Title

'A Most Splendid Tree': Hákon Hákonarson and the Norwegian Royal Court as a Site of Literary Production

Author

Jacobs, Molly

Publication Date

2014

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

'A Most Splendid Tree': Hákon Hákonarson and the Norwegian Royal Court as a Site of Literary Production

By

Molly Anne Jacobs

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Scandinavian Languages and Literatures
and Medieval Studies
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

John Lindow, Chair
Jonas Wellendorf
David F. Hult

Fall 2014

ABSTRACT

'A Most Splendid Tree': Hákon Hákonarson and
the Norwegian Royal Court as a Site of Literary Production

by

Molly Anne Jacobs

Doctor of Philosophy in Scandinavian Languages and Literatures

and Medieval Studies

University of California, Berkeley

Professor John Lindow, Chair

This dissertation explores the development of the concept of the royal court in medieval Norway through an analysis of thirteenth-century literary portrayals of courts. The thirteenth century was a period of great change in Norway, characterized by centralization and increasing royal authority. There has been a great deal of discussion as to how shifting ideas of kingship factored into social change during this period, but less about how new royal ideologies were spread to and adopted by the populace. I contend that the royal court was a crucial vector for the spread of new ideas, and that an examination of literature produced for and consumed at the Norwegian royal court will help explain how new ideologies were internalized. My argument consists of case studies of three of the most important literary genres at the court of Hákon IV Hákonarson (r. 1217-1263): skaldic poetry, the translated romance, and didactic literature. Chapter One examines skaldic poetry composed for Hákon, comparing the strategies used by Snorri Sturluson and his nephews, Óláfr and Sturla Þórðarsynir, to maintain the relevance of their craft for thirteenth-century audiences, whose world was quite different from the masculine, martial culture depicted in skaldic verse. Chapter Two examines the translated romances whose origins can be most firmly located at Hákon's court. It links romance themes with many important issues of Hákon's day, including the nature of kingship, the place of women at court, and the increasing importance of education for the courtier. Chapter Three looks at *Konungs skuggsjá* as an example of didactic literature and a witness of original Norwegian thinking about kingship and the royal court. Not only does it serve as a corrective to the dysfunctional kingship portrayed in the romances, it links the king's authority to God, and thus the court to heaven. Finally, I examine the impact of these ideas through a brief discussion of a late thirteenth-century courtier's manual, *Hirðskrá*.

For my family

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have many people to thank for their help in seeing this project to completion. Deep thanks goes to my advisor, John Lindow, who taught me so much about a wonderful field, including not to fear skaldic poetry. Many thanks to Jonas Wellendorf, who has helped me expand my appreciation of Old Norse literature and whose bibliographical knowledge never ceases to amaze me. Thanks also go to David Hult, who helped me shape this project into something much finer than what it started as. Thanks are due to the Scandinavian Department at Berkeley, particularly my fellow graduate students, and the ISSA staff, for their understanding, support, and, at times, commiseration. The Graduate Medievalists at Berkeley and all those at the Medieval Studies Colloquia were enormously helpful in their willingness to read my drafts and offer commentary. Many thanks to my friends, particularly those from SLC, who kept me sane and entertained throughout this long process and who have made California a wonderful place to be. Thanks also to Avy, who has been with me the whole way; to Tim Hardy, for his incisive insights and peerless commentary; and to Dr. Christopher Wiley, a Viking among scientists. Mike was an excellent study buddy, while Karl was instrumental in helping me decide what to leave on the floor. Finally, I owe so much to my family, particularly my parents, who taught me the value of education and who have been unfailingly supportive. But most of all, to Will. I cannot thank you enough.

INTRODUCTION

The thirteenth century looms large in the history of Norway as a sort of Golden Age. It was the period when the disruptive years of the Civil War finally came to a close, leading to a time of peace and prosperity in which the Norwegian kingdom reached its greatest extent, stretching all the way across the Atlantic to Greenland.[1] And yet the material record of this period is sparse—a handful of manuscripts, a collection of parchment fragments found tucked into bookbindings, parts of stone buildings—foundations, additions, traces of a Gothic window peaking above wooden floorboards. What is perhaps the most recognizable monument from this period, Håkonshallen, was used for centuries as a storeroom until its likely origins were discovered and it was restored, the distinctive stair-step gables reconstructed according to how they were thought to look in the thirteenth-century.[2]

Håkonshallen, constructed during the reign of king Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263), is part of a royal complex of stone structures in Bergen that today includes Rosenkrantz Tower, first constructed by Hákon's son Magnús Lagabœtir [Law-mender] (r. 1263-1280) and the foundations of stone outbuildings and other structures destroyed over the years, including during the Danish occupation and use of the site as a military defense. In Hákon's day, the site would have included Christ Church Cathedral, which housed the relics of St. Sunnifa and where Hákon would later be buried, and would have been watched over by Sverresborg, a stone fortress built by Sverrir, Hákon's grandfather and the founder of his royal dynasty.

This royal complex, growing slowly from the reign of Óláfr kyrri [calm] (r. 1066-1093), would have dominated one side of the waterway into the medieval town of Bergen, standing as a physical reminder of the power and authority of the king. Just the building materials would have been impressive to the average Norwegian, whose home, barn, even parish church would have been constructed from wood from Norway's ubiquitous forests. While large medieval churches were constructed of stone, including several in Bergen, Håkonshallen was something different as the largest secular stone building constructed during the middle ages. The hall thus stands as a nostalgic and a nationalistic image for a lost period of glory, when Norway was an independent monarchy and, essentially, an empire. It is also a symbol of a very real set of political, social, and economic developments that took place during the Scandinavian Middle Ages,[3] in which the reign of Hákon played a key role.

The medieval period in Norway is characterized by the consolidation of power. The Icelandic sagas tell a story of the early phase of this trend, when Haraldr hárfagri [fair-hair] took control of the country from local chieftains in the ninth century and became the first

1 Cf. Bagge 1993: "This was a period of foreign expansion, internal stability, apparently fairly efficient and orderly government, and a considerable cultural achievement" (160).

2 For the history of Håkonshallen, see Ågotnes and Øye.

3 Typically defined as 1066 to the Reformation (c. 1550).

ruler of all of Norway, thus driving the settlement of Iceland by those who did not wish to bow to a king. In reality, however, there were probably many reasons why Norwegians left their homes to settle Iceland, and Norwegian kings would not have sole authority for centuries to come. Norway's laws allowing inheritance of the throne by any son of the king meant that kingship was often shared between two or even three kings, and the existence of powerful noble families such as the jarls of Hlaðir in the north meant that the country was often divided between a number of leaders up until the end of the Civil War period in 1240.

In the thirteenth century, however, and particularly after 1240, the idea that one king should hold sole authority over the entire country became entrenched (Helle 1972, 562). That this happened despite the relatively weak financial base of the monarchy,[4] in comparison to both other European countries and the other power players in the country—the Church and the aristocracy—is due in part to shifting ideas of kingship. The idea of a king granted authority by the grace of God was introduced at least in the twelfth century, but it only later became a powerful tool,[5] especially when kings quarrelled with the bishops over authority—in particular King Sverrir and, to a lesser extent, his grandson Hákon Hákonarson.[6]

Power, once diffuse and often localized, became in many ways centralized and vertically structured (Bagge 1986, 58). The king's authority grew not just because of what he was—the Lord's anointed—but what he claimed for himself.[7] During this period, the monarchy claimed increasing control of the judicial process, law-making, and the utilization of violence.[8] Corporal and capital punishments were replaced in many instances by fines that proved an important source of revenue for the crown, and revenge killings were outlawed in favor of prosecution.[9] The role of the nobility was crucial in this shift. The authority of the monarchy was able to grow in part because of what it could offer to the nobility: the prestige of royal service, which gave access to positions with monetary compensation, like that of *sýslumaðr* [sheriff]. Thus, the aristocracy morphed from a land-based nobility to a service-

4 Helle 1981, 177. By the end of this period, however, the wealth of the monarchy had increased dramatically. See Bagge 2010, 119-20.

5 Bagge 2003, 469.

6 Brégaint 2009 sees this shift as moving from the idea of the king "as a part of society and subject to its rules, to a king increasingly connected to God and distanced from human institutions" (71), implying a change from a concept of ascending power, where the king gets his power from the people, to a concept of descending power, where the king is granted power from God. It is true that the local *þings* [assemblies] had less effective authority once Hákon's law of succession was passed in 1260. The earlier law of succession, from 1163/4, was never used (Bagge 2010, 167).

7 Helle 1981 attributes the growing influence of the monarchy in part to "the existence of a relatively strong personal royal power" (180), which is in opposition to earlier ideas held by historians such as Halvdan Koht, Edvard Bull, and Johan Schreiner, which saw the monarchy as a tool for the exercise of power for both lay and clerical elite. See Helle 1972, 11ff.

8 Bagge 1993, 160. Nedkvitne suggests that the centralization of the judicial process was due to "the increasing monopolization of legitimate violence" by the monarchy, likely because "ordinary people preferred to submit their cases to the King's judge because he had the power to make the verdicts respected" (290). Nedkvitne further argues that the king's men "actively undertook to prosecute serious crimes" (290), which may be in part because of the fines that could be collected.

9 This increased royal authority in two ways: those accused of a crime were under the king's protection. Furthermore, the fines that the convicted would pay would increase the royal coffers.

based nobility, their power now coming primarily from the king rather from traditional local power bases.[10]

The centralization of authority necessitated the development of government to manage and organize the increased responsibilities that had come to depend on the monarchy. In this period, then, the service aristocracy acted both as advisors to the king, and the means through which the king's power was expressed (Helle 1972, 562 & 569). For the nobility, proximity to the king meant greater influence over the now more centralized political decision-making, as well as a number of benefits granted to the king's retinue.[11] While the relationship between king and nobility was generally cooperative, particularly in comparison to other parts of Europe,[12] it shifted during this period from personal ties to a more formal structure as the king came to take on the role of head of state (Bagge 2003, 467). This increased stratification was felt at all levels of society; as the king differentiated himself from the nobility, so too did the distance between nobility and peasantry increase (Bagge 2003, 473).

The overall effect of these changes was, by the time of Norway's unification with Sweden in 1319, to produce a social structure that looked much more like that of Christian Europe. Some of these changes are likely due to exposure to European culture beginning with Viking-Age contacts and particularly the penetration of Christianity through Norwegian culture, but many have been attributed to purposeful action by individual kings, most notably Hákon.[13] Hákon is widely seen as undertaking a program of 'Europeanization' during his reign in an attempt to bring Norway closer to the rest of Europe. This project is viewed as enacted on multiple fronts, including strengthening ties of trade, diplomacy, and marriage with mainland and insular Europe,[14] as well as embracing cultural trends from abroad, as in the English-style architecture of Håkonshallen but also, and perhaps most importantly, in the composition and translation of literature that served to introduce cultural values like chivalry and courtesy, as well as advocate for particular political ideologies.

Literature is widely considered to be an important vehicle for social change in the middle ages through the spread of new ideas and ideologies to a variety of audiences. This role has been attributed to a variety of literary forms, including histories, chronicles,[15] and royal

10 Helle 1981, 174; Wærdahl considers this shift to be "one of the most important characteristic features of the state-building process in the Norwegian realm" (111-12). Bagge 2003 notes the cultural shift that had to accompany these social changes, include the expansion of the concept of honor to "include service to the king and the system of social rank" as well as the adoption of obedience and service as virtues "in a secular as well as a religious sense (485-6).

11 Helle 1972, 571; Wærdahl 107. These are discussed in Chapter Three.

12 See Helle 1972.

13 That Hákon took initiative on this front is a generally held position; see for example Eriksen 2013, 5; Lönnroth et. al. 2003, 509; Bagge 1993, 161.

14 Hákon's daughter Kristín wed Castilian prince Felipe in 1258.

15 Ferrari argues that in Sweden, the *Erikskröniken* served to "show the Swedish knights' adequacy to the ideal standards of chivalry, as they are presented in romances and in the foreign courtly chronicles" (71) and thereby "[promote] the ongoing process of formation of the ideology, of the specific viewpoint and of the self-consciousness of the aristocracy, and in this way [contribute] to the affirmation of its political and cultural hegemony on the Swedish society" (79).

letters,[16] but what has attracted the most attention for the high and late medieval period is the *roman cortois*, the courtly romance. The introduction of chivalry, and its effects on the image and self-image of the European nobility, was an extremely important intellectual and social shift in the middle ages (Kaeuper 99). The ideas of chivalry and courtesy, and the set of social values that accompany them, sometimes called "courtly culture," are considered to have been transmitted primarily through the courtly romance.[17] It is, therefore, extremely significant that the first translations of romance into Old Norse took place at a royal court that had a strong interest in links to the Europe, as well as in a society that was undergoing significant shifts.

While some shifts were a result of processes that had long been underway, others are seen as a result of exposure to the new ideas in literature that the king commissioned. Donald Sunnen argues that Hákon saw courtly literature as a means of royal legitimation through identification with King Arthur, while Stefka G. Eriksen suggests that the romances, with their popular appeal, "functioned as the perfect tool of royal propaganda for a king who needed to master a politically new, and geographically larger, domain" (2007, 131). New ideas of kingship linked with romance therefore necessitated a new idea of the society more generally, and it is the view of most scholars that the introduction of the romances was, at least in part, to introduce the nobility to ideas of chivalry, even to educate them in its ways.[18] This served both to link the Norwegian nobility more closely with that of other European countries through a shared culture and values,[19] as well as to further legitimize ideas of kingship based on European, Christian ideals. According to many scholars, this was effective: Lönnroth et. al. state that "a new and more aristocratic lifestyle spread with the romance from Norway all over the Scandinavian world" (510), Bagge that identification with romances aided in the separation of the Norwegian nobility from the rest of society that became particularly noticeable in the late medieval period (1993, 171; 2000, 41).

Despite the general consensus that literature in the thirteenth century, particularly translations of romances, was an important means for Hákon to strengthen and broaden royal authority and bind the nobility to himself, there has been far less attention paid to how specifically this process was effected. In discussions of literature and ideology in this period, the bulk of attention has been paid to developing ideas of kingship,[20] perhaps because of their accessibility through diplomas, laws, kings' sagas, and the didactic-political treatise from the

16 See Brégaint 2009 for the argument that royal diplomas, as documents designed to be read publicly, had the potential to be used as royal propaganda; in the case of the Norway, for the developing idea of the king more closely linked to God than to the rest of society. Similarly, Nedkvitne argues that the introduction of written evidence and verdicts aided in increasing royal authority over the judicial process (296).

17 Jaeger 14; Bumke 8. There were, however, other types of literature that could expose audiences to ideas of courtliness. For the use of *Erikskrönikan* as a vector for courtly culture to Sweden, see Småberg 2012. Nicholls provides a thorough overview of courtesy books.

18 See for example Meissner, Leach 1966, and Lönnroth et. al. 2003.

19 Though Malcolm Vale rejects the idea of a "courtly culture" that is sharply delineated from the rest of society (248), he is of the opinion that "sufficient similarities existed between courts for one to argue for a community of shared values, norms, and conventions" (297).

20 For example Andersson 1999, Ármann Jakobsson 1997, Bagge 1987 & 1996, Brégaint 2009, Eriksen 2007, Orning 2008; Larrington 2009 focuses on the women at Hákon's court but in her argument this is very much tied up with legitimacy and inheritance of the monarchy.

mid-thirteenth century, *Konungs skuggsjá* [*The King's Mirror*]. While tracing the shifts in the medieval Norwegian understanding of kingship is indeed extremely important for understanding the changes in Norwegian society and the thirteenth century as a crucial period of state development, a study of the king alone does not explain the flow of power thoroughly, even late in the centralizing process. This is because the king does not rule alone, nor does he claim to; during this period kings had a relatively close, cooperative relationship with their nobility.[21] The nobility, in particular the king's retinue, was an important means by which the king exercised his authority, both through promoting ideals that the royal service was highly desirable, thus attracting members of the aristocracy to his retinue, but also by placing members of the aristocracy in bureaucratic appointments around the country as his representatives. The king's retinue helps him to define and implement his authority and, as an apparatus of control, eventually develops into the apparatus of state—the government.

As the expectations and ideology of kingship shift, so too will they necessarily shift for the people who surround the king on a daily basis and are key in ensuring his authority.[22] The royal court served as a meeting-place for king and nobility, and is therefore the prime place where new ideas could be disseminated from king to nobility through the reading or performance of literature. Furthermore, the court is the place where the adoption of new ideas could be demonstrated both to the king and to other members of the court through means such as dress, behavior, and proximity to the king. This makes the concept of the royal court an ideal focus for an investigation into how literature played a role in social change, particularly because of the centrality of the concept of the court in romance literature. The ever-important value of *corteisie* is, after all, predicated upon there being a *cort*.[23] If this literature was indeed to serve as a new model for aristocracy, then it is necessary to understand the nature of the concept as it was presented in the romance and the demands it made on those within it, particularly the king and the aristocracy. Furthermore, as the romances had to go through a process of translation and were destined for an audience outside their original cultural milieu, it becomes necessary to examine what exactly were the ideals presented and what ideals they were intended to replace.

The ideology of the court as presented through literature has not yet been addressed in depth. The historical relationship between the king and his retinue has been discussed in places, at times with reference to *Konungs skuggsjá*,[24] but there has to date not been a detailed examination of the portrayal of this relationship and where it takes place as portrayed in the various literary genres that were consumed at this time. When people characterize the role of literature in the relationship between the king and nobility, it is typically discussed as part of

21 See Helle 1972.

22 It is of course possible, though less likely in the case of the Norway, that a changing aristocracy could create new demands and expectations of their king.

23 The Old Norse terms that approximate this concept, *kurteisi* and *hœverska*, are borrowings from French and German, respectively, and thus do not have the connotation of manners appropriate for court. There are a few words in this semantic field based on *hirð*, including *hirðsiðir* and *hirðmannasiðr*, but these are used less frequently and less widely than the borrowed terms. *Strengleikar* and *Tristrams saga* both use the borrowed words and *hirð*-based words, indicating an early translation strategy for a foreign concept.

24 For example, Orning 2008, Bagge 2010. Helle 1972 is the only full-length monograph dealing with the men who surround and support the king, but it focuses on the role of these men in political decision-making.

the "civilizing" function that, according to Norbert Elias, the courts perform in the development of the aristocracy. In his view, the close quarters of European castles necessitated what we might call "refined" behaviors, in order for inhabitants to co-exist peacefully,[25] a process spurred further by the king's gradual monopoly of violence. Thus the warrior elite gradually transformed into a courtier class, a process which culminated in the early modern period (2012, 429ff). This idea may be seen for example in the work of Sverre Bagge, who builds on Elias's view of seeing state formation as "the result of struggles between various centres of power, ending in the victory of one particular dynasty, which then leads to the creation of a new social organization, which in turn produces far-reaching changes in culture, manners, and behaviour" (1993, 160). The goal of these changes is to turn "unruly and quarrelsome warriors into obedient royal servants" (171). Bagge suggests that the romances provided examples of the new types of desired behavior, which were intended to "unite the aristocracy under [the crown's] leadership, teaching them respect for the king, urging them to mutual solidarity, partly by rules directly aiming at this purpose and partly by emphasizing the difference between them and the population in general" (171). Furthermore, Hans Jacob Orning, who also draws upon Elias's model of state formation, argues that the characters within the romances themselves may be seen as civilizing figures, thus serving as models in more than one way.[26]

Elias's views have been highly influential in court studies, and have been expanded backwards to apply more thoroughly to social developments in the medieval period. His theories have garnered criticism, both in terms of his understanding of the function of the medieval court, but also because his work is based on Freudian psychology.[27] Elias likens the civilizing process to the process of reaching maturity, envisioning medieval (and earlier) people as immature and ruled by emotions (409). Royal courts, therefore, were a key way through which the nobility was able to learn to control their passions because of the expectations for behavior that were placed on those who desired to stay and benefit from opportunities afforded by proximity to the king.

There are certain resonances in the Norwegian process of state-formation to Elias's theory: the crown indeed worked to monopolize violence through the outlawing of revenge killings and the levy of fines rather than corporal punishment for many crimes. It also seems probable that romance literature was used as a means to promote state-sponsored change in

25 Nicholls makes a similar argument for the origin of courtesy, but locates it in the monastery rather than the castle, as an outgrowth of the Benedictine Rule. Jaeger also sees courtliness as originating in the church, but as part of an attempt to educate young men for state administration, instead of related to living conditions (9).

26 He argues that "Tristram can be regarded as a civilizing agent, bringing courteous manners to the rest of the world" (2012, 95) and echoes the sentiment of Jaeger and Elias that courtly culture, here literature in particular, "was the expression of a movement directed at taming the reckless assertiveness of the European nobility" (Jaeger 3, qtd. in Orning 2013, 116). Halvorsen 1973 argues that it was the introduction of European culture as a whole (including "material culture, the manners and customs of European lay society, the ecclesiastical discipline of the Roman Church, and new legal concepts," as well as "courtly literature") that "was imposed on a presumably not particularly docile population" by the monarchy and served to "modif[y] the life of the people to a considerable extent" (22).

27 For example Jaeger, who sees courtly society as playing a civilizing role, but does not agree with the Freudian underpinnings of Elias's thesis. Duindam has raised important critiques about Elias's thesis more generally.

values that would serve to support a new, stronger monarchy. However, it is deeply problematic to think of medieval people as less mature or complex individuals than people were at any other point in history. Furthermore, the use of romance to restrain behavior, particularly violence, is questionable. As Kaeuper notes, "chivalry was a code of violence . . . just as thoroughly as it was a code of restraint" (99-100). And as several scholars have pointed out, there is a decided *lack* of interest in many of the more refined aspects of the romances at the expense of fight scenes in the Old Norse translations.[28]

Instead of a teleological process of "civilizing" it is more useful to think of the effects of the introduction of romance literature in Norway as an ideological shift whereby the king comes to be seen as a source of both social and cultural capital, through his ability to reward his men in various ways and his ability to acquire and have translated fashionable new literary texts from abroad. This grants an important role to literature in the processes of centralization and state formation without infantilizing medieval people. While there are indeed elements of behavioral change advocated for in *Konungs skuggsjá*, if not actually practiced (Bagge 2003, 473), these are fewer and less extensive than those advised in many of the continental courtesy books. Moreover, the behavioral guidelines of *Konungs skuggsjá* are geared towards worthiness of being in the presence of a king, who has a special relationship with God, through learning the rules and expectations.[29] These guidelines are therefore more about learning, observation, and wisdom, themes that pervade the text, than they are about the repression of passions.

The royal court, therefore, functioned as a place where new ideas could be transmitted from the king to the aristocracy. Furthermore, it was where the aristocracy could accrue social and cultural capital from the king by means such as participating in government, demonstrating public mastery of new codes of knowledge and behavior, and acquiring copies of the new romances that could be read in their own halls. How the royal court was portrayed in these texts is therefore crucial to our understanding of how the identity of the nobility shifted and how its members understood themselves and their relationship with the king. The royal court also has special qualities that make it more instructive as to the social changes that were taking place at this period than simply examining, for example, the aristocracy, as it is a meeting-place not just of king and nobility, but a meeting of conceptual areas. For "court" is a nebulous term that does not just refer to a place, nor to a specific subset of the aristocracy—it encompasses, but is not limited to, both.

The High Medieval Court

Defining the "court" has been a difficult proposition in both the medieval and the modern period. In his *De Nugis Curialium*, Walter Map muses on his experiences at the English court thusly:

> in curia sum, et de curia loquor, et nescio, Deus scit, quid sit curia. Scio tamen quod

28 Sunnen 99; see also Marianne Kalinke's various discussions of the translation and adaptation of *Erec et Enide*.
29 See Chapter Three.

> curia non est tempus; temporalis quidem est, mutabilis et uaria, localis et erratica, nunquam in eodem statu permanens. In recessu meo totam agnosco, in reditu nichil aut modicum inuenio quod dereliquerim; extraneam uideo factus alienus. Eadem est curia, sed mutata sunt membra . . . Multitudo certe sumus infinita, uni soli placere contendens: et hodie sumus una multitudo, cras erimus alia; curia uero non mutatur, eadem semper est. (2)
>
> ["In the court I exist and of the court I speak, and what the court is, God knows, I know not. I do know however that the court is not time; but temporal it is, changeable and various, space-bound and wandering, never continuing in one state. When I leave it, I know it perfectly: when I come back to it I find nothing or but little of what I left there: I am become a stranger to it, and it to me. The court is the same, its members are changed . . . We courtiers are assuredly a number, an infinite one, and all striving to please one individual. But to-day we are one number, to-morrow we shall be a different one: yet the court is not changed; it remains always the same." (3)]

Map's wandering, humorous discussion of the court—he also compares it to a hydra, plays off Boethius's description of Fortune in stating that the only constancy to the court is its inconstancy, and parodies Augustine and John of Salisbury[30]—despite its levity, is useful not only as a window into late 12th century impressions as to the nature of the royal court and what life was like there, but also a discussion of a courtly milieu—Plantagenet England—that was probably greatly influential to the development of the Norwegian court in the thirteenth century. Eventually, Map settles on the court being a place, with the specification that a place is "quicquid aliquid uel aliqua in se continet" (8) ["whatever contains a thing or things in itself" (9)]. As Map's discussion then veers off into a different direction, it is up to the reader to determine what those things are that constitute the court as a place: it seems to be the ever-shifting numbers of courtiers, of which he numbers himself at the opening of his work. These courtiers are bound together by their common purpose of pleasing one individual, and by their status as a literary community, if we take the "we" as referring to both Map and his audience.

Historians in recent years have come to embrace the shifting, ambiguous nature of the medieval royal court. As a group of people it is comprised not only of the people who make up the government, but the people who make up the household of the king. It is widely agreed that there is a domestic nature to the court, though what specifically varies; Rita Costa Gomes states that the court is "between the government of the household and the government of the public thing" (3) while Malcolm Vale argues that the court took its shape from, but was not synonymous with, the ruler's household (15-16).[31] Vale claims that the court in fact "defies analysis in institutional terms" (16), which has led to attempts to understand it in other ways. Elias, for example, speaks of a "constellation of needs" wherein the interdependence of the

30 See James's notes to this section, as well as p. xxxiii of the Introduction.

31 Though see Costa Gomes 16-17 for a discussion of earlier scholarship, which attempted to separate the domestic functions from the bureaucratic functions.

aristocracy generated the court, which was "created over and over again as a form of human relationships outlasting individuals" (435). Similarly, Costa Gomes sees the court as a network better understood as a process than an entity, "leading to the constitution of a centre from which there emerge determined values and categories that are shared diversely by society both in time and space" (2).

Where this center is considered to be, both in the medieval and the modern period, is the person of the king.[32] By the thirteenth century, "where the king is" implies quite a significant organization: people to carry out the bureaucratic business of the state, priests and clerics for daily Mass and the sacraments, and all the organization for managing the king's daily life, including food and drink, clothing, money, transportation and the managing of the large amount of furniture, hangings, windows and other household items that travelled with the king—as well as support systems for all of these people. The court, therefore, serves as a site for distribution of resources—both basic necessities for those who accompany the king, as well as more rarified things such as royal favor, justice, or office that would attract people to court (Cubitt 2, Nelson 56).

Janet L. Nelson, in discussing the nature of Charlemagne's court, sees it as a community, bound by shared experiences, the rhythms of court life, texts that were read and discussed, and oral histories that constituted the court as an aural as well as a textual community (47 ff). These parameters are broadly applicable throughout Europe, helping shape the culture of high medieval courts. The community aspect of the courts had broader implications; the tendency for young nobles to stay at courts for fostering or education, according to Paul Fouracre, aided in the cohesion of the country as well as the dissemination of ideas (373). Yet the court was more than simply a vector for ideas, literature, and art; its needs could "influence and shape the ebb and flow of artistic production" (Vale 167). According to Vale, the arts at court served as "both a symptom and an agent of cultural change —as an active as well as a passive index of the evolution of taste, of the representation of power, and the development of dynastic ideologies" (165). This combination of active shaping and passive indication is precisely what is happening in terms of literary production at the Norwegian court in the thirteenth century.

The court in Norway

As with much of Europe, the history of the development of the court in Norway is a process of development from war-band to "the kind of establishment, populated by courtiers, favoured by Renaissance rulers" (Vale 56-7). Our earliest glimpse of what this war-band may have looked like is perhaps Tacitus's famous description of the *comitatus* of the Germanic peoples in *Germania*. A man's retinue is his "renown and glory" (82).[33] It is characterized both by competition, between retainers for rank, and between leaders for the relative status of the retinue, as well as by loyalty: "principes pro victoria pugnant, comites pro principe" (80)

32 Costa Gomes 3, Vale 31.

33 References and Latin quotations are from Tacitus 1988; English translations are from Tacitus 1999.

["the leaders fight for victory, the retainers for their leader" (83)] and living after one's leader dies in battle is said to be shameful (80). Men seek the furtherance of their leader's glory through their actions in battle, and are rewarded with banquets and the spoils of war; the size of the bands thus depend on the availability of such goods, and men are said to seek out bands that are currently engaging in war (80). Despite some striking similarities with concepts and social structures found in later Germanic literature, such as *Beowulf* and skaldic verse, this description must be used with caution; as J. B. Rives points out, it is likely to be colored by Roman sensibilities and preoccupations.[34] While the general concept of a war-band with a leader seems to be well-established both culturally and linguistically in Germanic society, the use of Tacitus to determine the specific characteristics of these war-bands should be done with caution (*Germania* 1999, 184).

Literary evidence in from Scandinavia picks up with skaldic verse in the ninth century. Here, the term *drótt* is used to refer a warrior band, generally in close proximity to mention of a chieftain, suggesting, according to John Lindow, the existence of the concept of a military group "almost always tied to a specific leader, most often a king or a jarl" (1975a, 26). Skaldic poetry, in particular the highly stylized *dróttkvætt* [*drótt* meter], was used to record the deeds and accomplishments of the lord and his men, further linking the war-band as a literary community.[35] The sense of *drótt* gradually began to broaden, perhaps as early as the late tenth century; by the twelfth century taking on the more generalized meaning in poetry of "men, retainers" (28-9). As skaldic verse is for the *drótt*, about people in the *drótt,* this may not be surprising, but it also suggests the historical shift underway: the shift of the lord's retinue from primarily being a war-band to taking on a larger, more domestic structure.

In the eleventh century, the term *hirð* begins to replace *drótt* as the term for the lord's retinue. According to Lindow, this is likely because "the king's entourage simply became too large and complicated to be called *drótt* any longer" (1975b, 324). *Hirð* was likely borrowed from Old English *hīred*, 'household, family,' though Old Norse sources provide a creative etymology from *hirða*, 'herd, tend.' *Hirðskrá,* a late thirteenth century reference manual for the *hirð* written at the court of Hákon's son Magnús, states that "þvi eru hirðmen kallaðer at þa er konongr væl hirtr er han hævir þa hirð er bæðe vil hans giæta vel oc hans sœmda oc glaðlega lif sitt fram læggia firir hans semda sakir oc honum openberlega oc lœynilega i orðom oc i værkum hollr oc hagræðr vera" (Keyser and Munch 1848, II: 416) [they are called *hirðmenn* because the king is well cared for when he has a *hirð* which will eagerly guard both him and his honor and gladly lay their lives down for the sake of his honor and in public and private, in word and deed, be faithful and useful]. Lindow argues that by the mid-tenth century *hīred* had increased in status so as to refer specifically to large, institutionalized households such as that of the king, and was apt for describing shifting the social organization in Scandinavia (1975a,

34 In Tacitus 1999. Among other things, Rives notes that Tacitus's description of the *comitatus* is suspiciously close to descriptions of Celtic tribes by Polybius and Caesar. Additionally, he draws parallels between the "demands" of men for the spoils of war and "the need of the great generals of the day, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, and Augustus, to satisfy their soldiers' demands for rewards" (187). Rives's position is in contrast to earlier views, which saw a close correspondence between Tacitus's description and the historical institution. See for example Hamre 1961, 569.

35 See Lindow 1975b.

46 & 60). Whereas the *drótt* was primarily military in nature, led by a warrior-chieftain, the *hirð* was domestic, the king "ruler of an entire people, a statesman, a leader in the Christian community, as well as a warrior and the commander of an army" (60).

This shift is in evidence in the short saga of Óláfr kyrri.[36] His near-thirty-year reign was one of peace and prosperity, which may be why there were few events considered memorable enough to commemorate in skaldic verse or a saga. Instead, much of the discussion of Óláfr's reign in *Heimskringla* and *Morkinskinna* focuses on the changes amongst his retinue. The configuration of the hall is altered, the king's position moving from the high-seat in the middle of the hall to a dais at the end of the hall, and there is a change from drinking horns to ceramic vessels, from an open fire pit down the center of the hall to a stove for heating, allowing rushes to be on the floor all year round, rather than just the warmer summer months when a fire is not needed. Furthermore, fashion becomes noteworthy, and both texts comment on elaborate fashions that can only exist in an environment of luxury and wealth.[37] Most importantly, however, we get an enumeration of the people in his retinue: a hundred (likely 120) *hirðmenn*, sixty *gestir*, and sixty *húskarlar*, the last of whom are described as being assigned various chores.[38] This is clearly more than a war-band; an institutional structure is developing with differentiated ranks and roles, and a larger retinue suggests the expanding power of the monarchy.[39] Lydia Klos attributes these developments to a desire on the part of Óláfr to attempt to "adapt Norway as a kingdom of European standard and thus [free] the land from being the 'courtly periphery'" (16).

Due to the disruptions of the twelfth century, this process was still ongoing by the time of Hákon's reign. By this point, when saga prose had overtaken skaldic verse as the literary medium of choice, *drótt* appears to have become an archaism: it lingers in the highly-conservative skaldic verse, but occurs only once in prose—interestingly, in *Ynglingasaga*,[40] which purports to describe the earliest history of Scandinavia. Furthermore, in the thirteenth century a new linguistic challenge appears. *Drótt* and *hirð* refer to groups of people, despite a tendency to translate *hirð* as 'court.' In the thirteenth century, the organization around the king had grown past discreet groups of people. The categories of *hirðmaðr*, *gestr*, and *húskarl* still existed, but they were now part of a greater structure that included the king's council, the royal chapel, the king's bodyguard, and all those who saw to the smooth running of the king's household. In short, we are now dealing with what should be understood as a hybrid domestic-governmental court in the proper sense of the word.

Old Norse, however, had no word at this point equivalent to Latin *curia*, French *cort*,

36 See his sagas in *Heimskringla* and *Morkinskinna,* which largely agree.

37 These include gold leg rings, silk-embroidered shoes, and trailing sleeves, among other innovations *(Heimskringla* III: 205). *Heimskringla* is more detailed in this respect than *Morkinskinna*.

38 According to *Heimskringla*, the *húskarlar* were those who "flytja skyldu til garðsins þat, er þurfti, eða starfa aðra hluti, þá sem konungr vildi" (III: 207) [should move to the *garðr* [yard, enclosure] what is needed, or perform other things as the king desires].

39 Óláfr, however, when confronted about the size of his retinue being over the number allowed by law, comments that he needs more men than his father, Haraldr harðráði [hard-ruler], had because he is a less forceful man (Finnur Jónsson 1932, 290).

40 In *Heimskringla* I: 9-83.

German *hof*.[41] The Old Norse equivalent, *hof*, had come to refer solely to a pagan temple or site of worship. It was not until the 14th century, when an expanded connotation of *hof* was adopted via the translated romances, that Old Norse acquired a term corresponding to the full range of meaning expressed in "court" (Cleasby and Vigfússon 278). Thirteenth century sources, both original Old Norse texts as well as translations, typically refer to one aspect of court, either people (*hirð*, *lið*, *föruneyti*) or place (*konungs hús*, *konungsgarðr*, *konungs herbergi*). However, *Konungs skuggsjá* also makes use of the phrase "með konungi" [with the king]. This is essentially the idea expressed in a variety of other medieval sources—that where the king is, is the court. Thus while Old Norse did not yet have a word that encompassed the idea of "court," the idea that where the king was, including the people that surrounded him, was a special place, bound by special rules and expectations, was already in existence. The adoption of "hof" simply gave a name to a concept that had already developed. The nature of this space, however, was still developing during Hákon's reign.

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the various possibilities for what this social space could be in the period of change that was the thirteenth century. It is my assertion that the royal court forms a social space within which a specific model of kingship and courtiership may be enacted. The social space is created through the behaviors of the members of the court, including their dress, speech, and deportment, as well as the values that are held collectively by the members of the court. The nature of the social space created will in turn delineate the types of roles and relationships that are allowed there. I argue in this dissertation that the literary texts consumed at Hákon's court present different models of courts which can then be enacted as social space, or rejected. Though we have little evidence for when or how audiences encountered literature at Hákon's court, it is likely that stories and poems were read aloud as group entertainment. The variety of types of texts in circulation at Hákon's court meant that particular texts could be chosen, depending on audience or occasion, to encourage particular attitudes or feelings, and perhaps contribute to the enactment of a particular courtly model.[42] Through an examination of three literary genres that were consumed at Hákon's court—skaldic verse, translated romance, and didactic treatise—all of which had different origins and aims, this dissertation attempts to expand our understanding of the development of the medieval Norwegian court through addressing the aspect of social space as it was portrayed in the literature produced for and/or consumed by Hákon's court.

The purpose of this dissertation is not to inquire into the role of the court in the political development of Norway, which has been the primary historical question up to this point, but how patronage and consumption of literature shape the court's image of itself and the images that it projects to those outside the court. These images, I argue, eventually do have a political use or effect, but I am primarily interested here in how the concept of the court itself was shaped by literature. The prevailing narrative is, as I have stated above, a move towards

41 Where the word *curia* appears in the diplomas from Hákon's reign, it is used solely to refer to the bishop's retinue.

42 For example, texts with a strongly royalist bent might have been read at coronation celebrations or on the feast day of St. Óláfr, while bawdy texts such as *Möttuls saga* seem more likely to have been read at less formal occasions.

European, “courtly” culture. While I do not disagree that Norway more thoroughly embraced a pan-European Christian culture during the thirteenth century, I argue that, in the literary sphere, it was not a move of displacement so much as an expansion of possibilities. Rather than unidirectional progress from one courtly model to another, with the introduction of courtly literature and other types of texts from Europe the power players in Norway now had access to a variety of models of king and court that could be drawn upon when appropriate, as is demonstrated by the inclusion of skaldic verse in a rather untraditional type of saga, or the mixing of refined manners with divine imagery in *Konungs skuggsjá*. The chapters of this dissertation therefore examine the nature of the social space, that is, royal court, that is presented in the three literary genres delineated above.

In Chapter One, I establish what might be called a 'classical' or historical model of Norwegian kingship and court. This is drawn from skaldic poetry, the highly stylized format composed for kings and other patrons that dates back to the beginning of the Viking Age. Because of the formal demands of skaldic poetry, in particular *dróttkvætt* verse, poetic forms and imagery remained relatively static over several centuries. It presents the king as a warrior, bound to his men through personal loyalty and gift-exchange. I therefore examine the skaldic poetry composed in honor of Hákon, which is almost exclusively by three authors: Snorri Sturluson and his nephews Sturla and Óláfr Þórðarsynir, in light of this traditional model. The characteristic features of the above-mentioned poets suggest that this model was losing relevance, and the poets were forced to respond with different strategies. Snorri's poetry is what might be called hypertraditional, while Sturla and Óláfr, I argue, attempt to make their poetry more accessible and relevant for thirteenth-century audiences. While Snorri's strategy appears to fail in the Norwegian context, that of his nephews meets with some success. However, skaldic poetry at this point seems to hold symbolic weight rather than to function as a living tradition.

Chapter Two examines the translated romances whose origin can be most firmly located at Hákon's court. The romances introduce the idea of a court made up of people not just with particular abilities (i.e. martial), but possessing innate characteristics, which allows not only for the inclusion of women, but for a stronger focus on the individual courtier. It is the hero who ennobles the court in romance by joining it. However, in most cases he does not stay, choosing, typically, to leave to continue his chivalric development, or to pursue the love of a woman. Often this is accompanied by, or perhaps because of, some sort of failure in the king or at the court. The role of the court in romance seems primarily to confirm the status of the hero as a paragon of courtliness, rather than serving as a goal in and of itself. The questionable status of the king is problematic for royal-sponsored translations, but the texts nevertheless serve two important functions in Norway: 1) expanding the horizons of what a court can be through its emphasis on things such as a liberal arts education, and 2) engaging with a number of issues that were at hand during this period, such as the place of women at court and the importance of legitimacy for royal inheritance.

Chapter Three looks at *Konungs skuggsjá* as an example of didactic literature and a witness of original Norwegian thinking about kingship and the royal court. More than simply showing the adoption of continental trends such as an interest in chivalry, it demonstrates a

synthesis and recombination of elements into a project with political import. In its portrayal of the king as the center of the social system, it corrects many of the problematic aspects of the romances. Furthermore, its use of Biblical history and strategies of place description serve to strengthen the position of the monarchy vis à vis the Church by providing a competing claim to divine authority on Earth and allowing for a typological connection between the pleasures of the court of an appropriate king and the joys of heaven.

CHAPTER ONE

'Fúss brýtr fylkir eisu fens':
Skaldic Verse as Court Poetry in the Thirteenth Century

The literary format most commonly associated with royal courts in medieval Scandinavia is skaldic poetry, a unique poetic form attested from the ninth century to the fourteenth. Skaldic poetry could be used for a variety of subjects, such as love, mourning, or worship, though its subject par excellence, was praising kings and other other noblemen by recounting their deeds and accomplishments. After skaldic poetry ceased to function as royal praise, it enjoyed a long afterlife as a vehicle for religious composition.[1] Skaldic poetry encompasses a variety of forms and meters and its generic signifiers are not always clear, but mostly commonly it refers to poetry composed by known individuals, or skalds.[2] The most famous of its meters, a tightly-constrained form characterized by syllable-counting, alliteration, and stress, is called *dróttkvætt*, or *drótt* meter, affirming the connection between the royal milieu and skaldic verse.

Skaldic poetry was a prestige literary form. It could serve to honor a king or lord, whether by recounting great deeds or describing the magnificence of gifts they gave. Famous lineages could be memorialized in poetry, as could the life of a departed warrior. Underneath this is the assumption of memory: that the poetry will be handed down, preserving the fame of the departed for as long as language is spoken.[3] The ability of the skalds to provide this service thus gave them a prestigious position, enhanced, at least in the pre-Christian era, by the association of poetry with Óðinn, who was said to have stolen the mead of poetry from the giant Suttungr. Skalds are frequently depicted as playing important roles in Viking-Age or Medieval courts, acting as advisors, bodyguards, and propagandists. Their ability to compose memorable verse was also a danger, lest they get in a mood to make a negative assessment. Thus it was beneficial for kings and chieftains to both attract good skalds and to keep them happy through rich gifts that could inspire the creation of more poetry, and serve as a visual reminder of the wealth and generosity of the chieftain.

The bulk of the skaldic corpus is preserved in thirteenth-century texts, themselves typically found in later manuscripts. Historical writings about Norwegian kings or the Settlement Period of Iceland (c. 870-930) include a wealth of verse because of the perception of skaldic poetry as a means of historical authentication, as in many cases it would have been

1 See Paasche 1914, Schottmann 1973, and Wrightson 2001.

2 Roberta Frank provides a "crude and imprecise" description of skaldic poetry as "emphatically nonanonymous, occasional, recondite, unnatural, subjective, elitist, concerned with the present, and situation-bound" (2005, 159). For a more in-depth discussion, see Clunies Ross 2005, 6-18.

3 Despite the general instability of oral forms, the formal requirements of skaldic court verse do seem to have helped somewhat in the preservation of poetry through the centuries. See Frank 2005, 174-5.

composed by eyewitnesses, or based on the accounts of eyewitnesses. Thus, many historical sagas take the shape of prosimetrum, relating events in prose, with one or more skaldic verses that corroborate that event or elaborate on an aspect of that event, such as the number of ships that led an attack or the bravery of the lord in question. This also means that much of skaldic verse likely started out as long poems on lives or events and were then broken up, individual stanzas inserted into the relevant section of the narratives that preserve them. We can attempt to reconstruct the original poems, but have little way to tell what, or how much, may have been lost. In addition to historical writings, grammatical or poetical texts preserve a number of verses. The growth of literacy, ushered in by the Church, as well as increasing contacts with continental culture, seem to have spurred an interest in categorizing and theorizing the native poetic tradition (Quinn 1994 [1995]). Several of these works used native verse forms as examples for explicating particular concepts or as models to be followed.

Despite the dozens of known poets, the many works in which their poems are preserved, and the hundreds of manuscripts that preserve those works, much of our knowledge of the art form comes through one family: the Sturlung family, which gave its name to the tumultuous period before Iceland acceded to Norwegian rule in 1262. Several family sagas are associated with Sturlungs, including *Egils saga*, *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, and *Grettis saga*. Other types of works are attributed with varying degrees of certainty to specific individuals. Snorri Sturluson (1178/9-1241) is often credited with the composition of *Heimskringla*, a history of the kings of Norway from Óðinn to 1184, as well as the Prose *Edda*, which is generally considered to be a handbook or guide for poets, but is also one of the most important witnesses for Norse mythology, despite its composition well into the Christian period. Two of Snorri's nephews, Óláfr hvítaskáld [white-skald] and Sturla Þórðarsynir, were accomplished authors in their own right, certainly benefiting from their family's culture of literacy, as well as their uncle's learning. Óláfr (c. 1211-59) composed the *Third Grammatical Treatise* around 1250, as well as praise poetry for a number of Scandinavian nobles. Sturla (1214-82) was also a poet but is most famous for his prose; he is the author of both Hákon's official biography, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, written at Magnús's behest, as well as *Íslendinga saga*, which relates the events of the thirteenth century from the Icelandic perspective.[4]

These three poets are important because, to a large degree, they define our understanding of thirteenth-century skaldic activity as well. For example, in *Skáldatal*, a list of skalds and the nobles for whom they composed, eight poets are listed for Hákon.[5] However,

4 *Hákonar saga* was composed in the years 1264-5. Sturla states that the saga was composed when "Magnús hafði verit tvá vetr konungr at Nóregi" (II: 159) [Magnus had been king of Norway for two winters], presumably a reference to Magnús's accession to the throne after Hákon's death in December 1263, as Sturla was known to be in Norway at that time. *Íslendinga saga* is believed to have been written after Sturla returned to Iceland in 1271 (Ashurst 2007, 44). References from *Hákonar saga* are to the 2013 edition.

5 *Skáldatal* was presumably composed, or at least set to parchment, in the thirteenth century (Guðrún Nordal 2001, 122). Its composer is unknown, but it may have been a member of the Sturlung family, given that it appears in manuscripts with works attributed to Snorri. *Skáldatal* exists in two recensions, one in the Uppsala manuscript of the *Edda* (DG 11 4to), and one in the lost *Kringla* manuscript, preserved in modern paper copies, one of them by Árni Magnússon himself. The two versions are edited together in Jón Sigurðsson et. al. III: 251-86.

out of over a hundred stanzas preserved in *Hákonar saga*, only three are not by Sturla, Óláfr, or Snorri; three poets listed in *Skáldatal* have no verses in the saga at all.[6] While it is possible that Sturla did not know all of the poetry composed for Hákon and thus was not able to include it in *Hákonar saga*, the fact that one of the poets who has only a single verse in the saga, Gizurr Þorvaldsson, was a sometime political rival, suggests another principle at work than a simple attempt to recount history. What we know about poetry in this period is filtered through the biases and preferences, the politics and agendas of the three Sturlungs.[7] This means that the image of the Norwegian court as presented in skaldic verse during this period is also largely shaped by the compositions of these authors and what they chose to include in them.

This chapter investigates how the Norwegian court is portrayed in thirteenth-century skaldic verse. The three main authors whose poetry for Hákon was preserved are self-consciously part of the Old Norse poetic tradition, but this tradition is not static: despite the formal rigidity of its structure, it was a flexible tradition that changed to accommodate Christianity, literacy, and the introduction of Latin learning. Snorri, Óláfr, and Sturla also take part in the development of Old Norse letters, departing from tradition in creative and strategic ways. Skaldic verse, with its roots in the Viking Age, preserved not only a number of historical linguistic and literary forms, but it was, to a large extent, wedded to the image of the *drótt*: the warrior king with his close-knit group of followers.[8] With the changes of the medieval period, and particularly during the more peaceful years of Hákon's reign, this image became less relevant to the reality of the Norwegian aristocracy. The poets of this period therefore had to carefully moderate the traditional elements of the poetry which lent it prestige with the requirements of a changing social and literary landscape.

Kings and Icelanders

Though the earliest skalds were Norwegian, the art form eventually came to be dominated by Icelanders.[9] This meant that the literary image of the court was to an extent shaped by outsiders: Icelanders who sought favor and reward from the king would compose verse designed to please.[10] In demonstrating their knowledge of the expectations of court

6 See Guðrún Nordal 2001, 97-9.

7 The ability to support and control book production also increases the chances that a wealthy family's literary products will survive. See Guðrún Nordal 2001, 119 and 142.

8 This may in part explain the lack of verse associated with the peaceful reign of Óláfr kyrri.

9 Clunies Ross 1999, 57; Finlay 1997, 161; Meulengracht Sørensen, 12. However, Jan de Vries points out that the apparent dominance of Icelandic skalds may be due in part to the surviving manuscript record being overwhelmingly Icelandic (I: 155-6). Nevertheless, there is external evidence that Icelanders were associated with literary activity in the north: King Sverrir (r. 1184-1202) commissioned an Icelander, Karl Jónsson, to write his saga, much as his descendent Magnús hired Sturla to write both his own and his father's sagas. Furthermore, Saxo Grammaticus comments on the reputation of the Icelanders as storytellers in his *Gesta Danorum* of c. 1200, citing them as one of his sources (1,4). Why Icelanders came to dominate the field of skaldic verse is unclear, just as the reasons for their incredible productivity in saga-writing is unknown. Saxo suggests in his preface that it is a compensation for the poverty of their country (1,4).

10 And, if the desired reward was not forthcoming, perhaps to condemn.

poetry, they could earn admission into that society. In tying panegyric with praise of generosity, they helped to maintain the system: rewarding Icelandic poets was an attractive proposition for kings, as it would mean lasting memorial in the shape of poetry, and a reputation of generosity could help the king or lord attract a greater following.

That this relationship was deeply important to Icelanders is illustrated by the profusion of sagas and *þættir*, or short stories, that depict journeys by or visits from Icelanders to the kings and nobles of Norway, often, but not always, to present poetry. Norway and the Norwegian court are the most common destinations for adventuring Icelanders, and usually their first stop,[11] though settings from throughout the Nordic sphere of influence, including Sweden, Denmark, the Orkneys, England, Ireland, and Russia, are also featured. So common and consistent are these travel narratives that Joseph Harris has argued that the *þættir* that pit an Icelander against a Norwegian king may be considered a specific genre, which he calls "king and Icelander" *þættir* (1972). Lars Lönnroth has used the characteristics and structure of this proposed genre to isolate a "travel pattern" in the sagas, alongside the more familiar "feud pattern" (71-5). It consists of three phases: the Introduction and Journey In, that is, the departure from Iceland to Norway; Alienation and Reconciliation, where the Icelander may face a series of tests before being admitted (or admitted back) into the king's good graces, and the Journey Out and Conclusion, where the Icelander returns home and perhaps settles down. This pattern often appears in sagas as a structuring feature, an important moment of character development, as will be discussed below.

Iceland and Norway had a close, complex relationship during the Icelandic Commonwealth (930-1262). The sagas claim that many of the first settlers were Norwegians who, unhappy with the increasing power of king Haraldr hárfagri [fair-hair] (r. c. 885-933) and his drive to consolidate Norway, left for a land where service or taxes to a king were not required.[12] While the historicity of these claims cannot be determined, they are evidence of what Margaret Clunies Ross refers to as an "ideology of difference" between Iceland and Norway, developed by Icelanders to differentiate themselves from the linguistically and culturally similar Norwegians.[13] There is a high degree of ambivalence towards Norway present in the sagas: Norwegians in Iceland are often presented as outsiders or relegated to liminal positions such as dream interpreters,[14] and in Norway Icelanders often face mockery or scorn. Yet Norway was the place to be to create wealth or reputation, and many Icelanders still

11 Clunies Ross 1999, 56; Marcus 408.

12 See for example *Egils saga,* ch. 4; *Grettis saga*, ch. 3; *Laxdœla saga*, ch. 2; *Eyrbyggja saga*, ch. 1. *Grettis saga* also states that some men left because they were outlawed and had their property seized for fighting against Haraldr.

13 Clunies Ross 1999, 55. That Icelanders were highly conscious of their position relative to Norway can also be seen in place references, such as Ari fróði's statement in *Íslendingabók* that "þa varþ för manna mikil mioc *vt hingat* vr Norvege" (16) [then a great many men travelled *out here* from Norway, emphasis mine]. Ari, writing a century before the family sagas were composed, gives the same chronology for the settlement of Iceland as the family sagas, but provides no specific motivation for it.

14 See for example the Norwegian who interprets Þórsteinn's dream in *Gunnlaugs saga* (ch. 2) or the unnamed Norwegian who instructs Sighvatr Þórðarson how to prepare and eat the fish that will magically give him poetic abilities in the Separate Saga of St. Óláfr (*Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga*). These characters are generally not integrated into Icelandic society, and leave or disappear from the story after having fulfilled their function.

had family or property there. Despite the strong streak of suspicion towards kings in the sagas, Icelanders were still deeply interested in the institution, indicated by the great compendia of kings' sagas that they produced.[15]

Literary representations of Icelanders going to Norway show Icelanders taking advantage of their continuing ties to Norway while at the same time reaffirming their difference and, in many cases, superiority to the Norwegians. For many young men in the sagas, a trip abroad is a rite of passage. Some go of their own volition or at their parents' wishes, others because they have made trouble at home and it is in their best interest to be away from Iceland for a while.[16] The hope and expectation are that, while away, they will have conducted themselves well, made good trades or contacts abroad, and will return more mature and "ráðinn" [settled];[17] essentially, having proven themselves worthy to join adult Icelandic society. Those who do not return with a noticeable improvement in social status receive censure: Snorri Þorgrímsson (later Snorri *goði*) is mocked in *Eyrbyggja saga* for returning from Norway with unimpressive clothing and gear beside his travelling companion's gilded weaponry and fine clothing. His stepfather Börkr is unwilling to let him stay at his farm Helgafell over the winter because of his bad luck.[18] This is just another example of Snorri's characteristic cleverness, however; though he displays no outward trappings of fortune, he has secretly saved up his money and the following summer is able to buy Helgafell from Börkr who, underestimating him, prices it very low (ch. 13-14).

Most men, however, do not hide their success, and most Icelanders in these stories meet with success. It is not always simple; many Icelanders must work to win the favor of the king. Before Brandr örvi [generous] Vermundarson is allowed to meet King Haraldr harðráði [hard-ruler], he is asked to first give up his cloak, then his gold-inlaid axe, and finally the tunic he is wearing. Sufficiently pleased by his generosity, Haraldr summons him and showers him with rewards (Finnur Jónsson 1932, 194-5). Yet not all men are able to maintain this favor; Sneglu-Halli, for example, must compose poetry to Haraldr's specifications after pulling a stunt that the king disapproves of, and Halldórr Snorrason on multiple occasions needs the intercession of his loyal friend Bárðr to return to Haraldr's favor.[19] Though the Icelanders face displeasure and in many cases death, they are able to come out on top not only in that they are returned to the king's favor, but also in that, in performing whatever task is asked of them, they prove themselves to be as good as anyone at the Norwegian court—even, in many cases, the king. Kjartan Óláfsson proves himself to be equal to King Óláfr Tryggvason in a swimming match;[20] Brandr örvi initially displays greater generosity than Haraldr, of which he reminds the king by chopping a sleeve off the requested tunic, thus indicating that the king has

15 See Ármann Jakobsson and Andersson 1999 for discussions of Icelandic attitudes towards kingship.

16 As in the case of Hallfreðr Óttarsson in *Hallfreðar saga*, who is sent away because his pursuit of Kolfinna causes trouble between their families.

17 See *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, where Helga's father initially turns down Gunnlaug's offer for her hand because he is "óráðinn" [unsettled] (66-67).

18 "honum hefði óheppiliga með fét farizk, er öllu var eytt" (23) [it must have gone unluckily for him with money, that everything was lost]

19 These stories are related in *Morkinskinna* (1932): Sneglu-Halli, 234-47, Halldórr Snorrason, 148-155; see also *Halldors þáttr Snorrasonar* in *Laxdœla saga* (263-277) to supply the lacuna in *Morkinskinna*.

20 *Laxdœla saga* ch. 40.

only one arm: one to take, and none to give. Halldórr Snorrason is most bold in his assertions of equality: while he accedes to the king's order to drink a penalty,[21] he asserts that Haraldr's father—Sigurðr sýr [sow]—could not have gotten Halldórr's father—Snorri *goði*—to do the same. Later, he refuses to accept impure silver for his services to the king, despite being reminded by both his friend Bárðr and the king himself that the silver is good enough for the Norwegian nobility.[22] He eventually gets his wages in better currency.

Stories of Icelanders at the Norwegian court are about identity on multiple levels: the young Icelandic man making a name for himself, the poet making his reputation in courts abroad, Icelanders staking out their differences from Norwegians. They must go abroad to transition from boys to adults and to perform the poetry which makes them famous. Óláfr pái's [peacock] journey abroad is literally one of discovering his identity: he locates the family of his mother, a captured slave, proving himself to be the grandson of an Irish king.[23] In going abroad, particularly to Norway, Icelanders reaffirm their Icelandicness and the fact that, even in the face of Norway's political and economic superiority, that Icelandicness has worth. Poetry provides a way for the kings to test Icelanders by forcing them to compose on the spot, often on a particular subject, and for the Icelanders to showcase their unique abilities. The setting of the Norwegian king's court, in both real and imaginary space, provides a stage on which to explore concepts of Icelandic identity and Iceland's relationship to Norway. This is of particular importance because the prime saga-writing period was also the period during which Iceland struggled—and ultimately failed—to maintain its independence from Norway. Thus the "king and Icelander" *þættir* and the saga episodes featuring journeys to Norway provide an idealized portrayal of the relationship between Norwegian kings and Icelanders: the poets are showered with gold, the kings are impressed with the skills and qualities of the Icelanders despite the fact that they come from a poor backwater. Certainly this must have helped to shore up Icelandic pride before it became part of the Norwegian crown in 1262, and to serve as a balm to the ego afterwards.

