogitatione complectuntur aliquo signo quo moneantur notant, quod esse vel ex re tota potest, ut de navigatione, militia, vel ex verbo aliquo: nam etiam excidentes unius admonitione verbi in memoriam reponuntur.
>
> The next stage is to mark [*notant*] what they have written or are mentally preparing with some sign which will jog their memory. This may be based on the subject as a whole (on navigation or warfare, for example) or on a word, because even people who lose the thread of what they are saying can have their memory put back on track by the cue of a single word.[28]

While *Rhetorica ad Herennium* may have been known in Iceland, it is less probable (although not excluded) that Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* was known there.[29] Yet, the quotation effectively formulates what was a general axiom in rhetorical education, 'ubiquitous' according to Carruthers: the *nota* is a striking image, characterizing the referent and/or evoking associations and context belonging to it. *Notare* is to characterize something by using this striking image. Analogously, the *kenning* is an image — not always but very often a striking one — characterizing the referent by evoking associations and context (e.g., weapons or ships according to Snorri, just as Quintilian mentions navigation or warfare). There is probably no direct contact between Quintilian and Snorri, but it would be very difficult to think that Latin education in Iceland had not introduced memory and its techniques, conspicuous among them *nota* and *notatio*, as a vital prerequisite of learning.

[28] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. by Russell, 11.2.19.

[29] See Halldór Halldórsson, *Old Icelandic heiti in Modern Icelandic*, pp. 12–13.

The *kenning* is only indirectly associated with memory, and the *nota* is not always associated with memory either: it can be mere characterization according to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. However, the essence of *kenning* is very close to *nota* and *notation* — the forceful visualization of characteristics. The aspect of sense is not part of Latin *nota*, but knowledge and recognition are just what the term is about. *Nota* is a sign and *notatio* is the use of *nota* — a marking, noting, describing, characterizing, corresponding to the form *kenning*. The verb *notare* is to mark, signify, observe, corresponding to the verb *kenna*. At the bottom lies the verb *noscere*; that which is *notum* is that which is *kent* — known or made known. *Kenning* thus appears to be the congenial translation of *notatio*, and just like the rhetorical use of *notatio* it has achieved important aspects of visual imaging.[30] As grammar, rhetoric, and learning followed the Church into Iceland, these techniques must have been a natural part, as well as these terms. The kenning as a poetic device was obviously developed without aid from abroad, but the terminology for discussing it appears to have been a contribution from Latin rhetoric. The term *kenning* itself is not known before Snorri: if it was coined before him, it is likely to have been so within the same tradition. As has been demonstrated in several aspects, in elaborate although inconspicuous ways, Snorri incorporated Latin learning and concepts into his *Edda*.[31] As the emerging intellectual culture of saga and mythography, heavily intent on cultural recollection, was fed with the Latin culture of image, the result appears to have been most congenial — and, as so often with Snorri, vague and inconclusive.

The Vadstena Culture of Verbal Gaze

While attention to the impact and technique of visualization was commonplace, not least during the Middle Ages, it took different guises and resulted in

[30] For valuable ideas and suggestions, I would like to thank Margaret Clunies Ross, Andreas Harbsmaier, Pernille Harsting, Henrik Janson, Judith Jesch, Thomas Lindqvist, Else Mundal, and Vésteinn Ólason – without making any of them responsible for the conclusions I draw. At a conference in Reykholt in 2005, when I presented a draft of this interpretation (Malm, 'Varför heter det kenning?'), Bergsveinn Birgisson added that the connection between Icelandic words for 'image' and 'remember', *mynd* and *muna*, enforces the connection between memory and imagery in Icelandic thought. Bergsveinn Birgisson has since treated the similar functions of the *nota* of classical rhetoric and the Old Norse kenning on a general level (Bergsveinn Birgisson, 'Inn i skaldens sinn', pp. 120–22).

[31] See primarily Clunies Ross, *Skáldskaparmál* and references there.

different practices and different theoretical systems. One remarkable instance of attention to verbal gaze, maybe the most remarkable during the Scandinavian Middle Ages, was the revelations of St Birgitta (1303–73). Based in Vadstena monastery, she exerted wide international influence and her vehicle was the revelatory visualizations of heaven, earth, and hell. Summarizing the 'Birgittine legacy', Bridget Morris makes three points: (1) she was a 'prophet of reform', constantly chastising the decline of the Church; (2) she anticipated the change towards a new, active kind of spirituality and managed to establish new ways not only of formulating standpoints that were not those of official doctrine, but also of admitting women to interpret and declare the Word; (3) she was an early and important influence on the coming devotion to Mary and the incarnation.[32]

The two first points can be directly connected to the question of imagery and visualization. Birgitta's remarkable ability to formulate critique and actually achieve change was clearly dependent on how her ideas were presented, and here we may speak of imagery as an agent of reform.

The revelations obviously exploit visualization, but they also problematize visuality, not least by incorporating the discussion of seeing and desiring. Particularly in the important fifth book of revelations, *Liber Questionum*, Christ is questioned by an inquisitive and not very sympathetic monk who is usually considered as sharing traits with both Birgitta and her confessor Mathias of Linköping, his disturbing questions being the expressions of uncomfortable questions in them both. Recently, it has been shown that *Liber Questionum* should probably be understood as conveying and repudiating the notions of orders other than Birgitta's, especially as it ends in her call for a new order.[33] That is, Birgitta here describes how the order she wanted to found was to be constituted intellectually and practically. In defining this future intellectual culture, Birgitta starts out with the problem of idolatry. It is clarified that images, things, and adornment entice people's love and thus are not good even in the temple. This critique of visual desire and love for images has been treated by Mia Åkestam, who relates it to a number of instances of image and desire in the Birgittine milieu after her own time.[34] Although it is difficult to compare, it thus seems that Birgitta's legacy included a sharpened focus not only on images

[32] Morris, *Saint Birgitta of Sweden*, pp. 174–76.

[33] Birgitta, *The Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden 2. Liber Caelestis, Books IV–V*, ed. by Searby and Morris, p. 267. See Husabø Oen, 'Sight, Body, and Imagery in the Visionary Experiences of Birgitta'.

[34] Åkestam, 'Mastering Desires: Images of Love, Lust and Want in Fourteenth-Century Vadstena'.

but also on verbal imagery. This attention is not only performed but also thematized in her revelations, and the question is what foundations for this intellectual culture of verbal gaze had been laid before her.

The Organization of Gaze

Concerning Birgitta's establishment of a new kind of speaker, significantly liberated from doctrinal and gender orders, Morris states:

> She knew that women on their own were ineffectual in publicising the message of reform and that they had to be supported by male clerics who were preachers and well-connected theologians, and who would proclaim and promulgate the message of reform in the public sphere and outside the confines of the monastery. This fact is seen not only in the organisation of her order, but also in the recording of her divine revelations. Whereas her predecessors had enjoyed a relationship of obedience and submission to their spiritual directors, Birgitta co-operated actively with her confessors in producing a collaborative text of her revelations.[35]

Apart from creating new modes of communication and organization for the order, Birgitta thus used male collaborators not only to channel her words, but also to develop her texts. While Birgitta herself established a culture of verbal gaze, she could fall back on an intellectual culture where image had already been developed in a very particular way by her confessor, the Swedish friar Magister Mathias of Linköping. Mathias has been described as the most prominent male Swedish author of this period — Birgitta of course being the undoubted number one. In terms of establishing an intellectual culture, Birgitta obviously takes the top spot, but that culture was prepared in several ways by Mathias. It is commonly acknowledged that his spiritual guidance was of great importance to Birgitta; theological issues of Birgitta's revelations concerning the right faith and heretical ideas have been shown to be very much consistent with Mathias's theories as he expounded them in his theological works.[36] No doubt, Mathias heavily influenced the religious culture of fourteenth-century Sweden by his independent application of European intellectual matter.

Mathias was born as Matts Övidsson at the end of the thirteenth century and died around 1350. He studied abroad, probably in Paris, and was back in Sweden at least by the beginning of the 1330s. Documents from 1333 men-

[35] Morris, *Saint Birgitta of Sweden*, p. 175.

[36] Strömberg, 'Magister Mathias' ställning till tidens heretiska strömningar'; Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context'.

tion him as a canon at the cathedral of Linköping, and as a *magister*. Mathias's earliest works appear to have been two reworkings of Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*, the former entitled *Poetria* and the latter, only partly preserved, *Testa nucis*. *Poetria* is dedicated to the archbishop of Uppsala, Olof Björnsson, who died in 1332. After these profane works, Mathias's writings deal with theological and homiletic matters, such as a collection of 'abstracts' of *exempla*, *Copia exemplorum*, for the use of preachers. His *Alphabetum distinctionum* is a gloss of the Bible, arranged by keywords and explaining them in an encyclopaedic manner. *Homo conditus* has been described as 'a kind of popular theological *Summa*, intended for homiletic purposes'.[37] *Exposicio super Apocalypsim* was far more influential; a number of copies are still to be found in European libraries. St Bernardino of Siena had his own copy of it made in about 1413, and it was one of the principal sources for his renowned sermons. After hearing Bernardino, Nicolas Cusanus was eager for his own copy of Mathias's *Exposicio*. As Anders Piltz puts it,

> It was experienced as fresh, original, profound. It intends to give a literal as well as a spiritual exposition of the sacred text, but it is much more restrained in identifying historical events and persons than the Joachimite tradition or Nicolas of Lyra. It deals with time-less truths, virtues and vices, as incarnate in history, past, present, and future.[38]

One side of Mathias's work that Bernardino did not address in the same way was the profound reformist critique of how the Roman Church administered Christian religion.[39] Finally, Mathias wrote a prologue to Birgitta's revelations where he explained their character and authoritative status, usually called by its first words *Stupor et mirabilia*, 'Amazement and wonders'.

While Mathias's learning was up to date with contemporary European thought and he proved himself a subtle commentator on the Bible, his stance was decidedly independent. He renounced not only the Curia, but also scholastic argument and dialectics.[40] In his theological writings, Mathias is not only hostile to scholasticism of the Aristotelian kind, he also develops anti-Averroistic arguments.[41] This particularly concerns the determinism of Averroistic

[37] Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', p. 146.

[38] Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', p. 144.

[39] Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', pp. 143–45.

[40] Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', pp. 137–38.

[41] Strömberg, 'Magister Mathias' ställning till tidens heretiska strömningar'.

thought. This might lead to the conclusion that Mathias renounced the intellectual practices of his youth, the *Poetria* and *Testa nucis*. Not only did they concern profane writing, they were also direct adaptations of Aristotle, *Poetria* even by way of Averroës's commentary: it was through Averroës that Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* made their entrance into the Latin learned world after having been unavailable in Europe for a very long time. But there are no signs of Mathias having any concerns about referring to Aristotle and Averroës on matters of literary presentation.

While Mathias's European renown was mainly achieved through his exegesis in *Exposicio super Apocalypsim* and thus through his explanation of allegorical images, his *Copia exemplorum* was a pragmatic instrument for preachers, giving them abstracts of images and themes on which they could expand in persuasive ways. As Piltz points out, Mathias also uses strong images, for example in *Homo conditus*, when he evokes in a few words the image of the Good Samaritan in 'picturesque, scriptural language'.[42] To be sure, this image is used in a discussion of the three bad things that afflict man through his sins: condemnation, confusion, and punishment (*dampnum*, *confusionem*, *et penas*; 2.1). In this discussion, standard formulas of ignorance and sin as blindness and God as the light of truth are profuse. Not least, the words of John give guidance: 'Who follows me will not walk in the shadows but have the light of life'.[43]

This discussion is the frame of Mathias's lucid image. It appears to tell us that visualization is the remedy which removes shadows and facilitates the vision of heavenly light. This, too, is part of the common paradoxical notion that the phenomena of the temporal world, clear and bright and palpable as they may be, are in fact shadows and darkness, blinding the Christian soul or at least hindering the sight of heavenly truth. Accordingly, heavenly truth needs visual impact. In the two works of his youth, Mathias expertly developed the attribute, not of interpreting imagery, but of exploiting it for persuasive reasons.

Aristotle Converted

The path of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* to late thirteenth-century Paris had many detours. Willem van Moerbeke, closely associated with Thomas Aquinas, translated both works from the Greek, and his translation of the *Rhetoric* was widespread. However, the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* also took a longer path, being

[42] Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', p. 146.

[43] 'Qui sequitur me, non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen vite', John 8. 12.

translated first from the Greek into Syriac, and thence into Arabic. There, they were treated together with Aristotle's other works and particularly discussed in connection with his *On the Soul*. Al-Farabi wrote a commentary on the *Rhetoric* and Averroës elaborated a commentary on the *Poetics*, both of which were translated into Latin by Hermannus Alemannus in the mid-thirteenth century.[44] The Arabic version of the *Poetics* was more influential than Moerbeke's translation, a circumstance of considerable importance.

While translations always form the epicentre of discursive instability, Moerbeke's translation of the *Rhetoric* follows Aristotle's notions fairly well concerning the issue of imagery and visualization. As noted initially, in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle explained that setting things 'before the eyes' (pro ommatôn) is the best way of achieving effect, both in metaphors and in other cases. 'We ought therefore to aim at three things — metaphor, antithesis, actuality' (metaphoras antitheseôs energeias), he states in Freese's translation, to which can be added that the *energeia* does imply 'actuality' but is also highly constituted of visuality.[45] He then goes on to demonstrate how metaphor and actuality/visuality support one another. Aristotle thus forcefully declares the necessity of visualizing in order to persuade the audience, accentuating a notion of visualization that was prevailing even without his support. In Moerbeke's translation, the formula 'pro ommatôn' is rendered with 'ante oculos' and the stress on visualization is kept. Mathias appears to have relied on Moerbeke's translation when he wrote his version, *Testa nucis*, but as *Testa nucis* is only fragmentarily preserved, we cannot be sure of precisely how he treated the issue.[46] However, in his *Poetria* Mathias refers to his own treatment of methods for visualization in *Testa nucis*, which gives us reason to believe that he did not find visualization less important than did his predecessors.[47] In fact, studying Mathias's rendition of Aristotle's *Poetics*, we realize that the importance of visualization is remarkably increased.

While there is nothing strange about how the prescriptions for visualization in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* were passed on in the redactions of it, the reason that Mathias expounds it in his *Poetria* is all the more peculiar. For in the *Poetria*, Aristotle's *Poetics* has undergone a remarkable transformation. Aristotle's key concept, *mimêsis*, traditionally carried several meanings, 'representation' being

[44] See, e.g., Murphy, 'Aristotle's Rhetoric in the Middle Ages', and Bergh, 'Introduction'.

[45] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III. x.6.

[46] Bergh, 'Introduction', 8.

[47] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III. x.7–xi.4; *Aristoteles Latinus XXXI 1–2*; Mathias, *Poetria*, § 11.

one of the central ones: the word 'sofa' is a mimetic representation of the object 'sofa', just as a painter's painting of the sofa is. Aristotle, however, expanded the concept, and in his *Poetics*, the central instance of *mimêsis* is *muthos*, the composition of events and actions into a story, often connected with the modern term 'fiction'. What happens in Averroës's commentary, however, is that the idea of composition and events almost entirely vanishes. Instead, the key concept changes from content into medium. Averroës renders Aristotle's *mimêsis* with the word 'representation' — *representatio*. This *representatio*, however, is not neutral; instead, the soul of poetry according to Averroës is the overwhelmingly visualizing verbal representation. This development can be explained not least by the fact that Averroës interpreted the *Poetics* together with not only the *Rhetoric* but also *On the Soul*, and achieved a notion of poetry as the primary means of convincing receivers not through argument, but by irresistible visualization — irresistible, since visualizing discourse affects the imagination of the receivers. This aspect is very far from Aristotle's *Poetics*, but it is entirely decisive for Mathias's *Poetria*.

It was Hermannus's translation of Averroës's commentary that Mathias met in Paris and which he reworked into his own *Poetria*. He retains Averroistic concepts such as *representatio* and *imaginatio*, reordering them a bit but keeping, even reinforcing, the focus on visualizing presentation instead of content. He even draws the argument so far as to say that fiction — which was essential to Aristotle — is not desirable other than in such small circumstances as in a metaphor (to say 'the lion' instead of Achilles is to create a fiction). Central to poetry, according to Mathias, is its ability to evoke scenes of the strongest possible impact on the receivers.[48] Mathias also turns to more contemporary and directly accessible European theory of poetry, particularly the Horatian and post-Horatian tradition.[49] These, just like the Averroistic theorem, lead to the fundamental stress on visualization.

Mathias thus started his career by exploring the potentials and forces of visualizing discourse. His interest for placing things before the eyes is apparent, not least in the summaries of concretizations of stories and scenes in *Copia exemplorum*, which provides means for the preacher to visualize moral truths and admonitions. As is apparent from his *Exposicio*, visualization as an object

[48] For a detailed interpretation in this vein, see Malm, *The Soul of Poetry Redefined* and references there.

[49] This connection has been lucidly explained by Alastair Minnis in 'Acculturizing Aristotle: Matthew of Linköping's *Translatio* of Poetic Representation'.

of interpretation was also essential to Mathias, and this was a sense that he would develop. To the Aristotelian-Averroistic doctrine of the power of the eye, Mathias would later add the Augustinian doctrine of the power of the spiritual eyes over that of the corporeal eyes. The two are not explicitly discussed together, but starting from different theoretical standpoints, a discussion of each develops how verbal discourse through visual representations is capable of conveying remarkable truths. This takes place in the prologue to Birgitta's revelations, which Mathias wrote to declare his own faith in the curious fact that God should choose to speak through a female person from the outskirts of Europe, and not least to persuade the learned recipients of Christianity. It is easy to sense the suspicion about these revelations that he anticipated: did the visions really stem from God — or perhaps from the Devil? The prologue begins: 'Stupor et mirabilia audita sunt in terra nostra' (Amazement and wonders have been heard of in our land).[50] The wonder, of course, is Birgitta's revelations, and the importance of these, according to Mathias, is greater than the human mind and heart can grasp. In fact, Christ's apparition to Birgitta is even greater than when Christ appeared as a human being on earth:

> Sane stupendior est hec apparicio illa, qua se per carnem monstrauit. Illa carnis superficiem carnalibus oculis ingessit, hec Deum et hominem spiritualibus oculis ingerit.[51]

> This apparition is even more amazing than the one by which he showed himself in the flesh. His body presented itself outwardly to bodily eyes, but in this apparition the God and man are presented to spiritual eyes.[52]

Extolling Birgitta's revelations over Christ's actual descent to earth is bold, but seems consistent with Mathias's fascination with imaginary representation, because the revelations are God's imaginary representation. Mathias argues his cause by invoking both Sts Paul and Augustine. The distinction between 'corporeal eyes' and 'spiritual eyes' derives from Augustine, primarily the fifteenth book of *De trinitate*. This is where he discusses the words of Paul, 1 Corinthians 13. 12: 'Videmus nunc per speculum in ænigmate: tunc autem facie ad faciem' (Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face).[53] In understanding what we cannot see with our corporeal eyes, belief and intel-

[50] Birgitta, *Sancta Birgitta. Revelaciones. 1*, ed. by Undhagen, p. 234. Translation from Birgitta, *The Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden 1*, trans. by Searby, p. 47.

[51] Birgitta, *Sancta Birgitta. Revelaciones. 1*, ed. by Undhagen, pp. 234–35.

[52] Birgitta, *The Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden 1*, trans. by Searby, p. 48.

[53] Following the translation of *The New English Bible: New Testament*.

lect are both engaged; this is where Augustine expresses his influential doctrine that he who does not believe cannot understand.[54] Interpreting this tempting and vague image, the spiritual eyes of man are employed. With corporeal eyes one can see material things, the obscure image of truth, but with spiritual eyes one can see other dimensions.[55] Focusing on the interpretational strength of the spiritual gaze, in his prologue Mathias channels Augustine: what is seen with spiritual eyes must be of higher authority than what is seen with corporeal eyes, since wisdom is the light of the spiritual eyes.[56]

Now, the obvious question is to what extent Mathias, beset with image, may have influenced Birgitta's visions, the epitome of imaginary representation. His idea of the spiritual eyes is also emphasized in Birgitta's revelations themselves, where spiritual and corporeal eyes are often discussed. Further, within them frequent mention is made of the visions as images expressing higher truths — the reader is even at times supplied with thorough explications of how the visions are to be interpreted, in the same vein as Mathias's exegetic analysis in *Exposicio super Apocalypsim*.[57] Christ himself tells Birgitta that her visions of devils, hell, and so forth are images of higher truths that she could not otherwise grasp.[58] In the revelations, the idea of spiritual representation to spiritual eyes is not compared to Christ's life as it is in the prologue, but it is a distinct part not only of the legitimation of the revelations but also of their explication. In the revelations, it is Christ himself who gives Birgitta her mission:

> Audi que loquor et vade ad magistrum Mathiam, confessorem tuum, qui expertus est duorum spirituum secundum discrecionem, dic ei ex parte mea, que dico tibi, quia tu eris sponsa mea et canale meum et audies et videbis spiritualia, et spiritus meus permanebit tecum vsque ad mortem.
>
> Hear my words and go to master Mathias, your confessor, who is skilled in distinguishing the two spirits. Tell him on my behalf, that you shall be my bride and my channel and that you will hear and see spiritual things, and that my spirit will be with you all the way to death.[59]

[54] Augustine, *De trinitate*, XV. viii.40–44; see also Augustine, *De trinitate*, XXV. ii.24–28.

[55] Augustine, *De trinitate*, XV. ix.54–62.

[56] See Augustine, *De trinitate*, XV. viii.1–3.

[57] On the *Exposicio*, see Piltz, 'Magister Mathias of Sweden in his Theological Context', and Morris, *Saint Birgitta of Sweden*, p. 70.

[58] Birgitta, *Sancta Birgitta. Revelaciones. IV*, *Rev*. IV, 18, ed. by Undhagen, pp. 87–88. See, e.g., Lindgren, 'Birgitta och bilderna'.

[59] *Acta et processus canonizacionis beate Birgitte*, ed. by Collijn, p. 81.

God and Christ have chosen the same method of clarifying, persuasive discourse as Mathias discussed in his *Poetria*.[60] Revelations of course were nothing new, but we can conclude that the visualizing character, sometimes labelled 'realism', is astoundingly strong in Birgitta's revelations. We may also conclude that Mathias was extremely intent on verbal images and visualization, more so than any of his contemporaries. Then we may conclude that he, as her confessor, helped her from the start with delivering her visions and presenting them: according to one of the confessors, Petrus Olavi, Birgitta always told Mathias her revelations and followed any decision he made about them.[61] His influence on her theoretical development is well attested, and it is known that she was very receptive to different forms of presentation — for example, that in her revelations she reused actual images and scenes she had previously seen and read, and that she used material from sermons she assiduously attended.[62] It is evident from the records that the confessors of St Birgitta took an active part in redacting and finishing the written versions of her revelations.[63] And among the confessors, Mathias was clearly the most influential.[64] It was he who launched and modelled her career as visionary and promoted her to the world. As we have seen, he then spoke in terms of spiritual eyes in a manner most resembling the wording in *Poetria*.

The precise influence of Mathias on Birgitta's revelations cannot be determined, but what is clear is that the intellectual culture of verbal gaze in Vadstena was founded with Mathias's studies in Paris, and developed into something unpar-

[60] For further discussion and examples of Birgitta's visions, see Malm, *The Soul of Poetry Redefined*.

[61] *Acta et processus canonizacionis beate Birgitte*, ed. by Collijn, p. 489: 'Reuelaciones quoque, quas habuerat in patria Swecie, semper eas reuelauerat magistro Mathie et isti testi loquenti cum humilitate, et obediebat super hoc, quicquid determinabatur a dicto magistro Mathia' (The revelations she had in her fatherland Sweden, she always humbly disclosed to master Mathias and the witness speaking, and she obeyed anything master Mathias decided about them). In his prologue, Mathias does not describe himself as the one who has written down Birgitta's revelations. This *conscriptor* is not mentioned by name but should be understood as Prior Petrus of Alvastra.

[62] See primarily Klockars, *Birgitta och böckerna*.

[63] *Acta et processus canonizacionis beate Birgitte*, ed. by Collijn, p. 84. See Aili, 'St. Birgitta and the Text of the *Revelationes*', pp. 75–91.

