INTERFACES

A Journal of Medieval European Literatures

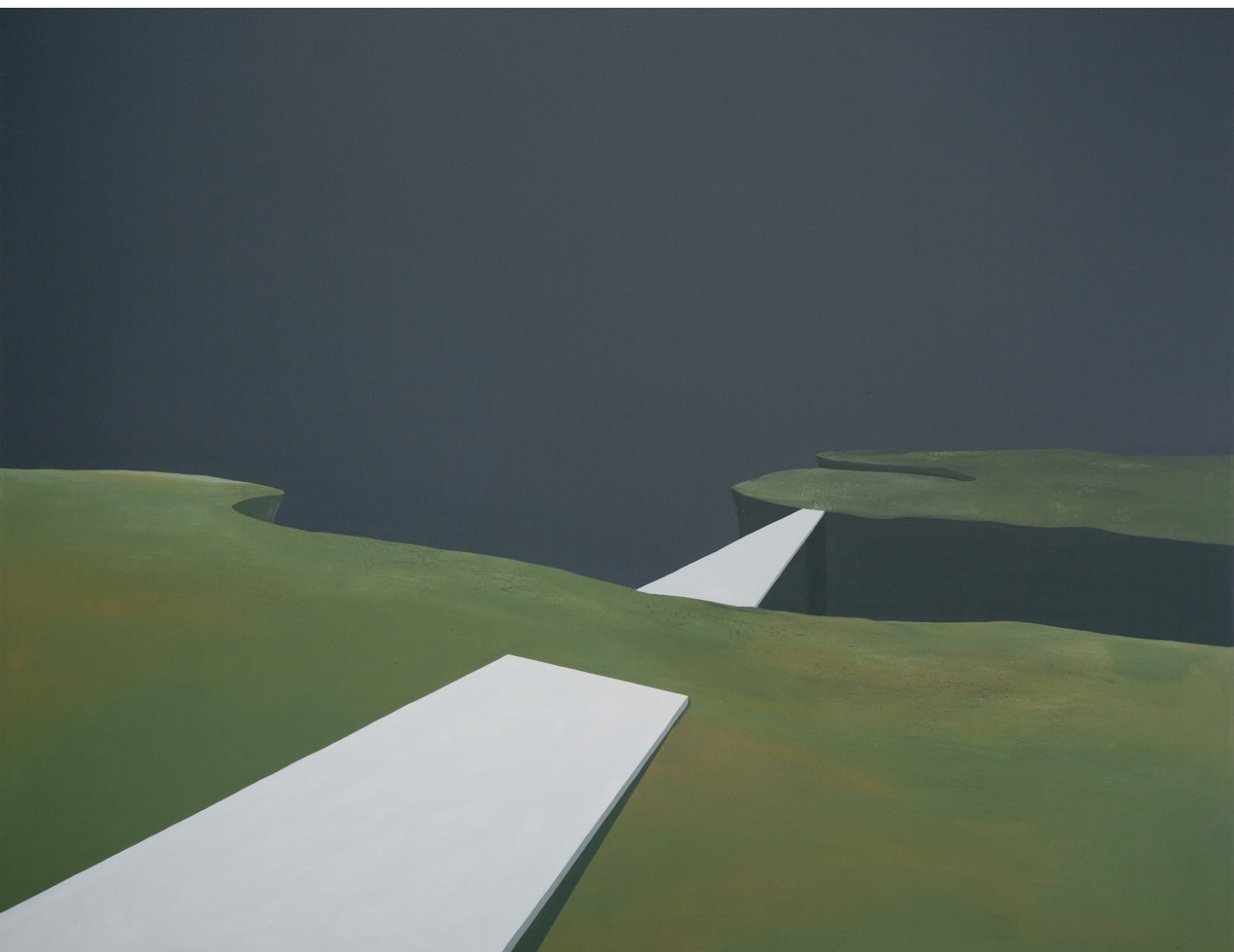VOL 9 · 2022

Transformations and Translocations of Medieval Literature

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This issue of *Interfaces* brings together papers given at the Centre for Medieval Literature's symposium on 'Moving Forms: The Transformations and Translocations of Medieval Literature,' held in Athens in 2019. At the heart of the symposium was the exploration of the ways in which the movement of people and books across space and time – mobility and portability – were driving forces of medieval European literary and intellectual culture. Men and women, clerical and secular, constructed extensive social networks and communities through travel, written communication, and the exchange of texts. Shared literary practices and forms occurred at the regional and transregional levels, defining local identities and forging links between people separated by distance and time. Around the North Sea and Baltic littorals, legends from the Norse sagas, for instance, were taken up by writers. On a larger scale, people from north-western Europe to China exchanged stories of Barlaam and Josaphat, while tales of Alexander are found from India to Ireland; in both cases, transmission was facilitated by the movement of people along the Silk Road. Rather than a full picture, often we are left with a set of trails, traces and clues that challenge us to create narratives out of the fragments.

This symposium sought to contribute to the understanding of medieval literature through the development of methodologies which examine the intersection of social networks and communities with literary forms. Papers attended to the agency of people (men and women), genres (literary, scientific, philosophical, legal, etc.), modes (verse, poetry, prose), styles, texts and manuscripts (book types, layouts, images) in creating literary links across space and time. Building on the practices of both comparative literature and entangled history, the symposium aimed to open up connections between literary cultures often considered to be separate. At the same time, and of equal importance, it was alert to the absence of connections, to discontinuities, exposing the diversities and ruptures of medieval literature, as well as the commonalities.

By following the movement of forms and tracing social connec-

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tions from Antiquity to the Renaissance, the symposium and the papers collected here interrogated both geographies and chronologies of medieval European literature. Always keeping the intersection of the social and the formal in view, the symposium moved back and forth between small and large scales of time and place: the local, the transregional, the European, and the Afro-Eurasian. Issues of morphology, scale and periodization were central to discussion, enabling conversations across a wide range of material to gain traction and to shape. The discussions in Athens are key to the final versions of papers now published here.

The keynotes, papers, sessions and roundtables of the symposium, as well as subsequently commissioned work, ranged across Europe, the Near and Middle East and North Africa – Northwest Afro-Eurasia – from late Antiquity through to the sixteenth century. The three keynotes (not published here) anchored this range: Ingela Nilsson (Uppsala) on 'Translocation as Translation, Transformation as Spoliation: The Forms of Medieval Story' moved out from Byzantium; Nizar Hermes (Virginia) looked at Europe through the lens of Arabic history-writing in his paper 'Les Noces of a Barcelonian Comte: Medieval Iberia through al-Bakrī's (d. 1094) Andalucentric Eyes'; and Elizabeth Tyler (York) ranged across literary cultures of Latin Europe before the twelfth century in her 'Connected Vernaculars of Latin Europe, c. 350-c. 1150'. We are delighted to be able present here a number of the papers from the symposium which collectively cross these geographies and chronologies as they consider a range of forms, from romance to legal writing and from history-writing to animal fables in examining texts from Georgia, Egypt, Bohemia, Scandinavia and Western Europe (with extensions across the Atlantic into the Americas). While each paper has something for the specialist, we hope that they collectively encourage reading across the full issue, inviting readers to enter into the expanded, comparative and connected, approach to medieval literatures that the symposium explored.

We are delighted to include in this issue of *Interfaces* a substantial report on the Fribourg Colloquium 2021, which was held at the Institut d'études médiévales, University of Fribourg, Switzerland. The colloquium was entitled 'Paradigmes et perspectives de la littérature médiévale comparée / Paradigmen und Perspektiven einer Mediävistischen Komparatistik / Paradigms and Perspectives of a Comparative Medieval Literature' and saw the participation of all four *Interfaces* editors, as organizer and speakers. As the report reveals, the conference shares the *Interfaces* aims of taking a wide and

connected view of the literatures of Medieval Europe and we look forward to the publication of its proceeding in *Scrinium Friburgense* in 2023.

And finally, we would like to draw your attention to a piece about *Interfaces* in the recently launched American journal, sponsored by the New Chaucer Society: *New Chaucer Studies: Pedagogy and Profession.* 'Editing *Interfaces*: A Journal of Medieval European Literatures' can be found here. The piece highlights the distinctive approach the journal takes to the study of medieval European literatures – working with an extended view of Europe and open to its place within wider cultural spheres across Afro-Eurasia. We address the direct link between our wider, more connected vision of medieval European literature and open access publishing – which places no financial barriers to who publishes and who reads.

The Editors

HELEN F. LESLIE-JACOBSEN

The Parergon and the Transformation of the Prologues to the Medieval and Early Modern Norwegian *Landslǫg* (1274–1604)

Abstract

The *Landslǫg* was the first national law code of Norway, in force between 1274 and 1687. During this time, several different prologues were appended to the law code. The most ubiquitous were the original prologue from the law of 1274 and a new prologue that accompanied translations of the code into Danish. There was also a learned prologue that was occasionally found together with the new prologue, and when the law code was finally printed for the first time in 1604, another prologue was also written to accompany it. While previous scholarship has paid scant attention to the transformation of the prologue (several of them have never been published), I argue that the prologues are key in understanding the contexts of the Norwegian *Landslǫg*. Using Derrida's concept of the parergon outlined in *The Truth in Painting* and by analysing the interaction of the prologue and main law code in different manuscripts, I conclude that each prologue exerts a parergonal influence on the law code in a different way and that the translation of the law into Danish had a profound effect on the transformations of the prologue. In addition, this article provides an updated overview of the prologues to the *Landslǫg* and lists which manuscripts they are preserved in.

Introduction

The prologue is a key aspect of the medieval Norwegian *Landslǫg*, the first national law code, because it guides the reader in the way in which the law code should be read and understood. The prologue also has parergonal qualities; it works to frame the main text and can affect the reception or interpretation of the main text. My essay uses Derrida's concept of the parergon to explore the prologue to the medieval Norwegian *Landslǫg*, which took on several different forms

during the period that the law was in force from 1274 to 1687. Although several medieval Norwegian law codes contain shorter prologues, the most extensive Norwegian legal prologue from the Middle Ages is the prologue to the law of 1274. This law code of 1274, known as the *Landslǫg*, was the first national law code of Norway, enacted to replace earlier regional laws, and its introduction was an important stage in the state formation processes of Norway and in the consolidation of the power of the monarchy (Helle; Bagge; Imsen). Since the law code was paired with several different prologues over the course of its existence, the notion of the parergon is a good tool with which to analyse the transformation of the prologue to the Norwegian law code of 1274, since the different prologues have different ways in which they interact with the law code. The translation of the original prologue from Old Norwegian to Danish and its removal and replacement with a new prologue can aid us in assessing what the prologue in its variant forms contributes to the main law code, which was itself simultanously translated to Danish in the sixteenth century.

The *Landslǫg* came into being in the late thirteenth century as a result of King Magnus Håkonsson's realm-wide programme of legal revisions in Norway and remained in force for around 400 years.[1] At first, King Magnus set out to revise the provincial laws.[2] His law revisions reached their peak in 1274 when the *Landslǫg* was adopted in the various regions of Norway between 1274 and 1276, and he continued his revisions by revising the town law.[3] Because of his work with the Norwegian laws, Magnus acquired the byname *lagabøte* ("the Law-Mender"). During this period of intense legal revision in the thirteenth century, Norway was an independent kingdom with a well-developed legal tradition. However, it would not be long until Norway was to be united with other kingdoms. In 1319, Norway was united with Sweden in a personal union under King Magnus VII Eriksson, which lasted until 1343 when Norway adopted Magnus Eriksson's second son as king (King Håkon VI Magnusson). His son, Olaf, was chosen as Danish king in 1375 (King Olaf II Håkonsson), and he then inherited the kingdom of Norway from his father as Olav IV Håkonsson in 1380, creating a Dano-Norwegian union that ultimately lasted until 1814. Although by the sixteenth century Norway was effectively a province ruled from Denmark when the Norwegian Council of the Realm (*Riksrådet*) was abolished in 1536, the *Landslǫg* remained in force until well into the early modern period, when it was replaced in 1687 by *Kong Christian Den Femtes Norske Lov af 15de April 1687*.

The *Landslǫg* was originally written and circulated in Old Nor-

1. Medieval and early modern Scandinavian personal names are given in their modern spellings in this article for the sake of consistency.

2. The various provinces of Scandinavia originally had legal autonomy and there were no written laws. This means that regional legal customs in what are now united Scandinavian kingdoms once prevailed. The regional or provincial laws in Norway, known as *landskapslover*, were written down only a few decades before the national law that replaced them was enacted in 1274. The provincial laws were, by and large, collections of customary laws. The vernacular laws did not usually contain ecclesiastical law, which was treated separately, but did include constitutional law, administrative law (public administration, exercised by an arm of the government), criminal law, and laws of procedure.

3. This canonical version of the legal revisions taking place in thirteenth century Norway has been assessed with a critical eye by Horn.

wegian, but during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries more and more Danes were placed in important administrative positions in Norway (Bagge and Mykland 66, 74, 77), and as a consequence, Danish became the language of the administration in Norway. For the numerous Danish administrators working in Norway in the sixteenth century, this language would have been hard to read, and the Old Norwegian may have also been difficult for some Norwegians.[4] Danish translations of the Old Norwegian of the law code were produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which circulated in manuscript form. Since different translations were in circulation, slightly different, although broadly similar, versions of the law appeared.[5] These different versions of the law caused the Norwegian legal system to slowly begin to fracture, and over the course of the sixteenth century, there were repeated commands from the court in Denmark to produce a state-sponsored, revised translation. Initially, these orders were pretty much ignored, but eventually in 1604 the new, revised lawbook was brought to print for the first time in Copenhagen, titled *Norske Low-Bog, offuerseet, cor-Rigerit oc forbedrit Anno M.DC.IIII* ("The Norwegian Law-Book, Looked Through, Corrected and Revised The Year 1604").[6] The lawbook of 1604 was in force until 1687 when it was replaced by *Kong Christian Den Femtis Norske Lov*.

Like other law codes from medieval northern Europe, medieval Norwegian law makes fairly extensive use of prologues to law codes and, as such, Norwegian vernacular legal prologues belong to a broader genre of European legal prologues found in Latin Christendom.[7] The prologues are not necessarily particularly long or detailed (often they are simply a few lines), and they are a common feature of medieval vernacular laws. In the medieval period in northern Europe, we find a prologue for example at the beginning of the Danish law of Jutland and in Norway at the beginning of the regional law of the Frostating.[8] The Norwegian legal prologues are therefore not a product of an exceptional, vernacular culture; rather the development of Norwegian prologues from the medieval and into the early modern period is likely a result of the entanglement of Europe-wide canon law practices, other Scandinavian legal cultures, and impulses from the British Isles over a period of 800 years.[9] By the late thirteenth century, legal prologues in the vernacular Norwegian legal tradition were a product of a learned milieu. The original, Old Norwegian prologue to the *Landslǫg* is a piece of rhetoric with a basis in both the speech and the public letter, and the form and structure of the prologue are products of the importance of rhetoric in the

4. There is, for example, the following comment from the mid-sixteenth century from the Norwegian Laurents Hanssøn in the prologue of his saga translations. Hanssøn notes that Norwegians themselves had problems in reading the old books: "Ere nu all ffaa bøgher i norige[...]anthen aff konge bøger eller andre norske bøger ffaa ere och dee som dem lese kunne æn ferre ere de som forstaa dem" (Storm, *Laurents Hanssøns sagaoversættelse* 3) ("Now there are so few books in Norway[...]whether books of kings or other Norwegian books. Also, those who are able to read them are few, yet fewer are they who understand them").

5. See Rindal and Spørck 41–50 for a list of the extant manuscripts containing a Danish translation of the *Landslǫg*.

6. The printed book of 1604 was published as an edition in 1855 (Hallager and Brandt). The printed lawbook of 1604 will be referred to as 'the lawbook of 1604' in this essay.

7. For an overview of legal prologues in general, see Fögen, and for a volume on prefaces to books of Canon Law in Latin Christianity, including translations, see Somerville and Brasington.

8. For the prologue to the law of Jutland see Gelting and for a translation see Tamm and Vogt 242–43; for the prologue to the law of the Frostating see Keyser and Munch 1846, 121.

9. For the prologues to Anglo-Saxon laws, see Treschow, for the prologues to Welsh law see Pryce.

pan-western European medieval education system, the teaching of letter writing in the Middle Ages, and the development of state bureaucracy in Norway.

The article argues that prologues as parergonal texts are key in understanding the contexts of the Norwegian *Landslǫg*, since the prologues are contemporary statements about the political system and about the translation of the law into Danish. The article also analyses how the different prologues (parerga) work together with the law code (ergon). In the original, thirteenth century prologue, the voice of Magnus Lagabøte in the prologue is a key site at which the prologue engages with the law code. This is made clear when this prologue is removed in the sixteenth century, and largely replaced by a new, Danish prologue. As will be clear from the overview of the surviving manuscripts given below, some manuscripts contain both the old and new prologues, but these are in a minority. There are also two other prologues to the *Landslǫg*: a learned prologue by Matthias Scavenius, which circulated together with the new prologue, and a prologue that prefaced the printed edition of the law code from 1604. Both of these prologues were also in Danish. Although the contents of the body of the law code remained broadly similar when it was translated into Danish, the fact of the translation of the law code into Danish itself appears to have had a tremendous effect on the development of the prologues, as they become increasingly focused on the notion of the law being understandable and being written in a language that is widely used.

This article combines the tool of the parergon with the examination of individual manuscripts to provide an analysis of the prologues that have been attached to the Norwegian *Landslǫg* from 1274 to 1604. In previous catalogues of *Landslǫg* manuscripts, the prologues have been used as a way of grouping the Danish translations of the *Landslǫg*. This article reveals the inadequacies of this approach and offers an updated list and timeline of manuscripts containing the prologues.

Parergon and the Legal Prologue

A 'parergon' is an addition to a main work, in that 'parergon' does not refer to an independent entity, but rather to something that is subordinate to a main subject. 'Parergon' is a key term in Derrida's *The Truth in Painting* (*La Vérité en peinture*), in which the character and function of the parergon are understood to be that of a threshold or

10. The concept of parergon has also been applied to literary studies, most notably by Simone Heller-Andrist in her 2012 book *The Fiction of the Frame: Derrida's* Parergon *in Literature*. This critical volume has been influential on my own understanding of the parergon.

11. See also Duro 27–28 for a description of parergon as ornament.

border – in particular that of a frame, the border of an artwork.[10] Derrida borrowed the word from Kant (see for example Derrida 55), and it is derived from the Greek *para* – meaning "beside," and *ergon*, meaning the "work". In the present article I understand the prologue to the *Landslǫg* as the parergon to the ergon of the body of the law code, and investigate what happens when the prologue is transformed into various versions throughout the history of the *Landslǫg*.

In the *Landslǫg*, the parergonal prologue and the body of the law code (ergon) interact: as Heller-Andrist points out, the frame (in this case, the prologue) mediates between the work and the reader and between the work and its surroundings. This interaction is a crucial condition of the parergon that separates it from mere adornment (Heller-Andrist 38).[11]

Two key terms to describe the interaction of parergon and ergon are 'oscillation' and 'friction'. Heller-Andrist introduces the notion of 'friction' to describe the interaction of parergon and ergon that Derrida outlines. Friction, Heller-Andrist comments, is "a symptom: it is the main indicator of parergonality in literature" (12). The main manifestation of friction is identified as 'oscillation'. The force of the parergon can swing back and forth like a pendulum:

> When the parergon executes its full force upon the work, it writes itself fully into the work and complements it, only to fall back into the state of a passive supplement afterwards. The parergon is thus able to unite a range of different conditions within itself in order to enable this sort of communication. These conditions range from inert supplement to most active complement. When one traces the process of oscillating interaction between work and frame, the parergon, according to Derrida, 'effaces itself…at the moment it deploys its greatest energy' (Heller-Andrist 2012, 32).

Prologues introduce completed works; the work is usually already finished before the introduction or prologue is written, and the parergon not only holds the essence of the main work, but directs the reader in which way to read it, and as such forms the portal through which we access the work (Heller-Andrist 23). Applying the notion of parergon to the prologues of the *Landslǫg* opens up a framework within which we can interpret the friction between the prologue and law code it prefaces over time. If friction is "effected by incompatibilities between work and frame" (Heller-Andrist 11), then we may be able to identify friction between prologue as parergon and the law

code as ergon by searching for signs of these incompatibilities.

In order to search for these signs of incompatibilities that cause friction, this article interrogates the border(s) between the prologue and the law code. Derrida asks, "Where does a parergon begin and end?" (Derrida 57). This is a relevant question because, as Heller-Andrist clarifies, the parergon is neither part of something else nor stands on its own, and it is not fully detached from nor fully attached to the main work (34). Since the parergon and the ergon oscillate with each other, there is a border realm in which an exchange or even interchange between the parergon and ergon takes place. The site of this quasi-attachment is known as the 'passe-partout,' the location of transition between prologue and work. The parergon is able to transgress the ergon at the site of this passe-partout. How do we go about interrogating the passe-partout further to trace textual parergonal oscillation, the ways in which the parergon and ergon talk into each other? Derrida approaches the mechanism via lack:

> It is not because they [the parerga] are detached but on the contrary because they are more difficult to detach and above all because without them, without their quasi-detachment, the lack on the inside of the work would appear; or (which amounts to the same thing for a lack) would not appear. What constitutes them as *parerga* is not simply their exteriority as a surplus, it is the internal structural link which rivets them to the lack in the interior of the *ergon*. And this lack would be constitutive of the very unity of the ergon. Without this lack, the *ergon* would have no need of a *parergon*. The *ergon's* lack is the lack of a *parergon*. (Derrida 59–60)

The 'lack' is something that is missing in the work, that only becomes noticeable through the workings of the frame, although as lack is an absence it cannot appear (Derrida 49), so whether the lack appears or not must be the same thing. Anyway, this leads Heller-Andrist to the conclusion that "the defining criterion for a parergon is its internal structural link to the site of the lack in the ergon" (Derrida 49). Only when the parergon is absent after having been present can we find the lack: "if we consider the parergon to be the constitutive voice around the work, the lack is that which would be missing if this very voice did not point it out. This means that, if we did not have this voice available, we would not realize that something was missing" (Derrida 49). Through the transformation of the prologue across the centuries, we are able to search for Derrida's lack, which might aid us

in accounting for a mechanism with which the parergon interacts with the ergon. It might be tempting to assume that it is the entirety of the prologue as parergon that interacts with the main law text, however, I argue that there is one element in particular that is the key mechanism for the interaction of the prologue with the law code: the voice of Magnus Lagabøte himself.

The Old Norwegian Prologue to the Law Code of 1274

Far from being a non-essential preface to the law, the original prologue to the code of 1274 frames the legislation and provides important contemporary commentary on the provisions of the law code. The prologue explains how and why the new law code came about and outlines the contents of the lawbook. This is a longer and more elaborate prologue than those used for previous Norwegian law codes, and is also noteworthy for being in the voice of King Magnus himself. Since including a prologue was normal in Norwegians laws, one of the functions of the prologue to the *Landslǫg* is thus to assert the place of the *Landslǫg* as a Norwegian legal text begun in an appropriate and customary way, which is perhaps important given the status of the *Landslǫg* as a new law code that was going to be imposed over the whole country in a manner that had not been done before.[12]

The Old Norwegian prologue has a parergonal relationship with the main law code because the two interact with each other. One example of the prologue interacting with the main law code, and in the process defacing itself, comes at the point at which the voice of King Magnus mentions each section of the law code in order, and justifies why it is necessary:

> Eftir landsleigubǫlk er kaupabǫlkr, því at svá skal eftir lagasóknum lausa aura sǿkja sem með landabrigði land ok jarðir. Eftir kaupabǫlk er þjófabǫlkr, því at þat hǿfir engum fyrir ǫðrum at tortíma, sem hinn hefir með lǫgum at komizk. En sá er ǫðruvís gerir, man lagarefsing fyrir taka. (Holm Perg 34 4to, f. 8v)[13]

> (After the section on Tenancy is the section on Trade, because thus shall cases be prosecuted about possessions/chattels as with land claims and estates. After the section on

12. For the new ideas introduced in the *Landslǫg*, see Sunde.

13. All quotations from the Old Norwegian prologue of the *Landslǫg* are from the oldest surviving manuscript, Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm Perg 34 4to [Holm Perg]. The normalised transcription of this manuscript is cited here, published on Emroon.no, which is based on a transcription by Anna C. Horn and on transcription and annotation by Robert Kristof Paulsen.

Trade is the section on Theft, because it behoves no one to take something from another which he has acquired according to the law. And that one who does otherwise will be punished according to the law.)[14]

The text of the prologue turns from a general rationale of why the law code was written to focus on the internal structure of law code, thereby drawing the parergon and ergon into each other. At the moment at which the parergon asserts its strongest force against the main law code, by describing the contents of the code, it disappears, obscured by the contents of the main law code itself, of which it is not a part.

The original Old Norwegian prologue begins with a customary greeting from the king, in which he sets out his lineage and conveys his and God's greetings. Next, Magnus talks about how he was asked to make the book, and the kind of changes he made. He begins by saying:

> Þér vitið at hinir skynsǫmustu menn af Frostuþingslǫgum hafa iðurliga getit fyrir oss at þér hafið spurt at vér hǫfum hlut í átt at bóta nǫkkut um flestar lǫgbǿkr í landinu, ok beðit oss at yður bók skyldi eigi þeira umbóta hlutlaus verða. (Holm Perg 34 4to, f. 8r)

> (You are cognisant that the most wise men of the Frosta assembly's law-district have frequently mentioned in front of us that you have heard that we have had a part in amending the majority of the lawbooks in the country, and begged us that your book should not be without a share of those improvements.)

The fact that the prologue in the first person makes the prologue to the *Landslǫg* particularly striking, because it is ostensibly from King Magnus in his own voice, endowing the prologue with immediacy. Politically, this consolidates the position of the King as law-maker: Magnus is represented as the source of the law and the lawbook in the *Landslǫg*, and the law code begins with a prologue in which he takes personal responsibility for the law:

> þá hǫfum vér þó þessa bók látit rita, er vér sendum yðr eftir slíkum hǽtti sem hon váttar treystandi á várs herra *Jesu Christi* miskunn ok þeira hinna skynsǫmustu manna tillǫgu er í hjá oss váru. (Holm Perg 34 4to, f. 8r)

(… we have nevertheless had this book written, which we
send to you after such a manner as it bears witness, trusting
in the mercy of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the contribution
of the most wise men who were with us.)

In the law, the triad of King, God, and the lawbook often intersect as
sources of authority throughout the law code.

The Old Norwegian prologue presents Magnus as the legal au-
thority behind the law code right at the beginning of the text. This
strongly interacts with the references to the power of the king in the
law code itself. While the lawbook is presented as the fundamental
record of the law, the king is presented in the *Landslǫg* as the source
of the law, as is made clear in the discussion of cases that are not ad-
equately covered by the lawbook:

En allt þat er lǫgbók skilr eigi ór, þá skal þat ór hverju máli
hafa er þeir verða ásáttir allir. En ef þá skilr á, þá ráði lǫgmaðr
ok þeir er með honum samþykkja, nema konungi með hinna
vitrustu manna ráði lítisk annat lǫgligara. (Holm Perg 34 4to,
f. 10v, *Þingfararbǫlkr*)

(And all that which the lawbook does not decide, then shall
each case have that which they are all in agreement upon. But
if they disagree, then the justice and those which agree with
him decide, unless the king, with the advice of the wisest
men, decides that it appears to him that another [i.e. different
decision] is more in accordance with the law.)

The law code goes on to say that the king is "yfir skipaðr lǫgin" (Holm
Perg 34 4to, f. 12r, *Þingfararbǫlkr*) ("above the law"). In addition to
asserting the authority of the king through the rhetorical triad of the
king, book and God, the *Landslǫg* also functioned to consolidate the
power of King Magnus by the centralisation of authority. The *Land-
slǫg* represents a centralization of norm production in the passing of
law code for the whole realm. Judgements and norm production
shifted from having occurred at the local assemblies, where each in-
dividual case was treated as unique, to a focus on the collective ap-
paratus of norms. Those people involved in this changed from being
local people at the assembly to a powerful group who could make
their decisions valid on a national level. This idea is really brought to
the fore in the prologue and resonates throughout the law code.

If the passe-partout, or the place of interaction between the pro-
logue and law code, is to be located in the voice of King Magnus in

the content of the law code, we might also consider where the passepartout between the prologue and law code might be found in the material record of the *Landslǫg*. There is one particularly interesting statement in the prologue to the code of 1274 with this in mind:

> Þingfararbǫlkr er nú sem fyrr **í andverðu ritaðr áðr en hefi sjalfa bókina**, at áðr berr at þingit sé skipat ok nefndarmenn skoðaðir, lǫgréttumenn kosnir, eiðar fluttir ok grið sett ok siðsemðum lýst, at því betr verði bókinni hlýtt síðan þingit er betr stillt ok siðat. Fyrsti hlutr bókarinnar er kristinsdóms-bǫlkr… (Holm Perg 34 4to, f. 8r, my emphasis)

> (The section about travelling to the assembly is now as before **written at the beginning**, **before the book itself begins**, since it is fitting that already the assembly be created and nominated men looked at, members of the law council chosen, oaths sworn, and truces made and good manners published, because the book will be better listened to since the assembly is better tempered and better mannered. The first part of the book is the Christian laws section…)

This quotation is drawn from the section of the prologue that describes and justifies the contents of the prologue in the order in which they come in the lawbook. Most interesting for us, is that the description "written at the beginning, before the book itself begins" does not in fact refer to the prologue. The section it in fact refers to, *Þingfararbǫlkr* ("the section about travelling to the assembly"), is usually regarded as the first section of the lawbook proper after the prologue and as the section with which the law code opens. The prologue does not contain legally binding rules, but the section on travelling to the assembly does. But, according to the description of contents in the prologue, it is only after the section on travelling to the assembly that the first book of the law code begins. We will now turn to how this is reflected in the material preservation of the *Landslǫg*, to explore how scribes organised aspects of the transition between parergon and ergon in the manuscript tradition.

The transition between the prologue and the law code in the medieval manuscripts of the *Landslǫg* points to one element that provides a point of transition: registers. In the manuscripts that contain registers (and some do not), these lists of contents typically come before each section of the law code and provide a list of headings or contents for each legal paragraph of the section. Registers are inter-

mediary points between the different sections of the law and indicate where the prologue ends and the law code begins.

In København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GkS 1154 fol. (a fourteenth-century manuscript), it is very clear the book painting and the registers work together to mark the points of transition in the manuscript. On f. 1v, there is an historiated initial at the beginning of the prologue depicting King Magnus giving the lawbook to the people. On f. 2v, another large initial serves to demarcate the beginning of the next section on travelling to the assembly. According to the overview in the prologue discussed above, this could also be classed an extra-legal section, since this is the section that was described as "written at the beginning, before the book itself begins." When we contrast *Þingfararbǫlkr* with the other books of the law code (which are, according to the prologue, the law code proper), we can see that these also have an initial like the prologue and *Þingfararbǫlkr*, but they also have a list of contents before each book, loosely based on the rubrics as headings. On f. 9v, the register providing the overview of the contents of the chapter comes directly above the chapter it overviews. In GkS 1154 fol., those books that were counted as belonging to the law code proper have a contents page before the initials; those that did not were still afforded historiated initials but organised on different principles. Since the prologue and *Þingfararbǫlkr* do not have contents pages, we might assume that these pages were not intended to be referred to as often, so the navigation of these pages was not as important. Nevertheless, other manuscripts, such as København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 60 4to (f. 22v) and København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 62 4to (f. 2v) do have registers for *Þingfararbǫlkr* following the prologue. In GkS 1154 fol. therefore, the prologue and *Þingfararbǫlkr* both provide prefatory material, although it is debateable whether *Þingfararbǫlkr* acts parergonally on the law code, since its contents are more obviously similar to the code than the prologue.[15] In the AM 60 4to and AM 62 4to, the indications in the manuscript are that *Þingfararbǫlkr* is clearly included in the law code. This demonstrates that in the case of texts transmitted in manuscripts, both the textual and material contexts need to be evaluated in tandem, and that individual manuscripts will handle the transition between the various sections of the contents differently. Paying attention to these areas of transition in the material object may guide us in locating areas of friction and interaction between the parergon and the ergon. This would suggest that in future studies of the interaction between prologue and main text in me-

15. There is also no register before *erfðatal*, the section of the law on inheritance, in GkS 1154 fol., so the absence of a register before *Þingfararbǫlkr* may be coincidental, which would simply bring the manuscript in line with the other manuscripts mentioned that do have a register for *Þingfararbǫlkr*.

dieval texts, working with individual manuscripts and their layout may give provide clues to parergonal elements.

In summary, the mechanism with which the parergon interacts with the ergon in the text itself is the voice of Magnus Lagabøte, while in the context of the material object, the mechanism of interaction is to be found in the transitional areas between texts, such as initials and registers. The voice of King Magnus appears from the parergon throughout the ergon to claim authority over Norwegian law; the parergon serves the ergon, and the prologue directs the reader how to understand the law code.