Snorri's Háttatal*: Poetic model, courtly model*

While we cannot say exactly how and when the trope of Icelanders at the Norwegian court developed, it is possible that some *þættir* were written down before 1217, and almost certain that they were circulating orally long before that.[24] The literary idea of the clever or

21 "Punishments" for breaches in decorum consisted in offenders having to drink from the *vítishorn* [penalty horn] at Christmas (Andersson and Gade 435, n. 5).

22 "vel mattv þer þat lica lata. er lendra manna synir hafa" (*Morkinskinna* 151) ["What is good enough for the sons of Norway's magnates should be good enough for you" (Andersson and Gade 191)]

23 *Laxdœla saga* ch. 21-22; Óláfr also stops in Norway and finds great favor with Haraldr Gráfeldr [grey-cloak] and Queen Gunnhildr; he returns to Iceland laden with gifts, including a ship.

24 Andersson and Gade argue that *Morkinskinna*, a compilation of kings' sagas featuring a great number of "king and Icelander" stories composed between 1217 and 1222, made use of written versions of *þættir*. They suggest also that some *þættir*, such as that of Brandr örvi, were originally propagated by the people involved. Robert Cook, however, proposes that the trope of going abroad "as we see it in the sagas" could have come from translations of courtly literature (130). While this may be chronologically possible for some of the family

poetic Icelander matching wits with the king of Norway must have been a well-known one, and would have been reinforced by the constant comings-and-goings between Iceland and Norway well into the thirteenth century, despite the great changes that were taking place in both countries.[25] Kevin Wanner suggests this literary trope to be motivation for actual travel, specifically for Snorri's first trip to Norway in 1218. Having attained the pinnacle of wealth and status available to him in Iceland, Snorri set his eyes on Norway and the prestige that could be attained there. According to Wanner, he "cast himself in the time-honoured role of the Icelander bearing poetic gifts, for which he hoped to be rewarded with goods as well as access and influence" (2006, 28).

Snorri attempted to begin his career as a court poet long before Hákon became king: *Skáldatal* lists him as a poet to Hákon's grandfather Sverrir, who died in 1202. However, there is no record of any poetry by Snorri dedicated to Sverrir or what sort of reception it got. Snorri then sent poetry to Sverrir's successor, Ingi Bárðarson,[26] as well as Hákon jarl galinn [the mad] (I: 235). While there is no indication of Ingi's reception of Snorri's poetry, *Íslendinga saga* notes that Hákon jarl was so delighted that he sent Snorri a sword, a shield, and mailcoat and invited him to stay with him in Norway (I: 235-6). Yet by the time Snorri was able to travel abroad in 1218, both Ingi and Hákon jarl had died. Snorri delivered a poem to Hákon's widow that the jarl had commissioned and spent the winter with Ingi's brother Skúli jarl, now regent to the young Hákon Hákonarson (I: 238). There is no evidence that Snorri composed poetry for Hákon during his two-year stay in Norway.[27] It is clear, however, that he got on well with Skúli, who rewarded him handsomely for the poetry that he composed.[28] Snorri received the title of *skutilsveinn* [cup-bearer], an official position at court, which was augmented to the title of *lendr maðr* before he left, an "unprecedented honor" for an Icelander (Wanner 2008, 21). Sturla writes in *Hákonar saga* that Snorri's title of *lendr maðr* was granted by the king (I: 230), while in *Íslendinga saga* he comments that "vóru þat mest ráð þeirra

sagas, such as *Laxdœla saga*, which is generally believed to have been composed in the latter part of the thirteenth century, *Morkinskinna* would be too early for such influences, particularly if the compiler drew from written sources. While the romance translations may have added to the popularity of travel episodes, there already seems to have been a strong tradition of such stories in Scandinavia.

25 Iceland, like Norway, was undergoing centralization and aristocratization; the traditional 39 *goðorð* [chieftaincies] were now consolidated into the authority of just a few families and, as the thirteenth century wore on, they also fell into the hands of the Norwegian monarchy as they were considered property that could be inherited or sold. Furthermore, the greatest Icelandic families displayed pretensions of nobility, employing their own skalds and commissioning sagas and genealogies that could link them to historical and legendary rulers. Not all of these were in the distant or imagined past; for example Snorri's foster-father, Jón Loptsson, was the grandson of King Magnús berfœtr through his mother.

26 As attested in *Skáldatal*.

27 Wanner 2008 argues that there is no evidence that Snorri even met Hákon, but seeing as Skúli and Hákon seem to have spent the better part of these two years in the same place, this seems unlikely. See also *Háttatal* vv. 28-29, where Snorri speaks of gifts received and two visits to the king in the section dedicated to Hákon.

28 Sturla states in *Íslendinga saga* states that Snorri received a ship and "fimtán stór-gjafar" (I: 244) [fifteen handsome gifts] from Skúli, the latter of which is mentioned in v. 95 of *Háttatal*. However, the ship is mentioned in v. 28, which is Hákon's section. This may be a case like Snorri's title of *lendr maðr* (see below), especially given Hákon's poverty at the beginning of his reign. *Hákonar saga* states that Hákon inherited only a brooch and a finger ring from his father (I: 201).

Snorra ok jarlsins" (I: 244) [that was mostly the doing of Snorri and the earl], hinting at the developing tension between Skúli, Hákon, and Snorri.

Upon his return to Iceland, Snorri composed a poem dedicated to both Hákon and Skúli by the name of *Háttatal* [meter enumeration], a *clavis metrica* of 102 verses.[29] In its current state, it is part of the final section of Snorri's *Edda* but may have been the first section composed.[30] This section, also designated by the title *Háttatal*, begins in the style of a dialogue between a poetic master and his student, with the verses of the poem illustrating various concepts discussed in the prose. The dialogue eventually becomes simply a commentary, and in the structure of the *Edda*, *Háttatal* serves not only to demonstrate the principles discussed in the prose, but also an example of what can be composed with mastery of the content of the previous two sections of the text.

The poem also serves as a model of proper royal behavior. Though it purports to describe real people and, in places, actual events, it is structured around the idealized behavior of a warrior king. Verses 1-30 are addressed to Hákon, 31-95 to Skúli, and the remaining verses to both men. After an introduction to each section, each man is depicted preparing for battle: Hákon dons battle gear while Skúli exchanges promises with the valkyrie Hildr.[31] The section for Hákon and the section for Skúli are roughly parallel;[32] in each the action begins with a succession of verses depicting battle, followed by several stanzas that describe sailing. This presumably is to call to mind the voyage home after a successful military campaign, as we are then returned to the hall in winter, where the the generosity of Hákon and Skúli toward their men is praised with lavish descriptions of the gold and gifts they give in return for support during the campaigns. In these sections, Snorri does not hesitate to remind the rulers that he is composing very fine verse—worthy, perhaps, of gold.[33]

Snorri describes what is essentially the *drótt*—the recipient of the poem with his warrior-band, linked by loyalty and generosity. This world is martial and overwhelmingly masculine; women serve only as kenning determinants or rhetorical figures, as in the case of Hildr above. The *drótt* is also characterized by its movement and activity: setting out for battle, engaging in warfare, and sailing home. The only stillness is in winter, when sailing in the North Sea was typically restricted. But it is a necessary and temporary pause during which the

29 General consensus places the dates of composition between 1221 and 1225. See for example *Háttatal* 2007, x; Hermann Pálsson 1998, 54, Wanner 2008, 99. Heimir Pálsson, however, maintains that "in fact there is no basis for the assumption that *Háttatal* was composed in one go, and the latter part of the poem could well have been composed later than 1223" (*Edda* 2012, lxviii). He suggests that the latter section of the poem, which tips the balance of praise heavily in Skúli's favor, could have been a later addition, after Snorri's friendship with Skúli grew and his relationship with Hákon became more antagonistic.

30 For an overview of this discussion, see Wanner 2008, 99-100. Heimir Pálsson again disagrees with the prevailing view, arguing that "*Háttatal* is more likely to be the conclusion than the starting point" (*Edda* 2012, lxix).

31 This is a reference to the myth of the the Hjaðningavíg, where the abduction of a king's daughter, Hildr, kicks off an everlasting battle between her father and her captor/husband. The story is related in ch. 50 of *Skáldskaparmál*, the second section of the *Edda*.

32 There is a break in Skúli's section after v. 67; both poetry and commentary state that a new poem is beginning. However, when vv. 31-95 are taken together as a whole, we get an expanded version of the same structure found in Hákon's verses.

33 See vv. 92-3.

lord can reward his men for their bravery in the summer's fighting, and the important business of drinking can be accomplished. This time in the hall is also prime for poetry, and it is in these scenes that Snorri typically refers to his composition; the scenes of generous reward are, in Snorri's poetry, a natural segue to the rewards he seeks for himself. But he does not just connect himself to the *drótt* by inserting himself into it; Snorri's own movement echoes that of Hákon and Skúli when he describes sailing to meet them in vv. 27 and 101.

The hall scenes are characterized by actions designed to cultivate the cohesion of the group: drinking mead or beer, which encourages talk (v. 25), as well as the public distribution of wealth, presented here as sharing in the spoils of war in references to breaking up or flinging away gold. Snorri makes references on multiple occasions to joy in the hall: that of the men, as they enjoy their rewards and drink their mead, and that of Skúli as he surveys his full hall. Furthermore, the presentation of poetry in the hall scenes also draws together those gathered in the hall into a listening community, not just in that they are sharing an experience but, theoretically, in that they, as members of a *drótt*, have been trained to understand the complexities of skaldic verse.[34] The dominant value here is, unsurprisingly, fame: for feats in battle, for generosity, for the composition of poetry. The image of the court and the lord who presides over it is thus highly traditional.

By the thirteenth century, however, we are well past the seasonal raids of the Viking Age; gold is now much more difficult to come by than silver, and rewards are often given in the shape of estates or bureaucratic positions. It is not the world that Hákon, Skúli, and Snorri inhabit, but it is the one that Snorri evokes, not just in his images of battle and hall, but in his free use of the legendary and mythological material that characterized skaldic verse before the Christian era. This involves references to myths and stories, such as the Hjaðningavíg, but also kennings and *heiti* [epithets] that serve to identify Hákon and Skúli with the pagan gods. *Heiti* are used for both men that recall legendary and semi-historical kings, such as *buðlungr, skjöldungr*, and *yngvi*. Snorri also employs 'classical,'o complex *dróttkvætt* verse and does not hesitate to reference pagan mythology: Týr, Njörðr, Baldr, Óðinn, and Móði all appear in kennings, along with several valkyries. These features are notable because Snorri is composing well into the Christian era. Christianity brought innovation to skaldic poetry in the form of avoiding mythological references, as can be seen in the poetry of St. Óláfr's skald, Sighvatr Þórðarson, in a new library of kennings based on Christianity, employed in Einarr Skúlason's *Geisli* (1152/3), and the simple, straightforward style exemplified by the *Lilja* poet (c. 1350). Snorri, however, draws on the same imagery, the same mythological references, and the same meters that had been part of the skaldic tradition since its inception. He takes care to situate *Háttatal* within the larger framework of the Scandinavian poetic tradition: the final section of the poem is composed in *fornyrðislag* [old story meter], whose name attests to its antiquity. In this meter, Snorri claims that his poetry:

mun æ lifa
nema öld farisk
bragninga lof

34 See Lindow 1975b.

eða bili heimar (v. 96)

[will endure forever unless mankind perishes, the princes' praise, or the worlds end.]

This is a powerful statement; eddic verse, where *fornyrðislag* is typically used, records the stories of the beginning and end of the world, as well as the deeds and mystical knowledge of the pagan gods. Snorri's humility is similarly demonstrated in the final stanza of the poem, which uses *kviðuháttr:*[35]

Falli fyrr
fold í ægi
steini studd
en stillis lof (v. 102)

[May the earth, stone-supported, fall into the sea before the ruler's praise.]

Kviðuháttr is the verse used by Þjóðólfr Hvínaskáld in his *Ynglingatal* (c. 900), one the earliest extant skaldic poems, which traces the genealogy of Norway's earliest kings.[36] Snorri, thus, presents his poetry as situated at the center of the poetic tradition, hearkening back to its earliest period, but skillful enough that it will exist, preserving Hákon and Skúli's praise, until the end of time. By embracing the pagan past in his verse, Snorri demonstrates his engagement with a uniquely nordic literary form, setting himself off even from hybridizing trends that reach out to continental literature and theology.[37] His verse is of the sort a modern reader—or perhaps a thirteenth-century one—might imagine offered at the purportedly poet-friendly court of Haraldr hárfagri.[38]

Conversely, Christian elements in *Háttatal* are minimal. God is mentioned in v. 12 as Hákon's benefactor and there are a few references to luck, which may be a Christian concept associated with kingship.[39] Snorri, however, is a far cry from the anonymous poet of the Christian era, and Wanner argues that Snorri may even have seen the Church as a rival (2006, 23). In Wanner's view, one of the roles of skaldic verse was to provide a form of legitimation for a king's rule. As a "ritualised expression" whose author had "claims to speak for or with

35 *Kviðuháttr* displays features of both eddic and skaldic verse: it has a two-foot alliterative line like eddic verse but counts syllables like *dróttkvætt*; it displays alternating lines of three and four syllables.

36 *Ynglingatal* is preserved in *Heimskringla* (c. 1230), but is given its early date based on its attribution to a known poet and linguistic forms. See Fidjestøl 1999.

37 This can be seen, for example, in skaldic verse dedicated to Mary, which employs concepts that would be recognized all over Europe. Additionally, Martin Chase argues that the high proportion of religious verse that is anonymous suggests a new conception of the poet based on Christian ideas of humility (75). Though Snorri rejects overt foreign impulses, Judy Quinn argues that continental learning is in fact "fundamental" to his and to Óláfr's work (70), pointing out that "the new literary stage on which the skaldic art was being presented seems to have inspired a need to formalize and make consistent its metrical structure, but not to overhaul its mode of expression nor its traditional sphere of semantic reference" (73).

38 See Fidjestøl 1997a for a discussion of poetic activity at Haraldr hárfagri's court.

39 For an overview of this discussion, see McTurk.

divine power," a poem that recounted the deeds and abilities of a king could act as confirmation of his suitability to rule (Wanner 2006, 24) or, as Sigrún Davíðsdóttir puts it, "proof of their ability to govern in a society founded on military power" (190). This is aided further by the poetic genealogies that not only link the ruler in question to his immediate predecessors, but often also to legendary or mythological figures that would lend extra weight to their claims. Skaldic verse, therefore, could package the ruler's claims—birthright, military prowess, wealth to reward followers—and present it to rivals, potential supporters, and electors at the *þings* [local assemblies]. By the thirteenth century, however, the Church was very much involved in the process of election and legitimation of kings which, in Wanner's view, posed a challenge to "the traditional functions of Icelandic court skalds" (2008, 78). After the conversion, the Church usurped divine authority, and the skalds had to rely on the weight of cultural and historical authority. While these types of authority did have some weight, they were increasingly threatened by the growing European influence on the culture and structure of the court.

The traditional relationship between Icelandic poets and Norwegian kings was therefore under threat: with a much decreased ability to legitimize and memorialize rulers, Iceland's most prestigious resource—its literary activity—was no longer worth what it once was. Snorri's *Edda* seems to be a project to rehabilitate skaldic poetry, both in terms of reminding people of its importance, and by educating Christians who were now many generations removed from the pagan past. This was likely for poets in Iceland who were not familiar with the myths needed to compose traditional poetry but might also have been, as Wanner argues, for the Norwegian court. However, it is not known whether the *Edda* as a whole was sent to Norway, or just *Háttatal*, and if the latter, whether the commentary accompanied it. While Wanner suggests that the text could have served as a teaching tool for the young Hákon, Heimir Pálsson is of the opinion that it would have been "pure bad manners" to send the commentary with the poem (*Edda* 2012, lxviii). How well skaldic verse was understood in Norway at this point is also unknown. Guðrún Nordal shares Wanner's opinion that Norwegians understood it less than Icelanders, and sees the fact that Hákon's section of the poem is in the more difficult *dróttkvætt* verse as a subtle slight to the young king (1992, 59). However, Hákon was fostered with Hákon jarl galinn, who had clearly appreciated the poetry Snorri composed for him.[40] It seems unlikely that the young king would have been wholly unfamiliar with skaldic verse, particularly as poets continued to arrive at his court throughout his reign. It is possible, however, that Hákon's recruitment efforts[41] drew people to court who were indeed less familiar with the mythological associations, complex syntax, and ways of interpreting skaldic verse.

Wanner views Snorri's project as one that is strategic and primarily economic in nature, arguing that the point of the *Edda* was to "[protect] the market value of an important but endangered source of capital, preservation of which would have served to maximize Snorri's

40 It is of course possible that he appreciated the poetry for what it represented, rather than understanding its meaning. However, Gísli Sigurðsson has suggested that there were active poetic communities at Scandinavian royal courts based on the verses that Óláfr includes in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* (109 & 111). Tarrin Wills agrees and argues that Óláfr likely learned verses while at the Norwegian court (1062).

41 This will be discussed in Chapter Three.

overall position in domestic and foreign social and political fields" (Wanner 2008, 15).[42] Yet his project was symbolic as well. In his continued attempts to cultivate poetic relationships with Norwegian magnates and his production of a handbook for poetry to ensure the ability to understand that verse, Snorri seems to position himself as one of the skalds in the stories, who will go to Norway, gain favor from the king, and be showered with riches and honor. He succeeds to some extent: as mentioned above, he receives gifts and titles, but, as far as we know, only from Skúli, who is never able to provide the same sort of honor that Hákon would, and whose patronage ultimately backfires.[43]

Óláfr hvítaskáld: A New Approach

Óláfr Þórðarson followed in his uncle's footsteps in many ways, but was more poet than politician. He was a sub-deacon, and thus must have had some amount of formal education,[44] and like Snorri had an interest in understanding poetry as well as composing it. He accompanied Snorri on his second voyage to Norway in 1237 where he presented poetry to the Norwegian nobility; *Skáldatal* lists him as poet to Skúli, Hákon and, in the *Kringla* recension, his son Hákon ungi, as well as Knútr jarl, the son of Hákon galinn. Óláfr toured Scandinavia for five years, during which time he also performed poetry for kings Eiríkr Eiríksson of Sweden and Valdimar Valdimarsson of Denmark, whom he is said to have learned stories from.[45] Upon his return to Iceland, he served a term as lawspeaker and composed a poetical treatise called today the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, which consists of a translation of part of Priscian's *Institutiones Grammaticae* and Donatus's *Ars Maior*, with skaldic verse replacing the Latin poetry to illustrate the linguistic and rhetorical concepts.[46] It may have served as a textbook for the school at Stafaholt he is believed to have run.[47]

Óláfr's extant poetic corpus is not particularly large, the bulk of it consisting of praise poetry for Hákon preserved in *Hákonar saga*.[48] Twelve stanzas are in *hrynhent* and are thus generally grouped together into a biographical poem, as they cover the period from Hákon's election as king in 1217 until the death of Skúli in 1240. There are three other stanzas in

42 For an analysis of skaldic verse in terms of cultural capital, see Wanner 2008 and Torfi H. Tulinius.

43 Wanner argues that Snorri is ultimately unsuccessful (in that he never receives recognition from the king), while Torfi Tulinius views Snorri as successful, in that he did return to Iceland with an increased social status. Both, however, agree that Snorri's poetic abilities were subordinate to the political opportunities he presented for the Norwegian court, since he was a member of one of Iceland's leading families, and could possibly influence Icelandic attitudes towards Norway.

44 How much or what sort of education Snorri and Sturla received is uncertain, though both would have been exposed to environments that allowed or encouraged various sorts of education.

45 This has led some scholars to attribute to him the authorship of *Knýtlinga saga*, which relates the history of the kings of Denmark.

46 Valeria Micillo's observation that "many passages show a very vague correspondence with the source(s) presumably used" (68) suggests an attitude towards translation like that seen in the translated romances. See the following chapter for discussion.

47 This is a widely held opinion (see for example Clunies Ross 2005, 186; SkP II, II: 656), though Burrows points out that evidence for the school is slender (27).

48 A brief overview of Óláfr's corpus may be found in SkP II, II: 656.

dróttkvætt in the saga attributed to him; nothing is known of their original compositional or performance context, though one verse contains direct address to Hákon, and was perhaps originally intended for performance at court. In these verses, Óláfr does not show the same level of engagement with the mythology that Snorri does. Mythological references or topics are almost non-existent, and they are restricted to a single verse that describes Hákon's battle with Skúli in 1240:

> Snörp bitu járn, sem ísmöl yrpi
> óðastraumr; með heitu blóði
> herstefnir rauð hamri ofna
> hildar serki framar merkjum.
> Grimmum stóð á Göndlar himni
> grár regnbogi Hnikars þegna;
> harða lustu fylking fyrða
> fáreldingar meginsára.

["Sharp weapons bit, as if a raging stream were casting up pieces of ice; the army-leader [warrior=Hákon] reddened the hammer-woven shirts of battle [byrnies] with hot blood ahead of the standards. The grey rainbow of Hnikarr <=Óðinn> [spear] stood in the men's fierce sky of Göndul <valkyrie> [shield]; the destructive lightning bolts of great wounds [spears] powerfully struck the company of men."][49]

These uncharacteristic mythological references are juxtaposed with a decidedly non-traditional feature: the simile, which introduces the weather imagery that is sustained throughout the verse. The theme is traditional, even if part of its presentation is not; this mixture of traditional and non serves to characterize Óláfr's poetry for Hákon. Óláfr uses standard imagery throughout: banners blowing in the wind, shields being reddened, impressive naval fleets. His poetry almost exclusively features scenes of conflict: battle or political tension, with a single exception. *Hrynhenda* v. 1 relates the prosperity Norway enjoyed after Hákon's election as king, where the fruit trees are said to have born two crops and the birds two broods.[50] *Hrynhenda* is dominated by the increasing political tension between Hákon and Skúli. It displays skillful handling of the two factions: Skúli had been a friend to the Sturlung family, as well as Magnús's grandfather, but he had rebelled against the king and lost. The only criticism of Skúli in the poem is that he "took a higher title than was fitting."[51] The reasons for the turn of events are external. Blame for the falling out is placed on unnamed "men" who are separate from the "people" who suffer as a result of the conflict. Óláfr points out that "eigi má við ørlög bægjask/jöfra svein" (v.6) ["a host of princes cannot contend against fate"] and affirms that the ultimate outcome, Hákon's victory, is willed by God (v. 12). He therefore combines the traditional heroic fatalism with the will of God, despite the fact that the Christian doctrine of free will essentially makes the ideas incompatible. There are

49 *Hrynhenda* v. 11. Editions and translations of the poetry of Óláfr and Sturla are taken from SkP II (656-757),
50 This is related in *Hákonar saga* ch. 28, which also features two verses by Sturla on the same topic.
51 "Hauksnjallr tók þá hersa stillir/hæra nafn en mundang væri" (v. 7)

also echoes of the royal ideology that will develop during Hákon's reign: the idea that the king reigns because he is so chosen by God.[52]

Óláfr's poetry is generally less difficult than Snorri's; though the syntax of his *dróttkvætt* verses is complex, he makes less use of kennings than Snorri, and what kennings he does use are less elaborate than many that can be found in *Háttatal*. *Hrynhent* meter added two more syllables to each line, allowing for greater flexibility in word order. The syntax in *hrynhent* poems is typically simpler, meaning it would be easier for audiences to understand than *dróttkvætt*, and its rhythm would be familiar to audiences from Latin hymns (Frank 1978, 93). Furthermore, Óláfr's verses employ fewer mythological references than Snorri's and do not require knowledge of specific myths; anyone who knew anything about Óðinn likely knew that he had some association with spears, if not what exactly that association was. Óláfr's kennings for weapons or battle are described using weather or natural imagery, including storms, the sea, fire, and the sky, and when discussing Hákon or Skúli, it is always in religiously-neutral terms that reference their status as nobility, as rulers of men, or as war leaders. It is possible that he was less interested in the mythology than Snorri was, or that, having taken holy orders, he felt that it was less appropriate to use. His references to Christianity are also minimal here, but a greater commitment to Christian ideas may be indicated by the two stanzas from a *drápa* about Thomas Becket that are attributed to him.[53]

What we have of Óláfr's poetry places him somewhere between Snorri's "classical revival" and the more clear, religious-inspired verse of other post-conversion poets. While he generally does not emulate Snorri's style, his use of traditional themes and some imagery still places him firmly within the skaldic tradition as it had developed since the conversion. His image of king and court is traditional, save perhaps for the reference to God, but the voice of the poet is muted. This is largely because his verses are used as corroboration for historical events which he was not a witness to, meaning that self-references wouldn't really be appropriate.[54] It must be admitted that the poetry of Óláfr preserved in *Hákonar saga* is likely only a limited sample of his total corpus. What makes these verses important, however, is that they were deliberately chosen by Sturla for inclusion in the saga, and presumably approved by Magnús. We can contrast this with the fact that only two of *Háttatal*'s 102 verses were included in *Hákonar saga*, both from Skúli's section.[55]

While Óláfr's use of mythology is rather different from Snorri's, he built on some of his uncle's ideas regarding it. The prologue to the *Edda* and the beginning of *Heimskringla* present

52 *Hrynhenda* v. 12: "svá vildi guð framiðr mildi" ["God, excellent in mercy, willed it so"]. See Chapter Three for further discussion.

53 The *drápa* is the most prestigious poetic form, and it may be telling that no *drápur* for Hákon are preserved or included in *Hákonar saga*.

54 Though he uses first person in one of the *lausavísur* in describing the arrival of news of the battle of Láka, where Skúli's forces defeated Hákon's.

55 The saga includes one other verse attributed to Snorri; in the years shortly before Skúli's rebellion, tension arises between Hákon and Skúli, which is attributed to the members of their retinue, and in particular Gautr Jónsson á Meli. Skúli is depicted as asking Snorri whether it is true the Óðinn, known for sowing discord, is also known as Gautr. When Snorri replies in the affirmative, Skúli asks him to compose a verse on the subject (II: 42-3).

a euhemerized version of the Æsir: they are said to be humans from Troy,[56] who came to the North because Óðinn's gift of prophecy told him that he would be famous there. The Æsir then came to be worshipped because of their abilities. With this story, the mythology is somewhat rehabilitated: the Æsir are not gods, and thus threatening to Christianity; they were just thought to be by misguided people who did not yet know Christ. Furthermore, this move allows the peoples of the North to take part in the general European origin story, wherein various countries linked themselves to the classical world, particularly Troy, through a noble progenitor.[57] Óláfr sees the implications of this story: in the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, he states that the art of verse was learned in Greece by both the Romans and by Óðinn, who brought it with him to the north (Óláfr 1927, 39). Not only does this serve to justify the value of the Icelandic tradition, it gives it a higher status than any other vernacular poetry. The *Third Grammatical Treatise* was written after Óláfr's return to Iceland, so this commentary could not have been addressed to the Norwegian court, though we might imagine his position to be, at least in part, a reaction to the literary trends in fashion at the time.

Sturla Þórðarson and the writing of Hákonar saga

Sturla's poetic career abroad does not begin as ambitiously as his uncle or brother's. Unlike Snorri and Óláfr, he did not initiate contact; instead he was summoned to the Norwegian court in 1263 because of conflicts with the king's representative in the Borgarfjörður area (SkP II, II: 676). It is generally agreed that Sturla composed *Hrynhenda*[58] in Iceland before he left as a sort of head-ransom in an attempt to win back Hákon's good favor (SkP II, II: 676). However, Hákon had already left for his final campaign in Scotland and the Hebrides, on which he would die of illness, and so Sturla presented the poem to Magnús with great success. However, it was not a simple matter; the story of Sturla's initial meeting with Magnús, *Sturlu þáttr*, follows the "king and Icelander" trope. Magnús at first refuses to even see Sturla, but after his storytelling garners rapt attention, the queen invites Sturla to come to the royal chambers and repeat his story. Magnús is impressed by his ability, grants him leave to present his poem, and is so pleased that he offers Sturla a place in his court and commissions him to write the story of his father's life.

While this episode is markedly different from Snorri's voyage abroad to win fame and fortune like the skalds in the sagas, it is still one of the classic narratives and demonstrates that Sturla also viewed poetry as viable currency. This can also be seen in the type of poetry that he composes. Like Snorri, he includes more pagan than Christian elements and composes in a variety of meters; like Óláfr, however, his mythological kennings tend to be confined to battle scenes. He also branches out somewhat in subject matter: he discusses, for example, Hákon's coronation and the journey of his daughter Kristín to Castile to be married. He also places a

56 The *Edda* proposes the false etymology of Æsir with Asia.

57 Such as in the case of England, where Brutus fled Troy and came to England. This story would have been known in Scandinavia through the early thirteenth-century translation of Geoffrey's *Historia regum Brittaniae*. See Kalinke 2011 for an overview of *Breta sögur*.

58 This name is not attested in the manuscripts; it is called this because it is in *hrynhent*.

greater emphasis on scenes of battle than on praises of Hákon's generosity, which again makes sense given the composition context. While *Hrynhenda* was originally intended to address Hákon directly, asking for rewards when faced with royal displeasure would not have been wise.[59]

Sturla's poem for Hákon is thus quite different from Snorri's in tone. While Snorri is very self-conscious, not only asking for reward but declaring his ability to create a literary monument for his prospective patrons that will endure through time, Sturla seems to arrive at the Norwegian court, hat in hand. His claims for his role as poet are very modest. In v. 3 of *Hrynhenda* he proclaims:

> Öldum segik, hvé ófrið ulduð,
> unnviggs skipuðr, Dönum sunnan;
> víða settu þínar þjóðir
> þunnar skeiðr af fýrihlunnum.

["I tell men how you repaid the Danes for hostility from the south, commander of the wave-steed [ship > king]; your troops launched far and wide slender warships from the fir-rollers"]

Here he is positioned as the means by which Hákon's reputation as a fierce war-leader will grow, but he says nothing about the quality of his poetry. This sentiment is only echoed one other place, also in *Hrynhenda*, where Sturla states that "people will spread your glory [north] further than the sun shines."[60] This is, however, general acclaim, and less an affirmation of the importance of Sturla's role. Furthermore, every stanza of *Hrynhenda* emphasizes Hákon's power: power to command the largest naval fleet in Europe, power to frighten his enemies, power to marry his daughter to Spain and be crowned by a papal envoy. Sturla even turns the classic imagery of battle as storm into a statement about Hákon's might: in v. 16 he states that

> Ærin, var, sem elding færi
> (inn um borð) á lægi norðan,
> (öldum varp) er húfum helduð,
> hilmis kundr, til jörmungrundar.

["It was as if a great flash of lightning travelled from the north across the sea, son of the ruler [=Hákon], when you brought the hulls to the vast land; waves were thrown in over the gunwale."]

Sturla's other poems for Hákon were written in a very different context. As Hákon died not long after Sturla arrived in Norway, and the writing of *Hákonar saga* took place in the years immediately following Hákon's death, it seems safe to assume that the rest of Sturla's

59 Hákon is referred to as generous, but either as a general characteristic or in historical contexts, such as his reception of Ríkiza, who came from Sweden to marry Hákon's eldest son.

60 v. 20: "lengra reiða þjóðir þangat/þína dýrð, en röðull skíni."

poems were composed for the purpose of inclusion in the saga.[61] As such, they fall less into the living tradition of skaldic verse, with its attendant social function of establishing a relationship between king and poet, Norwegian and Icelander, and instead are likely closer to how many people of the period encountered at least some skaldic verse in the thirteenth century and later: as a written object, perhaps embedded within a narrative, rather than in a performance context.[62] To a certain extent, Sturla's other poems do indeed seem more "literary": as a rule, their syntax is more complex, the meters more demanding, and their kennings more elaborate than *Hrynhenda*'s.[63] This suggests that poetry composed to be performed before the king and court was designed to be more comprehensible, perhaps even more palatable, while poetry composed for the saga was either left to Sturla's discretion, or was intended to show off the skill of poets who had composed for Hákon; these are not mutually exclusive. The verse is clearly important to the saga, given that over a hundred stanzas are included, but the fact that the majority of the verse was composed by Sturla suggests that it was included because of the expectations of the saga genre. Indeed, the saga seems to have been intended as the real literary monument to Hákon; skaldic verse was simply the gilding.

The biographies and the poetry of the Sturlungs suggest that they attempt to act out the familiar narrative of the Icelandic poet who wins favor and makes his fortune at the Norwegian court. They seem to have met with mixed success, particularly Sturla, who twice was called to the king to answer for his behavior and twice was asked to write sagas.[64] It seems likely that this is due, at least in part, to the changing attitude towards skaldic verse, and the role of the skald, on the part of the Norwegian monarchy. This may be seen in the depiction of Hákon in his saga, as well as of his relationship with poets. It is unclear what the precise circumstances of the composition of *Hákonar saga* were—whether Sturla volunteered to write it or was commanded to write it—but as it was composed in Norway while Sturla was at court, it seems safe to assume that what he wrote was approved or directed by Magnús. It may thus be considered the official position as to how the monarchy wanted itself to be depicted.[65]

This is important because, in his saga, Hákon is not portrayed as the classical king of skaldic verse. To begin with, he is hardly what one could call a warrior-king. He establishes this trait early in life when he is still trying to enforce a claim on the throne and Skúli—older, wealthier, and better-connected—is an active threat. Seeing that Skúli is sending secret letters

61 As *Hákonarflokkr* mentions Hákon's burial in stanza 11, that poem, at least, has a certain *terminus post quem*.

62 If the traditional dating of c. 1223 for *Háttatal* is correct, then it, too, would fall into the category of written poetry. However, its function would have been much closer to the traditional role of praise poetry than Sturla's verses would have been. Readings of sagas, as are attested in various places, are included with "narrative" here; it is possible that understanding skaldic verse in narrative was less important because of the frequency with which it repeated information that was already related in the prose.

63 Gade points out that the complex meter of *Hrafnsmál* forced Sturla to include "a wealth of nominal compounds, many of which are hap[ax] leg[omena] and some of which are very awkward" (SkP II: II, 727).

64 Sturla was also the author of a saga about Magnús, though only a single manuscript leaf of the saga survives. It has been most recently edited in *Hákonar saga* 2013.

65 External evidence, such as thematic similarities between parts of *Hákonar saga* and *Konungs skuggsjá*, as well as Euro-centric policies, suggest that Hákon's portrayal in the saga does indeed reflect his position in many areas.

with the king's seal and taking frequent counsel with his supporters, Hákon's men tell the king of their suspicions. Rather than take action, however, Hákon replies that Skúli "mun vel halda vár einkamál af sinni hendi. Ætla ek ok eigi fyrri at bregða" (I:199) [will certainly keep to our agreement on his part. I do not intend to be the first to break it]. Hákon's words are prophetic: twenty years later Skúli is indeed the one to break the peace between them.

Instead, he is depicted as cultivating the image of circumspection and being slow to violence. In many instances he makes settlements rather than taking to battle, forgives when he could punish. For example, just before Christmas in 1224, Skúli intercepts letters from Värmlanders who had pledged their allegiance to Hákon secretly offering their support to rebel leader Sigurðr ribbungr. Hákon writes to king Eiríkr of Sweden several times in an attempt to get him to drive the rebels from his land, but only after he gets equivocation in response does he decide to take an army to Värmland (I: 227). Though his army is eager for action, Hákon holds off in the hope that the Värmlanders would come to him to ask for mercy. When this does not transpire, he gives his men the go-ahead to burn the land, though offers peace to any man who comes to him to ask it (I: 287).

Similarly, Hákon dissuades Skúli from invading Iceland in 1220[66] and ultimately pardons the Ribbungar in 1227. During Skúli's rebellion in 1240, Hákon catches abbot Björn with letters that "ábóti væri verðr lífláts fyrir" (II: 81) [would be cause for the abbot's death]. The king pardons him, in this case felicitously, for it is abbot Björn who in 1243 will bring letters from the pope that will lead to Hákon's coronation (II: 121). Hákon also pardons many of Skúli's followers, including Árni rufa, to whom he was "sem hann hefði honum jafnan fylgt" (II: 107) [as if he (Árni) had always followed him (the king)]. Hákon is certainly not a pushover—he displays willingness to go to battle regularly as a last resort, and delivers a rousing speech to his men, stirring them to revenge for the harm that Skúli's men have done them during the rebellion (II: 90-2)—but he does not seek battle or ever choose it as a first solution.[67]

Furthermore, Hákon is never portrayed as a literary patron. As stated above, seven or eight poets are listed under Hákon in *Skáldatal*,[68] giving him one of the highest numbers of poets recorded for Norwegian kings (Fidjestøl 1997a, 123). However, unlike many sagas of earlier kings, there are no depictions of skaldic performance at Hákon's court in the saga, despite the fact that many of the poets appear as characters in the saga. In the case of Snorri, this is unsurprising, as he was more a friend to Skúli than to Hákon, and he was ultimately killed on Hákon's orders. Gizurr Þorvaldsson, however, was loyal to the king and was even made the first earl of Iceland after it came under the Norwegian crown. As only a half-stanza of his poetry for Hákon is preserved in the saga, we can assume that Sturla did not desire to

66 I: 230. However, in chapter 43 of *Sturlunga saga* it is Skúli who dissuades Hákon. Instead, they agree to send Snorri back to Iceland to make peace, a plan which ultimately fails.

67 See also his continued efforts to make peace with the Danes through settlement rather than battle during the 1250s despite the larger Norwegian fleet, as well as during his final campaign to Scotland and the Southern Isles in 1263, and the several occasions when he gives Skúli the benefit of the doubt and prevents fighting between their followers despite circulating rumors of Skúli's efforts to usurp the throne.

68 See Wanner 2008, 86 and Guðrún Nordal 2001 for a discussion of these poets. They are Snorri Sturluson, Óláfr Þórðarson, Sturla Þórðarson, Gizurr jarl Þorvaldsson, Óláfr Leggsson, Játgeirr Torfason, Árni langi, and Guttormr körtr Helgason, the last of whom is omitted from the *Kringla* recension.

include more, perhaps for political reasons, and Magnús did not feel the need to insist on any more. That the only episodes of poetry being performed within the narrative take place at Skúli's court suggests that Skúli may have been more associated with poetic patronage.[69] It would therefore be prudent for Hákon, and Hákon's successor, to differentiate themselves from Hákon's rival. Furthermore, in showing what poets composed about Hákon, but not how Hákon rewarded them or how he appreciated his poetry, he is set above them; it is not the dynamic of an equal exchange as in the "king and Icelander" *þættir*.

In many key ways, then, Hákon does not seem to be a particularly good subject for skaldic poetry. He does not embrace the warrior ethos that skaldic poetry was created around, there is little record of him encouraging poets or rewarding them for their work, and his policies steadily move Norway in a new direction. There are, then, two conflicting ideas at work about what the Norwegian court can and should be. The Icelandic poets largely embrace the Nordic past, one that lauds their skills and confirms their political independence, and they compose poetry that is appropriate to what they desire the Norwegian court to be: a place to affirm their identity and increase their status. Hákon, however, is constructing a new type of kingdom, one that looks to Europe for its tastes, practices, and structures of power, and needs a court to reflect these changes. Having court skalds and poetry composed about him increased his prestige in the Northern world, but he no longer needed it, either to confirm his eligibility to rule, or to preserve his memory.[70]

Conclusion

The *Edda* is probably Snorri's most famous work, and may have been sent as a gift to the Norwegian court. If so, it would have arrived about the same time that Thomas's *Tristan* was being translated into Old Norse at the Norwegian court. This curious juxtaposition—a handbook of poetics and pagan mythology alongside one of the most famous medieval romances—not only demonstrates the wide range of literary projects that went on in and around Hákon's court, but also hints at tensions that existed within Hákon's sphere of influence due to his literary, cultural, and political projects. Hákon's literary patronage is discussed most commonly for the romances, *lais*, and *chansons de geste* that were produced at his court, but the Icelandic authors and poets that composed for him and his sons were also an important component of literary life in thirteenth-century Norway.

However, in the more literate, Christian society of the thirteenth century—a society that sent letters, kept records, and saw translation as a valuable project—skaldic poetry no

69 In addition to Snorri's verse regarding Gautr á Meli, Játgeirr skáld Torfason describes a battle between the two political factions, the Birkibeinar and the Ribbungar, in verse, but it is not clear whether this is done before Skúli, or simply in response to his bedmate's query (I: 254). Gizurr Þorvaldsson's verse could possibly be construed as being performed on the occasion of the king's campaign to Denmark in 1257 as the saga specifies that Gizurr went along, but it seems more likely that this is intended to serve as a corroborating verse (II: 192-3).

70 As a contrast, see Andersson and Gade's discussion of Haraldr harðráði, who "may have been the chief patron of his own legend and have nurtured a total narrative" and "had special relations with Icelanders, who were in a position to maintain the narrative" (590).

longer had the social function it once did. Furthermore, as Icelanders monopolized the art of skaldic verse, and as Christian and continental influences pervaded Norway, skaldic poetry, particularly the more baroque forms, likely became more removed from the Norwegian experience.[71] This would make it harder for poetry to do its work of bringing together and constituting the court, and thus less useful to kings. Skaldic verse would have had to contend not only with other forms of entertainment, but with books: as prestige items, beautifully illuminated manuscripts would not only be able to record the deeds of a king with relative permanence, they would simultaneously be objects of status—not just a saga, but a book, with all the types of expertise implied to create such an object. A broader court community could be created through the reading of a saga, which did not need special training to unravel: anyone who could hear and was old enough to understand could be included, which would be more appropriate for the larger thirteenth-century court, made up of people from a variety of social statuses and education levels.

The need to make concessions in order to maintain the viability of skaldic verse was likely an important guiding factor in the stylistic choices of Sturla and Óláfr. They had the same goals as Snorri—using their poetic ability to help themselves politically and materially—and much to gain by following his poetic agenda. However, the fact that their poetry deviates from his shows that they did not view his verse as completely viable for these goals. In order to maintain the integrity of the position of poet as Snorri attempted to embody, they chose different strategies. By using simpler diction and catchier meters for poetry destined for court performance, they may have been able to hold their audience's attention longer than they would with baroque *dróttkvætt*, thus prolonging the viability of skaldic verse. It is clear that, from the Icelandic perspective, skaldic poetry was important. It was in the best interest of the poets to encourage the preservation of a society that lent itself to skaldic verse and, when that failed, to expand the possibilities of skaldic verse as best as possible.

However, both Sturla and Óláfr are forced to perform a balancing act with their compositions. At the same time that they must make their verse accessible, they must also maintain its authority. As this is often granted by age and tradition in the middle ages, they cannot uproot skaldic verse from its oldest traditions, i.e., the mythology. Doing so would also endanger their position as purveyors of verse: if it does not make use of the unique knowledge that Icelanders were known for preserving, then any other person could become a skald, and Iceland would lose its monopoly on its highest-status export. Attaching the art of poetry to the classical world, as Snorri and Óláfr do, toes the line between imbuing Norse poetry with authority, but also preserving it as something that Icelanders are uniquely qualified to create: it is an attempt to offer something that is as attractive as the new texts coming from the cosmopolitan countries abroad.

Sturla affirms the authority of skaldic verse in another way: by making it a literary object. *Hákonar saga* does not demonstrate a living poetic tradition. Most of its poetry was composed for the saga, and it depicts the performance of only two verses, located at the court

71 This would have been exacerbated by the linguistic changes that were slowly separating Old Norwegian from Old Icelandic. While hardly important in day-to-day speech, vowel changes and the loss of word-initial [h] before consonants in Old Norwegian would have had a large impact on rhyme and alliteration in skaldic verse.

of Hákon's rival. However, the fact that so much verse was included demonstrates its continuing importance for the genre of the saga, if not for defining Norwegian kingship or maintaining the relationship between Norwegian kings and Icelanders. The use, or lack thereof, of poetry in *Hákonar saga* does not serve to show Hákon as a patron of the arts or a friend (or enemy!) to Icelanders. What the saga does instead is insert Hákon into the *historical* tradition through its inclusion of verses. There is a famous episode at the end of the saga that relates how, on his deathbed, Hákon had Latin books read to him, then sagas of saints in Old Norse, then the list of kings beginning with Hálfdanr svarti [black]. *Sverris saga* is finished shortly before midnight, and Hákon dies shortly after (ch. 397-8). Not only, therefore, is *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* the logical continuation of the literary record, it helps affirm Hákon's place amongst the kings of Norway. Including skaldic verse links Hákon back to the kings he claims to be descended from—St. Óláfr, Haraldr hárfagri—and signifies that he, too, is worthy of skaldic verse. Though its role in actuality is more symbolic than functional, with it, his saga can be set beside that of any other Norwegian king and it will be lacking in no way. The inclusion of skaldic verse also serves to designate the saga as a uniquely Scandinavian product. By the time of the writing of the saga, there were certainly various other models for composing prose texts. However, Sturla chose to write—and Magnús chose to approve—not just a saga, but a saga with events corroborated by skaldic verse, affirming that their own literary products had worth.[72]

In the world of the sagas, and by extension the Icelandic imagination, the Norwegian court is a place that has the power to confirm the independence and equality of Icelanders before their wealthier, more powerful and more cosmopolitan kinsmen. In triumphing over Norwegians using their cleverness, or gaining the king's favor through their poetic skill, they are able to, as Margaret Clunies Ross puts it, "[beat] the Norwegians at their own game because they play by different, Icelandic rules" (1999, 56). Though sagas and *þættir* almost certainly do not record history with perfect accuracy, there is enough evidence for us to have a degree of confidence that this pattern reflected life to a certain extent. Many stories feature real people, who are recorded in other sources such as *Íslendingabók,* whose genealogies can be traced and their journeys abroad followed. Secondly, the poetry itself preserves many details that corroborate saga narrative, including assertions by poets that they presented poetry to a ruler and received specific gifts in exchange. While some is suspect, such as the final section of *Haraldskvæði* which describes the windfall of gifts he gives to his poets, others show every indication of being authentic.[73]

Yet over the course of the thirteenth century, there are indications that this dynamic is losing the importance that it once had. Hákon is not a warrior-king like many of his predecessors; he fights to protect his holdings, but he does not go abroad on viking raids, nor is he depicted as laying claim to new territories.[74] He is deeply interested in domestic projects, as

72 This is not to claim that the sagas arose completely independently, but rather that they were seen by Icelanders and Norwegians as a native literary product. This would seem to be supported by the alterations that translated texts underwent, such as turning poetry to prose in the case of the romances.

73 See Fidjestøl 1997a, 127. For more discussion of "authentic" poetry, see his discussion of *Tøgdrápa* on p. 122.

74 When Hákon invades Scotland in 1263, the saga explains that he "aftr unnit ríki þau öll er Magnús konungr berfættr hafði unnit af Skotlandi ok Suðreyjum" (II: 257) [won back all the land which king Magnús berfœtr

the end of his saga attests, and the only type of literary patronage we have evidence for him engaging in is of romance and educational literature.[75] As Hákon cultivated an interest in European culture and strengthened his ties with the Church, the social structures and values that allowed Icelanders to play such a key role were changing. There is little indication that at his court, skaldic poetry had any greater function than that of entertainment.[76] It seems clear that, despite the best efforts of the Sturlung family and the handful of other poets at the courts of Hákon and Magnús, skaldic poetry as a vehicle for royal praise and legitimization was on the decline. Even though a lack of interest in skaldic poetry by foreign rulers, particularly Norwegian kings, meant the eventual death of a deeply interesting literary form that had brought much prestige to the Icelanders, new opportunities were created by new areas of interest. For while interest in skaldic poetry declined, interest in romance quickly caught on. And just like skaldic poetry, Icelanders adopted this new genre rapidly, soon making it their own. The advent of romance proved to be wildly productive, with indigenous Icelandic romances being written, shared, and copied all the way down to the nineteenth century.

had conquered in Scotland and the Hebrides]. Despite the saga's depiction, the fact that Hákon acquired Iceland, with Greenland shortly to follow, and married his sons to Swedish and Danish nobles, suggests that he did indeed have expansionist aims for Norway.

75 In the shape of *Konungs skuggsjá*.

76 Fidjestøl argues that this was also the case for Sverrir, to whom Hákon refers multiple times in his saga (1997a, 125).

CHAPTER TWO

Romancing the Throne: The Chivalric World of the Translated Romances

The previous chapter showed the image of the court operating in skaldic verse to be primarily martial and conservative. It is a masculine world, largely concerned with the acquisition of reputation through prowess—in battle, for the king and his followers, in composing poetry, for the poet—and a traditional relationship between king and courtiers (including the poet) marked by gift giving. As we have seen, this model was subject to modification during the thirteenth century, both because of a changing model of kingship largely influenced by Christianity, and because of competition in the shape of other literary forms. Rather than being immediately replaced, however, it coexisted for a time with other models of courts, such as that found in romance literature. The traditional model—the warrior king with his *drótt*—still had political uses; it could be deployed for rhetorical effect, making it worthwhile for Hákon and Magnús to continue to patronize skalds. However, it was no longer the Northern ideal, but had become one amongst several ideas, and seems to have become fossilized, rather than a living tradition, by the beginning of the fourteenth century.[1]

While the appeal of skaldic poetry was waning, translated literature from abroad increased in popularity. Religious texts and even some histories had reached Norway and Iceland during the twelfth century, but these were almost entirely Latin texts, with the exception of *A Debate between the Body and the Soul* (*Un samedi par nuit*), the earliest translation from French preserved in the North. The thirteenth century, however, saw a wave of translations of secular, vernacular texts, primarily from French (likely a combination of Anglo-Norman and Old French), but also some from German, mostly likely commissioned for use in the royal court and by extension other noble households. These texts included romances, *chansons de geste*, and lais, and feature some of the most well-known texts from

1 Eiríkr Magnússon (r. 1280-1299) is the last king to have poets listed in the later recension of *Skáldatal* in the Codex Uppsaliensis (see *Edda* 2012, lxxvi). This is perhaps in part due to the design of the manuscript; almost immediately after Eiríkr's last skald is listed, the composition of *Ynglingatal* (here attributed to Eyvindr skaldaspillir) is described and the list of Norwegian jarls and their skalds begins. In the space between the two columns, a later medieval hand has added Eiríkr's brother and successor Hákon Magnússon (r. 1299-1319) and Magnús Eiríksson (r. 1319-1343). There is no attempt to add skalds for these later additions, and while there is not space in the column for more poets, the manuscript page has ample margins where information could be added. The fact that this has not been done suggests either that there are no skalds to add, or that they were not considered important enough to find a place for on the manuscript page. It may be significant that this occurs at the same time that the court moves east to Sweden and the *Eufemiavisorna* are composed, suggesting a growing interest in German cultural ties. See Layher and Jansson. A facsimile edition and diplomatic transcription of the Codex Uppsaliensis may be found in Grape (see *Edda*).

medieval England and France.[2] The depiction of royal courts in romance and lai must have been a surprise to Northern audiences: romance literature brought with it a drastically different set of cultural customs predicated on an entirely different social model. Martial prowess was still important, but it was now service of higher ideals such as religion, self-discovery, and chivalry. Many features of this model work in tandem with Christian ideas of kingship, a point which will be developed further in Chapter Three.

The translated romances and lais are centered on the courts of King Arthur, King Markis,[3] and, in the case of the *Strengleikar*, Breton and English kings and nobles who inhabit the same literary world. It is typical in the scholarship of these texts to see their translation as purposeful—by some as a didactic enterprise, by others simply as another form of entertainment, but generally in service of bringing Norway and its court closer to the countries of Europe. The romance court, then, is read as serving as a stand-in for the European court, showing the Norwegian courtiers and nobility new rules of behavior and refinement and new cultural values. However, there are problems with this view, as Marianne Kalinke has pointed out in her discussion of *Möttuls saga*.[4] In many instances, the behavior on display in the romances is not behavior that ought to be emulated, such as unfaithfulness in women, the promising of rash boons, or a lack of strong leadership on the part of kings; romance literature frequently questions the very society which it seems to laud.

However, the courtly values typically associated with romance frequently do not actually originate at the court. They may be brought to court, as with Tristram in *Tristrams saga*, who ennobles Markis's court through his innate abilities and those in which he has been educated as a child. They might also be developed during an adventure, such as those experienced in Chrétien de Troyes's stories of Erec, Yvain, and Perceval. These knights, too, improve the court of Arthur by returning after journeys on which they perform great deeds and learn important lessons. Often in romance, then, the court functions not as the *source* of courtly values, but the place where they are brought together, accepted or rejected, and then disseminated. The romance court acts as an arbiter of culture through what it welcomes and honors, or what it rejects. Similarly, where the court fails in its duties or chooses poorly, it may be rejected. There are, therefore, consonances between the romance court and the skaldic court in that both function as places of valuation and commemoration, working to laud and reinforce the behaviors that create and maintain those particular spaces. Their key differences lie in what values underpin each model, as well as their structure, including the world views that contribute to that structure.

This chapter will investigate the model of the royal court that is depicted in the romances and lais, which comes to Norway with Hákon's translations around the middle of

2 Halvorsen 1973 lists twenty-nine works in seven different genres, from four different source languages. Bengt R. Jonsson would also locate the origin of the Scandinavian ballad at Hákon's court, citing its probable origins in French *chansons de toile* and *chansons d'histoire*, and notes that "all other forms of [French *courtois*] literature came, as far as we know, to Scandinavia from Anglo-Norman England; consequently, it is natural to think that the same goes for the ballad" (1991, 151).

3 I have followed other writers on romance in Old Norse in using the Old Norse forms of names, except for the most famous characters (Arthur, Gawain, and Kay), who are already well-known by the English forms of their names.

4 1981b, 21-2. See below.

the thirteenth century, and which serves as an alternate idea of what the royal court can be and how it can function to that found in skaldic verse. Using the texts that can be most firmly linked with Hákon's court—*Tristrams saga*, *Ívens saga*, *Parcevals saga*, the *Strengleikar,* and *Möttuls saga*[5]—I will investigate the structure of the romance court, how it relates to the society depicted in the texts, and its function within the texts. *Tristrams saga* is an ideal text for laying out courtly values, with its three idealized male characters: Tristram, his father Kanelangres, and King Markis. It can also serve to introduce the problems that lie at the heart of the romance court: unfaithful queens and weak kings. *Ívens saga* and *Parcevals saga* provide examples of knights learning courtly values outside the court, while *Möttuls saga* explores problems within, ultimately turning away from a court that does not—or cannot—uphold its own governing principles. Finally, the *Strengleikar* show how the court serves as a center of commemoration and validation, employing literary patronage to preserve and promote social ideals.

Translated romance in scholarship

No extant *riddarasaga*[6] manuscript can be reliably dated to the reign of Hákon IV Hákonarson, nor is there archival evidence recording Hákon's status as a literary patron. The connection between Hákon and the translations comes from comments in later manuscripts: the beginnings of *Strengleikar*, *Möttuls saga*, and *Tristrams saga*, as well as the end of *Ívens saga*. The earliest of these manuscripts is Uppsala, De la Gardie 4-7, which contains nearly all of the lais attributed to Marie de France as well as some anonymous lais, from c. 1270.[7] While this connection has occasionally been doubted,[8] the general consensus has been to take the attestations at face value, and to view Hákon's reign as a period of significant literary activity, marked particularly by translations of vernacular texts into Old Norse. In addition to the texts that mention Hákon, a number of other translated works have been associated with him or his

5 *Elis saga ok Rosamundu*, a translation of *Elie de Saint-Gille,* is also typically counted among the translated riddarasögur, linked to Hákon's court through the mention of Abbot Robert—perhaps Brother Robert, the translator of *Tristrams saga,* at a later stage in his career—and its inclusion in De la Gardie 4-7 fol., the same manuscript that preserves the *Strengleikar*. However, it is a *chanson de geste* and thus has different concerns from the romances, so it will not be treated in this chapter. It is possible that *Erex saga* may have been translated in this context as well, as it is a romance by Chrétien de Troyes, like *Ívens saga* and *Parcevals saga*, yet it has been drastically altered from the French original, and is thus less likely to preserve thirteenth-century ideals. Though the other Chrétien romances, as well as *Tristrams saga*, are preserved in very late manuscripts, they show a greater standard of fidelity to their source texts, which I argue, following Marianne Kalinke, means that they retain some value for investigating their medieval context. See below for further discussion. There may have been other texts translated at Hákon's court, such as *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* and *Bevers saga*, but we do not have manuscripts dating from this period or any sort of attestation of patronage, and so I have chosen not to treat them here.

6 I use this term here to mean translations of French romances, lais, and *chansons de geste.*

7 Cook and Tveitane x; Budal 2009 accepts this date (See under *Strengleikar*). However some, such as Kalinke and Mitchell 1985, have suggested a date of c. 1250 for the manuscript.

8 Sverrir Tómasson argues that the prologue of *Tristrams saga,* which names Hákon, was a later addition, and that the saga itself is from the fourteenth century.

courtly milieu, including *Parcevals saga*, *Erex saga*, *Elis saga*, *Karlamagnús saga*, *Þiðreks saga af Bern, Flores saga ok Blankiflúr*, and *Bevers saga*. Yet given that the vast majority of manuscripts —many of them fragmentary—post-date Hákon's reign, sometimes by several centuries, determining when texts were translated and in what order can, to an extent, only be speculative.

Two of the mentions of Hákon hint as to when the sagas might have originally been translated: *Tristrams saga* gives the date of 1226 while *Ívens saga* mentions "Hákon kongr gamli," suggesting a date after his son Hákon ungi had been named co-king, thus after 1240.[9] The date of *Tristrams saga* is generally taken at face value, and it is frequently viewed as the first translation in the literary portion of Hákon's project of Europeanization.[10] As previously mentioned, however, Sverrir Tómasson has expressed doubts as to *Tristrams saga*'s dating, and M. F. Thomas leans toward his position, at least in terms of the saga as it is currently preserved.[11] Suzanne Marti tentatively accepts the date of 1226, though argues on lexical grounds that *Tristrams saga* cannot have been the first translation of a romance.[12] Though I see no particular reason to doubt the date of 1226, firm dates for other translations, or an order in which the texts were translated, is a problem that will likely remain insoluble.

It has been traditionally believed that the *riddarasögur* were translated at Hákon's court or at a place with a close connection to it, such as the Lyse monastery.[13] Most discussions of the site of translation center on the *Strengleikar*, though in her call to re-evaluate the dating of the translation of *Percevals saga*, Marti suggests that we consider Iceland as a possible site of translation for at least some of the texts (2013, 65). A Norwegian site, however, would provide a number of royal clerks, as well as ties to England—diplomatic, economic, as well as

9 It is possible, as Claudia Bornholdt suggests, that it could indicate a broader period, starting with the birth of Hákon ungi in 1232 (98).