[64] See Undhagen, 'General Introduction', pp. 9–10; Klockars, *Birgitta och böckerna*, pp. 17, 222; Liedgren, 'Magister Matthias' svenska kungörelse om Birgittas första stora uppenbarelse'.

alleled in Scandinavia.[65] Mathias handled the aspects and uses of imagery in a way that on the whole conforms with common notions, only he theoretically developed them and practically promoted them to a unique degree. After incorporating the intellectual culture of Paris, he returned home, and from there he produced writings which would prove important far outside Sweden — and he became the main character of an intellectual culture in Vadstena until Birgitta took that place. In this culture, intently focused on the image, Birgitta's visions, through their visualizing impact and through their allegorical interpretations of their images, proved a remarkably efficient discourse that appears to have been in the forefront of opening up the 'access of women to the ministry of the Word'.[66]

Conclusion

The two cultures of verbal gaze and visual cognition discussed here may be said to be very far apart, although they have a basic common denominator. Both cases connect directly to classical rhetoric's recognition of the power of verbal visuality and exploration of the means to exploit it, and in both cases this tradition is deeply intertwined with the Christian developments of powers of visuality, as Christianity was the vehicle of transport. However, in the Icelandic case the learned tradition's tools and terms appear mainly to have been used in order to fix poetological terminology; obviously, poetic kennings could exist and be developed before being assigned their own designated term. If the term *kenning* was derived from those Latin theories and practices of memory which had doubtless been introduced with Christian learning, this was part of a very basic rhetorical teaching, intent on efficient oral presentation, which merged with an old focus on image and memory.

Mathias of Linköping's theoretical and practical work was, on the contrary, entirely developed as part of Latin learning and Christian homiletics. There, too, efficient oral presentation was the natural point of departure, but Mathias

[65] On the relation between Mathias's and Birgitta's imagery, see Strömberg, *Magister Mathias och fransk mendikantpredikan*, pp. 163–75, and Zochowska, 'Magister Mathias of Linköping and Saint Birgitta of Sweden: A Fellowship of Imagination'. More generally on Birgitta's images, see Lindgren, 'Birgitta och bilderna'; Piltz, 'Uppenbarelserna och uppenbarelsen. Birgittas förhållande till bibeln'; Piltz, 'Inspiration, vision, profetia. Birgitta och teorierna om uppenbarelsen'; Husabø Oen, 'Sight, Body, and Imagery in the Visionary Experiences of Birgitta'.

[66] Morris, *Saint Birgitta of Sweden*, p. 175 (quoting André Vauchez).

expanded far into the most sophisticated theories of written presentation and interpretation. The precise impact of his theoretical and literary interest on Birgitta's extremely influential revelations is impossible to determine, but we can be certain that it was one of the foundations of the remarkable Vadstena milieu.

In neither case can a clear definition of what was domestic or connatural on the one hand, and what was the result of Latin tradition on the other hand, be established. In different ways, both cases illustrate congenial adaptation of local circumstance and foreign impact, resulting in their very own, very specific intellectual culture.

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Worldly Existence and Heavenly Salvation

Messuskýringar: Old Norse Expositions of the Latin Mass and the Ritual Participation of the People

Sigurd Hareide

At the centre of medieval culture was the Christian cult, and at the centre of the Christian cult was the Latin ritual of 'Holy Mass'.[1] This ritual was performed every day by numerous priests at numerous altars in numerous churches all over Latin Christian civilization, even up in the far north, in Old Norse medieval culture. But how did the priests and the people understand this ritual act of the Latin Mass? When Christianity reached Norway and Iceland at the end of the first millennium AD, the genre *expositiones missae*, expositions of Mass, was already well established abroad as an influential way of explaining Mass through allegory.[2] The genre interpreted Mass as a representation of the life of Christ, and it flourished during the high Middle Ages. From around 1150, it is also preserved in Old Norse manuscripts. These were collected and edited by the Norwegian church historian Oluf Kolsrud during the first half of the twentieth century, and published posthumously in 1952 under

[1] See Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 91: 'The liturgy lay at the heart of medieval religion, and the Mass lay at the heart of the liturgy.' On the Eucharist as the central symbol of medieval culture, see Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*.

[2] The standard work on the medieval expositions of Mass is still Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie und des religiösen Volkslebens*, pp. 331–740.

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the heading *Messuskýringar*.[3] In this chapter, I will discuss these sources of liturgical explanation within their European and Old Norse settings in order to see how such sources can contribute to our present investigation into the making of an Old Norse intellectual culture in the high Middle Ages in Scandinavia.

Through a rather detailed study of the ceremonies of the Latin Mass and the interpretations we find in the Old Norse expositions, my aim is not to compare these Old Norse target texts with their European source texts or other texts in the same genre. Few of the Latin source texts of the Old Norse expositions are in fact known, and to search for comparable texts in the extensive body of the medieval genre of expositions would be an extremely demanding task. In addition, the ritual in question, the Latin Mass, was very much a unified and unifying ritual in medieval European culture, with fairly insignificant local variations.[4] Therefore, the expositions attest to a universal ritual, with its universal pattern of interpretations. Instead of comparing Latin expositions with Old Norse expositions, or the liturgy of Rome with the liturgy of Niðaróss, my aim is, first and foremost, to present an overview of the content of the Old Norse expositions, and to discuss how these sources try to explain the Latin ritual for both the people and priests of Old Norse society. Or to put it another way: my 'source text' will not be the Latin expositions of Mass per se, but the Latin Mass ritual itself. The translation discussed will therefore not be the translation from Latin exposition to Old Norse exposition, but instead the translation from Latin ritual to Old Norse exposition and interpretation. This was a translation, so to speak, from Latin ritual to biblical salvation history, and further from the Latin ritual and salvation story to daily life and heavenly hope in medieval Scandinavia. Such a translation process reveals how the culture of the intellectual elite of interpreters and professional performers of Mass on the one side, and of the common people taking part in Mass on the other side, were bound

[3] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud. Professor Kolsrud also intended to provide an introduction to the text edition, but because of his sudden death this was not done; see the short introduction by Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer fra middelalderen'. A full translation of Kolrsud's edition into modern Norwegian, with an introduction and commentary, was published in 2014: *Messuskýringar: Norrøne messeforklaringer i norsk oversettelse. Festskrift til førsteamanuensis Jan H. Schumacher*, ed. by Kristin Norseth, trans. by Elise Kleivane, introduction by Sigurd Hareide.

[4] Even if the local liturgical *usus* (usage) of the Niðaróss archbishopric and its ten suffragan bishoprics was one such variation, I do not anticipate finding many traces of local variations in the Old Norse expositions. We know for example that the Niðaróss rite/*usus* had lots of sequences (poetic songs sung after the *Alleluia*) special to the rite, but the expositions do not comment on such details in the changing texts and melodies of Mass.

together in the intellectual activity and cognitive exercise, which searching for meaning in the pan-European ritual of the holy Latin Mass implied.

More than sixty years after the publication of *Messuskýringar*, Oluf Kolsrud's edition of the Old Norse liturgical expositions, it is still the case that very little has been written about these most interesting sources of the medieval understanding — or at least *ideals* for the understanding — of the ritual act at the centre of Old Norse Christian culture.[5] In *Messuskýringar*, we gain access to important parts of the Old Norse liturgical vocabulary, and we are presented with the *expositiones missae* within the context of the Old Norse milieu. Despite the obvious advantages of studying these Old Norse liturgical expositions, they belong to a strongly discredited genre in modern liturgical scholarship. The medievalist Gary Macy has given voice to the uneasiness many scholars feel when confronted with allegorical liturgical explanation: '[It] smells of old unopened rooms' and 'feels as if it had been dead at least a dozen days'.[6] Now it is time to open up *Messuskýringar*, one of the unopened rooms of Old Norse culture, and see if the people and practices described there are dead or alive; or at least see if these sources can shed some new light on both Old Norse cult and culture, and the connection between them. In my search for answers, I will first introduce the rise and fall of the liturgical genre of Mass expositions in medieval Europe. Then I will give an overview of the Old Norse manuscripts and their content. Before examining in detail the ritual of medieval Latin Mass and Old Norse interpretations of the ritual, I will discuss the question of what kind of Mass the expositions explain: Sunday or weekday, parish or cathedral, etc.

Expositiones missae — *The Rise and Fall of a Liturgical Genre*

Expositiones missae, the extended commentary on Mass, is one of the oldest genres of Christian writing in the Middle Ages, with roots extending back to the patristic commentaries on the rites of Christian initiation, and even to the New Testament writings themselves.[7] Even if the roots can be traced back to

[5] For a very short introduction to the allegorical content of the Old Norse expositions, see Fæhn, 'Gudstjenestelivet i Nidaros domkirke i middelalderen', pp. 618–20. In a recent study by Arnved Nedkvitne concerning lay religion in Old Norse society, *Lay Belief in Norse Society 1000–1350*, many interesting Old Norse sources are used, but not *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud. This might be one reason why, in his interpretation of Mass, Nedkvitne never explores deeper levels than the concept of 'purification ritual'.

[6] Macy, *Treasures from the Storeroom*, p. 143.

[7] Thibodeau, 'Western Christendom', p. 237 (Medieval Liturgical Expositions). On the link to New Testament writings, see Barthe, 'The "Mystical" Meaning of the Ceremonies of the Mass'.

the early Christian writings, extended commentaries on the liturgy of Mass did not appear until the early medieval period. In the context of the Carolingian church reform, Bishop Amalarius of Metz (d. *c.* 850) produced a large, new corpus of Latin liturgical exposition, employing a method that came to dominate the genre for the next four centuries. Amalarius was the first medieval Latin liturgist who included the whole range of liturgical rites in his expositions and explained all of them allegorically: the temporal cycle, the Mass, the Divine Office, and the ordination rites. Inspired by the biblical commentaries of the English monk the Venerable Bede (*c.* 673–735), he applied the 'four senses' (quadriga) of scripture — the historical or literal, the allegorical or figurative/figural, the tropological or moral, and the anagogical or eschatological — to the texts and rituals of the liturgy. Using the same method for text and ritual, scripture and liturgy, may look strange from a modern perspective, but in a period when the Bible and the liturgy coexisted in a symbiotic relationship, this was a most natural way to proceed.[8] With such a view on the relationship between text and ritual, Amalarius could ask for the allegorical connection between each of the singular rites of the ritual and salvation history. Since the celebration of the Eucharist according to St Paul was said to be a proclamation of Christ's Passion and death,[9] each of the rites of Mass came to be seen as representing 'a stage in that Passion', and the whole ritual was considered as 'a comprehensive dramatization of the Passion of Christ'.[10] The high peak of the *expositiones missae* was during the early scholastic period, from the late eleventh until the early thirteenth centuries. In this period, some two dozen commentaries on Mass appeared in Latin Christendom, highly popular in their own time.[11] The best known of all the allegorical treatises on the liturgy is the *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (*Rationale for the Divine Offices/Services*) by Bishop William Durandus of Mende in France (1230–96).[12] His work was completed between 1294 and 1296 and has survived in hundreds of manuscripts. The modern critical edition of the complete text spans nearly

[8] Thibodeau, 'Western Christendom', p. 237.

[9] 1 Corinthians 11. 26: 'For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.' (All Bible quotations in translation are from the *New International Version*).

[10] Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist*, pp. 163–64.

[11] Macy, *Treasures from the Storeroom*, p. 142.

[12] For an interesting comparison between the work of Durandus and some Swedish expositions, see Nilsson, 'Församling och liturgi – Några medeltida exempel', pp. 68–95.

1700 pages and reflects the 'author's' ambitions as a compiler. It is the *summa* of the liturgical expositions, and the whole work starts with the following sentence, so characteristic of the method he employed:

> Whatever belongs to the liturgical offices, objects, and furnishings of the Church is full of signs of the divine and the sacred mysteries, and each of them overflows with a celestial sweetness when it is encountered by a diligent observer who can extract honey from the rock and oil from the stoniest ground.[13]

According to Durandus, the liturgy is 'full of signs' waiting to be discovered. It may, however, seem a paradox that this 'monastic' allegorical method flourished exactly in the heyday of scholasticism.[14] After the peak of the genre with the work of Durandus, few new commentaries were written and the genre 'appeared more and more "gothic" after the sixteenth century'.[15] The expositions belonged to another period, so to say, but the genre never died out totally.[16]

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were part of 'a period which marked a turning point in Eucharistic devotion'.[17] The gesture of the elevation of the Host high above the head of the priest after 'consecration', was introduced in Paris at the end of the twelfth century, spread throughout all of Europe, and became highly popular among the laity.[18] In Norway and Iceland, the same synodal statutes as elsewhere are known from 1268 and 1290, prescribing the rite of the elevation and the people's corresponding bodily reverence.[19] An important background to the changes in Eucharistic devotion was the strong theological discussions on the nature of Christ's presence in the Host and the exact meaning of terms like *transsubstantiatio* (transubstantiation). This in turn also led to a stronger emphasis on the care and preservation of the Sacrament, and this concern is also reflected in Old Norse sources. Theology, devotion, and ritual were interrelated during this period, but it is most interesting to see how very different concepts seem to have lived side by side: strong sacramental realism on the one side, and allegorical explanation of the ritual on the other side. But

[13] Durandus Gulielmus, *The Rationale Divinorum Officiorum of William Durand of Mende*, ed. and trans. by Thibodeau, p. 1 (Deuteronomy 32. 13).

[14] Thibodeau, 'Western Christendom', pp. 241–42.

[15] Barthe, 'The "Mystical" Meaning', pp. 191–95.

[16] See Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, Chapter 15.

[17] Macy, *Treasures from the Storeroom*, p. 142.

[18] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 55–57.

[19] Keyser, *Den norske kirkes historie under katholicismen*, II, 14–15 and 66.

are these concepts really contradictory, or can they be related to each other? And can the theological and ritual developments which occurred during the period when the Old Norse expositions were written be traced? I will return to these questions later when looking at the Old Norse expositions in detail.

The typical intended audience for the liturgical expositions included monks and clerics preparing for the priesthood. The expositions were mainly written in Latin and demanded an exact knowledge of the prayers said during Mass; thus, they were probably not originally intended for uneducated people.[20] However, they were also translated into vernacular languages and may therefore have had a wider audience. According to the Norwegian liturgical scholar Helge Fæhn, this was definitely the case with the Old Norse translations: 'They were written in Old Norse and therefore undoubtedly served as a means of teaching the people about Mass'.[21] The Old Norse translations might also have been used in the education of priests, since we are reminded in one of the expositions that Latin was not the priests' mother tongue.[22] According to this exposition, a priest should understand Latin in order to know whether he speaks in *masculinum* or *femininum*.[23]

Messuskýringar — *An Overview of the Manuscripts and their Content*

The term *messuskýring* is the Old Norse translation of *expositio missae*, used as the heading for such an exposition in a manuscript from about 1400.[24] The main corpus (five out of eight) of the Old Norse liturgical expositions in Kolsrud's

[20] Macy, *Treasures from the Storeroom*, p. 144.

[21] Fæhn, 'Gudstjenestelivet i Nidaros domkirke i middelalderen', p. 619: 'De er skrevet på gammelnorsk og har derfor utvilsomt tjent som middel til å undervise folket om messen' (All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated).

[22] See the discussion on the intended audience for the Old Norwegian Homily Book (which included liturgical expositions) in *Vår eldste bok: Skrift, miljø og biletbruk i den norske homilieboka*, ed. by Haugen and Ommundsen.

[23] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 110.

[24] Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer', p. 53, and *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 27. In the following, Old Norse will be rendered in normalized spelling, and not in the diplomatic orthography as printed by Kolsrud. Old Swedish will be given as printed in Kolsrud, but without marking of expanded abbreviations. I would like to thank Dr Elise Kleivane and Dr Mikael Males for discussing the translations, especially Elise Kleivane who translated the whole corpus of expositions to modern Norwegian in 2014: *Messuskýringar*, trans. by Kleivane, pp. 55–153. For an up to date discussion concerning the manuscripts and the textual contexts of the expositions, see Hareide and Kleivane, 'Kommentar til oversettelsen, manuskriptene og innholdet', pp. 155–78.

collection, *Messuskýringar*, consists of expositions of Mass.[25] Among these expositions of Mass, one also includes an exposition of all the different hours or prayers of the Divine Office. The three remaining commentaries focus on the symbolism of the liturgical year,[26] the church building[27] and on the liturgical offices and functions.[28] The dating of the manuscripts ranges from around 1150 to 1500; most of them (seven of eleven), however, are dated to the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. Kolsrud's collection of sources from different and widely scattered manuscripts is organized into eight expositions with different length and content. The few known Latin originals of the translated expositions are older than the time frame for this book (1100–1350) and some of the Old Norse expositions are younger. When studying manuscripts with such different dating, I will keep in mind the liturgical and spiritual developments during the high and late Middle Ages, and I will look for corresponding changes in the text of the expositions. But first I will give a short presentation of the eight manuscript groups of liturgical expositions as we find them in Kolsrud's edition.[29]

The first exposition in the Kolsrud collection is also the second longest exposition.[30] It is known from two different manuscripts, the older dating from about 1200[31] and the younger dating from around 1400.[32] Both manuscripts are fragmentary, and both build on the well-known *Gemma animæ* (*Jewel of the Soul*) by Honorius Augustodunensis (*c.* 1075–1156) from *c.* 1100.[33] The older of the two is part of the much-studied *Gammelnorsk homiliebok* (Old Norwegian Homily Book).[34] In the most common translation of the homilies into modern Norwegian, the exposition of Mass is not included, not only

[25] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, expositions nos I–IV, pp. 1–72, and VI, pp. 81–84.

[26] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition no. V, pp. 73–80.

[27] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition no. VII, pp. 85–107.

[28] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition no. VIII, pp. 108–12, and Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer', pp. 50–51.

[29] In *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, we are only given the names of the manuscripts, while in Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer', pp. 50–51, some additional information on the place and time of origin of the manuscripts is also provided. Elise Kleivane has continued working on the dating and the textual context in Hareide and Kleivane, 'Kommentar til oversettelsen'.

[30] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 1–26.

[31] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 619 4to.

[32] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 238 XXVI fol.

[33] Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer', p. 52.

[34] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, pp. 160–67. See also *Gammelnorsk homiliebok*, trans. by Salvesen, and *Vår eldste bok*, ed. by Haugen and Ommundsen.

because of the fragmentary state of the text, but also 'because it presupposes an intimate knowledge of the Latin liturgy'.[35] In addition, the well-known 'Stave Church Homily' from the Old Norwegian Homily Book is included in Kolsrud's edition as the seventh exposition.[36] This homiletic context is important for my discussion of the use and milieu of the expositions.

The second exposition in Kolsrud's edition, and the longest of all the expositions, includes, in addition to an exposition of Mass, expositions on the church bells and the Divine Office, as well as other interesting ceremonies such as the blessing of salt and water to be used on Sundays.[37] The exposition of Mass is found both in a well-known manuscript from around 1200 known as the Icelandic Homily Book,[38] and in another Icelandic manuscript from about 1470.[39] This last manuscript contains in addition to the Mass commentary also the commentary on the Divine Office and the other rituals.[40]

The third exposition[41] is an exposition of Mass from an Icelandic manuscript from the end of the fifteenth century.[42]

The fourth exposition is an exposition of Mass from around 1400.[43] The manuscript[44] is from the same collection of texts as some of the manuscripts in the first and eighth expositions.[45] The exposition is fragmentary, starting first in the middle of the *Canon* of Mass.[46] According to Helge Fæhn, it is highly

[35] *Gammelnorsk homiliebok*, trans. by Salvesen, p. 16: 'fordi den forutsetter et intimt kjennskap til den latinske liturgi'.

[36] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 85–107. This homily is, unlike the exposition on Mass, translated into modern Norwegian in *Gammelnorsk homiliebok*, trans. by Salvesen, pp. 100–04.

[37] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 27–56.

[38] Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm perg 15 4to.

[39] Reykjavik, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 625 4to.

[40] Before the full translation of Kolsrud's *Messuskýringar* to modern Norwegian by Elise Kleivane, parts of the exposition of the different hours in the Divine Office was translated by Else Mundal in 'Forklaring av messa og alle tidebøner', pp. 131–38.

[41] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 57–64.

[42] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 672 4to.

[43] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 65–72.

[44] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 238 XXIII fol.

[45] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 238 fol. contains twenty-nine larger and smaller fragments with different dates.

[46] The *Canon* is the long prayer in the second main part of Mass, when bread and wine is changed to the body and blood of Christ, according to Catholic doctrine.

dependent on, but still a free use of, the exposition of Mass in *Micrologus de ecclesiasticis observationibus* (Short explanation of the ecclesiastical ceremonies/uses) from *c.* 1085 by Bernold of Konstanz.[47]

The fifth exposition[48] is about changes in the liturgy during the liturgical year. The manuscript is from Iceland, from about 1500, and is among the youngest in Kolsrud's edition.[49]

The sixth exposition[50] is an exposition of Mass from a manuscript dating from the last part of the fifteenth century.[51] The exposition is also known in three Swedish variants with modern printed editions available.[52] They probably all have a common foreign original, probably in Latin. The Norwegian version of this unknown exposition is, according to Helge Fæhn, quite similar to one of the three Swedish versions.[53]

The seventh exposition is the well-known 'Stave Church Homily'.[54] It is known from four different manuscripts, the oldest, very fragmentary, from around 1150, and the youngest from around 1500.[55]

The eighth exposition is an exposition of the liturgical offices and functions.[56] It is preserved in two manuscripts, one from the second half of the fourteenth century,[57] and the other from the fifteenth century.[58]

[47] The *ordo missae* (order of Mass) in two Latin manuscripts from Norway is also influenced by *Micrologus*: the manuscript from *c.* 1200 by the exposition of Mass, and the manuscript from *c.* 1300 from the order of Mass. See Fæhn, 'Norsk-islandske messeforklaringer', p. 52, and Fæhn, *Fire norske messeordninger fra middelalderen*.

[48] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 73–80.

[49] Reykjavik, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 435 12mo.

[50] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 81–84.

[51] Stockholm, Riksarkivet, E 8822 fol. (N:o 156), from *c.* 1450/60 (formerly called: Skokloster cod. 156 fol.).

[52] See Brilioth, 'Till belysning av den svenska medeltidskyrkans mässfromhet'. Two variants of this exposition are printed in *Svenska kyrkobruk under medeltiden*, ed. by Greete, pp. 79–91.

[53] *Svenska kyrkobruk*, ed. by Greete, pp. 81–85.

[54] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 85–107.

[55] Kolsrud refers to the following manuscripts (A–D): A: Reykjavik, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 237 a fol, *c.* 1150, B: Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 619 4to, *c.* 1200–25 (This manuscript is also available in modern printed edition in *Gamal Norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, pp. 95–99), C: Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm perg 15 4to, *c.* 1200, D: Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 624 4to, *c.* 1500.

[56] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 108–12.

[57] Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm perg 5 fol., *c.* 1350/65.

[58] Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 238 XXIII fol.

There is still a lot of research to be done on the manuscripts and their relation to the known and unknown Latin originals. Until this is done, it is hard to say more about the relation to the Latin sources than Helge Fæhn does in his short introduction and which I have incorporated in great part in the text above. Instead, I will now turn to the content of the expositions by first looking at what kind of Mass they portray, and then how Mass is interpreted.

Sunday or Weekday, Cathedral or Parish — What Kind of Mass?

During the high Middle Ages, the ritual of Holy Mass could be experienced in very different settings, from large-scale High Masses in the cathedrals or monastic churches on Sundays and holy days of obligation, to the Low Mass said by one priest alone in a small village church on weekdays — perhaps only assisted by a cleric of lower grade — or the Low Masses said by many priests at different altars more or less simultaneously in a cathedral, a collegiate church, or a monastic church. The main texts and gestures were the same in all these settings, but there were also many options and prescriptions of variations. The most important difference was that between Mass on Sundays and holy days, and Mass on ordinary weekdays. We should perhaps underline *ordinary* when talking about weekdays, because many of the days which are weekdays for modern people were holidays in the Middle Ages. In addition to the fifty-two Sundays in a year, there were between thirty-six and forty feast days falling on other days of the week in medieval Norway. According to the historian Arnved Nedkvitne, this meant attendance at Mass for the people in the countryside on about ninety days a year, or 'every four days'.[59] The main contrast between the medieval year of working days, fasts, and holidays and the modern year of working days and free days is not the number of days off, which is quite similar in both cultures, but rather the steady punctuation of the medieval year with religious feasts and fasts. Holidays were not collected in a three-week-summer-holiday, but scattered throughout the year and centred on the celebration of the ritual of 'Holy Mass' in the parish church.