The Development of Prologues to the Danish Translations of the *Landslǫg*

Many manuscripts survive of the translations that were made of the *Landslǫg* into Danish. These translations arose because while Norway maintained its own laws in the early modern period, it was part of the Danish kingdom. The administration in the country in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were predominantly Danish and could not read the Old Norwegian the law code was written in. We have over 120 surviving manuscripts of these translations. In most of the manuscripts containing a translated version of the *Landslǫg,* the original prologue (discussed above, found in the medieval Old Norwegian versions of the law code) was replaced with a new prologue.

Earlier scholarship used the prologue as a criterion with which to group the manuscripts of the translated *Landslǫg*: one group contained translations that featured the old prologue, while the second group had the translation with the new prologue. This approach has its roots in Gustav Storm's *Om Haandskrifter og Oversættelser af Magnus Lagabøtes Love* from 1879, in which Storm states he has gone through the translations "med den Plan for Øie at gruppere dem" (Storm, *Om Haandskrifter*, 22) ("with the plan in mind to group them"). Storm only classes two manuscripts as belonging to the first group (Danish translations with the old prologue), which he terms "the older recension".[16] All other manuscripts of the translation belong to the second group, the Danish translation with the new prologue, which he terms the younger recension (listed in Storm, *Om Haandskrifter* 22–26). Storm prints a summary of the new prologue to the *Landslǫg* translation, which he states is similar across all the manuscripts, and points out that a large part of this new prologue is

16. Lund, Universitetsbiblioteket, Lund J 10 b fol., and Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 29 4to (Storm, *Om Haandskrifter* 22).

an extract from the *Jyske lov*, the regional law of Jutland in Denmark in force at the time, and with some additional words of introduction (Storm, *Om Haandskrifter* 28–29). The catalogue of Norwegian law manuscripts from 1885 states whether most of the manuscripts containing the translations of the *Landslǫg* have either the new or old prologue,[17] (although they are not grouped in to the older and newer recensions here because the manuscripts are listed by repository) (Storm and Keyser), and the most recent list of *Landslǫg* manuscripts from 2018 also mentions whether most of the translations have the old or new prologue (Rindal and Spørck 41–50). Careful examination of the two latter catalogues of *Landslǫg* manuscripts and looking at the prologues in the manuscripts themselves reveals a problem with Storm's grouping into the older and younger recensions of the prologue: while it is true that some translations have the original prologue and some have the new prologue, some manuscripts actually have both the old and new prologues, some have a prologue by Matthias Scavenius in addition to the new prologue, and some have no prologue at all. In order to update the discussion of the prologues in the manuscripts containing a translation, I have thus distinguished the following subgroups of manuscripts containing a Danish translation of the *Landslǫg*, presented as a timeline in each subgroup:[18]

Manuscripts with the old prologue in Danish translation

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 84 fol (middle or second half of the sixteenth century)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 29 4to (second half of the sixteenth century)

Lund, Universitetsbiblioteket, Lund J 10 b fol. (second half of the sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 314 (second half of the sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 736 a (second half of the sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.fol. 530 (1593-1594)

Oslo, Riksarkivet, NRA Manuskriptsamlingen 4to 60 (1597)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 313 fol. (1598)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 316 fol. (end of sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 64 4to (end of sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.fol. 4 (end of sixteenth century)

17. The manuscripts, however, are not grouped in to the older and newer recensions in the catalogue because they are listed by repository (Storm and Keyser).

18. This list is complete as possible, but not all of the manuscripts were available for consultation in cases where the catalogue information was incomplete. This list is collated primarily on the basis of Rindal and Spørck 41–50; Storm and Keyser, and manuscripts have been consulted where necessary to determine the status of the prologue. Manuscripts containing translations of the *Landslǫg* and for which I have not been able to consult to determine the status of the prologue are: København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 94 4to, Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 30 4to and 32 4to, Edinburgh, The Advocates Library 21-4-3, København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 1155b fol., Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 74 4to and 76 4to, Linkøping b 72, Oslo, Riksarkivet, NRA Manuskriptsamlingen fol. 117, 4to 63, 4to 69, 4to 79 and 16vo 1, Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Rål 29 4to, København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Ulldal 35 fol. and 314 4to.

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1644 4to (end of
sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Ulldal 315 4to (end of
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 377 (1601)

Manuscripts with the new prologue

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.8vo 296 (sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 85 4to (1543)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms. 4to 528 (1544)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 86 4to (first
half of the sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 69 4to (first half of
the sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 3263 4to (c. 1550)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 1272 fol. (c. 1550)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 1273 fol. (c. 1550-1560)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 1274 fol. (c. 1500-1580)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 2084 4to (c. 1550)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 80 4to (mid-
sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 116 fol. (mid- six-
teenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 71 4to (mid- six-
teenth century)

Oslo, Riksarkivet,NRA 49 (mid- sixteenth century)[19]

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 317 fol. (sec-
ond half of the sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 81 4to (second
half of the sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 82 4to (second
half of the sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 88 4to (second
half of the sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 89 4to (second
half of the sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Engestr C XVII, 1, 17 (second
half of the sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 115 fol. (second half
of the sixteenth century)

19. This manuscript only has two leaves containing part of the new prologue (Storm and Keyser 773; Rindal and Spørck 48).

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 70 4to (second half
of the sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Ledreb 76 4to (second half
of the sixteenth century)

Lund, Universitetsbiblioteket, Lund J 6 4to (second half of the
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 14 (second half of the
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 502 (second half of the
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.8vo 71 (second half of the
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 58 (c. 1560)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 75 4to (1561)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 28 4to (1562)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 87 4to (1566)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 33 4to (1567)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Kall 605 4to (1568-1579)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 302 (c. 1575)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 2086 4to (1589)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 90 4to (1593)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 91 4to (1593)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 83 a 4to (1594)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm C 79 fol. (1594)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 34 4to (1596)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 2087 4to (1596)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.fol. 278 (1598)

Bergen, Universitetetsbiblioteket, UBB-Ms 65 (c. 1598)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 84 4to (end of
sixteenth century)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 38 4to (end of sixteenth
century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 3264 4to (end of
sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 3265 4to (end of
sixteenth century)

Trondheim, Gunnerusbiblioteket, GUNNERUS XA Oct. 57
(end of sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 113 fol. (end of
sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 114 fol. (end of

sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 73 4to (end of sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.fol. 230 (end of sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 1392 (end of sixteenth century)[20]

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 526 (end of sixteenth century)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 591 (end of sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1073 fol. (end of sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1074 fol. (end of sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1075 fol. (end of sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1646 4to (end of sixteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 2085 4to (end of sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 95 a 4to (c. 1600)

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.8vo 3121 (c. 1600)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1076 fol. (c. 1600)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1635 c 4to (c. 1600)

Bergen, Universitetetsbiblioteket, UBB-Ms 63 (c. 1600)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 33 8vo (1601)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 12 fol. (1604)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 31 4to (eighteenth century)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1635 b 4to (eighteenth century)

Manuscripts with the old prologue in Danish translation and the new prologue

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 72 4to (1552)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 1156 fol. (second half of the sixteenth century)

Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 78 4to (after 1591)

København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 1643 4to (1593-1594)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 11 fol. (1595)

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 13 fol. (1596)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 321 fol. (end of sixteenth century)

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 79 4to (end of

20. This manuscript also contains a copy of the prologue of Mathias Scavenius, but it is separate from the new prologue and the *Landslǫg*.

sixteenth century)

Trondheim, Gunnerusbiblioteket, GUNNERUS XA Qv. 135 (1604)

Manuscript with the old prologue in Old Norwegian and Danish translation and the new prologue

Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.fol 5 (end of sixteenth century)

Manuscripts with the new prologue and the prologue of Mathias Scavenius

Oslo, Deichman Bibliotek, Deichman 14 fol. (1577)
Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 117 fol. (mid-sixteenth century)
København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 320 fol. (end of sixteenth century)
København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 32 8vo (end of sixteenth century)
Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms. 4to 1392 (end of sixteenth century)[21]
København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Ulldal 34 fol. (1600)

Manuscripts with the prologue lacking[22]

København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 93 4to (second half of the sixteenth century)
Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 553 (second half of the sixteenth century)
København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 318 fol. (1554)
Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm papp 77 4to (1575-1576)
København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 319 fol. (last part of the sixteenth century)
København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 2088 4to (1599)
Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.4to 691b (end of sixteenth century)
København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 92 4to (c. 1600)

We can see from this overview that there are over ten manuscripts of the Danish translations that contain the old prologue, and around ten manuscripts contain both the old and the new prologue. The ma-

21. Contains a copy of the Mathias Scavenius prologue but it is not with the new prologue or with the *Landslǫg* in the manuscript.

22. In some translations of the *Landslǫg*, the status of the prologue has not been possible to identify because it is blank or missing. AM 92 4to (which is a copy of NB Ms.4to 553) has blank leaves (f. 5v–8v) left for the prologue in the manuscript, but they were not filled in. This manuscript is a copy of NB Ms.4to 553 (Rindal and Spørck 42; Storm and Keyser 587), in which the prologue is lacking altogether, so the scribe of AM 92 4to clearly intended to source the prologue (we cannot know whether old or new) from elsewhere, but never did. Some manuscripts have a lacuna, which means the prologue is missing, for example in Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB MS.4to 311 (1550), NB MS.4to 694 (end of sixteenth century) and NB Ms.4to 736 b (second half of the sixteenth century). The translation in København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 75 4to from c. 1600 also does not have a prologue; this manuscript was originally bound in with the parchment manuscript AM 71 4to (Storm and Keyser 567), in which the *Landslǫg* is in Old Norwegian but has a lacuna that includes the prologue – we can assume this lacuna was already there when the translation in AM 75 4to was done in c. 1600 since they both lack the same pages. Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms.8vo 29 (1603) is a summary of the *Landslǫg* and the prologue is not included. There is however a short scribal prologue, describing the disposition of the books of the law code, which is printed in Storm and Keyser 749.

jority of the manuscripts, however, contain the new prologue, while six manuscripts contain the prologue of Mathias Scavenius in addition to the new prologue.

We can therefore find the following versions of prologue in *Landslǫg* manuscripts:

1) the old prologue in Old Norwegian (in the medieval manuscripts)
2) the old prologue in Danish translation
3) the new prologue
4) the old prologue in Danish and the new prologue
5) the old prologue in Old Norwegian and Danish translation and the new prologue
6) the new prologue and the prologue of Mathias Scavenius

The Old Prologue in Danish Translation

There are at least thirteen manuscripts of the Danish translations of the *Landslǫg* that contain the old prologue in the voice of Magnus Lagabøte in Danish translation.[23] These manuscripts date from the second half or the end of the sixteenth century and so do not represent the earliest surviving translations of the *Landslǫg* into Danish[24] (so it is not the case that the earliest translations sought to maintain the old prologue and the later translations were written with a new prologue). The arrangement of old prologue (in translation) with a Danish translation of the *Landslǫg* preserves the direction of reading established by the prologue in Old Norwegian, but the fact that the law code is now in Danish rather than Old Norwegian reflects the prevailing power structures in sixteenth-century Norway.

The translation of the law into Danish adds an extra layer of friction to the parergonal process. The voice of Magnus Lagabøte continues to connect and fill in the Derridean lack of the ergon, since the old prologue is still present. The "mechanism of interaction" (to borrow Heller-Andrist's turn of phrase, (56)), however, is fundamentally altered when the prologue is in Danish; even though Norway retained its own law code in the sixteenth century, the base of power had been transferred to Denmark. While the voice of Magnus Lagabøte in the Old Norwegian prologue exerted Norwegian royal influence on the law through interaction of the parergon with the law code (ergon), the translation of both of these parts into Danish serves to highlight

23. The version in Holm papp 84 fol. is somewhat translated (see f. 38).

24. The earliest manuscript, AM 85 4to, is from 1543 and contains only the new prologue.

that the Norwegian royal authority is no more. Magnus' voice in the Danish translation is only a hollow echo, and we might go so far as to say is negated by the translated law code. The translation of the law code into Danish is, afterall, an important indication of a new identity; Danish is the language of the present and future.

As in the medieval manuscripts, the prologue is treated as a separate entity to the main law code in the early modern manuscripts containing the old prologue. The separation between the parergon of the prologue and the rest of the law code is also clear in the material record by looking at the placement of registers. Most of the manuscripts that contain the old prologue in translation also contain registers.[25] The registers, or lists of contents, either follow the prologue (AM 313 fol.; AM 64 4to; NB Ms. fol. 530) or the law code itself (AM 316 fol., NB Ms. fol. 4) or come after each book of the law code (NB Ms. 4to 314), but the prologue is not included in the register any of these cases. In NB Ms. fol. 4, for example, the register of *Þingfararbǫlkr* ("The Section on Travelling to the Assembly") is described as "Tafflen til den første Bog som kallis Tingfare Bolck" (f. 3r) ("The contents table of the first book which is called *Þingfararbǫlkr*"), making it clear that the old prologue is not part of the law, and the register comes after the law code, and does not include the prologue.

Several of the manuscripts containing the old prologue in Danish translation contain introductory statements to the prologue which claim authority for the law code by appealing to past kings. In NB Ms.fol. 4 from the end of the sixteenth century, the old prologue is in Danish translation, but it is not at the beginning of the law code, since several navigational apparatuses come between it and the law code. It is, however, the first text in the manuscript. The prologue is introduced with the rubric "Dette er tenn rette gamble fortale som konning Magnus sielff giorde wdoffuer Lougenn" (p. 1) ("this is the true, old prologue that King Magnus himself made in addition to the law");[26] following this comes a register of the contents of each chapter of the law (pp. 9–20), and then another register containing a list of the chapters of the law code and several other items in the manuscript (pp. 21–22). It is after this that the law code itself starts. In this case, the prologue is treated as a separate text to the *Landslǫg*. In Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms. 4to 377, the title page of the manuscript says "Her Begyndis den norske low bog som Sancte Oluff konning giorde som mange frem farne konger udj Norge Stadt fest haffuer" (f. 1r) ("Here begins the Norwegian lawbook that Saint Olaf the King made, which many former kings have affirmed"). The introduction

25. Although there are some exceptions, for example NB Ms. 4to 377 contains no register, and NB Ms. 4to 736 b, has no registers but each chapter contains a descriptive heading.

26. This section of the manuscript is not foliated; the foliation begins at the beginning of the law code, therefore I provide page numbers for the section of the manuscript before foliation begins.

continues "Nu effterfylger her Konning Magnus rette oc gamle fortale offuer denne Norske love" ("Now follows here King Magnus' true and old prologue over this Norwegian law"). The appeal to St. Olaf (an eleventh century king of Norway) as the guarantor of Norway's laws goes back several centuries and is found in many legal contexts in Norway and Iceland, with Olaf gaining special prominence in this role the thirteenth century. By explicitly following the mention of Olaf as the guarantor of the law with a mention of Magnus, this presentation of the old prologue may be seeking to establish itself as the authentic prologue to Norway's law in the face of increasing dominance by the new prologue, and by extension, the Danish control of the law.

The New Prologue

In the majority of the manuscripts containing a translation of the *Landslǫg* into Danish, the old prologue is not present and instead a new prologue is used. This new prologue is very similar across the surviving manuscripts.[27] In this new prologue, the reference to Magnus Lagabøte is removed and replaced with a prologue in the voice of the Danish kings; nevertheless, the appeal to St. Olaf as the guarantor of Norwegian law remains. The new prologue begins:

> Her begÿndis Norigis och sÿnderlig Guletings Lougbog
> Effter som hellige her S. Oluff konning med mange gode herrer och fremfarne konger udi Norgis Rige met de skiønsammeste Ypperste oc beste mends Raad i landet giort skickit oc ordinert beuilget stadfest och menige mand samtygt … (København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 79 4to, f. 8r)[28]

> (Here begins Norway's and specifically the Guleting's lawbook according to that which the Holy Saint King Olaf with many good lords and former kings from the kingdom of Norway with the wisest, most excellent and best men's advice in the country have put together and consented to its being affirmed and with the agreement of ordinary men …)

Here the traditional appeal to St. Olaf as guarantor of Norwegian law is maintained. Although this prologue is clearly Danish, the opening appeals to Norwegian traditions and that the law has been authenticated by ancient Norwegian kings. This is likely an attempt to compensate for the voice of Magnus Lagabøte having been removed from

27. It can be found summarised in Storm, *Om Haandskrifter* 29–30, but has never been published.

28. All quotations from the new prologue are drawn from AM 79 4to, which contains both the new prologue and the old prologue.

the lawbook. The parergon "takes control and command" of the ergon (Heller-Andrist 61); for this reason, the Danish prologue removes the voice of King Magnus, exposing the parergonal force of Magnus' voice in the original prologue via its lack. It is also clear in the new prologue that the old law is forbidden, since "ingen sig effter denne dag formeldelst den gamble loug" (AM 79 4to, f. 8r) ("no one shall after this day shall be judged against the old law"). The translations of the *Landslǫg* themselves are in essence rather close to the original, however, so we might understand this as meaning against the essence of the old law as encapsulated in the old prologue. The *Landslǫg* is now to be understood as law administrated from Denmark, however much the rhetoric of the introduction, with its appeal to St. Olaf, seeks to reassure its reader that this is still a Norwegian law.

Although an ideal portrait of lawgiving is painted by the prologue and there are many references to the king, the rights of the king to legislate are actually curtailed in comparison to the old prologue: "maa Kongen slig loug eÿ… forandre uden sit Rigis Raadrz raad och mennige mandz samtycke med mindre hun vor obenbarlige emod gud Christi ord och lærdom" (AM 79 4to, f. 8v) ("the king must never change the law without the advice of his council and the agreement of common men, unless it is obviously against the word and teachings of God"). Collective agreement is emphasized; while this is a theme in the old prologue, there the king himself is presented as the source of the law.

The new prologue has what could be described as an external relationship to the *Landslǫg*; the prologue reaches outside the *Landslǫg* in an intertextual relationship with the *Jyske lov* ("The Law of Jutland").[29] While both the beginning and ending of the new prologue contain some elements reminiscent of the prologue to the *Jyske lov*, the middle part of the new prologue (beginning "Lougenn[30] skal vere Erlig oc Taallig" (AM 79 4to, f. 8r) ("the law shall be honest and moderate")) is drawn directly from the *Jyske lov*, in a clear statement of Danish authority. Also drawn from *Jyske lov* is the section that focuses on the rights and duties of the king and his representatives:

> Det er kongens och høffdings embede der i landet ere at dømme reuisse och frelse den som met vold tuingis som ere Viduer faderløsse børn Vdlenske folck, pillegrime och andre fattige mend (AM 79 4to, f. 8v)
> (It is the king's and ruler's duty here in the land to judge justly and to protect those who could be coerced with violence, which are widows, fatherless children, foreign people, pilgrims and other poor men)

29. The regional law of Jutland that had national influence and importance in Denmark. For an edition of the medieval *Jyske lov*, see Skautrup, Iuul and Jørgensen. For an early modern version of the prologue, see for example, the manuscript Bergen, Universitetet i Bergen Manuskriptsamlingen, UBB-Ms. 79, a sixteenth century Danish lawbook.

30. In AM 79 4to, it says "Kongen skal vere Erlig" ("the king shall be honest"), but "Kongen" ("the king") has later been corrected to "Lougenn" ("the law") in common with other manuscripts.

These vulnerable categories of people (all drawn directly from the *Jyske lov*) are the king's responsibility; no mention is made of the role of the law code in protecting them. The new prologue relates more to the context of the law code than to its contents. Heller-Andrist frames this kind of intertextual relationship as "the lack in the ergon could thus be said to be its reference to a previous work, which then acts as the frame" (62). Rather than the prologue directing the reader to the law code, the new prologue introduces communication with a Danish law code. This also serves to emphasise that the law code has been translated out of Norwegian.

Indeed, another emphasis in the introduction of the new prologue is that this is a prologue to a translated law. The first lines state the law has been "udseet at mennige mand kand bruge och forstaa alle til hielp och trost" (AM 79 4to, f. 8r) ("translated so that the common man can use and understanding everything to his help and comfort"). The focus on language, the "forstandigt maall som nu i landene brugeligt" (AM 79 4to, f. 8r) ("understandable language which is now used in the countries") replaces the focus of the old prologue on the content of the law; from this perspective, the new prologue is more separate from the law code than the was the old prologue in the medieval manuscripts. The interaction of the parergon with the ergon in the translated *Landslǫg* thus works on a completely different basis, directing the reader outside of the work towards Danish authority.

The Old Prologue in Danish Translation and the New Prologue

In the case of manuscripts containing both the old and new prologues, the reader faces two interacting systems; both frames together constitute the parergon. The inclusion of two prologues causes confliction and weakens the connection(s) of the prologue(s) to the law code. The old prologue connects to the law code by virtue of its contents, while contents-wise the new prologue speaks more to an intertextual relationship with the *Jyske lov* and to the external conditions of the law code in the sixteenth century. When both prologues are present, the voice of King Magnus is retained in the old prologue, while the contemporary statement of Danish identity is even stronger with the inclusion of the new prologue than it was in cases when only the translated old prologue was present in the manuscripts. In the medieval manuscripts, the figure of Magnus played a central role in

claiming authority over, as well as lending authority to, the lawbook. This can no longer be the case in Denmark-Norway, diminishing the effect of the voice of King Magnus in connecting the parergon of the old prologue to the Danish translation of the lawbook. The new prologue, which does not mention Magnus and instead harks back only to St. Olaf as the guarantor of Norwegian law and which reaches outside the translated Landslǫg towards the *Jyske lov* rather than heavily interacting with the content of the law code (like we saw in the case of the old prologue in the medieval manuscripts), further weakens the connection of the old prologue with the translated lawbook is further weakened; it becomes more of an "inert supplement" (Heller-Andrist 32) since the voice of King Magnus is severely disrupted.

The two prologues are arranged in different ways in the manuscripts. For example, in AM 79 4to, the new prologue is followed by the old prologue in translation. The old prologue is sandwiched between the new prologue and the register to the whole lawbook, which follows the old prologue (and therefore comes before the law code). In København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 321 fol., on the other hand, we find the old prologue (in translation) first in the manuscript (f. 1r-2v), and at the bottom of the old prologue the register to *Þingfararbǫlkr* (f. 2v). Following this comes the new prologue (f. 3r-4r), and then *Þingfararbǫlkr* itself begins (on f. 4r). In AM 321 fol., the old prologue is distanced from the main text of the law code, while the new prologue is placed after the register to *Þingfararbǫlkr*, in a closer proximity to the law code itself. These two examples of manuscripts thus present opposite systems of ordering the prologues and perhaps also reflect the conflict introduced by two prologues and the weakened connection of the parerga to the law code. Nor can the registers, previously identified as important places of transition between the parergon and ergon, be securely identified as borders between the prologue(s) and lawbook in manuscripts that have both the old and new prologues, since their placement also differs in the manuscripts.

The Old Prologue in Old Norwegian and Danish Translation and the New Prologue

In NB Ms. fol. 5, we also find a conflicting system of prologues, since in this manuscript there are three versions of the prologue. First is the new prologue to the *Landslǫg*, and then following this is the old

prologue presented in two columns; the original in Old Norwegian and then a Danish translation of the old prologue in the second column. There is a register to *Þingfararbǫlkr* beginning on a new leaf after the end of the dual presentation of the old prologue. This case of having three versions of the prologue is similar to the analysis above of the presence of both the old prologue (in translation) and the new prologue; the parergonal effect of the prologues on the law code is weakened. The prologue in Old Norwegian reaches for a version of the *Landslǫg* that is no longer there; the voice of Magnus Lagabøte reaches for an authority that is no longer his and the new prologue points to the new reality of Denmark-Norway and the introduction of Danish as the language of law.

The New Prologue and the Prologue of Matthias Scavenius

Six manuscripts contain a prologue written by a man who identifies himself as Matthias Scavenius. He is otherwise unknown. Matthias writes a learned prologue, which is rather long (roughly three times the length of the new prologue) and which is self-conscious in its display of its author's learning. The most substantial part of the prologue focuses on justice and the fairness of the law, and makes extensive reference to classical authors, such as Plutarch and Pisanus.[31] Further sections of the text are based on Cicero's *De Officiis* ("On Duties"), and the author makes references to the story of Sisamnes, who Herodotus tells is the unjust judge under King Cambyses of Persia, who was flayed alive for accepting a bribe and his skin used to cover the seat of judgement upon which his son then had to sit and deliver judgement. There are also three short poems in Danish included in the text. This prologue approaches the law from the position of a subject who will be judged by his superiors, and focuses on cautioning that this must be done justly.

The conclusion drawn in the prologue is that it is Norway's lawbook that will provide people with the protection necessary:

> Saa haffue vy oc her i Norgis Rige en gudfryctig oc viss
> Maade som er Norgis Logbog at effterfølge huilcken vor
> allernaadigste Herre oc Koning Koning Friderich den anden
> til Danmarck oc Norge haffuer loffuit alle Norgis indbyggere
> at de skulle sig effter den rette: oc hans Naade vil denem

31. This is probably Huguccio Pisanus, the twelfth-century Italian canon lawyer. He wrote a "Summa" of the *Decretum Gratiani*.

derunder beskierme oc ved mact holde. (København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 32 8vo, f. 7v)[32]

(So we have and here in the kingdom of Norway a god-fearing and certain way, which is to follow Norway's lawbook, which the most merciful lord and king King Fredrick the Second of Denmark and Norway has promised all Norway's inhabitants that they should follow it: and his mercy will protect them under it, and maintain it with his power.)

This introductory sentence to a new section of the prologue praises the power of Norway's own law, even if it is upheld by a Danish king. This is the beginning to a section of the prologue in which the author explains the need for a translation of "Norgis Logbog" (AM 32 8vo, f. 7v) ("Norway's lawbook"). The prologue continues with an explanation that the Norwegian lawbook

er funden ganske vklar saa at der icke findes saa i den ene som i den anden Logbog at de som hinde først haffue fordansked icke haffuer den saa klarligen *emenderit* oc *puncterit*, som det sig med rette burde en part onde oc wforstandige Skriffuers skyld som icke haffuer forstaait det som de haffue sielffue skreffuit (AM 32 8vo, f. 7v)

(is found to be very unclear so that there is not to be found in one what there is in another lawbook, because they who translated the first one into Danish have not so clearly emended and punctuated it as they really ought to have; it is partly to be blamed on the disorder and incomprehensibility of scribes, who have not understood what they themselves have written)

This expression of frustration that the variability in the Danish translations of the lawbook made it not fit for purpose accord with, for example, the sentiment expressed in the printed lawbook of 1604, dicussed below. The author's solution to this is a claim that he himself has taken many lawbooks, compared them, put the resulting text "paa ræt Danske" (AM 32 8vo, f. 8r) ("into correct Danish"), and explained all the main articles of the law in the margins, and in addition, noted the relevant Bible verse in the margin where the secular law is in accordance "med Guds Log" (AM 32 8vo, f. 8r) ("with God's law"). Before moving on to his conclusion, the author deflects any criticism that such a work "kommer icke offuereens med den gamle Norske

Logbog" (AM 32 8vo, f. 8r) ("is not in accordance with the old Norwegian lawbook"), highlighting that the lawbook has quite another character stripped of the voice of Magnus and presented in the Danish language. It is clear though that the author wishes to emphasise the need for a consistent lawbook in correct Danish, and to note its intertextual points of correspondence with the Bible, whilst, with the references to classical authors and a scholarly way of comparing and building a text, giving the whole enterprise a learned air. The prologue ends by returning to the need for mercy, citing "Christi gyldene Regel" (AM 32 8vo, f. 8v) ("Christ's golden rule"), do not treat others in ways that you would not like to be treated, bringing the prologue full circle back to its initial focus on justice and mercy.

Scavenius' prologue as parergon, like the new prologue, directs the reader outside of the work with its reference to other authors and tales. Derrida describes a parergon as "half-work and half-outside-the-work, neither work not outside-the-work and arising in order to supplement it because of the lack within the work" (122). It would appear from the promises of the author to provide an annotated law code that he anticipated his contribution as filling the lack he perceived in the code – especially at the crossover points of the law and the Bible. If friction is "effected by incompatibilities between work and frame" (Heller-Andrist 11), then here we might identify friction between this parergon and the law code. The parergon is not interested in the contents of the law code, but the method of its application (mercy, justice). As discussed above, this friction is itself a symptom of parergonality (Heller-Andrist 12).

There is some manuscript evidence that suggests that Scavenius' prologue was seen as an independent piece in comparison to the old and new prologues. For one, Scavenius' prologue appears in the manuscripts in conjunction with the new prologue, it does not replace it. For example, Scavenius' prologue comes foremost in the manuscript AM 320 fol., following the title page. After Scavenius' prologue comes a list of the sections of the law (p. 9), and following this the new prologue (p. 10). The new prologue has the heading "Ting fare Balck" at the tops of the pages, but it is not until the prologue is finished that we find the register for the section. AM 32 8vo has the same arrangement, except that the pages in between Scavenius' prologue and the new prologue (f. 9r-11v) are blank. Clearly it was intended that another text or register should be copied into this space, separating the two prologues, but this was never done. Oslo, Nasjonalbiblioteket, NB Ms. 4to 1392 contains the new prologue and the translated Landslǫg, at the beginning of the manuscript, but then contains Mathias Scavenius' prologue

at what was originally the end of the manuscript (according to Storm and Keyser 786 the material after Scavenius' prologue in the manuscript has been added later). This placement of a prologue is unusual and may indicate that it was seen as a somewhat independent or separate text is comparison to the other legal prologues.

The separation of the Mathias Scavenius prologue from the law code the may call the status of Mathias Scavenius' prologue as parergon into question; as Duro states, "a parergon cannot be identified as a thing in itself, but only in relation to something recognised as the main work (the ergon)" (26). If the Scavenius prologue can be separated from the law code, the relationship of prologue as parergon to law code as ergon is diminished, since its function as frame is lost.

The Prologue to the Lawbook of 1604

The publication of the lawbook of 1604 marked the first time the *Landslǫg* was printed. The printed edition is a translation into Danish and is also a revised version with the aim of removing inconsistencies apparant in the various translations circulating before this point in manuscript form.[33] The book was printed in Denmark, and sent to Norway for circulation, since at this point Norway did not have its own printing press. The prologue found in the lawbook of 1604 is a new prologue written for the occasion of the publication of the printed edition. The prologue is written in the voice of Christian IV (reigned 1588–1648), and, like the new prologue in the manuscript translations, also draws on the contemporary prologue to the *Jyske lov*, a revision and modernisation of which had been printed in 1590.[34] In common with the 1590 prologue to the *Jyske lov*, the main focus of the 1604 prologue is an explanation regarding the necessity of a revised and translated version. The contents of the lawbook are also revised because, as explained at length in the prologue, numerous kings through the centuries have issued amendments and open letters, with the result that

> icke alle stemmer met hin anden offuer eens, men somme steder findis at vere tuert imod huer andre: saa at huad den ene rettebod tillader oc befaler, det forbiudes offte vdi en anden (Hallager and Brandt 4)
>
> (not everything agrees in accordance with other things, but some places are to be found that directly disagree with each

33. The lawbook of 1604 contains some misunderstandings and inaccuracies in the translations. For an analysis of the 1604 translation in comparison to manuscript translations see Leslie-Jacobsen, "Translation". For an analysis of the motivations behind the printing of the lawbook of 1604, see Leslie-Jacobsen, "Corrected and Improved".

34. The 1590 Jyske lov was printed as *Den rette Judske Lowbog, Nu Nylige offuerseet, Corrigerit oc Dansken Forbedrit Aar M.D.LXXXX.*

other: so that what one amendment allows and orders, is often forbidden by another)

That the Danish *Jyske lov* influences the 1604 prologue is another statement of Danish authority in Norway. The voice of Christan IV is prominent in the prologue to the *Jyske lov*; his name is mentioned right at the beginning of the 1590 lawbook as dealing with the "stor brøst" (sig. A2r) ("large defects") in the *Jyske lov*, and similarly the 1604 lawbook also begins with the name of Christian IV.

Another main focus of the prologue concerns the obscure nature of the old Norwegian law code and the Danish translation found in the printed lawbook. The lack of clarity in the old lawbook means that "ordene texten oc stjlen icke haffuer verit saa tydelig" (Hallager and Brandt 3) ("the words, the text and the style have not been so clear"). It is pointed out that the language has changed so much that the people cannot understand the old language of the lawbook[35] and that "det er gantske faa folck vdi Norge (laugmendene vndertagen)" (Hallager and Brandt 4) ("there are rather few people in Norway (the lawmen excepted)") that can cope with it.

Above I argued that the parergonal effect of the old prologue rested on the interaction of the voice of Magnus Lagabøte with the Old Norwegian law code. While the old prologue reaches into the *Landslǫg* with the voice of Magnus, the new Danish prologue reaches outwards towards the Danish authority of the *Jyske lov*. What then of the prologue to the lawbook of 1604? Unlike the new prologue to the *Landslǫg*, the reference to St. Olaf is also removed in the prologue to the lawbook of 1604. In the printed lawbook, the voice of the king of Denmark-Norway, Christian IV, has been instated as the giver of the new lawbook. In this prologue, the parergonal effect of the prologue reaches both into the law code with the voice of the king, and out of it, towards Denmark. The site of interaction with the law code can be located not only in the voice of the king, but also in the emphasis on the revisions of the content and the Danish language, explained in the prologue and visible in the code. The prologue as frame also connects the law code to its wider context in the Danish realm, as the king remarks in the prologue that he "er kommen til regimentit, offuer forskreffne norsk lowbogs vrictighed" (Hallager and Brandt 3) ("has come to rule over the written Norwegian lawbook's inaccuracy"), the king presenting himself as bringer of the true and correct law to Norway.