10 See, for example, Kalinke 2006. Halvorsen 1973, who also accepts this date, would link it to Hákon's marriage in 1225 (19).

11 Though Thomas gives no specific date, she views the end of the saga as being contaminated by another branch of the story after its original translation. See discussion below.

12 Marti argues that the distribution of words used to express new concepts, such as *dubba,* 'dub' and *atreið,* 'tournament,' as well as how much explanation the concepts receive, can allow us to date the translated *riddarasögur* with relation to each other. As these specific terms are found throughout *Tristrams saga* with little explanation, but not *Parcevals saga*, she argues that this suggests that the words and concepts had become familiar and commonplace by the time of *Tristram*'s translation. However, her assertion that she will not "discuss whether or not individual wordings are the work of the first translator" calls into question how much the word distribution can tell us, as numerous scholars have commented on the significant transformations the texts underwent over the centuries (see the discussion of style below). Curiously, she does not consider the case of the *Strengleikar*, which not only do not use *dubba*, but has different name forms for the characters of the Tristan legend. An argument based on a similar observation regarding names has been used for dating *Möttuls saga* before the other Arthurian texts in *Möttuls saga,* ed. Kalinke 1987, LVI-XI.

13 The translated *riddarasögur* connected with Hákon's court are frequently discussed as a group, which I also shall do in this section. *Tristrams saga* and *Strengleikar* are the texts that have been the most studied on their own, and scholarship on them provides the bulk of discussion on questions of provenance and translation. I will indicate where a particular text is discussed, but where no particular text is indicated, it can be assumed that the discussion applies to the group of translated *riddarasögur* connected with Hákon's court: *Tristrams saga, Möttuls saga, Ívens saga, Parcevals saga*, and *Strengleikar*.

religious;[14] most scholars see it more likely that romance came to Norway from England rather than France.[15] In her 2009 dissertation, however, Ingvild Brügger Budal proposed that the *Strengleikar* were originally translated in England, imagining "ein gammalnorsk utsending på jakt etter høvisk litteratur" [an Old Norwegian envoy on a hunt for courtly literature] who "reiste truleg over Nordsjøen med eit handelsskip" [probably traveled over the North Sea with a merchant ship] to a place such as Oxford where manuscripts were available for copying for student use (I: 418).

There is little indication of who might have translated or copied the texts. *Tristrams saga* cites one "Brother Robert" as its translator, and the "Abbot Robert" named in *Elis saga* has been suggested to be the same Robert at a later stage of his career[16]—certainly, Robert was not a common name in Norway at the time, and Leach suggests that he was Anglo-Norman by birth (1966, 212). Though scholars once attributed a number of the other translations to Robert,[17] recent scholars have been more reticent. Whoever the translator was, he is generally thought to be a cleric or monk, though Anne Holtsmark suggested that jongleurs may have been responsible for or took part in the translation of *Strengleikar*, a suggestion that Robert Cook and Mattias Tveitane support (xxvi).[18] The different dialectal features in the manuscript, they argue, are indicative of multiple translators. Budal, however, rejects this, arguing that the dialectal differences were introduced at a later stage and that there was probably a single translator for the entire text (2009, I: 412). Additionally, she notes that there is no evidence of jongleurs having travelled to Norway, and the so-called 'jongleur manuscripts' have recently been evaluated as compilations for the nobility, rather than manuscripts that would travel with jongleurs (I: 416). Recent scholars more commonly attribute the translations to a native Norwegian speaker, save those by Robert.[19] Since Peter Hallberg's studies in the 1970s, there has not been a detailed linguistic comparison between a text assumed to be translated by a native Anglo-Norman speaker, such as *Elis saga*, and a native Norwegian speaker, such as *Ívens saga*, though the transmission history of the manuscripts means that the possibility to effectively carry out such a study is questionable.

The identity of the translator(s) and his native language comes to bear on the question of the nature of the original translations. As all of the current manuscript witnesses of the translated *riddarasögur* are significantly different from the extant Anglo-Norman and French

14 Several Norwegian monasteries were seeded from English foundations, and there were close religious ties between the countries at this period. See, for example, the strong English influence on the liturgy, as well as Matthew Paris's 1248 visit to Norway to reform the monastery of Niðarholmr.

15 See Budal 2009, I: 420; Leach 1921 is quite firm on this point: "In a few Norse translations there is definite internal evidence that the original was an Anglo-Norman or a Middle English work. In no instance does such evidence point to Continental French. Whenever a central French version of the original exists, it shows a wide divergence from the Norwegian form" (153).

16 *Elis saga,* ed. Kölbing vii.

17 See Schach 1975 for an overview. He himself builds on Hallberg's methodologies (Hallberg 1971, 1973, 1975) to argue that *Strengleikar*, *Möttuls saga*, *Ívens saga*, and *Parcevals saga* were all translated by Robert or at least the "same school" of translators (135).

18 See Holtsmark 1960.

19 For example, Leach 1966, Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir, and Budal 2009. Marti 2012 argues for a Norse-speaking translator, though, as stated above, her later argument opens this up to an Icelander as well as a Norwegian, at least for *Parcevals saga*.

witnesses, scholars initially dealt with this discrepancy by viewing the original translator(s) as either not very good or simply impatient with the flowery language of courtly love.[20] This opinion has been modified over the years, with Schach commenting of *Tristrams saga* that "occasionally the translator's fondness for playing with words leads him to stylistic excesses or absurdities or even to mistranslations" (1965, 86), a position similar to that held by Cook and Tveitane regarding the *Strengleikar*.[21] In her 1981 study, *King Arthur North-by-Northwest*, Marianne Kalinke carried out a broad survey of translated *riddarasögur* manuscripts, coming to the conclusion that comparison of all extant manuscript witnesses of a text, even late paper manuscripts, demonstrated the initial translations to be quite good, with many of the problems being introduced later in the manuscript transmission.[22]

Additionally, the question of recasting the texts to suit the taste of Northern audiences has been reframed. Whereas earlier it was seen as negative—Norwegians had no time for, or interest in, the subtleties and refinements of courtly love—changes to the text to shorten internal monologues or explain motivations are now viewed as a process of "acculturation": a conscious act on the part of the translator (or later redactors) to make the text conform to at least some of the pre-existing literary expectations of Northern audiences, a move which grants translators and redactors creative agency. For example, in comparing the recently-discovered Carlisle Fragment of Thomas's *Tristran* to *Tristrams saga*, Alison Finlay comments that

> the saga's emphasis is strenuously upon the negative qualities of love: grief, distress, longing, the impossibility of resisting (with the implication that they would prefer to do so). There is no reflection of Thomas's affirmation of the pleasure and release of consummated love. While this could argue no more than clerical prudishness, it is strongly reminiscent of the attitude to love recorded in the poets' sagas. (2004, 213-4)

Marianne Kalinke makes a similar argument regarding *Tristrams saga* and the Icelandic *riddarasaga* derived from it, today typically titled the *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*: that the changes in the story, in particular "the expression of male and female sexuality" are, at least in part, a result of trying to make the story conform to expectations raised by *íslendingasögur* and *fornaldarsögur*.[23]

The move towards a view of acculturation is part of a broader move to think about ways in which people during the middle ages viewed the concept and practice of translation, as well as the modern development of the fields of translation theory and translation studies.

20 For example, Meissner and *Strengleikar*, ed. Keyser & Unger.

21 Their view is that "there are, to be sure, some expected translation errors, infelicities, and probably evasions of certain difficult passages, but on the whole the translator seems to have been quite at home in the French language . . . all told, the translation deserved to be considered a success for the skill with which it reproduces a difficult foreign text in Norse that is free of foreign words and rich without being clumsy or cluttered" (xxx-i).

22 See also Kalinke 1991 and 2006. Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir makes a similar point regarding *Tristrams saga* in 1978.

23 Kalinke 2008. She also subscribes, at least in part, to Paul Schach's view that the *Saga af Tristram* is a reply to, or parody of, *Tristrams saga* (91).

With these theories in mind, Marti argues that our expectations of "translation" need to be re-evaluated, particularly in the case of medieval romance: that we should "not expect the one-to-one correspondence that we would seek in a modern translation, and instead consider the transformations that a text undergoes within its historical and cultural framework" (2012, 40).[24] While Kalinke's comparison of the manuscripts has shown that, in many cases, there probably *was* an extremely close correspondence in the original translations (or at least as close as one can get in translating from Anglo-Norman into Old Norwegian), Marti's reminder that even things such as the practice of translation can be culturally determined is welcome. While scholars outside the field of Old Norse still on occasion repeat the idea that the original translations were lacking due to the linguistic abilities of the translator(s), scholars within the field of Old Norse have generally come to believe that changes in the original translations were due more to conscious choice and creative license on the part of translators and redactors.

Attitudes towards the translations have been re-evaluated in light of a change in perception of the later paper manuscripts, as well as theories of translation. Another factor in our ability to even attempt to evaluate the quality of the *riddarasögur* is the state of the manuscripts of the original texts. No Anglo-Norman or French manuscript has been demonstrated to be the exemplar for any Norwegian translation, and the state of these texts varies. Thomas's *Tristan* is famously incomplete, extant only in ten fragments, the first of which picks up just after Tristan and Yseut have drunk the love potion halfway through the story.[25] There is more to compare the *Strengleikar* with, though several of the lais are not preserved anywhere else. Among the lais that do have texts to compare them with, most seem closer to the versions in British Museum, Harley 978, while a few or more similar to the texts of Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 1104). Some of the *Strengleikar* have readings that favor both manuscripts, suggesting that the exemplar for the original translation was a manuscript that has since been lost.[26] The case is the same with *Möttuls saga*, a translation of the fabliau-like *Le lai du cort mantel*, also called *Le mantel mautaillié*. Marianne Kalinke has demonstrated convincingly that none of the extant French manuscripts could have been the exemplar for the translation, and that furthermore, *Möttuls saga* in several cases preserves better readings than the French manuscripts.[27] The manuscript situation for *Yvain* or *Le chevalier au lion*, the source text of *Ívens saga*, is much better, though between the manuscript families there are a number of small but potentially significant divergences in meaning.[28] While not enough to affect the story, the grammatical and lexical

24 Kalinke makes a similar statement, though without recourse to translation theories, in 1977: "far from being travesties of Chrétien's masterpieces, the Old Norse redactions are fascinating examples of a type of medieval 'translation' designed to make the foreign not only more accessible, but also more palatable, to an audience unaccustomed to such narrative. The various omissions and changes of source material are to be ascribed not so much to a misunderstanding of the original, as to an intentional transformation designed to produce a work adhering to native literary conventions" (125).

25 For an overview of the *Tristan* manuscripts, see Lacy 1988 (see *Tristan*).

26 See the introductions to each lai in Cook and Tveitane and Budal 2009.

27 See for example *Möttuls saga* 1987, XLIX, where Kalinke suggests that the saga may preserve a passage of the equivalent of four lines lost in all French manuscripts. Furthermore, she argues, the saga "can be the determining factor in deciding which of several variants represents the original French lai" (LVI).

28 See the discussion of the groupings of *Yvain* manuscripts in Micha 1939, particularly pp. 146-153.

instabilities in the text are enough to make firm pronouncements about the habits or abilities of translators and redactors in Scandinavia difficult. The case is similar with *Perceval* or *Le conte du graal*: Keith Busby echoes the editors that preceded him in declaring the task of creating a stemma of the manuscripts to be "presque impossible" (Chrétien 1993, XL).

The question of determining the relationship between the sagas and their source texts has been accompanied by the equally—if not more—important question of how close the extant versions of the sagas are to their original translations. Rudolf Meissner viewed De la Gardie 4-7 to be representative of the original translation of the *Strengleikar*,[29] which clearly informs his opinions regarding the skill of the translator: the paring down of much of the text, in parts to a degree extreme enough that the sense is altered, is due to the preferences or abilities (or inabilities) of the translator. Yet Kölbing, examining the copy of *Elis saga* in the same manuscript, came to the opposite conclusion: that the original translations were quite close to the French or Anglo-Norman originals, and that the extant texts had undergone significant alteration.[30] That the present texts are representative of the original translation is supported by Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir in her examination of *Tristrams saga*,[31] as well as in the work of Geraldine Barnes. Surveying a broader range of *riddarasögur*, Barnes comes to the conclusion that "For purposes of literary and historical analysis, at least, it seems safe to assume that in their present state the *riddarasögur* MSS accurately represent the material translated, abbreviated or amplified by Brother Robert and his nameless colleagues" (1977, 438).

Paul Schach and Marianne Kalinke have come down on the side of Kölbing. In his work to produce a critical edition of *Tristrams saga*, unfortunately never published, Schach had access to a larger number of manuscripts than earlier scholars.[32] He came to the conclusion that *Tristrams saga* "has unfortunately not been preserved in anything approaching its original state" (1965, 66), a position that Marianne Kalinke reiterates. She argues that the fragments of the saga published by Schach "have proved beyond a doubt that the *Tristrams saga* we know today is not the saga that Brother Robert produced in thirteenth-century Norway" (2006, 178).[33] Her work with *Gvímars saga*, the Icelandic redaction of the *lai Guigemar*, led her to conclude that "it would be an injustice to the Norwegian translator of *Guigemar* to assume that history has preserved for us an accurate transcript of his work" (1980, 161). Her conclusions are more broadly applicable to the other *riddarasögur*, but that does not mean that the shape of the original translation has forever been lost: Kalinke shows that an examination of all manuscripts of a saga, including the later paper manuscripts ignored as useless by earlier scholars, not only is crucial for our understanding of the original translations,[34] but, as mentioned above, shows them to have been quite careful.

29 pp. 137 ff.

30 *Elis saga* xxv. However, he did not make use of the later paper manuscripts like Kalinke.

31 *Tristán en el norte*, 1978, as well as her revisitation of the material in 2000.

32 Schach was the first to work with the Reeves fragment of *Tristrams saga*, though it was known to Finnur Jónsson and Einar Ól. Sveinsson. See Schach 1969.

33 It is possible that early damage to manuscripts resulted in some alterations, as Blaisdell discusses in the case of *Ívens saga* (1969).

34 Kalinke reiterates this point in 1991. See also Blaisdell 1967.

Much has been said regarding the style of the translated *riddarasögur*.[35] Most notably, they do not reproduce the rhyming couplets of French romance and lai, instead preferring what E. F. Halvorsen (1959) has called "court style,"[36] a prose style ornate relative to the spareness of the *íslendingasögur,* with moments of elaborate description. These descriptive moments, characterized by alliterating pairs or strings of synonyms, are used for emphasis, or to highlight moments of dramatic or emotional intensity.[37] Other linguistic features include use of the present participle, lexical variation, and the use of antithesis. Explanations may be added for unfamiliar customs or to illuminate plot points that might not be immediately apparent to an audience unfamiliar with romance conventions, as well as the occasional comment or coloring with a religious or didactic tone. These features are balanced by a tendency to trim: stylistic repetition is frequently dispensed with and authorial intrusions are deleted: "phrases, sentences, and even entire sections in which Chrétien's presence is too strong, are automatically deleted by the Scandinavian redactors" (Kalinke 1977, 126). This is unsurprising for any saga reader, given the sagas' pretense towards objectivity—the conversational narrators of the lais and particularly Chrétien's romances would have initially seemed strange in the Scandinavian literary milieu. Also reduced may be "descriptions of nature, dress, physiognomy and the lengthy analyses of mental states often found in French romances."[38] The twin impulses to expand and to contract mean that several of the translated *riddarasögur*, particularly the lais of *Strengleikar*, are notably "different" (if one expects translation to mean a one-to-one equivalent between words), but about the same length as the original text. Varying frequency of these features demonstrates the variety of individuals or schools that have had a hand in the creation of these texts, sometimes even within the same text, such as the case of the *Strengleikar*, where the second half shows a much greater tendency to condense than the first half.[39]

A topic that has had nearly as much ink devoted to it as the question of the ability of the translators is what the purpose of the texts was. Nearly every scholar who has commented on the translated *riddarasögur* have viewed them as having some sort of use for Hákon and/or his court. Early scholars saw this purpose as being to introduce courtly manners, tastes, and customs to the "crude" Norwegians,[40] though some, such as Meissner, saw this as ultimately

35 See in particular Schach 1957, Halvorsen 1959, Barnes 1977, Kalinke 1977, 1981b, and 1991, Cook and Tveitane 1979, Budal 2009, Marti 2012, 2013.

36 Schach argues that Brother Robert is the originator of this style (1965, 63), but this position has not caught on widely.

37 Kalinke 1977, 132-3; see also Cederschiöld 1884, vii and Schach 1957, 117.

38 Barnes 1977, 411 though note Kalinke 1991, who argues that reduction in the text is not as drastic as had been thought by early editors: some is balanced by amplification, as noted above, while some reduction seems to have come during the Icelandic transmission stage rather than in translation, as is suggested by Schach's edition of the Reeves fragment of *Tristrams saga* (1969).

39 Hallberg has attempted to use these syntactic and lexical preferences to establish "groups" of *riddarasögur* (1971, 1973). His methods were criticized by Blaisdell (1974), and though he later clarified his methodology (1975), his conclusions have not gained widespread acceptance.

40 Leach 1966 argues that the *Strengleikar* "prove [Hákon's] desire to present models of chivalry and courtesy to his cruder Norwegian people" (212). Others who view the translated *riddarasögur* as intended to be instructive in courtesy include de Vries 1964 (II: 501) and Schach 1965.

having a political use.[41] Scholarly interpretation has gradually shifted from the cultural to the political. Barnes argues that "Hákon's motives for introducing a literature which depicted an ideal and absolute king in Arthur, and a model court in his company of knights" should be understood in light of his efforts to "raise the status of the Norwegian throne both at home and abroad and to endow the monarchy with the aura of holiness and majesty which it enjoyed elsewhere in Europe" (1975, 144-5). Stefka G. Eriksen also sees political motivations behind the translations: their popular appeal would help the texts to serve as political propaganda and thus remind audiences of the king's presence (2007). Eriksen later elaborates the possibilities of such propaganda: "an extensive political and cultural program initiated by the king, which entailed peace within the kingdom, revision of the provincial laws leading to the development of a national law, external expansion, development of strong personal and political contacts with various European kings" as well as, on a literary level, "to contribute to the positioning of Old Norse language and literature within the European Latin and vernacular polysystem" (2013, 5).[42]

There is yet another view of the texts from a utilitarian perspective, and that is as a tool of Christian instruction. H. J. Chaytor articulated this position in 1945, stating that Hákon used translations as "a means of Christian propaganda" (2). Several of the translated *riddarasögur* do indeed seem to preserve a clerical perspective not found in their French exemplars, and Jonna Kjær has argued that this is a means by which to soften the scandal of stories with adultery at their center (371). She views the changes from the French Tristan as "un essai de conciliation entre courtoisie et christianisme" (368) [an attempt at conciliation between courtliness and Christianity]. Both Barnes and Hélène Tétrel remark on the long epilogue added to *Equitan*, one of the *Strengleikar*; Tétrel argues that the lai, a story of a king who carries on an affair with his faithful steward's wife, is not about love as in the French version, but desire and power (2003, 237). Barnes draws parallels between the sermonizing in *Equitan* and *Konungs Skuggsjá*'s "preoccupation . . . with the ruler's integrity" (1975, 147). She sees the translated *riddarasögur* as having a strong element of Christian ethics, as for example in *Ívens saga* and *Parcevals saga*, where "the translator has obviously taken pains to bolster up the occasionally flagging perfection of Chrétien's heroes and restore them to the pinnacle of knightly virtue" (1975, 148).

Kalinke, however, has argued against a primarily didactic purpose for the translated *riddarasögur*, with perhaps the exception of *Parcevals saga*.[43] In her view, the courtly material, with its problematic kings and vaunting of adultery, could not serve a didactic function. Instead, "the Arthurian literature was translated not to provide a source of proper etiquette, a hand book of chivalrous conduct, but rather to make available the literature considered *de*

41 See pp. 120 & 134.

42 I take this to mean the development of Old Norse language and literature as participating in the same literary trends and texts as other European languages such as Old French (both from Britain and the Continent), Occitan, and Middle High German.

43 2006, 176. Kalinke also states that *Erex saga* "exhibits didactic tendencies in regard to royal behavior" (1981b, 40). However, *Erex saga* has been significantly altered from what the original translation might be imagined to have been, based on the other *riddarasögur*, including interpolations and restructuring. Though the current saga may seem to be didactic, that does not mean that it was in its original form considered as such. See Kalinke 1971 for a comparison of *Erex saga* and *Erec et Enide*.

rigueur at other courts, and to expand the literary horizon of the Norwegians" (1981b, 28). This is still something of a political move, in that it posits a movement towards the cultural sphere of continental and insular Europe, but it is not the active propaganda that Eriksen proposes. Kalinke uses the illustrative example of the prologue to *Möttuls saga*, which features a long description of the glories of King Arthur that is not found in any of the French manuscripts. While this has been interpreted by scholars such as Meissner as giving an idealized protagonist a proper introduction, Kalinke sees this as ironic: the glorious image is quickly undermined when it is revealed that his court is rife with infidelity and, moreover, Arthur offers a rash boon and must be reminded to keep his oath. This would appear to be a poor model for a king moving the monarchy and the court in a new direction.

Barnes later modified her position somewhat, pointing to the medieval tendency to interpret texts on a number of levels. She argues for a broad interpretation of *skemta* ('to amuse, entertain') that includes the concept of edification, and offers as example the description of *Þorkáks saga helga* in *Hungrvaka* as "til skemtunar góðum mönnum" (42) [as entertainment for good men]. The prologue to the *Strengleikar* seems to support such multivalent interpretation, the authorial voice claiming that wise men had composed stories of true events "til ævenlægrar amminingar til skæmtanar. Ok margfrœðes viðr komande þioða at hverr bœte ok birte sitt lif af kunnasto ok liðenna luta" (4) ["as an everlasting reminder, as entertainment, and as a source of great learning for posterity, so that each man could amend and illumine his life with the knowledge of past events" (5)]. We must then decide whether such a statement should be taken at face value, or whether it is the sort of defensive justification found in several Icelandic *riddarasögur* that could hardly be interpreted as anything but entertainment.[44] Recent research on the translated *riddarasögur* tends to be open to multiple purposes for the texts,[45] which is the position that I adopt here.

The translated *riddarasögur* are for the most part available in multiple manuscripts and at least one edition. *Tristrams saga* does not have a modern critical edition that looks at all available manuscripts, but it is thankfully the only one of the translated *riddarasögur* under question to suffer from this deficiency. There are a number of older editions, primarily those of Eugen Kölbing (1878) and Gísli Brynjúlfsson (1878), but these are only a partial solution for the scholar. Both editions, as well as both English translations of the saga, take AM 543 4to as its base. This 17th-century manuscript is one of the four post-medieval manuscripts of the saga,[46] and is generally taken as the best text: only two fragments of vellum manuscripts survive, AM 567 4to XXII and the Reeves Fragment. Paul Schach has argued that ÍB 51 fol., from the late 17th century, is actually a better representative of the AM 567 fragment, but

44 Kalinke 2005 has a discussion of *apologiae* included at the beginning of several original Icelandic romances, which seek to pre-empt objections that the stories are not sufficiently edifying or realistic (318-19).

45 See for example Marti 2012 or Eriksen 2007, who sees functions of entertainment and politics working together: "amusing qualities of the stories did not have to devaluate the political message inherent in them, but may have instead contributed to its wider transmission and acceptance" (100).

46 The others being ÍB 51 fol., JS 8 fol., Lbs. 4816 4to; there are also two résumés of the text, AM 576b 4to and Ny kgl. saml. 1144 fol.

damage along the bottom and sides makes it a more difficult manuscript to work with.[47] The saga has been translated most recently into English by Peter Jorgensen (1999) and by Schach (1973), who has also edited the two medieval fragments of the saga.[48] A modern scholarly edition of the saga is very much a *desideratum* because of its importance for the study of medieval romance. *Tristrams saga* is the sole complete witness of the Thomas-branch of the Tristan material, named after its author, Thomas of Britain; as stated above, the French material is fragmentary and the thirteenth-century reworking in Middle High German by Gottfried von Strassburg is incomplete. The Tristan material is also represented by the Béroul branch, which has its own German reworking by Eilhart. There have been some arguments for influence from this branch on the saga,[49] but the fragmentary nature of Thomas's twelfth-century poem makes a firm answer an impossibility.[50]

The lais of *Strengleikar* are found in Uppsala, De la Gardie 4-7, though there is also a fragment that was separated: the fragment now known as AM 666 b, 4to was used to stiffen a bishop's mitre, and so only exists in partial pages.[51] De la Gardie is missing its end, and has a leaf of *Leikara lioð* (*Lai of the Player*)[52] torn out, meaning that the beginning of *Janual* (*Lanval*), which follows it in the manuscript, is lost. The text consists of all of the lais attributed to Marie de France save *Eliduc*,[53] along with six anonymous lais (*Desire*, *Tidorel*, *Doun*, *Leikara ljoð*, *Naboreis*, and *Grelent*) and four for which there is no analogue: *Gurun*, *Strandar strengleikr*, *Ricar hinn gamli*, and *Tveggia elskanda strengleikr*. There are two Icelandic retellings of individual lais: *Tiódels saga* is a reworking of *Bisclavret*, which has some substantial divergences from the original,[54] while *Gvímars saga* is close enough to *Guiamar* to improve our understanding of the original translation of the text.[55] Cook and Tveitane's edition and translation of the text is primary, though Keyser and Unger first edited it in 1850, and Budal's

47 Schach 1957, where the manuscript is listed as AM 564 4to.

48 Schach 1964 and 1969.

49 See below.

50 For an overview of the Tristan poems, see Hunt and Bromiley 2006.

51 There are also some very late excerpts of various parts of the collection which are listed in Kalinke 1981b, appendix V.

52 This title is perhaps an uncharacteristic deviation from what is otherwise a rather literal practice of translation of the titles of lais. The French title is *Lai dou lecheor*, or *Lay of the Lecher*. It is possible that the translator was unfamiliar with the French word and simply transliterated it, or chose *leikari* "because of a general association of the class of entertainers with lechery" (Cook and Tveitane 207). However, Cook and Tveitane make another suggestion that seems more plausible if we assume that the translator was generally very good: pointing out the examples of *Jóns saga leikara* and *Drauma-Jóns saga*, where characters called *leikari* or *leiksveinn* could be considered lecherous, but hardly musical, they suggest that, at least in Icelandic tradition, "the association *leikari*/*leiksvein* = lecher seems strong" (207). This would admittedly be an unusual reading; Fritzner, Cleasby and Vigfússon, and the *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* list only the definition of "player," but a reading of "lecher" would seem to work better with the typical practices of the translator.

53 Carol J. Clover has argued that the motif of one weasel healing another with a plant in *Völsunga saga* derives from a similar episode in *Eliduc*, suggesting that the lai was known in the north, but subsequently lost. However, Cook & Tveitane are of the opinion that lai "was probably never put into Norwegian" because "it could scarcely have fitted into the few lost leaves of the manuscript" (xvii).

54 See Kalinke 1981a and Budal 2012.

55 See Kalinke 1979b and 1980.

2009 dissertation included a diplomatic edition of the text alongside the French.[56] The manuscript is available in a facsimile edition in Tveitane 1972.

There are three primary manuscripts of *Ívens saga*: Stockhom Perg. 4:o nr. 6 and AM 489 4to from the fifteenth century, and Stockholm 46 fol., which was written in 1690 but which Marianne Kalinke calls a "condensed albeit text-critically significant version of the saga."[57] Additionally, there are eight manuscripts spanning the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries that derive from Sth 6, a seventeenth century manuscript that derives from AM 489, and three résumés from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[58] The saga was edited twice by Kölbing, in 1872 and 1898, but these editions look only at a few manuscripts. These editions have been superseded by a modern critical edition by Foster W. Blaisdell that takes all manuscripts into account (1979). It has also appeared in a facing-page edition and translation by Marianne Kalinke in her *Norse Romance* series; the text there is based on Sth 6 but is supplemented where defective by AM 489 4to and Brit. Mus. Add. 4857.

In its Old Norse transmission, *Perceval* has been broken into *Parcevals saga* and *Valvens þáttr* rather than preserve the interlace structure in the French, which follows the parallel adventures of Perceval and Gawain (*Valven* in translation). *Parcevals saga* is found in Sth 6, as well as two fourteenth-century fragments, AM 573 4to and Ny kgl. saml. 1749B 4to.[59] There are eight manuscripts dating from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, two of which preserve *Parcevals saga* but not *Valvens þáttr*, and two late résumés. There are two critical editions, that of Kölbing from 1872 and Helen Maclean's 1968 dissertation. The introduction to Kirsten Wolf's edition of the saga in *Norse Romance* vol. 2 states that Maclean is in the process of preparing a diplomatic edition of the text to come out in the Editiones Arnamagnæanæ series, but it has not yet appeared. The editions available are thus limited to Wolf's normalized edition based on Sth 6 with only minimal notes, and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson's popular edition in volume 4 of *Riddarasögur* (1954).

There are nearly twenty manuscript witnesses to *Möttuls saga*, spanning the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries. There are two extant medieval manuscripts, preserved now only in fragmentary form: AM 598 4to Iβ, Sth 6; the fragment AM 598 4to Iα originally belonged to the Stockholm manuscript.[60] All other manuscripts of *Möttuls saga* derive from Sth 6. The oldest complete manuscripts of the saga, AM 179 fol. and AM 181b fol., date from the seventeenth century, but convincing arguments have been made for AM 179 being a direct copy of Stockholm 6.[61] The best manuscripts have been edited in a diplomatic edition by Marianne Kalinke, who also translates the Old Norse and provides a critical edition of the French poem for comparison.[62] A facing-page translation into English with normalized

56 Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir also published a popular edition in modern Icelandic in 2006.

57 "Introduction" to *Ívens saga* 1999, 35. AM 489 is available in facsimile in Blaisdell 1980; Sth 6 is in Slay 1972.

58 These are listed and discussed in Blaisdell's edition of the saga.

59 Lbs 1907 8vo also has a fragment of the saga, but dates from the late nineteenth century.

60 See Kalinke 1987 for a detailed discussion and description of all of the manuscripts, as well as a partial stemma.

61 For discussion of this topic, see Kalinke 1987, C-CII. AM 181b fol. may also be a copy of Stockholm 6; see the introduction to Slay (1972).

62 See Kalinke 1987, CXLIII-V for a discussion of the two earlier editions of the saga by Gustaf Cederschiöld (1877) and Gísli Brynjúlfsson (1878).

orthography also appears in Kalinke's *Norse Romance* series.[63]

Tristrams saga*: What (not) to do at court*

As stated above, *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar* poses particular problems in that no complete redaction survives before the seventeenth century, but its position as the only complete extant version of the Thomas-branch makes it too important to ignore. I take the position that the saga we have is, in terms of plot, essentially the same as Brother Róbert's thirteenth-century translation. In terms of style and theme, however, I believe that we must proceed more cautiously, as it is clear that the saga has been much altered over time. It is impossible to know, for example, whether the explicit religious overtones are from Brother Róbert's clerical point of view or a later redactor's reaction to the text. Yet where similar concerns are voiced in both the Norse and German versions, such as the matter of the legitimacy of Kanelangres and Blensinbil's marriage, I accept that as original in idea, if not exact form, to Thomas. Thus, in order to get as close as possible to the version that would have been read or heard at Hákon's court, I limit my analysis, as much as possible, to those points of plot or theme that are corroborated by Gottfried von Straussburg or Thomas,[64] or are a common feature of the early thirteenth century translations, such as elements of the court style of prose.

The relationship between place and narrative in the Thomas branch of Tristan is, at least initially, similar to that of other romances. There is a cultural and political center at the royal court, and while the king presides over this center, he is not the central figure in the narrative.[65] Instead, we follow the path of a knight as he journeys to and away from this center, encountering love relationships and adventures along the way. Like other romances, particularly those of Chrétien, the idyllic veneer is worn away to reveal serious problems at the heart of the kingdom: in *Tristan*, the adultery of the queen, a weak king, and evil advisors. In the romances of Chrétien, the status of Arthur's court is generally stable: change occurs in the person of the knight-errant, not the courtly milieu. This is not the case in *Tristrams saga*, however: at the beginning of the saga, King Markis is an ideal king; wealthy, powerful, and a model of courtliness. It is these positive qualities which draw Kanelangres, who has outgrown his homeland, to Britain. Markis's sophisticated court awes both Kanelangres and the audience, with its vivid and stirring descriptions of the feast that he holds. By the second half of the romance, however, everything has changed. Markis's closest kinsman and heir has

63 A full list of editions and translations through 1985 can be found in Kalinke and Mitchell 1985.

64 The editions used for these texts are the 2011 edition of Gottfried's *Tristan und Isolde* by Haug and Scholz and Lacy's 1998 edition of the French Tristan poems.

65 Other scholars have made arguments for Markis's centrality to the story. Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir sees him as a "focal point in the story . . . or a meeting place for many of the various themes and events" (2000, 131); Jonna Kjær, in arguing that *Tristrams saga* is a "Christianized" version of the story, claims that "dans *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, c'est le roi Marc qui devient le centre idéologique de l'histoire en tant que représentant de Dieu et soutenu par lui" (371) [in *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, it is King Markis who becomes the ideological center of the story in that he is representative of God and supported by him]. Yet because Markis is sidelined for so much of the story, shifting that "center" to the court opens more opportunities for interpretation.

committed adultery with his wife, Markis is plagued with conniving, jealous courtiers, and he shuttles between suspicion and shame when he is made to believe once again that Tristram and Ísönd are innocent. Even God seems to abandon him, allowing Ísönd to succeed the ordeal and granting her and Tristram absolution in their love, in the shape of the two trees that grow out of their graves and intertwine over the Church gable. *Tristrams saga* thus provides both a positive and negative image of a royal court, which serves as a backdrop to the main story of Tristram's tragic love for Ísönd.

King Markis's court is portrayed as a cultural and political center in the first half of the saga in that it is a place to which a connection can confer prestige. That makes it the natural destination for Kanelangres, Tristram's father, despite the fact that—or perhaps because—he is already so accomplished. He is described as

> hinn fríðasti maðr á líkams fegrð, hinn vildasti ríkra gjafa, öflugr ok auðugr ríkra kastala ok borga, kænn til margrar kunnáttu, hinn röskvasti at riddaraskap, hinn öruggasti at alls konar drengskap, vitr ok varr í ráðagerðum, forsjáll ok framsýnn, fullgerr at öllum atgervum yfir alla menn, er í þann tíma váru í því ríki. (28)
>
> ["the handsomest of men and the most gifted in other respects—wealthy and powerful with strong castles and cities, knowledgeable about many things, the most valiant in chivalric pursuits, the most trustworthy whenever courage was necessary, wise and understanding in his judgments, prudent and foresightful, perfect in all areas compared to other men in that kingdom who were living at that time." (29)][66]

This final qualification is important, for despite Kanelangres's seeming perfection in all possible ways, it is a perfection with geographical limitations. Kanelangres thus sets out to improve himself (and perhaps overcome this limitation) by going abroad, like many other saga heroes.[67] This attitude is reminiscent of the provisions of *Konungs skuggsjá*,[68] where the benefits of travelling abroad are extolled: here, the son desires to travel abroad in order to prepare himself to court. In the father's advice for travelling, he informs the son how best to take advantage of the trip in order to teach himself discipline, the managing of wealth, being prepared for unforeseen events, observations of the natural world, particularly things helpful for the travelling merchant such as tides and the movement of heavenly bodies, and learning to deal with people in a variety of capacities. This advice is all pragmatic, but included in it is the necessity to observe and master foreign customs and adopt the good and avoid the bad as a warning (86) as well as cultivating one's academic education: the father recommends studying arithmetic, law, and languages (particularly Latin and French, though not to the neglect of

66 Quoted translations are from Jorgensen.

67 As Bolli Bollason tells Snorri goði in *Laxdœla saga*: "þykkir maðr við þat fávíss verða, ef hann kannar ekki víðara en hér Ísland" (211) [a man is thought to become ignorant if he travels no further than here in Iceland], evident in the insult *heimskr*, 'foolish,' with its etymological relationship to *heimr*, 'home'. This idea was developed more fully for the case of skalds in particular in Chapter One.

68 On this text, see Chapter Three

one's native tongue), for "þat er raunar, at allra manna vit er minna en þeirra, er af bókum taka mannvit" (6) ["it is clear that those who gain knowledge from books have keener wits than others" (81)].[69]

The kingdom of Markis provides the necessary setting for Kanelangres to "kannaz við dugandi menn ok frægja sik ok fremja sína hreysti ok riddaraskap" (28) ["meet courageous men, to further his fame, and to enhance his prowess and knightly skills" (29)]. Markis is king over both Cornwall and England in the Thomas-branch (as opposed to just Cornwall in Béroul), and the saga tells us of the glories of his kingdom, which is

> mikit ríki ok auðugt, frítt ok frægt, gott ok gnógt, með alls konar góðindum kurteisra riddara ok ríkra borga ok sterkra kastala, ok hin ríkasta veiðistaða dýra ok fugla ok hit gnægsta at málmi gulls ok silfrs ok alls kyns klæða ok góðra hesta, grárra skinna ok hvítra, bjarnskinna ok safala. (28, 30)
>
> ["a great and wealthy kingdom . . . beautiful, bountiful, and renowned, with all kinds of wonderful things—courteous knights, mighty towns, strong castles, the most plentiful places to hunt animals and birds, an abundance of metals, gold and silver and various kinds of cloth, and good horses, furs of gray and white, bearskins and sable." (29, 31)]

Its people are described as possessing "mildi ok hæverska" ["grace and good manners"] and "er öllum þeim dugöndum gera sæmdir ok ágætan félagskap, er til þeira koma ok með þeim vilja vera" ["treat[ing] with honor and with utmost comradeship all those gallant men who come to them and who wish to be with them"] (30-1). The excellence of England is also extolled in Gottfried, but in a much more general way, suggesting that either Thomas originally included praise for the courtly milieu for which he wrote, or that the text reflects warm feelings towards England on the part of Scandinavian audiences.

It is only after England is described in such glowing terms in the saga that Markis is named as its king. In Gottfried, however, it is the reverse; Rivalin hears of the fame of king Marke, who ruled Cornwall so well that the Saxons, who fought endlessly amongst themselves, eventually placed their lands under Marke's control. At the beginning of the saga, Markis is portrayed as powerful, wise, and wealthy; he is the sole ruler ("einvaldsherra ok höfðingi," 30)[70] of the English and Cornish and is accompanied by a retinue ("vildarlið," lit. "chosen troops") that reflects and increases his prestige. His capitol city of Tintajol holds "hinn sterkasti kastali í öllu kóngsríkinu" (30) [the strongest castle in the entire kingdom] and his fame, as stated above, has moved beyond the bounds of his lands.

69 Trans. Larson.

70 This point is reiterated at the feast, when Markis surveys the party and "vex honum mikil gleði ok hyggr at hann skyldi vera einn höfðingi yfir því landi, sem svá var ríkt ok auðugt af jafnmiklu fólki hæverska manna ok kurteisra kvenna" ("great joy and comfort welled up in him that he alone should be the chieftain over this realm that was so rich and powerful with such a large population of well-mannered men and courtly ladies") (32-3). It is of interest because *Konungs skuggsjá* puts so much weight on the idea of individual, rather than joint kingship. While suggestive, it is impossible to tell how early this emphasis appeared in the saga tradition.

Kanelangres and his men arrive at the palace at Tintajol "sæmiliga gætandi tign ok virðing hirðligrar siðvenju, tveir ok tveir saman gangandi, haldandiz í hendr, klæddir ok búnir dýrligum klæðabúnaði" (30) ["suitably mindful of the pomp and magnificence of courtly custom—walking two-by-two, arm-in-arm, dressed in costly attire" (31)]. They greet the king "vel ok vitrliga" ["in the appropriate manner"] and Kanelangres's comportment as he introduces himself and shares news with the king impresses Markis so much that "tók hann honum vel ok virðuliga ok öllum félögum hans, hafandi þá í allri makt um fram sína riddara" (30) ["he received him and his companions honorably and well. He placed them in a high position over and above his own knights" (31)].[71] It is only later, during the tournament, that Kanelangres displays his martial abilities to Markis's court, doing so well that one wonders in what ways he could possibly have improved himself by coming to England.

Markis's feast, and the tournament that accompanies it, demonstrate his power and wealth. He invites "allir hinir vildustu menn þessa kóngsríkis ok höfðingjar allra eyja umhverfis" ["all the most distinguished men of this kingdom as well as chieftains of all the surrounding islands,"] and "allir menn gersamliga" ["absolutely all the people"] who had been invited to the banquet come (32-3).[72] It is not just nobles and knights, however, but their wives and daughters as well. Women are not just an afterthought, but an important component. Though the centerpiece of the feast are the tournament games where men can show off their skills, their efforts, at least in part, are to win the favor of ladies. In fact, women seem to be the primary audience for the knightly accomplishments that take place at the tournament, as the fact of their watching is mentioned numerous times.[73] Their attention serves both as a spur to masculine action and a means of ranking;[74] not only does Kanelangres seem to be the best at everything, we are told that "fekk hann þar . . . hina hæstu virðing, því allr sá hinn mikli fjöldi meyja ok kvenna festu sín augu ok ástir á honum" (34) ["he garnered the greatest honor, as all of that very large crowd of maidens and women fastened their adoring eyes upon him" (35)].[75]

In addition to spurring men on to action, women play crucial political functions. They

71 Markis's decision to place Kanelangres and his men above his own knights is also said in the saga to bring him "hin mesta gæfa ok hin frábærusta hamingja" ["a wealth of good luck and marvelously good fortune], qualities frequently associated with kingship, as discussed in the previous chapter (30-1).

72 "Ok sem allir höfðu heyrt boð kóngsins ok skildu hans vilja, þá geyma allir ok gæta hans vilja ok sinnar lýð skyldu ok búa nú ferð sína án allrar dvalar" (32) ["when everyone had heard the king's invitation and understood his wishes, they all took heed and were mindful of his desires and their duty. Without delay they prepared for the journey." (33)]

73 The idea of women watching men on the tournament field is mentioned or discussed in chapters 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 (chapter 5 serves solely to introduce Blensinbil, who then becomes the most important of the observing women). For a discussion of female viewership, see Molly Martin and Jacobs [forthcoming].

74 "Þar gerðuz þá nýdubbaðir riddarar ok ungir menn með fögrum atreiðum ok léku riddaraliga fyrir útan öfund ok hégóma ok öðlaz með því ást ok yndi frídra meyja ok kurteisra kvenna, er þar váru saman safnaðar" (32) ["The newly dubbed knights and young men busied themselves with tilting and other tournament games without jealousy or deceit, and in this way they garnered the fondness and love of beautiful maidens and courtly ladies who were gathered together." (33)]

75 This engenders negative narratorial comment about women tending to "virða meir vilja sinn fullkominn en mundangshóf" (34) ["set their desires more toward perfection than to moderation" (35)] in loving a man they know nothing about and a comparison to Dido's self-immolation. There is no such sentiment in Gottfried, and it seems unlikely to have been present in Thomas.

are key to providing legitimate heirs, which will be discussed below, and they can create political alliances through marriage. Ísönd's marriage to Markis is a means of reconciliation after England rejects Ireland's demands for tribute and Tristram kills Morhold, Ísönd's uncle. Marriages can also cement personal friendships, in the shape of Tristram's marriage to Ísodd (as the saga names Isolde of the White Hands), the sister of his friend Kardín. The women of Markis's court are just as accomplished as the men, and possess many of the same qualities. His sister Blensinbil is "fríð ok ynnilig, sjálig ok sæmlig, kurteislig ok elskulig, ríkulig ok göfuglig" ["beautiful and lovely, attractive and honorable, well mannered and beloved, magnificent and generous"] as well as being unequalled in "vit ok vísdómr, kurteisi ok hæverska, örlyndr ok skörugleikr" ["wit and widom, courtliness and manners, generosity and nobleness"] (34-5). Her fame, too, stretches beyond the borders of the kingdom and causes many men who have never seen her to fall in love with her (34); these same qualities are highlighted in later descriptions of Ísönd (ch. 30, 33). In addition to possessing such positive qualities, her behavior is ideal as well. She occupies herself during the feast by engaging in appropriate actions for a woman of her station: she observes the activities of men, surrounds herself with suitable companions, thus creating bonds with other noblewomen and demonstrating proper courtly behavior, and she dresses so as to demonstrate her social position (ch. 6).

The necessary inclusion of women at the royal court demonstrates that it is not simply a martial institution; it is different in its structure, culture, and in the qualities and skills it prizes in its members. Martial ability is certainly important, as demonstrated by the fact that Markis's retinue is designated by *-lið* compounds (vildarlið, herlið) and the main entertainment of the feast is the tournament. However, other, very different types of behaviors are also rewarded. As stated above, the English are famous for their courtliness and their graciousness, and Kanelangres's self-presentation is enough for him to be accepted into the court long before he demonstrates his skill with a sword.

The court's appreciation for non-military endeavors is reinforced by the manner of Tristram's integration into it. He has just been freed from captivity, and so arrives at court lost and alone, without the benefit of Kanelangres's pedigree, wealth, or connections. He first impresses the men at court with his knowledge of "the gift of the chase" a courtly way to present a stag to the king (60-1). He is thus allowed to stay and serve with the king's hunters. Yet it is his skill with the harp that catches the king's attention. Tristram's ability to sing and play the harp, and his knowledge of the context of composition, so impresses the king and everyone at the court that Markis asks that he "'í nátt í mínu herbergi vera ok hugga mik svá með þinni kunnáttu ok strengleik, þá er ek ligg vakandi'" (62) ["'remain in my quarters and comfort me with your knowledge and music as long as I lie awake" (63)]. Furthermore, "Tristram var því næst . . . öllum kærr, en kónginum kærastr" (62) ["after that, Tristram . . . was welcome among everyone there. He was beloved by everybody, but especially by the king" (63)].

Kanelangres is the knight par excellence, but Tristram is a step above, having been educated in the seven liberal arts and achieved mastery over several languages (ch. 17). His abduction provides an illustration of the depth of his learning, as well as a glimpse of Norway from a European perspective. Tristram comes to the court of Markis in Cornwall because he

was abducted by Norwegian merchants who had come to sell their wares in his homeland, Brittany. Impressed with Tristram's abilities—he can speak to them in Norwegian—as well as his wisdom and refinement, they set sail while he is absorbed in a game of chess with one of the merchants, eventually letting him go before reaching Norway because of the terrible storms they have incurred as punishment.[76] The Norwegian merchant would have been a familiar image to Norwegian audiences. Not only did Norway have a long history of mercantile activity stretching back into the Viking Age, in Hákon's time trading was still considered a worthy occupation for young men, offering not only the ability to make money, but to see the world and learn from other cultures. The two extant versions of this episode, the saga and Gottfried's Tristan, diverge on the point of linguistic ability. *Tristrams saga* states that the Norwegians do not understand Breton or French, prompting Tristram to speak to them in their own language in order to purchase hunting birds for his foster-brothers, while in Gottfried Tristan speaks Norwegian after the transactions have been completed—thus presumably the Norwegians have been speaking another language—which impresses them because "next to none in those parts" knew it.[77]

Tristram is a new type of courtier, a student-athlete who sets the bar for later heroes of the Icelandic *riddarasögur*.[78] Education, linguistic mastery, musical ability, a grasp of courtly manners, and martial prowess are the idea characteristics set forth in *Tristrams saga*, and it is a pattern seen again and again throughout the romances. Markis's court is as much a cultural institution as it is military or political, allowing for, and requiring, the inclusion of a broader range of people than a military band such as the *drótt*. Both the skaldic court and the romance court are sites for the performance and appreciation of the arts, but they are slightly different. Glimpses we see in sagas show stories and poetry recited both for entertainment (*Sturlu þáttr*, *Íslendings þáttr sögufróða*) and as a means to flatter kings and promote their reputation. In Markis's court, stories and music seem to be primarily for entertainment and, as he tells Tristram, comfort.

However, there are more serious concerns at court, one of the chief being the importance of proper Christian marriage that produces legitimate offspring. This is a thread that runs throughout the text, beginning with the elopement of Blensinbil and Kanelangres. The narrator is careful to assure us that, even though Blensinbil left England without Markis's knowledge or consent, Kanelangres had "fekk hennar þá með lögligum hjúskap ok réttri vígslu" (46) ["married her in a legal, Church-sanctioned ceremony" (47)]. This sentiment is

76 The saga is also decidedly localized: the wares the merchants offer include sulfur, whale oil, and walrus tusks, though these sound more like Icelandic goods than Norwegian (ch. 18); in Gottfried's text they have jewels, silks, and hunting birds, only the last of which could plausibly be Norwegian (ll. 2201-7). On his tempestuous voyage to find Tristram, his foster-father Róaldr puts in at Denmark, Gautland, Iceland, the Orkneys and the Shetland Islands (ch 19). As Gottfried lists Norway, Ireland, Denmark, and a number of other unnamed kingdoms, it seems likely that many of these details were added during the Icelandic stage of the text. The fifteenth-century fragment AM 567 4to XXII, 2, which begins after Tristram has realized that he has been abducted, has Róaldr's ship stopping at Denmark, Gautland, and Norway (there may have been other place names that are now lost), indicating that these changes were introduced early on in the transmission of the text.

77 Hatto 71; "die lützel ieman kunde dâ" (l. 2237)

78 See Kalinke 1983.

repeated in Gottfried's text, which allows us to assume that the point was stressed in both the original translation and in Thomas. The unusual manner of Tristan's parent's marriage is called into question when Tristan finally goes to regain his patrimony. While in Gottfried Duke Morgân simply questions the legitimacy of his birth, *Tristrams saga* is far harsher; the duke tells Tristram, "Þú ert son einnar pútu, ok veizt þú ekki hverr þik gat" (70) ["You are the son of a whore and have no idea who sired you" (71)]. Tristram, being in the right, quickly quashes his opposition and regains his patrimony (which he immediately gives away to his foster father). The question of proper marriage comes up next at the scene of Tristram's marriage to Ísodd. They are said to be wed properly (168), but Tristram's failure to consummate the marriage means that the sacrament is not complete and raises not only moral but legal issues. It is also a grave insult to Ísodd's family, and when her brother Kardín discovers the situation, he is placated only after Tristram explains the truth of his situation and brings him to the shrine with statues of Ísönd and Bringvet.

Most troublesome is, of course, Tristram's relationship with Ísönd. Her marriage to Markis is political, a means of keeping the peace between Ireland and Britain, and endangering the marriage means endangering the political situation. This is given a further dimension by repeated mentions of Ísönd's status as a foreigner at court: she is in a strange place with strange customs, and has no one to support her save her maid Bringvet, who is essentially powerless as a foreign woman of lower status.[79] Ísönd fails in her essential duty of providing Markis with an heir, but this may be a means of mitigating the seriousness of her adultery: in never having Ísönd become pregnant, the saga side-steps the thorny question of parentage and inheritance; after the deaths of Ísönd and Tristram, who is Markis's heir in the absence of a child, the kingdom can (in theory) pass smoothly to another heir without questions of legitimacy potentially causing instability. Throughout the text, therefore, there is an emphasis on finding an appropriate spouse in an appropriate manner, but this is only partially achieved by Kanelangres and Blensinbil, and Kanelangres dies not long into their marriage, with Blensinbil following close behind.

Not only are the people at court and their various relationships crucial to its make-up, so are the setting and atmosphere—the stage upon which the drama of plot unfolds. As king, Markis has the power not only to determine who will attend on him, but to shape the space itself that they will inhabit.[80] When he invites his nobles to his feast, they gather outdoors, allowing both for jousting and other games and for appreciating the flora in bloom. The setting is a classic *locus amœnus*,[81] situated "í einum skógi hjá stöðuvatni nokkuru. Þar váru

79 This is explicitly addressed in ch. 56 and 90; in chapter 56 suspicion regarding Ísönd's relationship with Tristram has once again grown and she is displaced even from the one place that is explicitly hers in the kingdom of England and Cornwall, the king's bed (147).

80 Though I am avoiding a close linguistic analysis of *Tristrams saga* due to the likely level of textual transformation that has taken place, it is interesting that *kóngsgarðr* [king's estate/yard] is typically used to refer to where the king resides, while the preferred term in the *Strengleikar* is *kastali* [castle]. It is possible that this is a result of acculturation to the largely rural Icelandic society, similar to the way that *Atlamál* is a more provincial reworking of *Atlakviða*.

81 Ernst Robert Curtius writes that "from the Empire to the sixteenth century, [the locus amoenus] forms the principal motif of all nature description. It is . . . a beautiful, shaded natural site. Its minimum ingredients

fagrir vellir ok víðir, sléttir, prýddir fögrum grösum ok blómasamligum" ["in a forest and beside a lake. There were beautiful fields, spacious and flat, adorned with fine herbs in bloom"] upon which Markis "lét . . . þar setja ok skipa stórum landtjöldum, gulum ok grænum, blám ok rauðum, ok ríkuliga búnum, gylldum ok gullsaumuðum, undir ilmöndum laufum ok nýsprungnum blómstrum" (32) ["had large tents set up and furnished in yellow and green, blue and red—and richly decorated, gilded and embroidered with golden thread—under fragrant foliage and bursting blossoms" (33)].

The setting is picturesque, but also designed to engage the senses. The saga tells us with unusual detail of the colors of the tents, the flowers, and the colorful court clothing; the song of birds, the scent of flowers, and the delicacies that Markis serves his guests.[82] It is easy to imagine such a scene making a deep impression: Bergen is not known for its sunny weather; Hákon's coronation feast was held in a boathouse due to wind and rain. The spectacle and sensuality of the saga setting demonstrate that pleasure is shown to be highly valued—not just entertainment such as fighting and drinking, but more "refined" pleasures of the senses. Appreciation of beauty, discerning taste and sense of smell are cultivated, and these things are considered important enough to be remarked upon. Sensory detail is sparse in indigenous traditions, but in skaldic poetry it similarly serves to highlight what is of value: glittering gold and shining weapons, or a well-made ship that will bring the king to victory.[83] In romance, it is the setting of the action and the people who inhabit it. *Tristrams saga* has few physical descriptions, but they are common in other romances, such as that of Íven's beloved in *Ívens saga*:

> Hún var skreytt skínandi skikkju. Hún var þá björt sem dagsbrún, en hennar litr sem at samtemprat væri þat snjóhvíta gras lilium ok hinn rauða rósa, en hárit sem gull barit. Augu hennar váru skínandi sem carbunculi þeir steinar sem svá heita. Hennar möttull var af bissu allr skínandi ok öll hennar klæði váru gulli búinn þar bæta þótti, ok þóttu þó svört hjá hennar birti. (52)
>
> ["She was dressed in a glittering mantle. She was as fair as the dawn, and her coloring was as if the snow-white lily and the red rose had been mingled together, and her hair was like beaten gold. Her eyes sparkled like the gems called carbuncles. Her mantle was of a material that glittered exceedingly, and all her garments were adorned with gold wherever appropriate, yet they seemed black compared to her radiance." (53)][84]

comprise a tree (or several trees), a meadow, and a spring or brook. Birdsong and flowers may be added. The most elaborate examples also add a breeze" (195).

82 The saga tells us that "alls kyn dýrustum vistum (32) ["all kinds of the choicest foods"] were served at the feast (33).

83 While no thorough study of the senses in Old Norse literature and culture exists, a preliminary survey indicates that senses other than vision are rarely engaged in Old Norse literature. Pleasant or sweet scents primarily feature in religious texts or texts with religious elements, such as the discoveries of the remains of St. Óláfr (*Heimskringla* ch. 244) and St. Sunnifa (Flateyjarbók ch. 194), and in connection with dozens of miracles in saints' lives. Foul scents typically appear in connection with evil creatures such as *draugar* or magic. Sounds are frequently key in scenes of magic or haunting, while touch and taste are almost never invoked.

84 The description of the eponymous heroine of the fourteenth-century *Nítiða saga* must be ultimately from

Description of the lady's clothing and body mingle together, evoking both natural and manufactured beauty; her mantle glitters and her beauty is radiant; her hair like beaten gold matches the gold trim of her garment. Íven's lady is the proper courtier, being naturally beautiful, and clothing herself in garments that both show off her station and are pleasing to others. Clothing in the romances is chosen not just to demonstrate wealth—people expect to be looked at, and thus visually signal their familiarity with, and mastery of, courtly custom. Clothing can literally be what makes a person acceptable to court: when Róaldr is finally reunited with Tristram, he is dressed in rags after his long journey, and has to bribe the guard in order to be admitted to the king's hall. Once Tristram introduces Róaldr to Markis as his foster-father, Markis supplies him with "ein ríka gangverja" (64) [a rich suit of clothes] and suddenly he is transformed: "Hann sýndiz áðr sem einn akrkarl, en nú er hann sem einn höldr eða jarl. Nú er honum skipat at kóngs borði, ok sitr nú ríkr hjá ríkum" (66) ["Previously he had seemed like a field laborer, but now he seemed like a mighty landowner or a nobleman. A place was made for him at the king's table, and he sat there as a powerful man among powerful men" (67)].

Self-presentation is just as important as one's abilities, as demonstrated by the way Kanelangres and his men approach Markis's court for the first time, ceremonially and dressed with care. Similarly, Tristram and his men awe the Irish court when they arrive under the guise of merchants, but in glorious fashion:

> klædduz þeir guðvefjum, ok gervöll með einum lit, ok neðri klæði með alls konar litum, ok undir hvít skinn með safal ok bezta blíat, með miklum hagleik ger, svá þó at hverr þeira væri hinn tignarligasti kóngr mikils ríkis, þá máttu þeir ekki vera betr búnir. Ok stigu þeir þá á hesta sína með sínum búnaði ok gylldum söðlum ok riðu síðan, tveir ok tveir saman, í kongsgarð . . . En hestar þeira vár feitir ok vel vandir í hörðum atreiðum, börðu fótum ok gneggjuðu, svá at heyraz mátti um allan kóngsgarð. Félagar Tristrams váru hinir fríðustu menn ok hinir vöskustu til vápns. Gengu þeir inn í höllina ok skipuðuz kurteisliga næst hinum helztum lendum mönnum á hinn hæsta pall, fríðir ok fagnandi. Þeira flokkr var ríkr, ok tignarligr var þeira búnaðr. (106, 108)
>
> ["They . . . put on cloaks of velvet, all in one color, and underneath, clothing skillfully make of the finest material in all different colors and trimmed with sable and ermine. Each of them wouldn't have been better dressed if he were the most exalted king of a great empire. Attired in this fashion they climbed onto the

Ívens saga, though the metaphors may have become commonplace at some point: "Hún var bæði vitur og væn, ljós og rjóð í andliti þvílíkast sem hin rauða rósa væri samtemprað við snjóhvíta lileam, augun svo skær sem karbunkulus, hörundið svo hvítt sem fíls bein, hár þvílíkt sem gull . . . Hún hafði svo fagra raust að hún svæfði fugla og fiska, dýr og öll jarðlig kvikindi, svo að unað þótti á að heyra" (124) ["She was both wise and fair, her face bright and rosy just as if the red rose had been mingled with a snow-while lily; her eyes were as bright as a carbuncle, and her skin as white as ivory; her hair was like gold . . . She had such a beautiful voice that it made birds, fish, wild animals, and all worldly creatures sleep, so delightful was it to hear" (125)].