On Sundays and important holy days, Mass would have some rituals and songs that would not be performed on ordinary weekdays. On Sundays, a special ritual before the proper Mass marked the importance of the day and the gathering of the people on this day, thereby emphasizing the distinctiveness of Sunday, that is, the day on which the weekly obligation for all to hear Mass fell.

[59] Nedkvitne, *Lay Belief in Norse Society*, p. 91.

This ritual was what we may call the *Asperges* ceremony,[60] when the priest first blessed a mixture of water and salt, and then sprinkled the people with this holy water while the song leader, the cantor, or the choir sang portions of Psalm 51: 'Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo...'[61] This act of cleansing and penance is attested in several of the Old Norse liturgical commentaries, but never fully as an integrated part of the explanation of Mass step by step. This is natural because the rite was used only on Sundays, and therefore it was not directly connected with the order of Mass in the missals of the period either. But the appearance of the ceremony in *Messuskýringar* attests to an important Sunday use and thereby makes Sunday Mass, the form of Mass most visited by the people, a natural context for our interpretation of the expositions.

The second liturgical exposition in Kolsrud's edition is the most extensive one. The section on the sprinkling is placed between the explanation of the canonical hours and liturgical clothes. Before Mass on Sundays, the priest would put on most of the liturgical clothes (alb, stole, and perhaps a cope) and then perform the *Asperges* ceremony. The exposition explains that it is an established custom that the priest blesses water every Lord's Day and sprinkles it over the people before Mass.[62] People could also bring holy water home to bless their herd and their house, we are told. In the fifth exposition, about changes during the liturgical year and how they were established, the ritual of sprinkling is legitimized by referring to its institution by a second-century pope, Pope Alexander I, and his ordering of the ritual. Priests should bless salt and water to sprinkle on the people and the cattle, and over Christian people's houses. And this should now happen 'hvern dróttinsdag' (every Lord's Day) according to canon law, says the exposition.[63] In the seventh exposition, we also find the rite of blessing water. In this exposition, which is about the different liturgical offices and ministries, the first definition of the priest is that he shall sing Mass and bless salt and water on the Lord's Day.[64] These three different ways of mentioning the blessing of salt and water do not in themselves prove that the Masses in the expositions are Sunday Masses, but it tells us what we know

[60] Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, 272.

[61] Psalm 51. 7: 'Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow'. Verse 1: 'Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love.' Another Bible text was used during the sprinkling between Easter Sunday and Pentecost.

[62] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 38.

[63] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 73.

[64] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 110.

from other sources: Mass on Sunday was preceded by the *Asperges* ceremony, and this ritual was seen as a very important one linked with the participants' own previous baptism in water and the blessing of their homes, their herd, and their houses on the Sunday. In this way, the ritual of sprinkling linked the individual participant to the baptized community as a baptized member on the one hand, and, on the other, this ceremony also connected the communal ritual in the church to the home and work of each individual parishioner.

Another sign of Sunday Mass, but also of Mass on holy days, was the extended use of singing. According to *Messuskýringar*, everything was sung, and there is no differentiation in the explanations between Low Mass without singing and Masses with singing. This does not necessarily mean there was no difference in practice, but that the focus in the explanations was elsewhere. In Masses on Sundays and holy days, the cantor would sing the songs of the *proprium missae*, the song texts that changed from Mass to Mass: *Introitus*, *Graduale*, *Alleluia* (or *Tractus*), *Sequentia* (on some days), *Offertorium*, and *Communio*. While the cantor and choir sang these songs and the songs of the *ordinarium missae*, i.e., the unchanging songs of Mass (*Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*), the priest would be occupied with other actions. For example, during the song called *Introitus* (entrance), as told by one of the expositions, the priest was to walk to the altar at the beginning of Mass.[65] In all 'advanced' Masses with more than one person acting, there would have been this kind of double or parallel action.[66] The priest would read in a low voice everything the choir sang, and this reading was often not fully synchronized with the choir. The priest's reading or singing in a low voice with accompanying ritual actions would probably have given an impression of mystery to the participant or spectator, and underlined that the priest's actions during Mass were seen as extremely important in medieval society.

Two of the songs of the *ordinarium missae* were sung only on Sundays and holy days. These were the great song of praise, the *Gloria*, and the Nicene Creed, the *Credo*. Both of these songs were part of most of the Old Norse expositions. This is another indication that Sunday Mass is a natural context for an interpretation of the expositions.

[65] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 11.

[66] Helander, *Mässa i medeltida socken*, p. 78. In connection with this study on Mass in late medieval Sweden, a film of a reconstructed Mass from around 1450 was made. Here the parallel actions of priest and cantor (and people) are seen very clearly. See *Medeltidsmässa i Endre Kyrka 1450* [on DVD].

Preaching to the people was part of the priest's obligation at Mass on Sundays and holy days, but this is not mentioned in the expositions, except in the one about the priest's duties. Besides explaining the importance of knowing Latin in order to understand whether he speaks in *masculinum* or *femininum*, this exposition also says that the priest should be able to interpret or translate the Gospels.[67] Possibly preaching is excluded from the expositions of Mass because it was seen as a kind of break in the ritual of Mass. The priest would take off the chasuble, leave the altar, and preach to the people in the vernacular from a place between the choir and the nave. At the end of the 'break', he would recite the Apostle's Creed, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary either in the vernacular or in Latin.[68]

Another variation in Mass is the number of clerics taking part in the ritual. In *Messuskýringar*, we meet a varied 'liturgical personnel' with varied duties. Some of the expositions only mention the priest,[69] others mention a bishop, priest, deacon, and acolyte or subdeacon,[70] while yet another mentions the priest and the deacon acting during Mass.[71] From these variations, it is hard to draw any firm conclusions about what kind of Masses the expositions attest to, with respect to liturgical ministers and ceremonial splendour, except that Masses were varied and that the liturgical deacon — who was, in fact, often a priest dressed in the deacon's liturgical clothes — played an important role in the ritual, or at least in the expositions' ideal ritual.

We have seen that the ritual of blessing and sprinkling of water was an important one according to the Old Norse liturgical expositions and that the Mass described in most instances has the components typical for Mass on Sunday or holy days. There is also variation in the sources when it comes to ceremonial splendour (incense, lights, etc.) and clergy taking part. Now it is time to look closer at the explanations and the different parts of Mass. But how much variation can we expect to find in the sources? A consequence of the allegorical method used in the expositions of Mass is a certain eclecticism, possibly leading to great variations of interpretation. Still, there is a common feature of interpretation in the fact that all the expositions use the same main pattern of interpretation: Mass is portrayed as a dramatization of the biblical salvation

[67] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 110.

[68] See Pernler, 'Predikan ad populum under svensk medeltid', pp. 73–95.

[69] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition no. I.

[70] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition nos II and III.

[71] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, exposition no. IV.

history. So, while the details in the interpretation can vary considerably, the main pattern is the same. We will keep this in mind while looking at the different parts of the ritual of Mass and some of the examples of allegorical interpretations of these details of Mass as given in the expositions. First, however, I will give a simplified schematic overview of the different parts of Mass, including some of the Latin and Old Norse terms we find in the expositions, as well as English translations and terms I use elsewhere in this chapter. I have no intention of giving a complete overview, neither of Mass nor of designations used in the Old Norse expositions, but the ritual is so complicated that an overview may be useful.

Sunday Mass — An Overview

Asperges me (cleanse me) — ritual of blessing and sprinkling of water before Mass on Sundays

I. 'Prímsigndramessa' — *missa catechumenorum* (Mass of catechumens/prime signed)

   A) Introductory rites
      Introitus (P)[72] — (entrance) song, mostly taken from the Psalms
      Kyrie (O)[73] — (Lord (have mercy)) sung in Greek
      Gloria (O) — 'the angelic song'
      Collecta (P) — prayer(s) of the day

   B) Readings
      Epistola (P) — reading from the New Testament epistles or other biblical books
      Graduale (P) — 'pallasǫngr' (the song in the stairs), mostly taken from the Psalms
      Alleluia (P) — sung before and after a short Bible verse was sung
      Sequentia (P) — followed after (*sequi*) *Alleluia* on certain holy days and feasts
      Evangelium (P) — reading of the Gospel, 'guðspjall' (god talk), of the Day
      Credo (O) — the Nicene Creed

[72] (P) for the *proprium missae*, the special, i.e. changing texts of Mass.

[73] (O) for the *ordinarium missae*, the ordinary, i.e. unchanging (song) texts of Mass.

C) The preaching part of Mass — in the vernacular
— translation of the Gospel of the Day by the priest
— sermon
— public prayers
— the Apostles' Creed (in the vernacular or in Latin)
— the Our Father and Hail Mary (in the vernacular or in Latin)

II. *Missa fidelium* (Mass of the faithful)

A) *Offertorium* — preparation of the altar with the bread, water, and wine for the Eucharist

Offertorium/offerenda (P) — song, mostly taken from the Psalms, accompanying the preparation of the altar

Secreta (P) — 'leynilig' (secret) prayer said in a low voice for the offering of the Eucharist

B) The Eucharistic prayer

i) *Prefatio* (P) — solemn introduction (preface) song of the Eucharistic prayer

Sanctus (O) — song of praise based on Isaiah 6. 3 and Matthew 21. 9

ii) *Canon* (O) — 'Hin lengsta lága sǫng' (the longest quiet song), the climax of the whole ritual as the priest prayed for the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Consisted of many prayers said with a low/quiet voice.

C) Communion rite

Pater noster (Our Father) — with the prayer *Libera nos*, 'efsta lága sǫng' (last quiet song)

Agnus Dei (O) (Lamb of God) — song based on John 1. 29, accompanied by the breaking of bread by the priest

Kiss of peace — with *paxbred*, 'messukoss' (kiss of Mass) sent from the altar to the people

Communion — often the priest was the only one to receive the bread and wine of the ritual, but in the expositions all the participants of Mass are told to unite spiritually with the act of the priest

Communio (P) — communion song, normally a verse from the Bible

Prayer(s) after communion (P)

D) Dismissal and blessing

Ite missa est (Go, Mass is ended)

Blessing of the people

Prímsigndramessa — *Introductory Rites and Songs*

The traditional division of Mass into two main parts is visible in the expositions. In an Old Norse translation of the Latin *missa catechumenorum* (Mass of the catechumens),[74] the first part of Mass is called 'prímsigndramessa' (Mass of the prime signed).[75] The people called 'prime signed' were named after the first ritual they had taken part in on their way to become full members of the Christian Church through baptism. They had received the first sign (*prima signatio*) of the cross out of many signings of the cross that were part of the baptismal liturgy, and they were thus considered catechumens, people preparing for baptism, even though some of them would never finish the baptismal rite. According to one exposition, the designation of the first part of Mass as 'prímsigndramessa' indicated that the prime signed people were to stay inside the church until this part of Mass had ended. Then they were expected to leave the church before the second part of Mass was performed, the *missa fidelium* (Mass of the faithful). This practice from missionary times, when mostly adults were baptized, was eventually discontinued.[76] In another exposition, the status of the prime signed is a bit different. In an etymological explanation of the term 'Mass', it is stated that neither the prime signed/catechumens nor other people banned from Mass should be part of Mass at all, because the Latin word for Mass, *missa*, means dismissal. Therefore, according to the same exposition, when Mass is sung, it is suitable that both 'prímsigndum' (prime signed) and 'bannsettum' (excommunicated) are driven out.[77] Whether this general prohibition on attending Mass reflects a historic reality or is only an anachronism reminiscent of an old practice, is uncertain. However, it does say something about the view of the sanctity of the ritual called 'Holy Mass' and the potential for this ritual to define community in the Middle Ages. The prohibition on the prime signed/catechumens attending Mass at all — and even that first part of Mass which was called the Mass of the prime blessed/catechumens in other expositions — is probably a sign that there were not many, if any, catechumens in Christianized Old Norse society after 1100.

After the penitential sprinkling of the people in the church with holy water on Sundays, the priest would leave the altar and go to the sacristy to put on the

[74] Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, 261.

[75] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 47.

[76] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 47.

[77] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 11.

chasuble and the maniple, the ceremonial clothes reserved for Mass.[78] Mass was followed with the *Introitus*, the first song of Mass. The *Introitus* was one of the changing songs of Mass (the *proprium missae*); it opened the whole ritual and, by virtue of its first line, could provide the name for the Sunday in the liturgical year. Like most of the other songs sung during Mass (except parts of the *Gloria*, the *Sequentia*, and the *Credo*), it consisted of extracts from the Bible, most often from the Psalms. In the expositions, the *Introitus* is often interpreted as a sign of the Old Testament prophecies about Christ,[79] and it was sung when the priest was walking towards the altar at the beginning of Mass.[80] Sometimes the different parts of the *Introitus* are explained (antiphon, verse, *Gloria Patri*), and there are more ceremonial details in the exposition.[81] The high point of this entrance by the priest (and deacon) is when he kisses (they kiss) the altar. When the deacon walks in front of the priest, the deacon is said to signify John the Baptist born into this world before 'Dróttni várum' (our Lord).[82] In this way, Mass was related to the Christian history of salvation and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies. The sixth exposition starts even earlier with the priest's preparations as a sign of how 'our Lord' created man and placed him in Paradise, and then how Adam broke the commandment.[83] Still, the situating of Mass in the context of biblical salvation history is the same, whether the starting point is the creation story, or the prophecies from the Old Testament, or a prophetic figure like John the Baptist. The pattern for interpretation of Mass and all its details remains the same, but the interpretations of the details vary under this common umbrella of salvation history.

The next song, the *Kyrie*, is the first of the Mass songs that do not change (the *ordinarium missae*). It is a song lacking what we may call 'ritual movement' during the singing, that is, the song was not 'covering' any ritual action. The Greek text of the *Kyrie* was fixed — *Kyrie eleison*, *Christe eleison*, *Kyrie eleison* (Lord/Christ have mercy!) — but the melodies could vary enormously.[84] One common explanation of this repeated prayer is that the nine rep-

[78] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 40. The band on the left hand, the maniple, was in particular reserved for the celebration of Mass.

[79] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 41 and 57–58.

[80] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 11.

[81] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 41–43 and 57.

[82] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 43 and 57, e.g., p. 43, right column.

[83] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 81.

[84] Even if the text of the *Kyrie* was normally short and fixed, this text could also vary in the

etitions often used in the Middle Ages are signs of the nine heavenly choirs singing in praise of the Lord's birth.[85] But alongside this rather imaginative interpretation, we also find a straightforward translation of the Greek language of the *Kyrie*. It is interesting that the translation of the Greek *Kyrie* is not direct to Old Norse, but via Latin.[86] If the original exposition was in Latin, the translator of the Old Norse must have found the Latin translation of the Greek useful too. And it really was, because later on in Mass we also find on several occasions in different liturgical songs a Latin *Kyrie eleison*, namely the *miserere nobis* (have mercy on us), for example in the *Gloria* and the *Agnus Dei*. Thus, we have an example here of a line repeated several times in the liturgy, first in Greek and then later on in Latin, with a simple translation that made both texts of the ritual understandable to those who did not know Latin and Greek. To understand both the Greek *kyrie-* and Latin *miserere-*sentences in the Mass, the people needed both the translation from Greek to Latin and from Latin to the vernacular. The Greek language in the liturgy is, in the explanations, also used in an allegorical comment on the three different languages during Mass: Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. The reason for this custom, we are told, is to signify how Pontius Pilate — called 'Pilatus jarl' (Pilate the Earl) in the exposition — wrote in all three languages on the *titulus* of the cross of Christ.[87]

The *Gloria* followed the *Kyrie* on Sundays and holy days, and with the first line taken from the birth story in St Luke's Gospel — 'Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis' (Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will) — we have one of the few examples of corresponding meaning in text and interpretation. According to some expositions, the *Gloria* signifies the great joy with which the angels proclaimed to the world that God had come to earth.[88] There is no further translation in the expositions, or even a citation from this long and most ancient hymn in Christian liturgy. Perhaps it was deemed enough to know that this song was sung with the angels? Or perhaps the different words used in the following text to worship God — 'Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te' (we praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you) — were so close to each other that a

Middle Ages through interpolations, so-called *tropes*.

[85] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 3, 6, 14, and 81.

[86] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 43 and 58.

[87] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 12, left column.

[88] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 81 and 43–44.

translation would not say much more about the meaning of the song in any case? The singing of the *Gloria* was seen as angelic singing, singing 'í eptirlíking engla' (in imitation of the angels).[89]

After these two important songs from the *ordinarium missae*, the priest would, for the first time, turn to the people from the altar and greet them with 'Dominus vobiscum' (the Lord be with you), almost like the Lord, according to the Gospels, greeted his disciples after the Resurrection.[90] And the assisting minister would answer, 'Et cum spiritu tuo' (And with your spirit). This simple dialogue could be given the allegorical explanation that God revealed himself to the three holy kings in the stars.[91] The straightforward Old Norse translation of this main sentence in the liturgical dialogue is, however, even more important than such allegorical interpretations. This dialogue was repeated at all important stages throughout the ritual of Mass and highlighted the role of the priest in the liturgy. Through this repetition of the dialogue, and by using words with clear allusions to the Gospel stories about the encounters between the resurrected Christ and his disciples, the translation of the greeting would have underlined that Mass was to be seen principally as an encounter with the resurrected Christ acting through the priest.

Thereafter followed the *Collecta* (collect — in fact, often collects in plural), the first solemn prayer of the day, changing from Mass to Mass, and definitely out of reach for illiterate participants of Mass. Still, in the expositions, the people were told to do exactly what the priest told them in the greeting before the prayer: 'Oremus' (Let us pray). They were to stand and bow to the priest, and turn their thoughts to prayer,[92] or they were to fall on their knees and pray, so that the prayer of the priest was heard by God.[93] The people were expected not only to come to church to listen to the priest's prayer, but also to pray themselves, since Mass was seen as the most effective place for prayer. In other words, physical participation in the ritual presupposed a cognitive and intellectual involvement as well.

[89] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 58.

[90] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 1. The bishop greeted with Christ's own words: 'Pax vobiscum' (Peace be with you). *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 58–59.

[91] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 79.

[92] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 44.

[93] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 81.

Prímsigndramessa — *Readings and* guðspjall

The three opening songs of Mass, *Introitus*, *Kyrie*, and *Gloria*, and the solemn opening prayer, the *Collecta*, were followed by the first Bible reading, or rather singing of the *Epistola* (epistle). Again we meet John the Baptist, but this time he is seen as preaching before 'our Lord'.[94] The reading of the epistle followed immediately after the *Collecta* and was most often read/sung from the missal on the right side of the altar. It is easy to see how this part of Mass could be portrayed in other sources as difficult for lay people to follow, as in *Draumkvedet*, a visionary poem with roots dating back to medieval times: 'Presten stend'e fyr altaret og les opp lestine lange' (The priest is standing in front of the altar, reading the long readings).[95] And then the protagonist in the poem, Olav Åsteson, goes away to sit in the opening of the church door, falls asleep, and has his visionary dream. However, people could also do as they were told in the Old Norse expositions: think of John the Baptist preaching before 'our Lord' and prepare for the coming high points of Mass.

After the singing of the epistle, or of another Bible reading, a song followed named for the place it was sung, the *Graduale*, after the Latin word for stair, *gradus*. It was sung on the stairs up to the choir.[96] The content of the song was taken from the Psalms in the Bible and varied from Mass to Mass. In two of the expositions, the 'pallasǫngr' (the song on the stairs) is interpreted as an invitation to rise as the peak of the first half of Mass, the Gospel reading, was approaching.[97] In this way, the functional or practical naming of the song becomes an important metaphor as Mass ascends to its first climax.

The *Alleluia* came next, a Hebrew word signifying heavenly praise, which was sung before and after a Bible verse.[98] This Bible verse in the middle of the singing of alleluias introduced the theme of the Gospel reading of the day that would follow next. Sometimes however *Alleluia* was first followed by a *Sequentia* (sequence), a hymn on the theme of that Mass (a saint or a feast or a requiem). In an exposition the song of the sequence is said to derive from the *Alleluia* to increase this beautiful song.[99] Beautiful singing must have been an

[94] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 41, 45, and 81.

[95] *Draumkvedet og tekster fra norrøn middelalder*, ed. by Steinsland, p. 320.

[96] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 16 and 45 (e.g., p. 45, right column 'pallasǫngr', from the Old Norse words for stairs, 'pallr' and song, 'sǫngr').

[97] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 17 and 45.

[98] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 45.

[99] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 46.

important element for the appreciation of the average illiterate listener. They probably did not understand much of the verse in between the alleluias, or the elaborate poetic text of the sequence, but they knew what it meant when they heard the untranslatable Hebrew word, 'halleluja'.[100] This was the sound of heaven, sung before the Gospel, when the Lord's own words in the Gospel would be read. They had truly ascended on high.

For most of the elements of Mass, the expositions give the Latin word and sometimes include an explanation of the meaning of the word. But when we come to the Gospel, the manuscripts of the second exposition use the Old Norse translation 'guðspjall' instead of the Latin word *evangelium*.[101] This was possibly due to the meaning of the term: this was the most important name for the Christian message as a whole. The translation to Old Norse as *guðspjall* is equivalent to the Greek word 'εὐαγγέλιον', meaning a 'good message', 'good tidings'. But the exact meaning of the Old Norse word is 'god talk' rather than 'good talk'. It is thus an analysis of the original word, probably through the English *godspel*, rather than a direct translation. Only the late medieval sixth exposition uses the Latinized word *ewangilium*.[102] Thus, the re-analysis disregarded the original Greek meaning of the term Gospel, but the new word, God-talk, was not unfitting as a designation of the Gospel reading during Mass. The reading of Christ's own word was seen as a manifestation of God's own Word in a special way, and there were many signs that the Gospel was a climax in the first half of Mass.

First, the songs before the Gospel are elaborate in melody, and the basic text of the *Alleluia* must have been easy to recognize even for illiterate people. The bodily and ceremonial actions prescribed also underlined the reading. The Gospel was read facing a northerly direction or at the northern part of the altar, and this was given an allegorical explanation. According to two expositions, the direction is north because the Word of God is a help for man against the devils coming from the north.[103] In addition, the people's actions underlined the importance of the Gospel reading: all should rise and remain standing,

[100] The Hebrew word *halleluja* could be translated as 'praised be Yahweh'. Still, the practice of not translating it from Hebrew early on made it into a word expressing the unspeakable and the heavenly, see Schumacher, *Kirkehistorisk latinleksikon*, pp. 19–20. The people were probably also able to recognize the finest examples of the sequences, those for the highest feasts, from year to year and would likely have been curious about their meaning.

[101] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 46.

[102] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 82.

[103] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 46 and 82.

they should cross themselves (on the forehead, mouth, and breast), put down the staff, and men should take off their hoods. These actions, as reported by the expositions, corresponded to the ceremonial acts surrounding the Gospel reading and the interpretations given in the expositions: light was carried as God shone over the whole world with his Gospel, incense was carried, and after the reading, the book was kissed.[104] The kissing of the book by the priest and even other ministers is well known from other sources. But here it seems as if the people were also supposed to kiss the Gospel book, perhaps even when the Nicene Creed was sung after the reading of the Gospel, because the Creed is mentioned as a way of demonstrating belief in the message of the Gospel, before the kissing is mentioned.[105] Through body language and signs of honour, the Gospel as a book and a message was greeted as God's own Word.

Reading the Gospel was part of the deacon's ministry, and, according to one exposition, when the deacon read the *guðspjall* he signified Jesus Christ proclaiming the Word of God.[106] After the prophecies and the birth of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist, we have, in the Mass's unfolding of salvation history, finally come to the public ministry of Jesus and the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. This allegorical identification between the Gospel reading and Christ's public ministry is a quite fitting interpretation, because the Gospel texts read in Mass actually were to a great extent about Jesus's public ministry. Still, a modern reader may wonder how much the medieval congregation understood of the Latin Gospel reading for that day. At this stage of Mass, they probably would not understand more than what the allegorical explanation said itself and the ceremonial and bodily actions underlined, namely, that the Gospel was the word of Christ himself and should be treated with great reverence. But later on, during the priest's homily, he would first translate the Gospel from Latin to the vernacular, and then give his (allegorical) interpretation of the text.[107] In this way, the Gospel was heard in three stages: first through the ceremonial singing of the Latin Gospel, then in Old Norse translation given by the priest, and finally in his explanation of the meaning of the 'Gospel of the Day' in his sermon.