35. Described as "det gamle norske sprog som for nogle hundrit aar haffuer verit brugelig, paa huilcken oc lowen aff førsten er skreffuen" (Hallager and Brandt 3–4) ("the old Norwegian language, which has been in use for hundreds of years, in which the law was also first written").

Conclusion

Above I have presented an updated overview of the different prologues associated with the *Landslǫg*, and considered how the prologue is transformed into different versions. Each of the prologues exerts a parergonal influence on the law code itself. While this functions differently for each prologue, it is clear that the translation of the law code into Danish had a profound effect on the development and transformation of the prologues. The old prologue to the *Landslǫg* interacts with the law code via the authoritative voice of Magnus Lagabøte. The new prologue, on the other hand, prioritises an intertextual relationship with the Danish *Jyske lov*, guiding the reader outside of the law code itself. Manuscripts containing both the old and new prologues present a mixed and conflicting system, with the parergonal effects of the prologue severely weakened. The prologue of Matthias Scavenius is a learned prologue leaning heavily on other sources to build the narrative and is transmitted with the new prologue in the manuscripts, and since there is evidence that this prologue could be separated altogether from the law code, the function of this prologue as a parergonal frame can also be called into question. The prologue to the lawbook of 1604 interacts with the law code by virtue of its focus on the changes made to the lawbook when it was printed, which the reader can then expect to meet in the law code itself. Its focus on the Danish language also provides a point of connection with the context of the lawbook as a code sent from Denmark. I have also demonstrated that the sites where the prologue/parergon and law code/ergon meet can be identified in the manuscript tradition, for example by looking at the location of registers in the manuscripts, and that the examination of individual manuscripts can be profitably combined with the study of the contents of the texts when studying prologues preserved in manuscripts as parerga.

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PAVLÍNA CERMANOVÁ AND VÁCLAV ŽŮREK

Reading Alexander the Great in Medieval Bohemia:

A Moralistic Example and a Functional Label[1]

Abstract

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the figure of Alexander the Great and the stories associated with him became a stable part of the Bohemian literary landscape. Here, he represented a great ruler and conqueror, as well as a reminder of the transience of worldly glory and the need for humility. The study focuses on the role of Alexander's figure in different literary contexts and how the reading and use of the character have shifted according to the changing political and social situation.

The story of Alexander the Great belonged to the most well known in the Middle Ages, recounted across Europe and Asia in many versions and languages. However, its reception varied in its effects across geographies, languages, and cultures within this space. Literary works with Alexandrian motifs were not part of the required knowledge of a medieval scholar, but they became exceptionally popular, widespread, and well known. Alexander's medieval popularity was based not only on historiographical works and epic adaptations of his life; his figure also permeated other genres. In medieval biblical exegesis, for example, Alexander's reign was associated with the exposition of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the prophecy of Daniel (Dn 2,29–45). He also left a significant mark on medieval apocalyptic literature as the one to imprison the tribes of Gog and Magog, playing an essential role in the prophesized end of days.

Alexander the Great entered many literary genres, in part thanks to his ability to be an example, both positive and negative. He can be found in a wide range of stories that carry easily understandable messages. Their comprehension was conditioned to a significant extent by the fact that the basic contours of, or stories about, Alexander

were widely known through the circulation of extensive biographical texts (Bridges; Cary; Zuwiyya). For a medieval reader, the dominant association with Alexander was certainly glory, world domination, and adventure, but also paganism contrasted with Christianity. These characteristics connected the most well-known stories about Alexander and offer a basis for the interpretation of those not as widely circulated among readers and listeners. Within this framework, Alexander's character was a connection and, simultaneously, an interpretive key that ensured that the individual stories had a common and easily communicable message. Even seemingly simple stories as we know them from the collections of medieval exempla, if they featured Alexander and thus became part of the whole of the Alexander narratives, gained more attractiveness for the medieval reader or listener. This fact was well known to those who took up the Alexander's figure in the Middle Ages and continued to use it in their works.

This study will focus on the dissemination and transformation of Alexander and Alexandrian narratives in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Bohemia, which include extensive biographical narratives and shorter literary forms, exempla and minor stories featuring Alexander. In this study, we will concentrate primarily on the last group. We will also discuss the role that Alexander and his stories occupied in literary representations of social, political, and general cultural changes in medieval Bohemia, the alterations in their readings, and the transformation of Alexander as a literary figure.[2] We will analyse the Alexandrian texts from several perspectives: we will focus on the replication of the model of the instructed ruler and sage based on the paradigmatic model of Aristotle and Alexander, and we will trace the motif of impermanence and its representations in high medieval Bohemian literature; an essential question for us will also be how the dynamic confessional and social changes in fifteenth-century Bohemia were projected onto the reading of Alexander's stories.

I. Alexander in Bohemia

The fame of Alexander the Great spread in medieval Bohemia through several works. Large-scale epic compositions represent the dominant form of dissemination of Alexander the Great's stories, primarily Latin renderings, which had their basis in the *Historia de preliis* by Archpresbyter Leo of Naples from the tenth century and Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis*, written in the twelfth century. In Bohemia,

2. The most recent overview of writings about Alexander the Great in medieval Bohemia is given by Adde-Vomáčka.

the *Historia de preliis* was copied in two later versions from the twelfth–thirteenth centuries (I², I³; Vidmanová, "Latinská historie"). Bohemian copies of these two versions are known mainly from manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The spread and copying of these canonical works also included their specific processing, in particular their simplification. An example is the *Prague epitome,* a simplified version of I² preserved in a Prague manuscript dated to the late fourteenth century (Magoun). A rich source of stories from Alexander's life independent of the *Historia de preliis* is the *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX* by Valerius Maximus, an author living in the first century CE, whose texts were very popular in fourteenth-century Bohemia.

Besides the generally well-known texts, which were read in Latin, stories about Alexander are related to the beginnings of the Czech literature, for they began to be translated into and adapted in the vernacular languages in the Czech milieu from the thirteenth century. Walter of Châtillon's poem was a seminal influence in Bohemia at this time. His *Alexandreis* was translated into Czech at the end of the thirteenth century, leading to the Old Czech *Alexandreida* in verse. The same model served as the basis for the German verse work *Alexandreis*, written by poet Ulrich of Etzenbach.

The Old Czech verse *Alexandreida*, preserved only in extensive fragments, describes the life and adventures of Alexander of Macedonia, depicting him as a defender of the social order, as well as collecting the advice the great thinker Aristotle gave his royal pupil. Here we learn how the medieval poet imagined this chivalrous and heroic sovereign as being more than the values that previous literary versions ascribed to Alexander, for elements of individual works of medieval political philosophy appear here as well. For example, Aristotle advises Alexander in the *Alexandreida* to surround himself with distinguished nobles and to exclude commoners from his closest circles in order to be a fair judge; to appear often in front of his subjects; to be generous with them; not to excessively indulge in worldly pleasures; and in his final counsel, implores his pupil to show mercy (Vážný, 37–40). Although the Bohemian author followed the Latin poem of Walter of Châtillon, he worked largely independently. He enriched the narrative with many direct speeches, added Bohemian references and, above all, the Christian and chivalric concept of the king and his court, which was meant to consist of noble men loyal to the king. This concept wholly corresponded to the environment of Ottokar II of Bohemia's court (1253-1278) and the later court

3. Research on the Old Czech *Alexandreida* was last summarized by František Svejkovský in the introduction to Vážný 7–28.

of his son Wenceslas II (1278-1305). However, interpretation of the work is complicated by the fact that only about a third of the text has survived, and then only incompletely.[3]

At the same time, a Middle High German version of the *Alexandreis* was created by Ulrich of Etzenbach at the royal court in Prague, which was similarly extensive. It also includes many updates and localizations conditioned by the court of Ottokar II of Bohemia, as it was completed shortly after his death. Although Ulrich primarily worked with Walter's version of Alexander's life, he did include compositions and passages inspired by the *Historia de preliis* in its I² version (Bok 77–97). An Old Czech prose version of the *Historia de preliis* (Vidmanová, "Nejstarší" 134–36; Solomon 7–19; Antonín, 164–68) is dated a century later. It is based on the youngest Latin version, known as I³ (Steffens). Compared with the other two versions of this composition, the Latin I³ and the Old Czech translation show a great intent to moralize the stories. Humility, penitence, and a personification of transience were added to heroism and glory, a narrative that received a widespread response in both high medieval Bohemia and beyond. The tendency to emphasize repentance and humility, including that of Alexander, who served as a proxy-symbol of a great ruler, corresponds to the high medieval emphasis on human nature, emotionality, and, with it, suffering, which appears both in Christological representations and in the newly defined ideal of the ruler, as seen, for example, in the stylization of the French king Louis IX and, in the Czech environment, of Wenceslas II, as created by his historiographers (Le Goff 624–34; Mowbray 13–42).

Alexander became well known among the medieval public in ways other than epic texts. One was the fictional letter from Aristotle to Alexander the Great that was known under various names, most often as the *Secretum secretorum*. This text became extremely popular in the Middle Ages and was distributed in many copies (for the Czech lands alone, we have more than 60 copies of the entire text or parts of it). In the form of an epistle, Aristotle gives his noble pupil instructions on how to govern correctly, how to take care of his body to keep it healthy and in good condition, and how to cure human diseases. He also reveals secrets from philosophy and natural sciences, including magical practices and alchemy. However, the origins of the text, which claims Aristotle as its author, do not go back to Greece but rather to two Arabic versions dating back to the tenth century (Ryan and Schmitt; Williams; Gaullier-Bougassas, Bridges, and Tilliette; Cermanová, 179–213; Cermanová, Svátek, Žůrek, and

Bažant). The text was first partially translated into Latin by John of Seville in 1120 (Forster 18–19), and a translation of the entire text was then done by Philip of Tripoli in 1232 (Burnett). The interconnectedness of the Alexandrian textual corpus is evidenced, among other things, by the fact that some of the above-mentioned pieces of advice of Aristotle to Alexander which were contained in the Old Czech *Alexandreis* were inspired, at least in part, by the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum* (Cermanová, Svátek, Žůrek, and Bažant 514).

II. Exemplarity

Alexander the Great appears in more than fifty individual stories (*exempla*) that were read in medieval Bohemia (Dvořák 58–63). This testifies to the exceptional popularity and function of this character, as well as the variety of topics associated with him. This is especially true of literary output focused on lessons and the moralistic cultivation of readers and listeners, even the most dignified. The reservoir of exempla was supplied by collections, whether they were ensembles assembled purely as a means of gathering these small stories together (such as the *Gesta Romanorum*) or works written with a different intention, into which, however, a large number of exemplary narratives were inserted (for example, Cessolis's *Liber de moribus* and its Old Czech adaptation). Works containing exempla influenced one another and frequently shared the same stories.

The texts we will examine are those that primarily dealt with another topic but include fragments of Alexandrian stories, allude to them, or use examples and short narratives associated with Alexander and his life. While these stories are firmly anchored in the epic master narrative of the famous pagan king, they better enable us to explore the transformations and shifts in the meaning and function of Alexandrian motifs. As with other compact narratives that created the literary landscape of medieval Bohemia, both Latin and vernacular, Alexandrian themes were also part of a mutually interconnected whole: individual texts were linked by motifs and often by entire narratives that travelled between literary works. One story or motif could thus enter several texts as an integral part of them. Older Alexandrian narratives, or more specifically their fragments, are placed into new (con)texts and new literary forms, giving them a new and updated reading. We will focus on texts where Alexander is not the main topic. Instead, the focus is on the writings concerning the functioning of medieval society,

in order to examine questions associated with the fragmentation of the Alexandrian story and the reuse of individual parts in a modified context. The authors placed several smaller stories and examples with Alexander as the main hero in the texts we will consider. However, Alexander is a substitute for a medieval sovereign in these cases.

To begin with, let us mention the *Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium sive super ludum scaccorum* ("Book of the customs of men and the duties of nobles or the Book of chess") by the Dominican Jacobus de Cessolis, and the *Breviloquium de virtutibus antiquorum principum et philosophorum* ("Brief speech on the virtues of ancient rulers and philosophers") by the Franciscan John of Wales. We are considering the Central European version of John's work, which was preserved in many manuscripts in the libraries in the region and subsequently received two Old Czech translations. We should also mention the *De vita et moribus philosophorum antiquorum*, a work attributed in the Middle Ages to Walter Burley.[4] Collections of exempla, such as the *Gesta Romanorum*, are another valuable source. The *Liber de moribus*, *Secretum secretorum*, *Breviloquium*, *De vita et moribus*, and *Gesta Romanorum* are texts that were used as sources of lessons, stories, and quotations. These works were often read, listened to, copied, and translated in the Czech lands during the fourteenth century, as can be attested by a large number of extant medieval manuscript copies. They also frequently received new versions in Central Europe, both in Latin and the vernacular. It was not exceptional for stories with Alexander as the main protagonist to be added to these new Central European versions.

These writings, partly composed of individual stories, were often interconnected, not only by direct textual quotations but also by the character and intention of their writing. Moreover, they were connected by appearing together within individual manuscript codices. The listed works, including Cessolis's *Liber de moribus* and, to a certain extent, the *Secretum secretorum*, characterized the use of the ancient material in the form of individual stories. They also have a common tendency toward a moralizing interpretation of society. These texts presented retold stories of European history and mythology, which they used to teach moral lessons. For scholars and students, and perhaps even more so for preachers, they provided a handy reservoir of wisdom narratives and instruction that they could quote in their further work without wading through extensive volumes that often required specialized academic expertise.

The connection between these texts is neither readily apparent

4. The specific redactions of the work were studied by Vidmanová, "Die mittelalterliche Gesellschaft". She supposes that this is the proof that Jacobus de Cessolis used the passages about chess in the original *Breviloquium* because of the dominant survival of the Central European version in Bohemian manuscripts. The characteristic chess passages were added to the second redaction of the *Breviloquium* from Jacobus's text, as convincingly shown in the study by Küenzlen, Kalning, and Plessow. For the edition of the chess passages, see 79–89. This version can be generally dated, on the basis of surviving manuscripts, to the last quarter of the fourteenth century. For comparison with Old Czech translations, see Šimek *Staročeský* 1–13.

nor accidental, as is shown by their complicated interconnectedness, which is also evident in their Central European and vernacular versions. The Central European redaction of the *Breviloquium* takes extensive passages from Jacobus's *Liber de moribus* when it tells the story of the origin of the game of chess. The Old Czech version of pseudo-Burley's *De vita et moribus* borrows the entire chess passage from the *Breviloquium*, but this story actually originated in Jacobus de Cessolis. The Old Czech rendering of the *Liber de moribus* adapts fairly extensive selections from the *Secretum secretorum* without following Cessolis's Latin source. The *Gesta Romanorum* takes several exempla from Jacobus's treatise on chess (Žůrek, "Chess"). Finally, let us recall that the texts mentioned above were not only connected in the Central European area in way that has been described, even if the link between them was indeed very strong here. Examples can also be found in Western Europe: for example, Geoffrey of Waterford, who translated the *Secretum secretorum* into French, incorporated long passages from John of Wales's *Breviloquium* into his translation of the *Secretum*.

Instructing the King

The Czech adaptation of Jacobus de Cessolis's text about chess that circulated in Europe in the original Latin under the name *Liber de moribus hominum* also advised on good governance. The Czech version under the name *Kniežky o šašiech* ("Books of chess") survived in a single manuscript that does not reveals its author. However, it has been assumed to have been written by an educated layman and diligent translator from Latin, Tomáš Štítný of Štítné, since the discovery of the manuscript by Ferdinand Menčík in 1879, mainly on the basis of textual correspondences with other Štítný's translations (Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 5293, f. 290r–311r; Menčík; Gebauer 64–65). In his translation, Štítný made significant changes and shifts compared with the Latin original. When Štítný speaks of the king chess-piece, he enumerates different qualities than Cessolis and denounces other weaknesses. The topics selected for emphasis reflect the historical situation in Bohemia at the end of the fourteenth century under Wenceslas IV, a ruler whom even contemporary sources associated with irascibility and debauchery. It is notable that this criticism of the king is found in a vernacular work (Nederman; Rychterová 165–67). It is therefore significant that in describing the chess king, Štítný mentions the deficiencies in be-

haviour that contemporaries attributed to King Wenceslas. He calls on the sovereign to not be controlled by animalistic instincts, drunkenness, and fornication, and to resist wicked advisers and flatterers.

To, že ten král, ješto šach sluje, by jako člověk, napomíná krále, aby člověkem se pomněl a neměl hlúpé zvěři, němé tváři nerozomné obyčeje maje, ale aby užíval smyslu a rozumu člověčieho, krotě v sobě zvieřecie neřádné žádosti a dětinné obyčeje. É, kam král zajde, dá li nad sebú ukrutnosti, smilstvu, opilstvu a dětinné mysli panovati! Nebude li zpósobné mysli, kam jej od spravedlnosti zavedú jeho pochlebníci, stojiec po svém, aby jim i cizie dával, sirotčie a lidí prostých! I dieť písmo: "Běda zemi, v kteréž král dietě jest a jejiež kniežata ráno jedie a stojie po opilstvu!" Neb opilý ten jsa, ten nebude.

(The fact that the chess king is made to look like a human being reminds the king to behave like a human being and abandon all the habits of unwise animals, unthinking inarticulate beasts, and to use human thinking and reason, restraining the sinful animal desires and childish habits in himself. Why, what can a king achieve if he gives himself over to cruelty, fornication, drinking, and childish thought? Unless he is of a capable mind, how far from righteousness his flatterers can take him, insisting that he give them other people's, orphans', and common folk's property! Scripture itself says, "Woe betide a country whose king is a child and whose princes get up in the morning to eat after a drinking binge!" For he who is drunk will perish.) (*Šimek Tomáš Štítný* 361–62)[5]

5. All quotations from the sources have been translated into English by the authors of this paper.

Štítný's adaptation of the Book of chess represents a work intended to instruct the king, and his advice had a clear recipient: the ruling Bohemian king, Wenceslas IV. It is noteworthy that in the chapter about the king, Štítný (contrary to Cessolis) takes topics and sentences from the *Secretum secretorum*. Each of these is counsel meant for the king (the king should not talk extensively; emphasizing the king's wisdom comes from having God in his heart, in his mouth, and in his actions; the third points out the necessity of keeping secrets), and each one is styled as though Aristotle were advising Alexander: "Učilť jest mistr Aristotileš Alexandra" (Master Aristotle taught Alexander) (Šimek *Tomáš Štítný* 363, 368, 381; cf. Steele 41,

47, 49).[6] It is Štítný who brings Aristotle into the text; Cessolis does not include this name. At least in the chapter about the king in chess, Štítný puts himself into the role of Aristotle: the sage scholar offering the sovereign advice about proper behaviour. In this text, Alexander is not a role model for readers in his behaviour but the recipient of advice written in the book. Like Alexander accepting advice from Aristotle, other kings and noblemen do not have to be ashamed of taking advice from scholars. That is the message to be spread among readers at the royal court of Wenceslas IV, who needed good advice to improve his governance.

Alexander the Great is part of many exempla in the original work by Jacobus de Cessolis, largely compiled using shorter stories based on ancient history. In his work on the Old Czech version of the text about chess, Štítný omitted a significant number of exempla where Alexander had appeared. On the other hand, he added many new stories where Alexander was mentioned as well (Žůrek, "Křesťanské" 131–33). In other cases, he slightly changed the existing exemplum to shift its message, e.g. the story where an imprisoned pirate chides Alexander for doing the same thing as him. Paradoxically, Alexander does it to a more considerable extent; while in the case of the pirate, it is theft, with Alexander, it is governance.

> Byl jeden popaden, ješto lúpil na moři, a přiveden byl před Alexandra krále. A když jemu vece Alexander: "Pročs lúpil, nedada pokoje na moři lidem?", a ten směle vece proti králi: "A proč ty lúpě nedáš pokoje všemu světu? Že já jednu lodí vezmu, nazýváš mě lúpežníkem, a že ty s vojskem jezdě lúpíš, ciesař sloveš! Byť se mně štěstie obrátilo, já bych byl dobrý; ale čím tobě viece jde pod ruku, tys vždy hoří." Aj, kakúť jest řeč tak veliký král strpěl, a řekl tomu: "Chciť tvú chudobu proměniti, aby svú zlostí štěstie nevinil." I nadal jeho, že jemu nebylo třeba lúpiti.

> (They seized one [pirate] who marauded on the sea and brought him before King Alexander. When Alexander asked him: "Why did you maraud and not leave people on the sea alone?", he replied boldly to the king: "Why do you maraud and not leave the whole world alone? You call me a marauder for taking one ship, yet you call yourself an emperor for riding with an army and marauding! I might become better if I had a turn of fortune, but you are worse, the more you get

your hands on." Oh, what words the great king put up with, only to reply: "I am going to change your poverty, so you that do not blame fortune out of your wickedness." And he donated to him, so that he no longer needed to maraud.) (Šimek *Tomáš Štítný* 387)

In Jacobus de Cessolis's version, the story should show the king being just, which is why it is in the chapter about the chess king. Štítný put the story in the chapter about the rook, which for him represented a royal official (Köpke 4). The official should be patient in the face of criticism, which is also true of the king, further emphasized by a quote from Seneca. In this particular story, Alexander is not just because he corrects the pirate, as was the case in the original, but he is patient chiefly because he calmly listened to the pirate's insolent reply.[7] The entire story is introduced by saying that patience is the virtue of great kings: "I králi velicí chválu mají, že sú taková utrhánie neb káranie strpievali" ("Even great kings are praised for tolerating such slander or rebukes") (Šimek *Tomáš Štítný* 387).

In this case, Štítný may have been inspired by the *Breviloquium de virtutibus antiquorum principum* by John of Wales, who also included the same story. It is very possible that he had access to its Central European version. The emphasis on patience in the interpretation of the exemplum about Alexander and the pirate is part of a Latin *Breviloquium* that was reworked in Central Europe at the end of the fourteenth century. In the original version, Alexander's reaction was understood primarily as proof of justice, which was said to be natural for the sovereign;[8] patience is only secondary here. The new version of the *Breviloquium*, just like Štítný, explicitly accentuates the king's patience in the first place.[9] In his version of the treatise about chess, Štítný moved the exemplum with the pirate and Alexander into a chapter where he wanted to discuss this virtue.

Many similar short narratives where Alexander appears can be found in medieval codices. We can return to the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*, more precisely one of its Bohemian copies (the manuscript held by the Moravská zemská knihovna in Brno, Mk 46), for another example. This one includes a copy of the *Secretum secretorum* that was completed around 1402 according to the colophon.[10] The *Secretum* (f. 25r–42v) is copied in the translation of Philip of Tripoli. The prologue and the state and health science parts from the *Secretum* are included in this manuscript copy. The end of the copy is incomplete in comparison with the 'canonical' version. Some parts have been omitted, and some are listed in a different order. At the

7. Again, the jab was aimed at Wenceslas IV, who was widely known to be hot-tempered, as can be seen from the listed passages from Štítný or the opening passage of the contemporary *Chronicon veteris collegiati Pragensis*, where the king is described with the words "rex iratus"; Černá, Čornej, and Klosová 79.

8. "Ex quo patet, quod iustitia debet esse regum in possidendo. Item debet esse in eis patientia in sustinendo iustas increpationes. Item benevolentia benefaciendo eis, qui iste arguunt." ("This implies that kings are to be just in possession. Also, they should have the patience to endure the just reproofs. Also, they should have goodwill to treat well those who justly rebuke them.") Anežka Vidmanová compared these passages; "Osservazioni" 39.

9. Vidmanová, "Osservazioni" 39: "Unde patet, quod in principibus debet esse paciencia iustas increpaciones sustinendo, et benevolencia sit aput illos, qui eos iuste arguunt." ("This implies that rulers should have the patience to endure the just reproofs and the goodwill with those who rebuke them justly and reward them generously with property.")

10. Brno, Moravská zemská knihovna, Mk 46, f. 42v: "Explicit liber Aristotelis de moralibus dominorum, qui liber alio nomine appellatur Secretum secretorum, finitus in octava katerine Anno d. M°cccc°ii°." ("Here ends Aristotle's book on the manners of lords, otherwise called the Secret of secrets, which was finished on the eighth day after St. Catherine in the year of Lord 1402.")

end, there is a call for Alexander to listen to the stars and astrono-
mers in all things. Here is where the copy departs from the original
Secretum, but not with Alexandrian stories, as it continues with the
short description of a miracle (a later rubric labels it as the *Miracu-
lum alium legitur de Allexandro*). This is a short narrative about how
Alexander climbed the city walls after conquering a city, amazed that
all the houses were the same height and size. After it was explained
to him that the homes were the same because people are equal, Al-
exander gave them a reprieve and withdrew. Another short Alexan-
drian episode tells of a military leader in a pagan cemetery which his
fellow-believers wanted to protect with their lives. For their loyalty,
Alexander gave them the same reprieve. Finally, it is written that Al-
exander did not want any servants that would not correct him. This
topic resonates strongly within the *Secretum*, although not exactly
with the advice given. An interesting detail of several of these Alex-
andrian short narratives is the double use of the Czech word *lhota*
("grace period"): "Alexander dedit eis lhotam" ("Alexander gave
them a *lhota*") – the stories where Alexander is the hero are directly
connected with the medieval meaning of the economic-political con-
cept of *lhota*, which was used as a tool in the period of colonization
(thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) to settle and rule an area more eas-
ily. On his campaigns (captured in literary form), Alexander wit-
nessed many new and strange things that he did not know, but he
regularly reacted wisely to them. This approach was also included in
manuscript Mk 46: Alexander wonders at an unknown order or be-
haviour, accepts it, and reacts by incorporating it as something new,
which was the concept of *lhota* in the Middle Ages.

If we take a closer look at the codices that contained Cessolis's
Liber de moribus, we often find similar works bound together, includ-
ing the pseudo-Burley *De vita et moribus philosophorum antiquorum*;
in fact, it is the work together with which Cessolis's text was most of-
ten copied in Central Europe (Plessow 248). The *De vita et moribus*,
written at the beginning of the fourteenth century, was previously at-
tributed to Walter Burley, the English philosopher and author of the
famous commentary on Aristotle's *Politics*. Today, it is believed that
De vita et moribus was written by an unknown author in northern It-
aly (Grignaschi). This was a very popular text that survives in about
270 manuscripts, with about forty in Czech libraries or in manu-
scripts that have a Bohemian origin. The texts have a simple struc-
ture: the work is comprised of more or less concise biographies of
ancient Greek and Roman scholars. It is possible to imagine the use

of such a text in an educational environment, but it was also certainly a source of illustrative stories read in other milieus (see Copeland). The text was copied many times, and it was reworked and simplified in Central Europe. The central European version was created in the fourteenth century, as documented by the oldest surviving manuscripts.[11] While the original text represented a simplified discussion of the history of ancient philosophy, the Central European version is more of a list of terms for students or a repository of stories from the lives of philosophers and their best-known statements. The number of people introduced was reduced to 77 from 131, however the author omitted some characters but added others, including Alexander the Great, who was not a philosopher. Alexander's biography, which was added to the Central European version immediately following Aristotle, is a compilation of available sources of information about the ancient ruler. Its author used a version of the *Historia de preliis* version I[3] as a source but also utilized the Latin version of the originally Arabic *Liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum* attributed to John of Procida. Most of the narrative was taken from here, supplemented by several stories from Jacobus de Cessolis's text about chess. This is also true of passages listed as excerpts from Valerius Maximus, which are quoted throughout Jacobus's text (Vidmanová, "La formation" 266–67). This description of Alexander is also part of the Czech translation of the Central European version of *De vita et moribus*, which might be dated to the end of the fourteenth century (i.e. Praha, Národní knihovna České Republiky [hereafter NK ČR], XIX B 9, with Alexander's biography on f. 27r–33r; or Praha, NK ČR, XVII E 14, Alexander on f. 197r–204v). In contrast to other texts about Alexander created in medieval Bohemia, the author does not discuss the transience of worldly glory, even in the parts about Alexander's death.

The literary figure of a scholar instructing a monarch (Alexander) enters into discourses other than those of government. The physician John Hacke of Göttingen stylizes his discussion of poisons (*Epistola de cautela a venenis*) dedicated to the Czech king John of Luxembourg in this way. Not only does the text appear in the form of a letter to his king, but he also specifically refers to advice given to Alexander by Aristotle in the *Secretum secretorum*. In the opening list of authorities, John of Hacke explicitly names Aristotle's book for Alexander of Macedonia: "Pater philosophie Aristoteles librum De regimine principum edidit Alexandro" ("The father of philosophy Aristotle edited the book De regimine principum for Alexander") (Říhová 78). He then borrows a story about an Indian girl filled with

poisons from the *Secretum* a few paragraphs later:

> Sic enim Aristoteles, ut scribit in libro De secretis secretorum, Alexandrum precavit a veneno illius puelle venustissime, tamen venenose utpote in naturam serpentis converse, ipsi Alexandro a regina Yndie transmisse causa amicicie cum multis enceniis et donis venustis.

> (For just in this way Aristotle, as he writes in his book, Secretum secretorum, warned Alexander against the poison served by that maiden, beautiful indeed, but a poisoner, whom the queen of India sent to Alexander himself with many presents and beautiful gifts in token of friendship; but she seemed to have transformed herself into the nature of a poisonous serpent.) (Říhová 82–83; cf. Steele 60)[12]

This story was part of the original Arabic variant translated into Latin by Philip of Tripoli. It tells of a girl from India that Alexander received as a gift from the mother of the Indian monarch. The girl had been fed poison her entire life, and she was so filled with it that her essence changed into a poisonous snake and physical contact with her was deadly. The story ends with Aristotle exhorting Alexander to protect his soul and not give in to the temptations of the world of the flesh. The *Secretum* was not the only Arabian text that included the Poison Maiden story. We can also find it in *Turba philosophorum*, one of the fundamental texts of medieval Arabic alchemy from around 900, which was translated into Latin in the twelfth century (see Plessner, "The Place"; Plessner, "Natural Sciences"). The story was also taken from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum* by other authors, such as the previously mentioned John of Wales, who used it in his *Compendiloquium de vitis illustrium philosophorum*.[13] As has been said, this story spread throughout Europe both on its own and in association with the *Secretum secretorum*. This was a welcome tool for John Hacke, who used the reference to the famous text to point out the dangers of poisons. He also used the model situation of a scholar advising a ruler by letter, reproducing the paradigmatic pair we know from the *Secretum*. In a verbatim reproduction of Aristotle's appeal to Alexander, John Hacke calls on King John to be on guard for deadly poisons: "Cave, cave mortifera venena!" ("Guard yourself, guard against deadly poisons!").[14] The Poison Maiden story, which was part of copies of the *Secretum*, also appeared independently as a curiosity copied out of interest. For example, we can

13. See also Williams 251, note 293.

14. *Říhová* 82. Cf. Steele 59.

find a copy in a manuscript at the Wrocław University Library (Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, I Q 310, f. 139v), where the story of the Indian girl filled with poison was added to a copy of fasting sermons by Jacobus de Voragine. The scribe seemingly suspended his copying of the sermons to make a note of the story quickly. The scribe probably did not take the story from the *Secretum secretorum*, as the matches are largely on the level of content, but from Albertus Magnus, who himself took inspiration from the pseudo-Aristotelian work many times (Stadler 553).

The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV (1346-78), and the Czech king, his son Wenceslas IV of Luxembourg (1378-1419), were addressed directly in works that used Alexandrian motifs and quotes from Alexandrian literature. Some of these works demonstrably took inspiration from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*. Besides the previously mentioned examples, we can also list the mirror for princes attributed to Charles IV. Formally, these are two letters (the shorter one from the prince and a longer answer from the ruler). The author, probably the humanist Niccolò Beccari, who was active at the Luxembourg court in Tangermünde and later in Prague, sought a mental foundation and basis for his claims among ancient authorities. He found great inspiration in Francesco Petrarca's *De avaritia vitanda* (1358), which he quotes extensively in passages that praise the ruler's generosity and reject avarice toward the court and subjects. The author combines quotes from Petrarca's works with parts of the *Secretum secretorum* in these passages. From the *Secretum* he took a passage distinguishing types of monarchs according to their generosity or avarice toward themselves and their subjects. While the pseudo-Aristotelian text identifies four types, "quatuor sunt reges" ("there are four kings"), the mirror for princes in question works with three types:

> Quare ut scias, cuius mores vitamque fugere debeas aut sequi, tripartitam illam distinccionem regum, inter ea que Aristotelis secreta nominantur insertam, digne tibi distribuendum putavimus in hoc loco. (Steinherz 49; cf. Steele 42–43)

> (Therefore, in order that you may know what morals and life you should avoid or adhere to, we have thought it appropriate to lay out for you in this place the threefold distinction of kings contained in the works called Secrets by Aristotle.)