> golden saddles on their horses and rode off, two by two, to the royal palace . . . Their horses were well fed and well seasoned in tournaments; they stamped the ground with their hooves and neighed, so that they could be heard throughout the royal residence. Tristram's companions were the most handsome of men and the bravest in battle. They entered the hall and in courtly fashion took their place with gracious greetings beside the foremost vassals on the highest bench. They were a mighty company of men and outfitted splendidly." (107, 109)]

The Irish marvel at these supposed merchants and brook no opposition to their taking places amongst the highest members of the court. The impressive nature of the men, together with Tristram's killing of the dragon that had been plaguing the kingdom, help ensure that they are successful in their mission of gaining Ísönd's hand in marriage for Markis. As the slayer of the queen's brother, Tristram was understandably concerned about how the trip would turn out, but in showing their worth through knightly deeds and displaying their courtliness in dress and manner, the Cornish/English are able to prepare the path, and succeed in a way that is honorable to both Markis and the Irish king, despite Markis's previous submission to Ireland.[85]

Dress is only one facet of the broader category of spectacle. As the above excerpt depicting Tristram's men coming to the Irish court shows, it is not only their appearance that attracts notice. Their horses attract attention with their stamping and neighing, and there is a ritualistic aspect of their proceeding by twos, as Kanelangres and his men did earlier in the saga, and their formal exchange of greetings. Arrivals at court throughout the saga are narrated similarly, though not as fully, but other moments of importance are also similarly ritualized. For example, the scene in which Ísönd's hand is to be given in marriage to the slayer of the dragon is depicted as a formal affair; there is a "mikill fjöldi, er þar var af höfþingjum ok lendum mönnum" (108) ["large assemblage of nobles and vassals" (109)] and the queen takes the opportunity to make an entrance with Tristram, whose suit on behalf of Markis she plans to support against the claims of the steward: "því næst, sem allir sátu, var dróttning inn leidd sæmiliga í höllina ok svá tignarliga sem henni sómdi ok settiz niðr hjá kóngi" (108) ["after everyone was seated, the queen was ceremoniously led in as befitted her and seated beside the king" (109)].

Spectacle, in the form of appearance and actions designed to be witnessed, serves to reinforce courtly values to those within the court, and project them outwards to outsiders, creating cohesion among members of the court, and publicly drawing a line of separation between them and those who do not belong. Communal actions serve to bind the courtly community together, as in the outpouring of grief after the deaths of Kanelangres and Blensinbil (ch. 15). Later, the elaborate ceremony of Tristram's knighthood welcomes Tristram not only fully into Markis's court, but into his family through the public giving of costly armor and weaponry, as well as the assigning of dozens of men to him along with provisions for their own equipment (66-8). The knighthood ceremony is recalled several chapters later when Tristram prepares to face Morhold in order to release Markis's kingdom from the oppression

85 In planning for Tristram's journey, Markis worries that people will think he is asking for Ísönd's hand out of fear (ch. 33).

of the Irish. Again, Tristram is given the best armor and weaponry, again he is given a horse, and again Markis girds him with a sword himself. In the saga, this becomes almost a moment of conspicuous consumption as the destruction of much of this equipment is subsequently described during the duel: "er þeir mættuz, lagði hvárr til annars í skjölduna með mikilli ok harðri atreið, svá at sundr brustu spjótsköpt beggja þeira . . . Sem hlífarnar biluðu, sótti hvárr þeira at öðrum at gera skaða. Hjálmarnir bognuðu fyrir sverðunum, brynjurnar biluðu, skildirnir klofnuðu, völlrinn klæddiz af járni ok stáli ok gylldum búnaði skjalda ok hjálma" (80) ["As they approached one another each thrust at the other's shield in a great, furious charge, so that both lances shattered . . . As their armor became damaged, each attempted to injure the other. The helmets were dented by the swords, coats of mail were damaged, shields were split; the field became covered with iron and steel and gilded decorations of shields and helmets" (81)]. This description is surely a testament to the strength and ferociousness with which Tristram and Markis fights, but it is also an illustration of a society that can afford to commission extremely expensive armor and weaponry and pay to have it decorated and gilded, simply to be destroyed. These are not simply functional weapons and armor, but the best and most beautiful, fit for kings and the best of knights.

In fact, playing to spectacle is what allows Tristram his first foothold into Markis's court, when he is lost and alone. After the Norwegian merchants drop him off in the middle of nowhere, he wanders until his encounter with the royal hunting party. The new method of breaking up quarry that he demonstrates for them involves a procession back to court and ends with presenting the head of the stag to the king on a pole while the hunters blow their horns. There is such a great commotion that people run out of the hall to see what is happening, and everyone at court is deeply impressed: "aldri var fyrr í því landi hjörtr svá sundr tekinn né veiðimanna fang svá tignarliga heim flutt né kóngrinn af neinum svá sæmliga tignaðr" (60) ["never before in that country had a stag been dressed in that way nor the catch of the hunters brought home so gloriously, nor a king so fittingly honored by anyone" (61)]. Not only is the king honored through Tristram's actions, everyone knows of Tristram's actions to honor the king: his public display reinforces the idea that the king's presence is the place for a special set of behaviors, and the status of the king as worthy of the greatest honor.

Despite the rosy picture we get of court life in *Tristrams saga*, and particularly that of Markis—of manners, luxury, the pursuit of pleasure, and accessibility to women—there is a thread of dysfunctionality that runs through the story, just as with many other romances. There are hints of imperfection early in the saga: Markis does not participate in the tournament he hosts, or at least we are not told that he does, and there is the odd moment where Tristram shows the men of Markis's court a more courtly way to present their game than they had known—despite the fact that Kanelangres went to Tintajol specifically to observe people more courtly than himself. Problems really begin, however, when Tristram returns from his trip to Brittany to regain his patrimony and finds Morhold demanding tribute from Markis, with no one willing to stand up to him (ch. 26). The timeline is unclear here; we know that Róaldr searched for three years before finding Tristram, but not how long Tristram was in Brittany. Thus we do not know if the five years during which the Irish have demanded tribute began before or after Tristram's departure. Regardless, the revelation that Markis is forced to pay tribute makes the early descriptions of Markis's magnificent court—wealthy,

cultured, and full of brave and powerful courtiers—ring false. Neither Markis nor his men are brave enough to stand up to Morhold in single combat, and later Markis even proves himself to be foolish by offering an Irish harper a rash boon. He promises the harper whatever he wishes for an evening of music, and the harper chooses Ísönd. Markis is in an intenable position: he can forfeit his wife, or his reputation and even his throne by breaking his oath; either way his honor is sullied.[86] Again, none of his men stand up to the harper, and it is up to Tristram, returning to court only after Ísönd's abduction, to salvage the situation. He rescues Ísönd and returns her to her husband, but takes the opportunity to chastise the king, saying "þat veit trú mín, at lítit sómir konu at unna þeim manni, er hana gefr upp fyrir einn hörpuslátt. Nú gætið hennar í öðru sinni betr" (132) ["surely there is little honor for a woman to love a man who would surrender her for a performance on a harp. Next time protect her more carefully" (133)]. We are not told how Markis responds to this bold, if justified, criticism.

This episode is indicative of a shift in the portrayal of the court that takes place over the course of the saga. *Tristrams saga* begins in the way many stories do, with a promising young man wanting to expand his horizons by going to the court of a famous king. Once Tristram is on the scene, however, narrative attention focuses on him, not just to the exclusion of Markis, but eventually at the *expense* of Markis. Their relationship begins similarly to that of Markis and Kanelangres, but at a more extreme disadvantage on Tristram's part; Tristram also has to prove himself to earn the king's favor, but he starts from nothing, rather than his father's privileged position of having wealth, extensive lands, and twenty men to accompany him. Both young men are made better through their relationship to the king and spending time at his court, but Tristram soon surpasses even the king. As his story progresses, the narrative spends less and less time at Markis's court, which is portrayed in an increasingly negative fashion.

Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir characterizes the shift in tone midway through *Tristrams saga* as a change in the motivating principle behind Tristram's actions (2000). In the first half of the saga, it is honor, understandable to any member of a martial society. The introduction of the love potion approximately halfway through the saga, however, imposes a new set of loyalties: love.[87] The audience is then torn between sympathizing with the hero, who is impelled in his actions by an external force, and disapproving of his breaking the rules of society, some of which were dictated by God himself. The scandal is softened by the changing portrayal of Markis: he cannot defend his kingdom from the Irish and he cannot defend his wife from an interloper.[88] As Tristram's scolding suggests, he is not worthy of Ísönd, and the audience is left to wonder if he is still worthy of his kingdom.

86 The harper reminds Markis of a law that states that "sá höfðingi, sem opinberliga lýgr ok gengr á eiða sína ok orð, á aldri at hafa vald né ríki yfir dugandismönnum" (128) ["that nobleman who openly lies or who breaks his oath or his word, shall not hold power or dominion over other men" (129)].

87 Tristram and Ísönd's fateful voyage takes place in chapter 46, out of a total 101 chapters in the saga.

88 Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir sees Markis as generally unsympathetic; she characterizes him as "weak-minded and gullible in many ways, and totally unsuited to the marital problems that he finds himself having to deal with (2000, 132). Schach, however, argues that Markis is purposefully portrayed in a positive light by Brother Robert (1965, 75-6).

Like Markis, the court loses its initial shine. Aside from Ísönd and Bringvet, women disappear from the court while evil courtiers and councillors remain, who primarily serve to spread gossip and cause further troubles for Tristram. They do their duty in revealing to Markis the infidelity of Tristram and Ísönd, but the narrative's sympathies are never with them; they are frequently described as envious (135, 150) or simply malicious, like the evil dwarf ("hinn illi dvergr," 142). The idyllic, idealized court of the beginning of the saga, with its emphasis on courtliness and a place for women, thus becomes a space of intrigue and conspiracy as the story contracts to focus on Tristram and Ísönd. As their love threatens the very foundations upon which the court stands, it can no longer be a place for them to demonstrate their skills and accomplishments and increase their standing in society; instead the court itself becomes their adversary.

Once Tristram's motivations shift, however, the court no longer has the draw it once did; Tristram stays not because of the prestige, but because of the proximity to Ísönd. Things that before would have been notable in their own right as indications of luxury—hunting trips, an evening of entertainment by a travelling musician, an entire afternoon devoted to being bled by a physician—now become background for the greater drama of Tristram and Ísönd's forbidden love. Markis's court becomes incidental, and other places begin to take on characteristics initially associated with the court. Most striking is the transformation of wild, outdoor spaces. For much of the saga, the wilderness, particularly forests, are frightening: the location of giants (ch. 62, 73, 78) and where Ísönd orders Bringvet to be taken and killed when she fears Bringvet will reveal Ísönd's lies. It is also where Tristram finds himself during the lowest points of his life: when the Norwegians regret abducting him and set him ashore in a foreign country, and when he and Ísönd are banished from court.

However, the terrors of the forest are transformed when it becomes Tristram and Ísönd's space.[89] They find a grotto in an ideal setting that calls to mind the tournament grounds where Blensinbil and Kanelangres met:

> Ok var þetta allt hvelft . . . Jörð var mikil á húsinu, ok stóð á sá fríðasti viðr á berginu, ok dreifðiz skuggi viðarins ok hlífði fyrir sólarhita ok bruna. Þar hjá húsinu var ein uppsprettandi á með heilsusömu vatni, en umhverfis ána váru vaxin hin sætustu grös með fögru blómi, er maðr vildi kjósa, en straumrinn rann austr frá uppsprettunni. En þá er sólin skein á grösin, þá ilmaði hinum sætasta ilm, ok var þá vatnit allt sem milskat væri af sætleik undir berginu. (160)
>
> ["It was high and vaulted . . . There was a great deal of earth above the chamber,

89 Even before Tristram and Ísönd are banished, they—and their anti-social behavior—are associated with the outdoors: they are twice depicted meeting in an orchard (ch. 55, 67) and later, when Tristram is stopped from consummating his marriage by the sight of the ring given to him by Ísönd, he remembers her in the orchard (ch. 70). He also sneaks through the orchard to meet Ísönd on the first night someone (aside from Bringvet) learns of the affair (ch. 51). I read this change in the presentation of the wilderness as centered around Tristram and Ísönd, though Hans Jacob Orning makes an argument for a broader interpretation. He states that Tristram "can be regarded as a civilizing agent, bringing courteous manners to the rest of the world," a "civilizing effort" which "may be interpreted as a symbolic conquest of the wilderness and forests" (2012, 95).

> and on top of that grew the most beautiful tree, which cast its shadow and provided protection from the heat and burning of the sun. Next to the structure was a spring with healthful waters, and around the spring grew the sweetest herbs with the most beautiful blossoms that one could choose to have, with a stream running eastward from the spring. When the sun shone on the herbs, they exuded the sweetest fragrance, and the water was pervaded by the sweetness of the herbs." (161)]

Tristram and Ísönd fill their days with walking in the forest and hunting, and what could be an extremely marginal living (and is presented as such in Béroul, where they suffer from prosaic problems such as lack of salt, l. 1297)[90] is presented simply as a "góðr kostr" (160) ["pleasant alternative" (161)], as a courtly lifestyle outside the court. The setting is again portrayed as a locus amœnus, and it is also the same sort of sensory environment described at the beginning of the saga. The only other place that gets such attention is the chamber that Tristram constructs in a forest that once belonged to a giant. The saga tells us that "engi kann at tjá né telja þann hagleik, er þar var" (188) ["No one can describe or detail the artistry apparent" (189)] in Tristram's project, but it takes two whole chapters to do just that; the room is set with carved, painted, and gilded panels inside and out and houses exquisite lifelike statues of Ísönd and Bringvet. Ísönd's statue—crowned and trampling a likeness of the evil dwarf—emanates a sweet fragrance and calls to mind the image of Mary as New Eve, trampling the serpent.[91] Here, Tristram literally relives his life at court; he "mintiz ok á alla þá huggan, skemtan, ok gleði ok yndi, er hann fekk af Ísönd, ok kyssti hvert sinn líkneskit, er hann íhugaði huggan þeira" ["remembered . . . all the comfort, pleasure, joy and delight that Ísönd had given him, and he kissed the statue every time that he thought about their good times together"] while he takes out his feelings about the bad times on the statue of an evil counselor that also stands in the chamber (188-9). When Markis's court is no longer accessible—perhaps even acceptable, for a variety of reasons—it is replaced by a new space, reminiscent of the court but ruled by Tristram and Ísönd's love, rather than a worldly king.[92]

Yet even as the center shifts away from the court, it is not entirely replaced. The forest grotto in which Tristram and Ísönd shelter provides a place for them to enjoy their love fully and freely for the first time since the fateful ship voyage and they feel that they lack for

90 "Béroul's *Tristan*" l. 1297, Lacy 1998 vol. 1.

91 Schiller I: 108. Ísönd's presentation here recalls pictorial representations of Mary in several respects: not only trampling the enemy, but also crowned and holding a staff, which in Marian representation signals the rod of Jesse. See also Kalinke 2009, 230.

92 Kalinke suggests that not only does the statue of Ísönd "[provide] Tristram with access to his beloved Ísönd, it permits him to comment on and interpret past events" (2009, 234). The symbolism of the statues clearly links them with the sacred, providing either a deeply ironic tableau or, as Kalinke suggests, "Tristram's perception of himself and Ísönd as innocent victims" (234). The detailed description of the statues and the chamber invites the audience to meditate on the same subject. It seems likely that the majority of medieval audiences would agree with Tristram; though Gottfried tends towards cynicism in religious matters (see discussion below), the fact that pictorial representations of the Tristan story were extremely popular during the medieval period suggests that the attitude towards Tristan and Yseut was overall sympathetic (See Kalinke 2009, 225 as well as Eming, Rasmussen, and Starkey).

nothing. But this is only a temporary solution; they are still constrained by social ties. When Markis observes them sleeping chastely, he invites them to return, no longer angry (ch. 66). Despite their feelings that they have everything they need in each other, and their trust in God to grant them nourishment,[93] the court still has some sort of pull for them, and they return. In the following chapter, however, Tristram leaves the court of Markis for good. His golden chamber acts as a surrogate but only for so long; eventually he and Kardín are compelled to return to England.[94] Tristram is able to be with Ísönd once more before his death, but the location is indeterminate: he and Kardín meet up with Markis's entourage when they are travelling. Though Tristram and Kardín enjoy nights with their ladies, they otherwise remain on the edges of the royal entourage, constantly in danger of being caught. Presumably the entourage reaches its long-term location at some point, though this is never specified. Tristram gets closest to the court only when he is in disguise—once, as a beggar outside the cathedral on a feast day, and later in a tournament. Like his father at the beginning of the saga, Tristram distinguishes himself at the joust. All mention of courtly accomplishments are gone, however; Tristram and Kardín "léku hart við þá ok hrundu mörgum af hestum sínum ok lögðu sjálfa sik í ábyrgð, því þeir drápu tvá þá, er ernastir váru í því landi" (210) ["played rough with their opponents, knocking many from their horses and putting themselves in danger, for they killed the two men who were the most powerful in that country" (211)]. Despite the narrative symmetry—Kanelangres first distinguishes himself at the court of Markis during a joust, and Tristan immediately leaves the court after his final joust, never to return—the episodes are opposite: Kanelangres shows himself to be worthy among Markis's famous knights, and becomes part of his family through his relationship with Blensinbil. For Tristram, however, England has become virtually indistinguishable from any of the other countries where he tests his prowess at points throughout the story. He and his companion come, prove themselves to have greater prowess than the country's foremost men, and leave. Not only this, they must flee; they are pursued all the way to the coast and must kill several men in order to escape. Tristram is literally driven away, not only from the court, but from the country. Tristram's technical displacement—he is currently at the court but at the fringes—becomes permanent, for in the next major episode of the saga, he is fatally injured.

Throughout the saga, Tristram seems to resist being associated with a specific place.[95] On multiple occasions, he has the opportunity to set down roots, but fails to do so—when he is

93 "guð mun vilja gefa þeim nokkura næring, hvar sem þau váru. Ok líkaði þeim þat vel tveim einum saman at vera. Ok girntuz þau ekki meira en þau höfðu nú af öllu því, sem í veröldinni var" (160) ["they felt that God would grant them nourishment enough, wherever they were. Both of them were pleased to be together with no one else around. Of all the possible things in the world, they desired nothing more than what they currently had." (160-1)]

94 After this point references to Cornwall drop out and only England is mentioned as the land of Markis and Ísönd.

95 Molly Robinson Kelly associates Tristan with the sea, but argues that this is both place and not: "the sea plays a fundamental role in the legend, and as a place it is fluid and constantly changing, uninhabited and uninhabitable. For these reasons, it does not have the associations with people and memory . . . Yet the sea clearly can take on meaning, and in that sense, it is indeed a place, albeit one that could only generate a belonging as transient and unstable as its watery medium . . . Its instability echoes [Tristan's] own, and the unpredictable will that governs it reflects the mysterious forces at work in his life" (226).

accepted by Markis as his heir, when he finally regains his patrimony, when he is healed the first time at the Irish court, and when he weds Ísodd.[96] Ísönd, however, being a woman, is not allowed the same peregrinations that Tristram is. She remains for most of her time in the saga at the center of the court with Markis, but we are constantly reminded that she is a stranger in a strange land. Suspicion and perhaps also the fact that she does not produce an heir keep her from ever being fully assimilated into courtly Cornish/English society. Throughout, she laments her position as a foreigner with no friends or family to support or aid her, suggesting that her mother's potion may have been designed to help her assimilate into her husband's kingdom through the strength of their love, rather than simply inspire romantic feelings. Once she leaves her homeland, Ísönd is psychologically displaced just as Tristram is physically, as it is on the journey to Tintajol that she drinks the potion and falls in love with Tristram, and she cannot find peace as long as suspicion surrounds her at Markis's court, and Tristram is banished.

The end of the saga sees their lives end away from Markis's court. Ísönd flees in secret to join the dying Tristram in Brittany and breathes her last over his body. This part of the saga poses special problems, as it deviates uncharacteristically from the preserved versions of Thomas's poem. Two fragments of Thomas, Douce and Sneyd[2], preserve the end, and in both, the narrative ends with the deaths of Tristan and Yseut. The end of the saga, however, preserves a detail from other versions of the story: that out of their graves, two plants grow and twine together, finally uniting the lovers in death. Additionally, during Ísönd's final lament, she begs God for forgiveness, a detail found only in the saga. M. F. Thomas argues that the motif of the twining plants came from the Béroul branch of the story, and was added in Iceland at some point during the saga's transmission, implying that multiple versions of the Tristan story were known there.[97] She concludes that "this part, at least, of the saga is not derived from Thomas and the 'courtly' Tristram tradition: it cannot be a faithful representation of the twelfth-century French poem" (81). Merritt R. Blakeslee, however, argues that because the twining plants motif was found in two separate versions of the story—the Béroul branch, as represented by Eilhart (the end of Béroul is not preserved), and an early prose text preserved in B.N.fr. 103, as well as the saga—it was originally in Thomas's poem as well. However, because of the apparent blessing of adultery in the poem, it "profoundly alarmed and deeply threatened" audiences and was therefore excised (145). Blakeslee sees *Tristrams saga* as preserving a faithful version of the story, with the addition of Ísönd's confession to mitigate the scandal (131). Alfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir is also inclined to believe that the twining plants motif was found in Róbert's exemplar, but notes that we cannot know if it was originally in the poem composed by Thomas, or added at some point before the text reached Scandinavia (1978, 211).

Blakeslee conflates the translator with later redactors throughout his article; it is impossible to know whether the twining plants motif was in the exemplar of the translator, or

96 To this we might also add the episode in the grotto, as both Tristram and Ísönd seem content.

97 If Jonsson is correct in his theory that the Scandinavian ballad arose at Hákon's court, this would suggest other oral songs and stories were present that left less of a trace in the literary record. For example, Alison Finlay admits it possible that in Iceland, at least, the story of Tristan "was known and appreciated in popular versions at an earlier date independently of the efforts of Brother Robert" (2004, 217). If this was the case, it would easily have been possible for an oral version of *Tristan* to be known in Norway as well.

if Ísönd's prayer was added by the original translator or a later copyist. The twining plants motif seems to have become critical to Icelandic Tristan-tradition, as it also appears in both *Tristramskvæði* and the later reworking or parody, *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*. It must therefore have been part of the tradition fairly early on, if it is not original. Neither of these texts includes Ísönd's confession, though the *Saga af Tristram* makes its own mitigating move, stating that:

> standa þar þessir viðir enn, til marks at Tristram fífldi ekki Ísodd hina fögru fyrir illsku sakir við Mórodd kóng, frænda sinn, heldr fyrir þat, at sjálfr guð hafði þeim skipat saman af sinni samvizku. En fyrir þá sök þá Tristram ekki Ísodd hina fögru af Mórodd kóngi, at hann unni honum hins bezta ráðs, ok mátti hann þó fyrir engan mun við sköpnum vinna. (288)
>
> ["these trees are still standing there as a sign that Tristram did not beguile Ísodd the Fair out of malice towards his kinsman Mórodd but rather because God Himself in His wisdom had destined them for each other. And the reason why Tristram did not accept Ísodd the Fair from King Mórodd was because he wanted him to have the best match, and yet he was by no means able to withstand the fates." (289)]

This explanation is not without its own problems, but it serves to reinforce our image of the sort of reception the story must have had: that it did not need to be rejected altogether, but its message needed framing. After all, Scandinavians were not strangers to tragedy or imperfect heroes; many of the most famous stories involve the most taboo of crimes, such as incest and kinslaying.

Tristrams saga, as it is preserved, presents a story that is internally coherent: Ísönd begs God for forgiveness at the end of her life, and so God honors the loyalty of her love with Tristram after death through the twining of the tree branches over the roof of the church outside of which they are buried. We cannot be certain, however, at what point the story reached this state. If we follow Blakeslee in seeing the twining plants motif as original and Ísönd's prayer as added by Brother Robert, the end of the saga is a continuation of the movement of the story in the second half of the saga. Love is the highest principle that Tristram and Ísönd serve, to the exclusion of all others. The characters become increasingly disassociated with the royal court that should be their home, moving outside the bounds of courtliness, civilization, and even royal authority as they move to inhabit the wild spaces of the text. Their death and burial is one more step in that direction: Ísönd leaves her husband permanently, choosing to join Tristram in death because it is no longer fitting for her to live ("sómir mér nú ekki at lifa lengr," 222), and they are finally united by two trees, recalling the trees that sheltered and shaded them when they were banished, and those that hid Tristram's gilded chamber.

A second possibility is that the twining trees motif was in the original translation, but Ísönd's prayer was added by a later redactor. Though it may seem unlikely for what we presume to be a clerical translator to let a story like *Tristrams saga* go without comment, it is not unheard of. Many of the *Strengleikar*, for example, feature stories of adultery, and only

Equitan offers explicit critique of the characters in the story. Moreover, that critique is primarily focused on the failings of the king to carry out his duties, one of which is treating well those men who serve him (and thus not seducing their wives). Other texts, therefore, do not feel the need to condemn adultery on moral grounds, so it is in theory possible that Ísönd's prayer is part of a later, moralistic overlay to the story, which would also include moments such as the critique of women's immoderation in love in Chapter 4 and perhaps the narratorial comment after Ísönd's ambiguous oath at her ordeal. *Tristrams saga* takes the oath at face value: Ísönd bears it well and passes the ordeal because, as the audience knows, her oath that she had only had Markis and the poor pilgrim (Tristram in disguise) in her arms was in fact true. The saga tells us that "gaf guð henni með sinni fagri miskunn fagra skírn, sætt ok samþykki við kónginn, herra sinn ok eiginbónda, með fullri ást, sæmd ok mikilli tign" ["God in his gentle mercy granted her purification, reconciliation, and harmony with the king, her lord and husband, with an abundance of love, honor, and high esteem"] which is strangely out of step with the story, as Ísönd's loyalties remain with Tristram throughout, and she does not seek forgiveness until the end (150-1). Gottfried's cynical commentary about God's virtue being "pliant as a windblown sleeve" and "at the beck of every heart for honest deeds or fraud" is more in keeping with the nature of the episode.[98] In this case, my earlier interpretation of the end of the saga still stands, though the rightness of Tristram and Ísönd's relationship is implicit rather than explicit. They seem to have been rewarded for following the rules of Love by remaining faithful to each other rather than for reasons of Christian morality.

Finally, it is possible that both unique elements of the end represent later Icelandic tradition and influence from other versions of the Tristan story. If we imagine the ending of the original translation presented in the Norwegian court as essentially being the same as what is preserved in the Douce and Sneyd[2] fragments, stopping with the deaths of Tristram and an unrepentant Ísönd, the sense of the story shifts to the dangers of passionate love rather than a rewarding of loyal love. The story ends, according to Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, with a "final vision of the lovers . . . side by side, closely embraced; no transcendence moves them beyond that final static vision" (106). Tristram and Ísönd are still united only in death, but the tragedy is greater; the story ends without their being able to meet a final time due to Ísodd's jealousy. There is no softening of the blow, no trees twining to allow them some sort of peace after all their suffering in life. In this version, Tristram and Ísönd are never able to find a new place for themselves, even after death; the tragedy of their inability to freely love each other is underscored, much like the refrain of *Tristramskvæði*, "Þeim var ekki skapat nema skilja" [For them was no fate except parting]. It is not hard to see why a kinder ending would have been added. However, a further possibility of interpretation is added if we admit Thomas's epilogue, no trace of which survives in Old Norse. He reflects on the composition of the story, but not its contents; he does not offer a final message or suggest how audiences should interpret the story of Tristan and Yseut. Instead, he states that he composed the story as an "essamplë"

98 Hatto, 248. "Dâ wart wol g'offenbæret/und al der werlt bewæret,/daz der vil tugenthafte Crist/wintschaffen alse ein ermel ist:/er vüeget unde suochet an,/dâ man'z an in gesuochen kan/alse gevuoge und alse wol,/als er von allem rehte sol./er'st allen herzen bereit,/ze durnehte und ze trügeheit./ist ez ernest, ist ez spil,/er ist ie, swie sô man wil" (ll. 15733-15744).

[example] to please lovers and to comfort them when needed.[99] In the absence of criticism of Tristan and Yseut, we might take this as support on the part of Thomas. Bruckner, however, argues that Thomas's ending is purposefully ambiguous so as to appeal to a broader public who can make their own interpretation regarding the story (109).

The suitability of *Tristrams saga* as part of Hákon's project of Europeanization has been questioned, particularly if the translated texts are supposed to perform some sort of a didactic function. There are certainly troubling aspects, particularly the valorisation of adulterous love, and the cuckolding of the king. Even if the text was primarily for entertainment—which seems more likely, given the nature of the text—the same problem arises: why choose *Tristan*, which seemingly lauds infidelity and places individual passion above the good of the realm, as a sort of state-sponsored entertainment? The negative aspects of Markis's portrayal do not stem simply from his standing in the way of Tristram and Ísönd's happiness. They begin earlier, and are more serious in nature: Markis cannot protect his kingdom and cannot secure a line of succession, two crucial functions for a king. He may, therefore, serve as an example of a poor king, one who is neither wise nor surrounds himself with wise counselors, a point on which *Konungs skuggsjá* is quite explicit. At the same time, however, his portrayal early in the saga helps establish the courtly milieu as a genuinely positive place. It is not, however, the appropriate setting for passionate love, and that is what the characters of *Tristrams saga* struggle with. The potion created to form a strong bond between king and queen is diverted, and Tristram and Ísönd are never able to properly assimilate once they have tasted it. The thrill of an exciting love story is balanced with a cautionary message, and even if it was simply intended to while away the longer winter nights, the story still brings with it a wealth of information regarding what an ideal court is in the world of romance, what it isn't, and who and what belongs there.

Ívens saga*: balancing loyalty and love*

Ívens saga similarly explores the conflict between loyalty to love and to liege that is central to *Tristrams saga*. Here, however, the problematic aspects have shifted: Íven's love is not the adulterous love of Tristram, and so it is not a direct threat to king and country.[100] Instead, his love is immature, as is his attitude towards knighthood. It is only in losing

99 "Pur essamplë issi ai fait/Pur l'estorië embelir/Quë as amanz deive plaisir,/E que par lieus poissent troveir/Chose u se puissent recorder./Aveir em poissent grant confort/Encuntre change, encontre tort,/Encuntre painë e dolur,/Encuntre tuiz engins d'amur!" (ll. 3135-43) ["I composed both narrative and verse/in such a way as to serve as an example,/so that, by being made beautiful,/it might please lovers,/and that they might find here and there within it/something to reflect upon./May they derive great comfort from the tale/when they are the victims of fickleness and wrong,/when they suffer pain and sorrow,/when they are ensnared by all the wiles of love!" (Lacy 1998, vol II.)]

100Though throughout *Yvain*, there are indications of this problem in the references to *Le chevalier de la charrette*, the story of the adulterous love of Lancelot and Guinevere, which occurs simultaneously. This story is referenced once in *Ívens saga* (ch. 9), but it is not known whether Lancelot's story was known in the north at this period. Halvorsen 1973 suggests that an Icelandic folktale with a protagonist who travels in a cart is "an obvious imitation of Lancelot," which would indicate either oral transmission or a lost translation (20).

everything that he learns the true value of love and chivalry. Whereas much of the drama of *Tristrams saga* is external—a love potion, evil counsellors, a suspicious king—that of Íven is internal. It is his personal failings, choices, and growth that drive the story rather than the mysterious hand of God or fate.

Unlike Tristram and Parceval, Íven is already a part of the courtly world at the start of the story: he is a knight at Arthur's court, keeping such illustrious company as Lancelot,[101] Gawain, and Kay. In *Yvain* it is clear that there is something wrong with this world: Arthur retires from his feast to dally with his queen, leaving his knights to occupy themselves outside his door. In *Ívens saga* this has been smoothed over during some stage of transmission as Geraldine Barnes points out: Arthur's laudatory introduction has been slightly expanded, he retires because "fell svá mikill þungi á konginn, at hann varð fyrir hvatvetna fram at ganga út í sitt herbergi ok sofa fara" (38) ["a great drowsiness came over the king, so that he was compelled to go to his chamber to sleep" (39)], and the queen merely sits beside him as opposed to the suggestive implications in the French.[102] At the very least, it can be said that the saga indicates something strange is afoot.

Íven is initially motivated by self-interest; in particular, a preoccupation with his standing at court. Upon hearing of his kinsman Kalogrenant's defeat at the hand of Sodal, the guardian of the spring,[103] Íven is more upset that he was not told of the matter than concerned about his kinsman. He vows to take vengeance, and is roundly mocked by Kay. Though the queen upbraids Kay, his words stick with Íven, causing him to sneak out of the castle to face the knight of the spring alone before Arthur arrives with his retinue. He succeeds in exacting revenge but has little time to relish it; he is trapped in the hall of Laudine[104] and Sodal, being hunted by their men, preserved only by Lúneta's invisible ring in thanks for a kindness he once did her. Then, almost immediately, his attention is caught by the beauty of Laudine, the dead knight's wife. Íven's single purpose becomes wooing her successfully, which he accomplishes with the help, again, of Lúneta. Íven vows his love for her and accords her the highest honor, placing his life in her hands (58) and moving to sit at Laudine's feet when he is presented to her men (60). As Laudine's new knight, he even rides out to defend her spring against the arrival of Arthur, to whom he so recently owed his loyalties.

Yet the depth of Íven's devotion to his lady proves to be as negligible as the strength of his loyalty to Arthur. Once he avenges himself upon Kay, who was given permission to ride against the knight of the spring, Íven reveals himself and is welcomed back amongst the court. He has displaced Kay, disgracing him by knocking him down headfirst into the mud, and

101Though Lancelot is included in the list of knights at the beginning of the saga, he is not counted among them in *Yvain*.

102Barnes 1987, 65-6.

103The guardian of the spring who Yvain kills is called Esclados in *Yvain*. However, the different numbers that varying manuscripts give for how many years ago Calogrenant fought the guardian of the spring suggests that Esclados may not have been the guardian of the spring at that point. See Hult's introduction to *Yvain*, 12.

104Laudine is not named in the extant saga manuscripts, just as she is not named in the majority of French manuscripts. However, her country is not named in the saga either, making her frequent appellation La Dame de Landuc problematic. I have chosen to call her Laudine here for the sake of simplicity. Only her father's name is preserved, though in varying forms (Blaisdell 1969). The fact that she is unnamed is interesting in a story with such a strong focus on women, though see Hult 11-12 in *Yvain.*

regained his standing as a member of the court, though now improved because he has made good on his boast. Laudine now invites Arthur to a feast in her castle, which is richly decorated, and sends 600 knights to meet him. At this point, Laudine is essentially Arthur's equal, both in standing and in the claim she has upon Íven. She trusts Íven to be able to balance the conflicting claims upon him, letting him leave with Arthur's court for a year to pursue his knightly accomplishments. Íven has again been swayed by words, though this time it is Gawain speaking in what he believes to be Íven's best interest: he says that "hann skyldi fylgja brott kónginum ok þar eigi lengi vera í þeim kastala ok fordjarfa svá sinn riddaraskap ok atgervi" (64, 66) ["he should accompany the king and not stay in the castle any longer and thus ruin his knightly reputation and accomplishments"(65, 67)]. However, Íven is unable to balance his obligations and completely forgets his deadline.

When a messenger sent by Laudine arrives at Arthur's court to announce Laudine's displeasure and reclaim her ring, she acknowledges all of the members of the court save Íven, figuratively excluding him from the knightly world just as he has been excluded from his lady's favor (66). Still, Íven thinks of his standing before the other knights; he is grief-stricken but also "skammaðiz sjálfs síns fyrir öðrum riddurum" (66) ["very ashamed before the other knights" (67)]. He decides to go where he is unknown, but rather than another city or the service of another king, he retreats to the forest, the antithesis of the highly cultured courtly world.

There, Íven loses all markers of belonging to society: his wits, his clothing, his network of friends and family; he steals a bow and arrows from a boy and eats his meat raw.[105] Yet it is there, that, once stripped of everything that he valued, he learns what he should truly value. After Íven has been running about as a wild man[106] for some time, a hermit takes pity on him and gives him bread and water though he is afraid, knowing that Íven is not possessed of his full faculties (68). Though it is the worst bread that he has had, Íven "mundi gerla hvat gott einsetumaðrinn hafði gert honum" (68) ["was fully aware what good the hermit had done for him" (69)]. In his first act of selflessness, he turns the stolen bow and arrows to the benefit of another and begins to hunt for the hermit.

It is after this low moment that Íven slowly begins to re-integrate into the world. While asleep, he is recognized by a trio of women and recalled as "þann bezta riddara er vápn hefir borit" (68) ["the best knight who has ever borne weapons" (69)]. They take him to their lady's castle, where he recovers his health and his senses, but keeps his previous identity concealed. Íven also leaves behind his previous motivation, spending the rest of the saga acting in service to others, starting with his host. After driving away the earl who has been threatening the lady and refusing reward, Íven rescues a lion who is being attacked by a dragon.[107] The lion,

105This detail comes from *Yvain*, though it carries its own associations in Old Norse literature, where eating raw meat is sometimes associated with berserks. Carolyne Larrington points out that the *víkingalög* in *Örvar-Odds saga*, which she argues has been "clearly impacted" by chivalric ethics, carries a provision against eating raw meat (2008, 284).

106For this trope in medieval literature and symbolism, see Husband and Bernheimer.

107When Íven comes across the fight, "hugsaði hann með sér, hvárum þeira hann skyldi við hjálpa" ["he considered which of them he should help"] and settles on the lion "þvíat hann undirstóð at leó æpti á hann til hjálpar" (72) ["because he realized that the lion was calling on him for help" (73)].

grateful, assists him in his later endeavors, fighting next to him and wanting to die when he believes Íven is dead, demonstrating loyalty and the value of selflessness. But Íven's quest for redemption truly begins when he comes across the spring again and falls into a frenzy. He confesses his crimes, showing his cognizance of his failings, and wonders aloud why he does not kill himself (74). Yet this moment of self-pity is checked by Lúneta, who is locked up in the chapel next to the spring, sentenced to death because of Laudine's ill feelings towards her and an opportunistic steward. Íven is set face-to-face with consequences of his actions that do not affect just him, but extend to others.

For the remainder of the saga, Íven builds a new identity and a new reputation for himself as the Knight with the Lion, going from castle to castle and adventure to adventure, assisting those in need. It culminates in a return to Arthur's court as the Knight with the Lion, where he fights Gawain as the champion of one of two disputing sisters. They fight for hours, neither gaining the upper hand, until Gawain reveals his identity and Íven refuses to fight him any longer. Before the court, Íven surrenders to Gawain, privileging bonds of friendship above his knightly reputation. Gawain refuses to accept his surrender, however, and so they settle as equals, turning the case over to Arthur to decide. Íven is now reinstated in Arthur's court, but he does not stay: again he decides to sneak out and go to the spring, again he is determined to win Laudine's favor. Yet rather than throw himself at her feet in an excess of overwrought passion, he boldly declares that he "'skal . . . aldri af láta at gera henni ór keldunni eldingar'" (94) ["'shall . . . never stop producing lightning storms for her with the spring water'" (95)]. That is, he has learned what is worth fighting for. Íven does lay at her feet a second time, but he endures Laudine's scolding, speaking only to admit his wrongdoing and ask forgiveness.

Íven's story is in some ways the inverse of the narrative of the young man who proves himself through bold deeds and wins recognition and favor with king and court. Though he begins in an enviable position as the son of a king who is in favor at Arthur's court, it is clear that being in that milieu is not enough for him to learn true chivalry, especially with Kay as one of the most prominent figures and a king who is given to strange fits of drowsiness.[108] Arthur's court is important to the story, but it is more of a backdrop against which Íven's development can be played out rather than an entity in itself. Moments of Íven at court give us three snapshots: the young, proud knight; as married Knight of the Spring at the height of hubris, and finally as humbled Knight of the Lion. It is only in leaving the court that Íven learns true chivalry, and it is necessary for him to experience the utter opposite in the form of the wild to do so. Moreover, his presence may be seen to have an effect on Arthur's court rather than the reverse. During his first return, he embarrasses Kay, shaming him and thus weakening the negative influence he wields over the court.[109] In his second return, at the end of the saga, his and Gawain's refusal to fight puts the case of the disputing sisters into the hands of the king to decide. Whereas Arthur abdicated his duties at the beginning of the saga, we now see a resumption of his duties in the shape of ruling on a legal case. Given the

108Or, if we imagine an original translation that is closer to the French, a king who leaves his duties to spend time with the queen, exactly what Erec was guilty of, and what Íven errs in doing the opposite.

109"allir fögnuðu misförum hans, þvíat hann átti engan vin í kóngs hirð. Kóngrinn sjálfr gerði sér at gaman" (64) ["all rejoiced at [Kay's] mishap because he had no friend in the king's court. The king himself poked fun at him" (65)].

importance of the idea of king as judge in Norwegian royal circles at this time,[110] this detail would have been extremely interesting to Norwegian courtly audiences. Íven's mastery of proper chivalric behavior and attendance to its values essentially allows for the restoration of equilibrium to Arthur's court.

In addition to the two poles of Arthur's court and the forest, Laudine's demesne is a third site which compels Íven's development. Just as she serves as an analogue to Arthur, so does her setting of chapel, spring, and castle function similarly to Arthur's court. It is another courtly setting, a castle beautifully decorated and populated by knights and beautiful maidens, but it is ruled over by Laudine, the figure of love, as opposed to a figure like Arthur, who is introduced with a reference to his excellence as a king.[111] Íven is only in Laudine's lands for a short while in narrative terms, coming to the spring at various stages in his development, first as immature challenger, then at the nadir of his despair, followed shortly after by a visit at the beginning of his rehabilitation to rescue Lúneta, and finally as the reformed and resolved Knight of the Lion. While Íven's martial abilities are highlighted in scenes dealing with Arthur's court, the scenes in Laudine's sphere of influence unsurprisingly develop the deepening devotion to his lady. Just as his return to Arthur's court reaffirms Arthur's position as ruler and judge, so does his return to Laudine restore the stability of her lands, which have been without a defender and at the mercy of anyone who chooses to pour water over the pillar at the spring, as Íven himself does in the final scene.[112]

The importance granted to Laudine in the story helps to normalize the place of women in the courtly world, a theme that runs throughout *Ívens saga*. This is a process that was begun in *Tristrams saga*, with the prominent place of women in courtly settings, such as the necessary observation of Blensinbil and her ladies at the tournament grounds of Markis's feast and the queen's role as keeper of the hostage in the trial of the Irish steward. It is a tentative integration, however, for while Ísönd is clearly depicted as being courtly, she never quite finds her place in the court: she is not loyal to the king, she does not bear future heirs, and her foreignness is repeatedly emphasized. Her ties reach outward, rather than within the court, especially once Tristram is banished, and though her marriage reinforces the peace between England and Ireland, we never see Ireland serving as a friend or ally to England after the marriage. Ísönd's potential as a model of courtliness is mitigated by the destructive passion that dominates her story, and which ultimately drives her to reject husband, king, and court to die with Tristram. The tension in *Ívens saga* between love and martial prowess is real, but not

110See the following chapter.

111Arthur's identification with the martial aspect of knighthood is even more explicit in *Yvain*, which opens with the lines "Li boins roys Artus de Bretaigne,/La qui proeche nous enseigne/que nou soions preus et courtois" (ll. 1-3) [The good king Arthur of Brittany, whose prowess teaches us to be valiant and courteous].

112Pouring water over the pillar is genuinely threatening; the saga tells us that "gerði hann svá miklar eldingar at allir óttuðuz þeir er í borginni váru með frú hans, ok hugðu at öll mundi hún niðr hrapa ok vildu heldr vera á Persidalandi en innan þeira veggja, er svá mjök váru skjálfandi" (94) ["he produced there such great flashes of lightning that all who were in the castle with his lady were frightened and they thought that everything would come down on top of them and they would rather have been in Persia than within the walls that were shaking so hard" (95)]. The inhabitants bemoan the fact that a single man "má svá pína oss ok skelfa" (96) ["can so torture us and make us tremble" (97)].

so fraught: though Laudine physically resides outside of Arthur's court, and is, as the lady of the spring, even at times antagonistic towards it, her presence does not challenge the courtly world in the way that Ísönd's does, but instead serves to reinforce the values of chivalry.

Women are prominent players in virtually every episode of the saga, which is strikingly different from the native saga tradition, let alone skaldic court poetry. When the saga opens, the queen is literally at Arthur's side. She then joins the knights who stand guard outside his door, taking equal part in the conversation, and acting as arbiter of what is appropriate speech and what is not: she encourages Kalogrenant's story, but censures Kay's taunts.[113] Both speeches provide an opportunity for knightly action, but one allows for the possibility of strengthening ties within the court, while the other is divisive. Though Íven responds to Kalogrenant's story in a self-centered fashion, that is due to his own failings, and one can perhaps imagine a different response from a more mature knight such as Gawain.

Laudine also serves as a figure of authority. As heir to her father, she has her own duchy over which she is sovereign, with knights and followers who answer to her. While considering marrying Íven, she speaks of making him (54) "riddari minn ok alls míns ríkis" ["my knight and knight of my realm" (55)]. When she presents her idea to her court, she is seated in the highest position in the hall, and her lords kneel before her to implore her to remarry so that they have a defender against King Arthur. Similarly, Íven acknowledges her superior station. Going to meet her the first time, he bathes, dresses, and accessorizes carefully, much like Kanelangres carefully preparing to go to Markis's court. Íven prostrates himself before her, both physically and as a captive of love, an idea which seems to confuse one of the Old Norse redactors, as it requires an explanation.[114] At the same time, however, she cannot serve as a replacement for male authority. She is limited in needing to marry in order to defend her spring, as her doing it herself is not possible within the world of the story, nor do any of her six hundred knights seem willing to do it. Moreover, she is characterized by feminine irrationality in the same casually misogynistic fashion as Blensinbil; when she angrily sends Lúneta away after suggesting remarriage, Lúneta responds that "'Sýnt er nú at kona ert þú ok kvenna sið hefir þú. Þær firraz ok felaz ef þeim er ofgott boðit ok heilt ráðit'" (54) ["It is now obvious that you are a woman and behave like a woman. They avoid and hide if offered something good or if given salutary advice" (55)].[115] Though she eventually realizes her error, this is troubling for Norwegian audiences, for whom the importance of good counselors—and

113Interestingly, in *Sturlu þáttr*, the story of Sturla Þórðarson's arrival at the Norwegian court, it is the queen, Ingilborg (though she is not named here), who invites him to tell a story and gets her husband Magnús to listen. She praises his abilities as storyteller and skald three times (in response to his telling of the story of Huld, his poem about Magnús, and his poem about Hákon) before Magnús states his opinion.

114"En þó má vera, at hún tali til ástar hertöku ok kallaði hann því hertekinn at sá er hertekinn er mikit ann" (58) ["It may be that she was talking about a captive of love and therefore called him a captive since anyone who loves greatly is a captive" (59)].

115There is also an aside about the fickleness of women in the scene in which she presents Íven to her followers, despite the fact that it is not really relevant to the scene at hand; Laudine is purposefully acting as if she does not want to marry Íven so that she will not be chastised for remarrying so soon. This does not have a counterpart in *Yvain*, though in a scene excised from the saga, Yvain muses on the fickle moods of women and hopes that Laudine will become agreeable towards him, despite his status as her husband's killer (ll. 1436-44).

the ability of kings to listen to them—would be well known.[116] It is therefore necessary that Laudine marry so that her patrimony can be properly managed, defended, and passed down, but that does not preclude her from being a figure deserving of respect and loyalty in her own right.

While Laudine is at the heart of Íven's story, it is also populated with, even directed by, a number of other women. Lúneta is the most prominent among them. She is named, while her lady is not in most versions of the text, and she is able to bring Íven and Laudine together through her manipulations. She acts as a sort of gatekeeper; having proven himself worthy by treating her well at Arthur's court when no one else would,[117] Íven gains her approval and she agrees to save him and convince her lady to marry him. Lúneta occupies this role a second time when Íven promises to save her from execution and he keeps his word; having proven himself, she agrees to speak for him a second time and tricks her lady into promising to reconcile with him. Other women also motivate the action: the healers, the succession of women who need saving from evil earls, a giant, and the three hundred women held in servitude at the castle of Finnandi Atburðr (Pesme Aventure), and finally the younger sister, whose choice of the Knight with the Lion as her champion in claiming her inheritance brings him back to Arthur's court. Though Íven's adventures are clearly a lesson in humility, this is presented as a positive thing: he fights a giant, a dragon, one of Arthur's best knights, and a number of fearsome foes, but these feats are not the focus of the story—instead, his service of those in need, and his attendant growth is.

Íven therefore comes to be a model knight, but it is a model new for Norwegian audiences. He serves love, but is not a slave to it in the way that Tristram is. Íven is loyal to his king, but he is also loyal to his lady—his wife—and these loyalties are shown as being equally important. Not only that, his story demonstrates the importance of aiding women for the proper knight. The court is no longer simply a man's world; women are part of it, as both actors and inheritors, and men are supposed to be courteous and conscious of their needs even, perhaps especially, when the women aren't courtly.[118] Finally, we see in *Ívens saga* that while the royal court is important, it is not everything—unlike in *Tristrams saga*, it is not a center to which Íven always desires to return. It is important, but it is important for him to leave, too, for it is only in leaving that he is truly worthy of belonging, an idea explored more deeply in *Parcevals saga*.

Parcevals saga*: beyond courtliness*

116This idea is important in both *Konungs Skuggsjá* and *Hákonar saga*.

117She reminds him: "þú virðir mik framar en allir aðrir ok þó ek kynni eigi svá hæversk sem hirðinni hæfði, þá varstu þó svá hæverskr við mik ok þjónaðir mér sem einn dugandis maðr, þó ek þess í engan máta verðug væri" (48) ["you respected me more than all the others and even though I was not as courtly as befits those at court, you were nonetheless very courteous toward me and served me as befits a valiant man although I was in no way worthy of it" (49)].

118Moreover, the fact that Íven is married before he undertakes the majority of his adventures means that he cannot be compensated in the traditional way, that is, marrying the maiden he saved from some danger and inheriting her lands. While taken individually these acts are models of altruistic action, though it must be acknowledged that Íven is ultimately rewarded by the return of his wife's favor.

The stories of Parceval and Íven are similarly concerned with ideals, though their focus shifts away from the king and his family to his knights. The Old French texts, composed in the latter half of the twelfth century by Chrétien de Troyes, famously interrogate the concept of chivalry and the idealized portrait of King Arthur as he is depicted in earlier texts.[119] While *Yvain* is the story of a knight who is conflicted between his two duties of love and martial prowess, *Perceval*, or *Le conte du graal*, describes the spiritual and chivalric education of a knight. While *Yvain* ends happily, the protagonist reconciled with his love, *Perceval* is unfinished, and so the resolution to its problems is less clear.

At some point during the transmission of *Parcevals saga*,[120] an ending was supplied that re-affirmed Parceval's Christianity, reunited him with his lady-love, and established him as a bold warrior and excellent ruler, all in the space of a short paragraph.[121] This ending is indicative of how many scholars see the treatment of the story in the hands of Scandinavian translators and scribes. Geraldine Barnes calls it a "straightforward account of the education of a young knight" from which the mystery of the grail has largely been erased.[122] Critics have noted the reduced importance of Christian themes as exemplified by the mother's advice at the beginning of the story.[123] In *Perceval*, the mother gives Perceval advice about dealing with women, some guidelines for travelling, and ends by essentially teaching him the catechism (ll. 527-94). In the saga, the mother gives no instruction regarding religion, but instead gives advice for acting courteously. Here, the spiritual theme, and Perceval's vow to go to churches and chapels—subsequently broken—is not included. That the spiritual storyline ends abruptly is therefore understandable, though the remaining elements stand out oddly. Henry Kratz argues that the advice of the mother in the saga is "much broader and more practical" in the saga and, therefore, "more adapted to real life in Norway than to the Arthurian romance" (23-4). He sees the alteration in the tone of the saga as a result of cultural difference (22), a position that Marti shares, though they differ on whether the resulting text is ultimately an adaptation or a translation.[124]

Barnes argues that this simplified story functions as a *miroir* for knights—that protagonists' problematic characteristics from *Le conte du graal* have been smoothed over or explained away, claiming that "the Norse Parceval is presented as an exemplary student, a

---

119In particular, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum britanniae* and Wace's *Roman de Brut*. On this point, see Barnes 1987, 71-2.

120While it is impossible to tell when the end was added, it seems likely that it would have been early on in the text transmission. It seems improbable that an incomplete saga would have been presented to a royal audience. It must be acknowledged, however, that *Valvens þáttr* remains incomplete. There is one thread of Parceval's story left dangling by the semi-incomplete status of the text. The Haughty Knight's lady tells him that he must not use his sword unless it is reforged (ch. 12). This never happens, and so Parceval is presumably left with an unusable sword.

121The story thread dealing with Gawain has largely been removed from the saga and appended as *Valvens þáttr*. See the introduction to Maclean's edition (xi).

1221984, 49 & 62; see also Zink 84.

123On this point, see Barnes 1984, Kratz, and Zink.

124Marti 2012 sees the saga as falling within the medieval principles of translation, while Kratz considers it to be different enough from the original to be called an adaption— "and not the worst one ever made" (45).

worthy model for any knight aspirant" (1984, 54). She finds linguistic similarities in the text to *Konungs skuggsjá* and *Hirðskrá*, texts that function partly as Norwegian manuals of courtly instruction, particularly in the stress placed upon the concept of *lítillæti*, or humility.[125] According to her, "the career of 'Parceval riddari' reads like a successful case history founded on the precepts advanced by the *Konungs Skuggsjá* and *Hirðskrá*, and the saga's ethic could be said to have considerably more in common with the ideal of conduct set forth in manuals like these than with the mysteries, religious and otherwise, of Chrétien's *Li contes del Graal*" (1984, 62). Her reading places *Parcevals saga* squarely within the 'edifying' arguments for the translated romances, though moves beyond a general argument for the text's purpose as an instrument of courtly instruction to a text that takes part in medieval intellectual traditions of mirror and exemplary literature. While Kalinke also allows for a possible didactic function in the text, there has not yet been enough scholarship on the subject to establish whether Barnes' ideas have been widely accepted.[126]

As with most of the translated romances, much has been said about the nature of the translation and less about the object that it produced.[127] If we take the saga as having been produced at Hákon's court,[128] we are faced with the curious conundrum of a story commissioned by a king, for his court, that is not particularly approving of the king and court that it depicts. Unlike *Le conte du graal*, however, the chivalric milieu is not explicitly critiqued at the beginning of the romance by Parceval's mother. While in *Le conte du graal* the family retreated to the wilderness because the father was wounded and their lands fell to ruin, a tragedy compounded by the death of Perceval's brothers in combat and his father's subsequent death due to grief, in *Parcevals saga* the reason is more pragmatic: the father kidnapped the mother, a king's daughter, and fled to the wilderness so he wouldn't be caught. As Geraldine Barnes points out, however, a suggestion from the original remains; later, the mother states that "auðig várum vit at eignum ok fé . . . eyddiz þá ok okkarr kostr ok flýðum vit hingat sem nú erum vit" (110) ["We were rich in lands and other possessions . . . but in the end our resources were exhausted and we fled to this place, where we are now" (111)].[129] In addition to seemingly contradicting the earlier explanation for their location, the statement is ambiguous: did they become destitute through their own [profligacy], or through an attempt to adhere to unrealistic social expectations?[130]

125See Barnes 1984 and 1987.

126Suzanne Marti's 2010 dissertation on *Parcevals saga* was not available for consultation.

127Aside from the status of the text, the point that has received the most comment is the description of grail, which is likened to a "textus" and called the rather obscure "gangandi greiði." For discussion, see Foote 1969, Mitchell, and Kratz. To explain this odd description, R. S. Loomis has argued for influence from the First Continuation, though we have no other evidence for its existence or knowledge of it in Scandinavia (99-100).

128Here I follow the majority of scholars in situating the translation of *Parcevals saga* at Hákon's court with the other Arthurian romances. While Marti's argument for an earlier, possibly Icelandic translation milieu is intriguing, the late date of *Le conte du graal* (c. 1190) makes it unlikely that it could have been translated at the end of the twelfth century as she suggests (2013, 65). In any event, a more systematic exploration of foreign loanwords for new concepts, such as those involved in chivalry, would be welcome.

129Quotations are from Wolf's edition.

130Let alone where the father's lord was in this situation. In several other instances, such as the lais *Lanval* and

Parcevals saga thus begins with a family that has been removed from the courtly world, either voluntarily or not. However, though it is a story of Parceval's knightly education, it is not a story of his adoption of, or into, that world. He becomes a great and famous knight, proving himself in battle and winning a noble wife for himself, yet his education takes place almost entirely outside of Arthur's court. Parceval's first visit to the court is purely transactional and, in some respects, antagonistic. He wants those things that Arthur can give —arms, armour, knighthood—but he as yet does not understand the social prestige that comes with being at court or the social and symbolic weight of chivalry. He makes his demands, pressing to get what he wants because, he says, "'ek vil þegar í brott fara'" (114) ["I want to be off at once" (115)]. Parceval has been given little reason to be polite up to this point; Arthur is so preoccupied by the Red Knight's challenge that he does not respond when Parceval greets him twice, and it is only when Parceval's horse knocks his hat off that Arthur notices him. Nor does anyone else attend to Parceval; Ionet politely directs him to the king, but only after Parceval has addressed him.