[104] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 47.

[105] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 47. See Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, 449: 'In countries of the North the people were for a time, permitted to share in this veneration of the Gospel book'.

[106] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 46.

[107] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 110: 'skal kunna þýðing guðspjalla' (shall be able to give interpretation of the Gospels).

Even if people did not understand the Latin in their first hearing of the Gospel of the Day, it is worth considering that, in a cultural situation very different to ours, people's ability to remember by heart was very impressive. The story about the first Lutheran bishop of Zealand in Denmark, Peder Palladius, may serve as an example. According to Palladius, his father was once very angry with him, because he could not list all the Sunday Gospels on his fingers. His father could do this, even if he had never learnt a letter.[108] The story does not say explicitly that it was the Latin Gospels he remembered, but it is not impossible that a pious person could remember both the Latin beginning of the Sunday's Gospel and its central content. Therefore, it is most natural that in the Old Norse expositions, references to Bible texts were always made by citations in Latin. This means that the explanation of Mass was translated from Latin to Old Norse, except the citations from the Gospels. In this way the connection between the Latin ritual and the ritual's reading of the Bible in Latin was kept. This may also attest to how people in Old Norse society could remember the content of the story by a reference in Latin, just as we talk about a song by citing only the title. In this way, a reference in Latin could function as a mnemonic device instructive to the content of a Bible story. It is hard to say how many of the medieval parishioners knew the short-form references to all the Gospel readings of the Christian year like Peder Palladius's father. The translation of the Gospel in the priest's preaching during the ritual of 'Holy Mass' was, after all, probably the most important way in which the people were able to know the Gospel stories, whether they knew the short-form references or not.

'Quiet Songs' and a 'High Cry' — From the Offertorium *to the* Nobis quoque

The preaching part divided Sunday Mass in two. After this vernacular ritual in the Latin ritual, the second part of Mass, the *missa fidelium* (Mass of the faithful), could begin. In this part the participants would be led to an even greater climax in ritual and in salvation history allegory than in the first part of Mass, i.e., to the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar and the Passion narrative of Christ.

What followed now were the three 'quiet songs': first, the prayer called *Secreta* (secret) in Latin and 'leynilig' (secret/hidden) in Old Norse;[109] then,

[108] Peder Palladius, *En Visitatsbog*, ed. and trans. by Lausten, p. 64 n. 80.

[109] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 60.

after the *Prefatio* and *Sanctus*, the *Canon* of the Mass, called 'hin lengsta lága sǫng'[110] or 'lága sǫngr hinn lengsti'[111] (the longest quiet song); and finally, after the *Canon* in a strict sense of the term, 'efsta lága sǫng' (last quiet song), leading up to the communion of the priest.[112] The Old Norse designation for these central prayers of Mass signifies that they were sung in a low voice. It was thus not only the Latin language, but also the volume that made it impossible for the people to hear and understand the prayers. This shift from loud preaching to silent prayer signalized a shift in the mode of Mass. Now the symbolic telling of the Passion narrative began: 'Lága sǫngr er sunginn í minning píningar Dróttins' (the quiet song is sung in commemoration of the Lord's Passion).[113] This allegory of the Passion could either start with 'our Lord' riding into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday signified by the preparation of bread and wine in the offertory,[114] or it could start with the prayer of Christ after supper on 'skírdeginum' (Maundy Thursday) until he was crucified, signifying how Christ himself prayed with a low voice.[115] In this way, the low voice of the priest at the centre of Mass could lead into the drama of Christ's Passion. Some of the expositions contain many details, while others are more general and only refer to the most important moments in the liturgy.

The first act in this second part of Mass was the offertory. Here the offertory song, the *Offertorium*, was sung, yet another of the songs of the *proprium missae* with extracts from the Bible. During this song the priest said or sang many prayers in a quiet voice while preparing bread and wine for the sacrifice of Mass, ending with the *Secreta*, a prayer for the offering, changing from day to day. Following the offertory was the *Prefatio*, translated as 'forgildi' (preface) in an exposition.[116] It was sung in a solemn tone by the priest and introduced the long prayer over bread and wine, the *Canon*, but was first followed by the *Sanctus*, the seraphic song. The sixth exposition says that the preface signifies the sweet knowledge the Lord preached to his apostles on Maundy Thursday, but the second exposition has an explanation closer to the liturgical

[110] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 9, here also called 'kanón' (left column) and 'canon' (right column).

[111] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 65.

[112] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 22.

[113] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 51.

[114] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 82.

[115] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 60.

[116] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 49.

text of the preface itself.[117] According to this explanation, it is a prayer through which the Lord allows the participants' voices to be united with the voices and praise of the angels and all heavenly powers.[118] The full text of the *Sanctus* is then given both in Latin and in Old Norse translation, and as this was one of the songs to be sung at the centre of every Mass, this translation and exposition may suggest that this was a well-known song among medieval parishioners, even if the choir or a cantor would often do the singing. Again we meet the same conviction we met earlier in the Mass commentary: to come to Mass was to take part in the angels' song and praise. The *Sanctus* is one of the best examples of this attitude to the ritual.

During or after the *Sanctus* was the prayer called *Canon*, the ritual centre of the whole 'sacrifice of the Mass' as medieval theologians called the ritual. The *Canon* consisted of many prayers with different Latin names. Sometimes they are interpreted prayer for prayer, one after the other, in the expositions; other times the focus is not so much on the prayers themselves, but on all the signs of the cross the priest made over bread and wine during the prayer or on other visible signs. Since the priest prayed or sang in a low voice, these outward signs were easier for the lay people to follow than the prayers' Latin wording. It is also clear that, most of the time, it was not the text of the prayer that was explained, but the ritual movements, used as a starting point for the allegorical explanation of the Passion. Nonetheless, in the explanations of this long prayer, the *Canon*, the focus was not purely allegorical. It also pointed to the miracle at the centre of Mass: the belief that through this prayer, bread and wine would change substantially into the body and blood of Jesus Christ and that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was renewed in an 'unbloody manner' on the altar. When we know how important these doctrines of sacrifice and sacramental presence were in the theology of the high Middle Ages, it is strange that we do not find more about this sacrificial and sacramental centre in the expositions.

It is even stranger that we find almost no mention of the ritual of the elevation of the Host, which was extremely popular in spiritual life from the beginning of the thirteenth century onwards, and is attested in Old Norse sources from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[119] The only exception is the sixth commentary, from the fifteenth century. Here the elevation is mentioned, but nothing is said about the people's gestures and prayers at this moment, a

[117] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 82.

[118] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 49.

[119] See Keyser, *Den norske kirkes historie under katholicismen*, II, 14–15 and p. 66.

moment so full of expectation in other sources from the same time. The interpretation is wholly allegorical: 'Ther gudʒ lıkame uplyftis tyder ath war herræ var korsfeſter uppa korſith' (That the body of God is lifted signifies that our Lord was crucified on the cross).[120] The same allegorical explanation is found without any mention of the elevation in the other expositions. They all focus on the death of Jesus immediately after the prayers of the *Canon* cite the words of Jesus from the institution narratives.[121] At this point the allegory tells how Jesus gave up his spirit, followed by an interpretation of the next prayer, the *Nobis quoque*, a prayer where the priest raised his voice, interpreted to signify the Roman soldier, the centurion, standing by the cross, watching the death of Jesus and exclaiming: 'Surely he was the Son of God!'.[122]

The lack of focus on the elevation in all the manuscripts except the one from 1450/60 is probably a sign of a conservative genre. However, this allegory of the exclamation of the centurion is fully compatible with the piety associated with the elevation of the Host in the Middle Ages and could surely be taken as an invitation to the people attending Mass to follow the centurion's example when they are confronted with the miracle of the transubstantiation and sacramental presence of Christ. In this way it also points towards the two lines of thought in the Middle Ages that would meld together more and more: the asacramental meditation on the humanity of Christ in the allegory of Mass as a passion play on the one hand, and the extremely realistic sacramental theology we find in the scholastic theologians' treatises and in the late medieval prayer books for the people on the other. The two lines were bound together by the concept of devotion to the humanity of Christ, and they corresponded to the increasing focus on the spiritual 'communion of the eye' instead of the sacramental communion of the mouth.[123]

[120] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 82.

[121] 'Hoc est enim corpus meum' (This is my body) and 'Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei' (This is the chalice of my blood).

[122] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 53: 'Vere filius dei erat iste'. (Matthew 27. 54). This interpretation of the high voice in the middle of the prayers spoken in a low voice was so common that we also find it in the rubrics (the prescriptions of what the priest should do) in a Norwegian missal. Fæhn, *Fire norske messeordninger*, p. 34. See also Fæhn, 'Gudstjenestelivet i Nidaros domkirke', p. 619.

[123] Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist*, pp. 192–95 and 222–24.

To 'Listen Carefully' and 'Take the Corpus Domini *Spiritually'*

After the 'high cry' of the priest, or the centurion, the *Canon*, in a strict sense of the term, ended with more prayers and finally with the priest's lifting of the *Corpus Domini* (body of the Lord) and the chalice and kissing both of them. This could signify how Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the corpse of the Lord down from the cross and put it in the grave. Then three prayers followed, which according to one of the expositions symbolize the three days in the grave.[124] Even if one of the three prayers, the *Pater noster* (Our Father), is the most important of all Christian prayers, in the allegorical exposition it functions mainly as one of three numbers, i.e. the three days in the grave. The point at which the people's praying of the Our Father should come during Mass was not when the priest would say the prayer during the ritual of Mass, but at the end of the homily when the priest would pray with the people. The sixth exposition also offers another interesting possibility: eight of the crosses the priest made during the *Canon* are said to signify the eight (sic) words of Jesus on the cross. After having commemorated the seven words on the cross (and the breaking of his heart as the eighth), a promise is given: 'Huo þȝ loffuar huar dagh mȝ atte *pater noster* oc viii *ave maria* han haffuer makth moth diæffuulen ſtandæ' (He who praises this [i.e., the eight [sic] words of Christ on the cross] every day with eight *Pater noster* and eight *Ave Maria*, has the power to stand against the Devil).[125] So, the lay people did not take part in the 'Our Father' prayer of the ritual itself, but could say eight 'Our Fathers' and 'Hail Marys' instead during Mass when the priest said all his other prayers. To think of the life and Passion of Christ and to pray during the ritual was the practice the expositions tried to foster.

The next element in the ritual was the breaking of the bread into three pieces and the greeting of peace. There are many interesting ritual and allegorical details here too, such as how the expositions attest to the use of the so-called 'paxbred', 'a disk or tablet on which was carved or painted a sacred emblem, such as the Lamb of God or the Crucifix'.[126] Before his own communion, the priest kissed the linen where the sacred Host rested, the lip of the chalice, and the *paxbred*, and passed the *paxbred* around from the altar to the people in the parish. One exposition states that the priest would take 'messukoss' (the kiss of

[124] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 53–54.

[125] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 83.

[126] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 125.

Mass/*paxbred*) from the altar and then give it to all in the church as a sign that they were 'samtengda við líkama Krists' (united with the body of Christ).[127] The lack in most Masses of the sacramental communion of the people had led to the use of certain important substitutes, such as the *paxbred*, which could foster some of the same feeling of peace with God and one's neighbours that was a prerequisite for the receiving of sacramental communion on Easter day, but also at other times of the year for the most pious.

Before the description and interpretation of the communion of the priest in the expositions, the text of the song *Agnus Dei* is given both in Latin and in Old Norse translation.[128] Again we meet a short and repetitive song from the *ordinarium missae* where the lay people could easily learn the meaning of the Latin text and meditate on it when the cantor or choir sang. Then the communion of the priest followed. He took 'holds ok blóðs Krists' (the body and blood of Christ), even called the 'holdi ok blóði Guðs' (the body and blood of God).[129] Normally the people did not take communion, 'holdtekit' (taking of the flesh/body), but they were expected to unite themselves with the act of the priest, because he was seen as 'ein mun for allom crıſne' (one mouth for all Christians).[130] Also, without sacramental communion for the people, Mass was seen to be of spiritual help for them if they were attending Mass and watching the communion of the priest without mortal sin.[131] In another exposition, we meet the same line of thought, but not explicitly connected to the communion of the priest: 'fyrir því at svá er sem þeir taki allir þá corpus Domini andliga er til messuna hlýða skynsamliga' (For it is as if all who have listened carefully to Mass are then taking the *Corpus Domini* spiritually).[132] In other words, the prayerful meditation on the sufferings of Christ during Mass which the expositions tried to foster was seen as a way to receive communion — union with Christ — spiritually.

I would argue that the attitude towards the ritual of Mass described above reveals the essence of the expositions' spirituality. In the course of the theological and spiritual developments of the high Middle Ages, three forms of receiving of communion were defined: sacramental alone, sacramental and real, and real alone. To receive communion sacramentally without faith and love was of

[127] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 62.

[128] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 61–62.

[129] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 62.

[130] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 62.

[131] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 84.

[132] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 71.

no use. What really mattered was the real, spiritual communion with Christ through the faith and love of the believer, and this communion could be experienced either alone as spiritual communion — also called 'communion of the eye' due to the visual observation of the sacred host — or as spiritual communion together with the sacramental communion.[133] It is interesting to see that the concept of spiritual communion in this Old Norse exposition is connected with the participation in Mass in its entirety and not only with the elevation of the Host as would have been the normal view at the time. However, there is no need to think that there was less focus on the elevation in Old Norse society than in other places in Latin Christendom at the time. This lack of focus on the elevation in connection with spiritual communion may be due to the same slowness in adapting an old genre to new theological and spiritual conditions, as was suggested earlier with regard to the lack of focus on the elevation in general. Still, we have seen that one of the latest expositions did mention the elevation, without conflicting with the almost asacramental allegorical concept of the liturgical commentaries.

After the communion of the priest and the song called *Communio* was sung while he cleansed the holy vessels, the last solemn prayer of Mass followed, then the *Ite missa est*, the last words of the deacon, sending the people on their way: 'Farit þér, messat er' ('Go forth, Mass is ended'), before the final blessing by the priest.[134] Again, there were lots of opportunities for allegory, but the allegory often ended with some post-Resurrection stories from the Gospels and finally with Christ returning on Doomsday to rise up all men and judge the world.[135] And with this theme of Doomsday, the end had come, both for Mass as a ritual and as a dramatization of salvation history.

Conclusion — Mass as a Common Ritual for Intellectual and Popular Cultures Alike

This survey of medieval Mass as conveyed in the Old Norse expositions only comments on a few of many aspects of the ritual in the texts. Even though the allegorical interpretations of Mass are surely eclectic — as allegorical interpretations naturally are — and most of the time the interpretations have nothing

[133] Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist*, pp. 188–89.

[134] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 56. The Latin *Ite missa est* is not easily translated, and the Old Norse translation is an interesting attempt.

[135] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, pp. 56 and 84.

to do with the literal meaning of the prayer texts of Mass itself, there is a certain consistency and logic to the genre that gives us a glimpse into the modes of thought and intellectual activities of an age so different to ours.

First, it was the conviction of the time and the culture of Latin Christendom that the ritual of Mass was the most important ritual in the world. Perhaps this explains why the translators did not change the expositions easily, even when the ritual had changed as we saw in the case of the elevation of the Host. For if the ritual itself was 'full of meaning', as Durandus had said, one would not change the explanation of this meaning very easily, since this might risk losing some of the mystical content.[136] Thus, the genre could become slightly outdated compared to the latest intellectual and spiritual developments in Western theology. This seems to have been unproblematic in the Middle Ages, but after the 'waning of the Middle Ages' in the fifteenth century the genre never blossomed like before, even if some of the Old Norse expositions come from this period. In Scandinavia, the Lutheran reformations brought a sure end to the genre's life here as the Catholic Latin Mass was changed into the vernacular Lutheran Mass, centring more and more on the preaching of the word and less and less on the mystery of the sacrament.

Second, the ritual of Holy Mass was seen as extremely important because it was considered the 'space' where the medieval today was united with the most important events in the history of mankind, that is, the Christian history of salvation, with the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ at the centre of it all. Following this line of thought, the Latin Mass could, through the expositions, be translated into a vernacular and dramatized version of the grand narrative of the Bible, and this was, as we have seen, the framework and the limit for all the eclectic allegorical commentary on Mass.

However, the interpretation of the ritual was not only looking back and uniting the biblical yesterday with the Mass ritual of the medieval today, even if this category dominates much of the interpretations. For the medieval parishioner, taking part in the ritual of the holy Latin Mass was also a partaking in the world to come, or as we have seen several times, in the heavenly choirs, the world above. This eschatological aspect of Mass is a third crucial element in the interpretation of the ritual, which it is easy to lose sight of amongst all the historical representative allegory.[137] The exposition on the church house, the so-called 'Stave Church Homily', comments on the issue:

[136] See footnote 13.

[137] For this and other categories of liturgical allegory, see Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, 89.

> Í kirkju skal vígja hold ok blóð Dróttins Jesu Krists, þat er allr kristinn lýðr skal bergja til syndalausnar. Í þeirri þjónustu lúkask upp himnar, ok koma helgir englar með mǫnnum ok fylla þjónustu kennimanns.[138]
>
> In the church we shall consecrate the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be enjoyed by the whole Christian congregation for their salvation. During this service the heaven opens up, and the angels of God descend to man and follow the service of the priest.

Attending Mass was seen as nothing less than being present at the place where heaven and earth united and where a foretaste of the world to come was given.

We have seen that the 'enjoying' of the body and blood of Christ mentioned in the exposition above was, most of the time, experienced through spiritual communion. The main purpose of the expositions seems to have been to foster such participation by those training to become priests, as well as by the people they were to preach to. The expositions may also be seen as proof of an intimate connection between the allegorical preaching of the biblical text (the Gospel) and the allegorical explanation of the 'text' of the church building and the rituals. Thus, the homilies and the expositions may have served a double function for their primary audience, the priests-to-be, both to deepen the faith of the priests and monks preparing for service, and as examples of the style and content of the homilies they were obliged to present to the people on Sundays and holy days. It was not only the ritual text of the Gospel of the Day that was to be explained to the people in their homilies, but also the ritual itself as a 'text', including both words and actions. This liturgical pedagogics, or *mystagogics* to use an older word, is in strong opposition to a common view of the Latin ritual as something ordinary people cannot have understood much of.[139] As we have

[138] *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 87, the C-text (same content with only slightly different wording in the B- and D-texts). We find the same view concerning Mass as the place where heaven opens up in the pastoral letter from 1346/49 of Archbishop ~~Arne~~ Vade of Niðaróss, but there it is connected with the elevation of the Host in particular, while the manuscripts of the 'Stave Church Homily' have a more general approach to the open heaven motif. See *Norges gamle Love indtil 1387*, ed. by Keyser and Munch, III, 295–301. Exposition IV also uses the same motif, in connection with the *Canon* (the prayer *Supplices te*), and attributes it to its author, Pope Gregory (the Great), *Messuskýringar*, ed. by Kolsrud, p. 66.

[139] See, for example, the one-sided view of the people and Mass in medieval Norway by Sverre Bagge, a most competent scholar of medieval history: 'ordene som ble sagt [i messen], forstod man ikke noe av fordi språket i messen var latin. […] Selv om vanlige mennesker ikke kan ha forstått særlig mye av liturgien' (the words said [in Mass] were not understood at all because the language of Mass was Latin. […] Even if ordinary people cannot have understood much of the liturgy). Bagge, *Da boken kom til Norge*, pp. 148–49.

seen, this was true on one level, because ordinary people did not understand most of the long and changing Latin sentences in the *proprium missae*, and they were not translated in the expositions either. But the Old Norse expositions of Mass are full of translations of the shorter sentences and songs of the *ordinarium missae*, and above all, they are full of 'translations' of the bodily acts of Mass. Such a reading of the expositions of Mass indicates how the Latin Mass was considered full of meaning, and how attempts were also made to make it meaningful to priests and people alike through vernacular preaching and teaching both concerning Mass and during Mass. To grasp this process of translation of meaning from Latin Mass to Old Norse exposition, and from bodily action to spiritual nourishment, it is important to dig deep into the symbolic universe of medieval culture and the ritual at the centre of it all, as we now have done.

The Old Norse expositions show us how Mass could be considered as a way of telling the Christian salvation history, with the focus on the Passion narrative. It is tempting to conclude that the expositions and the preaching they fostered in this way functioned purely as a Bible for the illiterate, but such an interpretation is inadequate, albeit correct on one level. Understanding the ritual as an old text was not enough, because it had to be experienced anew, and it had to lead to prayer and spiritual communion. It was therefore not enough to translate the Latin ritual of Mass into an Old Norse Passion narrative (the allegorical sense of the ritual) by translating the Latin exposition into the Old Norse language. The text of this Passion story also had to be translated into good deeds and a hope of resurrection and everlasting life, and the bread and wine of Mass had to be translated, so to say, to the heavenly banquet of the world to come (the moral and the eschatological sense). Considered from this wider theological angle, the Old Norse expositions of Mass do not contribute to the making of an intellectual culture in Old Norse society merely through vernacular translations. More importantly, the expositions bear witness to the interrelatedness of intellectual and popular culture through the common ritual of the holy Latin Mass — with all its possible interpretations and levels of participation and translation. The expositions thus attest to the multimediality of intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia as it was realized, not only in writing, in translating, and in the building of churches, but also in preaching and in participation in the collective ritual of Mass, and in the multitude of cognitive and spiritual activities this ritual and its interpretations invited the individual to participate in.

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Cultivating Virtues on Scandinavian Soil: The Rise of a Christian Humanism and Ecclesiastical Art in Twelfth-Century Denmark

Kristin B. Aavitsland

Golden Altars and Divine Virtues

A number of remarkably well-preserved metal altars originate from Romanesque parish churches across Denmark. These altars are from the early twelfth to early thirteenth centuries.[1] The manufacturing of these valuable pieces of ecclesiastical furniture took place in local workshops and coincided with the establishment of an ecclesiastical structure in Denmark, as well as with the development of Latin literacy, books, schools, and the professional administration of the Danish state and Church. With their high-quality craftsmanship, material splendour, sophisticated theological inscriptions and iconographic programmes, these altar frontals and retables are highly representative of European Romanesque art. They also bear witness to a conscious will to integrate the young Danish church province into the international culture of the Latin West. As aesthetic objects and complex constructs of meaning, these golden altars offer material for the exploration of a developing 'intellectual culture' in the lands of the North, on the edge of the European medieval world.[2] I aim to show that studying these arte-

[1] The most comprehensive study of the Scandinavian metal altar frontals and retables remains Nørlund, *Gyldne altre*. For a more recent general survey, see *Nordens gyldne billeder*, ed. by Grinder-Hansen and others. An updated introduction in a non-Scandinavian language is still needed for this important group of Romanesque ecclesiastical works of art.

[2] ~~e~~f. Stefka G. Eriksen's introduction to this volume.

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Figure 12.1. Altar frontal and retable from Lisbjerg church in eastern Jutland, *c.* 1135, Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet. Photo courtesy of the Nationalmuseet.