Another example of the popularity of the *Secretum secretorum* in terms of Aristotle instructing Alexander is seen in the *Tractatus de habilitate temporis ad processum versus Italiam*. This text was written for Charles IV between 1376–1378 by an Italian humanist whose identity is the subject of historiographical debate. In this work, conceived as an appeal to the emperor, in which he exhorts the monarch to the third Roman campaign, the author explicitly relied many times on the authority of the writings of the *Secretum secretorum*. He also openly cites verses from the *Alexandreis* by Walter of Châtillon. The work under discussion includes the story of how Alexander joins a banquet in Darius's house in disguise and steals dishes saying that that is a custom at Alexander's court. This exemplum with its reminder of the need for rulers to be generous was part of the *Historia de preliis*, but it was also added to many medieval works (Schmugge).

We can also see reminders of Alexander the Great in works associated with Wenceslas IV. We have already discussed Štítný's work on chess. However, it should be noted that Alexander is a fundamental "hero" of the *Bellifortis* military handbook by Konrad Kyeser of Eichstätt, who completed his work at the Prague court after 1400 (Krása 56). The popularity of reading about Alexander in the vernacular at the Prague court was confirmed by Queen Sophia of Bavaria (+1428), whose estate included a biography of Alexander written in Czech, which is certainly the Old Czech translation of the *Historia de preliis* that has survived in five manuscripts.[15]

15. Vítovský 56: "Item ain puch in pirmet von des grossen Alexander leben pehemisch geschriben" ("Also one parchment book about the life of Alexander the Great written in Czech.")

Transience of worldly glory

If we read the Old Czech adaptation of the Latin prose *Historia de preliis* (redaction I[3]), we find a passage at the end that describes how Demosthenes composed the epitaph for Alexander's grave. The main topic of this passage is the need to scorn all worldly property and glory: the higher a person rises, the deeper they fall. Alexander, who was preordained to rule the world, found his end in a small, inhospitable grave. He himself says in this work:

> Vše sem bral, smrt mě vzela, jenž všechno béře. […] Svět mi dosti nebyl se všech stran k chycení, již sem chycen a krátký mě hrnec drží. […] Čím viece vstupuješ na najvyššie, v hlubokost spadneš. Spatř mé biedné tělo, jemužto bieše všechno povolno, a již mě krátký a úzký sudček v úzkém miestě drží. Proč mužské přirozenie raduje se, bera se vzhuo-

ru, poňavadž jest z útlého stvořeno, zveličeného sprvu počátka, potom pytel smrdutý a naposledy pokrm črvuom.

(I have taken everything, death has taken me, which takes everything […] It was not enough for me to grasp the world from all sides, I am already caught, and a small vessel holds me. […] The higher you climb, the deeper you fall. Look at my wretched body, to which everything has been subordinated, already held in a tight place by a small and narrow vessel. Why does mankind rejoice when it rises upward, for it is made of a frail foundation, then excellent, then a sack of stink, and lastly, a meal for worms.) (Kolár and Nedvědová 141; cf. Steffens 204–07)[16]

The theme of the transience of worldly glory was an essential topic for sermons and moralistic literature in the high Middle Ages (Ariés; Vovelle; Warda). It is also commonplace in stories about Alexander. The perception of Alexander as an ambivalent personality and the critical emphasis on his worldly pride can already be found in some ancient authors from whose works medieval authors could have taken inspiration (Stoneman).

Focusing on a relevant part of the Alexandrian story, we will now observe how this motif was used in Bohemia from the fourteenth century onward. Both the Latin Bohemian version of the *Gesta Romanorum* and its Old Czech adaptation present several stories where the main character is Alexander the Great: one is about the deadly basilisk in a city that Alexander had put under siege. The moralistic message added to the story is clear: it is a warning of pride and an appeal to humility. Elsewhere, Alexander's death is the topic when the central message of the story and the explanation is the transience and futility of worldly glory: "Včera Alexandrovi nestačil všechen svět, dnes dosti má na dvú loktú nebo na třech země" ("Yesterday the whole world was not enough for Alexander; today two or three cubits of land are enough for him") (Šimek *Příběhy* 39). A similar exemplum can be found in the *Summa recreatorum*, which was compiled from an eclectic mix of prose texts, verses, and even medicinal advice for the distinguished entertainment of the Luxembourg court (Vidmanová, "Summa"). The fourth of the five books that make up the *Summa recreatorum* is comprised of amusing and instructive stories and poems. This part is divided into two halves, as the author writes in the introduction – one prose and one verse. The opening included in the passage about chess (taken from Cessolis's *Liber de*

16. The specifics of the Bohemian reception of the Latin text was described by Vidmanová, "Latinská historie" 266.

17. See, for example, the manuscript Praha, NK ČR, I E 22, where the chess passage and the first *historia* can be found on f. 74rb–75ra and end with the words "Qui sine fine in virtutibus vivit et regnat." ("Who lived and reigned without end in virtue.")

18. See the fifth book Praha, NK ČR, I E 22, f. 105va–116ra.

moribus) is a moralizing reminder to any ruler that they can reform themselves if they try to understand how human society and the differentiation of societal roles should function.[17] The entire fifth book is conceived as a mirror for princes ("Quintus tractatus est de virtutibus exemplorum et regencium legalibus") divided into four parts that gradually discuss cardinal virtues (*iustitia, prudencia, fortitudo, temperancia*).[18] The author explicitly refers to the *Secretum secretorum* among the quoted ancient and medieval authorities in the fifth book (Vidmanová, "Antika" 144). However, given the method of the author of this work, it is not improbable that he took the reference from another medieval work; he may have worked with some Aristotelian *florilegium*.

In the fifth book of the *Summa recreatorum*, we find an epitaph from Alexander's tombstone. The epitaph adapts ancient verses by Valerius Maximus:

> Quam frivola gaudia mundi! / Quam rerum fugitivus honor, quam nomen inane! / Magnus in exemplo est. Cui non suffecerat orbis, / sufficit exciso defossa marmore terra, / quinque pedum fabricata domus, / qua nobile corpus exiguo requievit humo. (Praha, NK ČR, I E 22, f. 110v)

> (Frivolous are the joys of the world, / riches fade, as does the sound of a name. / The Great man is the example. The world was not enough for him. / Now he is contented with earth, with a marble headstone on top, / a house of five feet, where his distinguished body rests / in a bit of soil.)

19. The use of these particular verses from Walter's *Alexandreis* for royal epitaphs has a larger tradition in Europe. The same verses can be found, for example, on the tomb of Henry II at Fontevraud. Cf. Sargent-Baur 15.

20. The verses "Magnus in exemplo est, cui non suffecerat orbis, sufficit exciso defossa marmore terra, quinque pedum fabricata domus, quam nobile corpus exigua requiescit humo" are taken from Walter's *Alexandreis* 10.448–51. See Colker 273. The other part, "En ego, qui totum mundum certamine vici / dictus Alexander, vincor in hora brevi", is taken from *Historia de preliis* I³, Steffens 204–05.

It was Jan Hus who applied the same verses dealing with the theme of Alexander's death and transience in his sermon in memory of the anniversary of Charles IV's death on November 29, 1409.[19] He used the example of Alexander's death to show that even the greatest glory cannot protect a person from death, and worldly fame and majesty make the end miserable (Vidmanová *Positiones* 125). This part of Hus's text is a combination of verses drawn from both *Historia de preliis* and Walter's *Alexandreis*. In addition to these two works, Hus also acknowledges drawing on the work of Peter Alfonsi, specifically his twelfth-century collection *Disciplina clericalis* (Hilka and Söderhjelm 44–45).[20] Jan Hus included the same verses, translated into Czech, a few years later in his *Výklady* ("Expositions"), specifically in the *Výklad delší na desatero přikázanie* ("Longer exposition on the Ten Commandments"). When he reaches the question of futility

and transience, he first asks the question: "Co platno člověku, ač veš-ken svět získá a své duši uškodí?" ("What does it value for a man to gain the whole world if he harms his soul?"). He answers this eternal question by recalling the death of Alexander: "A by Alexander, jenž jest vešken svět pod sě byl podbojoval, by mohl mluviti mrtev, mohl by řéci: 'Aj, toť já, jenž vešken svět válků sem přemohl, Alexander ře-čený, přemožen sem v hodinu krátkú!'" ("And if Alexander, who has subdued the whole world under his power, could speak when dead, he would say 'Behold, I, called Alexander, who have conquered the whole world by military force, I am conquered in a short time!'") (Daňhelka 324–325; cf. Vidmanová, "Staročeské pokusy").

The same Latin hexametric verses can also be found in the Strahov Library codex DN IV 2/f. This copy of the *Secretum secretorum* dated to the fifteenth century is written on two gatherings, bound probably later into the manuscript. The last folio (23r) is fol-lowed by an entry written by the same hand, which brings the afore-mentioned hexameters that deal with Alexander's death and the tran-sition from worldly glory to posthumous nothingness ("En ego, qui totum mundum certamine vici …"). We already encountered these verses above in Jan Hus's sermon from 1409 and his *Longer exposition on the Ten Commandments*. This moralistic story about the passing of Alexander resonated strongly in the Middle Ages, and the Czech me-dieval environment was no exception. It created its referential frame-work, the message of which was used by learned preachers and intel-lectuals who leveraged the emblematic character of Alexander to point out the transience of life and the futility of worldly pride.

III. New reading of old texts

The Kingdom of Bohemia was a land of great intellectual boom and political and confessional changes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as was reflected in the production of literary texts that in-cluded the newly engaging discourse about political philosophy and religious polemics. During the Hussite wars and confessional con-troversies, the Bohemian royal throne remained vacant when Sigis-mund was rejected as the legitimate monarch (1420–36); the situa-tion was repeated in 1438–48, during the childhood of his grandson, Ladislav the Posthumous, and ended with the election of King George of Poděbrady (1458–71). The traditional dynastic principle was abandoned, and in the context of the texts written during the

preparations for the election of the king, the requirements imposed on the monarch were redefined. In confessionally divided Bohemia, unity of faith was one of the essential themes; nevertheless, the sovereign's virtues were also emphasized. Literature became a more social matter, which went hand-in-hand with its vernacularization, as vernacular texts were often shaped by a political or confessional programme that attempted to reach a wider audience. Among the texts written or edited in the Czech lands during the fourteenth and mainly fifteenth centuries, there are ones that are inspired by Alexandrian literature and at the same time contain elements of specific political and especially confessional involvement. We encounter works that had to develop into 'engaged readings', which means that later readings of them diverged from the author's original intention and the text took on a new political or confessional connotation.

As an example could serve the Alexander's Privilege for Slavs, very probably originally written as an educational stylistic exercise (*dictamen*; Vidmanová, "Ještě jednou"). In this text, Alexander promises "illustri prosapie Slaworum et lingue eorum" ("the glorious tribes of Slavs and their language") dominion over the area north of Italy as thanks for their loyal service. Many formal elements (the dating of the writing to Alexandria, worship of pagan gods, etc.) were intended to create an illusion of an authentic document, but the overall content suggests a literary game.

> Nos Allexander Philipi regis Macedonum, hircus monarchie figuratus, Grecorum imperii inchoator, magni dei Yovis filius per Nectanabum nunciatus, allocutor Bragmanorum et arborum Solis et Lune, conculcator Persarum et Medorum regionum, dominus mundi ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, a meridie usque ad septentrionem, illustri prosapie Slaworum et lingue eorum graciam, pacem atque salutem a nobis et successoribus nostri succedentibus nobis in gubernacione mundi. (Vidmanová, "Ještě jednou" 180)

> (We, Alexander, successor to the Macedonian king Phillip, prefigured as the goat who allegorizes kingly rule, the originator of the Greek monarchy, the son of Zeus, announced by Nectanabo, interlocutor with the Brahmans and with the trees of the Sun and the Moon, suppressor of the Persians and the Medes, lord of the world from where the sun rises to where it sets, from noon to midnight, to the eminent tribe of

21. The goat is an allusion to the passage from Daniel 8,5.

the Slavs and to their language, grace, peace, and greetings from us and our successors that will follow us in ruling the world.)[21]

The quoted invocation summarizes the most famous motifs of Alexander's career, or rather of its literary presentation in the *Historia de preliis*. At the same time, it imitates contemporary chancery practice in issuing charters. The document was most probably created in the Slavonic Monastery in Prague during the reign of Charles IV, where the question of the Slavic origin of Czech rulers and its symbolic importance was a crucial issue, as it was in the imperial chancery. Later, this brief document was copied several times in various countries, including fifteenth-century Bohemia (Bojcov). It is natural, however, that the context of further copying and reading was different. One of the copies is preserved in a manuscript (Brno, Moravský zemský archiv, Cerr. II, n. 108, f. 10v), where it was written by the same scribe together with historical pamphlets and anti-German texts. This codex was most probably compiled during the campaign before Albrecht of Habsburg became king of Bohemia in 1437/38, after the death of Sigismund of Luxembourg. The manuscript was most likely compiled by an opponent of Albrecht's accession. The inclusion of Alexander's alleged privilege for the Slavs in this collection of texts suggests its nationalist-tinged reading and use. The text, originally written as a stylistic game and educational exercise, now becomes part of an argument in the political discourse of Hussite Bohemia. In this case, the political fiction that used Alexander's name and ancient glory easily became a subject of nationalistic differentiation in fifteenth-century interpretation.

Solfernus

Above, we have discussed a set of advice to the monarch in which Alexander played an essential role. We now return to this theme again, using the example of the fifteenth-century Old Bohemian book *Solfernus*. A passage dealing with advice to the monarch was inserted into the opening part of this work. As we shall demonstrate, the apparent inspiration for these pieces of advice was the *Secretum secretorum* and Aristotle's instruction to Alexander. As we will show, the introduction of *Solfernus*, including the recommendation to the monarch, reflects the political and confessional reality of fifteenth-century Bohemia.

The *Solfernus* belongs to the genre of hellish trials or medieval descriptions of 'satanic trials' (Cardelle de Hartmann; Mastroberti). The

22. Barbora Hanzová, *Solfernus*, online edition (accessed on August 25, 2020).

23. The text survived in several manuscripts primarily from the second half of the fifteenth century. It is most probably a translation from Latin, but the original has not yet been found. *Solfernus* was until recently only partially available in an edition: Tomsa 17–119; Erben 471–98; Dolenský 88–96. A new edition based on the manuscript Praha, KNM, IV E 29 has been prepared by Barbora Hanzová. See online (accessed on July 2, 2019).

Solfernus, which in the manuscript tradition also appears under the name *Život Adamóv* ("Adam's Life"), like other novels of its kind describes a conflict, in this case the conflict of fallen angels with God about their place in heaven.[22] The plot supplements the story of the creation of the world, the fall of the angels, and Adam and Eve and their stay in heaven and hell.[23] For us, the conflict between the forces of God and evil is not as interesting as the introduction that precedes the novel itself. This is a fragmented text where several literary traditions overlap.

The *Solfernus* incorporates the basic narrative of Christian doctrine. Even the introductory statements are anchored in Christian values: the worship of Mary is an essential motif in the story of salvation and damnation. The prologue, which includes a dedication to an unnamed king, provides advice to the ruler, specifically, how a Christian sovereign should act so that his behaviour will please God (Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 67r–71r). For the Czech reader of the second half of the fifteenth century, however, the passage on the relationship between the monarch and the Church could have been very topical. The Hussite wars brought to Bohemia not only the theme of severe criticism of the corrupt Church but also confessional schism, or rather the strongly felt demand for Church unity. The sovereign should honour and favour the clerics at court, as they are the "suol zemská, soléce dobrými skutky a v dobrém potvrzujíce" ("salt of the earth, salting with good deeds and in goodness confirming") (Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 70r). If salt spoils, it should be discarded, which is the same way to treat wicked clergy. The king should unequivocally act against those whose teachings threaten the unity of the Church and abandon established regulations. The text here develops a motif from Matthew's Gospel (Mt 7,15):

> Také netrp žádných, jenž řádóv cierkve svaté zachovati
> nechtěli by, neb sú ti najhorší, v ovčiem rúše chodiece, a vnitř
> jsúce vlcie hltaví, kteřížto některé věci ustavené cierkví svatú
> opúštějí a v lehkost ji berúce a svá ustavení viece vážiece,
> skrze kteréžto mohli by s lidem svým upadnúti u veliké zlé,
> jenž slóve scisma, to jest oddělenie od obecné cierkve svaté,
> od obce věrných, aneb snad skrze jich učenie v jiný blud
> mohli by upadnúti.
>
> (Also, hate anyone who will not keep the ordinances of the
> Holy Church, for they are the worst who walk in sheep's
> clothing and inside are ravenous wolves. They forsake some

things ordained by the Holy Church and take them lightly,
esteeming their own ordinances more highly, through which
they might fall with their people into evil deeds, which is
called schism, that is, separation from the universal Church,
from the community of the faithful, or through their doctrine
they might perhaps fall into other error.) (Praha, KNM, IV E
29, f. 70r)

As the set of advice for rulers is not closely connected to the topic of
Solfernus, we can easily surmise that this passage was more or less in-
dependent from the presumed Latin model of the Old Czech trans-
lation, and its content might well describe events in post-Hussite Bo-
hemia, where the double faith of the Catholics and Utraquists was
the lived reality. If we accept that this passage was part of the origi-
nal model, it would have acquired new relevance and apt readers in
the confessionally divided Czech lands of the fifteenth century. The
author instructs the king not to interfere in Church matters and reli-
gious discussions on his own, and he should avoid contact with er-
rant people: "I varuj se pilně obcovati s bludnými lidmi a poběhlými
řádóv svých, aby slepý slepého veda, oba v jámu upadla" ("And be
careful not to keep company with those who are erring and have lost
their way, lest the blind lead the blind and they both fall into the pit")
(Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 70v). Suppose we accept this passage was
applied to the political-confessional situation in fifteenth century Bo-
hemia. Here, again, we see an appeal to the king to surround himself
with members of a single confession, in this case Catholics. After this
set of confessional advice come recommendations that are striking-
ly similar in content to what Aristotle advised Alexander in the *Secre-
tum secretorum*: not to rely on his reason alone but to surround him-
self with reliable advisors, to beware of speaking too much in front
of people, to do everything in fear of God (Steele 48–49). The im-
pression that part of the advice to the ruler originated in the pseu-
do-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum* is immediately reinforced in the
next passage, in which the author of the preface reveals himself as a
translator of *Solfernus* from Arabic into Latin. He was to translate the
work in question for his sovereign and was well aware of the differ-
ences and shifts between the Islamic and Christian worlds and be-
tween Arabic and Latin cultures:

Tyto kniehy […], přeložil sem zajisté s velikú prací z arabské
řeči v latinskú a to sem k vaší cti a chvále učinil. Ale velikú
proměnu mají arabští od latinníkóv, neb jiný obyčej zachová-

vají v mluvení. […] Písma zajisté svatých knih v druhých
městech jinak psány mají nežli my v svém přeložení.

(These books […] I have translated with great labour from
Arabic into Latin, and this I have done for your honour and
praise. But the Arabic text differs greatly from the Latin, for it
retains a different manner of speaking. […] For they have the
holy books written differently from our translations in many
places.) (Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 70v).

A few lines below, he expands on the shift between languages and
cultures when he says "má věděno býti, že nemóž tak pravě vyvlože-
no býti v latinskú řeč, jakož tento doktor arabský popsal jest" ("It is
to be known that what this Arabic scholar wrote cannot be correct-
ly translated into Latin") (Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 71r). He also tells
the story of the text that he translated from Arabic to Latin, bringing
us even closer to the *Secretum*.

The text referred to in the preface to *Solfernus* was said to have been
written by a certain Trigonius of Jerusalem,[24] originally an Arabic-writ-
ing Jew who converted to Christianity. Trigonius dedicated his work
to the Bishop of Tripoli Valentinus and prefaced it with a prologue
which corresponds in some striking points with the prologue with
which Philip of Tripoli provided his translation of the *Secretum secre-
torum*.[25] The partial matches between the *Solfernus* prologue and that
of the *Secretum* bring us to the idea that a distorted topical narrative
about how the *Secretum secretorum* came to Europe can be recognized.
In the case of the pseudo-Aristotelian text, this narrative was not about
the creation of the text itself, but about the translation made for Bish-
op Guido of Valencia by Philip of Tripoli. A distant reference to a work
called the *Secretum secretorum* appears once more: in the following
part of the text, the author explains that he worked from books of the
Bible and other scholarly works. These included a certain Klindius,
where we can see a corruption of the name of the Arabic scholar al-
Kindi, and Agazael, standing for al-Ghazali, who we then learn wrote
a "book of secrets" (Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 71v). There is no doubt,
however, that the book of secrets mentioned is the pseudo-Aristotelian
Secretum secretorum from which we see direct quotes in the introduc-
tion. Here, Arabic scholarship acts in a position of authority, support-
ing Christian stories about Creation, Adam and Eve, the angels, and
heaven. All mentions of Aristotle, Alexander, and the Greek origin of
the "book of secrets" disappear in this context, and the author of the
Solfernus seeks inspiration in the world of Arabic scholarship.

24. He is listed as Frigonius in some
manuscripts. Compare Barbora
Hanzová's editorial note.

25. Praha, KNM, IV E 29, f. 71r. Cf. Steele
25: "Domino suo excellentissimo in
cultu religionis Christiane strenuissimo
Guidoni Vere de Valencia, civitatis
metropolis glorioso pontifici, Philippus
suorum minimus clericorum seipsum et
devocionis obsequium. Quantum Luna
ceteris stellis est lucidior, et Solis radius
luciditate Lune fulgencior: tantum
ingenii vestri claritudo, vestreque
sciencie profunditas cunctos citra mare
modernos in literatura exuberat, tam
barbaros quam Latinos. Nec est aliquis
sane mentis qui huic sciencie valeat
refragari." ("To his most excellent lord
Guido, originally of Valence, most
strenuous in the cultivation of the
Christian religion, glorious pontiff of the
city of Tripoli, from Philip, the least of
his clerics, in the service of devotion. As
much as the moon is brighter than the
stars, and the sun's ray shines brighter
still than the moon, so the clarity of your
genius and the depth of your knowledge
in letters exceeds that of all contempo-
raries on this side of the sea, whether
natives or Latins. Nor is there anyone of
sane mind who would be able to oppose
this knowledge.") On the reading
"Guidoni vere de Valencia", we follow
Williams 360.

As we have just seen, the author of the introduction to the Old Czech *Solfernus* appeals to his king to honour God and care for the unity of the faith. To support his arguments, he uses quotations from the *Secretum secretorum*, although he does not acknowledge his source. The unity of faith as a task for a successful ruler administrating a thriving kingdom was an essential topic in didactic and instructional literature (in Czech) in the second half of the fifteenth century. This was also true of the text written by the Catholic convert Pavel Žídek for the Czech king George of Poděbrady under the title *Spravovna*.[26] He completed this work in 1471, thus in a similar atmosphere to that which accompanied the creation of the surviving copies of the *Solfernus*. Žídek's *Spravovna*, as we will see, takes significant inspiration from the text of the *Secretum secretorum*, both in the form of advice from a wise man to his king and in the content.

Spravovna

In the *Spravovna* ("Instruction for Governance"), Žídek/the scholar gives advice to King George of Poděbrady/the ruler, in many places taking words from the *Secretum secretorum*, leveraging the authority of Aristotle's relationship to Alexander. The idea of the unity of faith as a task for a successful sovereign administering a thriving kingdom was one of the chief lines of thinking in the *Spravovna*. In the *Spravovna*, Žídek exhorts the king to "restore the Bohemian land", preferably by converting to Catholicism and abolishing the double faith. Žídek mimics the pseudo-Aristotelian text to a great extent, both formally and in terms of content. In the introduction, he even expresses faith that the *Spravovna* will be "more useful than Aristotle's [advice] to Alexander" for King George (Tobolka 4). Žídek referred to the *Secretum* while writing the *Spravovna* and presented text taken from it with the words "as Aristotle told Alexander". In such cases, he added advice to the *Spravovna* in the name of the ancient philosopher that was taken from the pseudo-Aristotelian text: George, just like Alexander, should not excessively love carnal pleasures; he should care for his good reputation and hold celebrations for his subjects, but not get drunk with them; he should be a generous and just ruler; and he should consult an astrologer about all his actions. Žídek also took health and medicine advice from the *Secretum*. Perhaps even more relevant to us now are the counsels that take the authority of Aristotle's and Alexander's names but are not to be found in the *Secretum* text and do not reflect the context of the pagan, i.e. Greek and Arab, world ei-

26. M. Pavla Žídka Spravovna. A new edition from Tereza Hejdová is available online (accessed on September 11, 2020). For the most recent work on the *Spravovna*, see Žůrek "Konvertiten" 246–66. For the royal ideal according to Pavel Žídek, see Grygiel 336–38.

ther. We can also find appeals that are anchored from their very foundation in the historical situation in Bohemia in the second half of the fifteenth century. According to Žídek, the ruler should build and improve churches throughout the country. He also puts into Aristotle's mouth the advice that the ruler should ensure, "všady po všech kostelech bohóm slávu činiti a dieky" ("celebrating gods in all temples and thank them") (Tobolka 14). In order to respect the law of God, the king is to ensure unity in the divine service. Using the power of Aristotle's authority, Žídek polemicizes against radical Utraquists who do not acknowledge any binding authority other than the Bible:

> I protož aby Vaše Jasnost věděla, co jest zákon Božie, ne to, co bludný lid praví, že by byla sama biblí nebo samo čtenie, ale všecko písmo na ni doktoruov svatých a práva duchovní otcóv svatých, totiž decret a decretales, agenda v kostelech a pontifical; neb sama biblí nenie dostatečna cierkev svatú spravovati.

> (And therefore, so that Your Highness knows what God's law is, it is not what the heretics say – that it is only the Bible or only the Gospels – but all the writings on it made by holy doctors and the ecclesiastical law of the Holy Fathers, that is the decret and the decretals, the church agenda and the pontifical. Because the Bible itself is not sufficient to rule the Holy Church.) (Tobolka 18)

Care of the churches, maintenance of the unity of the faith, and appeals for the observance of a uniform liturgy are usual and hardly surprising parts of royal duties. However, in the context of confessionally divided Bohemia, they take on a higher relevance and become part of a vibrant dialogue. This particular case is a clear response by the Catholic side to Utraquist practice. Completed at the beginning of the 1470s, the *Spravovna* is a political pamphlet that supports the Catholic camp in its positions and demands toward the monarch. It intentionally adopts the form of an Aristotelian–Alexandrian dialogue of a scholar with a ruler as known, for example, from the *Secretum secretorum*.

Conclusion

Jan Hus, a famous Prague intellectual and preacher, apparently had various elaborations of Alexander the Great's stories in his library. When he wrote his writings, in which he worked with Alexander mo-

tifs, he deliberately combined various sources of the Alexander textual corpus. He did so to show his scholarship and familiarity with contemporary trends in Bohemian literacy. It is evident from the preserved literary sources that the stories of Alexander the Great undoubtedly belonged to the trending themes.

In the Middle Ages, Alexander the Great was a representative figure as a great ruler and conqueror, and a reminder of the transience of worldly glory and the need for humility. After Alexander's figure was transposed into the Christian value system, it became an appeal to Christian contempt for the material world and a model of Christian virtues. We witnessed the placing of allusions to Alexander's death into the funeral sermon given by the archbishop of Prague after the end of Charles IV, just as Jan Hus used this motif explicitly in a sermon in memory of the same emperor some years later. In general, contemplating Alexander's death was an effective *memento mori* with the same intention as the medieval dance of death.

In a different context, Alexander appears as a figure in texts whose primary purpose is to instruct the ruler, both in good government and proper living. In such cases, the form of a dialogue between the scholar and the monarch is often reproduced, with one instructing the other; the dialogue also might have been transformed into a monologic instruction of the king by the scholar. The pair of the instructing sage and the monarch being instructed is naturally a reference to the paradigmatic pair of Aristotle and Alexander.

The contextualized use of Alexandrian stories goes hand-in-hand with the general cultural and historical development of the region. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the character of Alexander and the stories associated with him became a stable part of the Bohemian literary landscape. Nevertheless, their reading and use gradually changed during the fifteenth century. Literature was written not just in Latin but also in the vernacular, which gives greater space for creativity and a shift away from the canonical versions of the narrative (in the case of translations or adaptations), which gave them greater potential to be updated for the contemporary political context. For example, Cessolis's preacher's manual *Liber de moribus*, in the verbal adaptation by Tomáš Štítný, became a mirror for the princes, thus fulfilling the intention of an allegorical treatise on government which was partly aimed at Wenceslas IV. Alexandrian stories were often incorporated into polemic discourses in various forms. In the fifteenth century, we find Alexander's name in the context of very timely religious discussions. According to the testimony of extant sources, it

was mainly Catholic authors who, in the confessional-political polemics in Hussite and early post-Hussite Bohemia, supported their positions by referring to Alexander's name and authority. This was the case even though Catholic and Utraquist proponents came from the same cultural background and underwent a similar education.

Often, only the basic contours remain from the original Alexandrian narrative, which has been filled with new content corresponding to the contemporary political and confessional situation, or rather its tensions. Various fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Bohemian literary contexts where Alexander appeared clearly demonstrate what a useful figure he was. It was possible to functionally use him as more than just a moralistic example. The duo of Aristotle and Alexander had a great deal of identification potential, which was exploited by medieval authors when they wanted to camouflage their criticism and instruct their rulers.

Alexander the Great was not an unknown figure in medieval Bohemia. However, we have to ask ourselves a question in conclusion: was there one Alexander or many, whose character changed according to the needs of the moment and the narrative context? Alexander's name functioned as a label that linked medieval narratives, however long and for whatever purpose they were intended, to the significant corpus of Alexandrian texts. Meanwhile, Alexander's actual fate, the details of the Alexandrian romances, could only remain hinted at in the background. The mere name of Alexander was enough to change the reading of the medieval story and its attractiveness. It was not always the same person that stood behind the label of Alexander's name. What did not change and remained constant regardless of the changing literary context was the image of the great king. His specific deeds and character, however, could vary. The ambivalence of Alexander's character made him a universal figure applicable in various medieval narrative situations and contexts.

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SANDRO NIKOLAISHVILI

The Georgian Milieu and the Metaphrastic Menologion:

Three Accounts about Symeon Metaphrastes

Abstract

The article investigates the reception history of the Metaphrastic menologion in the medieval Georgian milieu. The Georgian literati were the first non-Greeks to translate the metaphrastic hagiographical literature. Soon after Symeon Metaphrastes (also called Symeon the Logothetes; end of tenth century) finished his literary project, the Georgian monks at the monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos started translating not only Symeon's saints' lives but also adopted metaphrastic method and applied it to other texts. The tradition set in motion at Iviron was successfully continued and cultivated by Georgians in various parts of the Byzantine Empire, mainly in Constantinople and at the Black Mountain near Antioch. The increased interest of the Georgian learned monks in Symeon Metaphrastes' saints' lives demonstrates the popularity of Metaphrastic menologion and success of Symeon's literary project. The article focuses on several extant Georgian sources that provide unique information about Symeon Metaphrastes, his project and rewriting method. The accounts by Ephrem Mc'ire, Theophilos the Hieromonk, and Ioannes Xiphilinos the Younger that survive only in Georgian, shed new light on the history and trajectory of the metaphrastic movement. The accounts include manuscript colophons, commentaries, and prayers for the rulers. These testimonies allow one to understand why Georgians wholeheartedly embraced literary trends set in motion in the center of the Byzantine Empire.[1]

Symeon Metaphrastes, a Byzantine court official and a literatus, rewriter/author of 148 saints' lives, could not have envisioned that the project he initiated would find such a wide reception in Byzantium and even spread beyond the imperial frontiers. Euthymios the Athonite, a learned Georgian monk from the Iviron monastery, translated several metaphrastic hagiographical texts into Georgian either during Symeon's lifetime or soon after his death. Despite the Georgian monks' early interest in metaphrastic saints' lives, the entire corpus of Symeon's menologion was translated into Georgian

only towards the end of the eleventh century. At this point in time, translation of Symeon's saints' lives took place almost simultaneously in two different parts of the Byzantine Empire, namely in Constantinople, and at the Black Mountain near Antioch. The Georgian translators, Theophilos the Hieromonk from Constantinople and Ephrem Mcʻire and his team from the Black Mountain, left invaluable accounts about Symeon and his rewritten hagiographical texts. Ephrem and Theophilos were contemporaries, and both held Symeon Metaphrastes in high esteem. The fact that the metaphrastic menologion enjoyed wide reception and great popularity in the Georgian milieu further indicates the success of Symeon's literary project.

We shall take a look at the early activities of Euthymios around the year 1000 before directing our attention to the more complete translations of the Metaphrastic corpus towards the end of the eleventh century.

Euthymios the Athonite, the first Georgian to appreciate the literary merit of the Metaphrastic menologion, translated at least nine metaphrastic saints' lives a decade after Symeon's death.[2] During his long monastic career, Euthymios translated more than 120 works from all genres of ecclesiastic literature: exegetical, homiletic, dogmatic, and canonical texts. To better understand why Euthymios busied himself with the translation of metaphrastic hagiographical texts, it is essential to recall the milieu in which his views and literary taste were formed.