Nor is the situation better once Arthur has acknowledged Parceval. Kay goads Parceval into taking the armor he desires from the Red Knight, and though Arthur scolds him, he does nothing to prevent the untried boy from taking on a knight bold enough to insult the king himself. Parceval, thus, leaves the court having received indifference from most of the members and antagonism from Kay, cemented by his striking a maiden and a fool who believe that Parceval will become more valiant than Kay. Furthermore, the audience has been given a snapshot of a deeply dysfunctional court. Arthur's rule has been challenged and he and his queen have been insulted to their faces, and yet he sits paralyzed with anxiety ("áhyggja," 114), unable to perform even the most basic functions of his position. This is noticed also by characters within the saga; Gormanz expresses surprise that Parceval has been 'knighted' by Arthur, commenting that: "'ek hugða, at hann hefði nóga áhyggju áðr'" (122) ["'I thought that he would have enough to worry about already'" (123)]. Rather than serving as a benefactor or guide in Parceval's education,[131] Arthur verbally acquiesces to Parceval's demand to be made a knight but does not actually carry out the ceremony.[132] Nor does he grant to Parceval the armour of the Red Knight, as Parceval later claims to him and to Gormanz (116, 122); it is Kay who does so, urging him to take them for himself with derision (114).

Arthur is not unaware of his failings. When Ionet brings him the news that Parceval has killed the Red Knight and presents the cup as evidence, Arthur again scolds Kay, stating that "af illum orðum þínum hefi ek tapat góðum riddara, er mér gerði í dag góða sæmd ok drap inn mesta óvin minn þar sem ek gerða honum enga sæmd" (120) ["through your wicked words I have lost a good knight who has done much honour today and killed my greatest enemy, even though I did him no honour" (121)]. However, this does little to restore Arthur's agency. He chastises Kay a second time, and though his presence prevents Kay from beating the dwarf again (120), he does not suggest that anyone go to meet Parceval, he only laments

Grelent, kings are critiqued for allowing their knights to become destitute.

131 Contrast this with Arthur's warm welcome of Alexander in *Cligès*. Alexander is quickly integrated into the court, and the king is supportive of his desire to become a knight.

132 Gormanz later Parceval his spurs, girds a sword on him, and makes a speech. This ceremony, the saga tells us, is how one would "gera riddara" in those days (128).

that the boy might not live long: "'Nú sitr hann á inum bezta vápnhesti, ok ef nokkurr gárungr girniz hest hans ok herklæði, þá mun hann skjótt fá drepit hann.[133] Sá er illa fallinn at berjaz, er eigi kann vápnum verjaz" (120, 122) ["'Now he is sitting on the finest warhorse, and if some prankster takes a fancy to his horse and armour, he will then be able to put an end to him quickly. A man who cannot weapons wield is ill-equipped to take the field'" (123)]. Again, it is only Ionet who takes any sort of initiative; he follows Parceval to his encounter with the Red Knight and then helps him remove and don the dead man's armour. In this scene he seems to stand in for the king, not only allowing Perceval to take possession of the armor, but also girding his sword,[134] teaching him how to draw and sheathe it, showing how to make use of stirrups, and handing him the Red Knight's banner and shield (118). Parceval repays honor with honor, giving Ionet his horse and declaring that he will be the champion of the maiden who spoke out on his behalf, and was slapped for it.[135]

As Parceval continues on his adventures, Arthur's court serves as the passive receptor of the results of Parceval's activity. As he defeats his foes—Gingvarus, Klamadius, and the Haughty Knight—he sends them to the maiden, where they give Parceval's greetings to Arthur and affirm his intention to avenge the maiden. This message is sent twice, and intensified with the Haughty Knight, who brings the message that Parceval shall not return to court until he has avenged the maiden.[136] The three knights give news of Parceval's progress and, while they are integrated into the court and ultimately become positive additions to it, thus increasing Arthur's stature, they simultaneously serve as a reminder of Parceval's mistreatment at court. Gingvarus's arrival at court is not narrated, but when Klamadius shows up, Arthur scolds Kay once more with regards to his treatment of Parceval, stating that "'sakir þinnar illgirndar ok heimsku tungu fór hann brott ok hefir mik þat angrat jafnan síðan'" (144) ["'it was thanks to your wicked and foolish tongue that he went away, and that has grieved me ever since'" (145)]. Arthur then proceeds to treat Klamadius courteously and accepts him into his retinue.

Arthur's reception of the Haughty Knight is even more courteous; the king welcomes him warmly specifically because he has been sent by Parceval.[137] He then chastises Kay yet again and praises Parceval, which is reaffirmed by Gawain's statement that the Haughty Knight is the best in the land (160). It is at this point—when Parceval's genuine prowess is made apparent to the entire court—that Arthur decides that he wants to find Parceval. He does not send a knight or two to fetch him, however; he packs up his entire court, and they all leave the castle at Korboel, displacing to the wilderness where they eventually encounter him. Parceval does not intentionally return to court; the court comes to him.

133In Wolf's edition she closes the direct speech here, though Maclean's translation includes the following sentence as direct speech. I follow Maclean here, as the sentiment expressed continues the line of Arthur's thoughts, though direct commentary by the narrator does occur in many instances in the saga.

134Markis girds a sword on Tristram both when he is made a knight (68) and before his fight with Morhold (78).

135He does not make the same offer on behalf of the fool.

136"'seg henni svá at ek kem eigi fyrr í hirð Artús kóngs en ek hefi hefnt hennar svívirðingar á Kæi ok hún skal kalla vel hefnt'" (158) ["'tell her this, that I shall not enter King Arthur's court before I have avenged her humiliation on Kay so that she will say it is well avenged'" (159)].

137"'Blessaðr sé sá riddari er þvílíkan riddara sendi m[ér] ok sakar hans skalt þú v[er]a hér velkominn ok sæmiliga haldinn'" (158) ["'A blessing on the knight who has sent me such a liegeman! And for his sake you shall be welcome here and be honourably treated.'" (159)]

The second meeting of Arthur and Parceval continues as an inverse episode to their first meeting. After eagerly seeking out Parceval, they find him lost in contemplation of blood on the snow, which reminds him of Blankiflúr's complexion, though they do not yet know his identity (161). Similar to Arthur's distressed reverie after the Red Knight's challenge, twice the knights attempt to make contact with Parceval. Though like Arthur he twice does not respond, Parceval sees the approach of the knights and meets them in combat, defeating both. The difference between Parceval and the king is striking: even in a contemplation so deep that "ekki mátti hann þá annat kunna" ["he was powerless to comprehend anything more" (160-1)], Parceval is able to respond to and defeat threats. The second knight who attacks him is Kay, on whom vengeance is wreaked when he is knocked unconscious and his arm is broken. A verbal response is finally elicited by Gawain, who approaches Parceval not with lance but with welcoming words, immediately including him in the courtly gathering by addressing him as "Bróðir" [Brother] (164). Parceval then returns to court and is given the finest of clothing, in stark contrast to the clothes "eptir bónda sið" ["in the country style"] which he wore on his first visit to court (108-9). Here again Arthur makes a move towards Parceval, rising to meet him when Gawain brings him to the king.

Despite Arthur's rather unkingly concessions to Parceval, there is a brief time when the court achieves a happy equilibrium. Arthur has the best knight in the land at his court, Parceval is able to demonstrate his new grasp of chivalry to the queen and the maiden, and vengeance has been visited on Kay for his words and unchivalric behavior.[138] Parceval returns to Korboel with Arthur "í miklum fagnaði" (166) ["in great good cheer" (167)]. The next day, however, their joy is interrupted by the Loathly Lady, who chastises Parceval for failing to ask the question of the Fisher King and brings news of feats that can be undertaken. The court scatters, men declaring various quests for themselves right when it had reached a state of wholeness and perfection. At the beginning of the saga, Arthur is sad because "fjöldi riddara hans sneriz til ýmissa borga, þar sem þeim þykkir hægjast at vera, ok veit hann eigi hvat þeir at hafaz" (112) ["'a great many of his knights have gone away to various other stronghold where they feel it is most comfortable to be, and he does not know what they are doing" (113)]. When Klamadius arrives, it is the traditional Whitsuntide setting of Arthurian romance, and all the nobles of the land are present for the feast. Though it is unclear how much time passes between Parceval's encounters with Klamadius and the Haughty Knight, and thus whether Arthur still has an expanded court, our next snapshot of it is the joyful moment when he encounters Parceval again. Yet, due to the external impetus of the Loathly Lady, everyone disperses, and our last image of the Arthurian court in the saga is one voided of knights.[139]

Arthur's court primarily serves as a touchstone for Parceval's development as a knight, providing impetus for him to begin and serving as antagonism to overcome, which ultimately establishes him as a model knight. His actual development, and the main thrust of the story, take place when Parceval is away. Arthur is largely a symbolic figure for Parceval, while true

138While the maiden has received three hostages, the renown of a connection to Parceval, and a vow from him that he will always support her if she needs it (164), the fool must apparently be content with a vicarious sense of satisfied revenge.

139Though Kay presumably stays behind because of his broken arm.

mentorship and guidance are granted by the other figures Parceval encounters. His chivalric education begins with his mother, who gives him advice and a new set of clothes as he sets out. This advice is, as Barnes has pointed out, mostly pragmatic and has no spiritual dimension. Parceval is immediately given the opportunity to test his mastery of these guidelines and largely fails.[140] As his behavior improves, however, he is given a second set of advice. After Parceval leaves Arthur's court and defeats the Red Knight, he encounters Gormanz, a "góðr maðr" ["worthy man"] who welcomes him kindly (122-3). Parceval's improved appearance and polite greeting may in part explain his warm reception, but when his rough edges begin to show, Gormanz continues to treat him courteously, belying Arthur's fear that Parceval would be taken advantage of. Gormanz teaches Parceval how to hold and use his weapons properly and finally convinces him to exchange his homely garments for more knightly garb. Just as Parceval's mother instructed him in how to treat women, Gormanz instructs him in proper knightly behavior.

The third element of the ideal knight, as it is presented in the text, is represented by the hermit, who educates Parceval in proper Christian devotion. This story thread, however, is quite altered in the Norse text. Parceval is never portrayed as completely ignorant of Christianity, and the author of the added ending was content to redeem his sins with a prayer. The reduced role of Christianity in the text therefore also reduces the importance of the Fisher King and the Loathly Lady to Parceval's education. They provide another means for him to grow, this time largely in a spiritual dimension. As in his first trial with women, Parceval fails, and when the Loathly Lady makes this known to him, Parceval vows to correct his error. This does not happen, however, as the saga redactor is seemingly untroubled by his unfulfilled vow to find out what the "gangandi greiði" is and sees marriage and the gaining of a good reputation as a knight a sufficient end to Parceval's story.

Because of the suppression of the spiritual theme in *Parcevals saga*—which threatens Perceval's standing as a good man in *Le conte du graal*—we indeed get the impression that many of the rough edges have been smoothed off of the knightly protagonist. His story is one of education, and so missteps are bound to happen, but Parceval's status as a knight worthy of admiration is never seriously threatened. However, it cannot be said of chivalry in the saga that the"'problematic' side disappears altogether."[141] The king is part of the equation, and Arthur is not beyond reproach. Though it is less blatant, Arthur is still a problematic figure here as he is in *Möttuls saga* or as Markis is in *Tristrams saga*. While Barnes argues that the translated romances show an unquestioning acceptance of chivalry because of an unfamiliarity with its convention, even saga audiences in remote Iceland would know Arthur's paralysis after being humiliated was not good and that you go to the king, the king does not go to you. Furthermore, changes to remove problematic aspects of Parceval and Yvain would hardly be

140Barnes 1984 argues that Parceval is in fact a good student who interprets the advice given to him correctly and uses this as evidence for the Norse tendency to make Parceval exemplary. While I agree that there is some mitigation of his faults in *Parcevals saga*, it seems more correct to say that Parceval has the ability to follow the letter of the law, but does not understand it, rather than Perceval's active misinterpretation in *Le conte du graal*. It is this lack of deeper understanding that leads him to steal a kiss from the Haughty Knight's lady, which causes her grief, and to fail to ask about the grail.

141Barnes 1987, 57.

necessitated if no one thought there was a problem.

If the romances are "improved," but still problematic portrayals of knighthood and kingship, we must again address the question of how they might have fit into a courtly milieu. In *Parceval*, the figure of Arthur is striking because he is almost solitary. Arthur is initially set up as a paragon of kings. We first hear about him when Parceval does—the knights that he thinks are so beautiful that he confuses them with God state that they receive their armour and weapons from Arthur. He is therefore generous, and also victorious in battle, as the charcoal-burner informs Parceval (112). At the same time we get this information, we and Parceval also learn that Arthur is sad because his knights have left him. While it has been established that leaving the court is crucial for knightly formation, the reason given for the knights leaving in this case is that they want to go somewhere more comfortable. The knights are not out testing their prowess—Arthur would know if they were, as the updates that the court receives regarding Parceval's progress show. Instead of honor, they have sought comfort, which reflects poorly on the knights and raises questions about Arthur's ability as a host.

This unsettling message is reiterated when Parceval encounters the Red Knight, who continues to challenge Arthur and dares him to send one of his men to defend his kingdom (112). While Arthur has not acted, neither has anyone stood up as his champion. Perhaps someone would have if the knights had been at court, but they are not, and the Red Knight's unanswered challenge underlines that fact. Furthermore, the last image of the court in the saga is, as mentioned above, of it emptied. This time it is because the knights have sworn to do chivalric deeds, but Arthur is left out of the dynamic: they leave not because it is his wish, or because it will bring him glory, but because they desire to test their own knighthood against the "fræknustu riddarar" ["most intrepid knights"] and win "höfuðfrægð í öllum heiminum" ["the highest renown in all the world"] (166-7). There are other things to tempt them, too—fair maidens and wealth "for the taking" (167).[142] Their quests are driven by their concern for themselves, rather than a desire to right wrongs or serve their king. This reading is suggested by the fact that it comes immediately after the Loathly Lady's scolding of Parceval for his behavior at the castle of the Fisher King. Afraid of going against the advice Gormanz gives him, he remains silent, his self-centered decision condemning the Fisher King to remain wounded.[143]

Thus, while Arthur's portrayal is troubling, so too is that of his knights. Gawain's courtliness might balance out Kay's antagonism, but there is no one else to uphold the unparalleled reputation of Arthur's court—save Parceval. The saga, therefore, demonstrates

142"fá má þar nóga . . . fjárhlut[i]" (166). This is an interesting contrast to Parceval's motivation. He has no interest in wealth, and by this stage his relationship with women has changed dramatically. Beginning with coldly leaving his mother to die, he has the well-meaning but problematic encounter with the Haughty Knight's lady. He then becomes the champion for the maiden at Arthur's court who stood up for him, and then for Blankiflúr, whose only relationship to him is one of host—a poor one at that, as her castle has long been under siege. Parceval's arc, like Ívens', is clearly one from self-interest to selflessness, though it is not without its setbacks.

143This is, however, one of the places where Parceval is made to look better than he does in the French text. There, he is afraid that he will look foolish if he asks about the procession (ll. 3210-1); in the saga, however, Parceval "vildi eigi angra þá er honum veittu beina" (148) ["did not wish to trouble the man who had granted him hospitality" (149)].

concern for the knights, and by extension the institution of chivalry. The problem of court members who do not behave fittingly is one that was clearly of concern in thirteenth-century Norway, where its appearance in *Konungs skuggsjá* will be discussed in the following chapter. This concern would again resonate with both continental and Scandinavian audiences, if in different ways. The critique of the chivalric system is more problematic but not, I believe, irreconcilable to the saga's likely translation context at the Norwegian royal court.

The depiction of Arthur's court in the saga is one that has become dysfunctional. However, it is still crucial to Parceval's development into a perfect knight. He begins his journey with a desire to find Arthur's court and acquire for himself something that he considers desirable. Though the method in which he does it is uncouth both on his part and that of the courtiers, he succeeds, winning the arms and armour of the Red Knight and creating for himself a link with Arthur that he is able to carry on his later travels. It is this initial problematic encounter that then pushes Parceval to improve himself: he vows to avenge the maiden who spoke up for him with great deeds,[144] and in doing so, has a series of encounters that improve his chivalric education and therefore his social status, effected in part because he continually sends his defeated opponents to Arthur's court. Though Parceval largely functions outside the court, it is a center of gravity that he never quite escapes. Despite the problems in the court, it still helps to produce one of the best knights in the land. Thus while Arthur's court seems to function in *Parcevals saga* as a negative exemplar, it is still clear that becoming an excellent knight is a desirable thing, and that a king is needed. Though the traditional relationship between king and knight is upended—Arthur does not really give Parceval his armour or rewards for his later performance—it is still clear that there *is* a relationship, and that the status of king and knight are, at least to a degree, mutually dependent.

Möttuls saga*: rejecting the world of chivalry*

In contrast to the sagas of Parceval and Íven, *Möttuls saga* takes place entirely at Arthur's court. Instead of the action happening once we have left the court, here, things begin when a messenger with a mysterious gift from a mysterious woman arrives. The text is a snapshot of a single place at a single moment, the Arthurian court at Pentecost, and yet the action of the story reveals patterns of behavior and and deep-rooted characteristics that serve to undermine the very structure of the Arthurian world. This is not surprising if we read the text as a *fabliau*, a short, comic tale that often focuses on sexual humor, or as *fabliau*-like.[145]

144"ek skal svá mikit at gera áðr ek dey, at hún skal segja sik vel hefnda á þeim er hana laust" (120) ["I shall do such great things before I die that she will declare herself well avenged upon the man who struck her" (121)].

145There is no firm definition of a fabliau; Muscatine contents himself with Bédier's extremely broad definition of "contes à rire en vers" (6), though adds that the fabliaux are rooted in realism, unlike epic and romance (23). *Le mantel mautaillié*, or *Le lai du cort mantel*, poses problems for genre in that its interest in sexual humor and use of irony are characteristics of the fabliaux, yet its setting is courtly, while most fabliaux are populated with characters of the middle-class or lower nobility (knights, etc.). For a brief summary of opinions regarding the status of *Le mantel mautaillié*, see Baumgartner 324.

Fabliaux frequently poke fun at existing social structures and expectations, upending the status quo,[146] which is precisely what *Möttuls saga* does in the context of Arthurian literature. Geraldine Barnes, however, argues that the irony characteristic of *fabliaux* and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes is lost on Old Norse audiences, which "had neither the key to the cultural codes of twelfth-century France nor the guiding hand of the biased narrator to pinpoint the discrepancies between theory and practice" (1987, 100). Though it is true that the irony would likely have less impact for an audience with only recent familiarity with Arthurian romance and a social structure that did not mirror the world of romance as closely as in other areas, it wouldn't take a great deal of experience to notice the comically large gap between Arthur as described and Arthur in action, or between the glittering veneer of the court and the prosaic matters that lead to its infamy. From where the humor rose might have been different for different audiences, but it seems likely that even "backwoods" Norwegian audiences would understand that it does not display model behavior from king and court.

Before it is demolished by revelations of infidelity, however, the courtly world is presented as superlative. Arthur is the best of kings, as the prologue establishes, listing his qualities with varying degrees of elaborateness.[147] His catalogue of talents is underlined by assurances that the story is true; the veracity of the story is affirmed twice and and a book is mentioned as the source of the story, giving it further gravitas.[148] The occasion is the typical Arthurian setting of a Pentecost feast, to which Arthur has extended a sweeping invitation: "lét hann blása hvervetna á skógum, á vegum ok gatnamótum, at hverr er þar var um farandi skyldi koma til hirðar ok hátíðar hans. Þat fylgði ok boði kóngs at hverr er átti fríða unnustu, þá skyldi hún fylgja honum ok vera jafn velkomin með kóngi sem unnasti hennar" (6) ["he let it be trumpeted about, in woods, on roads and crossroads, that everyone who was traveling about, should come to his court and his celebration. The king's summons went on to say that any man's ladylove might accompany him, and the king would make her equally welcome" (7)]. Arthur's ability to host and feed so many people is impressive, though it raises the question whether it is truly a courtly gathering if virtually everyone attends. However, the narrative proceeds as if everyone in attendance is the crème de la crème. Also worth noting in this invitation is a promise of hospitality that is broken: by the end of the story, all of the ladies of the court have been forced by Arthur to reveal their infidelity and are disgraced, angry, and jealous of Karadín's beloved, the only woman who proved worthy of owning the mantle.

At the feast, Arthur and his queen are welcoming and generous, and both gives to their followers those things that are appropriate for courtly men and women to have: clothing, jewels, and accessories for the women, in costly materials and quality workmanship, and weapons, clothing, and horses for the men. Everyone dresses in their finest clothing, and the guests pass the time appropriately: "Þá var þar mikil skemtan ok allskonar gaman með gnógligum fagnáði svá margra hæverska manna sem þar váru saman komnir" (8) ["Much diversion and all kinds of entertainment with abundant pastimes were provided for the many wellbred persons who had assembled there" (9)]. On the day of the feast, "hin gnógligustu

146Muscatine 92-3.

147The prologue has no counterpart in Old French versions of the text.

148This is true for Sth 6 4to and AM 598 Iβ 4to, which Kalinke considers to be the two primary manuscripts of the text (*Möttuls saga* LXXXV).

föng góðra vista ok þann bezta drykk er fannz í heimi" ["a most abundant supply of good provision and the best beverages to be found in the world"] are laid out on a table beautifully set, and everything is ready for the holiday feast (8-9).

It is precisely this moment that the shine starts to fade: everything is ready for the feast, but they cannot eat, because Arthur's custom of waiting to hear news apparently takes precedence over a table laid and waiting, and people hungry from fasting.[149] Finally, however, the messenger arrives, promising respite, but instead of allowing everyone to sit down and eat, the drawn-out process of going person-by-person to reveal the true nature of those purported to be courtly begins.

The apparent problem at Arthur's court is that the women are all adulterous. The story takes the "thème de fabliau par excellence" [*fabliau* theme *par excellence*] of the love triangle[150] and pushes it as far as it can go: all of the women present, save one, have taken other lovers. This functions to make the men look foolish, questioning what the purpose was behind their risking their lives to accomplish bold deeds, as Kay points out.[151] It also raises the question of whom the women are being unfaithful with, and whether the knights are equally to blame.[152] The "contract" of the courtly world is broken, if it had ever really been kept at all.

Just as worrisome, however, is the king who rules over it. Arthur begins the trouble by granting a rash boon. He is then compelled to either keep his promise, causing the discomfort of virtually every one of his guests, or he can break his promise. He attempts to do the latter but, as the messenger reminds him, "þat sem kóngr gefr ok játar á aldri at ónýtaz ok aptr takaz" (16) ["whatever a king grants and promises must never be rescinded or revoked" (17)], lest it put his kingship in danger. The messenger tells him that abjuring his promise is not "rétt . . . eða sæmiligt né yðvarri tign tilgeyriligt" (16) ["right . . . nor honorable, nor in keeping with your station" (17)]. The sequence is amplified in the Old Norse, which Kalinke argues is not merely decorative, but also serves the purpose of highlighting the importance of this moment: "The simple objection has become a triple accusation, a reminder to the king of his royal obligation to observe the law and to act honorably and in keeping with his station. The royal authority is at stake and the translator expresses the importance of the reprimand with an expansion that becomes more specific with each additional element" (1979a, 245). Moreover, Arthur is cringe-inducingly naïve throughout the whole process. Though he admirably believes the best of the ladies at court, disappointment after disappoint causes his men to plead with him multiple times not to speak about the virtue of the women before they have tried on the mantle.

Arthur's failings are clear even if the text is read unironically, making improbable Barnes's assertion that "Hákon's court would have regarded Arthur and his knights with a

149As is the queen; when Gawain, Kay, and the page Meon go to fetch her to try on the mantle, the typical courtly phrases are traded for a description of her as "albúna til borða at ganga, þvíat hana hungraði er hún skyldi svá lengi fasta" (12) ["ready to go to table, for she was hungry, since she had fasted for so long" (13)].

150Nykrog 60.

151As Kay tells the queen: "ok svá sú ást er riddarar hafa á yðrum meydóm, ok leggja sik í lífshaka ok margskonar ábyrgð fyrir yðrar sakir" (16) ["because of the love that they knights have for your virginity, they hazard mortal danger and take many risks for your sakes" (17)].

152Bennett also suggests that there must be a "légèreté de mœurs" [weakness of morals] that causes the knights to choose "des amies du même acabit" [lovers of the same sort] (115).

totally uncritical eye" (1987, 66), at least with regards to *Möttuls saga*. Though it is true, as she points out, that "the court distinguishes itself by being, according to the saga, the only one of several so tested in which a chaste woman can be found" (1989, 85), this is undermined by the fact that Karadín and his beloved leave immediately after the feast. Once the true nature of the court is revealed—a place of infidelity and hollow accomplishments—they reject it, and moreover they reject the prize they receive for being distinguished there: they place the much-coveted mantel in a monastery,[153] Karadín's beloved proving herself to be not only chaste, but humble. That which separates Arthur's court from all others is therefore removed, and the fine foods and entertainments that Arthur's guests are finally able to enjoy are less enticing than they had been before the messenger's arrival.

While the text is a critique of courtly values, that does not mean that it must be read as a rejection of Arthur and the world of chivalry. Instead, the Arthurian world serves as a stock background against which a drama plays out, this one a comment on the nature of true chivalry, rather than a simple veneer of luxury and beauty. This is much in line with the themes of *Ívens saga* and *Parcevals saga*, where it is not enough to simply enjoy the pleasures of the courtly life. There must be a moral core, and this acknowledgment makes the literature of chivalry seem less frivolous in the clerical-dominated literary milieu of thirteenth-century Norway. In the fashion of other *fabliaux*, humor can also be instructive,[154] and this text works not just with the other translated romances, but with the courtly works produced in Norway, to construct an idea of what the nature of the royal court should be.

Strengleikar, *the Court, and Commemoration*

The compilation of twenty-one French lais, gathered together under the title *Strengleikar*, is a varied collection of stories that functions as a microcosm of the courtly world of literature, bound together by the subject of love.[155] As the product of more than one author,[156] the lais are understandably not unified, but even amongst those attributed to Marie de France, there is a "kaleidoscopic variation of visions on ways to negotiate questions of love, loyalty, and power in the context of feudal society. The lessons they convey or the moralities they implicitly or explicitly exemplify are multiple and situational, and liable to be contradictory" (Kinoshita and McCracken 198). Sharon Kinoshita and Peggy McCracken argue that not only do the stories, even the individual lais, "[resist] a common message" (130),

153Though Baumgartner attributes the rejection of the mantle as part of a pattern of *recréantise* on the part of Carados: "il se désintéresse tout autant de sa propre gloire que de la renommée de la cour" (327) [he is just as uninterested in his own glory as the renown of the court].

154Muscatine 20-1.

155Though romantic love is the main theme, Rothschild points out that many types of love, including between parents and children, sisters, and friends are also important (95).

156The inability to attribute all the lais of the Harley manuscript, as well as the fables, the *Espurgatoire seint Patriz*, and perhaps the *Vie seinte Audree* with absolute certainty to one person has led some scholars to speak of Marie de France as an "author-function," so as to focus on the texts rather than attempt to uncover the biography of a specific individual. For an example of such a reading, see Kinoshita and McCracken, 203ff. See McCash for a summary of the discussion of the authorship of the *Vie seinte Audree*.

they "leave readers largely to their own devices in adjudicating the apparently contrary lessons of juxtaposed tales" (199).[157] Though the *lais* resist a single message as to the nature of the royal court, they nevertheless expand upon important aspects of the romance court that the previous discussion has highlighted. In the variety of settings, locations, classes, and characters that populate the stories, the *lais* depict the expansion of courtly values beyond the court and, in their focus on female characters, particularly in Marie's *lais*, confirm women not only as key to the world of romance, but as subjects in themselves, similar to the treatment of the knightly protagonists of Chrétien's romances.

The declaration of female authorship in the opening of *Guigemar* has invited a significant amount of comment on the status of the female voice and female bodies within Marie's *lais*. However, the first eighteen lines of the *lai*, including where Marie names herself, are not preserved in the Norwegian manuscript.[158] Regardless, there is still much to be said about the place of women in these stories; as Anne Paupert notes, "dans tous les lais, c'est une parole de femme qui est à l'origine de l'aventure, ou du lai qui la commémore" (170) [in each of the *lais*, it is the word of a woman that is the origin of the *aventure*, or of the *lai* that commemorates it]. Women in the *lais* are consistently central to the events of the story or, as in *Strandar strengleikr*, the creation of it. Like in *Tristrams saga*, for the male characters of the lais, be they kings or young men, "it is their love for a woman . . . which constitutes their *aventure*" (Burgess 1987, 162); in some cases, such as *Lanval*, their romantic relationships trump even feudal obligation.[159] Most importantly, perhaps, is that many of the *lais* have women as the main character, a rare occurrence in Old Norse literature outside hagiography and some of the Eddic poetry.[160]

Marie's female characters, though stylized, like the male characters are often flawed, such as the lady of *Chetovel* with her inability to choose amongst four suitors, and subsequent loss of all, or the mother in *Eskia*, whose slanderous speech leads her to send away one of her daughters out of fear. The women of the *lais* possess a great deal of agency, even to the extent of committing adultery. Yet this is not condemned across the board; though the women of *Bisclaret* and *Equitan* are punished, the lady of *Guiamar* is rewarded for her faithfulness to her lover by finally reuniting with him. The lady of *Laustik*, though she does not receive a happy ending, is portrayed sympathetically, at the mercy of her cruel husband. Like *Tristrams saga*, the ambiguous attitude towards adultery raises questions for the reception context of the Norwegian court. Larrington has argued, however, that "the courtly audience would be unlikely to draw parallels between Arthur's unruly queen and the virtuous Margrét . . . it seems likely that the idea of queenly adultery could cheerfully be entertained by the court, precisely because it is unthinkable in the Norwegian context" (2009, 521). While in the traditional

157Burgess 1987, however, argues that "the poems point the way towards improved standards of behavior and a greater sense of responsibility" (183).

158Budal 2009, II: 15. Similarly, Chrétien's name is not preserved in *Erex saga*.

159Though it may be argued that Arthur abrogated the relationship first by neglecting Lanval and allowing him to become destitute.

160Some sagas seem to be structured around the marriages or lives of women, such as *Laxdœla saga*, *Eiriks saga rauða,* and *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, but these women are generally part of a large cast of characters as opposed to the much tighter focus of the *lais*.

courtly model offered by skaldic verse women are typically at the sidelines—watching eyes for the feats of men or props for the spoils of war—in the world of romance, women are ever-present and multi-dimensional, at the sides of their lords, or sovereign in their own rights.

The varieties of settings and locations of the *lais* means that the "royal center" present in longer romances does not always serve as a thematic touchstone. Unlike the longer romances, which tend to have a binary sense of place in the form of court and wild, with islands of civilization in the form of castles that the knights stop in at along their journeys, the literary geography of the *lais* is more complex. It includes real places, imagined places in the real world, encounters with courtly fairy women in the wild, even apparent journeys to the world of fairy.[161] While some stories take place at royal courts and others entirely in the "wild," several lais deal with the middle classes and lower nobility, and inhabit a world with the more mundane architecture of houses, towns, and monasteries. In the absence of a royal court at which the characters arrive and depart from, objects tend to serve as anchors for the texts, particularly in the lais attributed to Marie de France, such as the cloth in *Eskia* (*Lai del Freisne*) that reveals her parentage, the casket that holds the dead nightingale from *Laustik*, or the swan used in *Milun* to carry messages between the lovers.

Kings and courts, when they do come into focus, are treated with the same variety as other subjects. Some courts are flawed, such as those of *Janual, Equitan*, or *Tveggia elskanda lioð* (*Deus amanz*), generally due to the king, though the queen in *Janual* is also a source of trouble. In other cases, however, courts merely serve as a backdrop for drama, as in *Bisclaret* and *Desire*. The kings perform expected public functions, such as holding feasts, making knights, or giving permission to marry, granting an opportunity for characters to meet or reunite. The royal court in the *lais* can thus be good, bad, neutral, or simply a non-entity depending on the needs of the story. Because places in the *lais* are not "consistently defined," according to Kinoshita and McCracken (130), meaning is instead generated by movement between places (114).

While the Old Norse translation of the *lais* is faithful to a high degree, if meaning is dependent in part upon movement between place, the instability of geography in the translations would suggest a disconnect between the way the stories are understood in their original context, and how they are understood in their Norwegian context. In the translated *lais*, terms can be ambiguous: "Bretland" is used to refer to Britain or Brittany while "Kornbretaland" may refer to Cornwall or Cornouaille in Brittany; context does not always make clear which is being referenced.[162] Additionally, at times French and Breton are

161In *Jonet* (*Yonec*) the lady follows her lover through a cave and into an unfamiliar land where everything is beautiful and peaceful.

162As in, for example, *Gurun*, which uses both ambiguous terms and has inspired different interpretations. See Cook and Tveitane 181, n. 6. In Old Norse "Bretland" typically refers to Wales, while "syðra Bretland" designates Brittany; however in *Tidorel*, "brettlannde" is used to translate OF "Bretaingne" [Brittany] (Budal II: 165). Wales in the *lais* is "Suhtwales," [lit. "South Wales"] translated as "valess" in *Milun* (Budal II: 217) and "Suðvales" in *Geitarlauf* (Budal II: 239), save for a second mention in *Geitarlauf* where OF "Wales" is translated as "vales" (Budal II: 242). Similarly odd is the note at the beginning of *Geitarlauf* that explains the name of the *lai*: "bretar calla gotulæf en ver kollum Geitarlauf" (196) ["the English call [this] "gotulæf", but we call [it] Geitarlauf" (197)]. While Cook and Tveitane translated "bretar" as "English," it literally means "British." Given the well-known similarities between Old English and Old Norse, and the geographical

differentiated, as in *Laustik*,[163] but at other times the difference is less clear. In *Eskia*, for example, it is stated explicitly that the "atburðr" [adventure] happened in Brittany, "ok var af þessare þat lioð ort er brættar kalla æskiu lioð" ["and from this one was made the lai which the Bretons call 'Lai of the Ash'" (44-5)]. Later, however, a redactor explains that the main character in the story was named Eskia "þui at þat er hit fægrsta nafn. ok atkuæði i volsku male" (50) [because that is a very beautiful name and designation in the French language" (51)].

This geographical uncertainty extends to the perceived origin of the texts.[164] The Old Norse prologue specifies that the texts were translated from French ("volsko male," 4) and the stories were elaborated on by poets from "syðra brætlande er liggr i frannz" (4) ["Brittany — which is in France" (5)]. For French-speaking audiences, Brittany would have been a peripheral place, different in terms of language, though perhaps politically important.[165] This peripherality, together with its rich literary and folkloric traditions that became popular in the twelfth century, meant that it could stand as a place where fantastic things could happen—if not in actuality, at least in the imagination, much like India or continental Europe in the later Icelandic romances. For Norwegian audiences, however, the close identification of Brittany with both England and France links it with what are cultural centers relative to Norway—here, Brittany is not the mysterious land of fantasy, but part of cosmopolitan Europe.

The variety in the *lais* means that no one meaning attaches to the concept of the royal court. This may not have been a problem for medieval audiences, as the multiplicity of meanings arises primarily when the stories are juxtaposed, the book read, in the modern fashion, from start to finish.[166] It is possible that medieval audiences experienced the *lais* in a different fashion, such as one at a time, with favorites read and re-read and less appealing ones ignored. At the same time however, these texts may have hung together in the minds of Norwegian audiences because of their foreignness. Though Old Norse literature has its own short prose narrative form, the *þáttr*, these texts are called "ljóð,"[167] and their subject matter would have been quite distinctive. Is there, then, something that can be said about the presentation of the royal court within the *lais* as a whole?

An answer may lie in how the collection is framed. What links these varied texts is their status as part of a collection that is described twice—both in the translation of Marie's General Prologue and in the added Old Norse prologue—to be a vehicle for the

---

slippage within the text, "enskir" [English] might be expected here for clarity.

163"kalla þæir þætta lioð laustik. sua er kallat i bræzko male. en i volsku russinol" (102) ["they call this lai 'Laustik.' It is called this in the Breton language, but in French 'russinol'" (103)].

164If we can assume that an English translator would have a better idea of insular and French geography, this may be an indication that the original translator was Norwegian (and not, therefore, the Robert who translated *Tristrams saga* and *Elis saga*).

165See, for example, Henry II of England's various efforts to gain control of it, finally succeeding with the marriage of his son Geoffrey to Constance, the heiress to the duchy.

166See Rothschild 99-101. One can of course read multiple meanings into individual *lais*, but the possibilities for interpretation increase enormously when multiple *lais* are compared.

167This term is used for several original Old Norse texts with mythological or religious matter, such as *Hyndluljóð, Hárbarðsljóð*, and *Sólarljóð*.

commemoration of things worth remembering, primarily for the purposes of edification, but also for entertainment. The Old Norse prologue describes the purpose of the collection thus:

> fyrir þui at i fyrnskunni gerðuzc marger undarleger lutir ok ohæyrðir atburðir a varom dogum. Þa syndizc oss at frœða verande ok viðrkomande þæim sogum er margfroðer menn gærðo um athæve þæirra sem i fyrnskunni varo ok a bokum leto rita. til ævenlægrar aminningar til skæmtanar. ok margfrœðes viðr komande þioða at huerr bœte ok birte sitt lif. af kunnasto liðenna luta. oc at æigi lœynizsk þat at hinum siðarstom dogum er gærðozk i andværðom. Sua ok at hverr ihugi með allre kunnasto ok koste með ollu afle freme ok fullgere með ollum fongum at bua ok bœta sialvan sec til rikis guðs (4)
>
> ["because many marvelous things and events unheard of in our time took place in olden days, it occurred to us to teach men living and those to come these stories, which men of great learning made about the deeds of those who lived in olden days, and which they had written down in books as an everlasting reminder, as entertainment, and as a source of great learning for posterity, so that each man could amend and illumine his life with the knowledge of past events, and so that that will not be concealed in later time which happened in the remote past, and so that everyone might consider with full knowledge and strive with all his strength, and accomplish and achieve with every opportunity to prepare and improve himself for the kingdom of God." (5)]

The texts of *Strengleikar* thus claim to have an educational purpose, but they are also important simply in that they record "historical" events. How these texts were received is unclear; the prologue seems to take the fantastical stories, located for the most part only vaguely in time and place, at face value. Also curious is how these stories of love—such as the uncriticised adultery of *Guiamar* and the sexual relationships outside of marriage (*Eskia, Chetoval, Milun*, etc.)—would allow one to "prepare and improve himself for the kingdom of God." Though it might be argued that some of these are negative examples of patterns of behavior, the Old Norse prologue offers no condemnation; instead, it implies that the events recorded in the stories are comprised of "daðer ok drængskaper ok allzkonar goðlæikr er skryddi ok pryddi lif þæirra er guði likaðo" (4) ["deeds and nobility and every kind of goodness, which embellished and adorned the lives of those who pleased God" (5)].

Similar sentiments appear in the translation of Marie's General Prologue, though the emphasis is less on events that are worth remembering than the preservation and transmission of learning.[168] In Marie's prologue, the process begins with wise men writing down their

168An interesting change in the process of translation is the alteration of Marie's floral metaphor (ll. 5-8: "Quant uns granz biens est mult oïz,/Dunc a primes est il fluriz,/E quant loëz est de plusurs,/Dunc ad espandues ses flurs" ["When a truly beneficial thing is heard by many people, it then enjoys its first blossom, but if it is widely praised its flowers are in full bloom" (Burgess and Busby 41)]) to one of a tree bearing fruit in the *Strengleikar*. Logan E. Whalen connects this metaphor to practices of memory, and sees it as highlighting "the significance of the role of memory in the process of *inventio*" (40).

learning "með myrkom orðom. ok diupom skilnengom" (6) ["in dark words and deep meanings" (7)], providing the opportunity for those who come after to explain, expand, and expound upon these early writings.[169] In her view, this is a continual process that leads to the improvement of those who take part in it, using their learning to teach others.[170] It is within this dynamic that she situates her project, relating the "kynlegom atburðom er i [brætlande] gærðuzc" (8) ["strange adventures that took place in [Brittany]" (9)]. Her explanation is less explicitly didactic; it is more about general improvement than specifically Christian instruction.

The interest in remembrance, in recording stories, events, impressions, and feelings, extends beyond the prologues and is a concern in a number of individual lais. The majority of the lais of the collection explicitly reference the process of being recorded: of events that have been used as the basis for a *lai* in order that they might be remembered; some even reiterate the process at both beginning and end.[171] Other texts are just as much about the process of composition as they are about relating the events that inspired the composition.[172] The centerpiece of *Geitarlauf* (*Chievrefueil*) is the stick that Tristram carves for Ísönd, comparing them to the necessary interconnection of the honeysuckle and the hazel. The first half of *Strandar Strengleikar* is devoted to setting up a particular moment: William the Conqueror's pleasant stay at Barfleur while waiting for a good wind to cross the English Channel: "[hann] for hvern dag með gashaukum ok veiddi tronur . . . fyrre dvaldez hann þar mioc lengi. sacar þeirrar skemtanar er honum licaðe sua vel ok yndelega hugnaðe" (202) ["Every day he went out with goshawks and hunted cranes . . . he preferred to stay there a long time on account of the amusement which pleased him so much and delighted him so charmingly" (203)]. So much does he enjoy his time there that "með retto athygli" ["after proper consideration"] he commissions a lai about his time there: "vill hann muna ok hveriv sinni minnaz þeirrar skemtanarsamlego seto er hann sat a barbeflear strondv til byriar biðo" (202) ["he wants to

169This same idea is developed in *Konungs skuggsjá* with regards to the Psalms: "En því glósaði eigi David sjálfr psaltarann, at hann vildi öðrum þat starf ætla, at skýra með orðum alla þá hluti, er hann hugði með sjálfum sér skýringina, þá er hann ritaði rétta framgangsrœðu upphafra psálma" (120) ["David himself did not gloss the Psalter for the reason that he wished to leave to others the task of expressing all those thoughts which came up in his mind, while he continued writing the Psalms as originally planned" (276)].

170In the Old Norse translation of this section, there is some reference to self-improvement through work, but the emphasis is, here and overall, more focused on social benefits rather than the various benefits for the author/translator in Marie's prologues. Compare: "En þæir sem lif sitt vilia lytalaust varðvæita. þa samer jamnan nokot þat at ihuga ok iðna. er þa gære sialfa vinsæla. ok af kunnasto sinne mege aðra frœðra" (6) ["And it is quite fitting that those who want to preserve their lives faultless be always considering and working at that which may make themselves beloved and which may instruct others from their own knowledge" (7)] vs. Marie's "Ki de vice se voelt defendre/Estudïer deit e entendre/A grevose ovre comencier:/Par ceo s'en puet plus esloignier/E de grant dolur delivrer" (ll. 23-27) ["Anyone wishing to guard against vice should study intently and undertake a demanding task, whereby one can ward off and rid oneself of great suffering" (41)].

171Many of the lais that do not make specific reference to the process of composition still reference the fact that it is based on an event, such as in *Tidorel*: "Nv er at segia fra þeirre strengleics sogu er bretar calla Tidorel með hverium hætte er þat gerðizc" (136) ["Now we shall tell the lai-story which the Bretons call 'Tidorel', and in what manner it came about" (137)].

172*Leikara ljoð* is explicitly about composition and memory, as it takes place during a holiday celebrated by the sharing of news and adventures. However, the majority of it has been lost due to a missing leaf. It seems likely that the page was torn out because of the subject matter of the lai (female genitalia).

recall and remember always the delightful period when he stayed at the beach of Barfleur waiting for the wind" (203)]. Yet the text is not only about the commemoration of a particular, happy moment; William commissions the best of composers, the Red Lady, to make his *lai*, and sends his best harpers to Brittany to learn it. Knowing the *lai* thereafter becomes a mark of distinction: "þa læz ei harparenn ne glyiarenn vera nytr nema hann være þenna kunnande vel at gera ok gorsamlega" (204) ["no harper or gleeman was declared competent unless he was familiar with this one and could perform it well and skilfully" (205)] and it circulates among all of the nobility.

In this way, we see the life of the texts after they are composed. They serve to preserve, commemorate, and illustrate, but they also also function as tools of distinction. Because this *lai* is favored by the king, the nobility adopts it as their own: "ok var engi su drottning hertoga ne jarla. ne aðrar rikar frúr. er ei leto lica sér þenna strengleic" (204) ["there was no queen or duchess or earl's lady or any other powerful lady who was not fond of this lai" (205)]. In showing a preference for the lai, one thus allies oneself with those in the highest circles of the land. In listening to the story about the lai, therefore, audiences are able to link themselves to the powerful, the cultured, the arbiters of taste. This extends, moreover, to those who might not necessarily be considered "courtly," but who interact with, or have a peripheral place in the court—here, the musicians. Royal favor determines their repertoire, which to some extent controls what is available for other audiences that they travel to, to hear. We see, therefore, how royal power spreads through cultural as well as political or military means, and how ideas and values might spread through entertainment.

This dynamic works not only within the texts, but in the context of their transmission. Norwegian audiences can see themselves as the counterpart to the nobles in the text, gaining prestige through their access to literature favored by the king. Identification with the texts is important not only for the Norwegian nobility, but for the status of Norway within European culture. Marie's project of remembrance is realized through translation. The fact that she takes stories and recasts them for her noble audience suggests not only a broader literary community from which she draws her stories, but a practice throughout Europe in which she is taking part through her work of retelling. Kinoshita and McCracken state that "the movement of protagonists in the *Lais* suggests the . . . broader circulation of a shared European culture of chivalry" (115-6), an effect echoed in "the habit of naming the same poem in English, French, and Breton" which, according to Tétrel, "could just as well be interpreted as a reference to the ancient idea of a poetic commonwealth" (2012, 98). The interconnectedness of these languages through literature comprises a "literary system" which is "characterized by a regular contact producing a shared knowledge encouraging both the imitation and translation of preexisting forms and motifs and the emergence and circulation of new ones" (Kinoshita and McCracken 28). While translation is often thought to be derivative, here the work of translating the *lais* into Old Norse is actually quite important. In doing so, Old Norse is brought into the "literary system"; the Old Norse title alongside those in English, French, and Breton includes the peripheral language into this "poetic commonwealth."[173]

The importance of Old Norse is recognized by a small addition in the prologue: in the

173Cf. Eriksen 2013, 5.

discussion of glossing older works, both French and Old Norse describe improved understanding of people over time through study, but the *Strengleikar* prologue also adds that "i ollum londum gærðuzc hinir margfroðasto menn mælande sinna landa tungum" (6) ["the most learned men in every country began expressing themselves in the language of their country" (7)]. This is a difficult passage in the original, but there is nothing in the French regarding vernacular. That it was included suggests an interest in the status of Old Norse as a language of literature—not just native sagas or poetry, but participating in broader European trends. Latin was of course a universalizing language, but it was associated above all with the Church, which was also the means of access to it. Old Norse, however, could be understood by everyone. Furthermore, both Marie's *lais* and the collection of *Strengleikar* are framed as gifts to the king. In accepting these gifts, kings play a crucial role in both the project of remembrance and in the formation of this literary system. The court, as the site where the stories are performed and whence they are disseminated, becomes not just an arbiter of culture, but a site of commemoration.

Just as Marie describes an active process in shaping her stories—she says that after hearing them, she "put them into verse" (41)[174]—so too did the Norse redactors feel free to alter and embellish, according to need and to native expectations or æsthetics, a process that continued after the initial translation as the text was copied and recopied. The most significant example of this, after the alterations and additions in the prologue, is in *Equitan*, which has a long epilogue appended that is rather different in tone from the rest of the *lais*. In it, the translator addresses the audience directly,[175] commenting on the crimes of the king, quoting St. Augustine, a Latin poem on the destruction of Troy, and perhaps the Bible in criticizing the behavior of the king.[176] Thus, while the French original is more of a commentary on the necessity of appropriate love, the Old Norse version takes on a specifically moral dimension. Hélène Tétrel reads the text as "une condamnation des iniquités perpétrées par les grands de ce monde" [a condemnation of iniquities perpetrated by the powerful in this world] and a critique of "la convoitise [des biens matériels] et l'abus de pouvoir" [the desire for material goods and the abuse of power] (2003, 237). This possible focus on the nature of kingship is borne out by a number of interpolations in the text.

While Equitan, the king, amuses himself, his faithful seneschal picks up the slack of ruling the kingdom. The French text reads simply "Tute sa terre li gardout/e meinteneit e justisout" (ll. 23-4) ["took care of his entire territory, governing it and administering its justice" (56)],[177] while the Old Norse is more expansive: "Þessom hafðe herra hans fengit gaumgæfð ok gæzlo allz rikis sins. með rettyndom ok ræfsingom. ok for hann sua vel með manna malom æftir logum ok landsiðom at engi vandi kunni sa geraz at herra hans þurfti i at valkazt" (66)

174"Plusurs en ai oï conter,/Nes voil laissier ne oblier./Rimé en ai e fait ditié" (ll. 39-41) ["I myself have heard a number of them and do not wish to overlook or neglect them. I have put them into verse, [and] made poems from them" (41)].

175"En sa er þessa bok norrœnaðe ræðr ollum er þessa sogu hœyra ok hœyrt hava . . ." (78) ["He who put this book into Norwegian advises all who hear and have heard this story . . ." (79)]

176See nn. 11-14 in Cook and Tveitane's edition for a discussion of the Latin in the text.

177Translations of the French are from Burgess and Busby 1999.

["The lord had given to this man the care and keeping of all his realm, with authority to carry out justice and punishment, and he handled men's cases so well according to law and the customs of the land that no difficulty could arise that his lord needed to bother himself about" (67)].[178] Throughout the text, the majesty of kingship is emphasized, along with its privileges and duties. For example, Equitan offering to make his seneschal's wife his queen and wife ("reïne e dame vus fereie" [I would make you queen and wife] (l. 233)) in Old Norse becomes "þec skyllda ec gera fru ok drotnengo allz mins rikis valldz ok hirðliðs allra minna æigna. ok kastala" (74) ["I should make you the lady and queen of all my realm, my dominion and court, all my property and castles"(75)].[179]

The redactor uses this tendency to demonstrate his impatience with the love theme in the story. Much has been made of a supposed lack of interest in love psychology on the part of Old Norse audiences. While this is observable in certain cases, such as *Tristrams saga* and some of the later *lais* in the collection, which have undergone more shortening than the earlier *lais*, others such as *Guiamar* are fairly faithful to the original. *Equitan* largely reproduces the discussion of love in the source texts, but cleverly-placed interpolations in line with other additions by the redactor throw the love torments into stark relief. In the middle of the lai, there is a long section where Equitan has an internal monologue about his forbidden love of his seneschal's wife. In French he laments that

> Pur ceste dame qu'ai veüe
> M'est une anguisse al quor ferue,
> Ki tut le cors me fet trembler :
> Jeo quit que mei l'estuet amer (ll. 67-70)

["Because of this lady I have seen, my heart has been overwhelmed by a pain so great that my whole body trembles. I think I have no option but to love her" (57)]

However, the Old Norse redactor renders the king's speech thus:

> harmr ok angr sem sua hava bundit mec sarom sorgum af fru þessarre er ec hafi her sét. ok losteð hug minn ok hiarta sua unytri ahyggio ok allan mec fra tekit sialfum mer með sua kynlegom hætti at kynsemð min ter mer ækki. ok valld mitt. ok sua mikit riki er mer mæirr harmr en huggan. ec skialfr allr ok þo usiukr mec ventir at ec værði ælsca hana. ok hallda henni trygglega ast. mina ok æinorð (68)
>
> ["grief and care have so bound me with painful sorrows on account of this lady whom I

178I have engaged in a closer reading with this text than with the longer romances because the manuscript dates to the thirteenth century, and thus can be assumed to be closer to what was circulating in Hákon's court than the state in which the romances are preserved. It must be remembered, however, that the current text is not that of the original translation.

179While amplification is common in the Old Norse translations of romance, I agree with Kalinke that it can have narrative or thematic purpose in addition to being ornamental. See Kalinke 1979a and the discussion of *Möttuls saga* above.

> have seen here, and struck my mind and heart with such useless anxiety and taken me entirely from myself in such an extraordinary fashion that my reason is of no use to me and my power and such a great kingdom are more care than comfort to me. I shake all over and yet I am not sick. I believe I must love her and hold to her with my firm love and fidelity." (69)]

The extent of the amplification in this passage suggests a desire to emphasize the rhetoric. Old Norse literature typically has little patience for characters being lovelorn; in *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, for example, on the day that Gunnlaugr's beloved marries another man, Gunnlaugr's father tells him, "slá ekki slíku á þik, at þrá eptir einni konu, ok lát sem þú vitir eigi, ok mun þik aldri konur skorta" (89) [do not take it upon yourself to yearn after a single woman; let it seem like you don't notice, and you will never be short of women]. Helga, the unhappy bride, is described simply as "heldr döpr" [rather downcast] (87). The redactor here seems to suggest that Equitan's kingdom and power should console him, and the fact that they don't is strange. Additionally, Equitan states that his reason is compromised, a serious problem for a king.[180] If he has lost the faculty of reason, he has not just purposefully abdicated his duties, he is no longer capable of carrying them out.

Equitan resolves to arrange a tryst with the lady, despite the harm it will cause to his faithful seneschal. While the French text certainly condemns the king, the description of love and the feelings it engenders are presented in a typical fashion. The Norse redactor faithfully reproduces what is happening, but his use of amplification here again seems to add a negative cast to the scene. The French states: "Mes nepurquant pis iert, asez/ Que pur li seië afolez" (ll. 77-8) ["But nevertheless, it would be far worse if I were to be laid low because of her" (57)], which in Old Norse becomes "en þo at sua se þa ma þat vel setiazc. hælldr en ec fyrir faromc ok tynemc af akefð ok ohofsemð astar hænnar" (68) ["But though this be so, it must be arranged rather than that I should die and perish from the intensity and immoderation of my love for her" (69)]. In both cases, it is clear that love is overwhelming and irresistible, but the stakes are higher in Old Norse—death rather than madness—and Equitan realizing his love is not only "intense" but "immoderate" seems to be more the position of the redactor edging in rather than Equitan suddenly gaining some self-awareness.[181]

Happily, though, Equitan decides to find out what the lady thinks and "hætta ok hafna þessom hæimska harm er byr i astar oviti. ok œrslo er gerer mer sua mikinn angr. ok uró. At ec fęr æigi huilld ne ró" (70) ["stop and cease this silly sorrow which belongs to the folly and frenzy of love and which gives me so much grief and unrest that I get no rest or peace" (71)], as opposed to the French text's simple statement, "S'ele sentist ceo ke jeo sent,/Jeo perdreie ceste dolur" (ll. 96-7) ["If she felt as I do, this agony of mine would disappear" (57)]. The strangeness of the situation from the Norwegian perspective is highlighted in the next sentence

180In the French, the emphasis is on the inability of reason to overcome Love.

181We might compare this to a similar scene in *Guiamar*, where Guiamar is struck by love, tormented by it, and cannot sleep, much in the way that Equitan is. While there is some overlap in vocabulary in the two Old Norse texts, *Guiamar*'s scene is simply trimmed down, as opposed to the amplification in *Equitan*. This suggests that the redactor disapproves of this type of love specifically when it comes to kings, perhaps because of the importance that reason and wisdom hold for kingship.

when Equitan is described as "hinn riki maðr . . . ok hofðingi allz þæss rikis" (70) [the powerful man and lord of all this kingdom (71)]—that is, a man who should be above such things.

Equitan, of course, does not stop his "silly sorrow" and begs the seneschal's wife to return his love. This is portrayed as a type of love that would be a familiar literary trope to audiences with exposure to the poetry of *troubadours* and *trouvères*, but virtually unheard-of in the north: Equitan promises to let his lady rule and to serve her, pleading, "Ver þu fru en ec herra. Ver þu mikillot en ec biðill þinn. þic biðiande" (72, 74) ["You be the lady and I the lord. You be proud and I the suitor begging for you" (73, 75)].[182] The original at this point describes him as "li reis" [the king] (l. 181) while the Old Norse amplifies this to "hinn riki herra ok hofðingi" (74) ["the mighty lord and leader" (75)]. Read in light of the immediately preceding section, both Equitan and his situation again come off looking distinctly un-king-like. He has wealth, power, and position, but he cannot administer or even appreciate them because he is more concerned with love—an impossible, adulterous love—than performing his duty. The redactor's disapproval, both of the king's actions, and of this overwhelming model of love, are clear. This may be why Equitan is never actually called a king until the final Latin couplet (Meissner 249). Throughout the text, "li reis" is never translated as "konungr," despite a consistent practice of doing so in the rest of the *lais*. Instead, Equitan is a "ríkr maðr" [powerful man] or "höfðingi" [chieftain], the latter term being used in other *lais* to indicate various other members of the nobility, but never kings.

The redactor's focus on the duties and the importance of kingship make this text feel very much as if it belongs in the same literary milieu as that which produced *Konungs skuggsjá*. In both *Equitan* and *Konungs skuggsjá*, the primary duty of the king is the administration of justice. Failing in this is one of the worst things a king can do. One aspect of upholding justice is keeping a well-ordered kingdom, that is, making sure that the wealthy are not too overbearing with respect to those of lower classes; *Konungs skuggsjá* specifies that a king should think on "hversu stríðliga hann skal hinum ríka aptr halda, at hann verði eigi ofágjarn við hinn fátœka, svá ok með mundangshófi fram at draga hinn fátœka, at hann görisk eigi ofdjarfr við hinn ríka" (105) ["what measure of firmness he must use in restraining the rich lest they become too arrogant toward the poor, and what caution in uplifting the poor, lest they grow too defiant toward the wealthy" (250)]. *Konungs Skuggsjá* is quite clear on the nature of royal power: it is essentially absolute; the king is a stand-in for God on earth. However, this power cannot be abused: "margir hyggja þat, at konunglig tign sé skipuð til gamansamligs ríkdóms ok alfrjálsrar skemtanar í allri girnd sinni. En . . . hann á jafnan at áneyða sik undir guðs oki" (136) ["many believe the royal dignity to have been founded for such pleasure-giving splendor and unrestrained amusement as kings may desire. But . . . a king ought constantly to labor in the yoke of God" (298)].

Sverre Bagge argues that the message of *Konungs Skuggsjá* "is that society is hierarchically organised and consists of different estates who are mutually dependent on one another, and that this whole arrangement must be held together by a strong ruler" (2000, 39).

182For various views on familiarity with *troubadour* verse in the north, perhaps brought back by Rögnvaldr kali, earl of Orkney, after his stay in Narbonne, see Bjarni Einarsson 1961 and 1971, Andersson 1969, and Finlay 1995.