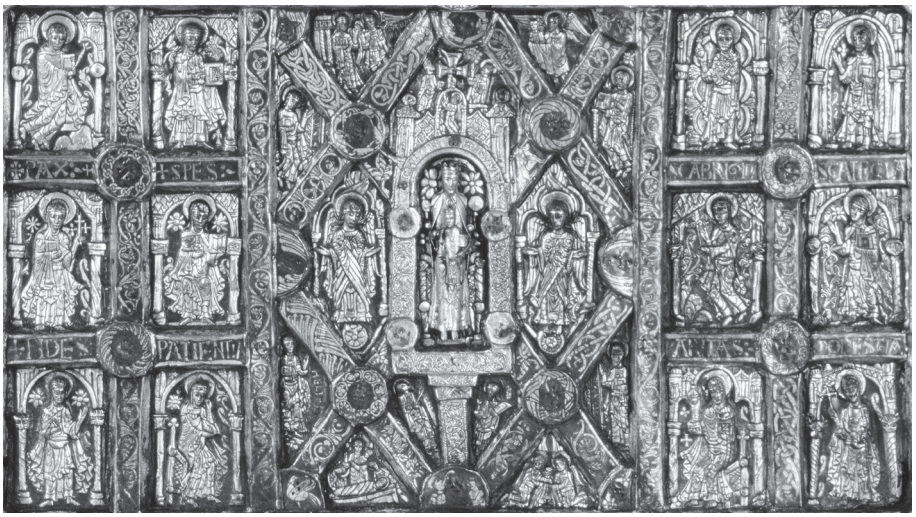

Figure 12.2. Detail of Figure 12.1: the Virgin and Child enthroned, surrounded by female saints and personifications of virtues at the frontal of the Lisbjerg altar. Photo courtesy of the Nationalmuseet.

facts may reveal aspects not only of the faith, but also of the self-understanding of the 'intellectual', art-commissioning class in twelfth-century Denmark. I shall employ as a case the altar from Lisbjerg church, the oldest in the group of metal altars, and focus on one specific aspect of its visual rhetoric.

An ensemble of altar frontal, arched retable, and crucifix once adorned the high altar of the parish church of Lisbjerg (Fig. 12.1), north of the episcopal town of Aarhus in western Denmark. It is now in the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen. The altar, carbon-dated to *c.* 1135, seems to have been commissioned especially for Lisbjerg church and was probably made in a workshop in Aarhus.[3] It has a core of oak and is covered by fire gilt copper sheets with repoussé reliefs, inscriptions, and ornaments in *vernis brun*.[4] A sophisticated programme of images and inscriptions with an emphasis on soteriology and eschatology unfolds within an elaborate, ornamental framework.[5] I shall focus on one aspect of the altar's iconography: the personified virtues on the altar's frontal (Fig. 12.2).

[3] For a discussion of the altar's provenance, see Wienberg, 'Gylne altre'.

[4] Nørlund, *Gyldne altre*.

[5] Aavitsland, 'Visual Orders'.

Surrounding the Virgin enthroned, the virtues are given an unusually pronounced position. Twelve female figures are distributed in rectangular panels, six on each side of the frontal. Like the Virgin herself, they appear framed below an arched portal. They are standing, kneeling or sitting on throne-like chairs and all wear haloes. As the compositional grid of the frontal has not left enough space for inscriptions below the lowest row of figures, only eight of the twelve are identified by *tituli*. Of these, six are clearly personifications of virtues. To the right of the Virgin are Peace (*Pax*), Hope (*Spes*), Faith (*Fides*), and Patience (*Patientia*), while to her left are Charity (*Caritas*) and Modesty (*Modestia*). Above the last two is a pair of female saints: St Brigida and St Tecla. Apart from the inscriptions below the figures, nothing in the iconography distinguishes the saints from the virtues. The pictorial language of the altar thus seems to equate the abstract concepts of virtues with the historical persons of the two represented saints.

Personifications of virtues on Romanesque metal altars may also be seen elsewhere. A famous example is the eleventh-century altar frontal from Basel Cathedral, donated by Emperor Henry II and his saintly Empress Cunigunde. On it the four Ciceronian cardinal virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude are represented as busts in medallions above the main figures. On a contemporary portable altar from Fulda in Germany, the same four virtues are prominently placed around the Lamb of God. On the Lisbjerg altar, however, these four classical cardinal virtues are absent. Instead, there is the Pauline trio of Faith, Hope, and Charity.[6] Peace, Modesty, and Patience have also been included. The selection and number of virtues on this altar, as well as its iconographic and compositional equation of virtues and saints, are, to the best of my knowledge, unique in Romanesque art. It seems reasonable to presuppose that there was some kind of conceptual understanding of the virtues in the minds of those who chose to include them in the altar's pictorial programme. But what was the content of this conception, and who chose to have the virtues depicted? What did the figures of virtues mean at Lisbjerg in the early twelfth century, and to whom? These questions may shed some light on the culture of the 'intellectual' and art-commissioning elites in twelfth-century Denmark.

[6] 1 Corinthians 13. 13.

Church Art and Patronage in Medieval Denmark

Although nothing certain is known about the patron of the Lisbjerg altar, archaeological excavations have placed Lisbjerg church in an aristocratic context. The church, probably erected in the 1130s, stands in the middle of the vast yard of an eleventh century timber-built manor surrounded by a great palisade wall.[7] Inside the nave of the church, traces of an earlier, wooden church have been found, probably from the late eleventh century. The excavations at Lisbjerg thus suggest an identity between the landowner and church patron: only the lord of the manor could have commissioned the erection of the wooden church within its walls. But who was the patron of the standing church? Late medieval documents testify that Lisbjerg was under the episcopal patronage of the see of Aarhus.[8] It has been suggested that the manor and the early church originally belonged to the Crown, but were transferred to the bishop about 1060, when King Sven Estridsen (*c.* 1019–76) founded the diocese of Aarhus. The manor at Lisbjerg probably functioned as an episcopal residence until 1102, when the first cathedral of Aarhus was completed and the bishop moved to the city.[9] Although this course of events is only probable, it seems reasonable to assume that Lisbjerg had some kind of close connection to the see of Aarhus in the 1130s, and it is not unlikely that the bishop commissioned the new, extraordinarily large stone church and its golden altar.

According to documentary and pictorial sources, episcopal or royal patronage is not uncommon for twelfth-century Danish village churches and their furnishings. An example close to Lisbjerg is the now mutilated golden altar from Tamdrup, on which the patrons of the altar are represented as minor figures venerating the majesty of Christ (Fig. 12.3). The woman, wearing a crown and bestowed the place of honour to the right of Christ, is certainly of high rank, probably a duchess or a queen. The man on the left is dressed as an ecclesiastic. Prostrate at the feet of Christ is a figure who might be the goldsmith who crafted the metal altar.[10] In addition to royalty and clergy, members of the aristocracy with close relations to the court and Church alike represent another important group of patrons — a well-known example is at Fjenneslev church

[7] The results of the excavations have been published in Jeppesen and Madsen, 'Stormandshal og kirke i Lisbjerg'; Jeppesen and Madsen, 'Trækirke og stormandshal i Lisbjerg', and Jeppesen. 'Lisbjerggården'.

[8] *Danmarks kirker. Aarhus amt*, Lisbjerg kirke, III, 1388.

[9] Jeppesen and Madsen, 'Trækirke og stormandshal', p. 168.

[10] *Danmarks kirker, XVI, Aarhus amt*, Tamdrup kirke, IX, 5114.

Figure 12.3.
Maiestas Domini with donor figures. Repoussé relief from Tamdrup Church, Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet.
Photo courtesy of the Nationalmuseet.

in Sealand, with its donor portrait of the landowner Asser Rig of the mighty Hvide dynasty and his wife Inger, parents of the influential courtier Esbern Snare and his brother Archbishop Absalon.[11]

Even when concrete pictorial and documentary evidence is lacking, the superb quality of the sculpted and painted decorations and the richly equipped interiors bear witness to patrons who were in charge of highly qualified artisans and who possessed sufficient resources to pay them. The complex iconography of frescoes and golden altars as well as the numerous theological inscriptions, written in leonine hexameters, testify to the local presence of well-educated 'intellectuals', as Stefka G. Eriksen has defined the term in the introduction to this volume. In most of the Romanesque churches scattered across the Danish

[11] The churches commissioned by the Hvide dynasty at Sealand and in Scania are well documented; see e.g. Haastrup, 'Die seeländischen romanischen Wandmalereien'.

countryside, this class of 'intellectuals' must have conceived the pictorial and epigraphic programmes of the church interiors and thus construed them as meaningful spatial frames around the liturgy.[12]

Generally, there is very little provincial or immature about the Danish church interiors from the late eleventh and the early twelfth centuries, even though the Christian faith had no long history in Denmark at the time. The interiors of the village churches share the Romanesque style and composite iconographic repertoire found elsewhere in Europe — for example, there are close parallels along the Rhine valley. The inscriptions of the golden altars are evidence that the literary culture of epigraphy, eagerly cultivated in monasteries and cathedral chapters in Carolingian and Ottonian Europe and culminating in the twelfth century, was also a living art in Denmark.[13] This corresponds to the international culture of the Danish elite who ordered these churches to be built and decorated. This rather small group of inherited and/or befriended individuals was culturally and politically integrated with the elites elsewhere in Europe, especially in the neighbouring German empire.[14] From the conversion of King Harald Bluetooth in the 960s, the Danish elite slowly adopted the faith, culture, and taste of their European counterparts.[15] A century after Harald's conversion, the Danish Church was organized into dioceses. In 1104, forty years later, the diocese of Lund was elevated to an archbishopric, and the 'Europeanization' of the Danish upper class accelerated.[16] Art historians have long agreed that the urban centres and great monasteries along the Rhine, Weser, and Elbe were highly influential on Danish Romanesque art, whether in terms

[12] Through a comprehensive examination of the Romanesque churches in the western Swedish diocese of Skara, Markus Dahlberg has established a social context for the village churches which seems very similar to the situation in Denmark. By emphasizing the common features of Romanesque culture throughout Europe in the twelfth century, Dahlberg points to the methodological difficulties in traditional stylistic genealogies, which are often based on arbitrary stylistic features, Dalhlberg, *Skaratraktens kyrkor*, pp. 184–86.

[13] On epigraphy as a literary genre in Romanesque Europe, see Kendall, *The Allegory of the Church*.

[14] Lars Hermanson 'Släkt, vänner och makt'.

[15] The German bishop who bore an ordeal for King Harald and later baptized him might be identical with Poppo of Würzburg, see Demidoff, 'The Poppo Legend', p. 65. The event is represented on the golden panels from Tamdrup church, probably belonging to an early twelfth-century reliquary, although opinions on the dating of the Tamdrup panels diverge.

[16] Hermanson, 'Släkt, vänner och makt'.

Figure 12.4. Personifications of virtues.
Soffit of the chancel arch in Gundsømagle church, Sealand, 1100–1125.
Photo courtesy of *kalkmalerier.dk*.

of fresco painting or liturgical metalwork.[17] With regard to the golden altars, which must have been far more frequent in Denmark than those extant suggest, the goldsmith techniques and artistic forms employed have clearly been influenced by the workshops in towns such as Cologne and Hildesheim, and monasteries such as Helmarshausen. This region also seems to have been equally influential with regard to educational ideals, learning, and literary culture. Many Danish ecclesiastics and aristocrats were educated in Germany. The second archbishop of Lund, Eskil (1137–77), personally acquainted with St Bernard of Clairvaux, was educated in Hildesheim, and the exchange of manuscripts between the Danish arch see and the monastery of Helmarshausen is well documented.[18] The intensive building and sumptuous decoration of churches all over Denmark within one century can be understood as a means by which the elite manifested its cultural, Christian identity. And that identity, moulded in the cathedral schools and the monasteries of the Ottonian and Frankish centres, implied a certain understanding of the virtues. The frequent occurrence of virtue personifications in the fresco decoration of Danish Romanesque churces contemporary with the Lisbjerg altar testifies to their significance.

Cultus virtutum

As C. Stephen Jaeger has shown in his 1994 study *The Envy of Angels*, the instruction of virtue was the core curriculum of schools in France and Germany during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Their educational ambition may be summed up by the poetic paradox in the title of Jaeger's book. It refers to St Bernard of Clairvaux, who, in one of his letters, praises the beauty of the pious virgin Sophia. Her poise and body language are ruled by discipline, which 'sets the angle of the neck, arranges the eyebrows, composes the expression of the face, directs the eyes, restrains laughter, moderates speech, suppresses appetite, controls anger and arranges the gait'. According to Bernard, such bodily control is the true expression of virtue and therefore constitutive of beauty. Restraint and bodily control are the reward for the strong cultivation of virtue and the taming of man's fallen nature. Disciplined posture is an ornament which the

[17] For fresco painting, see Haastrup and Egevang, *Danske kalkmalerier*, I, 79. For metalwork, see Nørlund, *Gyldne altere*, pp. 131–76.

[18] For Eskil and Bernard, see McGuire, 'Bernard's Life and Works', pp. 59–60. For the connections between Lund and Helmarshausen in the twelfth century, see Mortensen, 'The Nordic Archbishoprics'.

most virtuous of all beings, the angels, cannot obtain, since they have no body. Thus the quote that inspired Jaeger's title: 'the best and most desirable is that ornament which even angels might envy'.[19] Thus, the educational programme of the tenth- and eleventh-century schools was to produce men possessing the enviable discipline, charm, and spiritual beauty that Bernard praises in Sophia. This was obtained by the cult and cultivation of virtues, the *cultus virtutum*, taught and practised at the cathedral schools in France and Germany through the twofold curriculum of letters and manners, *litterae et mores*.

The great masters of these schools — men like Bruno of Cologne and Fulbert of Chartres in the tenth century, and Godefrid de Reims in the eleventh — did not write much, for their *opus magnum* was themselves and their performance of virtue. Accordingly, their teachings are not left to posterity in didactic treatises, but in the biographies about the schoolmasters themselves. Convinced that the outer man mirrors the inner man, their biographers describe the schoolmasters' manifold virtues through their physical appearance and conduct.[20] The charismatic personality was the ideal of the time, and the pedagogy was based on the student's imitation of the charismatic teacher. By reproducing not only the master's knowledge, but also his demeanour, wit, and good manners, the student was supposed to come eventually to embody and perform the virtues — to personify virtue. The ultimate goal for the cultivation of the virtues was salvific transformation of the self.[21] Simultaneously, this educational programme also produced more mundane advantages. His studies completed and his person gracious and virtuous, the student was fit for an administrative or diplomatic career at some princely court or within the Church. The training in virtues yielded the social skills and the elegance of conduct required to hold high positions at worldly and ecclesiastical courts.

As this educational programme disintegrated during the twelfth century and was replaced with other disciplines, such as Aristotelian logic and scholasticism, and the schools were eventually usurped by other institutions such as the new universities, the *cultus virtutum* continued at courts and cathedral chapters and ultimately transformed into the social ideal of courtliness. When

[19] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 270, quotes Bernard of Clairvaux, Epist. 113, 5; Opera 7, 290. Jaeger makes it clear, however, that in Bernard virtue is derived from nature and grace, whereas Hugues de Saint-Victor, for example, claims that virtue can be learned, Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 12.

[20] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 9.

[21] Münster-Swensen, 'Medieval Virtuosity', p. 49.

the social ideal of embodied charisma faded, attempts were made to keep the memory of it alive in literature and sculpted images. According to C. Stephen Jaeger, the so-called renaissance of the twelfth century is best understood as a 'nostalgic urge to recapture the incomparable personality and moral heroism of the eleventh century out of which many of the great artefacts of the twelfth were born.'[22]

It is unlikely that Jaeger had Scandinavian Romanesque church art in mind when positing the connection between the ideals of the *cultus virtutum* and twelfth-century cultural achievements. Rather, he has argued that the charismatic culture of the tenth century lived forth as a fading reminiscence in the vivid and expressive rendering of human form in Gothic art, the striking images of the wise and foolish virgins at Strasbourg Cathedral being his paradigmatic example.[23] Compared to the 'hypermimetic plasticity' and subtle facial expressions of Gothic sculpture, the figures on the Lisbjerg altar seem rigid, solemn, and mask-like (Fig. 12.2). Unlike the Strasbourg virgins, who incarnate virtue through the mimetic expressiveness of their bodies, the Lisbjerg virgins signal virtue through their shining golden surface and formal appearances. The charisma of virtue is certainly not embodied in the figures on the Lisbjerg altar in the same way as Jaeger and others claim that it came to be in Gothic art, but there is, I would argue, still reason to consider the *cultus virtutum* a relevant conceptual horizon for an understanding of the Lisbjerg altar. The person who commissioned it in the 1130s, perhaps the bishop of Aarhus or someone connected to his chapter, is likely to have been a member of the rather marginal network of the political and cultural elite in Denmark. He (or she?) shared the culture and social ideals of the European elites at the time.[24] If we accept this hypothesis, we might presume that the virtues on the altar were somehow associated with the social ideals of the people involved in making the altar, especially because they include the monastic virtues so prominent in the *cultus virtutum*. Modesty and Patience, which both appear on the altar frontal, were regarded as paramount means whereby to obtain the control over the body and mind required by an amiable and well-educated person.[25]

[22] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 14.

[23] Jaeger, *Enchantment*, pp. 150–61.

[24] Münster-Swensen, 'Medieval Virtuosity'. See also Münster-Swensen, 'The Model of Scholastic Mastery'.

[25] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, pp. 76–111.

Virtues in Context: The Iconography and Inscriptions of the Lisbjerg Altar

The Lisbjerg virtues surround the Virgin and Child on the frontal (Fig. 12.2). The Virgin sits enthroned in front of the gate of *Civitas Hierusalem*, encircled by guarding angels and prophets.[26] Among the figures of the virtues are, as mentioned above, St Brigid of Ireland and St Tecla. I am inclined to identify the latter with the Benedictine Abbess Thecla of Kitzingen and Oschsenfurt, a prolific eighth-century monastic leader of Anglo-Saxon origin. She joined St Boniface's mission to Germany, where she, according to a *Passio Bonifacii* written in the eleventh century, 'shone like a light in a dark place'.[27] In the following centuries, her cult spread along the Rhine and the Main.

This female assembly in front of the altar table is integrated into a wider iconographic context (Fig. 12.1). On the table, at the far end, a low retable was placed, onto which was mounted a large crucifix and probably also mourning figures of the Virgin Mary and St John, which are now lost. An arch representing the dome of heaven spans the retable and crucifix. On top of the arch, there is a colonnade with Christ on his heavenly throne in the midst of saints and angels. On the retable proper, Christ is depicted again, as judge among his twelve apostles. Long, mostly metric inscriptions run along the frames of both the frontal and retable and comment on the iconography in various ways. On the frontal's upper frame the legend reads: 'Hortor ut intretis | requiem dum tempus habetis | ne foribus clausis | mea vos audiat auris' (I urge you to enter the rest/peace while you still have time, so that it does not happen, that, when the doors are closed, my ear will not hear you.)[28]

A second, non-metric inscription runs from the *Agnus Dei* medallion on the middle of the upper frame and downwards on the right vertical frame: 'Venite benedicti patris mei percipite regnum quod vobis paratum est ab origine mundi dicit Dominus' (Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, the Lord shall say). This phrase quotes the judging Christ in Matthew 25. 34, and it is commonly found in representations of the Last Judgement. Here, though, it is striking that the corresponding phrase, condemning the souls of the unjust, is absent. On the upper frame of the retable, above the heads of the standing apostles, there is another

[26] For a discussion of Jerusalem representations in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scandinavia and the interplay of conceptions of the earthly and heavenly city, see Aavitsland, 'Defending Jerusalem'.

[27] Quoted after Schmitt and Kulzer, *Medieval Woman Monastics*, p. 104.

[28] This and the following translations of the altar's inscriptions are by the author.

long inscription. Three leonine hexameters read: 'Omnibus exutis | rex et tua iussa secutis. | Que fuerit merces | dic rex, qui cuncta coherces. | Ante meum vultum | cum nil remanebit inultum' (For those, o king, who have forsaken all and followed thy law, say o king, who reign over everything, what shall we have therefore? Before my face [you shall stand the day] when nothing will remain unpunished). These lines paraphrase the conversation between St Peter and Christ in Matthew 19. 27–28.

The altar's longest inscription runs along the outer span of the retable arch and consists of an elegiac couplet followed by a non-metric phrase:

> In cruces hoc signo | dantur medicamina ligno: | Hic sanatur homo | qui traxit uulnera pomo. | Qualia cernis homo | pro te cruciamina porto. Credito nec dubita | mors mea vita tua. Absque notitia creatoris sui omnis homo pecus est

> In this sign of the cross cure is given by the tree. The man is healed who was wounded by the fruit. Behold, man, what sufferings I bear for thee. Believe, and doubt not: my death is thy life. Without knowledge of his creator every man is a beast.

From the iconography and epigraphy we may learn that the overall theme of the Lisbjerg altar is soteriological and eschatological in character. The message is that of God's intervention in history through the incarnation of Christ, His sacrifice redeeming mankind and offering the glory of eternal life for the righteous in Heavenly Jerusalem. But why are the virtues included within this context of Christian dogmatics? A hint may be found in the inscriptions framing the frontal and the virtues themselves. Both these inscriptions are appeals to 'you' (second-person plural) from Christ himself: in the first, He calls to conversion: 'hortor ut intretis' (I urge you to enter); in the second, He invites the righteous to enter eternal life: 'venite benedicti' (come ye blessed). The verbs used are *intrare* and *venire*. The gate through which we — and the donors and original beholders of the altar — are encouraged to enter, is represented in the middle of the frontal (Fig. 12.5): the golden gate of Heavenly Jerusalem — depicted 'literally' as a city gate, as well as allegorically as the Virgin Mary, who among many other allegorical designations is called the *porta coeli*, the Gate of Heaven: she is the means by which postlapsarian man is given access to paradise. The virtues surrounding the gate must be interpreted as guides and pathfinders on the way to the gate of heaven (Fig. 12.2).

From this eschatological perspective, the virtues are assistants to conversion, securing a place for man in heaven on the day of doom. This is a role given to the virtues in Bernard of Clairvaux's parable *De filio Regis*, for example, a

Figure 12.5. Detail of Figure 12.1: the Virgin and Child enthroned in the gate of *Civitas Hierusalem* at the frontal of the Lisbjerg altar. Photo courtesy of the Nationalmuseet.

text which was certainly in circulation in Denmark in the twelfth century.[29] On the Lisbjerg altar, the future event of the Last Judgement is mentioned in the retable inscription, 'cum nil remanebit inultum' (when nothing will remain unpunished), and alluded to in the quotation from Matthew 25. 34 ('Venite benedicti...'). But although the Last Judgement is hinted at, there are no threats of punishment in hell, no devils or the weighing of souls. The reluctance to represent the other 'half' of the Last Judgement is understandable if we consider the function of the altar and its proximity to the sacrifice of the Eucharist: only the righteous are worthy of standing by the altar of God.

Our starting point, however, was not the virtues in the light of eschatology, but the assumption that the personifications on the Lisbjerg altar are an expression of the mundane and ethico-practical understanding of the virtues taught in the cathedral schools in the eleventh century and practised at court in the twelfth. Is it possible to reconcile the eschatological 'flavour' of the programme with the social practice of *cultus virtutum*? Do the transcendental sphere of salvation history and the earthly sphere of good manners and social conduct interact at some point?

[29] Haastrup,'Om Ribes Kathoveddør'.

[Figure 12.6 goes here, preferably full page portrait]

Figure 12.6. Detail of Figure 12.1: part of the retable arch of the Lisbjerg altar with the inscription quoting St Jerome's Epistle no. 60. Photo courtesy of the Nationalmuseet.

'Humanitas' in the Lisbjerg Altar

The tradition of the *cultus virtutum* is Stoic-Ciceronian in origin, and belongs to the current in European intellectual history that is called humanism — although not entirely in the sense of the humanism of the sixteenth century Renaissance, for example. The concept of *humanitas* is central to the *cultus virtutum* as a social quality more than as an ideal of learning. To the eleventh-century charismatic culture, *humanitas* is, to quote Jaeger, 'an inner warmth that flows outward from virtue'.[30] Several of the sources express *humanitas* in the Ciceronian sense as 'strong authority reined in and restrained by gentleness, love, kindness'.[31] On the Lisbjerg altar, a prominent representative of the Stoic-Ciceronian tradition and ardent admirer of Cicero, the church father St Jerome (*c.* 347–*c.* 420), is actually quoted verbatim. Interestingly, the quote contains a definition of *humanitas*. After the versified inscription of the retable arch, a non-metric addition quotes Jerome's epistle no. 60, dated AD 396. This text is a consolatory letter to Jerome's friend Heliodorus, bishop of Altinum in northern Italy. On the Lisbjerg altar, the quote was clearly added to the epigraphic programme as the work on the altar proceeded, as the letters are considerably smaller than the preceding verse, and the phrase exceeds the space reserved for inscription (Fig. 12.6). The phrase reads: 'Absque notitia creatoris sui, omne homo pecus est' (without knowledge of his creator, every man is but a beast).[32]

In a way, Jerome's words define *humanitias* on the most fundamental level. *Humanitas* here is not understood in opposition to *divinitas*, but to the beasts, man's fellow creatures who do not share with him the dignity of being created in the likeness of God. In Jerome, *humanitas* equals *christianitas*. In the context of the Lisbjerg altar's eschatological programme, the quote is a kind of meta-statement on what the altar displays (Fig. 12.1). In image and text, the Creator is represented in several figures and through several metaphors. In the inscriptions He defines himself as the light, 'ego sum lux mundi' (I am the light of the world), and as 'via, veritas et vita' (the way, the truth, and the life). He is depicted as a child on his mother's lap, as the sacrificial Lamb of God, as the judge, as crucified, and as the resurrected King of Heaven. All these figures of Christ sum up the knowledge which is needed in order not to be but a beast. The call for conversion in other of the altar's inscriptions is thus a call for education, and the epigraphic programme as a whole can be read as an instruction

[30] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 98.