Euthymios was of noble descent; his father was a close associate of Davit III *kouropalatēs*, the ruler of Tao. Young Euthymios was sent as a royal hostage to the court of Emperor Basileios II (r. 976–1025) and spent his teen-age years in Constantinople, where he received an up-to-date education (*Life of Ioane and Eptvime* 43; *Georgian Monks* 56). Euthymios could have met with Symeon Metaphrastes. While he was a hostage at the palace, Symeon was the *logothetes tou dromou*, overseeing the empire's foreign affairs. It could be that among Symeon's duties was closely watching high-ranking imperial hostages, especially children of foreign rulers and influential aristocrats, to make sure that they received proper treatment and education. One may hypothesize that a personal acquaintance with Symeon and knowledge about his literary activities encouraged Euthymios to translate several hagiographical texts and pioneer in applying the metaphrastic method to the texts he translated from Georgian into Greek. A case in point is *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, the Christian life of Buddha, which became a bestseller in Byzantium and one of the

2. Euthymios translated the following metaphrastic texts: *The Martyrdom of Clement of Rome, The Martyrdom of Prokopios, The Life of Anthony, The Life of George, The Life of Mary of Egypt, and The Life of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Kekelidze, *History* 207).

most popular and widely read texts in the Middle Ages (Volk 127–34; Khintibidze 192–280; Papaioannou 18). *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was transmitted to Latin Christendom and even translated into Old Norse in the thirteenth century.

Euthymios' *Barlaam and Ioasaph* was not merely a Greek translation of the Georgian *Balavar and Iodasap*; it was a new text, significantly longer than the Georgian original and full of dogmatic-polemic elements (Khintibidze 242). *Barlaam and Ioasaph* has all the features of metaphrastic hagiography. It is rhetorically embellished and contains multiple layers of different Christian canonical narratives and theological passages (Khintibidze 249, 270). Another fundamental feature of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* is that it includes fragments from metaphrastic texts (Kekelidze, *History* 187). Thus, Euthymios can safely be considered a Metaphrast and one of the earliest pioneers to employ a strategy similar to Symeon's (Kekelidze, *History* 190; Høgel, "Euthymios the Athonite" 353–64; Grossmann 87–94). The correlation between Euthymios' narrative and the metaphrastic saints' lives may indicate that the Athonite monastery of Iviron owned manuscript(s) containing Symeon's works. It is well known that soon after its foundation the Iviron monastery was able to build up a rich library. One of the earliest dated Greek metaphrastic manuscripts, ca. 1042, originates from Iviron (Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* 132).

A couple of decades after Euthymios' first translations, Giorgi the Athonite followed the venerated Iviron monk's example and translated several metaphrastic narratives himself on Athos (Kekelidze, *History* 230). Like Euthymios, Giorgi became *hegoumenos* of the Iviron monastery and earned reputation and respect through his literary activities. Giorgi translated more than one hundred texts into Georgian and composed original hagiography, the *Life of Ioane and Euthymios the Athonites*, which earned him sanctity and canonization. Georgian narratives fashion Giorgi the Athonite as continuator of Euthymios' legacy.

Giorgi the Athonite arrived at the Iviron monastery from the Black Mountain, sent with a special mission by his mentor, a learned monk and translator, Giorgi the Recluse. According to Giorgi the Athonite's biography, Giorgi the Recluse urged Giorgi the Athonite to continue his career on the Holy Mountain and complete the works that Euthymios had left unfinished. Giorgi the Recluse was aware that the Iviron monastery needed learned men and skilled translators (*Life of Giorgi the Athonite* 122; *Georgian Monks* 110). The story about Giorgi the Recluse's eagerness to help the Iviron monastery indicates close literary and personal connections between the Geor-

gian monastic communities of the Byzantine Empire.

Theophilos the Hieromonk's Metaphrastic Manuscripts

The earliest Georgian source that preserves rich information about Symeon and his saints' lives is the manuscript Ivir. georg. 20 (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 63–79). The manuscript contains metaphrastic texts and homilies for the month of September translated by a Georgian monk, Theophilos, in the monastery of Theotokos Peribleptos (Triantafyllou) in Constantinople in 1081. Theophilos, in the first lines of the manuscript, claims that he has translated the first book out of twelve metaphrastic books and hopes to complete all "twelve metaphrastic books with divine support" (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 76). According to Theophilos, the Metaphrastic menologion counted twelve books and the first book contained saints' lives for September. Theophilos' testimony contradicts contemporary evidence which suggests that the Metaphrastic menologion comprised ten rather than twelve volumes/books (Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* 133).

The only thing known about Theophilos – that he lived in the imperial capital and was active in the 1070s and 1080s – comes from his colophon, where he presents himself as a disciple of Giorgi the Athonite. Based on this account, it seems that Theophilos lived or started his monastic career at Iviron when Giorgi the Athonite was *hegoumenos* of the monastery and likely came to master his translation skills there. Whether he was educated at Iviron or in Constantinople remains unknown.

Theophilos also translated metaphrastic hagiographical texts for November and December. The saints' lives for October are lost (Goguadze, "Two Athonite" 32–37). Although we know that the Iviron monastery library catalogue, checked in 1830 and now lost, listed a metaphrastic manuscript for October (Goguadze, "Interrelation" 6). It may well be that the saints' lives for October were penned by Theophilos.

Of all these manuscripts, Ivir. georg. 20 is by-far the most important for information on Symeon Metaphrastes. It is a well-preserved manuscript and contains: 1) a table of contents, 2) Theophilos' long prologue about Symeon Metaphrastes, 3) metaphrastic hagiographical texts for September and three homilies, 4) Theophilos' two short

original poems, 5) and his long colophon (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 63–79).

The table of contents of the manuscript starts with the following words: "This is the table of contents of the book of metaphrasis, written in Greek by Symeon the Logothetes [*i.e.* Metaphrastes] and translated into Georgian by the sinner Theophilos the Hieromonk" ("ზანდუკი რჩეული წიგნისა ამის მეტაფრასისად, აღწერილი ბერძნულად სანატრელისა მიერ სჳმეონ ლოღოთეტისა, ხოლო თარგმანებული ქართულად ცოდვილისა მიერ თეოფილე ხუცესმონაზონისა": Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 72). The manuscript contains twenty-seven texts: twenty-four metaphrastic hagiographical texts, and three homilies. Two homilies are by Ioannes Damaskenos, and one is by Basil the Great. The homilies appear at the end of the manuscript, right after the last metaphrastic text, the *Life of Gregory the Illuminator* (30 September). Theophilos says that he translated all saints' lives, twenty-four in total, from one Greek manuscript, but he consulted other manuscripts for the homilies.

Theophilos sounds concerned that he had to place the homilies (readings for 8 and 14 September) at the end of the manuscript. In a marginal note, however, he urges the individuals who may copy his manuscript in the future to correct this discrepancy by moving the three homilies from the end of the manuscript and placing them where they belong (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 70). Theophilos, unfortunately, does not identify the manuscript from which he translated the homilies of Damaskenos and Basil and what other texts this manuscript contained. We know that the earliest dated Greek metaphrastic texts appeared in a mixed manuscript, which contained metaphrastic saints' lives and a selection of other texts (Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* 130).

Theophilos the Hieromonk about Symeon Metaphrastes

Theophilos' prologue in the metaphrastic manuscript for September is a rare source that provides valuable information about Symeon's literary project. Biographical data about the author of the metaphrastic saints' lives are scarce in Theophilos' prologue, but he relates that Symeon was a high-ranking courtier and the logothetes during the reign of Emperor Basileios II (r. 976–1025). Strangely, this crucial information never appears in Michael Psellos' long and rhetorical en-

comium about Symeon (Fisher 193–202). A Byzantine learned man like Psellos, who held a high position at the court under several emperors (Konstantinos IX Monomachos, Konstantinos X, and Michal VII Doukas), strangely fails to inform his reader under which ruler Symeon served. It could be that Psellos avoids naming Basileios II because he was sure that his audience, comprised of learned men, already knew whose contemporary was Symeon.

Theophilos' prologue aims to explain to the reader/audience why metaphrastic texts are unique. It contains priceless information about the method that Symeon allegedly used to improve saints' lives. Theophilos begins his discourse with a pre-Christian Roman history and elaborates on how justice and the court system worked in antiquity. He claims that each criminal case went through the courts in the Roman Empire and the defendant's words were thoroughly documented. When the emperors started persecutions, Christians were brought before the courts. Each interrogation and execution was recorded with great precision. Afterward, the documents containing authentic accounts of the saints' interrogations, tortures, and executions were stored in the imperial archives and libraries and kept there for centuries (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 74–75).

Theophilos then argues that most of the pre-metaphrastic texts composed after saints' torture and execution were deficient. The martyrdom narratives often failed to account for the events accurately. The reason for this was that the stories about the saints were composed by individuals who never witnessed their protagonists' trials and executions but had heard the stories from others. On the other hand, those authors who witnessed saints' trials and executions were not educated enough to produce reliable accounts. As a consequence, pre-metaphrastic saints' lives "resembled an icon drawn on the wall with charcoal", *i.e.*, distorted, and ugly (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 74–75).

According to Theophilos, some accurate and trustworthy accounts about the saints' martyrdoms were stored in the imperial palace. Throughout the centuries, no single person with the divine wisdom, grace, and determination showed up to use these precious documents to provide the church with improved and uncorrupted accounts about the saints. Only during emperor Basileios' II rule emerged an astonishing man, Symeon, adorned with divine and human wisdom. He decided to rewrite saints' lives, eliminate deficiencies and corrupted parts, and thus bring these texts to deserved perfection. Symeon was a high-ranking courtier, *i.e.*, a logothetes. His position at the court allowed him to use first-hand and reliable ac-

counts kept in the imperial palace for centuries. Theophilos refers to metaphrastic saints' lives as the "pearl of the church" and states that Symeon's texts in Byzantine churches and monasteries enjoy respect similar to the Holy Scripture (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 75–76).

Besides eulogizing Symeon and elaborating about the differences between pre-metaphrastic and metaphrastic texts, Theophilos projects himself as the first translator of metaphrastic saints' lives. He explains why no one has done this before him. "Someone may pose a question: 'If the twelve metaphrastic books are so special and desirable, why did our father Euthymios and Giorgi the Athonites not translate them?' I can give the following answer […] they were busy with more pressing matters and left these texts untranslated" ("ხოლო უკუეთუ ვინმე იტყოდის, თუ ვინაეთგან ესოდენ საწადელ არიან ათორმეტნი ესე წიგნნი მეტაფრასნი, რად არა თარგმნნეს წმიდათა მამათა ჩუენთა: ეფთჳმი და გეორგი? მე ვაუწყო ჭეშმარიტი მიზეზი […] რამეთუ უფრო საჭიროთაგან არა სცალდა და ამისთჳს დაშთეს უთარგმანოდ": Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 76).

In this passage, Theophilos seems to try to excuse his teacher, Giorgi the Athonite, and Euthymios – venerated as an exemplary translator, illuminator of the Georgian church, and a "new Chrysostom" – for failing to translate the entire corpus of metaphrastic texts. He reinforces the idea, however, that metaphrastic literature has great value and that it was essential to have it in a Georgian translation.

The Georgian Royal Court and Metaphrastic Saints' Lives

Theophilos the Hieromonk's long colophon in Ivir. georg. 20 is equally important for studying the reception of metaphrastic hagiographical texts in Georgia. Theophilos gives details concerning the place and date of the manuscript's composition and lists the individuals who supported his work.

> This metaphrastic book was translated in the royal city of Constantinople, in the beautiful monastery of the Mother of God of Triantafyllou, by the unworthy monk Theophilos, year 6589 from the creation of the world, Byzantine indikton four [*i.e.,* 1081]; during the reign in the east of Giorgi kesaros [*i.e.,* kaisar] son of Bagrat, on whose order I translated this

work from Greek into Georgian, and during the queenship of
Marta in Byzantium, the sister of Giorgi, and the kingship of
Nikephoros Botaniates and Alexi Komnenos … and in the
time when Mariam, Bagrat's daughter, came to Constantino-
ple from the east.

((ითარგმნა უკუჱ წიგნი ესე მეტაფრასი ქალაქსა შინა
სამეუფოსა კოსტანტინეპოლეს, მონასტერსა შინა
ყოვლადშუენიერსა ტრიანდაფილვის დედისა
ღ˜თისასა, უდირსისა მიერ თეოფილეს რეცა
ხუცესმონაზონისა და მათვე ხელთა მიერ დაინუსხა
დასაბამითგანთა წელთა ექუს ათას ხუთას
ოთხმეოცდა-მეცხრესა, ინდიკტონსა ოთხსა
ბერძნულად; მეფობასა აღმოსავლეთს გიორგი
კესაროსისა, ბაგრატის ძისა, რომლისა ბრძანებითა და
მოღუაწეობითა ვიწყე თარგმნად წიგნთა საღმრთოთა
ელენთურისგან ქართულად […] ხოლო საბერძნეთს
დედოფლობასა მართა მისვე გეორგის დისასა და
მეფობასა ნიკიფორე ბოტანიოტისა და ალექსი
კომნიანოსისასა, მას ჟამსა, ოდეს ბაგრატის ასული
მარიამ დედოფალი აღმოსავლეთით
კონსტანტინოპოლეს შემოვიდა) (Metreveli, *Description*
1986, 79).

As Theophilos relates, he started and completed his hagiographical
collection in Constantinople, during the kingships of Nikephoros III
Botaneiates (r. 1078–81) and Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118).

Without doubt, the most valuable information in Theophilos'
colophon is his claim that he translated the metaphrastic collection
by order of King Giorgi II (r. 1072–89). It may be assumed that King
Giorgi and his entourage approached Theophilos through the inter-
mediary of his sister, Empress Maria of Alania, known for her liter-
ary patronage of Georgian and Byzantine learned men, and request-
ed translations of saints' lives. Theophilos was chosen for this signif-
icant project because of his reputation in Constantinople as an emi-
nent translator. It is remarkable that King Giorgi II, residing at the
very edge of the Byzantine oikumene, made this kind of request to a
Constantinopolitan monk, Theophilos. One might ask if Giorgi II
wished to have in Georgian translation precisely the collection of
metaphrastic hagiographical texts and question the extent to which
the Georgian royal court knew about Symeon Metaphrastes' literary
project. If one considers the close ties of the Bagratid kings with the

imperial court of Constantinople as well as the degree to which Georgian ecclesiastical culture was influenced by Byzantine tradition, this possibility cannot be ruled out.

What can be claimed with a high degree of certainty based on Theophilos' colophon is that the translation of metaphrastic texts was a royal project. King Giorgi II possibly wished to have the entire corpus of Symeon's saints' lives in Georgian. In the prologue of the manuscript, Theophilos hopes with divine support to carry out his project and translate all twelve books of metaphrastic saints' lives. We know that after completing the first book in ca. 1081, Theophilos continued working on translations; several metaphrastic texts by him for November and December have come down to us. Despite the scarce evidence, Theophilos probably fulfilled his dream, expressed in the proem of the manuscript, and translated all "twelve books of metaphrasis," *i.e.*, 148 saints' lives, or at least all volumes until that covering the month of December.

It is worth noting that besides Giorgi II, Theophilos mentions two other Bagratid royal family members in his colophon: Queen Marta (*i.e.* Byzantine Empress Maria of Alania) and "Queen Mariam, Bagrat's daughter." Theophilos refers to the Byzantine empress by her Georgian name of Marta: "I translated this work from Greek into Georgian, and during the queenship of Marta in Byzantium, the sister of Giorgi, and kingship of Nikephoros Botaniates and Alexi Komnenos" (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 79). Marta's (Maria of Alania) mention before the emperors, Nikephoros III and Alexios I, is noteworthy. By ca. 1081, Empress Maria of Alania was at the zenith of her power in the empire. She was one of the masterminds of the *coup d'état* that brought Alexios I Komnenos to power. After dethroning Nikephoros III Botaniates, Alexios considered marrying Maria of Alania, but he was persuaded to abandon this plan. By placing Marta's name before the Byzantine Emperors' names, Theophilos affirms that around 1081, a critical period for Byzantine power politics, Maria of Alania exerted considerable influence.

A third member of the Bagratid family referred to in the colophon – "Queen Mariam, Bagrat's daughter" – is King Giorgi II's and Maria of Alania's young sister. According to the text, Mariam arrived in Constantinople "from the east" (*i.e.*, the kingdom of Georgia) ca. 1081. Apart from the colophon, Theophilos refers to Queen Mariam in his prayer inserted at the end of *Martyrdom of Niketas the Goth*. "Beloved by God, those who will come and take this holy book, please pray for Queen Mariam, daughter of Bagrat, because she had

paid for the parchment of this book" ("საყუარელნო ღმრთისანო, ვისაცა მოიწიოს და ვინცა მიემთხუნეთ წმიდასა ამას წიგნსა, ლოცვა ყავთ სანატრელისა მარიამ დედოფლისათვს, ბაგრატის ასულია, რამეთუ ამის წიგნისა ეტრატისა ფასი მ...": Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 66). This account highlights that Queen Mariam was among the commissioners of the metaphrastic manuscript.

Although Theophilos' metaphrastic manuscript for September was ordered by the Georgian king and could have been prepared for the Bagratid royal court, it ended up on Athos, at the monastery of Iviron. It is difficult to trace the history of the manuscript's movement and there are two possible hypotheses. First, the manuscript commissioned by King Giorgi II and his sister, Queen Mariam, was never meant to arrive in Georgia, but was a royal gift to the Iviron monastery library. A second hypothesis could be that Queen Mariam took Theophilos' manuscript to Georgia in 1081. It is not clear why Queen Mariam came to the imperial capital in such a tumultuous time and what her mission was. Either she was visiting her elder sister, Empress Maria of Alania, or she had a diplomatic mission to solidify the political and military alliance between the imperial court and the Bagratid kings. If we assume that Queen Mariam brought the manuscript back to Georgia, the Bagratid royal court could have donated it to the Iviron monastery two or more decades later. The exchange and circulation of manuscripts between Iviron and Georgia was common, and Iviron maintained a close connection with monastic centers in Georgia and the Bagratid royal court. The Bagratid monarchy supported Iviron, and the monastery's well-being was the cornerstone of the royal court's policy of patronage.

There are strong grounds to suspect that Theophilos translated metaphrastic manuscript for the Georgian royal court rather than for the Iviron monastery. In the colophon and marginal note discussed above, Theophilos never hints that the manuscript was supposed to end up at the Iviron. The author emphasizes the role of the Georgian royal court. He names King Giorgi as a commissioner of his manuscript and expresses gratitude to Queen Mariam for her financial support. Georgian monks and scribes often noted in their colophons or marginal notes if a manuscript composed at a specific location was intended for somewhere else. For instance, the eleventh-century renowned translator, Giorgi the Recluse, in his colophon, clarified that the manuscript which he finished at the Black Mountain was a gift for his peer monks at the Iviron Monastery. Giorgi the Recluse claims that when he learned that the Iviron library lacked several saints' lives

he decided to prepare and send the manuscript to his brethren on Athos. Therefore, if Theophilos had translated hagiographical texts for the Iviron monastic community he would have indicated this either in his colophon or marginal notes.

Another argument for why metaphrastic manuscript was created specifically for the royal court is the way Theophilos elaborates on Symeon Metaphrastes' method of rewriting and discusses the origin of metaphrastic saints' lives. Iviron Monastery had a rich and unique library and was a hub of manuscript production and an important center of translating activities (Metreveli, "Role of Athos" 259–67). Learned monks at this monastery zealously translated all genres of Byzantine ecclesiastic literature and they would have been well-informed about Symeon and his literary project. Therefore, Theophilos' proem served to inform those who had limited knowledge about Symeon and did not understand the differences between metaphrastic and pre-metaphrastic hagiographical texts. Such individuals are more likely to have been Giorgi II and his courtiers rather than monks at Iviron.

Theophilos' self-representing strategy may also indicate that the metaphrastic manuscript was meant for King Giorgi II. In his manuscript prologue, Theophilos attempts to enhance his self-image as a learned monk by fashioning himself as a student of Giorgi the Athonite (Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 74). As already pointed out, Giorgi the Athonite was not just a monk, but in the strict sense of the word, a Byzantine literatus, educated at the imperial court. Like Euthymios the Athonite, Giorgi belonged to a Georgian aristocratic family and was a high-ranking hostage during his teen years in Constantinople. According to his biographer, prominent Byzantine learned men were his teachers and after he completed his studies, he was competent enough to polemicize with ecclesial officials, the patriarch of Constantinople, and the emperor (*Life of Giorgi the Athonite* 118; *Georgian Monks* 107). Giorgi's translated texts and commentaries confirm his biographer's claim about his exceptional talent and erudition. King Giorgi II would have remembered Giorgi the Athonite from his teen-age years. The Iviron monk had visited Georgia at the invitation of King Bagrat IV (r.1027–72) in the 1060s and spent a few years at the royal court. He even served as a tutor to Prince Giorgi for a short period and may have impressed the future king. The extent to which Theophilos knew that he and King Giorgi shared the memory of knowing the charismatic and celebrated Iviron monk is far from easy to ascertain.

Theophilos did his best to display his learning and literary com-

petence to impress King Giorgi and thus secure his good disposition to receive further requests to translate manuscripts. Unfortunately, due to the lack of evidence, we cannot elaborate further on whether translated metaphrastic hagiographical texts were read during the royal liturgies in the presence of the Georgian rulers or during certain royal ceremonies served either at the court or main cathedrals of the kingdom.

The Black Mountain and the Metaphrastic Menologion

A decade after Theophilos finished his manuscript, another learned Georgian monk and accomplished theologian, Ephrem Mcʻire and his peers, Davit Tʻbeli, Stephanos Sananoisʒe, and Arsen of Iqʻalto, completed the translation of Metaphrastic saints' lives from their base at the eastern periphery of the Byzantine Empire – the Monastery of Kalipos at the Black Mountain, in the vicinity of Antioch. Ephrem's and his peers' metaphrastic translations are preserved in five manuscripts (Goguadze, "Interrelation" 6–7).

Biographical data on Ephrem Mcʻire is scarce, but it seems that he was educated in Constantinople and afterward moved to the Black Mountain. The corpus of Ephrem Mcʻire's translated works is as impressive as that of Euthymios and Giorgi the Athonites. Like them, Ephrem translated more than one hundred texts, which include the oldest extant translation of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite's philosophical treatises (Khintibidze 27; Kekelidze, *History* 255).

In addition, Ephrem is the author of an original historiographic and polemic text, *Report on the Conversion of the Georgians and Books in which this is Mentioned*, which tells the story of the conversion of Georgia and highlights the reasons why the autocephaly of the Georgian church is canonical (Bregadze, 24–33). Ephrem based his historical work on accounts by Late Antique ecclesiastical historians such as Socrates, Sozomen, Theodor of Cyrus, and Rufinus. Ephrem's narrative reflects a fierce struggle between the Georgian and Greek monks on the Black Mountain a couple of decades earlier. Giorgi the Athonite, who happened to be on the Black Mountain at that time, managed to defend the orthodoxy of the Georgians. He persuaded the patriarch of Antioch of the apostolicity of the Georgian church. It seems, however, that tension grew again between the Georgian and the Greek monastic communities dur-

ing Ephrem's lifetime.

Ephrem Mc'ire earned fame and respect because of his innovative translation method, which diverged from the approach taken by Euthymios the Athonite, also followed by the Georgian monks of the Byzantine Empire (Bezarashvili, "From the Old" 102–10). Unlike Euthymios and his followers, who applied a so-called 'free' and reader-oriented translation method, Ephrem thought that the Georgian text should follow the Greek original as closely as possible. He often commented on and explained his translation method for the reader in his marginal notes and colophons. Ephrem wanted to clarify for the reader why he translated some parts of the texts in a certain way (Kekelidze, *History* 253–254; Tvaltvadze 8–12).

The earliest metaphrastic manuscript from the Black Mountain – Tbilisi, Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (GNCM), S collection, No. 384 – preserves hagiographical texts for three months, September, October, and November, and dates to the eleventh-twelfth centuries. The manuscript is damaged, lacks the first and the last several pages. The saints' lives for the dates from 1 to 11 September and 28 to 30 November and the colophon of the manuscript copyist/compiler are lost. Nevertheless, it contains several prayers and marginal notes of the authors, translators, and scribes (Metreveli, *Description* 1959, 462). Particularly valuable is Ephrem Mc'ire's prayer for the Georgian kings, Giorgi II and his son, Davit IV (r.1089–1125), inserted at the end of the *Martyrdoms of Akindynos, Pegasios, Anempodistos, Apthonios, and Elpidephoros* (2 November). The texts says: "Christ […] glorify both rulers crowned by you, shining and invincible king of kings Giorgi and great kaisar, and his God-given son Davit, king and panhypersebastos; make him strong and invincible in his struggle against his enemies" (იესუ ქრისტე [...] ადიდე ორკერძოდთავე დიდებითა შენ მიერ გვირგვინოსანი, ბრწყინვალე და უძლეველი მეფეთა-მეფე გიორგი და მადალი კესაროსი, და განამრავლენ წელნი მეფობისა მათისანი ნებისაებრ მათისა და [შენ] მიერ მონიჭებული ძე მათი დავით მეფე და პანიპერ სევასტოსი ადიდე და მძლე ყავ ყოველთა ზედა მტერთა და წინააღმდგომთა) (Metreveli, *Description* 1959, 466).

So far, this is the only metaphrastic manuscript from the Black Mountain that refers to members of the Georgian royal house and contains a prayer for kings. The appearance of Giorgi II's and Davit IV's names in this manuscript raises a question of whether Ephrem Mc'ire translated the collection of hagiographical texts for the royal

court. Ephrem could have learned about Theophilos' literary project and may have decided to follow in his peer Constantinopolitan monk's suit and prepare a manuscript for the royal family. One will never know if that was the case due to the loss of the colophon of manuscript, which would contain details about the manuscript commissioner/s and relate for whom it was prepared.

Nonetheless, it is known for certain that the Georgian royal court held Ephrem's name in high esteem. The *synodikon* of the church council convoked by King Davit IV to reform the Georgian church in 1105 commemorates Ephrem Mc'ire posthumously (Gabidzashvili 196). Ephrem's name in a document of this significance highlights the scale of his reputation and implies that his authority was respected beyond the Black Mountain. It is noteworthy that Ephrem's disciple, Arsen of Iq'alto, an eminent theologian and renowned translator, became King Davit's close associate. Arsen moved to Georgia from the Black Mountain at royal invitation and enjoyed Davit's support. Throughout his ecclesiastical career in Georgia, Arsen continued his literary activities. He translated an impressive number of Greek texts and metaphrased a Georgian hagiographical text, the *Life of Saint Nino* (Kekelidze, *History* 273–84).

A second manuscript from the Black Mountain, GNCM, S–1276, is a collection of homiletic and hagiographic texts, and dates to the eleventh to thirteenth centuries (Metreveli, *Description* 1961, 136–42). The first half of the manuscript preserves thirteen homilies (f. 1–115), the majority of which were translated by Ephrem Mc'ire (Metreveli, "Ephrem Mc'ire's Autograph" 115–25; Goguadze, "Interrelation" 7–8). The other part includes several metaphrastic saints' lives for October (f. 117–220).

Ephrem Mc'ire on Symeon Metaphrastes

A third metaphrastic manuscript, GNCM, A–90, translated at the Black Mountain, preserves saints' lives for November, December, and January. This manuscript has immense value because it contains Ephrem's literary piece, *A Brief Reminiscence on Symeon Logothetes and the Story of Those Responsible for the Translation of the Present Readings*, a rare source that tells essential information about the producer of the Metaphrastic menologion and his literary project. Ephrem's narrative about Symeon is the thirteenth text in the manuscript, following the *Life of Melania of Rome*, commemorated on

December 31 (Metreveli, *Description* 1973, 318).

Ephrem, in his encomium, says much more about the trajectory of Symeon's career than his contemporary, Theophilos, does. Although both Georgian monks state that Symeon was Basileios' contemporary, it is only Ephrem who relates that the producer of the Metaphrastic menologion earned fame in the sixth year of Basileios' reign, *i.e.* ca. 982. More importantly, Ephrem elaborates about circumstances that caused Symeon's downfall and led to the prohibition of his menologion in the entire empire. Ephrem states that the cause of Basileios' wrath was a particular passage in the metaphrastic version of the *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos*, which stated that the glorious days of the empire were over after the death of Emperor Leon VI (r. 886–912). The hagiographical text allegedly implied that the Byzantine Empire had been in decline since Leon VI, which hurt Basileios II's ego. As Ephrem relates, Emperor Basileios II had manuscripts of the Metaphrastic menologion burned and prohibited their reading in churches and monasteries. During Basileios' rule, Symeon's lives were read in secret, predominantly in the houses. Churches and monasteries only resumed their use after Basileios' death (Kekelidze, "Symeon Metaphrastes" 224–25).

It is implausible that a passage in the metaphrastic *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos* which did not reflect historical reality brought an end to Symeon's career. During the rule of Basileios II and his two predecessors, Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–69) and Ioannes I Tzimiskes (r. 969–76), the empire had regained the status of a supra-regional power and was at the zenith of its political and military might. Although Basileios faced challenges, and some may have doubted his leadership capabilities at the beginning of his reign, he proved to be one of the most impressive rulers in Byzantine history. In contrast, the empire of Leon VI was not a match for Byzantium as revived by Basileios II, Nikephoros II, and Ioannes I.

Ephrem does not say precisely when Symeon fell out of favor with the emperor. This may have happened after 985 as a consequence of Basileios the *parakoimomenos*' downfall. Up until 985, Basileios II was in the shadow of influential players, including Basileios the *parakoimomenos*, a high-ranking imperial official famous for his literary and artistic patronage. It is possible that Symeon was Basileios the *parakoimomenos*' protégé and lost favor after *parakoimomenos* was banished (Magdalino 123).

Ephrem would not have invented this story; without a doubt he based it on a contemporary account that seemed reliable to him. In

the eleventh century, Antioch was closely connected with the imperial capital, which facilitated the spread of news about significant events that happened in Constantinople. Nevertheless, the empire's periphery sometimes received distorted information.

It is worth re-emphasizing that Ephrem seems more informed on the trajectory of Symeon's career than his contemporary Constantinopolitan monk, Theophilos. It is difficult to suggest the reason why Theophilos never mentions the details outlined by Ephrem. The two Georgian accounts have one thing in common; neither of them relates that Basileios II commissioned Symeon's literary project. Furthermore, one cannot find a single marginal note or colophon in surviving Georgian manuscripts that would hint at Basileios II's involvement in the production of metaphrastic literature. The lack of this information in Theophilos' and Ephrem's narratives as well as in Georgian metaphrastic manuscripts further strengthens Høgel's belief that Basileios II did not support Symeon's work, which makes the imperial origin of the Metaphrastic menologion doubtful (Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* 129).

In his *Brief Reminiscence on Symeon Logothetes*, Ephrem characterizes Symeon as the most learned person of his time, well-versed in secular "pagan" and ecclesiastical wisdom. In contrast to Psellos' and Theophilos' accounts, which assume that rewriting the saints' lives was done at Symeon's initiative, Ephrem argues the contrary. He relates that "believers" used to beg Symeon – endowed with divine and human wisdom – to rewrite and improve the saints' lives. The main reason for this request to Symeon was that the saints' lives written in the past were corrupted by heretics and evil men and thus lost their firsthand simplicity and purity. After being persuaded, Symeon took it upon himself to rewrite the lives: "he put in front of him the old martyrdom acts, called kimeni,[3] and metaphrased them" (Kekelidze, "Symeon Metaphrastes" 223). According to Ephrem, Symeon made two types of improvements: he cleaned deficiencies from the saints' lives – eliminating specific phrases and words – and introduced more elevated and rhetorical language. While Ephrem considers stylistic improvement as the main merit of Symeon's works, Theophilos argued that Symeon consulted reliable sources and documents stored in the imperial palace when rewriting the saints' lives. This is not to say, however, that Theophilos did not appreciate the high-register language and rhetorical style of the hagiographical texts.

Ephrem also emphasizes that Symeon's literary pieces enjoyed

3. *Kimeni*, borrowed from Greek κείμενον, was a generic term used by medieval Georgian monks and learned men to refer to pre-metaphrastic saints' lives.

great popularity in Byzantium and beyond. According to his account, the saints' lives were read in all the churches and monasteries of the empire: "And let it be known that his improved writings were accepted by all churches, across the borders and frontiers" (ხოლო ესე საცნაურ იყავნ. ვითარმედ ყოველნივე წერილნი, მის მიერ განკარგულნი, სრულიად უცთომელ არიან და შეწყნარებულ ყოველთა მიერ ეკლესიათა...: Kekelidze, "Symeon Metaphrastes" 224). Ephrem's statement concerning the wide dissemination of metaphrastic saints' lives in Byzantium is in line with Theophilos' prologue which states: "This illustrious man [Symeon] gave these twelve books of metaphrasis, a pearl, to the churches of Byzantium for free. And all churches are reading these texts and getting illuminated through them. These books receive the same honor and respect as Gospels" (ამან სანატრელმან აღუწერნა ქრისტეანეთა ათორმეტნი ესე წიგნნი მეტაფრასნი, და მიანიჭა ეკლესიათა საბერძნეთისათა უსასყიდლოდ ესე მარგალიტი, რომლისათჳსცა ყოველნი ეკლესიანი მას იკითხვენ და მითა განათლდებიან, და სწორად სახარებისა პატივ-სცემენ: Metreveli, *Description* 1986, 75–76).