In *Equitan*, the ruler is not strong, and he breaks the bond between ruler and subject in which "the king gives high honors to such men in return for their service, if they perform it well" (169). Norway was not a "feudal" society in the way England or France was, but there was certainly a notion of exchange in the relationship between king and *hirðmaðr* (Hamre 569). Equitan is thus clearly a case of the abuse of royal power in the king's seduction of his steward's wife. Not only that, he abandons his duties as king, leaving even judicial decisions in the hands of his steward. Thus while moral failings are certainly central to the criticisms of the epilogue, this additional text is less a sermon on Christian behavior and more of a discussion of good and bad kingship that engages in ideas of ruling that were present at the Norwegian royal court in the thirteenth century.[183]

Conclusion

The arrival of romance in Norway expands the possibilities for what a court can be. While the core of the court is still a king and his warriors, their behavior is guided by the important new code of chivalry, which adds an important element of service to the duties they perform. This is above all to women, who come to feature in important ways, not just as objects of affection or people in need of aid, but as actors and as subjects in their own right. While men generally remain the focus, women figure more prominently than before. The court that these men and women populate is a place not just of wealth, but of beauty, which should be seen both in the setting of the court—the castles and grounds—as well as in the people who frequent it. The courts of romance are also flawed. In the majority of these texts, the court does not function as it should. While some scholars, such as Kalinke, have argued that we should therefore not view the texts as didactic, we must also consider the author of the prologue of *Strengleikar*, who presents his texts almost as *exempla*. He is not alone. Thomasin von Zirclaria writes in *Der Welsche Gast,* a German didactic poem written in 1216, that Arthur and Tristan are exemplary characters whose behavior should be emulated (68). While we might expect that people would condemn negative behavior by avoiding works that depict it, it seems instead that they embraced stories that opened up room for reflection and discussion, a conversation which may have paved the way for the composition of *Konungs skuggsjá* in the middle of the century.

The thematic similarities between kingship in the translated *Equitan* and *Konungs skuggsjá*, as well as the myriad influences of the romances on Old Norse literature, are a clear indication that the translated romances had an important literary impact in Norway and, by extension, Iceland. The question then becomes what, if any, social impact the texts had. How did they contribute to this project of Europeanization, and how did they change the court? The political developments during Hákon's reign suggest that who was at court, what it was like, and the function the court played displays consonances with the romances, indicating either influence from the literature, or that these texts served as justification for the changes

183The "free rendering," as Cook and Tveitane describe it, of the Latin quotations is also reminiscent of the author of *Konungs skuggsjá*'s use of biblical stories and quotations for his own purposes, without a great amount of attention to detail.

made—or perhaps both.

Women play an important, often key role in the romances,[184] and the court in romance literature, requiring a set of skills that both women and men may master, is not only amenable to, but requires women. During the thirteenth century, there were two related developments regarding the status of women at the Norwegian court: the increasing desire for legitimate heirs, as well as the growth of the importance of queenship. Despite his own illegitimate birth, in 1260 Hákon passed a law that gave the king's legitimate male heirs first right of inheritance, passing over his own son from a relationship before his marriage. This meant both that the king's wife was of greater importance than before,[185] and that her chastity was a concern in a way it had never been. The queen's role became crucial for the continuation of the dynasty, as well as the stability of the realm. Despite this increasing political importance, Hákon's court is never portrayed in *Hákonar saga* as populated by women; it is more typically a meeting place for Hákon and his councillors, or a political stage.[186] However, as Hákon moves around the country, there are several mentions of Queen Margrét, and later Ríkiza, wife of Hákon's oldest son, accompanying him or meeting him. The journeys of Hákon's daughter Kristín to Spain and the escape of Magnús's betrothed, Ingilborg, from Denmark are important episodes in the saga, but overall women play a small role, as they do in the majority of *konungasögur*. The growing political importance of women is reflected only in small ways, such as the coronation of Ingilborg, the first Norwegian queen to be crowned.

Some authors have argued that the Norwegian court did not have an interest in spectacle because many of the elaborate descriptions of court scenes in the romances are much cut down.[187] While there may not have been an interest in *literary* spectacle, it seems quite clear that spectacle was seen as an important political tool. This is made clear in *Hákonar saga*,

184This factor, and the importance that love plays in many of the stories, has been used by many scholars to argue that the romances were particularly attractive to women (for example, Halvorsen 1973). While it is indeed possible that the romances appealed to a broader audience, or a different audience than earlier, more heroic genres, we should not assume that the presence of women or love will automatically appeal to women who were, after all, brought up in the same culture that valorized military prowess as men. Furthermore, the heroic stories that predate the introduction of romance in Scandinavia are already populated by a number of prominent female characters, such as Brynhildr from the Nibelung material, Svanhildr the valkyrie, and Hervör from *Heiðreks saga*. Theodore M. Andersson also argues that there is a native literary interest in love (2008, 56-61). Though women could certainly be influential in literary trends, as in the case of Chrétien de Troyes' patron, Marie de Champagne, it seems extremely unlikely that the romances would have had such a wide impact in Scandinavia if they had not appealed to both men and women.

185Larrington argues that in Norway, power came from giving birth to sons rather than being married to the king (2009, 511). The king's wife, even well into the Christian period, would have had to compete with the established practice of concubinage and marital infidelity.

186The Fríssbók witness of the saga includes a rare episode where Margrét plays a central role: when Hákon receives news of her father's rebellion, he goes to bring her the news in her separate lodging, where she is asleep with her ladies-in-waiting. Despite the fact that the news comes in the middle of the night, Margrét is portrayed as receiving her husband in what might be called a "courtly" fashion: clad in a silk chemise, she puts on a red cloak, exchanges greetings with Hákon, and she offers him a "silki-kodda" [silk pillow] on which to sit. She bursts into tears when she learns of her father's rebellion. Guðbrandur Vigfússon believes this episode to be original, omitted from other manuscripts by scribal error (*Hákonar saga* 1887, 190 n. 1). It is not included in the Íslenzk fornrit edition of the saga.

187Such as Barnes 1975, 149; Sunnen 101.

where moments of political importance are highlighted by detailed descriptions of public events. For example, when Skúli has himself declared king in the autumn of 1239, Hákon holds a larger Christmas feast than usual. The reception of Hákon's daughter Kristín in Spain occasions particular interest, and Sturla describes in great detail the rich gifts with which she is sent off, the wealth of her new home, and the gallantry with which she is greeted everywhere she goes. She is also given the chance to choose her own husband from among the king's brothers, and Philippus, her choice, unsurprisingly embodies all the courtly virtues. Spectacle is also key in the description of Hákon's coronation on the feast of St. Óláfr in 1247. Sturla recounts the procession into the church, including dozens of men, some carrying banners or swords, the king's coronation robes, the royal scepters, the crown, the sword of consecration, the bishops, and finally the king. The feast hall and its seating arrangements are also carefully described.[188] The coronation was likely one of the most impressive events that had been held in Norway, serving to demonstrate the power and prestige of the king, both because of the wealth implied in such an undertaking, but also because of his connection to the pope, through the papal representative who had come to crown Hákon. It is clear that a consciousness of the uses of spectacle had developed in the thirteenth century, a point which will be explored further in the following chapter.

Finally, during Hákon's reign, the royal court came to function as a cultural center in a new way. While the Norwegian court was long a coveted stage for Icelandic poets to show off their abilities, cultural authority existed in the dynamic relationship between king and poet. Both were needed: the poet to provide a complex and prestigious cultural artifact, the king to confirm its worth and reward it. The balance was easy to upset, as the tempestuous relationship between Haraldr Harðráði and Halldórr Snorrason demonstrates: the king could threaten the poet's life and livelihood, while the poet had the ability to compose critical or lampooning verses that would last as long as the practice of skaldic poetry did. In commissioning translations of romance, however, the king had control over a much more secure form of cultural capital: the king was the person most likely to have access to foreign manuscripts and someone able to translate them.[189] Introducing and encouraging a new form of literature allowed Hákon to set the rules for the court, controlling access to power based on the ability to internalize new codes of behavior, values, and tastes. The king could benefit further through the links created between his court and foreign, cosmopolitan courts from the translations. In previous centuries, Norway could be said to belong to a "poetic commonwealth" centered around the North Sea, welcoming skalds that would seek patronage at courts in Sweden, England, and Ireland as well as Norway. In the thirteenth century, however, there was a shift south, bringing Norway into the "poetic commonwealth" of romance, and it was the king who facilitated it.

188For contrast, see the single paragraph that is considered sufficient to describe the coronation of Magnús Erlingsson in *Heimskringla* (*Magnúss saga Erlingssonar* ch. 22), the only coronation of a Norwegian king prior to that of Hákon. Hákon's son Magnús has a coronation that is just as elaborate as Hákon's. A Scottish witness is so struck that he is moved to tears by the ceremony.

189Later, though, there is evidence for direct transmission of texts to Iceland, as well as the development of the indigenous Icelandic romance genre.

CHAPTER THREE

The Lord's Throne is in Heaven: *Konungs skuggsjá* and Religious Authority

In the thirteenth century, the Norwegian royal court was a great consumer of vernacular literature. The impetus was both internal and external; some of it was brought by people seeking favor and rewards, while some was commissioned by members within the court. The previous chapters explored two of the most important vernacular literary genres at this time: skaldic poetry, by this point composed exclusively by Icelanders, and romance, apparently sought out by Hákon and perhaps his sons as well.[1] These are extremely different, in many ways incomparable genres, and yet there are points of consonance between the ways in which they depict the royal court. In both skaldic verse and romance, the court depends on a complex relationship between place and movement, requiring continual renewal through arrivals that brought gifts, wealth, ties with other power centers, and news of great feats that could add to the glory of the court, as well as departures that could continue to spread wealth, information and enforce social bonds, while allowing court members opportunity to increase their fame and, by extension, that of their lord. Though the values and concerns of the two court models, as well as the expectations for the king, are different, in both the king and, by extension, the court, has the role of arbiter, allowing people membership into the elite institution, as well as determining what should be celebrated or rejected, and setting standards for society more broadly.

We have seen, then, that the members of the Norwegian royal court had many influences from elsewhere as to how to think about the institution of which they were a part. Yet while they consumed literature from Iceland, England, and the continent, the Norwegian court was not simply a passive receptor of literary trends. This is seen in the ways that romance translations were shaped to appeal to Norwegian tastes and expectations or how saga technique was wed to continental trends of royal biography in the creation of the royally-commissioned *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*. Both the reshaping of existing texts and the use of previously existing genres demonstrate ways that Norwegians interacted with existing literary texts and trends to make them relevant to their own situation. Yet we also see a further development during this time period: the writing of a largely original text that lays forth a specifically Norwegian vision of society, including a political program as to what the role and duties of the king and his court are, and how they relate to the rest of society.

Konungs skuggsjá, or *The King's Mirror*, also called *Speculum regale* in its prologue,

1 *Barlaams saga ok Josaphats* has been linked with Hákon ungi (see Rindal 31-2), and it is possible that some of the romance translations that do not mention Hákon date from the reign of Magnús, such as *Alexanders saga*. See Ashurst 2009, 26-7 and 32.

likely originated in Norwegian royal circles in the 1250s. It belongs to the trend of mirror literature that was fashionable in the mid-thirteenth century[2] and is comprised of four main sections: a prologue and three dialogues that deal with merchants, courtiers, and the king. It is frequently seen as one of the most important texts of medieval Norway, as well as an important early witness for the field of Arctic Studies.[3] In addition to treating roles and expectations for the king, particularly the idea of the king as supreme judge, it provides guidelines of behavior for courtiers, advice for becoming a good merchant, and encyclopedic knowledge of Norway and the North Atlantic world. In many ways, *Konungs skuggsjá* shows a synthesis of ideas regarding kingship and the structure and purpose of the royal court, both new and traditional, from a variety of literary sources, which it has reworked and shaped into a uniquely Norwegian concept. Furthermore, it uses the medieval technique of describing place through sensory phenomena to delineate the court as a special place, and strengthen the royal claim of divine favor. This chapter, therefore, outlines the structure and function of the court as envisioned by *Konungs skuggsjá* not only as evidence of mid-thirteenth-century Norwegian thought, but also of a specifically royalist perspective.

Konungs skuggsjá*: background and sources*

There are remnants of some sixty separate manuscripts of *Konungs skuggsjá* preserved. As is the case for the romances, the majority of these manuscripts are late, Icelandic, and incomplete. However, there is a nearly-complete Norwegian manuscript from c. 1275, AM 243 b α fol., that is generally taken as the "main" manuscript of the text, though it is not thought to be the original.[4] This text provides the basis of the two main editions of the text, Holm-Olsen 1983 (originally published 1945) and the 1848 edition of Keyser, Munch, and Unger.[5] There are also five other Norwegian fragments, all dating between the mid-thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries, two of which may have belonged to the exemplar of the main manuscript.[6] The earliest Icelandic manuscripts date from the fifteenth century, but may be used to supplement the gaps in the Norwegian manuscript. That the text had broad appeal in Iceland is demonstrated not only by the number of extant manuscripts, but by the fact that new copies were made all the way through the mid-nineteenth century.[7]

In the preface to their edition, Keyser, Munch, and Unger date the text to the reign of Sverrir, specifically the years 1190-1196, on the grounds that the text demonstrates tension

2 Simek 1994, 732.

3 See Whitaker. *Konungs skuggsjá* is referenced in a number of historical accounts of Arctic Studies, including the writings of Norwegian polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen.

4 This manuscript has been prepared in a facsimile edition twice: Seip and Holm-Olsen 1947, and Flom 1915.

5 *Konungs skuggsjá* was also edited by Oscar Brenner in 1881 and Finnur Jónsson in 1920; both editions were based on the main manuscript. Finnur Jónsson's edition also includes variants from several manuscripts.

6 Holm-Olsen 1981, 234. For a thorough discussion of the *Konungs skuggsjá* manuscripts, see Holm-Olsen 1952, as well as Finnur Jónsson 1920.

7 See, for example, Lbs 632 4to (c. 1810), JS 382 8vo (first half 19th c.), ÍB 341 8o (between 1840-46), ÍB 172, 4to (1855-6), though these manuscripts may in part indicate a resurgence in popularity due to the 1768 printed edition by Halfdan Einersen rather than continuing interest. There is also a fragment of a Latin paraphrase of the text, probably made in Sweden in the fourteenth century, which suggests a broad medieval distribution in Scandinavia, facilitated by intermarriages of the nobility. See Storm 1883 and Finnur Jónsson 1920, II: 39-40.

between the monarchy and the church that was characteristic of his reign (viii).[8] This dating was accepted for many years, the hypothesis strengthened by similarities between the language and themes of *Konungs skuggsjá* to those in the *Speech Against the Bishops,* a royal condemnation of the Church from Sverrir's reign.[9] However, Otto Blom's examination of weaponry as described in the text concluded that the date of composition had to be in the thirteenth century.[10] This later date was accepted by Johan Schreiner and others, who saw the relationship between the crown and the church as less antagonistic during Hákon Hákonarson's reign than in the *Speech* and also cited elements such as a reference to what appears to be a later redaction of the letter of Prester John (Paasche 1927, 26), an implication that the civil war (1130-1240) was over, and an interest in ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which was of greater importance during Hákon's reign than Sverrir's.[11] Most scholars today agree on a mid-thirteenth century date for the text, most likely at some point in the 1250s.

While the text was originally believed to have been written by a single author, challenges to this position have been raised. Eirik Vandvik first suggested the possibility of composite composition in 1952. He argues that the sections that address the relationship between the king and the Church—that is, the prologue and the king's section—date to the same period as *Speech Against the Bishops* (75). The remaining portions, those treating the court and merchants, he would date to Hákon's reign (73).

Other challenges have come to the prologue, primarily by Holm-Olsen. He points out differences in imagery and vocabulary between the prologue and the rest of the text to suggest different hands at work (1981, 231-3). Supporting this idea is the fact that there are no traces of the prologue in any of the Norwegian manuscripts. The very beginning of the text in the main manuscript has been lost, so it is impossible to tell whether the prologue was once attached, or if there was even room for the prologue in the manuscript.[12] Furthermore, the prologue seems to suggest a structure different from that of the text as we have it. It describes the work as discussing the activities and customs *(íþróttir ok siðir*) of merchants, courtiers, the clergy, and peasantry, but the preserved text lacks distinct sections that treat the latter two categories. The mention of discussions of the clerical and farming classes were thus taken by earlier critics to refer to sections that had been lost or, as no traces of such material have been

8 For a full account of early debates regarding the text, see Daae.

9 On lexical and metaphorical similarities between the texts, see Holm-Olsen 1981, 232-3 and Vandvik 1952. Larson sums up the thematic similarities as follows: "the *Address* [=*Speech*] puts forth four claims of far-reaching importance: kingship is of divine origin and the king rules by the grace of God; the power of royalty extends to the church as well as to the state and includes the power to appoint the rules of the church; disloyalty to the king is a mortal sin; an unjust sentence of excommunication is invalid and injures him only who publishes the anathema. On all these points the *King's Mirror* is in complete agreement with Sverre's manifesto" (41).

10 On the military aspects of the text, see also Falk 1920.

11 See for example Schreiner 1950 and 1952-3; Holm-Olsen 1981, 223; Kramarz-Bein 1994a, 205; Brégaint 2012, 440; and Bagge 1987, 12-3 and 209. Bagge states that "the author's discussion of the relationship between king and bishop allows us to place The King's Mirror on a line of development from the rather extreme opinions of The Speech Against the Bishops to the moderate views of the National Law" (1987, 209), the latter being a law code for the entire country issued by Magnús in 1274.

12 See Holm-Olsen 1981, 227.

found, never written.[13] Holm-Olsen also suggests a disconnect in intended audiences between the prologue and the body. The prologue describes the text as being for all readers: "En þóat þat nafn sé heldr á, at konungs skuggsjón sé kallat, þá er hon þó skipuð öllum at heimild svá sem almenningr, þvíat hverjum er kostr í at sjá, er vill, ok skygna, hvárt er heldr vill, um siðu sjálfs síns eða alla aðra siðu" (3) ["Although the book is first and foremost a king's mirror, yet it is intended for every one 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" (75)].[14] Holm-Olsen, who argues that the text "was clearly written to be used in the very highest circles of society" (1981, 235), believes it "improbable" that the description of the structure, contents, and audience of the text would have been presented by the author as they are in the prologue. Instead, he finds it more likely that the prologue was added later by an Icelander "who worked at a time when there was no longer a royal court in Norway, and who wanted to introduce *Konungs skuggsiá* to a different audience from that for which it was written" (238).[15]

Yet the prologue being added later raises the question as to why its description of the contents of the text would not match up with the actual contents if written by a later author who knew the work. Holm-Olsen does not see a problem here. He argues that the mention of the clergy in the prologue "by no means presuppose[s] a separate section. The words are given such a form that they *may* be taken to refer to the chapters towards the end of the work, where the relationship between kingdom and church is discussed in the image of two houses, God's two halls, to guard which the king and the bishop are appointed" (1981, 237; emphasis original). Moreover, he points to numerous references to the *bœndr* [farmers] within the body of the text, particularly in the section dealing with dearth, to make a similar argument that that class of people is sufficiently addressed, if not with the same level of detail given to the three main groups.[16] The seeming gap between prologue and body could thus simply be the fault of imperfect recall, or due to the fact that the author "did not feel bound by [*Konungs skuggsjá*'s]

13 Larson (*Konungs skuggsjá* 1917) is of the opinion that the work is unfinished, likely due to illness or death of the author, an opinion shared by Holtsmark 1964, though he also suggests that the ideas of "clerical subordination to the secular powers, were so repugnant to the ecclesiastical thought of the time that the authorities of the church discouraged or perhaps found means to prevent the continuation of the work" (7). In a similar vein, Keyser, Munch, and Unger suggest the possibility that the author self-censored due to the political climate (viii).

14 Quotations from *Konungs Skuggsjá* are from the normalized text of Keyser, Unger, and Munch. Translations are from Larson 1917.

15 This position is accepted by Sayers 1985. As further support for the idea that the text would have been read only by a small, select group in Norway, Holm-Olsen points to the small number of preserved manuscripts/fragments of the text from Norway (1981, 235). However, as the overall manuscript record from Norway is very poor, especially beside that of Iceland, this particular argument is less convincing. Halvorsen 1973 points out that more Norwegian fragments of *Konungs skuggsjá* exist than of the translated romances to argue that the work was indeed popular in Norway (22).

16 While the phrasing of the discussion of the clergy is ambiguous, and there is indeed mention of the peasantry at various points in the text, that does not explain the implication that a discussion of the peasantry should come after that of the king: "En þó lauk minni spurning með því, at ek rœdda um íðrótt bónda ok fjölmennis þess, er land byggvir, ok þeirra siðu ok athæfi" (2) ["And I closed by inquiring into the activities of the peasants and husbandmen, who till the soil, and into their habits and occupation" (73)].

composition and merely wanted to give an elegant formulation of the subject of the conversation without taking care that it reflected the composition of the work with any accuracy" (1981, 238). The question as to single or composite authorship remains unresolved; many scholars have seen the thematic similarities between the prologue and body of the text as evidence enough that the text as we have it today is complete and written by a single author.[17]

Who the author is and where he wrote have not been established with certainty either. Varying dialectal forms in the manuscripts have made such a determination difficult.[18] An ingenious attempt at localizing the text based on the description of when the sun sets was made, but this tells us only that the author or an informant visited this latitude, not that the author grew up there, or the text itself was written there.[19] Arguments for authorship are frequently bound up with whether the text is perceived to hold an anti-clerical or a more conciliatory position. Fredrik Paasche sees sharp criticism of the court in the work, and thus suggested the author to be Archbishop Einarr smjörbak [butter-back].[20] Schreiner, however, sees the text as strongly in support of royal authority, and thus argues that Einarr would be an unlikely candidate for authorship.[21] Bagge supports a view of the text as anti-clerical, but not to the extent of the intellectual climate during Sverrir's reign: "the author clearly belongs to the royal and anti-clerical tradition, even in some respects going very far to emphasize the king's superiority over the Church, but at the same time showing some reluctance in drawing the full consequences of this view" (1987, 126). Rudolf Simek takes a more moderate position, arguing that the author "does not usually stress the king's preeminence too much, but rather tries to balance the arguments in favour of king and bishop rather carefully" (727) and even "tries to reconcile the church and the monarchy by naming both king and bishop as vicars of God on earth" (724).[22]

Despite the fact that in some cases the author seems to take a position more favorable to the king than the church, he is generally held to be a member of the clergy; certainly a person with such an education would be most likely to have the knowledge and skills to compose a work such as *Konungs skuggsjá*. Schreiner suggests that the author was perhaps a cleric attached to the royal chapel, an idea which has found broad support.[23] The author being a cleric with close ties to the court would explain his "secular attitudes in some matters" (Bagge 1987, 220) as well as his "vermittelnde Position" [mediating position] between strict morality and the excesses of courtly culture (Kramarz-Bein 1994a, 214). It is possible, however, that this is a false dichotomy; Bagge argues that in thirteenth-century Norway, "there was no sharp distinction between the religious and the secular culture, the court was the centre of cultural

17 For example Bagge 1987, Simek 1994.

18 See Holm-Olsen 1952 and Finnur Jónsson 1920.

19 Geelmuyden 1883 states that if the astronomical observations in the text are correct, this would indicate a latitude falling within Namdalen, north of Trondheim, a provenance which Larson accepts (9, n. 1).

20 Einarr was archbishop of Niðaróss from 1254 until his death in 1263.

21 To complicate the matter further, Holtsmark points out that Einarr was the son of one of Sverrir's men, Gunnarr Grjónbak, and so considers him to be "like meget kongens som kirkens mann" [as much the king's as the Church's man] (1964, 66).

22 Kramarz-Bein 1994a takes a similar position (214).

23 See for example Bagge 1987, 220; Kramarz-Bein 1994a, 212; Brégaint 2012, 446.

activity, and the literature that was produced there was to a considerable extent a mixture of clerical and lay traditions" (1987, 223).[24] No evidence has been found to make a more firm identification of authorship.[25]

The possible sources used by the author(s) of *Konungs skuggsjá* have inspired a great amount of discussion. Most intriguing may be the use of Biblical stories within the text to serve as example or illustration, as many of these stories deviate from the versions that were known to circulate in the Middle Ages, or even Scandinavia specifically. The author's treatment of these well-known stories has been described as "frie parafraser" [free paraphrases] which contract or expand the text "etter behov" [according to need] (Bagge 1974, 199). This willingness to adapt and paraphrase means that locating other influences, sources, and models with certainty is difficult. No direct model for the text as a whole has been found satisfactory. Various didactic works have been suggested as models or influence, such as Peter Alfonsi's *Disciplina Clericalis* or the Spanish mirror *Las siete partidas,* but these identifications remain tentative.[26] Somewhat firmer links have been suggested to the didactic works of Vincent of Beauvais, or to the material that he was collecting in Paris upon which his works were based (Holm-Olsen 1981, 226). Simek argues that Vincent's *specula* were known in the North, pointing out the similarities in the section on weaponry in *Konungs skuggsjá* with that of the *Speculum doctrinale*,[27] and Holm-Olsen notes that the adjectival form in the Latin title, *regale*, occurs in mirror literature only in the texts of Vincent of Beauvais and in *Konungs skuggsjá* (1981, 226).[28]

Only a few other texts have been suggested as sources. Simek has attributed the inclusion of a section on merchants to influence from Aristotle's *Politics* (1994, 730), and the image of the two halls, church and state, to similar imagery used to illustrate the concepts of public and private in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Economics* (732). He points out that a resurgence

24 Kay 2000 also points out that "clerks were above all men of education, who need not have identified strongly with the Church and its teachings" (87).

25 Various other attempts have been made: Daae suggested the author was Vilhjálmr, Hákon's chaplain (192-6), whom he identifies with the "meistari Vilhjálmr" who in *Hákonar saga* explains the appearance of a comet during Christmas (ch 237). Larson suggests that the author may have been Ívar boddi, who served both Sverrir and Hákon and travelled to England. However, that would almost certainly require a much earlier date of composition, which seems unlikely, provided the text was written as a whole. The author himself—or at least the author of the prologue—expresses the desire to remain anonymous so that his work will be judged on its own merits, rather than by its author: "En ef nökkurir girnask eða forvitnask at heyra eða nema þessa bók, þá er eigi nauðsyn at forvitnask þess nafn, eða hvat manna sá var, er samansetti ok ritaði þessa bók, at eigi berisk svá til, at nökkurr hafni því sem til nytsemdar má þar í finnask, annathvárt fyrir háðungar sakir eða öfundar, eða einshvers fjándskapar við þann er gerði" (3) ["If anyone desires or is curious to hear or study this book, he need not inquire about the name or the standing of the man who composed and wrote it, lest perchance he should reject what may be found useful in it because of contempt, envy, or hostile feeling of some sort for the author" (75)]. Larson suggests influence on this point from the *Elucidarius* (75, note).

26 On the *Discliplina, see* Larson 26, as well as Kramarz-Bein 1994a, 211, who suggests indirect or oral influence. On *Las siete partidas*, see Gløersen.

27 1994, 726. He acknowledges, however, that we cannot know if the text was taken from Vincent or from a manuscript of its original source, Vegetius's *De Re Militari*.

28 Holtsmark 1964 also notes this point, though does not stress it as strongly as Holm-Olsen (66).

in Aristotelian thought began around the same time as the popularity of mirror literature—the mid-thirteenth century—and that the author of *Konungs skuggsjá* may therefore have been "the first one to apply (pseudo-) Aristotelian teaching on economics and politics to the discussion of the relationship of church and state" (732). Finnur Jónsson suggested that the section on Irish *mirabilia* was taken from Giraldus Cambrensis's *Topographia Hiberniae*, though Kuno Meyer, and after him Jean Young, argue that significant divergences suggest an oral source instead, perhaps via the Hebrides.[29] Similarities between *Konungs skuggsjá*'s rendering of Old Testament stories to that in *Stjórn*, a partial translation of the Bible into Old Norse, led Gustav Storm to suggest *Stjórn* as a source for *Konungs skuggsjá*, a position accepted by Finnur Jónsson and D. A. Seip. However, in two articles published nearly simultaneously, Dietrich Hofmann and Sverre Bagge argue instead that *Konungs skuggsjá* is the more likely exemplar for the shared passages. Finally, Jens Eike Schnall has argued that the educational model of *Konungs skuggsjá*, which consists of both theoretical and practical aspects, is influenced by the translated romances, in particular *Tristrams saga* (2000b, 222-3).

In addition to written texts, other types of sources have been proposed. Anne Holtsmark purports to solve the curious problem of the number of apples in the Garden of Eden by looking at visual art, that is, church paintings and manuscript illustrations. The author of *Konungs skuggsjá* relates the story of the Fall twice, the first version with two apples being eaten, the second with four, as opposed to the single apple in Genesis.[30] Holtsmark points to images where different narrative moments are portrayed simultaneously by the repetition of images and objects, suggesting that the four apples do not have to be taken as four separate apples, but four narrative moments: the serpent offering the apple, Eve taking the apple, Eve offering the apple to Adam, and Adam eating the apple. She points to an illustration of the scene in *Stjórn*: in the text, Eve and Adam eat from the same apple, but two apples are shown in the illustration (1956, 84-5). She suggests that the two/four apples in *Konungs skuggsjá* thus arose as a misunderstanding of an image. Though this is an intriguing solution to an odd problem, Sverre Bagge points out that if it is a typical medieval artistic technique, it would be strange for an educated author, such as that of *Konungs skuggsjá*, to misunderstand (1974, 201).

Finally, oral texts have been suggested as a possible source or influence on the text. Willy Dahl argued that *Hávamál* was known to the author of *Konungs skuggsjá*; Holm-Olsen, though employing different evidence, came to a similar conclusion. Holm-Olsen points to several instances of rhythmic or alliterative prose to suggest influence from poetry and sees the use of the phrase "at goðu getit" as indicative that the author had both *Hávamál* and *Hákonarmál*, where the phrase also appears, in mind during composition, and that furthermore, the audience would have understood these references (1970, 109). It is certainly not difficult to believe that an author at Hákon's court, which was frequented by Snorri and his nephews, would have been exposed to eddic or skaldic verse in some form. That the general public would understand these references is less certain, particularly if one of the purposes of Snorri's *Edda* was to re-acquaint Norwegian audiences with the traditions and mythological

29 Young argues that the Hebrides served as an interface between Celtic and Norwegian cultures, citing Irish name forms and traffic between the Hebrides and Norway in *Hákonar saga* (129).

30 The Vulgate does not specify the type of fruit on the tree, but in both versions in *Konungs skuggsjá*, it is apples.

underpinnings of skaldic verse.[31] What further complicates this suggestion is that "at goðu getit" (and similar forms) is a phrase found in several other poems, including *Hugsvinnsmál*, suggesting it to be closer to a stock phrase than a vivid phrase that can recall a specific reference. And while it is true that eddic poetry has been found on the rune sticks from Bryggen,[32] *Hávamál* in particular is highly proverbial, meaning some of its content or phrasing could have been known independently of the poem itself.

In short, pinning down oral or visual sources for *Konungs skuggsjá* is just as problematic as finding written sources. The only source that seems to be generally agreed upon is the *Speech Against the Bishops*,[33] along with direct or indirect influence from some sort of didactic text. Didactic writing became increasingly popular during the high and late medieval period. Writings geared toward the education of the elite appeared in the mid-twelfth century, including John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, the first of the mirrors for princes. In the thirteenth century, the popularity of didactic texts grew, particularly in France, where it became common for kings and princes to have mirrors written for them (Orme 90).[34] Mirrors were theoretically geared towards kings, focusing on the responsibility of ruling, but were adopted by the nobility as well; Nicholas Orme writes that other members of the aristocracy "became avid readers of the mirrors . . . they acquired copies of the works and commissioned translations to be made, in an evident desire to learn the knowledge and functions of kings and thereby to share in the same kind of expertise and culture. In consequence the mirrors became effectively an aristocratic genre as well as a royal one" (89).

Mirrors are a heterogeneous group of texts, reflecting the varied nature of the aristocratic education. While accomplishment was important, so was the mastery of a variety of skills or fields, which Orme connects to the portrayal of ideal literary characters, such as Tristan, who are introduced with a long list of skills and abilities (112). An aristocratic education could include elements of the "religious, intellectual, social, artistic and physical" fields,[35] but there was no "essential" list of accomplishments that every member of the nobility should have (113). Thus, mirrors for princes "collectively covered a wide range of subjects: religion and ethics, politics, military matters, history, literature and medicine. There was also much diversity within the genre, some works being primarily scientific and analytical, while others were little more than anthologies of moral stories intended to offer amusement as well as instruction" (Orme 89).

Despite the varied nature of the genre of mirrors of princes, scholarship on *Konungs*

31 See Chapter One.

32 See Liestøl.

33 Holm-Olsen 1981, 233.

34 Holm-Olsen suggests that "the popularity of 'Speculum' as a title metaphor in the High Middle Ages may be due to the circumstance that the production of glass mirrors was resumed at that time" (1981, 224). The first use of "mirror" in the title of a work in Scandinavia was in the translation of Alcuin's *De virtutibus* (Holtsmark 1964, 61).

35 Orme 118. He writes that the daughters of the nobility had a similar sort of education, with an emphasis on variety but not a specific list of necessary accomplishments. Their education would have less emphasis on physical aspects, and more of an emphasis on the artistic, which he uses to mean textile work such as spinning, sewing, and embroidery. However, he distinguishes this from later educational programs in that the emphasis here was on the importance of "work and charity, not in the making of beautiful things" (177).

skuggsjá has tended to emphasize its uniqueness.[36] Most important to these arguments is the inclusion of a section directed towards merchants.[37] Norway's social and economic situation was unlike many places in Europe; though there was class differentiation, it was not a very stratified society. Trade was a common activity for those with the means to engage in it, and looked upon favorably as a method for the education and development of young men, as the many examples from the sagas suggest. The merchant section has been seen by some as aimed at middle classes, part of fulfilling the prologue's claim that the work is for everyone. Bagge sees the merchants as a separate class in Norway, not that different from the aristocracy in economic terms, but separated from them through a different relationship to the king; this quadripartite idea of social division would have been unusual for medieval Europe, which more typically used the tripartite division of nobility/clergy/peasantry (2000, 13-15). Others such as Schnall, however, group the merchants with the elite, arguing that a merchant with economic capabilities like those described in the text would have to belong to the very highest ranks of society (2000b, 225). In either case, Norwegian society is presented as different to a degree from the rest of Europe; either the text presents a unique idea of elite status, which allows for a broader scope of activities than the elite are encouraged to engage in than elsewhere, or it portrays an unusual image of social division for the thirteenth century.

There are also differences of content and theme between *Konungs skuggsjá* and the majority of medieval mirrors. Unlike many didactic works, there is no discussion of female behavior and hardly any mention of women at all. By contrast, there were many texts that were geared specifically towards a female audience, and many towards general audiences that dealt with both men and women. *Der Welsche Gast*, for example, has detailed discussions on behavior, conversation, and even comportment for both men and women; it is clear that the courtly society Thomasin envisions is comprised of both genders.[38] Additionally, *Konungs skuggsjá* shows little interest in the behavior of the king, while other texts, such as *Las siete partidas,* have very detailed guidelines regarding what he should and should not do. Yet in areas of "private" morality, *Konungs skuggsjá* has very little to say beyond delineating how the king should spend his day. Bagge argues that this is because the work treats these issues of private morality in earlier sections so that "when [the author] finally comes to the king, he can confine himself to discussion of those virtues which are both the most exalted and the most 'public' in their nature" (1987, 99).[39]

36 Despite seeing many similarities between *Konungs skuggsjá* and continental didactic and romance texts, Schnall 2000b states that it is in many respects "ohne Parallele" (224). Anne Holtsmark contrasts *Konungs skuggsjá* with the fourteenth-century Swedish mirror *Um styrilsi kununga ok höfdhinga*, which relies heavily on its continental exemplars (1964, 66).

37 *Las siete partidas* also includes a section on merchants, but the possibility of influence on *Konungs skuggsjá* is disputed. See Gløersen 1972 and Bagge 1987 for discussion.

38 Some of Thomasin's statements are surprising, such as the firm admonition that women should *not* ride side-saddle (61). The majority of his work, however, is focused on morals, particularly constancy, rather than manners.

39 To these things, Einar Már Jónsson adds that unlike other mirrors directed specifically to kings and princes, *Konungs skuggsjá* is not from the king's point of view—he is not one of the speakers, nor is the discussion from his point of view. The advice here is how to approach the king, rather than how the king should deal with his courtiers (401-2). Another important omission is an emphasis on splendor—things such as elegant

In this respect, and in its attention to details of comportment in the courtier, or *hirð,* section, the text seems more in line with the genre of courtesy books than the more philosophical mirror literature. Courtesy books typically contain poems that teach manners, particularly while at table, and grew in popularity in the late twelfth and throughout the thirteenth century as part of the general wave of interest in didactic literature that also saw the writing of mirror texts. According to Jonathan Nicholls, courtesy books probably have their origin in monastic customaries, and cover a "medley of precepts regulating outward behaviour (speech, conduct in church, greetings, travelling, etc.) Moral instruction is not necessarily absent, but usually takes a subordinate role" (14), and it is the last that separates courtesy books from other types of didactic literature.[40]

As an example of mirror literature, then, *Konungs skuggsjá* may be unusual, but there are also many continuities between continental thought and culture and the world delineated in the text. In addition to similarities with various genres of didactic literature, the text, according to Susanne Kramarz-Bein, takes part in a common European courtly culture, particularly in the *hirð* section. This can be seen in the description of table manners, the development of a courtly/uncourtly binary (French *curtesie/vileinie*, ON *hœverska/þorparaskapr*), and the depiction of a knightly education which includes practical elements, such as weapons training, as well as familiarity with courtly manners (Kramarz-Bein 1994a & 1994b). Schnall argues that the educational plan, including the study of foreign languages and the liberal arts as well as more practical kinds of knowledge, is also indicative of engagement with a broader courtly culture (2000b, 222).

To what specific purpose, or for whom *Konungs skuggsjá* was originally intended, is uncertain. The text contains no dedication,[41] and our only clues as to the author's intentions lie in the subject matter and the prologue. Because of Norway's specific circumstances—few centers of learning or available patrons for a work such as *Konungs skuggsjá*—many people have taken the position that Hákon's sons were the most likely audience for the work; Hákon ungi [the young] would have been in his early twenties, Magnús in his teens in the 1250s.[42] Schreiner argues that the text was written for Magnús specifically, and that the law codes he would later produce demonstrate a knowledge of *Konungs skuggsjá*.[43] There have also been arguments for a broader audience of either the royal court, or a general elite, composed of the nobility and wealthy merchants (Bagge 1987, 224; Brégaint 2012, 458). Finally, Brégaint argues that *Konungs skuggsjá* "was used as propaganda for the Norwegian king's policy of expansion in Iceland," specifically the discussion of the sun and the winds (2012, 440).[44] We cannot know

apparel and feasting culture (Kramarz-Bein 1994a, Bagge 1987, 106). Barnes argues that Old Norse translations of romances were similarly uninterested in courtly splendor (1975, 149). It seems likely, however, that this is more a function of typical Old Norse prose style than a genuine lack of interest.

40 Though, as is the case with most medieval genres, the distinctions are not always sharply defined.

41 This, along with several other factors, has lead Einar Már Jónsson to argue that *Konungs skuggsjá* cannot be considered a "Fürstenspiegel," or King's Mirror, though he does see it as belonging to the broader genre of mirror literature.

42 Holm-Olsen xi in *Konungs skuggsjá* 1983; Holtsmark 1964 (66); Schreiner 1950 (31).

43 "Det er ikke for meget sagt at Magnus virker som en elev av Kongespeilets forfatter" (1950, 33) [It is not too much to say that Magnus seems to be a student of the author of *Konungs skuggsjá*].

44 Sverre Bagge has read this section as an allegory of the relationship between the king and his nobles, though

if all or part of the text was composed with Icelanders in mind, but if it was, the number of extant manuscripts suggests it was indeed effective. While the text does not provide a specific dedication, that does not necessarily prevent us from imagining that it could have been written for Hákon's sons. Mentions of patronage in Old Norse texts are exceptions, rather than the rule, which makes those texts that name a patron, author, or translator that much more noteworthy. It may also have been the case that *Konungs skuggsjá* was written for the princes, but with a broader audience in mind as well: others who might hear the text in a public reading at court, or other young nobles educated alongside the princes.[45]

Konungs skuggsjá *—structure and theme*

Konungs skuggsjá is framed as a didactic dialogue, a format that we see in other educational texts, such as the *Elucidarius*, which teaches Christian theology, and the Prose *Edda*, which teaches poetic composition, as discussed in Chapter One. Here, the conversation takes place between a father, who seems to have been an important figure at court at some point,[46] and his Son, who seeks to improve himself. The Prologue is a first-person explanation of how the work came to be—the Son observed people straying from the path of righteousness and desired to learn how best to conduct himself. The body of the text therefore becomes a sort of flashback of their conversation. This begins with another sort of prologue: the Son approaches the Father, and explains what he would like to know, and the Father begins by speaking of learning wisdom, which starts with love of God.

The text then quickly turns to the discussion of merchants, as the Son desires to travel abroad to gain a certain amount of knowledge before coming to court. This section covers a rather varied subject matter, the first being how a young businessman should conduct himself: how he should occupy his days, including attending mass and following the activities of other merchants; subjects he should study, such as law, Latin, and French; and the virtues he should cultivate, particularly moderation and conscientiousness in his business deals, as well as the vices he should avoid. Next there is set of very practical knowledge, such as what extra materials to keep on hand for repairing the ship, what to do with money made, and understanding the movement of the stars and sea. This leads into more detailed discourse on scientific subjects such as the tides, calculating time, proof that the world is round, and the consequences of this for the amount of light and heat in various zones. Here we have the section of *mirabilia* as well as a more general description of the North Atlantic world, covering

---

Brégaint suggests that the use of eight winds, rather than the more typical twelve, is to signify the eight remaining Icelandic chieftaincies in the mid-thirteenth century (2012, 448). It should be noted, however, that different systems of naming and categorizing the winds existed simultaneously at this period, as indicated by the writings of Matthew Paris (see Taylor 1937). A later discussion in *Konungs skuggsjá* of how the winds change from summer to winter also names eight winds (ch 22).

45 Though the text of *Konungs skuggsjá* is a dialogue between father and son, the prologue makes note of "göfgir menn ok spakir" (2) ["certain wise and worthy men" (73-4)] who were present during the discussions and who urged the son to write them down so that they could be "nytsamligt gaman" (2) ["useful and enjoyable" (74)] to others. Though this may simply be a literary device, it may also suggest open discussion and education at court.

46 The phrase the Son uses is "þá er þér várut með konungum" (4), which Larson translates as "when you were at the royal court" (77) but is literally, "when you were with the king."

topics such as icebergs, whales and more mythical sea creatures, and conditions in Greenland.

Much of this is pragmatic advice, providing concrete steps to young men to help them succeed in the world, as well as information to help them understand the world they live in. This is particularly salient for Norwegian merchants, who might expect to see a vastly larger section of the world than the average medieval person, perhaps even the average medieval merchant.[47] Some information, however, seems to fall more on the "entertaining" side than the "useful" and some may be primarily political. Few Norwegians could ever expect to see Greenland, making the amount of space devoted to it rather curious. If the text were written in the 1250s, neither Greenland nor Iceland would yet be part of the Norwegian kingdom. The text does not claim them to be so, but in including them in the discussion of things a Norwegian merchant should know sets them firmly within the Norwegian cultural sphere—after all, Norwegian kings had had interest in Iceland practically since its settlement. However, this raises questions about the inclusion of Ireland, which has been suggested to be an interpolation.[48] Alternatively, we might connect the interest in Ireland to the mention in *Hákonar saga* that the Irish offered homage to Hákon if he would free them from English rule (ch 388, 394). Acting upon this offer, if it was indeed made, would clearly not be in the interest of maintaining a strong relationship with England, but the reminder of Scandinavian claims to Ireland, dating back to the Viking invasions, would help reinforce the idea of Norwegian dominance over the North Atlantic.

In his examination of the didactic strategies of the text, Schnall sees the merchant section of the text as a moral base upon which the *hirð*-section builds. He argues that as such, it focuses on empirical and encyclopedic knowledge, as well as the basics of *siðgæði* (good manners), one of the three values that the text states all people should strive to master. This is then expanded upon in the following section, which has much more detailed guidelines regarding manners and behavior, as well as skills of chivalry and courtesy. Schnall sees this arrangement as laying out an educational plan like that in *Tristrams saga*: "First the *artes liberales* (or encyclopedic knowledge of natural phenomena) are taught, then the art of chivalry" (2000a, 263).

Though much can be learned on one's travels, with new customs and new lands serving to broaden one's horizons, travel does not provide a full education. After the discussion of how to be a successful merchant, the Son then moves on in the second dialogue to the royal court where, he says, he can "sjá þar meira ágæti í siðum en í kaupförum sá ek" (56) ["see more perfect manners than those to be seen on my commercial tours" (164)]. There is not one prevailing set of customs here; instead the social organization around the king is comprised of many different groups and ranks so that "þeir er ágæti eru í þjónostu, þá skilr þá enn mikit um siðu eða atferðir, ok er því verr at optast verða þeir færri, er varðveita hina beztu siðu" (56) ["those who are higher in the service often differ much in manners and deportment, so that the men who observe the better customs are, unfortunately, fewer" (164)]. This, together with our knowledge of the Father's background, suggests an identification between the higher-ranked groups and the Son as well as, by extension, the audience. Just as the Son is

47 Though this would change with the growth of Bergen as an important Hansa site in the later medieval period.

48 See Hallseth. Sayers, however, sees important thematic resonance in some of the stories with the rest of the text. It is of course possible that the author had an organizational scheme that is opaque to modern readers.

encouraged to pursue the "better customs," so too is the audience.

The rankings within the company surrounding the king indicate the more institutional structure of this group of people. There are the *hirðmenn*, those of the highest rank, as well as *húskarlar*, among whom "greinask tign ok vald með þeim, svá sem . . . konungr vill hverjum gefit hafa" (57) ["honors and authority are distributed . . . according to the merits of each and as the king wishes to grant" (167)]. Some *húskarlar* are given responsibilities such as diplomatic missions or trading with the king's wares or ships (172-3), while others are required to perform "í konungs garði alt þat er ræðismaðr krefr þá til" (58) ["such service in the king's garth as the steward shall assign" (167)]. These men do not dine with the king and the *hirðmenn*, nor do the *gestir*, a group of *húskarlar* who are sent away on the king's business, which may include such unsavory activities as spying and killing (170).

These different rankings also raise questions in the mind of the Son, who asks why people come to court only to serve. The Father stresses quite firmly all of the benefits and opportunities of being a *konungsmaðr* (king's man). These include protection from the king, as well as opportunities for advancement for those who are too poor to trade or who don't have social connections to help them. For at court, the Father says, "þat verðr þó iðuliga, at þeir fá mikil metorð af konungi sakar þjónostu sinnar, ef þeir kunnu til at gæta" (58-9) ["it often happens that the king gives high honors to such men in return for their service, if they perform it well" (169)]. Moreover, service is in fact required by everyone in the country, even the bishops, for "konungrinn á alt ríkit, ok svá alt fólkit, er í er ríkinu, ok eru allir þeir menn, er í hans ríki eru, skyldir hánum til þjónostu, þegar hans nauðsynjar krefja" (61-2) ["the king owns the entire kingdom as well as all the people in it, so that all the men who are in his kingdom owe him service whenever his needs demand it" (174-5)]. By being a king's man, then, one at least reaps the benefits of the king's protection and favor.

The longest amount of time is spent discussing the responsibilities, benefits, and expected behavior of the *hirðmenn*. The Father provides a set of guidelines for success much like that given to the merchant, but it is much more thorough, including virtues to cultivate, vices to avoid, deportment, and table manners, and focuses on how to gain the favor of the king. There is quite a bit of time spent on military matters, both practical and theoretical, but mastery in this area is not stressed as much as good manners. To an extent, practice of martial skills is predicated on the idea of leisure rather than necessity. They are offered as an alternative to drinking or "skemtan" (211) [amusement], and we may infer that they are thus more virtuous, but they are also described as "skemtan," and the Father provides a number of different military skills to practice which may be taken up depending on what is thought to be "skemtanarsamligra" (84) ["more diverting" (213)].

Not only are the *hirðmenn* more highly ranked, without the service responsibilities of many of the *húskarlar*, and with the expectation of leisure time, they spend the most time of any of the king's men in the presence of the king, and therefore "er helzt verða áskynja, hvat góðir siðir eru í konungs föruneyti, ef þeir vilja hug á leggja" (62-3) ["if they give proper attention, are best able to acquire knowledge as to what is counted good manners in royal circles" (176)]. How people learn courtliness is therefore entirely different from the romances, where knights who were already educated and accomplished came to court not only to benefit, but also to increase the fame of the court. According to *Konungs skuggsjá*, however, "þar er

upphaf allra góðra siða ok kurteisi," (56) ["all courtesy and proper conduct have their origin [at the king's court] (164)]. Furthermore, the implication is that people will not be versed in courtliness before coming to the court, as the Son's opening question implies, and the Father later confirms, stating that "eigi má hverr maðr vita þegar alla konungliga siðu eða tign, er hann sér konung eða hans menn, fyrir því at sá maðr skal bæði vera siðnæmr ok þó vitr, er hann er eina tólf mánaði í konungs hirð, ok væri hann hvern dag innan hirðar með konungi" (61) ["every man cannot become perfect in all courtly customs and manners just as soon as he sees the king and his men; for a man will have to be both quick-witted and quick to learn, who, if he lacks in breeding, is to learn perfect courtliness in a year's time, even though every day of the year is spent at court among the hirdmen in the king's own presence" (173)]. In fact, "nökkurir siðir eru svá tornæmir í konungs hirð, at bæði þarf við næmleik ok langa at hygli" (61) ["some of the customs at court are so difficult to learn that both quick wit and continued observation are necessary" (173)]. Thus, one needs not only to *be* at court, but to spend a significant amount of time there, which seems likely to result in stronger ties between the king and his men.

Yet more important than simply being present at court is being close to the king. The emphasis on many of the guidelines for behavior is not simply a general principle of good manners, but how one ought to behave *in the presence of the king*. As the Father states, "maðr sé eigi vel færr at ganga fyrir konungs andlit, til þess at ræða við hann, nema hann kunni vel alla þessa hluti, er nú höfum vér um rætt" (72) ["one is scarcely prepared to come into the king's presence to converse with him unless he has mastered all these things that we have now talked about" (192)]. He notes that many of the *húskarlar* have not achieved the more refined manners "með því at þeir koma sjaldan at eins í þau konungs herbergi, er helzt munu vera góðir siðir í hafðir" (61) ["since they come but rarely into those of the royal apartments where good manners must especially be observed" (174)]. The Son asks why the king keeps these discourteous people around him, and the Father responds with the discussion of dearth which explicitly links the morals and behavior of the people with the character of the king.

The reason that the king keeps unrefined people around is, he says, because there are not always enough people who are skilled in the ways of courtliness. Though he states that dearth can come upon the morals of a people, his emphasis is upon its leadership, for worse is when "árgalli kemr í siðu þeirra ok mannvit eða meðferðir, er gæta skulu stjórnar landsins" (73) ["there may come failure in the morals, the intelligence, or the counsels of those who are to govern the land" (194)]. Such a failure of leadership can in fact bring about dearth upon a people. The Father cautions most strongly against the dangers of power-sharing, stating that a realm with multiple kings should be called "hömlubarða eða auðnaróðal, ok má þat þá náliga virðask sem týnt ríki, þvíat þat er þá sáit með hinu mesta úárans fræi ok úfríðar korni" (75) ["a rudderless ship or a decayed estate; it may be regarded almost as a ruined kingdom, for it is sown with the worst seeds of famine and the grains of unpeace" (198)]. The effects that this has upon a kingdom are strongly reminiscent of the chaos that precedes both Christian and heathen apocalypse; bonds are broken and the world turns upside-down: "allar lögligar setningar eru niðrfallnar ok réttar refsingar, en úlög ok illskur koma í stað" (78) ["all lawful ordinances and right punishments are ignored and unlaw and malice take their place" (202)]; kinship is destroyed (199); "brigða þá alugat öllum siðum landsins" (77) ["the morals of the

nation go to ruin" (199)] and "drýgjask . . . allskyns hórdómar" (77) ["all forms of whoredom are committed" (200)]. The social order breaks down entirely, as "bœndr ok alþýða gerask þá ríkisdjarfir ok úhlýðnir" (77) ["peasants and subjects become defiant and disobedient"] and foolish men set themselves up in opposition to the rightful king (200).

These concerns were very present during Hákon's reign. It was not until 1240 that the civil war period was decisively over, a period attributable in part to the fact that any son of a king, legitimate or not, had claim to the throne, and some kings, such as Magnús berfœtr [barelegs], had several sons who attained majority.[49] Norway also had a history of power-sharing; though the kingdom had more or less been consolidated since the tenth century, there were powerful figures who were granted or took power over part of the kingdom after that time, like the jarls of Hlaðir in the north or, in Hákon's time, his father-in-law Skúli, who was given a third of the country to rule as Duke. A text that forcefully argues against multiple rulers written not long after Skúli's rebellion is a powerful statement not only for the nobility who might attempt to claim power, but also for Hákon's two sons. Hákon took several steps to ensure a smooth succession from one ruler to another: he refused to make provisions to divide the kingdom between his two sons upon his death as Archbishop Einarr urged him to do, and after the death of his elder son in 1257, he had Magnús named as king and later crowned (*Hákonar saga* ch 348-9). The Law of Succession was passed in 1260, ensuring not only the inheritance rights of the eldest legitimate son, but also establishing an order of succession. Illegitimate sons were still included, but the law virtually eliminated the opportunity for multiple people to claim the throne at any one point.[50]

Despite all of the terrible things that *Konungs skuggsjá* warns may befall a country with multiple rulers, the Father assures the Son that God will save the country "þegar hánum þykkir fólkit yfrit bart fyrir sínar syndir" (78) ["when He finds that the people have been sufficiently chastised for their sins" (203)] and comments on, once a single monarch has been reinstated, "hversu . . . nytsamligt ríki þat mun þá vera hinar næstu stundir eptir slíkan úróa" (79) ["how prosperous the realm may become in the period immediately following such an unrest as I have just described" (203)], surely another reference to specifically Norwegian affairs. Yet the king does not simply get to enjoy this prosperity; he should constantly be working to see to the weighty task of ensuring justice in his realm.

When the dialogue treating the king begins, the perspective of the work changes—no longer is the Father offering the Son advice; instead, the discussion becomes descriptive, treating the king as a third party. This shift suggests that a broader audience than just Hákon's sons may have been in the mind of the author. At the same time, however, this section of the

49 Many also had sons who did not attain majority, but were held up as figureheads by powerful factions. See Bagge 2010, 46.

50 The ideal of primogeniture is emphasized also in the model prayer provided for the king in this section: "Þess bið ek þik forkunnliga, dróttinn minn, at þú gefir mér getinn af mínum lendum lögligan erfingja, þann er þú látir þér soma með þinni miskunn at setja í þat sœmdarsæti eptir mik, er þú hefir mik í settan, ok þú látir mitt hásæti aldri síðan koma undir aðrar höfðingjaættir, nema þær er af mér kvíslask, svá at son taki jafnan eptir föður" (134) ["from my heart I pray Thee, O Lord, to give me a lawful heir begotten of my loins, whom it may please Thee in They mercy to set after my time in the seat of honor where Thou has placed me; and let my high-seat never pass into the power of other dynasties, but only to such as shall spring from me, the son inheriting from the father in every case" (296)].

text has a number of lessons on just judgments of cases drawn from Biblical history. This is certainly most relevant for the instruction of the king, or "en som . . . skulle bli konge" [one who . . . would become king] (Schreiner 1950, 31). These *exempla* and their analysis make up the bulk of the dialogue on the king; here there is no discussion of manners, deportment, or how to be courteous. Sverre Bagge suggests that the reason there is no discussion of the king's morals is that these things have already been discussed in the previous sections so the author did not feel the need to address them a second time. The situation may be the same with his behavior. More practically, it is not necessary from the point of view of the Son. If he is simply a courtier, the king is his superior, and he does not need to know how the king "ought" to behave. If, however, the text is at least in part designed to aid in the formation of a king, the king would presumably have lived, perhaps even served, in the *hirð* as a boy, and already acquired the necessary attributes.

Instead, the dialogue focuses on the duties of the king. Most important is his role as supreme judge, which dictates his duties and responsibilities.[51] He must be wise enough to know how to judge cases, and in service of this, it is the king's "skyldarembætti at nema mannvit ok fróðleik, ok á hann víst at vera margfróðr um öll dœmi, þau er verit hafa, at hann megi þaðan skilning af taka til allrar stjórnar, þeirrar er hann þarf at hafa í sínum konungdómi" (104) ["bounden duty to seek knowledge and understanding, and he ought indeed to be well informed as to what has occurred in the past, for in that way he will gain insight for all the business that pertains to his kingship" (247)]. The Father stresses that "engi maðr ætti at vera margfróðari eða vitrari um alla hluti en konungr" (106) ["no man needs to be more learned or better informed in all subjects than a king" (251)], which we might again link back to the plethora of historical, geographical, and scientific knowledge contained in the text. The text grants the king leisure time only insomuch as "hann megi halda heilsu sinni eða léttleik til vápna ok allra herfara" (135) ["his health and agility at arms or in any form of warfare may be preserved" (298)]. His energies should instead be focused "at bera nytsamligar áhyggjur fyrir mannvitsamligri ríkisstjórn ok góðum orlausnum um öll vandendamál, eða allskyns nauðsynjum er fyrir hann væri bornar" (135-6) ["to maintain an intelligent government and to seek good solutions for all the difficult problems and demands which come before him" (298)]. Even at night should his thoughts be on his kingdom and his prayers on his people.

The dialogue regarding the king primarily presses on the seriousness of the king's role and works to enshrine the idea of his divine authority to rule. In this light, the significance of proper behavior, particularly in the king's presence, becomes more clear. A good king is wise and just and has God's favor. His innate qualities and the example that he sets for his retinue provide for them a model of courtly virtue, just as his men serve as example for the rest of the populace. Additionally, as the representative of God's rule on earth, the king is afforded the deepest respect and the highest honor. He is not like other men; thus, behaving in a courtly fashion serves to create a distinction between where he is and where he is not—which may explain why the author found the idea of courtly/uncourtly binary useful—in a way similar to how sacred space is set apart from the profane in various ways.