[31] Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 98.

[32] Aavitsland, 'Ornament and Iconography', p. 83.

for the formation of the Christian man — or as a guide to the road leading to salvation on the Day of Judgement.

We do not know whether the person who conceived the Lisbjerg programme knew Jerome's letter *in extenso*; he may have taken the phrase from a collection of *sententiae* or other anthology. However, it is tempting to suggest that the person(s) responsible for the altar's programme was familiar with the entire text. Jerome's letter to Heliodorus is written in the consolatory genre, deploring Heliodorus's loss of his young and promising nephew, Nepotian. In Nepotian, says Jerome, 'each single virtue was as conspicuous in him as if he possessed no other'.[33] He strove for the ideal of temperance at table, 'avoiding superstition and yet preserving self-control'.[34] And further: 'the seriousness of his disposition was mitigated by a cheerful expression. But while his laughter was joyous, it was never loud'.[35] The panegyric description of Nepotian in this fourth-century letter corresponds strikingly to the praise of virtue in schoolmasters and courtiers from the eleventh-century biographical accounts. Nepotian's virtues included most of those praised in the virtuous schoolmen and saintly women who embodied the 'intellectual' ideals of the early Middle Ages — and all the six virtues inscribed on the Lisbjerg altar.

To soothe his friend's grief at the loss of this virtuous young man Nepotian, Jerome contrasts pagan despair or resignation with Christian hope, contemplating Christ's redemption of man and the promise of access to paradise. It is in this specific context that Jerome defines man as a being with knowledge of his creator. Jerome's letter to Heliodorus is a very able attempt to unite Ciceronian virtues with the Christian ethos. The author underscores that the merit of virtue is entry into to heaven and citizenship in the City of God. In Jerome, as in Cicero, *humanitas* is civilization. In fact, this message is also communicated in the images and inscriptions of the Lisbjerg altar. Adopting Jerome's definition of *humanitas* as knowledge of God, the epigraphy presents a conception of the righteous, those blessed of the Father (*benedicti patris mei*) as those knowledgeable, educated, and thus virtuous individuals called to enter the Kingdom of God as its true citizens.[36] In keeping with this understanding, the saints and

[33] 'Ita in singulis virtutibus eminebat, quasi caeteras non haberet', Jerome, *Epistola LX*, ed. by Migne, p. 595; trans. by Fremantle, p. 127.

[34] 'Mensae [...] intereat, et sic apposita libabat, ut et superstitionem fugeret, et continentiam servaret', Jerome, *Epistola LX*, ed. by Migne, p. 595; trans. by Fremantle, p. 127.

[35] 'gravitatem morum, hilaritate frontis temperebat. Gaudium in risu, non cachinnum intelligeres', Jerome, *Epistola LX*, ed. by Migne, p. 595; trans. by Fremantle, p. 127.

[36] On the nexus between knowledge and virtue in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see

virtues of the altar frontal are represented as attending a heavenly court; they are sumptuously dressed and have modest, courteous countenances. As such, they may be interpreted as a representation of the Danish elite's understanding of its own ideals and role within the new, Christian order of things.

Embodying Virtue

I have attempted to reconcile the traditional soteriological interpretation of the virtues, as found for example in Bernard of Clairvaux, with the mundane, practical, and socially conditioned interpretation of the *cultus virtutum* of the courts and cathedral chapters. These two interpretations seem to be merged and expressed in the Lisbjerg altar from twelfth-century Denmark, conceived and commissioned by members of the aristocratic and internationally oriented elite of the time. To the European elites of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, the virtues were never abstract ideas, but performative instructions for the conduct of body and mind in social intercourse. Jaeger has shown how these instructions were conducted in practice and virtue was performed. The saints must have been regarded as individuals who managed to perform this praxis of virtue with excellence. The saints embodied the virtues. Accordingly, there is no difference between the representation of saints and virtues on the Lisbjerg altar.

The thought that saints personify virtue is based on the conviction that the goal of human life is to retain the *imago Dei* embedded within man from the beginning. Cultivating oneself into a personification of virtue is therefore a process of imitating Christ by brightening and restoring one's divine image. According to Peter Brown, this idea is founded on the conviction that the Christian life joins men as links in a chain diffusing the charisma of Christ, first through saints, then through monks and holy men, then bishops and priest, ending in laymen. This, according to Brown, is 'the imitation of Christ in its early medieval aspect'.[37] More than anything, the imitation of Christ was an issue of pedagogy. It seems that this conviction also prevailed in twelfth-century Scandinavia. The eager aspirations to sainthood of the Danish royal family, such as the efforts of King Valdemar I and Archbishop Eskil to canonize Valdemar's father, Knud Lavard, might be seen in this perspective. Through their virtues, the members of the new Christian elite in Denmark conceived of themselves as links in the chain diffusing the charisma of Christ.

Münster-Swendsen, 'Medieval Virtuosity'.

[37] Brown, 'The Saint as Exemplar'; Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, p. 78.

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Body and Soul in Old Norse Culture

Stefka G. Eriksen

Theological and philosophical discussions on the inseparability of body and soul, their functions, and the possibility of their unification on Judgement Day were major issues among thinkers from antiquity and through the Middle Ages. In this chapter, I will discuss how the body and soul debate was pursued in Old Norse literary sources, and what function it may have had in the intellectual culture in medieval Scandinavia. There are two Old Norse dialogues between body and soul, both of which are translations: the first is a translation of the Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit*, and the second is a translation of Hugues de Saint-Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae*. Little scholarly work has been done on these two texts: the first is discussed in detail in only one article by Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen from 1959,[1] while the second gets a more extensive coverage in a book by Gunnar Harðarson from 1995.[2] These studies describe the relationship between the respective source- and target-texts; the former includes a presentation of a stemma and an edition of the various Old Norse versions, while the latter also includes a discussion of compatibility between the Old Norse translation and contemporary Old Norse texts on vocabulary and stylistic levels. Building upon these studies, I will here focus on questions pertaining to the implicit ideological meaning of these debates seen against their respective literary and socio-political backgrounds.

[1] Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul in Old Norse Literature'.

[2] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*.

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The two texts treat the issue of body and soul very differently, and seem to be adapted to their respective manuscript and culture-historical contexts. An analysis juxtaposing the two Old Norse texts will complement the existing comparisons between the two source- and target-texts. This will bring further insight to our understanding of the intellectual climate in medieval Norway (mostly), as well as the social role and identity of 'intellectuals' in various contexts over time. The differences between the two texts foreground the topic's flexibility and relevance for various intellectual spheres, such as theoretical theology, education and schooling, and politics and personal formation, and emphasize the multimodal nature of Old Norse intellectual culture.

Literary Renderings of the Debate

The genre of debates or dialogues between the body and the soul was immensely popular in Latin and vernacular medieval literature.[3] Such dialogues tend to adhere to two subgroups. In the first group, the soul argues with the body from a position of moral superiority, while in the second, the soul and the body share guilt.[4] A survey of several medieval and Renaissance dialogues reveals that many philosophical and theological issues, such as separability/inseparability, complementary functions and responsibilities, and unification on Judgement Day, are addressed in literary sources. The separability of body and soul is explored, for example, by discussing the causal link or the interdependence between them: the body depends on the soul to speak and the soul requires the body to experience torments.[5] Some poems convey an idea of God favouring the soul and giving it authority over the body by teaching the soul how to discipline the body, which is significant for the discussion of the reunification of the soul with a universal or collective intellect.[6] Roughly generalized, the two types of dialogue may correspond to two philosophical standpoints: one communicates the idea of a divided self, where the opposition between the body and soul is fierce but where they are also much intertwined, while the other represents

[3] See for example *The Body and the Soul in Medieval Literature*, ed. by Boitani and Torti.

[4] Bossy, 'Medieval Debates of Body and Soul', p. 145; Bruce, 'A Contribution to the Study of "The Body and the Soul"', p. 193.

[5] Bossy, 'Medieval Debates', p. 150.

[6] Bossy, 'Medieval Debates', pp. 148, 156.

a battle between various components of human nature, and the opponents are less equally matched and less intertwined.[7]

This ambiguity and, at best, duality in the relationship between the body and the soul is also reflected in medieval art. There seems to be a shift in orientation, from an Augustine-inspired understanding of the distinction between the soul and the body, with the soul being the unifying aspect between man and God, at the beginning of the twelfth century, to a more Aquinas-inspired conceptualization of a greater unity between body and soul, when spirituality organizes physicality and is a part of it, rather than separated from it, in the thirteenth century.[8]

The genre is productive in Old Norse literary tradition as well, since there exist Old Norse translations of two different dialogues between the body and the soul. The dialogue form is common in Old Norse and appears in other texts as well, such as a translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*; a translation of *Elucidarius*; *Konungs Skuggsjá*, an original Old Norse *speculum principis*; a translation of the pseudo-classical *Pamphilus de Amore*; and a dialogue between courage (*hugrecki*) and fear (*æðra*), to mention a few.

The first dialogue between body and soul is a translation of the Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit*. Its main manuscript is AM 619 4to (*c.* 1220) which is known as the Old Norse Homily Book, where the dialogue is erroneously entitled *Visio Sancti Pauli apostoli*. The second dialogue is a translation of Hugues de Saint-Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae*. Its main manuscript is the Icelandic manuscript *Hauksbók* from the beginning of the fourteenth century.

These two Old Norse dialogues form part of the intellectual culture in two different temporal contexts. As mentioned in the Introduction to this book, the second part of the twelfth century saw the establishment of the Norwegian archiepiscopal see, and there were then many direct links between such European intellectual centres as the monastery of St Victor, the Universities of Paris, Orléans, and Bologna, and the Norwegian and Icelandic ecclesiastical elites.[9]

[7] Bossy, 'Medieval Debates', p. 151. For another art historical study focusing on the body, see Liepe, *Den medeltida kroppen*.

[8] Ladner, *Ad imaginem Dei*.

[9] Archbishop Eystein Erlendsson was for example at the monastery of St Victor after 1161. His successors, Archbishop Eirikr (retired in 1205, died in 1213) and Þórir (died in 1214), and also Bishop Þórir of Hamar (died in 1196) had also received parts of their education there. See Bekker-Nielsen, 'The Victorines and their Influence on Old Norse Literature', p. 33; Johnsen, 'Om St. Victorklosteret og Nordmennene', pp. 405–32. The most recent discussion on the issue appears in Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 20–30.

The second part of the thirteenth century, on the other hand, saw the development of the Norwegian monarchy during the reigns of Hákon Hákonarsson and Magnus the Lawmender, the establishment of legislation on a national scale, and increasingly professionalized administration. Roughly speaking, during the first of these periods, Norwegian and Icelandic writers used Latin to discuss the Norwegian background and history, while during the second period, Old Norse was used increasingly for both secular/political and ecclesiastical purposes.[10] The two dialogues which are the main concern in this chapter are preserved in manuscripts produced during these two periods. By studying, on the one hand, how the theological issue of the body and the soul is treated in the two texts, and on the other, the respective manuscripts and their broader cultural contexts (end of twelfth/beginning of thirteenth centuries and end of thirteenth/beginning of fourteenth centuries), this chapter will illustrate how one and the same theoretical theological debate was adapted to serve the specific needs of these two significant, albeit different, intellectual environments.

Dialogue between Body and Soul in the Old Norse Homily Book

One of the chapters in the Norwegian Homily Book (AM 619 4to, 75v–78r) is given the title *Visio Sancti Pauli*. This is not, however, a Latin vision of St Paul, but an Old Norse translation of the Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit*.[11] The manuscript contains six parts in all: a translation of Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* (1r–15r12); a collection of twenty-nine homilies following the church calendar (15r13–75v16); the dialogue; the Lord's Prayer with explanations (78r26–80v31); the saga of St Olav and his miracles, which is inserted into the homilies (54r9–63r12). The translation of *Un samedi* appears, in addition, in two Icelandic vellum manuscripts: AM 696 4to, fragment no. XXXII from the end of the fifteenth century and AM 764 4to (30r–v) from *c*. 1360–70. These two versions are very close to each other, which may suggest that they were produced at the same place, either the Benedictine monastery of Reynisstaðir, or the Augustinian abbey of Möðruvellir.[12] There is also a third

[10] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 36–37.

[11] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 274. The Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit* is edited by Varnhagen in *Erlanger Beiträge zur englischen Philologie I*.

[12] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 49.

version, in an Icelandic paper manuscript JS 405 8vo, from *c.* 1780, written by the farmer Ólafur Jónsson in Arney.[13]

The misleading title of the dialogue in the Homily Book indicates that the scribe must have known of *Visio Sancti Pauli*, but was not acquainted with its content.[14] The dialogue has no title in AM 764 4to, but there the dreamer who witnesses the dialogue between the body and the soul is called Auxentius. In JS 405 8vo, the text is called *Bernhardi Leidsla*, and Bernhard is said to be a learned man in England, who dreams about the debate between the body and the soul. These two manuscripts also contain an epilogue that is not in the Homily Book version.[15] Apart from the differences in the prologues and epilogues, the plot itself is similar in all manuscripts, and the versions are therefore placed in the same stemma by Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen.[16]

The Homily Book version of the dialogue seems to be an adaptation of several preserved versions of the Old French poem, but the French poem is still a more plausible source-text than a Latin poem on the same topic.[17] The Old French poem itself was a rendering of a Latin vision of Bernard, i.e. Bernard of Clairvaux.[18] This indicates that Old French texts were translated into Old Norse already at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, and that the better-known translations of romances, *chansons de geste*, and *lais* from the mid-thirteenth century contributed to a development that was already in progress.

Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen make a careful comparison between the Norwegian Homily Book version of the poem (N) and the available Old

[13] Ole Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 275.

[14] *Visio Pauli* seems also to have been used as a source for some of the sermons in the Homily Book, as for example *De nativitate domini sermo*. This strengthens the hypothesis that a Latin or Old Norse version of *Visio Pauli* must have existed before *c.* 1200. See Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, pp. 140–42.

[15] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 277.

[16] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 278.

[17] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 275.

[18] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, pp. 51, 142. The Latin version seems to be the source-text for translations into Middle English, Spanish, Polish, and Greek, see Bruce, 'A Contribution to the Study of "The Body and the Soul"', p. 400. On the relationship between the different versions, see also Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul*. For a more thorough discussion of the Old and Middle English versions, see Utley, 'Dialogues, Debates and Catechisms', pp. 669–95. For the Welsh version, see Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, Chapter on 'Five Ancient Books of Wales'.

French versions, as they appear in Hermann Varnhagen's edition: P, B, and C are contemporary, or slightly later than N, while H is dated to the fourteenth century.[19] N is closest to P, as the texts correspond verbatim to each other in numerous passages; some excerpts however are more reminiscent of B. Despite the literal translation of the framework of the poem, the translator abridged the text occasionally to prevent repetitions. The long complaint of the soul, corresponding to P 357–569, for example, does not appear in the N version,[20] where it is summarized as:

> Licamr meðan þu vart hæil þa var tu morgum manne þecr. en nu er tu hverium læiðr. þu ilmir illa oc þínar vistir ero í illum stað. oc þat er maclect fyrir illzu sacar þinar.[21]

> While you were well, Body, you were liked by many. But now you are disliked by everyone. You smell bad and you stay/take lodgings in bad places. And this is befitting, because of your wickedness.[22]

The abridgements of detailed descriptions to avoid repetition increase towards the end of the N-version.[23]

Widding and Bekker-Nielsen observe that N contains more abridgements than the Old French version, while the other Old Norse versions have greater differences in content, much more extensive cuts, and interesting additions, such as the epilogue. This may have been because they are less faithful to a source-text, as Widding and Bekker-Nielsen suggest, or because of the existence of other versions which are lost today.[24] The four Old Norse versions clearly derive from the same translation, as what we have in N is not the translator's copy.

With regard to the manuscript context of the text: there are two contending hypotheses about the provenance of the manuscript: the cathedral chapter in Bergen or the Augustinian monastery of Jonskloster in the same town. The two institutions were closely connected and Jonskloster may have been established

[19] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 275 n. 15.

[20] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 276.

[21] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 285.

[22] The translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

[23] For other examples of where and how the translator shortens his source-text, see the edition of the text in Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', pp. 280–89.

[24] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 276.

as a supporting institution to the cathedral chapter.[25] The cathedral chapter was also closely affiliated with the Augustinians, as several of the bishops in Norway at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries had spent time at St Victor in Paris, as mentioned above.

In any case, the scribal centre where the manuscript was produced seems to have been of a certain size, and the scribe seems to have been a figure of authority. According to Kirsten Berg, it is more plausible that the cathedral chapter had such a scribal centre.[26] Åslaug Ommundsen argues, however, that despite its small size — an institution with less than twelve friars — Jonskloster could have been the place of origin as it had powerful supporters, where material for book production was available.[27] Jonskloster would have had close links to other Augustinian houses, to the bishop, the cathedral chapter, and the archiepiscopal see in Niðarós. Further, Ommundsen argues that the type of liturgy in the Homily Book makes it plausible that it was written in an Augustinian house, as monastic liturgy (Benedictine and Cistercian) would generally have been of a different character compared to 'secular' liturgy.[28]

Despite earlier hypotheses that the manuscript was written by several scribes, scholars now agree that it was written by one scribe only.[29] The scribe may have studied in England, possibly in Lincoln, where many Norwegian clerics pursued their more advanced theological education.[30] Having completed his education he would have returned to Bergen where he obtained a high position in the cathedral chapter, and where he might have had the main responsibility for the education of priests.[31]

The contact between England and Norway encompassed not only the exchange of intellectual capital by means of education, but also influence on

[25] Berg, 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?', pp. 55–56.

[26] Berg, 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?', p. 76.

[27] Ommundsen, 'Homilieboka og dei liturgiske fragmenta', p. 149.

[28] Ommundsen, 'Homilieboka og dei liturgiske fragmenta', p. 146.

[29] See Gullick, 'Skriveren og Kunstneren bak Homilieboken', pp. 77–99.

[30] On a discussion of the English influence on the Homily Book on a textual and exegetic level, see Conti, 'Gammelt og nytt i homiliebokens prekenunivers', pp. 165–86. For a similar discussion from the perspective of *mise-en-page* and *mise-en-texte*, see Gullick, 'Skriveren og Kunstneren bak Homilieboken', pp. 77–99. Kirsten Berg also argues that the Homily Book can be compared to English manuscripts, as for example the famous Winchester Bible from 1160–75, see 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?', p. 64. See also Abram, 'Anglo-Saxon Influence in the Old Norwegian Homily Book', pp. 1–35.

[31] Ommundsen, 'Homilieboka og dei liturgiske fragmenta', pp. 131–50.

the establishment of monastic institutions in general, as in the twelfth century several Benedictine, Cistercian, and Augustinian houses were established from mother institutions in England. Archbishop Eystein of Niðarós (1161–88) was involved in the establishment of three of the Augustinian houses, and he had spent time both in Paris and in England when in exile. This institutional development most certainly also implied an import of books, as well as scribes with potentially wide academic backgrounds.[32]

Regarding the reception and use of the manuscript, the traditional view has been that it was used during Mass, when the homilies were read out to the congregation. Kirsten Berg, however, suggests that the book may have been used as a textbook for the education of priests.[33] She points out that despite the liturgical organization of the Homily Book, homilies for important days are missing. There are also several additional texts, such as the translation of Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*, the life of St Olav, the Lord's Prayer, and explanation of the Mass,[34] and the dialogue between body and soul. This hypothesis may be supported by the way the narrator addresses his audience, the format and organization of the manuscript itself, the presence of marginal signs at significant places, and rhythmical passages that were appropriate for memorization.[35]

The narrative in the dialogue starts on a Saturday evening when the narrator is sleeping and has a vision of a dead body, just abandoned by its soul. The soul starts an aggressive verbal attack on the body, to which the body replies with the same accusing tone. The dialogue is structured by a few meta-textual comments by the one who has the dream. The text ends with the narrator recounting how the soul is taken away.

The main issues addressed in the text are the nature of the relationship between the soul and body and their respective areas of responsibility. The dialogue promotes Augustinian ideology, as it foregrounds inner reflection and rumination as a means of reaching a favourable end.[36] This fits well with the suggested origin of the manuscript at an Augustinian house, or a scribal centre

[32] Gullick, 'Skriveren og Kunstneren bak Homilieboken', pp. 77–99.

[33] Berg, 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?', pp. 35–76.

[34] See chapter by Sigurd Hareide in this volume.

[35] Berg, 'Homilieboka – for hvem og til hva?', p. 74.

[36] Augustine can be characterized as the founding father of the philosophical school of thought which had an introvert philosophy of the body and the soul, as opposed to the extrovert school founded by Aristotle, and followed by such philosophers as Aquinas: see Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, p. 214.

closely affiliated with the Augustinians. Even though a reference to Augustine does not necessarily suggest an Augustinian provenance, as Augustine is one of the most quoted medieval writers in general, it is relevant to mention that the text refers to him explicitly: 'þat sægir hin hælgi Augustinus at sá hefir varla ennda-lóc góð er avalt søfr unnz at hann kennir bána vísan' (St Augustine says that he who always sleeps, until he realizes that the end is near, will hardly get a good end).[37]

Starting with the animating functions, the soul points out that it was because of the soul that the body could walk, speak, hear, and sleep while alive: 'ec gerða þic gang-føran.mælande.ok høyrande ok sofande' (I made you able to walk, speak, hear, and sleep).[38] Because of the body's sinfulness, however, it is the soul that has to tolerate hunger and thirst, as God punishes them both.[39] The soul is further given the responsibility for reflection and cognition, as it was the soul who thought about and reflected upon all the bad actions before they were done: 'þvi at þu hugðir fyrr en gort være. þvi at hvetvitna er hugt fyrr en gort se' (because you thought before it was done; everything is thought about before it is done).[40]

The responsibility for will and desire is also addressed in the dialogue. The soul accuses the body of having sinful desires and love of material goods. It links these vices exclusively to the body and characterizes them as opposite to Christian virtues and values.[41] The body, on the other hand, compares itself to Adam, and the soul to the snake or the temptations presented by Eve to Adam. According to the body, it is the soul that has the primary blame and responsibility for sinful desires, as the soul is the one who tempts the body to sin: the body could not sin if the soul did not will a sin. As the soul has failed to lead them both towards God, the body reckons that the soul should be punished:

> þu ert ávita værð. þu scyldir fyrir mer raða. en þu hefir spilt fyrir báðom ocr. Ec var guðs hus. nu hefir þu gort þiofs fylsni. Ec var bónar hus. nu em ec hordóms buð ef noccor maðr vildi í bua.[42]

[37] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 150.

[38] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 150.

[39] *Gammelnorsk Homiliebok*, trans. by Salversen, p. 133.

[40] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 151.

[41] *Gammelnorsk Homiliebok*, trans. by Salversen, p. 131.

[42] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 152.

> you should be punished as you were supposed to rule over me, but you have spoiled it all for both of us. I was God's house, but you have made me into a hiding place for thieves. I was the house for prayers, but now I am a whore-booth, if any man would wish to live there at all.

The issue of will is touched upon in the discussion on confession as well. The soul accuses the body of not confessing his sins before death:

> þvi at fyrr en du léter lifet være mœl at iðraz misgerninga þínna. nu hefir þu látet lifet oc œuðæfe mykil. þu sialfr est glataðr u sæl ok fyrir faren.[43]

> because before you left this life, you should have regretted your evil deeds. Now you have left this life and plenty of goods, but you yourself are lost, cursed, and wrecked.