Ephrem also thought it essential in *A Brief Reminiscence on Symeon Logothetes* to name the Georgian monks who had translated metaphrastic texts before him. From his account, we learn that Giorgi the Athonite and Davit T'beli had translated several metaphrastic saints' lives in the past. Strangely enough, however, Ephrem fails to mention Euthymios the Athonite and his contemporary, Theophilos, who, a decade earlier, had completed a metaphrastic manuscript, Ivir. georg. 20, by the order of King Giorgi II.

Apart from *A Brief Reminiscence on Symeon Logothetes*, Ephrem talks about Symeon and the metaphrastic method in his note inserted at the end of the *Life of Menas of Egypt*:

> Holy fathers, the martyrdom of St. Menas had already been translated from kimeni – this is the name of the ancient book of martyrs described in simple language. And now it has been translated once again from a metaphrasis by the order of Basil, a leader of Kalipos, because… he preferred to have the one by Symeon the Logothetes, embellished and ornamented which is called metaphrasis.
>
> (წმიდანო მამანო, ესე წმიდისა მინაჲს წამებაჲ იყო ძუელადაცა თარგმნილი კიმენისგან, რამეთუ ესრეთ ეწოდების პირუჭლ ლიტონად აღწერილსა წიგნსა

მოწამეთასა, ხოლო აწ ესე ითარგმნა ახლად
მეტაფრასისაგან ბრძანებითა კალიპოსელთა
წინამძღურისა ბასილისითა, რამეთუ მას [...] ირჩია
ლოღოთეტისა სჳმეონის შეკაზმულისა
მოწმეთაჲსაგან, რომელსა მეტაფრას ეწოდების)
(Metreveli, *Description* 1959, 467).

Symeon and the metaphrastic method are also mentioned in Ephrem's
preface to manuscript, GNCM, A–24. The manuscript is not a collec-
tion of metaphrastic saints' lives but contains various theological texts.
In the long preface to Ioannes Damaskenos' *Fountain of Knowledge*,
Ephrem appeals to the reader/audience and warns them:

> Do not expect this text to be as ornated and embellished as
> that of Symeon the Logothetes and other Byzantine learned
> men, who find the lives of martyrs, saints, or other stories
> written in a secular and straightforward language and im-
> prove on the words and use elaborate language. They called it
> metaphrasis, which means decorating, and they do it only
> when the author of the story was a simple and not an erudite
> man. Most of the accounts of martyrdom of saints had been
> written by men who have witnessed the events, and they stated
> the words which the martyrs had pronounced. Therefore, they
> neither added nor removed anything in their words. However,
> nobody dares to touch or change the words of the holy ortho-
> dox fathers, like those in the Gospels and in the epistles of Paul
> the Apostle, no matter how simple the language is.

> (კუალად ესეცა საცნაურ იყავნ, ვითარმედ არა ჯერ-
> არს, რათა სხუსა ვისგანმე შეკაზმულად ვჰგონებდეთ
> წიგნსა ამას. ვითარ იგი გუასმიეს სჳმეონ
> ლოღოთეტისა, და სხუათა მეცნიერთა ბერძენთაგან
> კაზმვაჲ, ანუ რომელთაჲ უღონოდ არს, რამეთუ იჳოოს
> თუ ცხოვრებაჲ ანუ წამებაჲ ანუ რაჲცაჲ ჰამბავი გინა
> მოთხრობაჲ სოფლურითა და უშუწრითა სიტყუათა
> აღწერილი, მას სიტყუთ განაშუწნებენ, გარდაჰკაზმენ
> და მეტაფრას უჶოდებენ, რომელს არს
> გარდაკაზმული. და ამასცა მაშინ ჰყოფენ, ოდეს
> აღმწერელი ჰამბვისა მის ლიტონი კაცი იყოს და არა
> წიგნთაგანი: ვითარ-იგი უმრავლესთა წმიდათა
> წამებანი თანადახდომილთა მონათა ვიეთგანმე
> აღწერილ იყვნენ, მას შეჰკაზმავენ ესე-ვითარითა

სიტყუთა, რომელი მასვე პირსა იტყოდის და არა
შეჰმატებდეს არცა დააკლებდეს საქმეთა; ხოლო წ̃თა
თქუმულსა და მართლმადიდებელთა მამათა
აღწერილსა ვერავინ იკადრებს შეხებად, ვითარცა წ̃ა
სახარებასა და ებისტოლეთა პავლე მოციქულისათა,
რაოდენცა ლიტონითა სიტყჳთ აღწერილ იყოს…)
(Metreveli, *Description* 1973, 84).

Ephrem sets a strict limit on the use of the metaphrastic method. As
he argues in this preface to a theological treatise by Ioannes Dam-
askenos, one should be careful when dealing with church fathers'
works and canonical texts and never attempt to embellish them. Met-
aphrasing applies only to the lives of the saints and martyrs.

Based on the manuscript evidence from the Black Mountain and
on Ephrem Mc'ire's accounts, it turns out that Georgian learned
monks considered metaphrastic hagiographical texts an integral part
of the ecclesiastical literature, the translation of which into Georgian
was thought to be crucial. The program of reception of the Byzan-
tine heritage set into motion by Euthymios the Athonite at Iviron
was raised to a new level and was continued successfully by Geor-
gian monks from the Black Mountain. Most of the metaphrastic
saints' lives that emanated from the vicinity of Antioch were trans-
lated by Ephrem, and a few by Davit T'beli, Stephanos Sananoisʒe,
and Arsen of Iq'alto, Ephrem's disciple who continued his legacy in
the twelfth-century Georgian kingdom.

Ioannes Xiphilinos the Younger about Symeon Metaphrastes

Yet another source that contains essential information about Syme-
on the Metaphrastes and his Metaphrastic menologion is Ioannes
Xiphilinos the Younger's hagiographic collection for the second half
of the year (summer months). Ioannes Xiphilinos the Younger, a
learned man and a nephew of Patriarch Ioannes Xiphilinos, rewrote
and metaphrased the saints' lives which Symeon Metaphrastes did
not manage to finish. Unlike Symeon's metaphrastic hagiographical
texts, preserved in more than seven hundred Greek manuscripts, the
original of Xiphilinos' work is lost, and it survives only in a Georgian
translation. It is difficult to explain why Xiphilinos' literary project,
which was meant to be equally significant as Symeon's, failed to en-
joy a wide reception in the Byzantine Empire. While most of the sur-

viving Georgian metaphrastic manuscripts were produced in Constantinople, Athos, and the Black Mountain, Xiphilinos' corpus was most likely translated in twelfth-century Georgia at the monastic school of Gelati, the eminent center of scholarly and translating activities. Xiphilinos' translated hagiographical texts are preserved in late sixteenth-century manuscripts commissioned by Evdemon Čxetiʒe (1543–78), *katholikos* of Apxazeti (western Georgia). Evdemon collected hagiographical manuscripts scattered across western Georgia. With his financial support, a team of scribes compiled a new manuscript collection containing the hagiographical narratives for the entire year, including metaphrastic texts by Symeon Metaphrastes (Goguadze, "The Commissioners" 160–65).

These sixteenth-century manuscripts contain not only Ioannes Xiphilinos' saints' lives but also his long colophon addressing Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118). The anonymous Georgian scribe thought it essential to translate and preserve Xiphilinos' encomiastic colophon.

Ioannes Xiphilinos' colophon consists of two parts. The first part, couple of lines, informs the reader/audience about the content and the author of the manuscript:

> A wise philosopher Xiphilinos, the chief among the bookish men of the royal court, metaphrased (which means enlarging and embellishing) from old kimeni, which is also called mravaltavi, martyrdoms, lives and deeds and achievements of the saints, commemorated during the seven months of the year that are: February, March, April, May, June, July and August.

> (შვდთა მათ თთუეთა, რომელ არიან ფებერვალ: მარტი: აპრილი: მაისი: ივნისი: ივლისი და ავღუსტოსი. ამათ შინა მოჴსენებულთა წმიდათა ცხოვრებათა და მოქალაქეობათა. და წამებათა და ღუაწლთა. ძუელისა კიმენისაგან. რომელსა ვიეთნიმე მრავალთავადცა უწოდენ. გარდამეტაფრასმქნელისა. ესეიგი არის განმავრცელებელისა და შემამკობელისასა. პალატისა მწიგნობართა უალრესისა. ყოვლად ბრძნისა ფილოსოფოსისა. ქსიფილინოსისა) (Kekelidze, "Ioannes Xiphilinos" 235).

The second and the longest part of the colophon elaborates on several issues. In the first lines Xiphilinos addresses Alexios I Komnenos and states that he completed metaphrasing *i.e.*, enlarging and expand-

ing saints' lives for seven months with divine support. He presents his work to Alexios and asks him to evaluate it. Xiphilinos tells the emperor that he wholeheartedly follows the established practice according to which every author is obliged to mention a ruling emperor's name in his work to avoid accusations of disloyalty towards the basileus. After this statement, Xiphilinos embarks on praise for Alexios' military prowess and victories achieved through his leadership against his enemies. He claims that Alexios' stunning victories has secured peace and guaranteed stability and prosperity in the empire, creating a fertile environment for learned men to dedicate themselves to literary activities. Xiphilinos further relates that if Alexios had failed in his efforts to deal a severe blow to the empire's adversaries, he would not have finished the work which he now presents to the emperor (Kekelidze, "Ioannes Xiphilinos" 235).

After Xiphilinos ends lauding Alexios as a savior of the empire, he starts explaining the differences between pre-metaphrastic and metaphrastic hagiographical texts. He states that in the past, saints' lives – which had been read in the churches for centuries – were written by men who did not use ornate words and elevated language. Instead, they wrote brief texts about the saints in a simple way. Xiphilinos tells Alexios that in contrast to the older saints' lives, he offers him metaphrastic saints' lives, and explains the meaning of "metaphrasis" as rewriting and enlarging:

> The present work of mine, o emperor, is a metaphrasis which means an expansion and enlargement of the short saints' lives from the books of mravaltavi. This work is different from the lives of saints (venerated and remembered every day in the catholic church) preserved in kimeni, composed by men in the past in a simple style, who did not bother to use high-register language.
>
> (ხოლო არს ესე ნაშრომი ჩემი ჭ მეფე ძუელთა უკუე და პატიოსანთა ყოვლითურთ რ�წმუნებისა ღირსთა კაცთაგან...ენითა მსოფლელთაჲთა შეწყობილთა საკითხავსა. კათოლიკე ეკლესიისა მიერ დღითიდღეთა ჴსენებათა შინა პატივცემულთა ყოველთა წმიდათასა. ესეიგი არს მრავალთავად წოდებულსა წიგნსა შინა შემოკლებით და ლიტონად აღწერილთა წამებათა გარდამეტაფრასებად)(Kekelidze, "Ioannes Xiphilinos" 237).

After making a distinction between pre-metaphrastic – referred to in Georgian translation as *kimeni* – and metaphrastic saints' lives, Xiphilinos switches to another topic and introduces Symeon Metaphrastes to Alexios. He presents Symeon as a learned court official and exemplary rhetorician, adorned with all virtues. Xiphilinos emphasizes that Symeon was the first man to have "metaphrased and enlarged" the saints' lives through the thorough and correct interpretation of the sources that contained the ancient accounts about the martyrs. The colophon further contends that Symeon metaphrased saints' lives to save them from neglect and oblivion. According to Xiphilinos, pre-metaphrastic saints' lives had not enjoyed great respect among believers, who thought they resembled secular texts due to their poor language and style. The 'grammarians' were particularly critical and disrespectful of these texts (Kekelidze, "Ioannes Xiphilinos" 238). Like Psellos and Ephrem Mc'ire, Xiphilinos accentuates that the literary qualities such as elevated and rhetorical language were distinctive features of Symeon's hagiographical texts. Xiphilinos does not hide his intention to become equal to Symeon and fashions himself as a continuator of his legacy. He explains to Alexios that Symeon metaphrased saints' lives only for the winter months, while he himself succeeded in rewriting lives for the rest of the year – February to August.

Of utmost significance in the colophon addressing Emperor Alexios I Komnenos is information about the audience and readership of the hagiographical texts. Xiphilinos makes a statement that he plans to give his saints' lives to the churches and monasteries of the empire and before doing so he wants Alexios' approval. Xiphilinos sounds confident that the collection of his hagiographical texts for the second half of the year will enjoy wide reception in the empire and be as widely red and used as Symeon Metaphrastes' works (Kekelidze, "Ioannes Xiphilinos" 235–36). Based on the minimal manuscript evidence, however, it seems that his plan to make his metaphrased saints' lives as popular as Symeon's failed. Had his works enjoyed as wide reception as the author wished, more Greek manuscripts would be extant, but, as I have already pointed out, Xiphilinos' metaphrastic corpus survives only in a Georgian translation. It is hard to know what hampered the popularization of Xiphilinos' ambitious project. It is improbable that Emperor Alexios Komnenos, to whom the work was presented, disapproved of it. The fact that Xiphilinos' work was translated into Georgian in the first half of the twelfth century, shows that metaphrastic saints' lives for the summer months had some circulation in the Byzantine Empire and were not completely marginalized.

Conclusion

Learned Georgian men's interest in metaphrastic saints' lives in the tenth and the eleventh centuries demonstrates the scale of the reception of Byzantine ecclesiastical culture and literature in Georgian milieus. The fascination of Georgians with the metaphrastic saints' lives of Symeon Metaphrastes is clear, and Ioannes Xiphilinos shows that the literary trend set in motion in the very center of the empire through the intermediary of Georgian monastic communities throughout Byzantium was also transmitted to the Georgian kingdom. Euthymios the Athonite, an erudite Georgian theologian and translator, pioneered in translating several metaphrastic hagiographical texts, applying the metaphrastic method also to the Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, thus becoming a Metaphrastes himself. Giorgi the Athonite continued Euthymios' legacy.

In the second half of the eleventh century, Theophilos the Hieromonk and Ephrem Mc'ire attempted to translate the entire corpus of metaphrastic hagiographical texts in two different parts of the Byzantine Empire, in Constantinople and at the Black Mountain respectively. Without a doubt, this inclusion of Symeon's Metaphrastic menologion into the Georgian literary world encouraged Georgian learned men to rewrite and metaphrase original Georgian hagiographical material.

Based on the scrutiny of various Georgian accounts about Symeon Metaphrastes and his menologion, it is apparent that Georgians started to consider metaphrastic saints' lives as sacred texts and part of the Byzantine holy canon. For this reason, the Georgian royal court took an interest in the Metaphrastic menologion and initiated its translation during the rule of Giorgi II. On the Black Mountain, Ephrem Mc'ire may have also translated metaphrastic texts for Georgian kings. His prayer for Giorgi II and his son, Davit IV, in a metaphrastic manuscript indicates a connection between the Bagratid royal court and the Georgian monastic community of the Black Mountain.

The translation movement that flourished among Georgian learned ecclesiastics in various parts of the Byzantine Empire in the tenth and the eleventh centuries had a clear-cut agenda. Many Georgians considered the translation of Byzantine texts into Georgian as a sacred mission. As highlighted by Giorgi Mc'ire in his hagiography, the *Life of Giorgi the Athonite*, the extensive translation and subsequent reception of these Byzantine/Christian narratives served to increase literacy and education among the Georgians and make them

as wise as Byzantines. In Giorgi's view, after the Georgians succeeded in embracing the Byzantine/Christian heritage, the Byzantines no longer had the right to call them barbarians (*Life of Giorgi the Athonite* 108; *Georgian Monks* 101).

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DORIANE ZERKA

Mapping Mobility: Women and Textual Networks in the Fifteenth-Century Prose Epic *Herzog Herpin*

Abstract

Considering the example of the fifteenth-century prose epic *Herzog Herpin*, attributed to Elisabeth of Nassau-Saarbrücken, through the lens of Caroline Levine's approach to networks, this essay examines the constitutive role of women in intra- and extra-textual constellations. *Herzog Herpin* is structured by networks colliding and interacting with each other. The family whose story it follows, the Mediterranean space that condition the movement of family members, and the network of intertextual references to Arthurian and Carolingian materials offer particularly productive examples of forms in which women act as connective agents. In turn, *Herzog Herpin*'s composition is conditioned by the context in which Elisabeth evolves – a dynastic network in which women foster links between courts. Using a network approach to connect the intra- and extra-textual without implying causality, sheds light on a pattern of gender-specific involvement in literature relying on movement and connectivity.[1]

2. See for example Haubrichs and Hermann; Haubrichs and Oster; Herz, "Frau. Macht. Text."; Bastert, *Helden als Heilige* 384–99.

The four epics attached to Elisabeth of Lorraine-Vaudémont, Countess of Nassau-Saarbrücken have often been defined as texts 'in-between': between France and Germany, between rulership and art, between epic and novel, between verse and prose, between the Middle Ages and Early Modernity.[2] As such, Elisabeth and the four epics present themselves as particularly productive examples to analyse through the lens of networks and network theory: it is precisely this state of 'in-between-ness' which, rather than implying a sort of existence in limbo between two poles, designates the texts and the countess as connective agents. Forming pathways between traditions and cultures, Elisabeth and her texts highlight the constitutive role that exchange, interconnection and transcultural mobility play in literature in the premodern era. Furthermore, the implication of Elisabeth brings into question the involvement of women in literary net-

works and the making of texts. The role of Elisabeth as a transcultural agent comes to the fore when considering the statement based on which scholars have connected her to the texts, as it appears in *Loher und Maller*, one of the four epics:

> Vnd dis büch tet schriben in welscher sprach ein edele wolgeborne frowe, die was genant frowe Margarete, greffynne zu Wiedemont und frowe zu Genville, hertzog Friderichs von Lotringen, graffen zu Wiedemont, husfrowe, in den iaren vnsers herren tusent vier hundert vnd fünff iare. Vnd ist diß büch ouch vorbaß von welsch zu dütsch gemacht durch die wolgeborne frowe Elisabeth von Lotringen, greffynne wytwe zu Nassauwe vnd Sarbrucken, der vorgenanten hertzog Friderichs vnd frouw Margreten tochter, die es durch sich selbs also bedütschet hat, als es hie vor an beschriben stet, vnd ist vollenbracht in den iaren tusent vierhundert siben vnd dryssig nach der geburt Cristi […]. (*Loher und Maller* 416)

> (And the very noble lady, named lady Margaret, countess of Vaudémont and lady of Joinville, wife of duke Frederick of Lorraine, Count of Vaudémont, had this book written in the French language in the year of our lord one thousand four hundred and five. And this book was then made from French into German by the noble lady Elisabeth of Lorraine, countess and widow of Nassau and Saarbrücken, daughter of the aforementioned duke Frederick and his wife Margaret, who put it in German herself, as it is described above, and was completed in the year one thousand four hundred thirty-seven after the birth of Christ […]).[3]

3. All translations are my own.

For Bernd Bastert, this statement is a "Mittel der Authentisierung" (*Helden als Heilige* 111, "means of authentication"); for Ute von Bloh, who questions what specific role Elisabeth might have played in the many different processes that lead to the creation of a manuscript, from translation to compilation to being written down, it is part of an "inszernierte[n] Legende, die das Ansehen der Texte zu erhöhen vermochte" (32, "staged legend, which enhanced the prestige of the text").

Of course, the veracity of this statement cannot be proven. But it remains noteworthy in marking a clear desire to tie Elisabeth not only to the text but to the very process of its translation into German. The text insists on this last part by repeating twice that she translated it herself, and then by calling attention to the repetition ("als es

hie vor an beschriben stet", in the above citation). This statement is valuable for modern scholarship not because of its potential to confirm or deny whether Elisabeth truly did translate the texts, but rather in the decided assertion itself, insofar as it purposefully marks Elisabeth as an active agent in the process of textual transmission. Elisabeth is, independently of her degree of implication in the 'actual' historical translation, textually designated as the figure that made possible the emergence of the prose novel – of this prose novel in particular, but also, because of the foundational role of the four epics, of a tradition of prose novels in the German language.[4]

4. For more on Elisabeth's texts as the first prose novels in German, see Herweg 225 and Herz, "Frau. Macht. Text." 78.

This statement, Tomas Tomasek remarks, also situates Elisabeth within a genealogy of literary women, providing a matrilineal dynastic legitimacy based on involvement in literary production (349). It proves more fruitful, then, to consider this statement as a form of epistemological paradigm or programmatic stance than to question its veracity or its function for the four epics. What is thrown into sharp relief in these few lines is an emphasis on the role of two women in the transmission of texts from one generation to the next, and from one language to another. Extrapolating on these two principles, I use this statement as a starting point to consider the role of Elisabeth in the context of late medieval aristocracy and her involvement in transcultural transmission and intertextual networks. Yet, because this statement offers itself as a possible literary exaggeration and as mentioned, its veracity cannot be proven, I also consider it a starting point to transpose my analysis onto the realm of the intra-textual, considering the role of women in a range of textual networks coexisting in *Herzog Herpin*, the first of the four epics attached to Elisabeth. Bypassing historical uncertainties regarding the degree of Elisabeth's influence on the material, a formalist analysis – conceiving of the text through the lens of Caroline Levine's approach to networks – reveals a pattern linked to the role of women as agents of genealogical and transcultural transmission.

Elisabeth was born in the last years of the fourteenth century, between 1394 and 1398, the daughter of Frederick V of Lorraine and Margaret of Joinville. In 1412, she married Phillip I of Nassau-Saarbrücken, moving to the German-speaking court of her husband from her primarily French-speaking home. Elisabeth held political sovereignty, especially after Phillip's death in 1429 and until her first-born son assumed his role as Count of Nassau-Saarbrücken in 1438. Her regency was marked by peace and prosperity, in contrast to the complex historical context of the end of the Hundred Years War, coincid-

5. See Thomas for more details on the historical and political contexts.

6. I use the order of the four epics as established by Wolfgang Liepe in his foundational study *Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken. Entstehung und Anfänge des Prosaromans in Deutschland* (1920), based on the genealogy developed by the four texts as well as textual clues. See also Ute von Bloh 92–99 for an overview of Liepe's argument and considerations on other possible – but unlikely – ways of ordering the texts.

7. For details on the cyclical nature of the work as a narrative strategy, see von Bloh; Kohnen.

ing with intrigues at the border between Francophone and German-speaking domains.[5] Elisabeth's family relations created links between Nassau-Saarbrücken and Nancy, where her uncle Charles I, Duke of Lorraine "sich […] humanistischen Studien widmete" ("dedicated himself to humanist topics"), and with Heidelberg through Charles' wife Margaret of the Palatinate; her brother, Anton, was part of the poetry circle at the court of Charles of Orléans (Steinhoff 482). Elisabeth lived, therefore, in a zone of contact, cultural and political, between French and German-speaking areas, which influenced her literary endeavours and forms part of a larger internationally-minded context: she corresponded frequently with her cousin René of Anjou and her husband Philipp took part in the Council of Constance in 1415, which David Wallace considers an exemplary moment, portraying the heterogeneous, multicultural encounter called to deal with the fragmentation of the Church as a metaphor for the heterogeneity and multicultural nature of European literary culture (655–82). Elisabeth died on 17 January 1456 and is buried in the church of the abbey of St. Arnual in Saarbrücken.

Elisabeth's interest in literature finds its roots in her childhood and the influence of Margaret of Joinville on her children. When Elisabeth was about ten years old, her mother possibly worked on a translation from Latin into French of the *Loher und Maller* material, which then became the basis of one of the epics attached to Elisabeth, alongside *Herzog Herpin*. It also appears that Margaret bequeathed her book collection to Elisabeth (Herrmann 112–13). After Philipp's death and during her time as regent, probably in the 1430s, Elisabeth translated – or had translated – four texts into German, known as *Herzog Herpin, Königin Sibille, Loher und Maller* and *Huge Scheppel*, prose adaptations of verse French cycles about Charlemagne and his descendants, ending with Hugues Capet.[6] *Herzog Herpin* is an adaptation of the French-language *Lion de Bourges* and follows the complex story of the eponymous Duke Herpin of Bourges' family over the course of three generations. The text is shaped by the peregrinations of family members around the Mediterranean basin, creating a cyclical pattern of family separations and reunions, complicated with each generation as the characters and their journeys multiply and their trajectories expand further and further out East.[7] The genealogical focus of the characters shapes the text and mirrors the structure of late medieval aristocratic families; characters connect with each other and are connected by the repetition of specific episodes; places appear and reappear, forming geographical

nodes as they are repeatedly visited by family members of different generations – all forming pathways that are visible to the audience even if they are not available to the characters themselves. At first, the text is concerned with the nuclear family of Herpin, his wife Alheyt and their son Lewe. Then, Lewe's own family comes into play, as he marries the daughter of the King of Sicily, Florentyne, who gives him two sons Wilhelm and Oleybaum, who are the subject of the final adventures. Finally, the text describes Oleybaum's adventure with his first wife Gallien and second wife Frolich in more details, while according less discourse time to Wilhelm and his wife Grassien.[8]

Extra-textually, *Herzog Herpin* emerges as the product of a multiplicity of complex, layered, and ongoing process contributing to the formation of what we might define as medieval European literary production – or a form of European cultural network. 'European' does not correspond to a form of strictly defined, fixed identity or even to a clearly outlined cultural production, but simply highlights, following the definition of "medieval European literature" established by Paolo Borsa, Christian Høgel, Lars Boje Mortensen and Elizabeth Tyler, "the productiveness of Europe" (15) and the fact that the subject matter "cannot be contained within the parameters of the national philologies" (16). The literary production of medieval Europe too requires a broad framework, departing first of all from "the modern tendency to assign 'literature' or a 'work of literature' to belles-lettres" (Green 218) and using the discrepancy between modern and medieval notions of authorship to focus on processes of transmission relying on wide phenomena that might fall under the umbrella of cultural memory: "with the growing importance of the linguistic turn and, more recently, of cultural memory studies (in which subjective and partial experience is allowed to be more constitutive of real history) literature in the very broad sense acquires new relevance" (Borsa et al. 9). *Herzog Herpin*, then, is a text shaping and shaped by a literary production that functions as an ongoing networking – connecting linguistic traditions through translations and generating new pathways triggering a sense of cultural memory by re-encapsulating motifs and topoi.

Turning to a network approach highlights the necessity to simply observe links between cultural objects, without seeking out cause and effect relations or attempting to determine the influence of some phenomena on others. Rather than emphasising causality or homogeneity, networks simply emphasise connection: "all networks afford connectivity; all create links between disconnected nodes" (Levine

8. A detailed summary in German of the plot of *Herzog Herpin* and the three other texts tied to Elisabeth is available on the Elisabeth-Prosa-Portal website, which compiles outputs and information from two research projects carried out in Potsdam and Bochum that led to new editions of the four texts.

114). I follow the approach of Caroline Levine in considering the structuring power of forms in society, politics and history as well as in arts and literature. Using Levine's network as an analytical model to consider *Herzog Herpin*, especially in relation to the key role played by women as connective agents, offers a way to read *Herpin* and its female protagonists to throw light on Elisabeth and her role as a transcultural agent, following what Levine terms "literary criticism turned upside-down" (122). Faced with the impossibility of ascertaining the level of implication of Elisabeth in the translation, or of determining that the key roles played by women in the text are a direct result of the involvement of a woman in the making of the text, using Levine's network delineates routes and patterns linked to women acting as connective agents.[9] Though her chapter on networks focuses on Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* rather than on medieval literature, I follow her approach in "deliberately taking a fictional text as a model for understanding the social, an experiment in apprehending society through – and as – multiple contending forms. The point here is less to use formalist methods to read [*Herpin*] than to use [*Herpin*] to throw light on the operations of social form" (122). Levine invites her readers not only to consider forms in themselves, but to question their interaction with other forms, as she approaches literary texts "not […] as reflections or expressions of prior social forms, but rather as sites, like social situations, where multiple forms cross and collide, inviting us to think in new ways about power" (122).

Herzog Herpin is a narrative criss-crossed by a multiplicity of networks, aesthetic and socio-political, intra-textual and extra-textual, spatial and temporal. Three of these come to the fore as forms in which women act as key nodal points, enabling the formation of new pathways between characters, places and motifs and as key structuring shapes in the narrative: first, the text's reliance on genealogy in the ever-expanding family it portrays; second, the backdrop of the Mediterranean basin; and finally the presence of intertextual references to pan-European motifs and traditions, both the result and evidence of the networked nature of medieval literary production. Considering these literary networks in relation to the social world of Elisabeth and the European cultural network mentioned above, in turn, highlights the recurring role of women as connective agents contributing to the transcultural literary production of medieval Europe, without the constraints of attempting to determine their 'real' or historical influence.

9. Some studies have drawn parallels between the portrayal of women the texts associated with Elisabeth and the Countess herself, though not through a network approach. For a study of instances of female speech in *Königin Sibille* compared with Elisabeth's letters, see Miedema and for considerations on depictions of female rulership taking into account Elisabeth's own role as regent, see Tomasek.

While *Herzog Herpin* and Elisabeth exist within a Franco-German linguistic realm, scholars working in other linguistic spheres have highlighted the importance of centring the role of women in medieval European literary production to challenge national paradigms. Elizabeth Tyler's book *England in Europe* highlights the role played by English royal women in fostering a cultural production that became constitutive not just of English literature, but more widely of European literary production. The dynamics of medieval aristocracy, Tyler argues, are key to understanding the role of female literary patronage in fostering transcultural literary production: "The movement of women, in dynastic marriage, and of the clergy was of greater direct consequence for literary culture than was the movement of lay men across political boundaries" (17).

Ursula Peters, in a study considering the role and representation of noble families in vernacular literature of the Middle Ages, provides an overview of organising principles of noble families, specifically by applying Claude Lévi-Strauss's anthropological concepts surrounding marriage. For example, she showcases scholarly uses of Lévi-Strauss' concept of the *échange généralisé asymétrique* following which women are 'exchanged' between different social groups, 'given' or 'received' (Lévi-Strauss' terminology), in order for noble families "in einem differenzierten System von Frauengeber- und Frauennehmerfamilien ein hohes Maß komplexer Bindungen und Mobilität zwischen den verschiedenen Adelsgruppen [zu] erreichen" (Peters 42, "to achieve a high degree of complex ties and mobility between the various noble groups in a differentiated system of families providing wives or receiving wives"). The nature of medieval aristocratic families lends itself to a formalist reading (in Levine's terms): these families are networks, stretching across time and space relying upon relationships to sustain and transmit power, but centred on their male line of descent as a way of maintaining land and wealth. It follows that female family members bear the responsibility of expanding the network and maintaining existing pathways. The education of women, too, focused on arts and literature rather than on the military teachings reserved for men, condition a gender-specific involvement in literary pursuits (Herweg 225–26).[10] While both Tyler and Peters highlight the mobility of women due to familial networks here, Peters' study as a whole deals with noble families and their representation within texts. Indeed, the nature of aristocratic families does not only shape the mobility of women and the texts they help circulate, but also the families, real or fictional, whose stories are told in these very texts.

10. See Herweg 223–29 for more details on the conditions that shaped women's transcultural involvement in literature.

As well as existing in relation to three other texts with which it interacts to form another genealogy, *Herzog Herpin* is a text itself centred on genealogy, which can be roughly divided into two parts. The first focuses on the adventures of Herpin, Alheyt and Lewe, their separation and concludes with their reunion in Toledo, while the second narrates the fate of Lewe, his attempts to reunite with his wife Florentyne and their sons Wilhelm and Oleybaum, whose own story forms another narrative cycle. This bipartite division, focused on the initial family reunion and its subsequent separations and reunions brings to the fore the centrality of the family as a structuring narrative device in the epic. Lina Herz, in a study on the family nucleus as narrative pattern in the epic, explains:

> Familie leitet sowohl die Handlung als auch deren Erzählung und zwar nicht nur in einer einzelnen Variablen […], sondern in ständig variierter Wiederkehr. […] Was die Erzählung auslöst, speist sich aus den Konstellationen und Handlungsabfolgen, die einer Geburt inhärent sind und die sowohl die Statik als auch die Dynamik des Narrativs konstitutiv bedingen. (*Schwieriges Glück* 15)

> (The family guides both the plot and its narration, and not just in a single variable […], but in constantly varied recurrence. […] That which triggers the narrative is generated by the constellations and sequences of events that are inherent to a birth and that condition, in a constitutive way, both the statics and the dynamics of the narrative.)

Herz' remarks open up two ways to conceive of the text: first, her use of a birth as an image throwing into relief the familial narrative pattern highlights the central role of women in the narrative pattern she describes and second, her mention of 'constellations' brings to the fore the networked structure of the family (and therefore of the epic more generally).[11] With each generation, each marriage and each birth, the family network expands and women, as wives and mothers, play a central (if obvious) role in furthering this expansion.[12] The centrality of motherhood in a text focused on and determined by genealogy and the adherence to patriarchal expectations are not surprising, yet within this structure, the text opens up avenues for its female characters to subvert and explore beyond the boundaries of strictly defined gender roles.

Female protagonists in *Herzog Herpin* fulfil gender expectations, abiding by the role dictated by their status as noble women, mirror-

11. Her focus on what she terms "die Statik und die Dynamik des Narrativs", too, recall the network's structuring power as a form that can be contained or uncontained, fixed or in movement (see Levine 117–18).