51 This is a common theme in mirrors for princes (Holtsmark 1964, 61).

Sverrir Jakobsson describes the process of the creation of sacred space in the case of Iceland. This includes the physical space within the Church, as well as other areas marked off by special immunities or prohibitions, such as church lands, the bodies of priests, or even holy days. Linking Lefebvre's idea of social space to Bourdieu's idea of cultural capital, he points out that "command of space is a fundamental and all-pervasive source of social power" (17). This becomes even more crucial when that space serves as a link to the divine, as in the case of the Church. The way that the Church managed to shape and promote the idea of sacred space, Sverrir Jakobsson argues, is through the use of literate culture, a field which the Church dominated through its near-monopoly on book production (8). He argues that "literate culture facilitated the quick absorption" of the idea that "a person, object, or place that came into contact with a source of sacredness was considered to have the opportunity to appropriate its energy" (9) and that "the formation of sacred space went hand in hand with the advent of literacy" (3). Curiously, he notes, "courtiers of the Norwegian king seem to have been more reluctant to violate the sanctity of churches than other participants" in struggles in Iceland (17). This suggests that the concept of sacred space was more thoroughly developed in Norway, and allows us to posit whether other types of space were as well, such as a sort of courtly space.[52]

Once the concept was developed, the space was created and maintained through behaviors such as respecting the sanctity of the Church, but also other means as well, such as the use of sensory stimuli. C. M. Woolgar demonstrates that sensory stimuli were key in creating "special environment[s]" (256) such as in the noble household: things like perfume and rich wall hangings contributed to "an atmosphere or aura" that could have effects such as projecting power or creating positive associations (266). So it was with sacred space, which would be demarcated through techniques such as the use of incense, the ringing of bells, the brightly-colored church paintings, and the special lighting and acoustics of the churches, particularly, in Scandinavia, those built in stone.

As discussed in chapter two, the romances also make use of sensory information to describe the courtly milieu, including picturesque interior and external settings, the beautiful people at court, and the luxurious clothing that they wear, helping to set the court off from other places that the hero encounters on his journey. *Konungs skuggsjá* employs many aspects of the romance idea of the royal court: ideas of behavior, dress, and the relationship between courtiers and the king. However, it uses them to advance its own ideas—foremost, the idea that the king's authority is from God, and he answers only to God. Additionally important are the ideas that the king's primary responsibilities are ensuring justice and pursuing wisdom. These principles serve as a corrective to the problematic kingship depicted in the romances, and provide an alternative to the outdated idea of the warrior-king of skaldic verse.

Konungs skuggsjá also makes use of romance practices of scene-setting through sensory description. However, it takes advantage of the similarities between the descriptions of

52 Sverrir Jakobsson implies that this may be due to some sort of state enforcement of sacred space in Norway. *Konungs skuggsjá* does indeed claim that the king has a responsibility to defend the Church, but also that the sanctity of Church may be violated in certain circumstances. It is perhaps relevant here that two of the major battles during Skúli's rebellion took place on church grounds and at the monastery of Elgisetr, respectively; Skúli was killed at the latter (*Hákonar saga* ch 272-80).

beautiful places and conventional descriptions of heaven as a means of connecting the royal with the divine. Just as using cases of divine judgment as examples for how kings should judge serves to place the king in the same position as God, so do evocative descriptions of place associate the royal court with Heaven. This helps explain why there is such a strong focus on behavior, dress, and mannerism: the external reveals the nature of the internal, as was commonly believed in the medieval period. The use of sensory description also demonstrates, as was argued in Chapter Two, that there was indeed an interest on the part of Old Norse audiences, and a literary use for, spectacle and description. It was simply used more sparingly, and thus with greater impact, than in continental texts.

Both the encouragement of a special set of behaviors and the formation of a particular sensory environment are in operation in *Konungs skuggsjá*. The behavior consists, to a large degree, in courtliness, including proper table manners, deportment, and appropriate use of one's time. These behaviors also help to create the sensory environment that obtains at the royal court. For example, *Konungs skuggsjá* envisions the court as a highly-controlled auditory environment.[53] The Son is told what to say, how, when, and to whom. According to the Father, one should restrain one's speech, not talking too much, and being clear and succinct when one does speak. Moreover, speech should be quiet:

> Svá eigu hirðmenn hljóðir at vera yfir borðum, at ekki orð heyri þeir, er á tvær hendr þeim sitja, er við talask; svá tali hverr lágt við sinn sessa, at engi heyri nema þeir er við rœðask, þá er bæði gótt hjlóð ok góðir siðir í konungs húsi. (83)
>
> ["The hirdmen ought to speak in a low tone at the table so that not a single word will be heard by those who sit on either side of the two who wish to converse; let each one speak to his partner so softly that none shall hear but those who are conversing; then there will be good deportment and quiet in the king's hall." (210)]

It is not a raucous beer hall, after all, it is the royal court. Speaking in quiet tones also allows for a hierarchy of voices: the Father warns against missing something that the king says by speaking to someone else instead of listening; he also provides instructions as to how to quiet a companion who may want to speak at the same time as the king (ch 32). Even the contents of speech are subject to regulation. The Father states that if one is so unfortunate as to miss what the king says, one should avoid a casual response of "What?" or "Eh?", but be prepared with an elegant response. Even content is regulated; when addressing the king, the use of plural is required because

> höfðingjar bera áhyggju fyrir öllum þeim, er undir þeim eru at þjónostu eða at veldi, ok

53 The discussion here is limited to speech, as that is the only element of hearing discussed thoroughly in *Konungs skuggsjá*. However, William Layher has discussed the use of literature, including translations, in the shaping of the auditory environments at various Scandinavian royal courts and the projection of royal power, specifically by queens. As the translations at Hákon's court were commissioned by Hákon, rather than his queen, Layher does not address them. However, given the elaborate, alliterative styles of translated romance, his conclusions may have some relevance for Norway in the thirteenth century.

> hafa þeir eigi eins manns svör í munni, heldr eigu þeir fyrir marga svör at veita . . . Nú með því at höfðingjar halda upp með mörgum hvárttveggja sœmdum ok andsvörum ok margfaldri áhyggju, þá er þat vel tilleggjanda þeim til sœmdar, at kenna þá með margföldu atkvæði í allri rœðu. (71)
>
> ["chieftains are responsible for all those who are subject to them in service or authority, and they have not only one man's answer on the tongue but have indeed to answer for many . . . since great lords both maintain the honor of many and have great cares and liabilities on their account, it is surely proper to honor them by using the plural forms of address." (190)]

One should know when to speak, to whom, and how; this specialized knowledge is then considered courtesy in a self-reinforcing system.[54] Being at the court requires special knowledge and behavior; acting in prescribed fashion then maintains the special environment.

This is also the case with visual elements, which are perhaps the most important in terms of sensory stimuli for shaping the court. The Father states that

> Þat er ok hœveska, at hann kunni . . . hversu hann skal haga klæðum sínum, bæði at lit ok öðrum hlutum, svá ok nær maðr þarf at standa eða sitja, eða nær réttr standa eða nær á kné. Þat er ok hœveska at kunna vita, nær er hann þarf hendr sínar niðr fyrir sik at rakna láta, ok kyrrar hafa, eða nær er hann má sínar hendr hrœra til einnarhverrar þjónustu, annathvárt sjálfum sér eða öðrum at veita, eða hvert hann skal andliti sínu snúa ok brjósti, eða hversu hann skal snúa baki eða herðum (92)
>
> ["It is also courtesy to know how to select one's clothes both as to color and other considerations; and to know when to stand or sit, when to rise or kneel. It is also courtesy to know when a man ought to let his hands drop gently and to keep them quiet or when he ought to move them about in service for himself or for others; to know in what direction to turn his face and breast, and how to turn his back and shoulders" (227)]

Specific moments in courtly life call for specific actions, and specific self-presentation. Being able to navigate this dizzying maze of rules and customs and skills thus requires a great deal of observation and reflection. It begins upon arrival: in order to be accepted at the court, one has to look like one belongs at the court. The amount of time spent describing how one should present oneself at court is reminiscent of the importance of first impressions in the romances.

54 "þat er hœveska . . . kunna at vera góðr félagi í samsæti ok í viðrœðu við aðra menn; kunna á því góða skilning, ef maðr talar við konur, hvárt sem eru ungar eða meir aldri orpnar, ríkar eða nökkut úríkari, at þau orð kunni hann til þeirra at mæla, er þeirra tigund hœfi, ok þeim sami vel at heyra, ok manni sami vel at mæla" (91) [It is courtesy . . . to know how to behave properly while conversing or making merry with other men; to know precisely, when a man is conversing with women, whether they be young or older in years, of gentle or humble estate, how to select such expressions as are suited to their rank and are as proper for them to hear as for him to use" (227)].

The Father describes at length how to dress:

> klæðabúnaði þínum skaltu áðr hafa svá háttat, at þú sér klæddr öllum góðum gangvera, þeim sem þú hefir vildastan til, ver hosaðr ok skúaðr; eigi skaltu ok kyrtilslauss vera; þvílíka yfirhöfn ok, sem þú hefir vildasta til. Vel þér þau klæði jafnan til hosna, er brúnuð sé at lit; þat þykki ok eigi illa bera, at maðr hafi svart skínn til hosna, en ekki önnur klæði nema skarlat sé. Kyrtil máttu ok hafa með brúnuðum lit, eða með grœnum eða rauðum . . . En línklæði þín skaltu láta gera af góðu lérepti ok þó lítil efni í; ger stutta skyrtu þína ok öll línklæði létt vel. Ætla jafnan góðum mun styttri skyrtu þína en kyrtil, þvíat engi maðr hœfeskr má sik prúðan fá gört af hör eða hampi (66)
>
> ["come fully dressed in good apparel, the smartest that you have, and wearing fine trousers and shoes. You must not come without your coat; and also wear a mantle, the best that you have. For trousers always select cloth of a brown dye. It seems quite proper also to wear trousers of black fur, but not of any other sort of cloth, unless it be scarlet. Your coat should be of brown color or green or read . . . Your linen should be made of good linen stuff, but with little cloth used; your shirt should be short, and all your linen rather light. Your shirt should be cut somewhat shorter than your coat; for no man of taste can deck himself out in flax or hemp." (181)]

He advises his son that prevailing fashions should be followed, in haircut as well as clothing. In addition to appearance, bearing, posture and mannerism also create the image of the proper courtier:

> Hvárki skaltu hafa hött né hufu kveif á höfði, heldr skaltu úhuldru hári ok berum höndum fyrir ríkismenn ganga, með blíðu andliti ok hreinsuðum öllum líkama ok limum . . . Ven þik at bera höfuð þitt rétt, ok svá allan líkam þinn þá ven þú vel réttan, þegar þú gengr; ven þik gangprúðan vel, ok þó eigi einkar seint at ganga. (66)
>
> ["You must have neither hat nor cap nor other covering on your head; for one must appear before lords with uncovered head and ungloved hands, with a blithe face and with limbs and body thoroughly bathed . . . Form the habit of holding your head up and your whole body erect when walking; strike a dignified gait, but do not walk too slowly." (182)]

The entire body becomes subject to observation; not just whether it is clean and properly clothed, but what is revealed or covered, and how it is present in motion and at rest. The Father has recommendations for the smallest gestures, describing even how one should dispose of one's hands while standing before the king: "Hendr þínar skaltu svá láta liggja, er þú stendr nærri konungi, at hin hœgri greip spenni um hinn vinstra úlflið, ok lát síðan hendr þínar í tómi rekjask niðr fyrir þik, sem þeim er hœgast" (67) ["When standing before the king, you should dispose of your hands in such a way that the thumb and forefinger of the right will grasp the left wrist" (183)].

This concern extends to activities at court other than simply waiting on the king; the Father instructs the son that practice with weapons is advisable for those who would be kings' men, and even there he provides a long description as to how sit on horseback. Much of this is practical advice: keeping one's horse shod properly, how to use the strength of one's body when thrusting a spear, how to position the foot when using stirrups. Yet the advice is not purely utilitarian; the Father also tells the Son, "tem þik til, hversu þú megir þess sitja á hesti þínum, er bæði sé fegrst ok fastast" (84) ["train yourself in the art of sitting on horseback in the firmest and most handsome manner" (211)] while wearing armor. The practicality of such a precarious activity is only part of the matter: one must also keep up appearances. The strangeness of some of these instructions is not lost on the Son: he asks why these customs are desirable at court when they would be mocked in the country:

> Hví sætir þat, er þér rœddut, at þat skal þykkja vel bera fyrir ríkismönnum, at maðr sé berr ok skikkjulauss, þegar hann gengr til tals við þá? En ef maðr gerði svá í heraði, þá mundi svá alþyða mæla, at sá maðr væri fól, er svá hlypi yfirhafnarlauss sem skiptingr (67-8)
>
> ["On what do you base your statement that it is considered good deportment among princes for a man to come bareheaded and without a mantle when he comes to seek audience with them. If anyone did thus in the country, the mob would say that the man was a fool to run about in that way without a cloak like a ninny." (184)]

The Son here points to a border of this social space, divided between those in the court who go without hat or mantle, and those in the country who do not. The Father's blunt answer simply deepens the divide: "þat þykkir mart heimskligt með kotkörlum, er hœfeskligt þykkir með konungi eða með öðrum ríkismönnum" (68) ["many things look stupid to the multitude which are considered proper in the presence of kings and other great men" (185)]. People outside the court do not appreciate courtly practices because they don't have the necessary knowledge to do so, nor perhaps the opportunity to acquire it.

The visual cues of courtly practice thus project outward, to people outside the court, in addition to the people within it. In doing so, these cues help constitute the court by publicly displaying its values through spectacle. This serves to show those who do not belong to the court how those who do belong are different, and allows members of the court to identify each other. Ultimately, however, it can have a paradoxical function, for in putting on display courtly manners it opens them up to imitation, thus requiring a constant process of differentiation by members of the court. Attempts to mitigate this tension can be seen in the enactment of sumptuary laws throughout medieval and early modern Europe.

Konungs skuggsjá is very conscious of the eyes of the public on the members of the court. It states that the king and his courtiers should be very careful with their behaviors so that they can serve as an example for others: "er [konungr] hæstr at nafni, ok á hann at fylgja fegrstum siðum, ok hans hirð ok allir aðrir hans þjónustumenn, at allar þjóðir taki af þeim góð dœmi til ráðvendi ok góðrar meðferðar ok allrar annarra hœveskra siða" (2-3) ["A king . . . holds the highest title and ought, with his court and all his servants, to observe the most

proper customs, so that in them his subjects may see good examples of proper conduct, uprightness, and all other courtly virtues" (74-5).] While this statement is from the prologue, and thus could be a later addition, the sentiment is found elsewhere in the text, such as the beginning of the description of the *hirð*:

> hvar sem þeir koma þá líta allra manna augu til þeirra siða ok meðferðar, ok allir hneigja sín eyru til þeirra orða, ok vænta þess allir, sem vera ætti, at þeir munu svá miklu framar vera en aðrir menn um siðu sína ok meðferðir, sem þeir verða meiri návistarmenn konungs at þjonustu eða yfirlæti en aðrir menn (63)
>
> ["wherever they are present, the eyes of all men are turned upon their manners and behavior; all incline their ears to their words; and all expect, as they ought, to find them so much more excellent than other men in deeds and deportment as they stand nearer the king in service and regard than his other men" (177)]

For Norwegians, observation of the hirð is instructive, yet to foreign eyes it reveals the nature of the king: "þóat hirð einshvers konungs verði fundin úhœvesk eða eigi vel siðug, eða allra helzt ef þjónosta hans verða eigi hœveskliga eða með fögrum siðum framflutt í hans herbergi, þá verðr dœmdr úhœveskr konungr sjálfr, ok kalla svá allir, ef hann væri hœveskr sjálfr eða vel siðugr, at þá mundu allir siðask af hánum" (64) ["If a king's retinue is found to be poorly trained and is lacking in polish, especially if the service of the king's apartments is not performed in a comely and proper manner, then the king himself is pronounced unfit; for it will be held that if he himself were polite and perfect in manners, all would acquire good breeding from him" (178)]. The *hirð* shapes Norway's reputation abroad, for when foreign envoys come, "hyggja þar því görr at hans þjónustu ok hœveski hans ok hans hirðar ok öllum siðum í hans hirð, er þeir eru sjálfir hœveskari" (63-4) ["the more polished they are, the more carefully they observe the royal service as well as the manners of the king and his courtiers and all the customs that prevail at the court" (177-8)]. When they return home, they will describe what they saw, and their report can bring honor or ridicule. So seriously does *The King's Mirror* take this prospect, that it states that those who bring shame upon the king through their behavior at court will suffer "heimill hæðiligr dauði" (64) ["a well deserved but ignominious death" (179)].

The link between space and the senses functioned on multiple levels in the middle ages. The senses had a complex of values and associations which were to a large degree moral, many of which go back to the Old Testament: good sights, sounds, smells had morally positive associations and vice versa.[55] A space demarcated by the presence of positive or negative sensory stimuli could therefore carry this moral value. Being so rooted in Biblical tradition and Christian culture, sensory stimuli thus had a range of connotations and associations that could be co-opted for various other purposes:

55 The *Song of Songs* is particularly lush with sensory detail.

> the medieval use of perfume and smell played on these associations and dynamics: if the monarch or aristocracy smelled of cinnamon, of incense or other perfumes, odours that appeared in religious contexts, in images, or arose from paternosters, was this not an indication of divine favour or powers, powers which might pass through proximity or touch? (Woolgar 145)

We see this in continental and insular royal courts and noble houses—the use of perfumes and incense that only the wealthy could afford; the use of glass windows, which would affect interior lighting; sumptuous dress and appointments, including wall-hangings that would provide additional color, warmth, and even serve to muffle sound. These strategies could be used to stimulate feelings of respect or awe, or to send different messages to people of different stations, creating a sense of inclusion or distance, and to reinforce social ranks.[56] Readers of literary texts might be similarly affected. Kathryn Starkey and Horst Wenzel argue that the creation in texts of spaces or environments using sensory description allow the audience to enter into the text through active engagement of the imagination and emotional identification with the characters (152, 158). So too might something like the descriptions of the joys of heaven or the torments of hell inspire hope or terror.

While our evidence for such sumptuary practice in Norway is limited, a stronger connection can be seen in terms of literature. Just as positive sensory phenomena were seen as good, so could moral nature be indicated via sensory phenomena. For example, the pleasures of heaven and the punishments of hell in the *Elucidarius* are to a large extent described as sensory pleasures or punishments. The saints in heaven are able to see the glory of God, hear the singing of angels; they "unaþs hilm hafa" (100) ["possess a delightful scent" (101)] and "bergia af søtleik Goþs oc seþiasc" (100) ["taste of the sweetness of God and they can eat their fill" (101)]. Furthermore, they are said to possess eternally "cleþe oc goþ hús oc at heyra fagran song oc harpslótt oc kenna reykelses hilm oc annarra dyrlegra urta eþa bergia søtom grosom oc eiga morg auþøve" (100) ["garments and good houses and to hear a beautiful song and the sound of a harp and to perceive the smell of incense and other costly herbs or to taste sweet herbs and to possess many riches" (101)].[57] Hell, however, "er fullur myrkra og meina, ellz og frostz, hungurs og þorsta og annarra likams kvala, bardaga og ecka og hræslu" (80) ["is full of darkness and diseases, fire and frost, hunger and thirst, and other pains of the body, such as fighting, grief and fear" (81)]. The spiritual torments of hell consist of

> gratur og gnotrun tanna, þviat reykur af elldi giorer grat [augna], en frost tanna gnotrun. Þridia kvol eru hrædiliger ormar og drekar [o...[-]leger] í syn og í röddu, þeir er svo lifi í ellde sem fiskar í vatne. Fiorda kvol er leidiligur daun . . . Atta er hræsla ogurligrar synar diofla og dreka þeirra er blasa elldi og brennu steine og vesalig heyrn grasz og diofla hlaturs. (80)

56 Similarly, Nikulaus Largier describes medieval practices of prayer where external stimuli, such as incense, bells, and religious images, are used to evoke internal responses (79-80)

57 Minor changes have been made to this and the following quotes from the *Elucidarius* solely for the purpose of clarity.

> ["weeping and gnashing of teeth because the smoke of the fire makes the eyes weep and the frost makes the teeth gnash. The third torment is terrible snakes and dragons, horrible in appearance and in voice, which live in fire just as fish live in water. The fourth torment is repulsive stench . . . The eighth is fear of the dreadful sight of devils and dragons which spew fire and brimstone, and the miserable noise of weeping and the laughter of devils." (81)]

This type of description, focusing more on sensual experience than concrete details of layout, shape, or size, becomes in the form of the earthly paradise trope tangled with the classical *locus amœnus* so that it becomes impossible to distinguish the two.[58] This trend reached the north from at least two directions: religious literature, such as the *Elucidarius*, as well as romance literature. Chapter Two discussed instances of the *locus amœnus* trope, primarily in *Tristrams saga* and *Ívens saga*; in both texts these instances not only have the necessary features (tree, grass, water), they mix in elements of sensory delight—sweet-smelling herbs, beautiful bird song, visual beauty of various kinds.

It is clear that the author of *Konungs skuggsjá* has internalized these expectations. For example, Ireland, "comes near being the best land that is known to man"; it "lies on that side of the world where heat and cold are so well tempered that the weather is never very hot or very cold" (105). Immediately after mentioning the pleasant climate of Ireland, the Father notes that it is holy: not only does the ground have the ability to kill undesirable creatures like snakes and toads, the populace is able to overcome its "bloodthirsty" nature and has never harmed a holy person (106).[59] Iceland, however, is the opposite. Its wonders are said to consist of "ofgangi frosts ok jökla, eða elligar af ofgangi elds ok bruna" (21) ["great frost and boundless ice, or in unusual displays of flame and fire" (105); it, along with Greenland is dubbed "náliga úbyggvanda" ["almost unfit for habitation" (105)]. Furthermore:

> sá eldr er á Íslandi er, þá brennir eigi tréit, þóat í sé kastat, ok eigi jörðina, en steina ok hart bert þá dregr hann til sinnar nœringar, ok kveikisk þar af, svá sem annarr eldr af þurrum viði . . . Nú með því at þessi eldr vill eigi við annat fœðask en við dauða skepnu, en hann hafnar allri skepnu, er annarr eldr fœðisk við, þá má þat víst kalla, at sá eldr er dauðr, ok er hann til þess líkastr, at hann sé helvítis eldr, þvíat þar eru allir hlutir dauðr. (33-4)
>
> ["The fire of Iceland, however, will burn neither earth nor wood, though these be cast upon it; but it feeds upon stone and hard rock and draws vigor from these as

58 Larrington 2004, 97, n. 31.

59 Almost nothing is said of Norway itself; the Father draws a comparison to the letter of Prester John in stating his unwillingness to speak of things that will only be received with skepticism: "þykki mér þat ilt í rœður at flytja, er ek skal síðan vera kallaðr lygimaðr af, þóat ek vita til víss at satt sé" (18) ["therefore I do not like to discuss such topics, if my statements are to be called fabrications later on, even though I know them to be true beyond doubt" (101)]. His statements regarding Norway are confined to the amount of daylight in the far northern parts of the country throughout the year, how strange the ability to ski might seem to people who had not witnessed it, and the marvel of the mythical Bjarkudal bog, which has the ability to petrify wood (ch 7-9).

> other fires do from dry wood . . . Now since this fire feeds on dead things only and rejects everything that other fires devour, it must surely be said that it is a dead fire; and it seems mostly likely that it is the fire of hell, for in hell all things are dead." (127-8)]

Ireland is beautiful, temperate, and holy; Iceland, however, is plagued by terrible phenomena that suggest nothing so much as Hell to the author, a point developed further in a later chapter that compares Iceland's volcanoes to those of Sicily described in Gregory's *Dialogues* (35ff). The most vivid descriptions in the text are descriptions of place, and those places are given moral connotations. This is even more apparent when the author moves from the familiar world to the Biblical. The first story of the Fall of Man is replete with sensory description. In the Garden of Paradise which, it should be recalled, was considered to be an actual place on earth, God is said to have "skrýddan" [adorned] the world "með grösum ok öðru blómi, svá ok með kykvendum eða fuglum" (106) ["with grass and other herbage, as well as with birds and beasts" (251)] and he proudly shows off "blómstr ok alla fegrð í Paradísu" (106) ["all the flowers and glories of Paradise" (252)]. The tree of wisdom is also beautiful (*fagr*), and during the trial of Adam and Eve, Truth states that their motivation was not only a desire for wisdom, but that "eplin váru fögr ok girnlig ok sœt at bergja" (108) ["the apples were fair and pleasant and sweet to taste" (255)].[60]

A final example illustrates how this practice is observed for a variety of purposes. The description of the House of Wisdom is purely allegorical, yet it follows the same patterns as other place descriptions. In the discussion of how the king should order his time, there is a long discussion of the beauty that Wisdom has added to creation, and the pleasures of her home. She states: "mitt herbergi er stráð með ilmandi grösum ok ágætum urtum, þat er tjaldat með fegrð ok prýði ok allri sælu" (138) ["my house is strewn with fragrant grasses and lovely herbs; it is hung with beauty and elegance, and splendor in every form" (303)]. Furthermore,

> Sæll er sá er gengr til míns snæðings, þvíat mín fœzla þefjar betr hverjum ilm; hunangi sœtari er minn drykkr ok skírri hverju víni; at mínu borði má heyra þjótandi strengleika með sœtum ok fögrum tóna; þar er kveðskapr ok fáheyrðri söngar; þar er skemtan ok gleði ok flærðlauss fagnaðr án alla sorg (138)
>
> ["Happy is he who goes to my table, for my meat has a more pleasing savour than the sweetest perfume; my drink is sweeter than honey and clearer than any wine; tuneful music is heard at my table in sweet and beautiful melody; there are songs and poems such as rarely are heard, merriment and gladness, and pure joy unmixed with grief." (302)]

60 The second story of the Fall focuses on Lucifer, rather than Adam and Eve, and so the descriptive elements are focused on the beauty of the angels, and the subsequent loss of it by those who fell, as well as temptation—the sweetness of the serpent's words, the fragrance and sweetness of the apple—rather than the pleasures of the Garden more generally (ch 47).

Four of the five senses are invoked in a description that seems positively paradisiacal. The author of *Konungs skuggsjá* operates with an understanding of place that is determined not just by physical location, but the sensory experience of inhabiting that place.[61] The results of proper behavior and knowledge do not simply show one to be worthy of being in the king's presence, but in aggregate help to shape a specific sensory environment that sets off the space around the king from the outside world.

Modern reception of *Konungs skuggsjá* has seen the text as providing a model of ideal kingship by delineating the roles and responsibilities of a king, with plenty of helpful and illustrative examples from history and the Bible. It has also been seen as an example of the internalization of secular, courtly values in its long discussions of courtly behaviors. Instead of emphasizing just one interpretation, we can see that both of these models of kingship and court are in operation, and that the text suggests an attempt to navigate between romance and biblical ideas, a process facilitated by moments of consonance or overlap between them.

The *hirð*-section of *Konungs skuggsjá* does more than simply describe the behavior of the ideal courtier. It engages in medieval connections between place and the senses to construct its vision of the court. In doing so, it aligns the court as described in the text with other literary descriptions of place. Key here is the role of wisdom. We have seen how knowledge is important for a courtier, even more important is wisdom for a king, so that he can rule well and pronounce just sentences. Though *Konungs skuggsjá* highlights three important qualities for any courtier, Sverre Bagge has argued that wisdom is in fact the "supreme virtue" of the text (1993, 163).

In its emphasis on wisdom as crucial for any king, and indeed any man, the text then allows us to draw a parallel between the pleasures of court ruled by a wise king, and the pleasures of dwelling in the House of Wisdom. That the House of Wisdom is allegorical is not a problem; the Father notes that "maðrinn var bæði skapaðr til veraldligra gersima ok svá til annars heims gersima, ef hann vill öðlask þat sem hann er til skapaðr" (80) ["man was created to enjoy the glories of both this and the other world, if he is to realize the purpose of his creation" (206)[62]. The recurrent use of sensory description in places of all types thus allows us to make a typological association with places with a morally positive connotation—the House of Wisdom, heaven—as well as with the glittering world of romance, which uses similar strategies in its depictions of place.

Konungs skuggsjá justifies splendor and beauty at the royal court through the use of Biblical history. When the Father states that courtesy has its origin at court, he specifies that this is only the case "ef eptir því ferr sem skyldi, ok fornt er upphaf til" (56) ["if the mode of life is as it ought to be and as it was ordained of old" (164)]. He does not specify what "of old" means, but a later passage provides a clue. During the discussion of the duties of the king, the Father remarks that

61 The description of the House of Wisdom further suggests an understanding of both physical and spiritual senses, a concept which is partially addressed in the *Elucidarius*, where the torments of hell are directed towards both the physical and spiritual senses, depending upon the type of sin that was committed.

62 *gersima*, translated by Larson as 'glories,' typically has the meaning of 'treasures.'

> Þat var siðr forðum þann tíma, er konungdómr var skipaðr ok hann stóð með fegrstum blóma, at þegar konungr sat við engan úvina aga, ok hann var í fullu frjálsi með hirð sinni, þá einkaði hann til þess eitt ágætligt hús, at láta þar setja í hásæti sitt, þat er hann hafði fyrir dómstól, ok lét þat sæti vel búa með konungligri tign allri . . . því næst hugum leiddi hann þat, hversu hann mætti þess sitja í svá ágætu sæti, at hann væri eigi með nökkurri háðung brotthrundinn or því sæti, annathvárt fyrir sakar ranglætis eða illsku, skamsýnis eða fólsku, eða ofmikillar bleyði eða ofdrambs, eða ofmikillar yfirgirndar, þóat hann sé háleitliga settr. Nú þykkir mér þat sannligast . . . at konungr haldi enn hinni sömu skipan sem fyrr var skipuð. (136)
>
> ["It was the custom of old at the time when the royal office was established and enjoyed its greatest splendor,[63] that, when a king no longer stood in fear of his enemies but sat in complete security among his henchmen, he selected a splendid house where he could set up his high-seat, which was also to serve as his judgment seat; and this throne he adorned with every form of decoration . . . Next he began to ponder in what way he must occupy this glorious high-seat, so as not to be driven from it with dishonor in spite of his exalted position either because of injustice or malice, indiscretion or folly, inordinate ambition, arrogance, or excessive timidity. Now it looks most reasonable to me that . . . a king should continue to maintain the arrangement which was made in the beginning." (298-9)]

Again, what ancient time is referenced is not specified, but given the text's preference for biblical *exempla*, it seems likely that this is referring to biblical rather than Norwegian history. This may in fact be a vague reference, in the fashion of the author, to the establishment of kingship in 1 Samuel 8-10 and Solomon's construction of the temple and palace after David has defeated the enemies of Israel (1 Kings 5:3-5). The palace is ornately decorated, and is a fitting partner for the temple that is just beside it (1 Kings 7). Solomon's association with wisdom and judgment make this identification plausible, as wisdom is the quality required by the king here in order to maintain his throne. Splendor at court is thus a time-honored tradition and, if we refer back to the previous passage, it is in fact necessary in order to maintain "the mode of life as it ought to be."

The web of associations woven by the author of *Konungs skuggsjá* grants a moral weight to the institution of the court in addition to those statements that he makes explicitly. He associates the royal with the divine in a speech that on the surface seems to clearly delineate the spheres of Church and State. The Father explains that:

> guð skipaði sér þau tvau hús á jörðu, er hann kaus til síns embættis . . . hefir hann sett í aðra þessa höll borð sitt, ok heitir þat fœzluhús, fyrir því at til þess kemr saman fólk guðs at taka þar andliga fœzlu; en í aðra þessa höll þá hefir hann settan helgan dómstól sinn, ok er þar samkváma fólks, til þess at heyra skýring heilagra dóma guðs. En til þessarra tveggja húsa þá hefir hann setta tvá gæzlumenn, er annarr konungr, en annarr

63 What Larson translates as 'greatest splendor' is in Old Norse literally 'fairest bloom.'

byskup. (171)

> ["God has established two houses upon earth, each chosen for a definite service . . . In one of these halls He had place His table, and this is called the house of bread; for there God's people gather to receive spiritual food. But in the other hall He has placed His holy judgment seat; and there the people assemble to hear the interpretation of God's holy verdicts. And God has appointed two keepers to guard these houses: the one is the king, the other the bishop." (359)]

Despite this seeming equality with the Church, we are told that "hverr maðr skal í öllum hlutum fyrst sœma konung ok konungliga tign, þvíat guð sjálfr kallar konung vera krist sinn, ok hverr konungr er fulla konungs tign berr, þá heitir hann með réttu kristr dróttins" (105). ["every man should in all things first honor the king and the royal dignity. For God Himself calls the king His anointed, and every king who possesses the full honors of royalty is rightly called the Lord's anointed" (249)]. Not only does the king receive special dignity, as specially chosen, *The King's Mirror* goes so far as to justify the custom of bowing before the king as one does before God because "konungrinn merkir guðliga tign; þvíat hann berr nafn sjálfs guðs, ok sitr hann í hinu hæsta dómsæti á jörðu, ok er þat svá at virða, sem maðr tigni guð sjálfan, þá er hann tignar konung fyrir nafns þess sakar, er hann hefir af guði" (104) ["the king represents divine lordship: for he bears God's own name and sits upon the highest judgment seat upon earth, wherefore it should be regarded as giving honor to God Himself, when one honors the king, because of the name which he has from God" (247)]. The king makes judgments in this world, as God will do in the next, ever mindful as to how he will have to answer for them. The king thus functions as God's power to judge in this world, just as the Church functions as God's power to consecrate. The court can thus serve, at least in the imagination of the author of *The King's Mirror* a similar function as the medieval church, which Sverrir Jakobsson describes as a "conceptual link between between this world and eternity, between the mundane and the holy, between the present time and the sacred time of Christ and the saints" (12). As with the Church in Iceland, Hákon's use of literature at court to seemingly change values and behaviors suggests similarities in the attempts of both parties to spread new ideas of the world and impose new understandings of authority.

Conclusion

Sverre Bagge is assuredly correct in arguing that the main goals of *Konungs skuggsjá* are political, rather than cultural, in what is perhaps a corrective counterbalance to the scholarly interest in the courtly aspects of the text. Yet these elements are more than a curiosity. In addition to communicating the concept of courtesy to the North as a mediation between foreign translations and the Norwegian populace, courtly elements serve to support the political goals of the text in helping to define and shape the center of the king's power, the court. *Konungs skuggsjá* borrows many of the external features of the romance court: the importance of dress and presentation, the use of splendor to project power and difference, and favoring courtiers who are polymaths. Its internal workings, however, are quite different.

While the knights in romance are typically motivated to do good deeds for themselves or for women, the motivating force in *Konungs skuggsjá* is the king. Women are hardly mentioned at all in the text and love is not a concern. Instead, faith suffuses the text, not just demonstrating that a good courtier is a good Christian, but strengthening the king's claim to divine authority by linking service to the king and service to God.

Bagge has shown that after the period of *Konungs skuggsjá*, the boundary between the aristocracy and peasantry grew sharper. Special privileges were granted to the aristocracy in *Hirðskrá*, and in the late medieval period, he notes, "the secular aristocracy developed into an aristocracy of birth which distinguished itself from the commoners through special titles and symbols" (2000, 41). The articulation of a separate social space, with obvious and apparent marks of inclusion, was likely a part of this growing divide. I am not arguing that the practice of marking off a specific social space is a new phenomenon in the thirteenth century. Similar preoccupations to what we see in *Konungs skuggsjá*, such as appropriate dress and speech when visiting a king, occur in various sagas and *þættir*. What has changed is the *nature* of the social space surrounding the king, as exemplified in a new set of rules, predicated on a new set of values, including a claim to divine favor and authority. Bagge argues that the goal of these new rules is to:

> [change] unruly and quarrelsome warriors into obedient royal servants. Thus, through a number of more or less complicated rules of etiquette and behaviour, the contemporary Norwegian monarchy sought to unite the aristocracy under its leadership, teaching them respect for the king, urging them to mutual solidarity, partly by rules directly aiming at this purpose and partly by emphasizing the difference between them and the population in general. (1993, 171)

In his view, *Konungs skuggsjá* provides "a glimpse of how these rules were explicitly formulated and transmitted to the members of the court" and the chivalrous literature produced and consumed at the court serves as examples of this behavior (171).

Konungs skuggsjá employs sensory information in order to create vivid images of place. In doing so, it participates in a medieval practice of constructing spaces, both physical and imaginary, that manifest in many ways: in reinforcing impressions of royal and religious power, in motivating Christian behavior, and in creating the idea of a courtly aristocracy. In literature, this technique is found in both romance and religious texts, which allows the author of *Konungs skuggsjá* to bring together these two strands to construct an idea of the royal court that can draw from either. The result is a flexible framework rather than a rigid structure that avoids the decadence of the romance court, at least as seen from the Northern perspective, or over-reliance on the hierarchy of the Church. The king has his own hall, and that hall is a courtly one.

The author of *Konungs skuggsjá* spends quite a bit of time advocating joining the court. He gives many practical reasons: the upward social mobility available to anyone, immunities offered to members of the *hirð*, and the public distinction belonging to a king's man. Alongside this, though, is the quietly compelling idea of a place of order and gentility, refinement and wisdom, of beauty and pleasure. The author draws not only on

ideas of glittering courts of romance, but links this to the sensually vivid depictions of paradise, describing not just a group of people, but a place to be, and to belong to. The sense of place provides a constant in the shifting world of the court. This idealized description is a far cry from Walter Map's opinion of the English court only a few decades earlier, who writes in *De Nugis Curialium*: "Quid si presumam audax effectus, et temerarie dicam curiam non infernum, sed locum penarum" (8) ["if I may presume so far, in an access of boldness, I would rashly say that the court is, not hell, but a place of punishment" (9)].

CONCLUSION

In scholarly discussions of the social, political, and cultural changes that took place in Norway during the thirteenth century, kingship has typically been the primary focus. This is understandable, because it is clear that from the time of Sverrir, a royal ideology based in Christian, European concepts of kingship was developing that sought to strengthen the monarchy, as well as make it independent from the other power players in Norway—namely, the Church and the aristocracy. Previous studies have typically spoken of the spread of this ideology as a top-down phenomenon, driven by the goal of the monarchy to assert itself. However, the relatively weak position of the Norwegian kings with respect to the aristocracy and the Church meant that the will of the monarchy was not sufficient on its own to implement the new ideas. A significant number of the king's followers and other members of society had to buy into the ideology he was advancing in order for it to succeed. It is therefore perhaps more correct to say that change was effected through the interaction between the king and his retinue and, by extension, between his retinue and the rest of society.

It is generally agreed that Hákon was able to persuade people to accept new ideas of kingship, nobility, and society at least in part through literature. How exactly this happened is less certain, in part because the scanty historical record means that there is much that we do not know about day-to-day experience during the thirteenth century. The court must have been a crucial vector for the dissemination of royalist ideas because it was a meeting place for the king, aristocracy, members of the clergy, and even, at times, the general populace. Literature favored by the king could be performed as entertainment or edification for anyone present and, as members of and visitors to the court returned home or left on business, they could share new stories and ideas with people in other parts of Norway. However, the court did not just serve as a tool for the advancement of a royal agenda: as a king needs a court appropriate to the type of king he desires to be, any royal reinvention requires the participation of the king's men. The court therefore deserves more critical attention as a cultural site than it has hitherto received. In order to better understand how the nobility may have received and internalized new ideas and expectations that issued from the monarchy, this dissertation has sought to offer an analysis of the concept of the royal court as it appeared in literature that would have been consumed at the Norwegian royal court in the thirteenth century.

The relationship between the king and his men is one of the defining features of the types of royal courts that are presented in the three literary genres explored in this dissertation: skaldic poetry, romance, and didactic literature. In skaldic poetry, the traditional warrior-king has a close relationship with his followers created by shared experience—the dangers and triumphs of war, the drinking and socialization during winter—and cemented with the exchange of gifts. The king travels with his men out to adventures, then home again, to while away the long, dark days of winter in company. The poet inserts himself into this scene as a member of the king's retinue with a special role, but also as an Icelander who seeks to affirm

equality and difference with the king. Skaldic poetry carried a great deal of symbolic prestige, and served to support the king's claim of fitness to rule, but the strong poetic voice meant that another person was in control of the message, and the message wasn't always what the king wanted to hear, or wanted other people to hear.

Commissioning the translation of romances gave Hákon greater control over literary production. Indeed, the strong narratorial voices of Thomas, Marie, and Chrétien are all but eliminated in the Old Norse translations, whereas Hákon's name has been added in several. There are some similarities between the court of romance and the court of skaldic verse, however: the romance court is still to a large extent a martial society, characterized by the search for fame through feats of military prowess and bonds of loyalty between the king and his knights. Yet the nature of this bond is different from that portrayed in skaldic verse. Men do not come to court to seek gold; instead they seek knighthood. The rhythm of the romance is in the comings-and-goings of the knights while the king has become more static and centralized. When the kings do travel, it is typically part of a pattern indicating dysfunction.[1] The impotent Arthur of *Parcevals saga* travels to find Parceval after Kay has uncourteously driven him away, and by the time Tristram and Kardín join Markis's court on its travels, the king has become all but irrelevant to the story.

The romances present an idealized vision of court life at the same time that they critique it. The romance court is a place of beauty and gentility, and people are expected behave courteously. Failings in character or behavior are causes for censure, but at the same time they drive the stories, allowing for the exploration of the concepts of loyalty, chivalry, and love. More serious, however, is when the failings are the king's. The translated romances demonstrate how, when there is a lack of leadership, justice is not handled, the succession may be jeopardized, and worthy people leave the court. The critiques present in the romances have lead some scholars to suggest that these texts could not serve as examples for the Norwegian court. However, *Der Welsche Gast* demonstrates that the failings of characters such as Tristan and Arthur could be overlooked in favor of their morally positive qualities. It is therefore possible that the romances could simultaneously serve an exemplary function regarding courtly values, while warning about the dangers of a dysfunctional monarchy. That the latter issue was a concern of kings in the thirteenth century is demonstrated by discussions of improper or false kingship in *Konungs skuggsjá, Hákonar saga*, and the later manual for courtiers, *Hirðskrá* [*Hirð*-scroll].[2]

Konungs skuggsjá is in many ways complementary to the romances. The courtly world that it depicts is very similar, with an emphasis on behavior, dress, and self-improvement. However, it offers a corrective to the problems raised in the romances: the court that the Father describes to the Son might be seen as the romance court with a proper king. For the author of *Konungs skuggsjá*, this means one who has been chosen by God. The courtiers here cannot outshine the king because he is the source of courtliness. *Konungs skuggsjá* also furthers the trend of centralization and stability. Movement throughout the text is towards the king. Though the merchant travels out, it is in service of education and formation, necessary steps

1 Arthur goes to visit Laudine in *Ívens saga*, but this seems to highlight the theme of Íven's divided loyalty between his liege and his love rather than serve as a critique of Arthur.

2 See below.

for one to be worthy of service in the king's court. The discussion in the *hirð* section brings the Son from arrival at court, to presentation to the king, to service in his chambers. The king travels only to meet other kings; the courtier leaves the king only on the king's business. Despite this physical closeness, however, the divide between the members of the court and king has increased: unlike the close-knit relationship between king and warrior depicted in skaldic verse, here, the courtier is very much in the service of the king.

Given that the prospect of service to the king was said to have driven people to settle Iceland, how could the message of *Konungs skuggsjá* be appealing to the prospective courtier? In skaldic poetry, the members of the king's retinue fade into the background.[3] There were certainly stories of battles and feats that circulated orally, but these did not carry the same prestige that formal court verse did. The romances, however, had a prominent place for members of the aristocratic elite, and, to an extent, they broadened the range of people who would be welcome at court: the royal retinue was no longer limited to people who possessed martial abilities, but also had a place for people with book learning, artistic abilities, and other skills. In their focus on the nobility, the romances served to stress the importance of the court in a well-ordered society. No longer would members of the court have to rely on the fame of the king they serve reflecting on them: the European model of knighthood provided stories for and granted importance to the king's followers. Building on these ideas, *Konungs skuggsjá* calls for a special kind of knight to serve the Lord's Anointed, making service to the king appear not only honorable, but desirable.

The traditional narrative about literature in this period is that skaldic verse was rejected in favor of fashionable new translated romances. While it is true that there was an increasing interest in courtly literature, and that the martial culture depicted in skaldic verse had decreasing relevance to life at the thirteenth-century court, it is clear that kings still saw some sort of benefit in encouraging the composition of skaldic verse in their honor, at least under certain circumstances. When viewing the three literary genres under discussion together, they appear to work together to create a comprehensive system of authority for the king. Skaldic poetry offers connection to the past, linking Hákon to the historical kings of Norway and affirming his birthright and that of his sons. Translated romance offers cultural authority by demonstrating Hákon's ties to the wealthy, sophisticated kingdoms of continental and insular Europe. Finally, *Konungs skuggsjá* provides spiritual authority for the king's rule, affirming the his connection to God, as well as linking the institution of kinship with salvation history through biblical *exempla*.

How successful was the ideology developed during Hákon's reign? *Hirðskrá*, a set of rules Magnús had written up for his *hirð*, suggests that it had a significant impact in some areas. The text, likely written between 1273 and 1277,[4] clearly follows the developments in royal ideology as laid out by *Konungs skuggsjá*. A distinction is drawn in terms of the source of power of the king and the *hirð*: the king gets his authority from God by right of birth, which is

3 It is possible that this is due in part to the preservation of the bulk of skaldic praise poetry in the sagas of kings, where the praise of the king in question is the most relevant aspect of the verse.

4 *Hirðskrá*, ed. Imsen, 24.

acknowledged by the people in a public assembly (395-6).[5] Other rank-holders, however, are said to receive their authority from the king or his agents, and it is stressed that this is the case even for the highest members of the nobility: dukes do not inherit their titles and lands by birth but are appointed by the king (400), as are jarls.[6] *Hirð* members are instructed to be skilled in law and warfare, to be inquisitive, virtuous, and to continually work to improve themselves (419-22). The court is the ideal place for this, as "þar nemr oc huerr æ nokot goðz er þar uil til hafa sik. þui at þæir koma þar flæstir er nokott goðz kunnu" (421) [anyone who desires to dwell there will always learn something good, because everyone who knows good things comes there]. In stressing the importance of wisdom and education, *Hirðskrá* frames the court as a cultural center as well as a political center.

Unlike in *Konungs skuggsjá*, there is in *Hirðskrá* a subtle tension between secular and Christian values. *Hirðskrá* advises everyone to be well-dressed, but not pretentious (421); in describing the rituals of initiation for *hirð* members, the text is careful to point out that the ceremonial acts are not ostentation, but in fact moderation, as they help to show the proper rank of members of the *hirð* (413). *Hirðskrá* is very concerned with rank and status, depicting a firmly stratified court with expected duties and behaviors for each group of people. The text does not hide the fact that this is a new development; it states that originally all of the king's followers were *húskarlar*, and thus of equal rank, but later titles were given according to distinction, with the implication that this is a good thing (416). Despite the differences in rank, all of the king's men are important; *Hirðskrá* declares that "þar er allr hafuðstyrkr konungs sem hirð hans er" (416) [the chief strength of the king is where his *hirð* is].

In addition to increased stratification, there is a broader range of people who have become necessary to the functioning of the court. *Hirðskrá* lists a chancellor and two priests in its enumeration of *hirð*-members and delineates the duties that each are expected to perform. The inclusion of the chancellor demonstrates the increasingly bureaucratic nature of the *hirð*, while the priests show the importance of maintaining the souls of the people at court, not just their fame. Women are not included as members of the court. They are mentioned only once outside of the discussion of inheritance, but what is said is important. *Hirðskrá* specifies that "kirkiu friðr oc kvænna" [the security of the Church and of women] is not to be violated (435). The reason given for this is not that it is inherently wrong to disturb the Church or assault women, but because the king has granted security to them, and "ollum mannum þæim sem konungr gefr grið ber engum manne at misbioða" (435) [no one should bring offense to all those men to whom the king gives peace]. This move is very much like what we have seen in *Konungs skuggsjá*: the adoption of new, courtly ideas, but in such a way that they might be employed in service of the monarchy—in this case, reinforcing the authority of the king. *Hirðskrá*'s single rule regarding women does not suggest a drastic change in the social position of women, but combined with the importance of queens in the courts of Hákon and Magnús as discussed in Chapter Two, it is evident that attitudes towards women and their roles were

5 References are to the Keyser and Munch edition.

6 402-3. The text provides several reasons why the lands of an earl are not, in fact, heritable, which suggests that this is an attempt to change established practice. *Hirðskrá* acknowledges that there might be "confusion" over the matter: the relevant section begins by announcing a subject about which some people are "ukunnulegare en von være oc til hœyrði" (402) [less knowledgeable than might be expected and appropriate].

shifting. It is likely that ideas first forwarded during the reign of Hákon helped pave the way for the later acceptance of Margrete Valdimarsdóttir as regent and, in 1387, sole ruler over the unified kingdom of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.

This dissertation has primarily focused on the centralization taking place within Norway in the thirteenth century. During this period, however, there was also another dynamic at work. As Norway finally saw an end to long years of turmoil, it had a greater opportunity to look outward than before. It cultivated ties with foreign countries through trade, marriage, and diplomacy, allowing Norway to develop a sense of itself as a part of Europe. At the same time, it was necessary to establish what the country was in relation to the rest of Europe. Many learned historical accounts foreground Norway's location in the northern part of the world—thus distant from spiritual and cultural centers—describing it as largely uninhabitable and only recently redeemed from the folly of paganism.[7] That anxiety regarding Norway's status was felt at the thirteenth-century court is indicated by the speech given by Cardinal William of Sabina Hákon's coronation in *Hákonar saga.* He informs the assembled guests that during his stopover in England on his way to Norway, the English tell him "fyrir sakir öfundar við Nóregsmenn at hann mundi þar engar sæmðir fá ok varla vera fæddr" (II: 123) [on account of envy of the Norwegians that he would get no honor in Norway and hardly be fed] and the people would be "líkari dýrum en mönnum" (II: 130) [more like beasts than men]. William defends the reputation of Norway to the English, stating that he had heard that it had "margir góðir kristnir menn ok vitr konungr ok skynsamr" (II: 124) [many good Christian men and a wise and rational king]. To those gathered at Hákon's coronation feast, he confirms that he has found the tales of the English to be untrue, and adds: "ek sé hér alla hluti góða, þá sem til eru, ok betra er at hafa en missa" (II: 130) [I see here all the good things that there are, and are better to have than to miss]. How historical this speech is, or the episode on which it is based, is impossible to tell. But even a literary account of a respected outside figure—and a cardinal!—affirm Norway's good qualities, especially in relation to England, must have been very powerful.

Literary activity at the Norwegian court in the thirteenth century demonstrates an ambivalent attitude regarding Norway's relationship with the rest of Europe. Norwegians were clearly self-conscious, concerned about their position at the edge of the world and their relatively late entry into Christianity. Their translation of dozens of foreign texts, and the adoption of many foreign customs and values demonstrates that they saw certain European countries as culturally superior to some extent. Furthermore, Norway's practice of cultural absorption shifted its position within the Scandinavian literary sphere. While Norwegian kings were dependent on Icelanders for poetry for several centuries, with the romances and *Konungs skuggsjá* Norway now had something of its own to export. These texts travelled west to Iceland, where they proved enormously popular and sparked a new literary genre, as well as east and south to Sweden and Denmark. The Norwegian court even became the impetus for the composition of the earliest Swedish romances, the *Eufemiavisor*.[8] While the Norwegian

7 As in the *Historia Norwegiae* or the *Passio Sancti Olavi.*

8 The *Eufemiavisor* consist of three metrical romances composed in the first two decades of the fourteenth century and are based on the stories of *Yvain, Floire et Blanchefleur,* and a lost German poem about Duke

court would eventually dissolve as the Scandinavian monarchies began to merge in the fourteenth century, it is clear that the hundred-year period of translation in Norway had served to establish a reputation of cultural authority for the Norwegian court that lingered in memory. This is demonstrated by the fact that copyists for centuries continued to include the names of Hákon and Queen Eufemia in the texts they are believed to have patronized, but also by the almost certainly false claim at the beginning of *Viktors saga ok Blávus,* likely inspired by the author's desire to imbue his work with authority, that it was one of the many texts translated from the classical languages at the behest of Hákon Magnússon (r. 1299-1319), husband to Eufemia.[9]

Norway clearly acquired cachet in introducing new literary and cultural fashions to the North. Yet Norwegians did not slavishly translate, copy, and reproduce what they took in. Instead, they adapted texts and ideas to fit local norms and expectations and in doing so, affirmed the worth of their own traditions and identity. They do this by taking foreign elements and folding them into their native products; synthesizing, experimenting, and reshaping to make the texts and tropes and stories meaningful to themselves. This was done on a large scale, such as the restructuring of *Erex saga* which even includes an added dragon-fighting episode. It also manifests in more modest ways, such as a relatively small change in the prologue to the *Strengleikar*. Marie describes the relationship between an artistic product and its audience as a flowering plant:

> Ki Deus ad duné escïence
> E de parler bone eloquence
> Ne s'en deit taisir ne celer,
> Ainz se deit voluntiers mustrer.
> Quant uns granz biens est mult oïz,
> Dunc a primes est il fluriz,
> E quant loëz est de plusurs,
> Dunc ad espandues ses flurs (ll. 1-8).

["Anyone who has received from God the gift of knowledge and true eloquence has a duty not to remain silent: rather should one be happy to reveal such talents. When a truly beneficial thing is heard by many people, it then enjoys its first blossom, but if it is widely praised its flowers are in full bloom." (41)]

In *Strengleikar*, however, the blooming flowers become a tree in fruit:

> Ollum þæim er guð hævir let vizsku ok kunnasto ok snilld at birta þa samer æigi at fela ne lœyna lan guðs i ser. hælldr fellr þæim at syna oðrom með goðvilia þat sem guði likaðe þæim at lia. Þa bera þæir sem hinn villdaste viðr lauf ok blóm. ok sem goðlæikr

Fredrik of Normandy. They are named for their patron, Eufemia of Rügen, queen of Norway from 1300-19.

9 Rudolf Simek and Hermann Pálson categorize *Viktors saga ok Blávus* as an indigenous Icelandic romance (416); Peter A. Jorgensen also believes it an original Icelandic composition, likely from the mid-fifteenth century (316, 319).

> þæirra frægizst i annars umbotum þa fullgærezt allden þæirra ok nœrer aðra. (6)
>
> ["It is not fitting that all those to whom God has given wisdom and knowledge and the eloquence to make these known should hide and conceal God's gift within themselves; rather, it is proper that they reveal to others with good will that which it pleased God to grant them. Then they will bear leaves and blossoms like the most splendid tree, and as their goodness becomes known through the improvement of others, so will their fruit become fully ripe and nourish other people." (7)]

Why this change was made is not immediately apparent; as the translator is typically quite skilled and seems to have adhered closely to his original text, the alterations here are certainly deliberate. It may simply have been a matter of pragmatism: a tree bearing fruit is more obviously beneficial than flowers in bloom. It may also have been due to pre-existing associations the scribe had with trees. They are a well-known symbol in Old Norse literature. They have mythological connotations, they are widely used in skaldic verse as base-words in person kennings, and they feature in dreams as a symbol of the Norwegian monarchy.[10] Medieval Christianity is also rich with tree symbolism: the tree of Knowledge, the Tree of Jesse, the Cross, all representative of crucial moments of salvation history. In both Christian and Old Norse tradition, trees are associated with wisdom.

An example may be seen in *Konungs skuggsjá* when the Father explains how wisdom is distributed:

> En mannvit er með mörgum háttum, þvíat þat stendr á margskvísluðum rótum, ok vex af mannvits rótum hinn sterkasti stólpi, er vera má, ok kvíslask síðan með stórum greinum ok margfölduðum limum ok með misjöfnum kvistafjölda; eru sumir smáir, en sumir stœrri, ok skiptask svá síðan manna í millum, hljóta sumir smærri, en sumir stœrri, ok er sá auðr svá sem hann er elskaðr til. Sá er mjök vill elska þenna auð ok örliga veita, þá hlýtr hann mikit af, þvíat þessi auðœfi hafa þá náttúru, at þau dragask þeim mest til handa, er mest elskar þau, ok þeirra neytir með mestum örleik (93)
>
> ["Wisdom has many forms, for it springs from roots which have many branches. And from these roots of wisdom rises the mightiest of all stems, which again divides into large boughs, many branches, and a multitude of twigs of different sizes, some small and some large. These are later distributed among men in such a way that some obtain the larger and some the smaller ones, and these riches have their value according as they are loved. He who is sure to appreciate this wealth and share it freely receives a large amount; for the nature of this possession is such that it is most attracted to him who loves it most and uses it most liberally" (230)].

The metaphors in these two examples are not quite the same: in *Konungs skuggsjá* wisdom is

10 There are two dreams in *Heimskringla* where trees stand as symbols of royal progeny. The first is in *Hálfdanar saga svarta*, and it is explained in *Haralds saga hárfagri*. The second is a dream that Sigurðr Jórsalafari has in *Magnússona saga*.

distributed amongst people in the form of twigs of various size, while in *Strengleikar* the tree is a representation of the person.[11] Both share the sentiment that people are called to share their gifts. In so doing, the individual thrives and society benefits. The change in metaphor in *Strengleikar* from the product blossoming to the person blooming and producing fruit may therefore indicate a desire to emphasize the virtue of acting for the benefit of others. This value is at the heart of the ideas of court that are developing in the thirteenth century. It is a place to grow, to learn, but most of all to share that learning, in service not just of the king, but of the country.

11 This is another difference from Marie, where it is the work that blossoms as it is shared and praised.

BIBLIOGRAPHY[1]

Primary Sources

De Nugis Curialium

Map, Walter. 1983. *De Nugis Curialium. Courtiers' Trifles*. Ed. and trans. M. R. James. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Der Welsche Gast

Thomasin von Zirclaria. 2009. *Der Welsche Gast (The Italian Guest)*. Ed. and trans. Marion Gibbs and Winder McConnell. Medieval German Texts in Bilingual Editions IV. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications.

Diplomatarium Norvegicum. 1847-. Christiania: P. T. Malling.

Edda

Grape, Anders, ed. 1962. *Snorre Sturlasons Edda. Uppsala-Handskriften DG 11.* 2 vols. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell.