According to the soul, it is thus the body that has to confess as it is responsible for all sinful behaviour. A sin is, thus, according to the soul, the vicious action in itself. The body, however, argues that thinking, or not thinking and reflecting rightly, leads to sinful behaviour, i.e. even a sinful thought is a sin. Since the soul is responsible for the activity of thinking, it is the soul that has sinned.

The discussion of the faculties of the body and the soul in the dialogue are reminiscent of Augustinian thought, but are expressed in a simpler manner: the dialogue does not include terminology referring to various faculties of the soul, but just states: 'ec gerða þic gang føran. mælande. oc høyrande oc sovande'[44] (I made you able to walk, to speak, to hear, and to sleep), or 'þu hugðir fyrr en gort være þvi at hvetvitna er hugt fyrr en gort se' (you think before deeds because everything is thought about before it is done).[45] Other terms that Augustine distinguishes between, for example, the 'inward man' and 'outward man', are not referred to in the dialogue either. According to Augustine, the outward man has the same functions as animals, and even some aspects of the soul, such as the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch belong to the outward man.[46] Reasoning and memory, on the other hand, are characterized as an inner sense. The dialogue, however, distinguishes only between the body (*licamr*) and the soul (*sæl*). According to Augustine, remembering

[43] Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'A Debate of the Body and the Soul', p. 281.

[44] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 150.

[45] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 151.

[46] For an art historical discussion of the representation of the soul, taking physical shapes, or on its journey, being able to see, hear, and taste, see Liepe, *Den medeltida kroppen*, p. 23.

is analogous to inner seeing, and he foregrounds the voluntary nature of the activity: remembering as well as thinking are operations of the will. The reason, also called the intellectual soul by Augustine, is thus responsible for *scientia*, i.e. duties such as controlling the bodily functions, as well as *sapientia*, or superior duties which distinguish humans from animals, such as contemplation and reflection. These, however, have to be done not for the sake of action, but for one's own inner movement forward.[47] Once again, terms like these are not alluded to in the dialogue, which includes just straightforward verbs as *vita* (to know), *hyggja* (to think), or 'þu sotter alldrigin guðs hus' (you never looked for the house of God).

The idea of will and its link to sin is also thoroughly discussed by Augustine. Will, or the ability to consent to thoughts as plans of actions is, according to Augustine, a function of the soul together with memory (the ability to remember) and intellect (the ability to ascend to theoretical thoughts).[48] For Augustine, the will is the issuer of commands in the sinner. When the mind commands the body, obedience is instant. When the mind commands the mind, however, it can meet resistance and disobedience. This is the case when, for example, a man wants to will to be chaste, but is not chaste. This argument by Augustine leads to a change in perception of what sin is — sin is not only the action but the thought of, or taking pleasure in, acting sinfully.[49] Free will gives the choice to sin and the choice not to sin. According to Augustine, perfect will, i.e. the availability of only one choice, not to sin, will be given to men only in heaven.[50]

The body in our dialogue follows the same line of reasoning, as it suggests that the soul has not taken substantial care of its responsibility to lead the right way, i.e. it has not willed correctly; the body has only committed sin because this is what the soul has actually willed. The body accuses the soul of sinning, due to insufficient reflection and sinful willing. If will is not wholehearted, it leads to inner conflicts as testified in the dialogue, which is only possible because all men are descended from Adam and inherit his sin.[51]

[47] Koterski, *An Introduction to Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 183–88. Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, p. 219.

[48] Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, p. 220. On Augustine's treatment of the will, see Matthews, 'Augustinianism', pp. 95–96.

[49] Matthews, 'Augustinianism', p. 97.

[50] Matthews, 'Augustinianism', p. 93.

[51] Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, p. 221. On Augustinian treatment of the problem of evil, see Matthews, 'Augustinianism', pp. 91–93.

The sense of sight, or *visio*, has a special status in Augustinian philosophy, as well as in the context of the dialogue. According to Augustine, there are three types of *visio* — *visio corporalis* (corporeal vision), *visio intellectualis* (intellectual vision), and *visio spiritualis seu imaginaria* (spiritual or imaginary vision). In the last case, one sees not with the bodily vision but with the soul's vision. *Visio intellectualis* is distinguished from *visio spiritualis* as the latter originates from God and is always good, while the former can be, but is not always God-sent, true, and good.[52] The distinction between seeing as a bodily experience, as opposed to seeing as a mental ability, is that the former, like all physical perception, is related to pleasure and pain, while the latter is not. Nonetheless, Augustine acknowledged that the desire for seeing mentally can also lead to temptation and an excessive lust for knowledge.[53]

The dialogue draws our attention to the concept of inner sight at its very beginning. As mentioned, the text is wrongly entitled *Visio Sancti Pauli*, even though it is not a vision of St Paul but a dream, referred to as a vision:

> Ein lœugar-dag at kveldi **svaf** ec í hvilo mínni. ok **sá ec í draume** mínum myccla **sion**. Þat **syndisc** mér at líc æit.[54]

> One Saturday evening, I was sleeping in peace, and I saw in my dreams a great vision. What was shown to me was one corpse.

The noun *sion*, or *sýn* (vision) is a common Old Norse term for a vision; another one is *vitran* (appearance in a dream, vision). *Sýna* (to show, to appear) is also commonly used to describe a visionary experience, together with *birtask* (to appear), *koma* (to come), *vitra* (to manifest, to reveal), or *vitja* (to visit).[55] The Old Norse term *sýn* refers thus to the general term *visio*,[56] while *andarsýn* has sometimes been used to refer to *visio spiritualis*.[57]

Further, according to Augustine, the soul's vision and other activities of the soul were immaterial. A *visio* would therefore be an immaterial entity. In Old Norse vision literature, however, the term *leiðsla* (*leizla*) is also commonly

[52] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, p. 44; Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 215–16.

[53] Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, p. 216.

[54] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 148.

[55] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, p. 43. On the signification of other Old Norse terms for vision, such as *leizla*, see Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, pp. 46–56.

[56] The Latin medieval terms were *visio*, mostly used in the early Middle Ages, and *revelatio*, mostly used in the late Middle Ages.

[57] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, p. 45.

used to refer to visions, in addition to the terms mentioned above.[58] This term refers to a movement which is seen in a *sýn*, that someone leads, and someone is led to the otherworld. The dialogue is characterized as a *sýn* in the Norwegian Homily Book, while the paper manuscript JS 405 8vo from *c.* 1780 has the following incipit: 'Her Biriast Bernhardi Leidsla' (Here starts Bernhard's vision). The first sentences in the same version are:

> Einn Vis og vellærdr madr Bernhardus ad nafne var i einum Stad á leid á Englande, honum byrtist á giætleg **leidsla** til eptir dæmis. Þat skede oc so sagde hann, ad eg var staddr i einu Svefnhúse, upp á eitt laugardags qvöld, eg var í Rekkju minni, oc sá eg so sem **Sýn**.[59]

> A wise and learned man, Bernhard by name, was at one moment travelling in England, and he was shown a grand *leidsla* to serve as an example. This happened and so he said, that I had stopped at a hostel one Saturday evening, and I was in my bed, and then I saw this *sýn*.

Even though the term *leizla* is younger than *sýn*, which may be an explanation for the change in terminology used in the prologue, the definition of the plot as a *sýn* in the Homily Book version as opposed to *leizla* in the eighteenth-century version, brings to mind the Augustinian argument about the immateriality of the soul and *visio*. The dialogue may thus be seen as a written text, material in its physical manuscript context, which was intended to lead its readers or listeners on an immaterial journey of reflection and contemplation.

At the end of the text, the soul addresses God and asks why He has created the soul and then allowed it to be blamed in such a way. Why would God, the origin of all wisdom, create something which is such a failure? These questions remain unanswered, and the soul's complaints and laments remain uncomforted, as at the very end of the dialogue, the narrator accounts for the soul's end:

> En i þvi como fiandr ok toko hana á braut ok báru hana sva u-þyrmilega sem vargar marger bera sauð æin. En hon øpte ascrámlega. en þat stoðaðe henne ecci. þvi at dómr hennar vár þa loken.[60]

> And at this moment came the devils and carried her [the soul] away, and carried her as urgently as a pack of wolves drags away a sheep. And she screamed in terror, but it did not help her, as her judgement had fallen.

[58] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, pp. 46–49.

[59] Wellendorf, *Kristelig visionslitteratur*, p. 50.

[60] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 153.

Augustine's metaphysical description of evil is as the deprivation of goodness. This has to be distinguished, however, from the necessary limitations of created beings, including body and soul, which are not evil as such. In the dialogue, it is explicitly stated that the soul, as well as the body, is created by God, but is not one with God, and therefore lacks God's all-goodness. Further, according to Augustine, the cause of evil is the misuse of free will, which is suggested in dialogue when the will and desire of the soul are discussed.

The connection between the materiality of the physical world and the cognitive processes of moral reflection and contemplation, as an inner spiritual activity, is conveyed also in other parts of the Old Norse Homily Book, such as *In dedicatione templi sermo*, or the Stave Church Homily.[61] The physical building of the stave church is here compared first to the Church, as an organization, and then to the spirituality, virtues, and faith of all Christians:

> En sva sem vér sægium kirkio merkia allan cristin lyð. sva man hon merkia sér hværn cristin mann. þann er sanlega geresc mystere hæilags anda í góðum siðum. Ðvi at hvær maðr scal smiða andlega kirkio í sér. æigi ór triom ne stæinum. hældr or goðum vercum.[62]

> And as we say that the church refers to the whole of Christianity, in the same way it can refer to each and every Christian man, who by good deeds can truly become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Because every man shall build a spiritual church in himself, not of wood or stone, but with good deeds.

The narrator here uses two standard 'levels' of scriptural interpretation: the allegorical, when speaking of Christianity as a whole, and the moral, when speaking of the individual. The passage thus emphasizes the analogical link between the body and the soul and, just like the dialogue, urges every man to take good care of both body and soul. The homily continues:

> Oc sva sem vér fødum ós itarlegre føzlo umm hætiðir. sva scolum vér føða ond vara hotiðlegre føzlo. þat er orð guðs. þvi at os ´ømt er at licamr føðesc ok cleðesc itarlega. en hinn iðre maðr se uprvðr ok missi sinnar føzlo.[63]

> And in the same way as we feed ourselves exclusive nourishments during holidays, we should nourish our soul during these holidays. These are God's words. Because it is improper that the body is gloriously fed and dressed, if our soul is neglected and misses its spiritual nourishment.

[61] See for example Schumacher, '"Den hellige ånds port"', pp. 153–68.

[62] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 97.

[63] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 99.

The dialogue between body and soul, which follows the *Stave Church Homily* in the manuscript, may thus be read in the light of the homily, and may be seen as revealing the possible outcomes if one does not heed God's words. In both texts, however, the body and the soul are parts of a unit and can be seen as signifiers of each other. The homily reads:

> Briost-þili þat er a milli kirkio ok songhus er. merkir hælgan anda. þvi at sva sem vér gangom inn fyrir Crist í cristnena. sva gœngum vér oc inn í himna dyrð fyrir miscunnar dyrr hæilags anda. [...] A þesso briost-þili ero mikil dyrr sva at sia ma oll tiðende í songhus (or) kirkiu. þvi at hverr er fiðr miscunnar dyrr hæilags anda má líta hugscotz œugum marga himnesca luti.[64]

> The wall which is between the church and the choir signifies the holy spirit, because as we go into Christendom through Christ, in the same way we go through the Holy Spirit's mercy door into heavenly glory [...] at this wall, there is a big door, so that one can see everything that happens in the choir from the church, as everyone who can find the mercy door of the Holy Spirit can see many heavenly things with the mind's eyes.

Here the attention is explicitly turned to the Augustinian concept of inner sight, and to the cognitive processes of rumination and meditation as central means of connecting the body and the soul, and turning the earthly bodily existence towards heavenly eternity.[65]

The dialogue thus addresses major theological discussions concerning the functions of the soul and the body, confession and punishment, free will and moral responsibility, and the nature of evil. It is an ethical debate, which does not give the right answer explicitly. The implicit, but powerful, message of the dialogue, and its prime moral lesson, is that sin will be punished. The dialogue clearly recommends that one takes responsibility in both thought and action, and advocates a wholehearted inner dialogue between body and soul. The text thus appears as an allegory, and its main topic is not only the relation between the body and the soul, but also and primarily the need for self-examination.

This reading of the dialogue elucidates the complex theological issues that the text carried within it. Many of the issues are treated in an Augustinian man-

[64] *Gamal norsk homiliebok*, ed. by Indrebø, p. 97.

[65] See Jan Schumacher, '"Den hellige ånds port"'. Kristin Aavitsland also argues for the existence of implicit emphasis on visuality and bodily physicality in the Homily Book, as an iconographical and rhetorical means to foreground the exegetical and didactic meaning of the texts. The bodily thus gives meaning to the spiritual in an analogical fashion, as was commonly done in European textual and art culture, see Aavitsland, 'Visualisert didaktikk?', pp. 217–46.

ner, but they are presented in a discursive and simple way, without direct references to Augustine or to his terms.[66] This may have suited the competence of the Old Norse audience, which, as suggested, possibly consisted of future priests either at an Augustinian monastery or at an institution that had strong links to the Augustinians.[67] We cannot be certain that the text inspired abstract theoretical discussion, but its availability suggests that this cannot be ruled out either. The scribe may have been fully aware of the potentiality of the text, as he might have been acquainted with such theoretical discussions from his theological education in England. A schooling context would certainly have been a suitable arena for such discussions. Those who had studied abroad would have been acquainted not only with the theological discussions themselves, but also with the methods of discourse and pedagogy. The dialogue between the body and the soul with its emphasis on the soul's inner reflection and responsibility is thus a pedagogical discourse guiding one from bodily existence towards heavenly eternity, which would have been a significant part of the education. The dialogue exemplifies how the translation of a text could also transmit complex theological debates and European intellectual culture, and adapt these to a specific schooling context in western Norway at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Dialogue between Body and Soul in Hauksbók

The second Old Norse dialogue between body and soul is a translation of Hugues de Saint-Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae*. It is preserved in the Icelandic manuscript *Hauksbók* (now AM 371 4to, AM 544 4to, and AM 675 4to), from the beginning of the fourteenth century. The manuscript was owned and partly written by Haukr Erlendsson, an Icelandic lawman and a member of the Norwegian royal council, who lived and worked in Oslo and Bergen for parts of his career. The dialogue appears in two other Icelandic manuscript fragments: AM 696 XXXII 4to and AM 696 XXXIII 4to, both from the fif-

[66] Note however that not all of the common Augustinian issues are mentioned in the dialogue, which says nothing about memory and faith, or the soul's awareness and ability to subject itself by means of first-person awareness. On faith, see Matthews, 'Augustinianism', pp. 89–90. On the first-person point of view in Augustinian thought, see Matthews, 'Augustinianism', pp. 87–88, and Haldane, 'Soul and Body', p. 296.

[67] Others have also shown that Old Norse translations sometimes simplified the rhetoric of the source-text and used fewer terms, while the main sense of the content is preserved. See for example Bagge, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*, p. 224; Cook, 'Concepts of Love in the *Lais* and in their Norse Counterparts', pp. 53–86.

teenth century. Note that the fragment XXXII includes the translation of *De arrha* (1r–5v) with its epilogue (6r–7r), as well as the dialogue between body and soul, which appears in the Homily Book (7v–8v).[68]

Haukr Erlendsson (*c*. 1265–1334) became a *lögmaðr* (lawman) in Iceland in 1294. In the same year his father was knighted by King Eiríkr Magnússon. Haukr may thus be seen as an example of the Norwegian monarchy's new way of recruiting administrators.[69] In 1302, he became a *lögmaðr* of Oslo. He was knighted in 1306 and was a member of the king's council in the period 1306–09, while living in Iceland. In 1310 he returned to Norway, to Bergen, where he was appointed a *lögmaðr* of the ~~Gulathing~~ district.[70]

Haukr would have been a member of the social circle where the contemporaneous close political and diplomatic, cultural, and intellectual links between Norway and France would have been most noticeable.[71] This in itself may be seen as a partial explanation for the inclusion of a translation of a text by Hugues de Saint-Victor in his manuscript.

The manuscript is an exceptional collection of a great variety of texts and has been characterized by Gunnar Harðarson and Stefán Karlsson as a private library.[72] It contains texts on Icelandic and European history, on natural history, geography, and other encyclopaedic genres, on religious practices and theology, as well as fictional sagas about the legendary past. As it is preserved today, it includes *Landnámabók*, *Kristni saga*, an Icelandic translation of Isidore's *Etymologiae*, excerpts from the *Elucidarius* of Honorius Augustodunensis, short texts about the Ember Days, rainbows, the course of the sun, sunrise and sunset (some of them from *Stjörnu-Odda tal*), descriptions of pilgrim sites, various excerpts from translations of Petrus Alphonsus's *Disciplinas clericalis*, from Bede's *Constitutio Mundi*, from Peter Comestor's *Historia librorum*

[68] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 48.

[69] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 168.

[70] For a more detailed survey of Haukr's career, his background, travels, and representative duties in Norway, see Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 168–74. See also Rowe, 'Literary, Codicological and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*', pp. 64–65.

[71] On the intellectual links between the two contexts, see Arne Odd Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*. On the political links between the two contexts, and the legislative similarities between the national law of ~~Magnus Lagabøtter~~ and St Louis King of France, see Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 188.

[72] Gunnar Harðarson and Stefán Karlsson, '*Hauksbók*', pp. 271–72. See also Jón Helgasson, 'Introduction'.

regum, a plan of Jerusalem, fragments of translations of *Summa decretalium*, *Völuspá*, *Trójumanna saga*, *Breta sögur*, *Merlínusspá*, dialogue between courage and fear, dialogue between body and soul, *Hemings þáttr*, *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, *Fóstbræðra saga*, *Algorismus*, *Eiríks saga rauða*, *Skálda saga*, *Þáttr um Upplendinga konungum*, *Ragnarssona þáttr*, and excerpts of Bede's *Prognostica temporum*.[73]

The manuscript was written over a long period of time, during several stages of composition. Some parts were written by Haukr and his assistant scribes, while others were written by a different scribe at a later stage. The philological and codicological discussions on the original form of the manuscript are complex and will not be pursued in this context.[74] Here, it will suffice to say that the dialogue between the body and the soul belongs to the part of the manuscript which is undisputedly ascribed to Haukr himself. It appears in what is now the ninth quire and seems to have been copied around 1310 after Haukr returned to Norway and was made a *lögmaðr* of the ~~Gulathing~~ district.[75]

The function and meaning of the manuscript have been discussed by many. Rudolf Simek argues that the manuscript was modelled after the encyclopaedic collection *Liber floridus*, compiled by the Flemish monk Lambert de Saint-Omer.[76] Sverrir Jakobsson suggests that the manuscript may be seen more as a reflection of the collective world view of Haukr's social class and time, or of the intellectual elite of medieval Iceland, but his conclusions may be elucidative of medieval Norway as well. Haukr himself may be seen as 'an interpreter and teacher of a world view'.[77] Towards the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, the Icelandic cultural elite adopted to a greater extent the pan-European, Christian world view, at the same time as they foregrounded Icelandic history as an integral part of European history, and *Hauksbók* can be seen as an example of this.[78] Elizabeth Ashman Rowe dis-

[73] For a more detailed survey of the content, on the distribution of the texts in quires and the scribal hands, see Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, 'Indledning', pp. viii–lxiii; Jón Helgasson, 'Introduction'. See also Johansson, 'Compilations, Collections and Composite Manuscripts'.

[74] See for example Johansson, 'Compilations, Collections and Composite Manuscripts'.

[75] Stefán Karlsson, 'Aldur Hauksbókar'.

[76] Simek, 'Warum sind *Völuspá* und *Merlínusspá* in *Hauksbók* überliefert?', pp. 104–15.

[77] Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic Worldview', p. 22.

[78] Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic Worldview', pp. 22–38. See also Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Det islandske verdensbillede', pp. 63–71.

cusses all these hypotheses and agrees that the manuscript seems to have been a result of deliberate choices made during a process of imitation and adaptation of Icelandic and Christian authoritative texts and manuscripts. In his pursuit of a position close to the royal power, Haukr claims his own political authority and status based on his all-encompassing knowledge and learning, not only of the royal and secular history of his kingdom, but also of Christian theology and philosophy.[79]

The translation of the *Soliloquium de arrha animae* in *Hauksbók* is a part of a text section which is introduced by the rubric *Viðræða likams ok sálar* on fol. 60r. The rubric is followed by an introductory preface:

> Bok þersa gerði meistari Valltare af sambvrð tveggia manna, ok rœðir hvarr við annan af sinv efni hvarr.[80]
>
> This book was written by master Valltari and is about the meeting of two men, when each of them spoke to the other about his own matters.

This preface, however, introduces the dialogue between courage and fear, or *Viðræða æðru ok hugrekkis*, on fols 60r–61v, which is a translation of chapter 26 of *Moralium dogma philosophorum*, a collection of moral philosophy, possibly written by the French author Walter of Châtillon, who himself built on the pseudo-Senecan *De remediis fortuitorum*.[81] The dialogue between courage and fear is then followed by the introduction to the translation of Hugues' *Soliloquium*, on fols 61v–68v:

> Nv af þvi at vti er viðrœða æðrv ok hvgreckis, þa byriaz her onnvr rœða, er maðr talar við sal sina, ok byriar þar eð siðarra, sem eð fyrra lettir af.[82]
>
> Now as the dialogue between Fear and Courage ends, here begins another dialogue, where a man talks with his soul, and the latter begins where the former ends.

[79] Rowe, 'Literary, Codicological and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*', pp. 73–74.

[80] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 303; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 446.

[81] The identity of the author of *Moralium dogma philosophorum* has been extensively discussed in secondary literature. For a summary of the discussion see Williams, 'The Quest for the Author of the *Moralium Dogma Philosophorum*', pp. 736–47. The end of the same dialogue is preserved in a Norwegian manuscript, Uppsala University Library, De la Gardie 4–7 fol., from *c*. 1270.

[82] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 308; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 452.

The dialogue ends with an epilogue, which contains an extract from another one of Hugues's texts, namely *Didascalicon*.[83]

The name of Hugues de Saint-Victor is not mentioned explicitly in *Hauksbók*, but he must have been a well-known thinker and writer in Norway and Iceland. In addition to the inclusion of parts of Hugues' *Didascalicon*, and the translation of *Soliloquium*, a chapter of another of his works, *De quinque septenis*, is preserved in a fifteenth-century Icelandic manuscript.[84] The significance of Hugues' works, as well as of those of other Victorine writers, is detectable in many Old Norse texts, on literary, ethical, and theological levels.[85]

Hugues' works may be seen as the quintessence of contemporary theology and knowledge. He revolutionized the ideas of disciplines and stages of learning, and was deeply concerned with all kinds of knowledge and understanding. For him, faith and religious asceticism are perfectly compatible with curiosity and the rational appropriation and understanding of new knowledge. His faith in reason is undoubtedly related to Aristotle, but when it comes to self-awareness and the understanding of cognition, Hugue is influenced by Augustinian philosophy.[86]

The *Soliloquium de arrha animae* is his main work in the field of mystical theology. Despite its title, the work is not a monologue but a dialogue between a man and his own soul.[87] *Arrha* signifies a down payment, but in medieval Latin it may also refer to the gifts which are given at the time of betrothal. The work was very popular, as it was translated into French, Flemish, Catalan, and German, in addition to Old Norse. The Latin original aims to direct the attention of the soul away from the material world and towards inner self-esteem, which leads to love of and by God. This conforms well to the Augustinian ideal that he who truly loves himself is also loved by God.[88] The soul undergoes a

[83] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 43–44, where he treats the whole section including the preface, the dialogue between courage and fear, the transition, the dialogue between body and soul, and the epilogue as a coherent entity.

[84] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 31.

[85] For a detailed survey, see Bekker-Nielsen, 'The Victorines and their Influence on Old Norse Literature', p. 33; Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 31–33.

[86] Herbert, 'Introduction', p. 3.

[87] In the Middle Ages, the terms 'dialogue' and 'soliloquy' could be both used to refer to a dialogue between man and his soul, or between man and God. See Herbert, 'Introduction', p. 11.