12. Admittedly, my use of the metaphor of birth to highlight the central role played by women is a gender essentialist endeavour, which must be strictly contextualised and understood here through the lens of gender as it is represented in the epic and insofar as it mirrors gender expectations within the patriarchal system of late medieval aristocracy.

ing the historical conditions of the world in which Elisabeth herself was born. Tomas Tomasek, for example, considering the representation of ruling women in the texts associated with Elisabeth, points out that all exemplary ruling women in the four texts bring first-born sons to the world, following the example of the countess herself and fulfilling what was a central expectation of women rulers in medieval society (362). They also tend to show a stronger bond with their sons than their husbands do, as a result both of motherly love and of a sense of responsibility for safeguarding the dynastic line, thus contributing to the preservation of the social order desired by God (Tomasek 362–63). Within this concern for the futures of their son and family, however, women can subvert expectations of gender and more. Alheyt offers a particularly convincing example of this dynamic, as she disguises herself as a kitchen boy to survive in Toledo, playing with socially defined boundaries of gender, class and religion.

Following her separation from Herpin and Lewe in the forest, Alheyt steals the clothes of one of the kidnappers who had taken her and, dressed as a man, seeks merchants or pilgrims that might take her to Jerusalem, where she suspects her husband is headed. En route to Jerusalem, a terrible wind causes most of the boats of her companions to sink, except hers. They lose their route and she ends up on the shores of *Hyspanien*, whence she travels to Toledo alone. Alheyt finds refuge in the city and spends eighteen years hiding as a kitchen boy named Besem, gaining the affection of the courtiers: "die fromme frouwe war noch in leben zu Tollet in der stadt, […] in des konniges hoffe sy wol achczehen iar was. […] Die edel frouwe hieß sich nennen Balier, das ist Besem, von Daragone. Sy ging als eyn iunger knecht, yr antlitz was schone." (*Herzog Herpin* 80, "The valiant woman was still alive in the city of Toledo […] she was at the king's court for a good eighteen years. […] The noble woman made them call her Belier, that is Besem, of Tarragona. She went as a young servant boy; her face was beautiful"). Although Alheyt is accepted as a heathen man in Toledo, her disguise always remains clearly marked out to the audience, since the narrator continues to employ female pronouns to refer to her. If the audience is privy to her true identity, everyone in Toledo accepts her as a male body and she fully commits to her disguise. Alheyt modifies her true story, and attributes the actions of her husband to herself (Herpin was banned from France for stabbing a man who had insulted him), taking on a masculine and Muslim role to keep her cover. When Florij, the king's daughter, asks her about her homeland, she replies: "So mir unnser got Appollo, ich erstach

einen mann, der namhaftig was, der schalt mich eins hornsuns leck-
er" (*Herzog Herpin* 80, "On our god Apollo, I stabbed a man, who
was famous, he berated me as a whoreson scoundrel"). She swears
on Apollo – a god often attributed in medieval Christian representa-
tions of Islam as a polytheistic belief system – and assumes all out-
ward signs of belonging to that religion. The character of Alheyt can
be inscribed in a larger tradition of describing women as agents of
transgression and highlights the malleability and mobility necessary
to women's survival in *Herpin*. As Ingrid Bennewitz has argued,
women in late medieval prose novels still function within established
gender roles, but they also offer an alternative, suggesting other roles
for women are imaginable, or at least "literarisierbar" ("Melusines
Schwestern" 299, "literarise-able"). Alheyt is a particularly clear ex-
ample of this alternative in *Herzog Herpin*.

During Alheyt's stay in the city, the king Marciles comes to at-
tack Toledo with the help of the giant Luciant. In the night, a voice
sent by God comes to the duchess in a dream, to ask her to take up
arms at daybreak and go to the gates of the city to fight the giant, as
Alheyt is the one meant to kill him. Before asking her to do this for
the love of God, however, the voice gives her news of her family:

> Ich sage dir vor ane, das din hußwirt lebet vnd ist gesunt vnd
> das du den schonesten son hast, der do lebet, er ist gesunt,
> küne vnd starck vnd hat viel ere vnd güde synne. Du mast
> yne wöl sehen, ee du von der werlede scheides vnd solt ouch
> dinen hußwirt wieder gewynnen. (*Herzog Herpin* 86)

> (First, let me tell you that you husband lives and he is in good
> health and that you have the most beautiful son, who is alive,
> he is in good health, bold and strong and honourable and
> sensible. You will see him before you leave this world and you
> will also win your husband again.)

Without ignoring Alheyt's religious motivation too, the envoy's pref-
acing of his request with the reassurance that her family nucleus is
safe and whole showcases both Alheyt's matrimonial and motherly
love as well as her sense of responsibility for the preservation of the
family line. Armed with the hope of a future family reunion, Alheyt
complies and defeats the giant.

Throughout the episode, the text emphasises Alheyt's lack of
proper equipment as the duchess arms herself with tools she finds in
the kitchen. The giant himself, when Alheyt first approaches him de-

manding a fight, retorts that he cannot bring himself to fight with such a poorly fitted opponent, going as far as telling her that he would rather lose a cart of gold than kill her, concluding condescendingly: "Ich mein, du hast ein kessel auf deynem haupt gesturtzet" (*Herzog Herpin* 93, "I think you put a pot upside down on your head"). The giant's mockery emphasises that the duchess, while overturning gender roles to the external audience of the text, is simultaneously playing with boundaries of social class to the internal audience of Toledo. Her fight with the giant, therefore, reverses two types of expectations: on the external level, to the people of Toledo, the reversal occurs on the level of class, as a kitchen boy takes on a responsibility that would be expected of a knight or a member of the male nobility, while on the internal level for the audience of the text, the reversal occurs on the level of gender.

Tomasek considers these two instances in which Alheyt/Besem overturns expectations as an instance in which the text makes the ruling power of one of its female protagonists clear:

> Ohne die Tätigkeitsfelder des männlichen Adels anzutasten, wird an dieser Stelle die Aussage gemacht, dass auch einer Herzogin die Aufgabe und die Legitimation einer Kämpferin gegen die Heiden und das Unrecht – zweifellos herrscherliche Aufgaben – zuteil werden können. (Tomasek 364)

> (Without infringing on the field of activity of the male nobility, a statement is made at this point, that a duchess can also be given the duty and the legitimacy to fight against heathendom and injustice – undoubtedly tasks belonging to a ruler.)

In this instance, Alheyt displays mobility as she crosses the boundaries of gender roles and secures political legitimacy, following Tomasek. Yet, Alheyt crosses the boundaries of social class, too, as she leaves the court of the king to save her marriage to Herpin. Following the fight with the giant, the King of Toledo's daughter, Florij, falls in love with Besem, demands that he marries her and, despite Alheyt/Besem's several attempts to find excuses to escape the union, Florij insists to such an extent that the duchess reveals herself to be a woman.[13] In turn, the King of Toledo himself falls in love with Alheyt, who, as a last attempt to save her union with Herpin, leaves court and lives as a beggar on the streets of Toledo until Herpin finally arrives in the city and the original family nucleus can begin to

13. The unsuccessful attempts of Florij to marry Alheyt, then Herpin, then Lewe are another example of the particular agency given to women in the text, as von Bloh remarks with the example of marriages: "Voraussetzung für eine Ehe ist die Zustimmung – die sich zugleich unabdingbar auch mit dem herrschaftspolitischen Erfordernissen harmonisieren lassen muß" (195) ("A marriage requires consent – which must also imperatively be able to align with the demands of ruling politics").

be reunited: "Dye edele hertzogyn zereyß ir cleyder vnd sye smyrte sich von myste vnd herger, vff das man sij nit enkente vnd lag alda in dem myste" (*Herzog Herpin* 137, "The noble duchess tore her clothes and smudged dung and dirt on herself, so that no one would recognise her and she lay there in the dirt"). While a reversal of gender expectations led to securing political legitimacy, a departure from social class leads to preserving genealogical integrity.

In fact, Alheyt is also key to the very survival of her husband. Twice, she saves his life: once before Charlemagne, begging him not to kill Herpin at the very beginning of the epic, when the king is tricked into believing Herpin is a traitor and Alheyt pleads with him to spare her husband, and a second time in Toledo, through the intercession of Florij, who convinces her father not to kill the Christian prisoners sent by the King of Cyprus in memory of Alheyt:

> Lassen den crysten wol wartten, von yne wirt in strijden wol gedient. Gedenckent ir nit der crysten frouwen, die in vnser küchen viertzehen iar was, die den riesen erslüg vnd den ritter kempt? Das was ye eyn frouw!" (*Herzog Herpin* 157)

> (Leave the Christians alone, they will serve you well in battle. Do you not remember the Christian woman who was in our kitchen for fourteen years, who slayed the giant and fought the knight? That was quite a woman!)

Throughout the first part of the text, Alheyt plays a key role as a character who determines the direction of the pathways taken by other members of the initial trio before they can finally reunite, one who acts to secure both her own political legitimacy and the integrity of her genealogical line. In network terminology, Alheyt becomes a nodal point in the narrative.

In order to reach the city where they finally reunite, Alheyt, Herpin and Lewe follow similar directions, but each of them establishes further connections and the itinerary expands each time a character undertakes the journey. Alheyt is the first to arrive in Toledo, after the boat that was carrying her to Jerusalem loses its route during a storm. Herpin then follows, believing he is on pilgrimage, though he is then sold into slavery to a Cypriot merchant by Gadifer of Savoy, leading him first to Rome, Brindisi and then Cyprus before reaching Toledo. Lewe, finally, reaches *Hyspanien* after having travelled through Constantinople and the Holy Land and Cyprus, where he learns from a beggar who has just travelled through the Peninsula

that his father might be in Toledo. Different places and characters appear throughout the text as direct or indirect paths between family members. The reunion between Lewe and his parents can only happen through Lewe connecting with characters who had previously connected with Herpin. And yet, it is not Herpin that is first mentioned by the beggar when telling the story of Lewe's parents, but Alheyt:

> In der stait was ein sengerynne, die was arme, vnd sprach, sye were von Franckrich. [...] Nü lagen ouch cristen lude in des konnigs gefenkckniß, die ließ der konnig hervß, das sij wyeder die heiden strieden. Vnder den cristen was ein herre, man saget, er were verbannet vsser Franckrich. [...] Die sengerynne [...], die sange ein soliche liet, das der crysten man [...] sprach, sij were sin elich wib. (*Herzog Herpin* 516–17)

> (In the city, there was a singer, she was poor, and said she was from France. […] Now there were also Christian people in the king's prison, the king let them out, so that they could fight against the heathens. Amongst the Christians was a lord, people say he had been exiled from France. […] The singer […] sang such a song that the Christian man said that she was his lawful wife).

The intermediary characters function as links that enable the (re)construction of the initial aristocratic family network, but this network evolves around and towards Alheyt. No matter how far the characters' travels take them, they are reconnected to Alheyt and it is only once Herpin and Lewe have reached Alheyt in Toledo that the three initial nodal characters are reconnected and the family network fixed for a few moments – before Lewe departs and a new cycle begins. After Lewe's departure from Toledo, Herpin is ambushed and killed. Alheyt, inconsolable, dies of grief four days later. The first family cycle closes with the death of its centre point Alheyt, and the following adventures see Lewe now attempting to rejoin his wife Florentyne, who had to flee their home of Montluisan after giving birth by herself, like her mother-in-law, to the twins Wilhelm and Oleybaum (initially named Herpin). Oleybaum is kidnapped, however, and left under an olive tree to be found by the shepherd Elij, mirroring the story of his father's birth in the woods and triggering a new cycle of family separation which will end with their reunion in Palermo.

While I have focused here primarily on a small part of the network – Alheyt, Herpin, Lewe – this does not imply that other family members are disconnected from these three, or that the family network is composed only of nuclei of blood relatives. Herz defines the existence of other familial models in the text (e.g. the recurrent motif of the foster parents) as a "Kontrastfolie" ("counter-foil") to the nuclear family pattern which, although always remembered and present in the imaginary of the characters can only be grasped in a few short moments (Herz, *Schwieriges Glück* 7). The family network expands as it incorporates elements who are not necessarily genealogically related to Alheyt and Herpin, but who help ensure the safety of their descendants and propel the narrative forward.

In *Herzog Herpin*, the family acquires a structuring function precisely because it takes the shape of an ever-expanding network: the narrative pattern at play here is the family conceived of as a network, in which family members are connected by other characters and by places but which spreads further and further as a result of these connections. In a very similar way to *Bleak House* which occupies Levine's analysis, *Herzog Herpin* "exposes not so much the splitting apart of families by networks but families as networks, in which the nodes are not always already fused together, but rather connected by paths that can be interrupted and stretched by other forms" (Levine 128). The patterns of connection between characters are shaped and conditioned by their travels around the Mediterranean space, itself a narrative network superimposed on a historically complex web of trading and cultural routes.[14] With each generational cycle, the family network expands as a result of marriages and births as mentioned above. Yet, as the family expands genealogically (and therefore temporally), it also spreads out spatially, because the movement of its members is conditioned by the Mediterranean basin as another of the many networks interacting in the narrative. The Mediterranean space provokes separations and enables reunions and, as such, conditions the patterns of connections that exist between the members of the family: *Herzog Herpin* repeatedly separates and reunites its characters as the paths connecting them are interrupted and stretched and the narrative allows its audience to glimpse the connective pathways, even when these are not visible to the characters themselves. The family network is interrupted and stretched because it collides with a Mediterranean network defined by movement and exchange, by temporary encounters with merchants and pilgrims and by the sea itself, functioning at once as a barrier and a bridge between family members, forcing separations and enabling reunions.

14. Recent trends in Mediterranean studies highlight the complexity and connectedness of the Mediterranean space, defined not only by the sea but also extending inland. See for example Horden and Purcell 10–15; Akbari and Mallette 3–22 or Catlos and Kinoshita.

15. The medieval Mediterranean has often been defined as a network by scholars in Mediterranean studies. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell for example consider the basin as a space of connectivity, defined by "the various ways in which microregions cohere, both internally and also one with another – in aggregates that may range in size from small clusters to something approaching the entire Mediterranean" (123). See also Coulon and Valérian.

The Mediterranean space forms another narrative network, which includes and shapes other patterns of connection between characters, and this textual network is superimposed on a historically complex web of trading and cultural routes.[15] The narrative makes use of the Mediterranean space's potential for intercultural exchange and the text acknowledges the religious and mercantile networks operating in the Mediterranean, as the characters seek to take advantage of the mobility these offer. Alheyt is the first to actively seek a boat to go to Jerusalem and heads towards the sea: "Do vand sie kauf lewt auß fremden landen vnnd manchen pilgram, die wolten uber das gesaltzen mere, in die erlichen stat, Iherusalem ist sie gnant." (*Herzog Herpin* 40, "There she found merchants from foreign lands and a few pilgrims, who wanted to [to sail] across the salted sea, to the noble city called Jerusalem"). The scene later finds echoes in Herpin's arrival in the port of Brindisi, where the narrator emphasises the potential for exchange of Mediterranean ports:

> Da fant er vil kaufflüde von fremden landen. Der eyner was von Danmarcke, der ander von Collen, der drytte von dem lande Salomon, der vierde von Cipern. Iuden, cristen, heyden drieben yren kauffman schatz vnder eynander. (*Herzog Herpin* 152)

> (There he found many merchants from foreign lands. The one was from Denmark, the other from Cologne, the third from the land of Solomon, the fourth from Cyprus. Jews, Christian, heathens were engaged in trade with one another.)

Herpin, who believed he was en route to the church of Saint Nicolas in Bari, will be involuntarily imbricated in the Mediterranean mercantile network as Gadifer of Savoy sells him as a slave to a Cypriot merchant (*Herzog Herpin* 152–53). This episode shapes the unfolding of the narrative as the Mediterranean node of Cyprus becomes an important pathway for the family network: by going through Cyprus, Herpin will then be sent to Toledo and Lewe only hears of his parents' reunion and travels to the city when he transits through Cyprus. The Mediterranean, in provoking separations and enabling reunions, conditions the patterns of connection that exist between the members of the family.

The North-South axis that might be expected of the attempts of Herpin's male descendents to reclaim their legacy in Bourges is played out in large parts on an East-West plane because of the move-

ment of women around the Mediterranean basin. Lewe, Wilhelm and Oleybaum do travel to Bourges and fight for the city, but the majority of the narrative takes place in and around the Mediterranean basin, ranging from the Holy Land to Iberia via Cyprus and Sicily, as they separate and reunite with their wives – all daughters, nieces or related to Mediterranean nobility. The Mediterranean network of the text is organised around specific nodal points, islands and cities through or to which members of each generation travel.

Three locales come to fore as having a particular impact on the family network and its narrative development: Toledo (the place of initial reunion), Sicily, especially insofar as it contains the cities of Montluisan and Palermo (the places of the second nuclear family's encounter and reunion) and Cyprus (as the place through which characters transit before being reunited). The narrative structure here appears to mirror the network structure of the Mediterranean space as defined by Damien Coulon and Dominique Valérian, who insist on cities and islands as two privileged observation points. Islands, they argue, organise maritime flows and constitute turning plates through which different networks can be put into touch (15). Islands fulfil a transitory role, where characters pass on their way to another destination, often defeating an enemy or converting a local king, but without intention of establishing themselves there. Travels through islands help characters gain recognition or connect to other characters, but islands are never a goal themselves. Cyprus, the island *par excellence* in *Herpin*, reconnects several of the family members but other islands play symbolic transitory roles. For example, Lewe, on the search for his parents, travels through Rhodes, where he helps Margelly, the king's daughter, defeat the giant who had previously killed her father and was hoping to marry her. The giant is killed and the woman asks to be baptised and a connection to the family nucleus is established as she takes on the name Alheyt. Finally, Lewe's companion Gerna and Margelly/Alheyt marry, and they leave Rhodes, never to return.

Cities, however, "jouent […] un rôle polarisant en tant que centres de décisions, mais sont aussi des noeuds de réseaux et des points de concentration des hommes, des marchandises, des informations, etc." (Coulon and Valérian 15, "play a polarising role as decision centres, but are also network nodes and points of concentration of men, merchandise, information, etc"). In *Herpin* too, cities function as points of concentration, where important decisions for the narrative are made (e.g. Lewe's decision to leave Montluisan after his marriage

to Florentyne, which will force her to leave for Palermo); cities are places in which long-lost characters reunite and where information gathered by different family members can be shared, often triggering a new storyline. Key cities mirror the genealogical focus of the text and its reliance on motherhood, as places of family reunions are dictated by the movement of women: Toledo, associated with Alheyt, becomes the (conscious or unconscious) end goal of both Herpin and Lewe precisely because the duchess is there. In Lewe's nuclear family, Florentyne connects Lewe to Sicily, specifically Montluisan which becomes Lewe's seat and then Palermo.

Palermo appears as an echo to Toledo in the second part of the narrative, since Lewe, Florentyne and their sons Wilhelm and Oleybaum reunite there. Cities can also be contested nodes because of the presence of a woman: the Duke of Calabria storms Montluisan, then Bonifant, and then Palermo in the hope of abducting Florentyne. She decides to leave Montluisan with Badewin of Monclin for her safety and the safety of her son Wilhelm. While discussing the attack on Montluisan, Florentyne picks Palermo as her new refuge:

> Also clafften sye also lange vff dem mere, byt das Florentyne eyn statt ersach. Da fragete Florentyne den schyeff man vnd sprach: 'Lieber frunt, was stadt ist das?' 'Ich sehen, lliebe ffrouwe, es ist eyn ryche statt, aber es wonen heyden dar inne, doch sint ouch viel heymlicher crysten dar inne.' 'Wie heysset die stadt?' sprach Florentyne. Er sprach: 'Sye heysset Affelern.' 'Vff myn trüwe', sprach Florentyne, 'ich wil dar faren, dann ich wyl ye so verre wandeln, das der hertzog noch mir nit künne erfaren. Ich weiß wol, wyste er mich hye zu finden, er wurde mich balde süchen.' (*Herzog Herpin* 445–46)

> (So they chatted a long time at sea, until Florentyne discerned a city. Then Florentyne asked the boatman and said: "Dear friend, which city is that?" "Dear lady, I see a rich city, but heathens live there, and yet many clandestine Christians are also there." "What is the city called?" said Florentyne. He said: "It is called Palermo:" "On my honour", said Florentyne, "I want to go there, because I want to travel so far that the duke will not hear of me. I know well, that if he knew where to find me, he would quickly look for me").

The connection sought by the wrong character (the Duke of Calabria) cannot be realised as it would jeopardise the genealogical

network that structure the narrative. In a domino effect, the presence of the Duke in Montluisan forces the absence of Florentyne, while the presence of Florentyne in Palermo turns the city into a node, creating a new pathway and redirecting family members who wish to reunite with her. The node of Palermo, and the pathways that lead to it, is once again determined by the movement of a woman attempting to preserve her family's network. Coulon and Valérian's historical analysis finds echoes on a narrative level in Rabea Kohnen's discussion of the construction of geographical cycles as a technique of accumulation and superimposition in the text and what she terms "Handlungsknotenpunkte" (179, "plot nodes"). Following Kohnen, recurrent places in the text, each containing a specific set of interactions, become narrative pockets, in which sub-storylines develop, often conflicts which are related to a specific place and can only be resolved through the presence of specific characters in this place (179). The network structure which shapes both the depiction of the Mediterranean space and the family forms a constellation not only of geographical places but of specific narrative moments associated with these places.

A product of linguistic exchange, *Herzog Herpin* integrates into its narrative a range of intertextual references stemming from motifs and traditions that can be traced back in a range of European vernaculars. Notably, the text ties itself to the Arthurian and Carolingian traditions. The superimposition of Christian heroic motifs and otherworldly Arthurian themes corresponds to the context of composition of the text. *Herpin*, and the other three epics, are the product of a translation that forms part of a wider movement of *Chanson de geste* reception in the German-language spanning the twelfth to late fifteenth centuries.[16] The French examples which form the basis of the Saarbrücken cycle correspond to what Bernd Bastert terms 'modern' *Chansons* and defines as texts characterised by the crossing of genres and the encounter of Carolingian heroes with the Arthurian otherworld ("Zwischen Artus und Jesus" 456). In his analysis, Bastert focuses on Lewe as a character 'between Arthur and Jesus' – that is, as a character who transgresses in unusual ways between the realm of the religious, transcendental world and the realm of Arthurian myth.

For example, after the initial reunion with his parents, Lewe rides to Bourges, travels up the Rhine and finds himself in the Eyfflinger forest, near Koblenz, where he finds a castle. A dwarf rides out of the castle and strikes him so hard Lewe falls off his horse. Already, the story is highly reminiscent of Erec, the inexperienced knight of King Arthur's court, dishonoured after being struck by a dwarf (and who

16. See Bastert, *Helden als Heilige*, for a detailed typology of German-language *Chansons de geste* adaptations.

has also won his wife's hand in a tourney) and the hero of both French and German-language texts, like Chrétien de Troyes' Érec *et Énide* (c. 1160–70) and Hartmann von Aue's *Erec* (c. 1180–90). Yet Lewe is further included in the Arthurian world of the Erec tradition as the story continues. Appalled by the thought of having been struck down by a dwarf, Lewe climbs back on his horse. Then the giant Abrahon comes out of the same castle and tricks Lewe into entering his magical castle where Morgue resides with other fairies, where the hero delays for six years, believing his stay only lasted four days. Lewe is rescued by the white knight – a character sent by God, inhabited by the soul of a man Lewe had previously saved by paying for him to be buried in a church (*Herzog Herpin* 193). The white knight explains: "'Lieber geselle', […] 'is ist sechs iar vor war. Diese burg ist von solichem wesen, wer hündert iare hie inne ist, den düncket is küme vier wochen syn. Das ist vmb der vberencie freude willen, die hie inn ist, ist mit zeubery also gemacht.'" (*Herzog Herpin* 563, "My dear companion, it has truly been six years. This castle's nature is such that he who is inside for a hundred years, he thinks that he has been for hardly four weeks. This is because of the abundant joy which is inside here, it is thus made with magic"). For Bastert, the text, in making the intervention of a religious character necessary, "verwischt und negiert […] die Trennlinie zwischen zwei einflussreichen großepischen Erzählstoffen des Mittelalters, der *matière de France* (Chanson de geste) und der *matière de Bretagne* (Artusroman)" ("Zwischen Artus und Jesus" 462, "blurs and negates […] the dividing line between two influential epic narrative materials of the Middle Ages, the *matière de France* (chanson de geste) and the *matière de Bretagne* (Arthurian romance)"). While focusing on Lewe brings to the fore the superimposition of traditions in the text, and another example of boundary crossing, considering how exactly these traditions are introduced in the text and in which context points to another example of female influence in the creation of transcultural textual networks relying on the mention of place names, characters or symbolic objects.

Morgue, who was already present at the beginning of the epic, is another prominent character in the episode mentioned by Bastert. While it is the white knight who rescues Lewe, the otherworldly castle of Abrahon is firmly tied to the Arthurian world as the narrator insists on Morgue's identity: "Lewe, der nam vrloup von Morgue, der frouwen, die was konnig Artus süster. Konnig Artus suster, die was sere bedrübet, da sy gesach, das Lewe enweg wolt." (*Herzog Herpin*

564, "Lewe took leave of Morgue, the lady, who was King Arthur's sister. King Arthur's sister was very sad to see that Lewe wanted to be on his way"). Similarly, the Arthurian world is evoked in conjunction with the white knight at a key moment in the narrative. After Florentyne succumbs to a disease, Lewe retreats into the woods of Sicily to live as a hermit, mirroring his father's decision to do so after his initial separation from Alheyt and his then unborn son, thus creating another echo within narrative cycles. However, as Lewe has already retreated, his two sons are captured while attempting to reclaim Bourges. The white knight intervenes once more to tell Lewe his sons need his help. Lewe rides to Bourges and is greeted near the city by a lady: "Yme erscheyne zü der selben zijt ein frouwe, brocht yme phert vnd harnesch vnd sprach zu yme: 'Dis hait uch konnig Artus geschickt […].' Das selbe phert was Malberous gewest, das swert was konnig Artus." (*Herzog Herpin* 788, "At the same moment a lady appeared to him, brought him a horse and armour and said to him: 'King Arthur sent you these.' This very horse was Malberous, the sword was King Arthur's.") Again, while it is Lewe who breaks the division between Arthurian and Christian worlds, the Arthurian realm is invoked by the presence of a woman who acts as a mediator for Arthur. Through a range of hints to the Arthurian tradition fostered by the intervention of female characters, *Herzog Herpin* is tied to a multilingual literary network.

Similarly, Carolingian material is anchored in the text not only through the overall framework of the four epics, but also in key moments, as specific characters and instance are mentioned, triggering a sense of cultural memory in the audience of the epic. The text opens with a scene at the court of Charlemagne and hints at the Roland tradition when the narrator lists the lords present at court. The list begins with good and worthy knights but ends with the mention of "Gannelon vnnd Clarien, ir vetter, die diebe, die dar auff griffen, die ir lebetage nye gut geteten" (*Herzog Herpin* 2, "Gannelon and Clarien, their cousins, the thieves, who reached above their station, who had never done good in their lives").[17] To an audience with any knowledge of the *Chansons de geste* tradition, the two names are likely recognisable: in the Roland tradition, Gannelon is known as the traitor who foments the attack on the rear-guard with the king of Saragossa Marsilie and Clarien is the name of the envoy who Paligan sends to Marsilie to offer his help to the Iberian troops.

Another important reference is made to the Roland tradition later on in the epic, as Alheyt in hiding in Toledo and the city is attacked

17. My translation is based on the reading of "die dar auff griffen" suggested in Bastert's edition: "die über ihren Stand hinausgriffen (sich selbst überschätzen)" (*Herzog Herpin* 2, "who reach above their station (who overestimate themselves)"). This strange phrasing, however, could be the result of a translation issue, like the mention of Ramczebaux discussed below. See Herz, "Frau. Macht. Text.", 89–90 for more details.

– leading to her fight with the giant. The narrator explains that the assailant is none other than "eyn heydischen konnig, hieß Marciles, der Ramczebaux und Rolant erdodet, die zwen warent konnig Karl neuen" (*Herzog Herpin* 82, "a heathen king, called Marciles, who killed Ronceval and Roland, the two were the nephews of King Charles"). The reference to Marsilie, especially next to Roland and Roncevaux, is impossible to miss. The personification of the valley of Roncevaux into a nephew of Charlemagne, however, is peculiar, especially considering the context in which Herpin appears. Why did the compiler or translator make this mistake?

Though this reference appears as an intertextual reference to literary historians, Maren Großbröhmer explains, for a contemporary audience it functioned as a connecting link to a system of epic knowledge or to what Bastert terms a *Sagengedächtnis* ("memory of legends").[18] Ideally, the recurrence of pieces of a collective memory, of a *Sagengedächtnis*, functions as a means to secure and reinforce a sense of collective identity. In the case of *Herzog Herpin*, however, the appearance of Ramzcebaux, both as a personification and because of spelling variations, might appear to cut off the German recipients from the French *Sagengedächtnis* evoked here and therefore from the cultural knowledge that would have been quite evident to a French audience (Großbröhmer 84). The reference, then, becomes a *Scheinanalepse* (pseudo-analepsis)[19] for the compiler of the text themselves (if not for modern scholars). The mention of Roland and Ramczebaux, then, provides the text with seeming historicity and a direct link to Charlemagne.

Whether a German audience would have needed access to the French narratives and *Sagengedächtnis* for the reference to Roland to have a similar capacity to reinforce a sense of collective identity and cultural memory is arguable. It is unlikely that the body of knowledge relating to legends of a German audience would have been so different from that of a French audience so as to allow a possible mistake, or an intentional play on the name of Roncevaux, to change the function and meaning of the Roland references in the German adaptation. But the connections between the different names – Marsilie, Roland, Ramczebaux, "die Bausteine des intertextuellen Verweises" (Großbröhmer 85, "the building blocks of the intertextual reference"), – might be made differently in a German-speaking context. In Großbröhmer's words:

18. Bastert defines the *Sagengedächtnis* as "ein selbstverständlicher und leicht abrufbarer Teil des kulturellen Gedächtnisses […], das sich freilich als nur scheinbar solide und damit in irgendeiner Form 'greifbare' Größe erweist, indem es zwar in der Literatur als fester Bezugsrahmen funktionalisiert, gleichzeitig aber durch sie wesentlich bestimmt und immer neu geformt wird" (*Helden als Heilige* 56, "an evident and easily retrievable part of the cultural memory, which turns out to be only seemingly reliable and thereby in some way of a 'tangible' breadth. While it is indeed functionalised in literature as a firm reference framework, it is simultaneously essentially asserted and always newly reformed through it").

19. Großbröhmer also borrows this term from Bastert to refer to a historical or literary event that cannot be reconstructed by literary scholarship but that allows text to give the illusion of a complete narrative world referring to an established and authoritative epic knowledge (*Helden als Heilige*, 49–55).

Der Verweis auf die Verbindung von Marciles und Karl dem Großen schafft neue Formationen im kollektiven Gedächtnis der Rezipienten. Auf diese Weise arbeiten die Scheinanalepsen ebenso wie die "echten" Analepsen performativ mit am kulturellen Wissen und damit auch an der kulturellen Identität der Rezipienten. Dafür genügt die Geste des Verweisens – ob der Verweis heutigen Ansprüchen von historiographischer Korrektheit genügt, ist nebensächlich (Großbröhmer 86).

(The reference to the connection between Marciles and Charlemagne creates new formations in the collective memory of the recipients. In this way, the pseudo-analepses, just like the 'real' analepses, contribute performatively to cultural knowledge and thus also to the cultural identity of the recipients. The gesture of referencing is sufficient for this - whether the reference meets today's demands of historiographical correctness is besides the point).

Following Großbröhmer's argument, shifting the focus from the reference's (in)accuracy to its performative contribution to the intertextual networks present in the text, I argue that the Ramczebaux reference can be best understood by considering the context in which it appears and what possible connections it creates with specific Carolingian motifs beyond the Roland tradition. Ramczebaux appears as the narrator describes Alheyt's stay in Toledo and the reference is directly preceded by her decision to remain in the city: "'Ich enweyß nit, ob es noch lebe, aber als lange gotz wil ist, so wil ich hie zu Töllet bliben.' Also gedachte dye frouwe in yrem hertzen. Vor den heyden arbeit sij sere, aber so sy nieder lag, so sprach sij manig güt gebet vnd clagde vnd schrey in große{r} bedrüpsal" (*Herzog Herpin* 82, "'I do not know if he [Lewe] still lives, but as long as it is God's will, I will stay here in Toledo.' So the woman felt in her heart. In front of the heathens she worked hard, but when she lay down, she said many good prayers and lamented and screamed in great distress.") As such, not only is Alheyt incorporated into pre-existing intertextual networks, but because of her presence in the city, Ramczebaux is mentioned in clear association with Toledo, a city which likely has a place in the cultural memory of *Herzog Herpin*'s audience, since it provides a connection to narratives of Charlemagne's youth, forming yet further pathways with traditions existing in the German language and beyond.