Heimir Pálsson, ed. 2012. *Snorri Sturluson. The Uppsala Edda.* Trans. Anthony Faulkes. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.

Egils saga Skallagrímssonar. 1933. Ed. Sigurður Nordal. Íslenzk fornrit 2. Hið Íslenzka Fornritafélag. Reykjavík.

Elis saga ok Rosamundu. Mit Einleitung, deutscher Übersetzung und Anmerkungen zum ersten Mal herausgegeben von Eugen Kölbing. 1881. Ed. Eugen Kölbing. Heilbronn: Gebr. Henninger.

Elucidarius

Firchow, Evelyn Scherabon, ed. and trans. 1992. *The Old Norse* Elucidarius. Columbia, SC: Camden House.

Eyrbyggja saga. 1935. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson. Íslenzk fornrit 4. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Germania

Tacitus, P. Cornelius. 1988. *Germania*. Ed. Allan A. Lund. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.

1 Works by Icelanders are alphabetized by first name.

_____. 1999. *Germania*. Trans. J. B. Rives. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gesta Danorum

Saxo Grammaticus. 2005. *Gesta Danorum: Danmarkshistorien*. Ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, trans. Peter Zeeberg. 2 vols. Copenhagen: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab.

Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar. 1936. Ed. Guðni Jónsson. Íslenzk fornrit 7. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu. 1938. Ed. Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson. *Borgfirðinga sögur*. Íslenzk fornrit 3. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag. 49-108.

Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar

Sturla Þórðarson. 1860-8. *Hákonar saga hins gamla*. *Flateyjarbók: En samling af norsk konge-sagaer med indskudte mindre fortællinger om begivenheder i og udenfor Norge samt annaler*. Ed. Guðbrandur Vigfússon and C. R. Unger. 3 vols. Oslo: P. T. Malling. III: 3-233.

_____. 1887. *Hakonar saga and a fragment of Magnus saga, with appendices*. Ed. Gudbrand Vigfusson [Guðbrandur Vigfússon]. Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores. Icelandic Sagas, and other historical documents relating to the settlements and descents of the northmen on the British Isles 2. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

_____. 1894. *The Saga of Hacon, and a fragment of The Saga of Magnus, with appendices*. Trans. G. W. Dasent. Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores. Icelandic Sagas, and other historical documents relating to the settlements and descents of the northmen on the British Isles 4. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. [rprt 1964].

_____. 1910. *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*. Ed. A. Kjær. *Det Arnamagnæanske Haandskrift 81a Fol. (Skálholtsbók yngsta)*. 5 vols. Kristiania: Det Mallingske Bogtrykkeri.

_____. 1977. *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar: etter Sth. 8 fol., AM 325 VIII, 4° og AM 304, 4°*. Ed. Marina Mundt. Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt.

_____. 2013. *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*. Ed. Þorleifur Hauksson, Sverrir Jakobsson, and Tor Ulset. 2 vols. Íslenzk fornrit 31-2. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Hallfreðar saga. 1939. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson. *Vatnsdœla saga.* Íslenzk fornrit 8. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag. 133-200.

Háttatal

Edda: Háttatal. 2007. Ed. Anthony Faulkes. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.

Heimskringla. 1941. Ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson. 3 vols. Íslenzk fornrit 26-8. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Hirðskrá

Berge, Lawrence G. 1968. *Hirðskrá 1-37, a translation with notes*. M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin.

Imsen, Steinar, ed. 2000. *Hirdskråen. Hirdloven til Norges konge og hans håndgangne menn*. Oslo: Riksarkivet.

Keyser, R. and P. A. Munch, eds. 1848. *Hirdskraa, udgiven af Kong Magnus Haakonssön. Norges gamle love indtil 1387. II: Lovgivningen under Kong Magnus Haakonssöns Regjeringstid fra 1263 til 1280*. 5 vols. Christiania: Chr. Gröndahl. II: 387-450.

Historia Norwegiae

Phelpstead, Carl, ed. 2001. *A History of Norway and The Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*. Trans. Devra Kunin. Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series XIII. London: Viking Society for Northern Research. 1-25.

Hungrvaka. 2002. Ed. Ásdís Egilsdóttir. *Biskupa sögur II*. Íslenzk fornrit 16. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag. 1-43.

Íslendinga saga

Sturla Þórðarson. 1878. *Íslendinga saga*. *Sturlunga saga* 1878, I: 189-409, II: 1-274.

Íslendingabók

Ari fróði Þorgilsson. 1968. *Íslendingabók*. Ed. Anne Holtsmark. Oslo: Dreyers Forlag.

Íslendings þáttr sögufróða. In *Morkinskinna* 1932, 199-200.

Ívens saga

Blaisdell, Foster W., Jr. 1979. *Ívens saga.* Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, 18. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel.

_____, ed. 1980. *The Sagas of Ywain and Tristan and other tales. AM 489 4to*. Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile XII. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger.

Blaisdell, Foster W., Jr. and Marianne Kalinke. 1977. *Erex saga and Ívens saga. The Old Norse Versions of Chrétien de Troyes's Erec and Yvain*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Kalinke, Marianne E., ed. and trans. 1999. *Ívens saga*. *Norse Romance II: The Knights of the Round Table.* Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Archives IV. 3 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 33-102.

Kölbing, Eugen, ed. 1872. *Ívens saga*. *Riddarasögur. Zum ersten Mal herausgegeben und mit einer literarhistorischen Einleitung versehen*. Strassburg, London: Karl J.

Trübner. 73-136.
_____, ed. 1898. *Ívens saga*. Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek, 7. Halle a.S.: Max Niemeyer.
Slay, Desmond, ed. 1972. *Romances: Perg. 4:o nr 6 in the Royal Library, Stockholm*. Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile X. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger.

Konungs skuggsjá

Brenner, Oscar. 1881. *Speculum regale. Ein altnorwegischer Dialog nach Cod. Arnamagn. 243 Fol. B und den ältesten Fragmenten*. München: Christian Kaiser.
Einersen, Halfdan. 1768. *Kongs-Skugg-sio utlögd a Daunsku og Latinu. Det Kongelige Speil med Dansk og Latinsk Oversættelse, samt noble Anmærkninger, Register, og Forberedelser. Speculum Regale cum interpretatione Danica et Latina, variis lectionibus, notis, &c.* Sorøe.
Finnur Jónsson, ed. 1920. *Konungs skuggsjá. Speculum regale. Udgivet efter håndskrifterne af det Kongelige nordiske oldskriftselskab*. 2 vols. Kjøbenhavn: Gyldendal.
Flom, George T., ed. 1915. *The Arnamagnean Manuscript 243 Bα, folio at Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen. The main manuscript of Konungs skuggsjá in phototypic reproduction with diplomatic text*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
Holm-Olsen, Ludvig, ed. 1983. *Konungs skuggsjá*. 2nd rev. ed. Oslo: Norsk Historisk Kjeldeskrift-Institutt.
_____, ed. 1987. *The King's Mirror: AM 243 a fol.* Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile XVII. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger.
Keyser, R., P. A. Munch, and C. R. Unger, eds. 1848. *Kongespeilet. Et philosophisk-didaktisk skrift, forfattet i Norge mod slutningen af det tolfte aarhundrede*. Christiania: Werner.
Larson, Laurence Marcellus, trans. 1917. *The King's Mirror*. New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation.
Seip, D. A., and Ludvig Holm-Olsen, eds. 1947. *Konungs skuggsiá. Speculum regale. De norske håndskrifter I faksimile. Festgave fra Universitetet i Oslo til H. M. Kong Haakon VII på hans 75-årsdag 3. august 1947*. Oslo: [University of Oslo].

Lais

Marie de France. 1966. *Les Lais de Marie de France*. Ed. Jean Rychner. Paris: Champion.
_____. 1999. *The Lais of Marie de France*. Trans. Glen S. Burgess and Keith Busby. London: Penguin.

Las siete partidas. 2001. Ed. Robert I. Burns. Trans. Samuel Parsons Scott. 5 vols. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Laxdœla saga. 1934. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson. Íslensk fornrit 5. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Morkinskinna

Andersson, Theodore M. and Kari Ellen Gade, trans. 2000. *Morkinskinna: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle of the Norwegian Kings (1030-1157)*. Islandica LI. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Finnur Jónsson, ed. 1932. *Morkinskinna*. Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur 53. København: J. Jørgensen.

Möttuls saga

Cederschiöld, Gustaf, and F.-A. Wulff. 1877. *Versions nordiques du fabliau français "Le mantel mautaillié." Textes et notes*. Lunds Universitets Årsskrift 13. Lund: Gleerup.

Gísli Brynjúlfsson, ed. 1878. *Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd samt Möttuls saga*. Kjöbenhavn: Det kongelige nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab. 215-42.

Kalinke, Marianne E., ed. 1987. *Möttuls saga, with an edition of Le Lai du cort mantel by Philip E. Bennett*. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel.

_____, ed. and trans. 1999. *Möttuls saga*. *Norse Romance II: The Knights of the Round Table*. Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Archives IV. 3 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 1-32.

Nítíða saga. 2009. Ed. and trans. Sheryl McDonald. *Leeds Studies in English* New Series XL: 119-146.

Parcevals saga

Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, ed. 1954. *Parcevals saga*. *Riddarasögur* IV. Reykjavík: Íslendingasagnaútgsáfan. 195-285.

Kölbing, Eugen, ed. 1872. *Riddarasögur. Zum ersten Mal herausgegeben und mit einer literarhistorischen Einleitung versehen*. Strassburg, London: Karl J. Trübner. 1-71.

Maclean, Helen. 1968. *A critical edition, complete with introduction, notes and select glossary of* Parcevals saga*: from the Stockholm manuscript codex holmiensis pergament no. 6, quarto.* M. Phil. Diss., University of Leeds.

Wolf, Kirsten, ed. 1999. *Parcevals saga with Valvens þáttr*. Trans. Helen Maclean. *Norse Romance II: The Knights of the Round Table*. Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Archives IV. 3 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 103-216.

Passio Sancti Olavi

Phelpstead, Carl, ed. 2001. *A History of Norway and The Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*. Trans. Devra Kunin. Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series XIII. London: Viking Society for Northern Research. 26-74.

Perceval/Le conte du graal

Chrétien de Troyes. 1993. *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal. Édition critique d'après tous les manuscrits*. Ed. Keith Busby. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer.

Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 2: from c. 1035 to c. 1300. 2009. Ed. Kari Ellen Gade. 2 vols. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 2. Turnhout: Brepolis.

Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga. Den store saga om Olav den hellige, eftir pergamenthåndskrift i Kungliga Biblioteket i Stockholm nr. 2 4to med varianter fra andre håndskrifter. 1941. Ed. Oscar Albert Johnsen and Jón Helgason. 2 vols. Oslo: Jacob Dybwad.

Skáldatal

Jón Sigurðsson et. al. 1848-87. Edda Snorra Sturlusonar. 3 vols. Hafniæ: Legatus Arnamagnæani. III: 251-86.

SkP II = *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 2: from c. 1035 to c. 1300*.

Stjórn, AM 227 fol. A Norwegian Version of the Old Testament Transcribed in Iceland. 1956. Ed. Didrik Arup Seip. Corpus codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi XX. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.

Strengleikar

Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, ed. 2006. *Strengleikar*. Reykjavík: Bókmenntafræðistofnun Háskóla Íslands.

Budal, Ingvil Brügger. 2009. *Strengleikar og Lais. Høviske noveller i omsetjing frå gammalfransk til gammalnorsk*. 2 vols. Ph. D. Diss., University of Bergen.

Cook, Robert and Mattias Tveitane, eds. 1979. *Strengleikar. An Old Norse Translation of Twenty-One Old French Lais*. Oslo: Norsk Historisk Kjeldeskrift-Institutt.

Keyser, R. and C. R. Unger, eds. 1850. *Strengleikar eða Lioðabok. En Samling af romantiske Fortællinger efter bretonisk Folesange (lais), oversat fra Fransk paa Norsk ved Midten af trettende Aarhundrede efter Foranstaltning af Kon Haakon Haakonssön*. Christiania: Feilberg & Landmark.

Tveitane, Mattias, ed. 1972. *Elis saga, Strengleikar and other texts: Uppsala University Library, Delagardieska samlingen nos. 4-7 folio and AM 666b quarto*. Corpus codicum Norvegicorum Medii Aevi. Quarto serie vol. 4. Oslo: Selskapet til utgivelse av gamle norske håndskrifter.

Sturlu þáttr. 1946. *Sturlunga saga*. Ed. Jón Jóhannesson, Magnús Finnbogason, and Kristján Eldjárn. 2 vols. Reykjavík: Sturlunguútgáfan. II: 227-36.

Sturlunga saga. 1878. Ed. Guðbrandur Vigfússon. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sverris saga. 2007. Ed. Þorleifur Hauksson. Íslenzk fornrit 30. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.

Third Grammatical Treatise

Óláfr Þórðarson. 1927. *Málhljóða- og Málskrúðsrit: Grammatisk-retorisk afhandling*. Ed. Finnur Jónsson. Det kgl. danske videnskabernes selskab. Historisk-filologiske meddelelser 13, 2. København: Høst.

Tristrams saga

Gísli Brynjúlfsson, ed. 1878. *Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd samt Möttuls saga*. Kjöbenhavn: Det kongelige nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab.

Jorgensen, Peter, ed. and trans. 1999. *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*. *Norse Romance I: The Tristan Legend*. Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Archives IV. 3 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 23-226.

Kölbing, Eugen, ed. 1878. *Tristrams saga ok Ísondar. Mit einer literarhistorischen Einleitung, deutscher Uebersetzung und Anmerkungen.* Heilbronn: Gebr. Henninger.

Schach, Paul, trans. 1973. *The Saga of Tristram and Ísönd*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Tristramskvæði. 1999. Ed. and trans. Robert Cook. *Norse Romance I: The Tristan Legend*. Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Archives IV. 3 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 227-39.

Tristan

Lacy, Norris J., ed. 1998. *Early French Tristan Poems*. 2 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

Tristan und Isolde

Gottfried von Strassburg. 2011. *Tristan und Isold*. Ed. Walter Haug and Manfred Günter Scholz. Berlin: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag.

_____. 2004. *Tristan*. Ed. and trans. A. T. Hatto. London: Penguin.

Tristrant

Eilhart von Oberge. 1978. *Tristrant.* Trans. J. W. Thomas. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Viktors saga ok Blávus

Saga af Victor ok Blávus. 1972. Ed. and trans. Allen H. Chappel. Hague: Mouton.

Yvain

Chrétien de Troyes. 1994. *Le chevalier au lion*. Ed. David F. Hult. Paris: Livre de poche.

Secondary Sources

Ågotnes, Anne, and Ingvild Øye, eds. 2011. *Fra kongssete til kulturminne: Håkonshallen og Bergenhus-området gjennom 750 år*. Bergen: John Grieg Forlag.

Álfrún Gunnlaugsdóttir. 1978. *Tristán en el norte*. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar.

_____. 2000. "'How great had been the love between them': key issues in the *Saga of Tristram and Ísönd*." *De consolatione philologiae: Studies in Honor of Evelyn S. Firchow*. Ed. Anna Grotans, Heinrich Beck and Anton Schwob. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 682. 2 vols. Göppingen: Kümmerle. 119-136.

Almazan, Vincent. 1988. "Translations at the Castilian and Norwegian courts in the thirteenth century: parallels and patterns." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 12: 213-32. [printed also in *Edda* 90 (1): 14-27, 1990]

Andersson, Theodore M. 1969. "Skalds and Troubadours." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 2: 7-41.

_____. 1994. "The Politics of Snorri Sturluson." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. 93 (1): 55-78.

_____. 1999. "The King of Iceland." *Speculum* 74 (4): 923-934.

_____. 2008. "The Native Romance of Gunnlaugr and Helga the Fair." *Romance and Love in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iceland.* Ed. Kirsten Wolf and Johanna Denzin. Islandica LIV. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Library. 33-64.

Ármann Jakobsson. 1997. *Í leit að konungi: Konungsmynd íslenskra konungasagna*. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan.

Ashurst, David. 2006. "Imagining Paradise." *The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature. Sagas and the British Isles. Preprint Papers of the Thirteenth International Saga Conference, Durham and York, 6th-12th August, 2006.* Ed. John McKinnell, David Ashurst, and Donata Kirk. 2 vols. Durham: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Durham University. I: 70-80.

_____. 2007. "The Ironies in Cardinal William of Sabina's Supposed Pronouncement on Icelandic Independence." *Saga-Book* 31: 39-45.

_____. 2009. *The Ethics of Empire in the Saga of Alexander the Great: A Study based on MS AM 519a 4to*. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan.

Bagge, Sverre. 1974. "Forholdet mellom Kongespeilet og Stjórn." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 89: 163-202.

_____. 1986. "Formation of the State and Concepts of Society in 13th Century Norway." *Continuity and Change: political institutions and literary monuments in the middle ages. A symposium.* Ed. Elisabeth Vestergaard. Odense: Odense University Press. 43-59.

_____. 1987. *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*. Odense: Odense University Press.

_____. 1993. "The Norwegian Monarchy in the Thirteenth Century." *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe.* Ed. A. Duggan. Short Run Press, Exeter. 159-78.

_____. 1996. *From Gang Leader to the Lord's Anointed: Kingship in* Sverris saga *and* Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar. Odense: Odense University Press.

_____. 2000. "Old Norse Theories of Society: From *Rígsþula* to *Konungs skuggsjá*." *Speculum*

*regale: Der altnorwegische Königsspiegel (*Konungs skuggsjá*) in der europäischen Tradition*. Wien: Fassbaender. 7-45.
_____. 2003. "Ideologies and mentalities." *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*. Vol. 1: Prehistory to 1520. Ed. Knut Helle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 465-86.
_____. 2010. *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom: State Formation in Norway, c. 900-1350.* Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
Barnes, Geraldine. 1975. "The riddarasögur and mediæval European literature." *Medieval Scandinavia* 8: 140-158.
_____. 1977. "The *Riddarasögur*: A Medieval Exercise in Translation." *Saga-Book* 19: 403-441.
_____. 1984. "Parcevals Saga: Riddara Skuggsjá?" *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 99: 49-62.
_____. 1987. "Arthurian Chivalry in Old Norse." *Arthurian Literature* VII. 50-102.
_____. 1989. "Some current issues in *riddarasögur* research." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 104: 73-88.
_____. 1999. "Tristan in Late Medieval Norse Literature: Saga and Ballad." *Tristan und Isolt im Spätmittelalter. Vorträge eines interdisziplinären Symposiums Vom 3. Bis 8. Juni 1996 an Der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen.* Ed. Xenja von Ertzdorff. Amsterdam and Atlanta. 373-96.
Baumgartner, Emmanuèle. 1975. "A propos du *Mantel mautaillié.*" *Romania* 96: 315-32.
Bédier, Joseph. 1893. *Les fabliaux: études de littérature populaire et d'histoire littéraire du moyen âge*. Paris: Émile Bouillon.
Bennett, P. E. 1978. "Le *Lai du Cort Mantel* et la critique de la courtoisie." *Les Lettres Romanes*. 32 (2-3): 103-21.
Bernheimer, Richard. 1970. *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*. New York: Octagon Books.
Bjarni Einarsson. 1961. *Skáldasögur. Um uppruna og eðli ástaskáldasagnanna fornu*. Reykjavík: Bókútgáfa Menningarsjóðs.
_____. 1971. "The Lovesick Skald." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 4: 21-41.
_____. 1974. "On the Rôle of Verse in Saga-Literature." *Medieval Scandinavia* 7: 118-25.
Blaisdell, Foster W., Jr. 1967. "The Value of the Valueless: A Problem in Editing Medieval Texts." *Scandinavian Studies* 39 (1): 40-6.
_____. 1969. "*Ívens saga*: Names." *Scandinavian Studies* 41 (1):30-40.
_____. 1974. "The so-called "Tristram-group" of the Riddarasögur." *Scandinavian Studies* 46 (2): 134-9.
Blakeslee, Merritt R. 1986. "*Mouvance* and Revisionism in the Transmission of Thomas of Britain's *Tristan*: The Episode of the Intertwining Trees." *Arthurian Literature* VI. 124-156.
Bloch, R. Howard. *The Scandal of the Fabliaux*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
Blom, Otto. 1867. "Bemærkninger om Kongespejlets Affattelsestid." *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*. 1st series. 2: 65-109.
Bornholdt, Claudia. 2011. "The Old Norse-Icelandic Transmission of Chrétien de Troyes's Romances: *Ívens saga*, *Erex saga*, *Parcevals saga* with *Valvens þáttr*." *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in Norse and Rus' Realms.* Ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages V. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 98-122.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1989. "Social Space and Symbolic Power." *Sociological Theory* 7 (1): 14-25.
Brégaint, David. 2009. "The Royal Order in Norwegian diplomas, 1202-1263." *Collegium Medievale* 22: 55-86.
_____. 2012. "Conquering Minds: *Konungs skuggsjá* and the Annexation of Iceland in the Thirteenth Century." *Scandinavian Studies* 84 (4): 439-66.
Bruckner, Matilda Tomaryn. 1995. "The Representation of the Lovers' Death: Thomas' *Tristan* as Open Text." *Tristan and Isolde: A Casebook*. Ed. Joan Tasker Grimbert. New York: Garland Publishing. 95-109.
Budal, Ingvil Brügger. 2011. "Who is 'I'? Translation of *riddarasögur* as a collective performance." *Scripta Islandica* 62: 5-18.
_____. 2012. "Ei historie om naselause kvinner og varulvklede." In Johansson and Flaten, 203-230.
Bumke, Joachim. 1991. *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Burgess, Glyn S. 1987. *The Lais of Marie de France: Text and Context*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
Burrows, Hannah. 2009. "Rhyme and Reason: Lawspeaker-Poets in Medieval Iceland." *Scandinavian Studies* 81 (2): 215-38.
Busby, Keith. 1993. "The Text of Chrétien's *Perceval* in MS London, College of Arms, Arundel XIV." *Anglo-Norman Anniversary Essays*. Ed. Ian Short. London: Anglo-Norman Text Society.
Cassidy-Welch, Megan. 2010. "Space and Place in Medieval Contexts." *Parergon* 27: 1-12.
Cederschiöld, Gustaf. 1884. *Fornsögur Suðrlanda*. Lund: Berling.
Chase, Martin. 1993. "Christian Poetry: 2. West Norse." *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. Philip Pulsiano and Kristen Wolf. New York: Garland. 72-7.
Chaytor, H. J. 1945. *From script to print: an introduction to medieval literature*. Cambridge: The University Press.
Cleasby, Richard and Gudbrand Vigfusson [Guðbrandur Vigfússon]. 1957. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Clover, Carol J. 1986. "*Völsunga saga* and the Missing Lay of Marie de France." *Sagnaskemmtun. Studies in Honour of Hermann Pálsson on his 65th birthday, 26 May 1986*. Ed. Rudolf Simek, Jónas Kristjánsson, Hans Bekker-Nielsen. Wien: Hermann Böhlaus. 79-84.
Clunies Ross, Margaret. 1987. "Fimm líkamsins vit: The development of a new lexical set in early Norse Christian literature." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 102: 197-206.
_____. 1999. "From Iceland to Norway: Essential Rites of Passage for an Early Icelandic Skald." *alvíssmál* 9: 55-72.
_____. 2000a. "The conservation and reinterpretation of myth in medieval Icelandic writings." In Clunies Ross 2000b, 116-139.
_____, ed. 2000b. *Old Icelandic Literature and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
_____. 2005. *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
Cook, Robert. 1997. "Journeys to Norway (and other Foreign Parts) in *Njáls saga*." *Sagas and*

the Norwegian Experience: Sagaene og Noreg. Preprints. Fortrykk. 10 Internasjonale sagakonferanse. 10th International Saga Conference. Trondheim, 3-9 August 1997. Trondheim: Senter for middelalderstudier. 130-8.

Costa Gomes, Rita. 2003. *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal.* Trans. Alison Aiken. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cubitt, Catherine. 2003. "Introduction." *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages*. *The Proceedings of the First Alcuin Conference*. Ed. Catherine Cubitt. Turnhout: Brepols. 1-15.

Curtius, Ernst Robert. 1953. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Trans. Willard R. Trask. Bollingen series XXXVI. New York: Pantheon.

Daae, Ludvig. 1896. "Studier angaaende Kongespeilet." *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*. 2nd series. 11: 171-96.

Dahl, Willy. 1960. "Kjøpmannsbolken i Konungs skuggsjá —en parafrase over Hávamál, str. 57-65." *Maal og Minne* No. 1-2: 48-55.

Diverres, Armel H. 1981. "Yvain's Quest for Chivalric Perfection." *An Arthurian Tapestry: essays in memory of Lewis Thorpe*. Ed. Kenneth Varty. Glasgow: Published on behalf of the British branch of the International Arthurian Society at the French Department of the University of Glasgow. 214-28.

Duggan, Joseph J. 2001. *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Duindam, Jeroen. 1994. *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court.* Trans. Lorri S. Granger and Gerard T. Moran. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Einar Már Jónsson. 1987. "La Situation du Speculum Regale dans la littérature occidentale." *Études Germaniques* 42 (2): 391-408.

Ekroll, Øystein. 1998. "Norwegian medieval castles: building on the edge of Europe." *Château Gaillard: Études de Castellologie médiévale* XVIII. *Actes du Colloque International tenu à Gilleleje (Danemark).* Caen: Centre de recherches archéologiques médiévales. 65-73.

Elias, Norbert. 2012. *On the Process of Civilisation* [*The Civilizing Process*]. rev. ed. *The Collected Works of Norbert Elias* 3. Dublin: University College Dublin Press.

Eming, Jutta, Ann Marie Rasmussen, and Kathryn Starkey, eds. 2012. *Visuality and Materiality in the Story of Tristan and Isolde*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Eriksen, Stefka Georgieva. 2007. "Popular Culture and Royal Propaganda in Norway and Iceland in the 13th Century." *Collegium Medievale* 20: 99-135.

_____. 2013. "Mode of Reception and Function of Medieval Texts: A Comparative Study of *Elye de Saint-Gilles* and *Elis saga ok Rósamundu*." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 112 (1): 1-25.

Falk, Hjalmar. 1920. "Militærvesenet —Klædedrakt —Hår og skjegg." In Tveitane 1971, 144-52.

Ferrante, Joan. 1984. *Self-Imprisonment of Man & Society in Courtly Codes.* Andrew W. Mellon Lectures. New Orleans: The Graduate School of Tulane University.

Ferrari, Fulvio. 2008. "Literature as a performative act: *Erikskrönikan* and the making of a nation." *Lärdomber oc skämptan*: *Medieval Swedish Literature Reconsidered*. Ed. Massimiliano Bampi and Fulvio Ferrari. Uppsala: Svenska fornskriftsällskapet. 55-80.
Fidjestøl, Bjarne. 1982. *Det norrøne fyrstediktet*. Øvre Ervik: Alvheim & Eide.
_____. 1997a. "'Have you heard a poem worth more?' A note on the economic background of early skaldic praise poetry." *Selected Papers*. Ed. Odd Einar Haugen and Else Mundal. Trans. Peter Foote. Odense: Odense University Press. 117-32.
_____. 1997b. "The king's skald from Kvinesdal and his poetry." *Selected Papers*. Ed. Odd Einar Haugen and Else Mundal. Trans. Peter Foote. Odense: Odense University Press. 68-92.
_____. 1997c. "Romantic reading at the court of Hákon Hákonarson." *Selected Papers*. Ed. Odd Einar Haugen and Else Mundal. Trans. Peter Foote. Odense: Odense University Press. 351-65.
_____. 1999. *The Dating of Eddic Poetry*. Ed. Odd Einar Haugen. Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 41. Copenhagen: Reitzel.
Finlay, Alison. 1995. "Skalds, troubadours and sagas." *Saga-Book* 24: 105-153.
_____. 1997. "Kings and Icelanders in Poets' Sagas and Þættir." *Sagas and the Norwegian Experience: Sagaene og Noreg. Preprints. Fortrykk. 10 Internasjonale sagakonferanse. 10th International Saga Conference. Trondheim, 3-9 August 1997*. Trondheim: Senter for middelalderstudier. 159-68.
_____. 2000. "Skald Sagas in their Literary Context 2: Possible European Contexts." *Skaldsagas. Text, Vocation, and Desire in the Icelandic Sagas of Poets.* Ed. Russell Poole. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter. 232–71.
_____. 2004. "Intolerable Love: Tristrams Saga and the Carlisle Tristan Fragment." *Medium Ævum* 73: 205–24.
Flom, George T. 1921. *The Language of the* Konungs Skuggsjá (Speculum Regale) *According to the Chief Manuscript, AM. 243 B α, Fol.* University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature VII, no. 3. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
Foote, P[eter]. G. 1969. "Gangandi Greiði." *Einarsbók. Afmæliskveðja til Einars Ól. Sveinssonar 12. desember 1969.* Ed. Bjarni Guðnason, Halldór Halldórsson and Jónas Kristjánsson. [Reykjavík]: Nokkrir vinir. 48-58.
_____. 1977 (for 1975). "Saman er broeðra eign bezt at sjá. A personal view of recent scholarship in fields of mutual Norse-Romance interest." *Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Studies* 7-26.
_____. 1984. "Beginnings and Endings." *Aurvandilstá: Norse Studies.* Ed. Michael Barnes, Hans Bekker-Nielsen, and Gerd Wolfgang Weber. Odense: Odense University Press. 236-48.
_____. 1984. "Latin rhetoric and Icelandic poetry: Some contacts." *Aurvandilstá*. Ed. Michael Barnes, Hans Bekker-Nielsen, and Gerd Wolfgang Weber. Odense: Odense University Press. 249-70.
Fouracre, Paul. 2001. "Space, Culture, and Kingdoms in Early Medieval Europe." *The Medieval World*. Ed. Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson. London: Routledge. 366-80.
Frank, Roberta. 1978. *Old Norse Court Poetry: The Dróttkvætt Verse*. Islandica XLII. Ithaca:

Cornell University Press.
_____. 1994. "When Poets Address Princes." *Sagnaþing helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni sjötugum 10. apríl 1994*. 2 vols. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag. I: 189-95.
_____. 2005. "Skaldic Poetry." *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide*. Ed. Carol J. Clover and John Lindow. Islandica XLV. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 157-96.
Fritzner, Johan. 1886-96. *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog.* 3 vols. Kristiania: Den norske Forlagsforening.
Gade, Kari Ellen. 1995. *The Structure of Old Norse* Dróttkvætt *Poetry*. Islandica XLIX. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
_____. 2000. "Poetry and its changing importance in medieval Icelandic culture." In Clunies Ross 2000b, 61-95.
Geelmuyden, Hans. 1883. "Om stedet for Kongespeilets forfattelse." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 1: 205-8.
Gísli Sigurðsson. 2000. "Óláfr Þórðarson hvítaskáld and oral poetry in the west of Iceland *c.* 1250: the evidence of references to poetry in *The Third Grammatical Treatise.*" In Clunies Ross 2000b, 96-116.
Gløersen, Ingeborg. 1972. *Kongespeilet og Las siete partidas*. Oslo: Universitetsforlag.
Guðrún Nordal. 1992. "Skáldið Snorri Sturluson." *Snorrastefna: 25.-27. júlí 1990.* Ed. Úlfar Bragason. Reykjavík: Stofnun Sigurðar Nordals. 52-69.
_____. 2001. *Tools of Literacy: The Role of Skaldic Verse in Icelandic Textual Culture of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Guerreau, Alain. 1996. "Quelques caractères spécifiques de l'espace féodal européen." *L'État ou le roi: Les fondations de la modernité monarchique en France (XIV^e^-XVII^e^ siècles)*. Ed. Neithard Bulst, Robert Descimon, and Alain Guerreau. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme. 85-101.
Hallberg, Peter. 1971. "Norröna riddarasagor. Några språkdrag." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 86: 114-38.
_____. 1973. "Broder Robert, *Tristrams saga*, och *Duggals leizla*." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 88: 55-71.
_____. 1975. "Is there a 'Tristram-Group' of the *riddarasögur*?" *Scandinavian Studies* 47 (1): 1-17.
Hallseth, Benedicte Tullinius. 1967. "Irland-afsnittet i Konungs skuggsjá. Til spørgsmaalet om værkets komposition." *Maal og Minne* No. 1-4: 50-63.
Halvorsen, Eyvind Fjeld. 1959. *The Norse Version of the Chanson de Roland.* Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
_____. 1973. "Norwegian Court Literature in the Middle Ages." *Orkney Miscellany* 5: 17-26.
_____. 1974. "Translation —Adaptation —Imitation." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 7: 56-60.
Hamre, Lars. 1961. "Hird." *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid*. 22 vols. København: Rosenkilde og Bagger. 6: 568-77.
Hanawalt, Barbara. 1998. "Medieval English Women in Rural and Urban Domestic Space." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52: 19-26.
Harris, Joseph. 1972. "Genre and Narrative Structure in some *Íslendinga þættir.*" *Scandinavian Studies* 44: 1-27.

_____. 1976. "Theme and Genre in some *Íslendinga Þættir.*" *Scandinavian Studies* 48: 1-28.
Harris, Sylvia C. 1977. "The Cave of Lovers in the 'Tristramssaga' and related romances." *Romania: Revue trimestrielle consacrée à l'étude des langues et des littératures romanes* 98: 306-330 & 460-500.
Helle, Knut. 1972. *Konge og gode menn i norsk riksstyring ca. 1150-1319.* Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.
_____. 1981. "Norway in the High Middle Ages: Recent views on the structure of society." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 6: 161-89.
Hermann Pálsson. 1973. "Hákonar Saga—Portrait of a King." *Orkney Miscellany* 5: 49-56.
_____. 1998. "Snorri Sturluson and the Everlasting Battle." *Snorri Sturluson: Herausgegeben von Hans Fix*. Berline: Walter de Gruyter. 44-56.
Hofmann, Dietrich. 1973. "Die Königsspiegel-Zitate in der Stiórn. Ihre Bedeutung für die Entstehungs- und Textgeschichte beider Werke." *Skandinavistik* 3: 1-40.
Holm-Olsen, Ludvig. 1952. *Håndskriftene av* Konungs Skuggsjá. Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 13. Hafniæ: Ejnar Munksgaard.
_____. 1970. "Konungs skuggsjá og norrøn poesi." In Tveitane 1971, 104-9.
_____. 1981. "The Prologue to *The King's Mirror*: Did the author of the work write it?" *Specvlvm norroenvm: Norse studies in memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre*. Ed. Ursula Dronke et. al. Odense: Odense University Press. 223-42.
Holtsmark, Anne. 1956. "Kongespeilet og eplene i Edens have." In Tveitane 1971, 80-92.
_____. 1960. Review: *The Norse Version of the Chanson de Roland* by E. F. Halvorsen. *Arv* 16: 187-98.
_____. 1964. "Kongespeillitteratur." *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid*. 22 vols. København: Rosenkilde og Bagger. 9: 61-68.
Hunt, Tony. 1977. "The Dialectic of Yvain." *The Modern Language Review* 72 (2): 285-99.
_____. 1979. "Chrestien de Troyes: The Textual Problem." *French Studies* 33 (3): 257-71.
Hunt, Tony and Geoffrey Bromiley. 2006. "The Tristan legend in Old French verse." *The Arthur of the French: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval French and Occitan Literature*. Ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Karen Pratt. Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages 4. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 112-34.
Husband, Timothy. 1980. *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Jacobs, M. A. 2014. "Hon stóð ok starði: Vision, Love, and Gender in *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu.*" *Scandinavian Studies* [forthcoming, 86 (2)].
Jaeger, C. Stephen. 1985. *The Origins of Courtliness. Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals 939-1210*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Jansson, Valter. 1945. *Eufemiavisorna: En filologisk undersökning.* Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 8. Uppsala: A. B. Lundequistska bokhandeln.
Jespersen, Leon. 2002. "Court and Nobility in Early Modern Denmark." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 27: 129-142.
Jochens, Jenny M. 1987. "The Politics of Reproduction: Medieval Norwegian Kingship." *The American Historical Review* 92 (2): 327-49.
Johansson, Karl G. and Rune Flaten, eds. 2012. *Francia et Germania: Studies in* Strengleikar

and Þiðreks saga af Bern. Oslo: Novus Forlag.
Jón Jóhannesson. 1974. *A History of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth.* Trans. Haraldur Bessason. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
Jonsson, Bengt R. 1991. "Oral Literature, Written Literature: The Ballad and Old Norse Genres." *The Ballad and Oral Literature*. Ed. Joseph Harris. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 139-70.
Jorgensen, Peter A. 1972. "The Icelandic Translations from Middle English." *Studies for Einar Haugen*. ed. Evelyn Scherabon Firchow et. al. Mouton: The Hague. 305-320.
Kaeuper, Richard. 2000. "The societal role of chivalry in romance: northwestern Europe." *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*. Ed. Roberta L. Krueger. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 97-114.
Kalinke, Marianne E. 1971. "A Structural Comparison of Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec et Enide* and the Norse *Erex saga*." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 4: 54-65.
_____. 1977. "*Erex saga* and *Ívens saga*: Medieval Approaches to Translation." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 92: 125-44.
_____. 1979a. "Amplification in *Möttuls saga*: Its Function and Form." *Acta Philologica Scandinavica* 32 (2): 239-55.
_____. 1979b. "Gvímars saga." *Opuscula* VII: 106-39.
_____. 1980. "Stalking the Elusive Translator: A Prototype of Guiamars ljóð." *Scandinavian Studies* 52 (2): 142-62.
_____. 1981a. "A Werewolf in Bear's Clothing." *Maal og Minne* No. 3-4: 137-44.
_____. 1981b. *King Arthur North-by-Northwest: The* matière de Bretagne *in Old Norse-Icelandic Romances*. Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 37. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Boghandel.
_____. 1982. "Scribes, Editors, and the *riddarasögur.*" *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 97: 36-51.
_____. 1983. "The Foreign Language Requirement in Medieval Icelandic Romance." *The Modern Language Review* 78 (4): 850-61.
_____. 1991. "Translator or Redactor? The Problem of Old Norse-Icelandic 'Translations' of Old French Literature." *New Comparison* 12: 34-53.
_____. 2005. "Norse Romance." *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide*. 2nd ed. Ed. Carol J. Clover and John Lindow. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 316-63.
_____. 2006. "Scandinavian Arthurian Literature." *A History of Arthurian Scholarship.* Ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 169-178.
_____. 2008. "Female Desire and the Quest in the Icelandic Legend of Tristram and Ísodd." *The Grail, the Quest, and the World of King Arthur.* Ed. Norris J. Lacy. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 76-91.
_____. 2009. "*Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, ch. 80: Ekphrasis as Recapitulation and Interpretation." *Analecta Septentrionalia*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 221-37.
_____, ed. 2011. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus' Realms*. Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages V. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
Kalinke, Marianne E. and P. M. Mitchell, ed. 1985. *Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Romances*. Islandica XLIV. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Kay, Sarah. 1985. "The Tristan Story as Chivalric Romance, Feudal Epic and Fabliau." *The*

Spirit of the Court. Selected Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society (Toronto 1983). Ed. Glyn S. Burgess and Robert A. Taylor. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 185-95.

_____. 2000. "Courts, clerks, and courtly love." *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*. Ed. Roberta L. Krueger. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 81-96.

Kelly, Molly Robinson. 2009. *The Hero's Place: Medieval Literary Traditions of Space and Belonging.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press.

Kinoshita, Sharon and Peggy McCracken. 2012. *Marie de France: A Critical Companion*. Gallica 24. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

Kjær, Jonna. 1990. "Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar —une version christianisée de la branche dite courtoise du 'Tristan.'" *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context. Selected papers from the 5th Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 August, 1986.* Ed. Keith Busby and Erik Kooper. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin. 367-77.

Klingenberg, Heinz. 1998. "Hommage für Skúli Bárðarson." *Snorri Sturluson: Beiträge zu Werk und Rezeption.* Ed. Hans Fix. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 57-108.

Klos, Lydia. 2004. "A courtly king —The change of hall customs under the reign of king Olaf kyrri, depending on European influences." *Skandinavistik* 34 (1): 12-30.

Koht, Halvdan. 1927. "Um Kjeldegrunnlage for soga um Håkon Håkonsson." *Historisk Tidsskrift* (Oslo). Series 5, 6: 16-30.

Kramarz-Bein, Susanne. 1994a. "Zum Höfischen im *Königsspiegel*." *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik 11: Arbeitstagung der deutschprachigen Skandinavistik 8.-14. August 1993 in Sigtuna*. Ed. Hans Schottmann. Münster: Verlag Kleinheinrich. 205-16.

_____. 1994b. "Zur Darstellung und Bedeutung des Höfischen in der *Konungs skuggsjá.*" *Collegium Medievale* 7: 51-86.

Kratz, Henry. 1977. "The *Parcevals saga* and *Li contes del graal.*" *Scandinavian Studies* 49 (1): 13-47.

Lacy, Norris J. 2012. "Writing in the Margins: Norse Arthurian Sagas as Palimpsests." *Arthuriana* 22 (1): 5-17.

Largier, Niklaus. 2008. "Praying by Numbers: An Essay on Medieval Aesthetics." *Representations* 104 (1): 73-91.

Larrington, Carolyne. 2004. "'Undruðusk þá, sem fyrir var': Wonder, Vínland, and Mediaeval Travel-Narratives." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 14: 91-114.

_____. 2008. "A Viking in Shining Armour? Vikings and Chivalry in the *Fornaldarsögur.*" *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 4: 269-88.

_____. 2009. "Queens and Bodies: The Norwegian Translated *lais* and Hákon IV's Kinswomen." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 108 (4): 506-27.

Laurie, Helen C. R. 1989. "Chrétien de Troyes and the Love Religion." *Romanische Forschungen* 101 (2/3): 169-83.

Layher, William. 2010. *Queenship and Voice in Medieval Northern Europe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Leach, Henry Goddard. 1921. *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*. Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature 6. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

_____. 1966. "The Lais Bretons in Norway." *Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Margaret Schlauch*. Ed. Mieczysław Brahmer, Stanisław Helsztyński, Julian Krzyźanowski. Warszawa: Polish Scientific Publishers. 203-212.
Leclanche, Jean-Luc. 2003. *Chevalerie et Grivoiserie: Fabliaux de Chevalerie.* Paris: Champion Classiques.
Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell.
Liestøl, Aslak. 1963. "Runer fra Bryggen." *Viking* 27: 5-53.
Lindow, John. 1975a. *Comitatus, Individual and Honor. Studies in North Germanic Institutional Vocabulary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
_____. 1975b. "Riddles, Kennings, and the Complexity of Skaldic Poetry." *Scandinavian Studies* 47 (3): 311-27.
_____. 1982. "Narrative and the Nature of Skaldic Poetry." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 97: 94-121.
_____. 2001. "Skald Sagas in their Literary Context 1: Other Icelandic Genres." *Skaldsagas: Text, Vocation, and Desire in the Icelandic Sagas of Poets*. Ed. Russell Poole. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 218-31.
_____. 2007. "*Akkerisfrakki*: Traditions Concerning Óláfr Tryggvason and Hallfreðr Óttarson vandræðaskáld and the Problem of the Conversion." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 106 (1): 64-80.
Lönnroth, Lars. 1976. *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Lönnroth, Lars, Vésteinn Ólason and Anders Piltz. 2003. "Literature." *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*. Vol. 1: Prehistory to 1520. Ed. Knut Helle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 487-520.
Loomis, R. S. 1964. "The Grail in the Parcevals saga." *Germanic Review* 39 (2): 97-100.
Marcus, G. J. 1957. "The Norse Traffic with Iceland." *The Economic History Review* New Series 9 (3): 408-19.
Marti, Suzanne. 2012. "Translation or Adaptation?: Parcevals saga as a Result of Cultural Transformation." *Arthuriana* 22 (1): 39-52.
_____. 2013. "Tristrams saga revisited." *Maal og Minne* No. 1: 39-68.
Martin, John J. 1976. "Some Aspects of Snorri Sturluson's View of Kingship." *Parergon* 15: 43-54.
Martin, Molly. 2010. *Vision and Gender in Malory's* Morte Darthur. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
McCash, June Hall. 2002. "La vie seinte Audree: A Fourth Text by Marie de France?" *Speculum* 77 (3): 744-77.
McTurk, R.W. 1975-76. "Sacral Kingship in Ancient Scandinavia: A Review of Some Recent Writings." *Saga-Book* 19: 139-169.
Meissner, Rudolf. 1902. *Die Strengleikar. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der altnordischen Prosalitteratur*. Halle a. S.: Max Niemeyer.
Meulengracht Sørensen, Preben. 2000. "Social institutions and belief systems of medieval Iceland (c. 870-1400) and their relations to literary production." Trans. Margaret Clunies Ross. In Clunies Ross 2000b, 8-29.

Meyer, Kuno. 1910. "The Irish Mirabilia in the Norse 'Speculum Regale.'" In Tveitane 1971, 130-43.
Micha, Alexandre. 1939. *La Tradition Manuscrite des romans de Chrétien de Troyes*. Paris: Librairie E. Droz.
Micillo, Valeria. 1993. "Classical Tradition and Norse Tradition in the 'Third Grammatical Treatise.'" *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 108: 68-79.
Mitchell, P. M. 1958. "The Grail in the Parcevals Saga." *Modern Language Notes* 73: 591-4.
Muscatine, Charles. 1986. *The Old French Fabliaux*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
Nansen, Fridtjof. 1911. *Nord i taakeheimen. Utforskningen av jordens nordlige strøk i tidlige tider.* 2 vols. Kristiania: Jacob Dybwads Forlag.
Nedkvitne, Arnved. 2005. "Administrative Literacy in Scandinavia 1000-1350." *Literacy in Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavian Culture*. Ed. Pernille Hermann. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark. 286-302.
Nelson, Janet L. 2003. "Was Charlemagne's Court a Courtly Society?" *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages*. *The Proceedings of the First Alcuin Conference*. Ed. Catherine Cubitt. Turnhout: Brepols. 39-57.
Nicholls, Jonathan. 1985. *The Matter of Courtesy: Medieval Courtesy Books and the Gawain-Poet*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
Noble, Peter S. *Love and Marriage in Chrétien de Troyes*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992.
Nykrog, Per. 1973. *Les Fabliaux.* Genève: Librairie Droz.
O'Donoghue, Heather. 2005. *Skaldic Verse and the Poetics of Saga Narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Oberlin, Adam. 2009. "'Translating' Tristan: *Hákonarsaga* and the Possibilities of *Translatio.*" *Tristania* 25: 49-68.
Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog. Københavns Universitet. <http://onp.ku.dk>
Orme, Nicholas. 1984. *From Childhood to Chivalry: The education of the English kings and aristocracy 1066-1530*. London: Methuen.
Orning, Hans Jacob. 2008. *Unpredictability and Presence: Norwegian Kingship in the High Middle Ages*. Leiden: Brill.
_____. 2012. "Tristram: From Civilizing Hero to Power Politician." *Arthuriana* 22 (1): 91-108.
_____. 2013. "The Reception and Adaptation of Courtly Culture in Old Norse Society: Changing Conceptions of Hierarchy and Networks in Two Versions of Tristrams saga." *Friendship and Social Networks in Scandinavia, c. 1000-1800*. Ed. Jón Viðar Sigurðsson and Thomas Småberg. Turnhout: Brepols. 115-51.
Paasche, Fredrik. 1914. *Kristendom og kvad: En studie i norrøn middelalder.* Kristiania: Aschehoug & Co.
_____. 1927. "Om Kongespeilets forfatter." In Tveitane 1971, 21-30.
Paupert, Anne. 1995. "Les femmes et la parole dans les lais de Marie de France." *Amour et merveille: les Lais de Marie de France*. Ed. Jean Dufournet. Paris: Champion. 169-87.
Poole, R. G. 1988. "The Cooperative Principle in Medieval Interpretations of Skaldic Verse:

Snorri Sturluson, Þjóðólfr Arnórsson, and Eyvindr Skáldaspillir." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 87 (2): 159-78.
Pulsiano, Philip, and Kristen Wolf, eds. 1993. *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Garland.
Quinn, Judy. 1994 [1995]. "*Eddu* list: The Emergence of Skaldic Pedagogy in Medieval Iceland." *álvissmál* 4: 69-92.
Reichert, Hermann. 1986. "King Arthur's round table: sociological implications of its literary reception in Scandinavia." *Structure and Meaning in Old Norse Literature.* Ed. John Lindow, Lars Lönnroth, and Gerd Wolfgang Weber. Odense: Odense University Press. 394-414.
Rindal, Magnus. 2009. "*Barlaams ok Josaphats saga* i det norske litterære miljøet." *Barlaam i nord: Legenden om Barlaam och Josaphat i den nordiska mideltidslitteraturen*. Ed. Karl G. Johansson and Maria Arvidsson. Oslo: Novus Forlag. 31-45.
Rosenwein, Barbara. 1999. *Negotiating Space*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Ross, Margaret Clunies —see Clunies Ross, Margaret.
Rothschild, Judith Rice. 2011. "Literary and Socio-cultural Aspects of the *Lais* of Marie de France." *A Companion to Marie de France*. Ed. Logan E. Whalen. Leiden: Brill. 89-116.
Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman. 2005. *The Development of Flateyjarbók.* Odense: The University Press of Southern Denmark.
Santini, Carlo. 1994. "'Kenningar Donati': An Investigation of the Classical Models in the Third Icelandic Grammatical Treatise." *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*. 1 (2): 37-44.
Sayers, William. 1985. "Konungs Skuggsjá: Irish Marvels and the King's Justice." *Scandinavian Studies* 57 (2): 147-61.
Schach, Paul. 1957. "Some Observations on Tristrams Saga." *Saga-Book* 15: 102–29.
_____. 1960. "An Excerpt from *Tristrams saga*." *Scandinavian Studies* 32(2): 83-88.
_____. 1962. "Tristan in Iceland." *Prairie Schooner* 36 (2), International Issue: 151-64.
_____. 1964. "An Unpublished Leaf of Tristrams saga: AM 567 quarto, XXII, 2." *Research Studies* 32 (2): 50-62.
_____. 1965. "The Style and Structure of Tristrams saga." *Scandinavian Studies: Essays Presented to Dr. Henry Goddard Leach*. Ed. Carl F. Bayerschmidt and Erik J. Friis. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 63-86.
_____. 1969. "The Reeves Fragment of *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar.*" *Einarsbók. Afmæliskveðja til Einars Ól. Sveinssonar 12. desember 1969.* Ed. Bjarni Guðnason, Halldór Halldórsson and Jónas Kristjánsson. [Reykjavík]: Nokkrir vinir. 296-308.
_____. 1975. "Some Observations on the Translations of Brother Róbert." *Les Relations littéraires franco-scandinaves au moyen âge. Acte du colloque de Liège (avril 1972)*. Paris: Société d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres." 117-135.
Schiller, Gertrud. 1971. *Iconography of Christian Art*. Trans. Janet Seligman. 2 vols. Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, Ltd.
Schlauch, Margaret. 1934. *Romance in Iceland*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Schnall, Jens Eike. 2000a. *Didaktische Absichten und Vermittlungsstrategien im*

*altnorwegischen "Königsspiegel" (*Konungs skuggsjá*)*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

_____. 2000b. "Von der norwegischen *hirð* zu einem europäischen Hof: Das Bildungsprogramm der *Konungs skuggsjá.*" *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik 13: Arbeitstagung der deutschsprachigen Skandinavistik, 29.7-3.8.1997 in Lysebu (Oslo).* Ed. Fritz Paul. Frankfurt: Peter Lang. 215-25.

Schottmann, Hans. 1973. *Die isländische Mariendichtung*. München: W. Fink.

Schreiner, Johan. 1950. "Kongespeilet som kampskrift" In Tveitane 1971, 31-5.

_____. 1952-3. "Bidrag til datering av Kongespeilet." In Tveitane 1971, 36-47.

_____. 1963. "Omkring Kongespeilet." In Tveitane 1971, 50-62.

Sigrún Davíðsdóttir. 1979. "Old Norse Court Poetry: Some Notes on its Purpose, Transmission and Historical Value." *Gripla* 3: 186-203.

Simek, Rudolf. 1994. "The Political Thought of the King's Mirror: A Supplement." *Sagnaþing helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni sjötugum 10. apríl 1994*. 2 vols. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag. II: 723-34.

Simek, Rudolf and Hermann Pálsson. 2007. *Lexikon der altnordischen Literatur*. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag.

Skårup, Povl. 1971. "Notes sur le text du *Lai du Lecheor*." *Revue Romane* 6 (1): 52-62.

Småberg, Thomas. 2012. "Rituals of Greeting and Farewell: Reflections on a Visit to the Royal Court of Norway in 1302." *Collegium Medievale* 25: 2-40.

Sørensen, Preben Meulengracht —see Meulengracht Sørensen, Preben

Sprenger, Ulrike. 2000. *Sturla Þorðarsons Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Starkey, Kathryn and Horst Wenzel. 2008. "The Visuality of German Courtly Literature." *Oxford German Studies* 37 (2): 130-159.

Storm, Gustav. 1883. "Brudstykke af en latinsk Oversættelse af Kongespeilet fra 14de Aarhundrede." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 1: 110-12.

Ström, Folke 1981. "Poetry as an Instrument of Propaganda: Jarl Hákon and his Poets." *Specvlvm norrœnum: Norse studies in memory of Gabriel Turville-Peter.* Ed. Ursula Dronke et. al. Odense: Odense University Press. 440-58.

Sunnen, Donald R. 1993. "Life and Letters at the Court of Hákon IV Hákonarson." *Medieval Perspectives* 8: 87-103.

Sverrir Jakobsson. 2010. "Heaven is a Place on Earth: Church and Sacred Space in Thirteenth-Century Iceland." *Scandinavian Studies* 82 (1): 1-20.

Sverrir Tómasson. 1977. "Hvenær var Tristrams sögu snúið?" *Gripla* 2: 47-78.

Taylor, E. G. R. 1937. "The 'De Ventis' of Matthew Paris." *Imago Mundi* 2: 23-6.

Tétrel, Hélène. 2003. "Equitan moralisé. La version norroise du lai de Marie de France." *Regards étonnés...: De l'expression de l'altéralité...à la construction de l'identité. Mélanges offerts au Professeur Gaël Milin.* Brest: Amis de Gaël Milin. 227-37.

_____. 2012. "*Lais* and *Strengleikar*. A "Breton" short Narrative Type in Old Norse?" In Johansson and Flaten, 87-104.

Thomas, M. F. 1983. "The Briar and the Vine: Tristan Goes North." *Arthurian Literature* III. 53-90.

Togeby, Knud. 1975. "La chronologie des versions scandinaves des anciens textes français." *Les Relations littéraires franco-scandinaves au moyen âge. Actes du colloque de Liège (avril 1972)*. Paris: Société d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres." 183-191.
Torfi H. Tulinius. 2009. "Pierre Bourdieu and Snorri Sturluson: Chieftains, sociology and the development of literature in medieval Iceland." *Snorres Edda i europeisk og islandsk kultur*. Ed. Jon Gunnar Jørgensen. Reykholt: Snorrastofa. 47-71.
Tranter, Stephen. 2000. "Medieval Icelandic *artes poeticae*." In Clunies Ross 2000b, 140-160.
Tveitane, Mattias, ed. 1971. *Studier over Konungs skuggsjá*. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.
Vale, Malcolm. 2001. *The Princely Court: Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe 1270-1380*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Vandvik, Eirik. 1952. "A new approach to the Konungs Skuggsiá." In Tveitane 1971, 71-9.
Vries, Jan de. 1964-7. *Altnordische Literaturgeschichte*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. Grundriss der germanischen philologie 15-16. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
Wærdahl, Randi Bjørshol. 2013. "Friends or Patrons? Powerful Go-Betweens in the Norwegian Realm in the High Middle Ages." *Friendship and Social Networks in Scandinavia, c. 1000-1800.* Ed. Jón Viðar Sigurðsson and Thomas Småberg. Turnhout: Brepols. 93-114.
Wanner, Kevin J. 2006. "At Smyrja Konung til Veldis: Royal Legitimation in Snorri Sturluson's *Magnúss saga Erlingssonar*." *Saga-Book* 30: 5-38.
_____. 2008. *Snorri Sturluson and the "Edda": The Conversion of Cultural Capital in Medieval Scandinavia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Whalen, Logan E. 2008. *Marie de France and the Poetics of Memory*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press.
Whaley, Diana. 1997. "Troublesome Poets at the Courts of Scandinavia." *Sagas and the Norwegian Experience: Sagaene og Noreg. Preprints. Fortrykk.* 10 Internasjonale sagakonferanse. 10th International Saga Conference. Trondheim, 3-9 August 1997. Trondheim: Senter for middelalderstudier. 663-73.
_____. 2000. "A useful past: historical writing in medieval Iceland." In Clunies Ross 2000b, 161-202.
_____. 2001. "Representations of Skalds in the Sagas 1: Social and Professional Relations." *Skaldsagas: Text, Vocation, and Desire in the Icelandic Sagas of Poets*. Ed. Russell Poole, 285-308. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
Whitaker, Ian. 1985. "The *King's Mirror* [*Konung's skuggsjá*] and Northern Research." *Polar Record* 22 (141): 615-27.
Widding, Ole and Hans Bekker-Nielsen. 1959. "A Debate of the Body and the Soul in Old Norse Literature." *Mediaeval Studies* 21: 272-89.
Wills, Tarrin. 2006. "The Anonymous Verse in the *Third Grammatical Treatise*." *The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature. Sagas and the British Isles. Preprint Papers of the Thirteenth International Saga Conference, Durham and York, 6th-12th August, 2006.* Ed. John McKinnell, David Ashurst, and Donata Kirk. 2 vols. Durham: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Durham University. II: 1054-63.
Woolgar, C. M. 2006. *The Senses in Late Medieval England.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
Wright, Monica L. 2003. "Their Clothing Becomes Them: The Narrative Function of Clothing

in Chrétien de Troyes." *Arthurian Literature* XX. 31-42.
Wrightson, Kellinde, ed. 2001. *Fourteenth-Century Icelandic Verse on the Virgin Mary*. Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series XIV. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
Young, Jean. 1938. "Two of the Irish 'mirabilia' in the 'King's Mirror.'" In Tveitane 1971, 125-9.
Zink, Georges. 1975. "Les poèmes arthuriens dans les pays scandinaves." *Les Relations littéraires franco-scandinaves au moyen age*. *Actes du Colloque de Liège (avril 1972)*. Paris: Société d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres." 77-95.