[88] Herbert, 'Introduction', p. 11.

development in the course of the text, following the counsels of the body. God has already demonstrated His love for men, and all souls are objects of divine love. Finding true love means finding God, and this can be done through self-examination, reflection, and assiduous preparation leading to self-knowledge and self-appreciation, i.e. by understanding and internalizing the love pledge which God has already given to men through Christ. The soul needs to repent its sins in order to find true love. The ascent of the soul to God is thus not provided by a neo-Platonic theory of an eternal link between the soul and God, but is based on the historicity of the life of Christ itself. At the end of the dialogue, the soul reaches a summit of true and sincere desire to love itself, a summit of inner peace and satisfaction, and faith in its own worthiness of God's love.[89]

The Old Norse version of the text keeps the construction of the argument, but shortens some passages, at the same time as it amplifies and explains others. The translation is equivalent in a pragmatic sense, as it is adapted to the secular context it was to be received in.[90] The terms used to describe the cognitive and emotional faculties of the soul and their transformations are only sometimes translated consistently from Latin.[91] There seems to be a lack of coherence in the translation of *agnosco* (to recognize, understand, perceive), *cognosco* (to examine, inquire, learn), *noui* (to know), which are interchangeably translated by the verbs *vita* (to know, be conscious), *kunna* (to know, to understand), or *kenna* (to know, recognize, perceive). Other terms are however translated more consistently, such as *dubito/ambigo – ifask/vera ifi í* (to doubt, to be in doubt); *cogito – hyggja* (to think, believe); *contemplor – sjá* (to look, see, understand); *considero – skynja* (to perceive, understand); *demonstro – sýna* (to show, to appear); *scio – vita* (to know); *puto – ætla* (to think, to mean).[92] *Intellectus* is consistently translated by *skilning* (understanding) and *uoluntas* by *vili* (will, desire). The term for *anima* is *sála* (soul), just as in the Old Norse Homily Book; *cor – hjarta* (heart, mind)/*hugskot* (mind, soul). The Latin *sensus* is translated by *líkamskennsl* (bodily/physical senses) and *líkamsatfærsla* (bodily/physical behaviour). Finally, it is interesting to notice that the Augustinian *memoria – intellectus – voluntas* is not entirely covered by the Old Norse *vit – ætlan – minni*, which rather corresponds to the Aristotelian

[89] Herbert, 'Introduction', p. 12.

[90] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 138.

[91] For a detailed description of the link between the source- and target-text, I refer to Gunnar Harðarson's book *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*.

[92] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 145.

cogitatio – imaginatio – memoria.[93] All in all, consistent terminology seems to be used only sometimes, and seems to be used independently to some degree, without blindly following or referring directly to Latin terms. In this sense, a simplification of terminology may be in evidence, a tendency which was also disclosed in the other dialogue.

On the other hand, the Old Norse text shows similarities in style and vocabulary to contemporary texts such as *Konungs Skuggsjá* (*King's Mirror*), *Alexander saga*, *Barlaams ok Josaphats saga*, parts of the ~~Gulathing~~ and the ~~Frostating~~ Laws (when it comes to the juridical terms), *Hávamál*, and *Ágrip af Nóregs konunga sögum*.[94] All in all, the text provides hints of the professional affiliations of its translator, as a central representative of the class of royal functionaries at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries.[95]

Gunnar Harðarson argues that because of its intended lay audience, the Old Norse dialogue focuses on the significance of confession and penance more than the Latin original, and thus targets its spirituality towards the *duganda men* (doughty men) of the royal circles.[96] Compared to the dialogue in the Homily Book, however, this text is much more emotional, genuinely discursive and constructive in its pursuit of true love.

The inner journey on which the soul is being led by the body is both cognitive and emotional. The search for true love is pursued by the soul's questions and the body's answers. Sometimes the soul is emotionally moved by the body's answers, but it continues to ask questions in order to better understand issues such as: how can God love all men, even though some are non-Christians, and some are evil and thieves?[97] The fact that the soul asks and the body answers can be seen as emphasizing that if one seeks God, one must seek Him in body, matter, and history, and not just in the mind and abstract thinking. The pursuit of true love, however, is also explicated as synonymous with the pursuit of knowledge and rational understanding, and vice versa. The body specifically addresses the process of inner reflection and contemplation, by suggesting that one should reflect upon all known examples, as good deeds should be seen as

[93] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 146.

[94] For a comprehensive study, see Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 148–60.

[95] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, pp. 185–86.

[96] Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale*, p. 185.

[97] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, pp. 312–13; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, pp. 456–58.

examples, bad deeds as warnings.[98] The same moral lesson is given in *Konungs Skuggsjá*, where it is specified that the more examples one knows, the easier it is to judge a situation justly.[99]

Despite the difference between source- and target-text, the soul is aware of the cognitive process it is going through, when it declares its thirst for knowledge, desire to hear and learn more, and make use of the lessons:

> Nv hvat er þu talar, þa vil ek heyra, nema ok mer i nyt fœra, þvi at eigi er rett at hafa eyrað til nytrar, kenningar, en hiartað i oðrvm stað, litið dvgir eyrað, ef hvgrinn reikar, þvi at sva mæler prophetinn við gvð sialfan.[100]

> Now what you are saying, I want to hear, learn, and use appropriately, as it is not right to have the ears for useful lessons, and the heart in another place; the hearing is little worth, if the thought wavers, as this is what the prophet preaches with God Himself.

This passage is one of those that are expanded in the Old Norse, as the source text just reads:

> The more I hear, the more I wish to hear. Go on, I beg of you, and tell me what follows.[101]

The expansion includes proverbial-like expressions, which are reminiscent of the poem *Hávamál*. Such additions and expansions appear in other Old Norse translations, such as *Elis saga ok Rósamundu*, chapter 15.[102] The Old Norse version thus foregrounds to a great extent that cognitive appropriation and understanding lead the soul to the process of inner reflection and rumination, which has to be followed assiduously and with temperance, before the soul can reach God.[103]

[98] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 315; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 459.

[99] See for example *The King's Mirror*, p. 235. For a further discussion of the holistic representation of cognition in *The King's Mirror*, see Eriksen, 'Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge'.

[100] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 317; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, pp. 460–61.

[101] Hugues de Saint-Victor, *Soliloquy on the Earnest Money of the Soul*, p. 26.

[102] *Elis saga ok Rósamundu*, p. 33.

[103] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, pp. 320–21; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, pp. 464–65.

This inner movement is also highly emotional. The soul talks of its own shame and fears, love and desire to find true love.[104] The soul fears that the things that it should be ashamed of are so many. It addresses its own inner sins and urges them with great emotional intensity to leave and never come back, thus declaring its wholehearted will to be loyal in faith towards God. The body reassures the soul that God will always turn to it, if the soul stays faithful to itself and God.[105] The soul is now at peace both emotionally and in its thoughts:

> Ek kenni með mer stvndvm ynði sva mikit ok hvggan, fagnað ok gleði, at mer þickir, sem ek se oll onnvr, en ek var skommv [...] mitt briost hefir tekit nyian fagnað, samvizka min er i gleði, dvenar fyst at lita til liðinna meina, i ró er nv hvgr minn, birtiz vit mitt, lysiz hiarta mitt, fyst min stvndar a giæzlv heilagrar giœzkv.[106]

> I can sometimes feel such a great delight, and comfort, joy, and happiness, that it seems to me that I am something completely different from what I just was [...] my chest has felt new joys, my conscience is in delight, my will has ceased to look at passed pains, my thoughts are in peace, my reason is enlightened, my heart is lightened, my desire is towards the light of Holiness.

The faculties of the soul that are clearly demonstrated in this ascent are its cognition and reflection, its faith and will. The main sense of the passage is translated more or less literally, but it is slightly shortened, as the Latin reads:

> What is that sweetness which sometimes touches my consciousness, and so forcefully and pleasantly moves me that I begin somehow to be wholly changed and in some way to be transported? Suddenly I am renewed and am become totally different, and I experience a well-being beyond my ability to describe. My senses are exhilarated, all the misery of past sorrows falls away, my mind is exultant, and my perception enlightened. My heart also is cheered and my desires are pleased.[107]

The faculties of the soul are, however, not opposed to those of the body in the way they were in the Homily Book. The soul is given the responsibility for desire and longing, but not in an accusing manner, as in the Homily Book. The

[104] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 318; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 462.

[105] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 327; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 471.

[106] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 328; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 471.

[107] Hugues de Saint-Victor, *Soliloquy on the Earnest Money of the Soul*, p. 35.

soul is aware that her desires and inability to find true love (*sanna ast*) in the material world brings her restlessness in her search for love.

The body explicitly explains that when God created the soul in his own image, he gave it, not only will, but also consciousness (*vit*), thought (*ætlan*), and memory (*minni*), faith (*tru*), hope (*ván*), and love (*astsemð*), knowledge (*kenning*), and wisdom (*vizka*). The body emphasizes that if reason and sensibility are lacking, everything else is of little worth. These gifts testify to God's love of man above all other living creatures. In return, the soul is to love God, and all fellow Christians, and to share her love with all.[108] The availability of the choice to love God is, however, given to man not because of his strength, wisdom, or power, but because of God's mercy and mildness:[109]

> Se hversv mikil milldi vars drottins er: hann gerði þig, þa er þv vart eigi, til þers fagnaðar, at þv skylldir i hans riki þann stað fylla, er engillinn tyndi; hann gaf þer at vera vel, þvi at ecki matter þv þer fyrir vtan hans lán; hann gaf þer ætlan at hyggia gott ok vilia at vinna ok megin.[110]

> See how very mild our Lord is: he made you when you did not exist, for your happiness when taking that place in his kingdom which the angel lost; he made sure that you were well, as you would not have coped without what he has given you; he gave you [the faculty of] thought to think well and [the faculty of] will and force to work.

Further, God's love and mercy are there even if one makes mistakes, and He has shown this by giving the soul knowledge and wisdom, consciousness and memory. Knowing of His love can help one live a pure life, and remember that one's mistakes are never so great but that His mercy is not greater.[111] Rational knowledge and faith are thus distinguished from each other as two separate capacities, but they are also related as both are capacities of the soul.

The invisibility and immateriality of the soul are juxtaposed with the materiality of things. Material objects do not lead to true love, but to misery. The inner beauty of the soul, on the other hand, surpasses all visible things and can

[108] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 317; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 460.

[109] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 320; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 463.

[110] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 325; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 468.

[111] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 327; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 470.

be reached and seen by turning to the soul's thoughts (*hugr*).[112] The soul cannot be seen by the eyes: 'avga ser allt, ok ser þo eigi sialft sig' (the eyes see everything, but they cannot see themselves), but by turning to where the faculty of vision comes from.[113] True love can be seen only if the soul's eye turns inwards. In a similar manner God, who gives and is to be given true love, can be neither seen nor touched, as He comes only to one's consciousness:[114]

> hann kemr til aminningar en eigi til synar, til kenningar en eigi til handlanar, vilia þinn at teygia, en eigi alla fyst þina at gera, astarfyst ter hann þer, en eigi enn avmbvnar fvllnað.[115]

> He comes to the memory [the mind] and not to the vision, to the understanding and not to the action, to entice your will but not all your desires; affectionately he gives to you, but not yet full return.

The whole dialogue is thus an inner discourse, but of a different nature from the dialogue in the Homily Book. This time the inner movement is gentle, with both parts being compassionate and generous to each other. The body is given a compassionate voice when talking to the soul; it leads the soul with an appropriate speed and manner towards personal ascent, true love of itself, and God. The soul, on the other hand, demonstrates its ability to develop after inquiring and reflecting upon the given answer. Its inner movement is a cognitive and emotional development towards knowledge, Truth, and God. Personal faith and love by and for God are the main aspects of this dialogue, and self-awareness and the active pursuit of this process are explicitly promoted.

The similarities between the dialogue and *Konungs Skuggsjá*, among other texts, have already been mentioned, especially with regard to style and legislative terminology. This study reveals parallels between the two texts on yet another level, i.e. the significance of the processes of inward reflection and rumination in one's advance towards knowledge of oneself and the world, both

[112] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 310; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 454.

[113] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 310; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 454.

[114] The main sense of this passage is also preserved from the Latin, even though the translation is not word by word, see Hugues de Saint-Victor, *Soliloquy on the Earnest Money of the Soul*, p. 35.

[115] *Hauksbók*, ed. by Eirikur Jonsson and Finnur Jónsson, p. 328; *Vidræda likams ok salar*, ed. by Unger, p. 471.

in order to better execute one's professional duties (the judge), and also in one's personal ascent to God. The *King's Mirror* presents a very systematic pedagogy for the pursuit of knowledge, which includes sensory appropriation, cognitive internalization, memory, reflection, and rumination, and just application. Most significantly, acquired knowledge has to be used in one's pursuit of just conduct and decision-making, by the king, but also by any other member of the ruling/administrative class. All knowledge and wisdom are, further, provided by God, and it is primarily through fear and love of God that one is able to reach true knowledge and His love.[116]

A similar attitude is conveyed in yet another *speculum* text, which is known to have existed in Norway at more or less the same time. ~~Bjarne Audunsson,~~ one of the closest councillors of King Hákon V and one who had studied abroad, seems to have been the owner of a manuscript containing a version of a king's mirror by Ægidius Romanus, *De regimine principum*.[117] Ægidius Romanus was the teacher of the son of Philip III of France in the middle of the 1280s, and he seems to have written this textbook for this particular pupil.[118] It was precisely during the reign of this prince, the later Philip IV, that relations between Norway and France became more friendly and favourable than they had been for a long time. It is not surprising that a textbook written for Philip IV would have been of interest to the environment around the Norwegian king Hákon V.[119]

Some sections of this textbook are reminiscent of *Konungs Skuggsjá* and the body and soul dialogue in *Hauksbók*. It proclaims that the highest good that a prince could seek to achieve cannot be reached through physical desire, possession of material objects, or in honour, strength, or outer beauty; it can only be achieved by wise and virtuous behaviour and by pleasing God.[120] Wisdom is promoted as the most significant of the four cardinal virtues. Other virtues that are emphasized are justice, courage, temperance, and generosity, just as in *Konungs Skuggsjá*, as well as in *Hauksbók* as a whole (dialogue between courage and fear, for example).[121] Meta-discussions of various virtues and moral ideals were obviously relevant for the contemporary Norwegian-Icelandic readership. Ægidius Romanus combines this primary focus on inner reflection with

[116] Eriksen, 'Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge'.

[117] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, pp. 18–19.

[118] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, p. 7.

[119] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, p. 19.

[120] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, p. 20.

[121] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, p. 20.

the suggestion that the education of children should include the study of the seven liberal arts, natural philosophy, and metaphysics discussing theological, moral, economic, and political issues. All those subjects are important for all children, but especially princes and others who were to have leading social positions.[122] The study of some of these disciplines is also recommended in *Konungs Skuggsjá*, either explicitly or implicitly, by means of the very content of the text.[123] The intended audience of the text is also defined in a similar way:

> En þóat þat nafn sé heldr á, at konungs skuggsjón sé kallat, þa er hon þó slipuð öllum at heimild svá sem almenningr, þviat hverium er kosts í at sjá, er vill, ok skygna, hvárt er heldr vill, um siðu sjálfs síns eða alla aðra siðu, þá er þar má í finna.[124]

> Although the book is first and foremost a king's mirror, yet it is intended for everyone as a common possession; since whoever wishes is free to look into it and to seek information, as he may desire, about his own conduct, or any other type of manners which he may find discussed in this book.[125]

Even though the dialogue does not explicitly promote education in this way, the content of *Hauksbók* as a whole testifies clearly to its producers' and users' interest in and appreciation of knowledge. When compared to Ægidius Romanus's king's mirror and the Old Norse *Konungs Skuggsjá*, it becomes clear that just like them, *Hauksbók* emphasizes and promotes the combination of inner reflection and ascent with the presentation of a great variety of actual knowledge of history, geography, natural sciences, and other encyclopaedic genres. *Hauksbók* can thus be seen as a mirror, if not for princes and kings, then certainly for the king's men. As Sverrir Jakobsson points out, the manuscript conveys the collective world view of the intellectual elite of Haukr.[126] Haukr's collection of knowledge, or private library, may well have had implications for his career and social positioning. This study has however shown that, in addition, the manuscript elucidates the prescribed or actual inner intellectual and spiritual movement of its compiler as an individual. The focus on inner reflection in the dialogue, and the very existence of a whole 'section' of theological texts, suggests that *Hauksbók* as a collection of knowledge was not only Haukr's

[122] Johnsen, *En lærebok for konger*, p. 22.

[123] See for example *The King's Mirror*, trans. by Larson, p. 81, where the nature of recommended education is discussed.

[124] *Speculum Regale*, ed. by Keiser, Munch, and Unger, p. 3.

[125] *The King's Mirror*, trans. by Larson, p. 75.

[126] Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic Worldview', p. 22.

means of accomplishing a certain career, as is suggested by Ashman Rowe.[127] It may, in addition, have provided guidance throughout his career and fostered Haukr's personal development as a professional and capable lawman and a just and conscientious individual.[128] The very process of collecting and compiling texts over a long time and in several stages, may attest to this reading, as such terms as *colligere* and *compilare*, and the processes they signify, may be seen as metaphors for thinking and intellectual processes.[129]

The inner ascent that is conveyed by the dialogue and the manuscript as a whole may also certainly be seen in relation to Haukr's own spirituality and his Christian faith, as the pursuit of knowledge and love of God are commonly seen as related, both in Hugucio's own theology, and also in the two other mirror-texts available in Norway and Iceland at that time. The theological nature of the manuscript has been seen as puzzling in scholarship hitherto; Sverrir Jakobsson explains it as a consequence of the moulding of *Hauksbók* after Membrana Reseniana 6,[130] while Rudolf Simek sees it in relation to another possible model, the *Liber Floridus*.[131] If the manuscript is, however, seen as a mirror for Haukr and others belonging to the same social class, as suggested in this study, the theological texts of which the dialogue between body and soul forms a part would have been of primary importance for these individuals' cognitive, emotional, and spiritual progress in their pursuit of knowledge, true love, and God.

[127] The theological texts do not appear in one separate section, and are not written by the same scribes, but thematically they are related. Eirikur Jonnson and Finnur Jónsson classify them as 'theses of theological-geographic-ethnographic content', which includes *Elucidarius*, *Heimslýsing ok helgifræði* (knowledge about the world and learning about sanctities), and *Heimspeki ok helgifræði* (wisdom about the world and learning about sanctities), the dialogues between courage and dear and body and soul, and *Pronostica temporum*. For a full description of the section see Eirikur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson, 'Indledning', pp. cxiii–cxxviii.

[128] As discussed by Gunnar Harðarson in his chapter in this book, Haukr is known to have copied law texts as well, see Eken, 'Innleiing', p. xvi. A closer investigation of the law texts copied by Haukr with regard to the possibility to interpret, ruminate, and reflect upon the texts in order to find the true meaning of the content, would have been relevant for the present discussion, but is beyond the scope of this study. I have elsewhere studied the link between debates on love and marriage in literary texts as opposed to law texts in a manuscript contemporaneous with *Hauksbók*, DG 4–7, precisely by focusing on the process of interpretation and ethical reflection that both types of texts open for. See Eriksen, 'Arthurian Ethics', pp. 175–98.

[129] See *Collections in Context*, ed. by Fresco and Hedeman.

[130] Sverrir Jakobsson, *Við og veröldin*, pp. 49–50.

[131] Simek, *Altnordische Kosmographie*, pp. 377–83.

Conclusion

In this essay I have studied two different Old Norse dialogues between body and soul in their respective manuscript and cultural contexts. One of the dialogues is a translation of the Old French poem *Un samedi par nuit*, preserved in the Old Norwegian Homily Book from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and the other is a translation of Hugues de Saint-Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, preserved in *Hauksbók* from the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Both dialogues discuss the relationship between the body and the soul, their respective responsibilities, and other issues such as confession, punishment, evil, and true love. They treat the subjects differently and describe the relationship between the body and soul differently. The translation of *Un samedi* is aggressive and accusing in nature, focusing on punishment and the negative consequences of living sinfully; the translation of *Soliloquium* is more peaceful and reflective, promoting the significance of love of one's own soul, and of God. The differences may certainly be explained by the differences between the two original texts. They may also, however, be seen as resulting from the different intended functions of the two manuscripts. The first text was possibly read in a schooling context for priests in an institution affiliated with the Augustinians in Bergen, and the harsher tone was possibly necessary in order for the text to serve its purpose as a warning against sinful thinking and living, which was essential for the formation of the future priests. The second, on the other hand, was copied by the lawman Haukr, aristocrat and member of the Norwegian-Icelandic intellectual and political elite, and was possibly useful in his career as a political figure, as well as in his personal ascent and inner ethical development. The two texts certainly have different pedagogies. Both of these were, however, common in the Middle Ages. The ideal balance between fear and love for God as a means towards temperance, justice, and wisdom, is mentioned and debated explicitly in Old Norse texts, such as the dialogue between courage and fear, which appears in *Hauksbók*, and in *Konungs Skuggsjá*, which quotes the Bible, Proverbs 9. 10:

> En ef þú vilt nema mannvit, þá vil ek sýna þér þar grundvöll, er upphaf er allrar speki, eptir þvi sem einn höfuð spekingr hefir mælt: þat er upphaf speki at hræðask almáttkan guð. En hann skal þó eigi hræðask sem úvin heldr með ástarhræzlu [...] nú með þvi at þú leitar, hvat stafrot eða grundvöllr sé til spektarnáms, þá er þetta eitt satt upphaf ok ekki annat. En sá er þetta nemr ok gætir, þa missir sá eigi sannrar spektar ok allrar gœzku[132]

[132] *Speculum Regale*, ed. by Keiser, Munch, and Unger, p. 4.

> Now if you seek understanding, I will show you the basis and the beginning of all wisdom, as a great and wise man once expressed it: to fear Almighty God, this is the beginning of wisdom. But he is not to be feared as an enemy, but rather with the fear of love [...] Now if you wish to know what are the beginnings and the first steps in the pursuit of wisdom, this is the true beginning and there is none other. And whoever learns this and observes it shall not be wanting in true knowledge or in any form of goodness.[133]

The two dialogues translate this ideal balance between fear and love of God differently, by representing the relationship between body and soul differently, adapting it to the target context and the intended pedagogy and purpose of the texts and manuscripts.

Despite the differences, both dialogues convey complex theological theories which were extensively discussed in the major European intellectual centres such as the monastery of St Victor and the Universities of Paris and Bologna. These issues are here addressed in terms which are not always consistent, nor are they defined as *terms*.[134] The texts are made suitable for two different everyday situations — the schooling of priests at the beginning of the thirteenth century and the personal formation of the intellectual secular elite a century later. The texts thus elucidate an invisible link between theoretical theology and daily situations in the far north. As Ian P. Wei suggests, it is significant to see and study the links between abstract philosophy and theology, and ethical and moral theology applied in everyday situations.[135] This study argues for the significance and existence of this link even in the far north, where individuals were not guided by Parisian masters on their path to salvation through public disputations and sermons. The individuals in medieval Norway, serving in both ecclesiastical and secular institutions, would have been guided on this inner and immaterial journey by texts such as the two dialogues, which echo the theoretical theology promoted by the masters in Paris.

Another common feature of the dialogues is their promotion of the individual's inner reflection and intellectual labour, be it a future priest or a public

[133] *The King's Mirror*, trans. by Larson, pp. 77–78.

[134] Note that a similar tendency, i.e. of simplification or even lack of terminology as such, is also attested in *The King's Mirror*, when it comes to both political theology and pedagogy. Sverre Bagge, *The Political Thought*, pp. 218–25, and Eriksen, 'Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge'. This may thus have been a common writing/translating strategy in Norway and Iceland at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, elucidating the concerns as well as the competence of this target-culture.

[135] Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, p. 1 and Chapter 4.

political figure. The two manuscripts, as mentioned, were written during two significant periods: the first one, for the development of the ecclesiastical structures in the new Nordic province, and the second for the political development (ending with a collapse in 1319) of the Norwegian monarchy. Because they both focus on inner reflection and intellectual processes, albeit in different ways, this study emphasizes the similarities in the intellectual activities which were expected to be internalized and perfected by, on the one hand, a priest, and on the other, a secular lawman. This study also demonstrates that one's individual ethical development, search for knowledge, cognition, emotionality, and spirituality were essential elements in the making of both clerical and secular intellectual culture in medieval Norway and Iceland during the thirteenth and at the beginning of the fourteenth centuries.

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