According to a story which circulates in different texts in Latin and European vernaculars and is largely known as the *Mainet* tradition, Charlemagne escaped to Toledo in his youth, disguised under the name Mainet, where he fell in love with a Moorish princess, daughter of the King Galafer. The earliest allusion to the emperor's stay in Toledo appears in the Latin *Pseudo-Turpin*, in which the audience learns that Charlemagne has been received in Toledo by King Galafer in his youth as he was escaping his land and that he knows Arabic as a result of his stay there, although the text does not mention the emperor's love interest (Horrent 41). The story of Charlemagne's youth can also be traced back in texts in French, Italian, German and Castilian, such as the German *Karlmeinet,* a German collection of stories about Charlemagne from the first quarter of the fourteenth century or Der Stricker's *Karl der Große*, a thirteenth-century adaptation of the *Rolandslied*, both texts also appearing as part of the large context of *Chansons de geste* reception in the German language.[20]

In *Karl und Galie*, the title by which the first part of the *Karlmeinet* is known, Toledo is the city in which Charlemagne seeks refuge as he is driven out of his father's kingdom by the traitors Hanfrat and Hoderich who conspire to usurp the throne, and where he meets his Iberian bride Galie. In *Karl der Große*, the story of Charlemagne fleeing to Iberia is told, and it is none other than Marsilie who offers the young emperor refuge (ll. 185–93). This story of Charlemagne's youth, through its disseminations in European vernaculars, forms a path between *Herpin*, Toledo, Carolingian legends and a multilingual body of literature. The link is reinforced by the inclusion of Galie as a character in *Herzog Herpin*: Oleybaum, Lewe's son, marries Gallien, the daughter of King Ansijs, the Iberian king from whom he receives the kingdom of Burgos. By using the name Gallien especially in an Iberian context, the narrative once again forms an intertextual network in which a woman plays a connective role as it recalls Charlemagne's young Spanish bride Galie, albeit in a form closer to the French Gallienne or the Castilian Galiana.

Much as Großbröhmer argues regarding the reference to a connection between Marciles and Charlemagne, the context in which this reference appears, I argue, has the potential to create new formations in the collective memory of its recepients – or to bring back to the fore pre-existing connections existing on an established intertextual network. While considering that the context of the reference could bring up other associations simply via a specific name or place might seem associative, the process of connections I describe corresponds to the

20. For more information on the *Karlmeinet* and on *Karl der Große* in this context, see Bastert, *Helden als Heilige*, 78–86, 121–26 and more generally 11–161 for more details on the transmission and reception context of French epics in German-language Europe.

very nature of memory, especially of cultural memory following Astrid Erll's definition. Beyond broadly qualifying "the interplay of present and past socio-cultural contexts" (Erll 2), the term "accentuates the connection of memory on the one hand and socio-cultural contexts on the other" (Erll 4). Erll distinguishes two levels of memory (the individual and the collective), arguing that "the notions of 'cultural' or 'collective' memory proceed from an operative metaphor. The concept of 'remembering' (a cognitive process which takes place in individual brains) is metaphorically transferred to the level of culture" (Erll 4). The parallel Erll draws between individual and collective processes of remembering is thrown into sharp relief by the influence of the two levels of memory and the role that trained individual memory plays in constituting a collective memory in medieval literature.

In her book on the uses of memory in medieval European cultures, Mary Carruthers describes a tight connection between memory and literature: "*Memoria* […] was a part of *litteratura*: indeed it was what literature, in a fundamental sense, was for" (11). The memorial culture of the Middle Ages, as Carruthers describes it, relies on memory rather than imagination as the creative force driving literary production, and the author, to whom authority is conferred, is not a version of the Romantic genius, but a person who arranges textual elements and produces a new text by exercising their memory. Carruthers continues:

> The Latin word *textus* comes from the verb meaning 'to weave' and it is in the institutionalization of a story through *memoria* that textualizing occurs. Literary works become institutions as they weave a community together by providing it with shared experience and a certain kind of language, the language of stories that can be experienced over and over again through time and as occasion suggests (14).

In that sense, works of literature become repositories of the individual memory of their composer, and by proxy (as Erll previously emphasised) repositories of the socio-cultural contexts that necessarily influence them. Processes of remembering enable processes of rewriting and adapting, which in turn become constitutive of textual communities who share a knowledge of specific motifs and stories. Considering Erll and Carruthers in dialogue with each other, it appears that the filiation of individual and collective cultural memory might operate on a less metaphorical level in medieval literary production: individual, trained memory forms part of the very fabric of

the literature that, I argue, takes the shape of ongoing networking taking place at the intra- and extra-textual level and in which women act as transcultural connective agents. Inevitably, questioning the interaction of the individual and collective levels centres writers, authors, sponsors and more generally people involved in literary production as mediators of cultural memory: in the case of *Herzog Herpin*, it centres Elisabeth.

Levine's network, as a literary form through which to read the social, offers an alternative analysis that embraces the blurriness of cultural transfer in the case of Elisabeth of Nassau-Saarbrücken and *Herzog Herpin* by focusing on connectivity and noticing how the interactions of literary shapes shed light on the social forms that structure women's involvement in premodern literature. By means of conclusion, an episode involving Frolich/Bedrüpnis, that daughter of the King of Cyprus, proves particularly productive in highlighting the interaction of the family with the Mediterranean network within an intertextual motif. The King of Cyprus, recently widowed, searches for a new wife but promised his late wife on her deathbed that he would only remarry someone who looked exactly like her. The only woman whose beauty resembles that of the late queen is none other than Frolich, the king's own daughter. The king resolves to marry Frolich and obtains the blessing of the Pope. Desperate to no longer qualify as her mother's look-a-like, Frolich cuts off her own hand and throws it into the sea, following which her father decides to banish her. Reaching the shore of the Iberian Peninsula, Frolich ("Happy") hides her identity, taking on the name Bedrüpnis ("Sadness") and pretending she is the daughter of a fisherman from the island of Rhodes. She meets Oleybaum who – having lost his first wife Gallien to an illness – falls in love and marries her. The family network of the king of Cyprus is stretched almost to breaking point, as Frolich flees across the Mediterranean Sea, moving between narrative nodes established by previous characters. Frolich displays an impressive agency in her attempts to save herself, not only as she cuts off her own hand but as she seeks out her husband herself, rather than fulfilling a more usual *Brautwerbung* scheme.[21]

After his marriage to Frolich, Oleybaum departs for Bourges to help his brother Wilhelm to reclaim the city from conspirators. While he is away, Frolich gives birth to their daughter and son and asks Beatrix, Oleybaum's foster mother, to write a letter to him to share the news. Oleybaum is ecstatic and replies that the son should be named Herpin and the daughter Florentyn after his great-grand-

21. See Bennewitz, "Mädchen ohne Hände", 165–66 and Kiening, 251 for discussions of the reversals of patriarchal structure in the Maiden without Hands topos.

father and his mother, emphasising the genealogical focus of the text while centring Frolich as an essential character in the family network. Beatrix, however, hires a scribe and swaps the letters to a false reply, in which Oleybaum supposedly asks for Frolich and the children to be burned. Beatrix's intrigue forces Frolich to flee once again and find refuge in Rome. Oleybaum discovers the stratagem but, with no way of knowing where Frolich went, rides to Palermo with his father and brother to defend the city from another attack. The king of Cyprus himself comes to help them and, as he share stories with Oleybaum, the two men realise Oleybaum's wife Bedrüpnis is none other than the king's daughter Frolich. Both decide to go to Rome together. With the reunion of Oleybaum, Frolich and their children, the final cycle of family separations and reunions closes. Frolich conditions the final reunion destination as she moves around the Mediterranean, escaping first her father, then Beatrix. While her original family network stretches to breaking point as she physically flees to the opposite end of the Mediterranean basin, the reunion of Oleybaum and the king of Cyprus reforms the family network but can only happen after Frolich has been integrated in a legitimate, non-incestuous family following her marriage with Oleybaum and the birth of her children. Finally, as the family is reunited in Rome, the cook, cutting open a sturgeon while preparing dinner, finds inside a beautiful white hand. Frolich recognises her own hand and brings it to the pope: by a miracle, the hand reattaches on Frolich's arm.

Beyond Frolich's role in the family network and her movements around the Mediterranean, the episode forms part of an intertextual network as it re-enacts the topos often known as 'Maiden without Hands', following a fairytale of the Grimm brothers and the classification of this topos as type 706 in the Aarne-Thompson-Uther index of folktales motifs.[22] The story can be found in many iterations, but the Frolich episode follows almost exactly the structure of Philippe de Rémi's *La Manekine* (c. 1240), a French-language version narrating the attempted incest of the King of Hungary with his daughter Joïe (who changes her identity to La Manekine).[23] The context of transmission of *Herzog Herpin* once again explains this similarity since, according to Kiening, *La Manekine* served as example for the episode as it is told in the *Lion de Bourges* (262). Kiening closes his study of the topos by considering what might have made such a story popular:

> Die Geschichte einer Frau, die gottgelenkt das Spannungsfeld von Genealogie und Herrschaft durchquert und zugleich

22. See Kiening 237–38 for more on the Grimm brothers' tale and the topos in its postmedieval iterations; see Uther for a recent edition of the Aarne-Thompson-Uther index.

23. For a detailed summary of *La Manekine* and its structure, see Kiening 241–42.

> neu begründet, die aus problematischen Kernfamilien flieht
> und diese zugleich rettet, nährte doch eine sehr spezifische
> Hoffnung der adligen Geschlechter des feudalen Mittelalters.
> (268)

> (The story of a woman who, guided by God, bridges the
> tension between genealogy and rulership and at the same
> time re-establishes it, who flees from problematic nuclear
> families and at the same time rescues them, nourishes indeed
> a very specific hope of the noble families of the feudal Middle
> Ages.)

Reading the text as an example of noble families striving for secular power, the continuation of the family line and salvation, Kiening too emphasises the social implications of a literary topos.

The family network spreads through time and space and extends thanks to the movement of female family members. The Mediterranean network, space of connectivity in which specific locales associated with women play key narrative roles, shapes the movement of characters. The intertextual network contributes to the development of a sense of cultural memory for the audience of *Herpin* and Elisabeth's contemporaries. In turn, these three forms, when considered through the lens of Levine's "literary criticism turned upside-down" (122), shed light on a gender-specific involvement in literature by women operating as transcultural agents within the literary and social systems of late medieval aristocracy on the extra- and intra-textual levels, fostering a constitutive connectivity between courts, languages, characters, locales, topoi.

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MUSTAFA BANISTER

Squeezing Juice from the *Fruits of the Caliphs*:

Tastes, Contexts, and Textual Transplantation at a Fifteenth-Century Egyptian Court[1]

Abstract

This article concerns themes of translation, movement, and context in its examination of the intentions behind the composition of Ahmad ibn ʿArabshah's (1389–1450) mid-fifteenth-century opus of animal fables and anecdotal advice literature, the *Fakihat al-khulafaʾ wa mufakahat al-zurafaʾ* (*Fruits of the Caliphs and Witty Banter of the Stylish Folk*). With some alterations, including the introduction of a substantial amount of historical material in its ultimate and penultimate chapters, Ibn ʿArabshah's *Fruits of the Caliphs* is primarily an expanded reworking of an earlier work, the thirteenth-century *Marzban-nama* (*Book of Marzban*) attributed to Saʿd al-Din al-Warawini.[2] Like the *Book of Marzban*, the *Fruits of the Caliphs* is largely a collection of moralistic animal fables and anecdotes of wisdom, bound together within several smaller stories which comprise a larger framework story. The ten chapters of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* share much in common with the *Book of Marzban* although Ibn ʿArabshah completed significant re-writing of the original tales with historical asides, changed names, and observations unique to his own mid-fifteenth-century interpretation of the book. Because the work is primarily an Arabic translation of an earlier Persianate mirror, it proves challenging to analyze as an 'original' work.[3] Nevertheless, Ibn ʿArabshah attempted to modernize the book and in its Arabic form, update it for what we may assume must be a late medieval Cairene courtly audience. In addition to engaging with the curious title of the work and its latent meanings, this article contextualizes and explains the author's creation of the work in relation to his later career trajectory and rising reputation in the fifteenth-century Syro-Egyptian cultural milieu.

Introduction

Scholars of late medieval Arabic literature have characterized the fifteenth century – particularly the so-called 'Mamluk' period of Egypt and Syria (mid-thirteenth to early sixteenth centuries) – as one of a very high degree of intertextuality. Large groups of authors were in

2. While employed as chief of the Ottoman chancery, Ibn ʿArabshah made many translations from Arabic and Persian into Turkish. See Woods. It is possible that Ibn ʿArabshah did not make a direct translation of the Persian *Marzban-nama* popularized by Warawini and instead rendered a late fourteenth-century Turkish translation of the work made by Sadr al-Din Sheykhoghlu into Arabic.

3. Ibn ʿArabshah's motives for translating the book are unclear from the work's introduction. We do not

know whether the idea to translate the work was proposed to him by someone else, or if he volunteered to do so himself. Ibn ʿArabshah, familiar with the work and his own

intellectual milieu, may have realized that the stories would resonate in the scholarly milieu of the fifteenth-century Cairo Sultanate.

4. Bauer 35; Hirschler.

5. On this phenomenon see Mauder, "Being Persian"; Yüksel Muslu; Atçıl.

6. One noteworthy exception in modern Arabic is Muhsin Bin ʿAmir's *al-Hikaya al-mithaliyya fi Marzuban-nama bi-tarjamat Ibn ʿArabshah.*

7. The adoption of terms familiar to scholars of pre-modern European literature such as *Fürstenspiegel* and mirrors for princes, remain somewhat contested in the field of Islamic Studies and have been subject to ongoing debate. See for example: Gutas; Van Gelder, 336; Marlow, "Advice and Advice literature"; Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 169–70; Crone, *God's Rule* 148–64.

8. See Marlow, *Counsel for Kings*; Marlow, "Advice and Advice literature"; Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 169–72.

dialogue with each other, referenced each other's texts, and actively sought to correct, update, and supplement previous works.[4]

The fifteenth-century Islamicate world can equally be described as a time of great movement for texts and one in which scholars had the relative freedom to move from one political sphere of influence to another, introducing new genres, ideas, and textual forms. The Ottoman court in the capital city of Edirne (Adrianople) was enriched by the migration of Iranian and Central Asian scholars in the early fifteenth century, while Cairo with its madrasas and Sufi hostels also proved a fertile intellectual climate with a powerful draw on scholars and litterateurs from the eastern Islamic world.[5]

This article concerns the traveling and transformation of one particular kind of literary form, specifically a textual template in the form of a work of advice literature comprised largely of animal fables as it moved across time, space, and language toward its ultimate transplantation from one cultural context into another, resulting in the construction of an entirely new text remade according to the specific taste, context, and socio-cultural concerns of mid-fifteenth century Cairo. Modern scholars, perhaps wary of the work's difficult Arabic *saj ʿ* prose style have given the *Fruits of the Caliphs* short shrift. Multiple manuscripts have made the text and its history difficult to establish. To date, few attempts have been made toward reaching an understanding of the text in the social context from which it emerged, to compare it closely with the *Book of Marzban*, or to mine it for the valuable commentary it provides on contemporary fifteenth-century Syro-Egyptian society as an updated version of a pre-existing text.[6]

While medieval Arabic and Persian literature lack an indigenous name for the genre or an analogous equivalent for terms such as 'Mirrors for Princes' or 'Fürstenspiegel', the genre was well known throughout the premodern Islamicate world.[7] The work of Louise Marlow suggests that the rich cultural tradition of such works produced in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, were typically written for specific recipients or dedicatees and often reflected an author's precise political circumstances and relationship to the ruler.[8]

It is important to point out here that the pre-modern Islamicate world had no rigid divisions between 'Arabic' and 'Persian' cultural spheres, and that both displayed different stylistic and thematic interests. In many of the lands and courts that Ibn ʿArabshah encountered during the first decades of the fifteenth century, there was a 'Persianate' literary sphere which was politically and culturally Turkic and Turco-Mongolian particularly in Central Asia and Anatolia.

Nevertheless, a great deal of linguistic diversity and cultural overlap existed between the Arabo and Perso-Islamic traditions. Educated elites were functional in both languages, made use of them in court-ly contexts, and even utilized them in the same texts. The production of Persian texts in the Central Islamic lands and, alternately, the pro-duction of Arabic texts in the Eastern Islamic lands remained a dis-cernable feature of the Islamicate world throughout the 'middle pe-riods' (c. 950–1800 C.E.) of Islamic history. Two such texts that call attention to such an overlap and which have received scholarly atten-tion are: the *Sea of Precious Virtues* (*Bahr al-Favaʾid*)[9] and *The Way of the Viziers* (*Minhaj al-Wuzaraʾ*) (Marlow, "The Way of Viziers").

9. Meisami (ed.); Van Gelder.

Ibn ʿArabshah: An Author in Transit

The translator and author concerned here, Ahmad ibn ʿArabshah, was kidnapped as an adolescent when the Central Asian warlord con-queror Tamerlane (Tīmūr, or Temür-e Lang), known to medieval European literature from the later work of Kristopher Marlowe (1564–93), moved west with his armies and sacked the Syrian city of Damascus in 1401. In the aftermath of his conquest and plunder, Ta-merlane took booty and slaves back to his distant capital in Samar-qand (modern Uzbekistan) and among the captives was the young Ibn ʿArabshah who would later pen a scathing biography of his cap-tor (*The Wonders of Destiny in the Calamities Wrought by Tamerlane*)[10] as well as a number of other Arabic literary works of kingly advice and panegyric in the mid-fifteenth century.

10. The work was first edited and trans-lated in Leiden in 1636 by Jacob Golius. For an English translation, see Ahmad ibn ʿArabshah, *Tamerlane: The Life of the Great Amir*, Trans. J. H. Sanders, London: I. B. Tauris, 2018.

Following his abduction by Tamerlane, Ibn ʿArabshah spent the next twenty years (1401–21) in the medieval Persian, Turkish, and Mongol courts[11] of various Muslim rulers until at last he returned home to Syria with his wife and family in 1422.[12] Spending his forma-tive years abroad had exposed him to a vast interregional network of scholars and literati that reached across Muslim west Asia, India, Asia Minor, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as to a wide array of texts from different linguistic and cultural traditions. Reestablish-ing himself in his homeland in his mid-thirties proved challenging, and Ibn ʿArabshah had difficulty finding a new position. He com-muted often to the local regional capital of Cairo in hopes of enter-ing the court of the reigning sultan, elsewhere in the religious infra-structure, or as a scribe in the chancery.

11. For an important problematization and theorization of the concept of 'court' as an analytical category in me-dieval Islamicate contexts, see Mauder, *In the Sultan's Salon* 28–69. See also Van Den Bossche, "Pen, Panegyric", 52–62.

12. For a study of Ibn ʿArabshah's life and works, see McChesney.

Although his florid Arabic biography of Tamerlane – finalized by

1439 and inspired by Persianate styles of courtly history – was widely consumed and copied by his contemporaries, he seems to have been somewhat unable to benefit greatly from the cultural and social capital he accrued from it.[13] Despite an invitation to visit the court of the sultan al-Zahir Jaqmaq (1438–53), for whom he attempted to write a panegyric in 1440, it was not until 1444 that Ibn ʿArabshah completed a new text that would truly cement his fame. That text, the *Fruits of the Caliphs*, would be roughly based on an earlier text, the *Book of Marzban* or *Marzban-nama*.

Beginning in 1421, Ibn ʿArabshah's mobility strategies had involved attaching himself to influential religious scholars in Syria and composing texts, such as his highly literary biography of Tamerlane which was read with great interest down to the present. But it was in his translation work: moving older texts from one language and cultural context into another that he found a calling. It seems fair to suggest that Ibn ʿArabshah, while remembered by contemporaries as a poet, religious scholar, and biographer, was also an important translator and textual broker. During his time as an Ottoman scribe, he had translated religious and literary texts for the Ottoman sultan Mehmed I (r. 1413–21) from Persian into Turkish, and later for the Cairene court of the sultan Jaqmaq from Persian into Arabic. As a cultural agent and cross-pollinator of texts Ibn ʿArabshah provided the impetus for these texts to live new lives in Cairo down to the modern age. The exchange of texts brought him into a dialogue with courtiers, religious scholars, and local people with whom he widened his immediate social network.[14]

The *Book of Marzban*

It is unclear when Ibn ʿArabshah first encountered the text of the *Book of Marzban*, but because he most likely found and translated an existing Turkish translation dated to 1300 into his native Arabic, it is tempting to suggest that he may have come across it during his time of service in Ottoman Edirne. The *Book of Marzban* is best described as a work of advice literature based on a lost tenth-century source text. It survives today in its best-known version in the form of mostly animal fables brought together and then popularized in the Tabari dialect of Persian between 1210–25 by Saʿd-al-Din Warawini (Persian: Saʿd-i Varavini) under the patronage of Abu al-Qasim Rabib al-Din, a vizier in the service of Uzbek ibn Muhammad (607–

13. To better understand the social world of someone like Ibn ʿArabshah, it may be useful to take onboard Pierre Bourdieu's notions of the different kinds of capital that can be accumulated and which represents the structures, exchanges, and practices of an environment like medieval Cairo. Cultural capital can accrue based on educational qualifications or cultural activities such as book production; while social capital is comprised of social connections (such as participation or access to a network) and may appear as appointment to office or the attainment of a title of nobility. Either can be reproduced, transmitted, or even converted into economic capital. We know less about the precise economic capital that may have been made available to Ibn ʿArabshah on the completion of his works whether through direct payments or appointment to office. See Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital" 241–58; Bourdieu, *Distinction* 114.

14. Banister "Professional Mobility;" McChesney.

15. Warawini's version of the text names the Sasanian-descended Marzban ibn Sharwin as the "originator of the book" in an older form of Persian from the Tabaristan region. See Kramers 632–33. However, we must be cautious when attributing fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Arabic or Persian works to lost Sasanian texts. See Marlow's comments on the problem of widespread (mis)attributions to texts of ancient wisdom, Marlow "Advice and advice literature"; Marlow *Counsel for Kings* 1 : 7– 17.

22/1210–25), the Ildegizid ruler of Azerbaijan.[15] As Andrew Peacock points out, much of the medieval literature produced for Saljuq rulers in Anatolia was Persian from the thirteenth century onwards and permeated "by Iranian cultural, political and literary traditions." In this context, there were other re-workings of the earlier (lost) *Book of Marzban* source text such as the one produced by Muhammad b. Ghazi al-Malatyawi shortly after 1197–1201 for the Saljuq sultan Sulaymanshah. The original work was similarly attractive to al-Malatyawi who, like Ibn ʿArabshah two centuries later, found its text "unadorned" and "in need of beatification" (Peacock 276, 278).

In his own time in the first half of the fifteenth century, Ibn ʿArabshah understood this *Book of Marzban* to be a significant work that would be attractive to a wide audience because of its entertaining animal stories with embedded moral lessons and socio-political wisdoms. The work is comprised of ten chapters enclosed in a narrative framing sequence (comparable to the *Arabian Nights*), to which Ibn ʿArabshah added Arabic poems, parables, sayings, and Quranic expressions. It is not unlike the slightly more popular and widely known animal wisdom fables of *Kalila and Dimna*, famous in the Arab world since the eighth century and itself a translation of an earlier Sanskrit text. One of the key appeals of this literary form for courtiers, is that it affords a potentially innocuous and indirect way to offer advice to the king in the guise of edifying and entertaining stories which ideally caused no offense. (It bears pointing out, however, that both Ibn ʿArabshah and the eighth-century translator of the *Kalila and Dimna* stories, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, both spent their final weeks jailed and tortured at the hands of would-be patrons).

Constructing a New Text: From *Book of Marzban* to *Fruits of the Caliphs*

A decade after returning to his birthplace of Syria in 1422, Ibn ʿArabshah composed his biography of Tamerlane in the 1430s which helped establish his local reputation. To draw further attention to the work, he began making frequent trips between Damascus and Cairo. After abandoning his attempt to pen a panegyric for the reigning sultan al-Zahir Jaqmaq, Ibn ʿArabshah next sought to translate the *Book of Marzban* into Arabic and disseminate it among his contacts, but this translation was really only a first move.

Ultimately, he used the work as a textual template to create an

entirely new text of his own which he completed between 1435 and 1448 and renamed the *Fruits of the Caliphs and Witty Banter of the Stylish Folk*, which was partly a translation of the *Book of Marzban* recycling many of its animal fables, and partly a unique work shaped by the context and courtly interests of mid-fifteenth-century Cairo. Ibn ʿArabshah presents his *Fruits of the Caliphs* not as derivative of the *Book of Marzban*, but as a new and authentic stand-alone work. He took the stories and the general organization of the chapters of the original text, and arranged a new text based on what Marlow has identified as the classic ten chapter format. Among the stylistic expectations for medieval Islamic advice literature, were that it should utilize rhyming prose, synonymous word pairings, borrowing from anthologies, and perhaps most characteristically, that the text should be divided into ten chapters based on familiar themes.[16] Ibn ʿArabshah adhered to this stylistic convention of the premodern Islamic world.

16. Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 180–84; Peacock 277.

Notably, the two final chapters increased the amount of Arabic poetry, historical anecdotes about recent political figures including past caliphs and Iranian kings, rhetoric on kingship, justice, and political wisdom. Like the *Book of Marzban*, the outer frame stories concern animals and birds, but the book also tells many stories about humans, and even includes various retellings of stories from the *Arabian Nights* including the story of the slave who lies once a year, and a version of *The Merchant and the Two Sharpers* (Irwin, *Arabian Nights* 86).

Translating works from one language to another was an important mark of courtly society in late medieval Cairo.[17] Writing to advise and benefit rulers and counselors was also an essential way to contribute to political culture in premodern Islamic societies more broadly (Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 169). An author's personal status was equally important, especially in the cases of more eminent writers of advice texts such as the eleventh-century Saljuq vizier Nizam al-Mulk or his contemporary, the scholar al-Ghazali. Ibn ʿArabshah translated the *Book of Marzban* and expanded it into a larger text at a time when he was accruing fame and cultural capital based on the reception of his biography of Tamerlane. He may have felt that drawing attention to the *Book of Marzban* was a surefire way to strengthen his reputation through the introduction and beatification of an obscure text (Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 171–72).

17. Mauder, *In the Sultan's Salon* 568, 575; D'hulster.

Ibn ʿArabshah's relocation and repositioning of this existing text into an entirely new context based first on his translation and then his transformative augmentation, is interesting for a number of reasons. Among his most significant additions are an entirely new intro-

duction (which interestingly mentions neither the original *Book of Marzban* or its author – though it does mention earlier works in the tradition such as *Kalila and Dimna* and another text that included animal fables, the *Sulwan al-Muta ʾ fi ʿudwan al-atba ʾ* (Comfort of Rulers Faced with the Hostility of their Followers), by the Sicilian author Ibn Zafar al-Siqilli (d. 1169 or 1172) which he uses to partially explain the project. The authors of such works believed the subject had a duty to counsel the ruler, along with the mutual benefit of such counselling (Marlow, "Advice and Advice Literature").

We can say with certainty that Ibn ʿArabshah, like many of his elite and educated peers in the 1440s, was interested in obtaining a salaried '*mansab*' position in the religious judiciary, the chancery, or the court of the ruler, al-Zahir Jaqmaq. It was this aim of ingratiating himself with a patron at the court, perhaps one of the viziers of the sultan to whom at least one manuscript is dedicated, that the court and its tastes influenced the author's presentation. A highly entertaining work of animal fables, one largely unknown in the Syro-Egyptian territories of the Cairo Sultanate, was likely a good bet for popularity and a wide readership that would enhance his cultural capital, raising his profile and prestige and hopefully bringing him to the attention of his next patron and source of economic capital.

The *Book of Marzban*, despite references to the Quran, reads as a more secular text, whereas Ibn ʿArabshah seems to have consciously given his *Fruits of the Caliphs* a decidedly Islamic coloring with more Quranic verses, statements by the Prophet Muhammad, and tales of Muslim caliphs and kings.

The ten chapters of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* resemble the structure, form, and content of the *Book of Marzban* with cultural modifications made by Ibn ʿArabshah to cater to the cosmopolitan Cairene society he addressed. Ibn ʿArabshah re-wrote many of al-Warawini's tales with historical asides and a few anecdotes unique to his own mid-fifteenth-century experiences and interpretation of the book. The ninth and tenth chapters of *Fruits of the Caliphs* (concerning the framing story of two partridges and an eagle king), contain a higher degree of historical content and many examples of political wisdom drawn from ancient Iranian and Islamic rulers. The *Fruits of the Caliphs* is far more than a mere 'update' of the *Book of Marzban*, however, as it includes alterations and the introduction of substantial historical data in its ultimate and penultimate chapters, including anecdotes about Tamerlane, Jaqmaq, and a survey of the history and customs of the Mongols.

Tastes of the Court

Although one manuscript of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* was commissioned by a vizier in the Cairo court of the sultan Jaqmaq, it is less clear from the work's introduction for 'whom else' Ibn ʿArabshah may have produced the book, if not the sultan himself. What, if anything, might the commissioning of such a work divulge about the discourses and discussions of the sultan's court? On the surface, its introductory section uncovers very little about the intentions of Ibn ʿArabshah apart from offering a straightforward vehicle to deliver messages about proper rule on the tongues of animals.

The introduction opens, as one might expect, with praise for God's creation of beasts and other living things as a sign (*aya*) of His existence, wisdom, power, and generosity. Moreover, one reads that each animal in its own way praises God and testifies to His existence and divine unity (*tawhid*).[18] Moving to praise for the Prophet, the introduction then lauds Muhammad's influence over the natural world, referring to incidents in which gazelles, camels, stones, clay, trees, tree stumps, and even the moon physically or verbally paid respect to the Prophet's authority or sought his assistance or protection. Indeed, it goes on, God, free from all faults and blemishes, wrote into the atoms of every created thing matters of wonder for people to contemplate, that they might be led toward correct guidance and *tawhid*. According to Ibn ʿArabshah, however:

> when these signs (*ayat*) became numerous and the wisdom of their florescent garden spread out to the lowlands and highlands, and their implicit wonders and lessons began to decrease, and the appearance of their decrees became repetitive for the subjects to hear and see, and for souls to repeat to themselves; hearts became unable to attain [their lessons and meaning] and people failed to benefit from their presence and ceased to regard all of the good fortune they contained. Many of the learned men and wise people repeated their sayings but their words fell on deaf ears and thoughts did not depend on them. A group of wise people then endeavored to use the approach of animals, and among them are those who knew the ways to bring [wisdom] out upon the tongues of beasts. […] They attributed words to these animals so that people would be inclined to listen and desire the character of the animals, because beasts, vermin, and

18. Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Freytag edition) 1; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Najjar edition) 35–36; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Buhayri edition) 21. See also: Leder 51–52.

livestock are unlikely sources of wisdom. Neither etiquette [*adab*], nor cleverness is attributed to them, rather animals have none of these things: knowledge, deeds, burdens, etc., because their nature is wild, harmful, predatory and corrupt. If, however, you attribute to them the best of ethical manners and if you make them interact in ways of virtue, intellect and conformity, even though [such animals] are inclined towards betrayal (which is the opposite of loyalty), […] [human] ears will listen to their reports and hearts will welcome them with feelings of goodly warmth […] Now that all these people have seen that animals can do such things, they feel at peace in their souls and cease to be melancholy and they rejoice, listening in delight to [the animal fables], inclining towards their natures.[19]

We can understand the resulting text of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* as a local take on an existing genre at a time when the author believed the tired religious and social discourses of his time were in need of reinvigoration, circulation, and refreshment. The introduction, by way of explaining the text itself, contains the author's observation that by the mid-fifteenth century, people (in this case courtiers) had grown tired of hearing the same messages and religious texts from the same class of religious scholars utilizing the same phrases, anecdotes, and formulas. He claims the repetition caused a lack of receptivity to the messages and thus required a new form through which they might be re-introduced: the mode of the animal fable.

Ultimately, Ibn ʿArabshah proposes that his readers are more apt to accept moral tales calling for righteous governance and godly piety from the tongues of likeable and clever animals than the stuffy intelligentsia or literati of his day, the so-called 'men of the turban'. The author of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* thus hopes that his audience, while contemplating lessons about justice, ethics, and good government, can recognize that they themselves "are among the people (*i.e.,* the human race) who *do* speak and are honored and noble. The fact that mankind has intellects which the animals do not, will make them increase in their vision or interest."[20] By removing human personalities from the world of mankind and inserting them into the animal kingdom to provide thinly-veiled commentary on political situations, the author wishes to make readers engage with the experience by introducing a more dynamic medium for his discourse. Indeed, "when people read of these abilities among the animals, it will make them wish to [behave in a similar manner]."[21]

19. Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Freytag edition) 2; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Najjar edition) 37–38; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulaf3aʾ* (Buhayri edition) 24–25.

20. Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Freytag edition) 3; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Najjar edition) 39; Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Buhayri edition) 26.

21. Ibid.

In updating the text for its new social reality and cultural context at the mid-fifteenth-century Cairene court, one wonders how confident Ibn ʿArabshah may have been in the ability of his text to initiate discussion, and help facilitate socio-political change or cultural exchange. The literary form he brought to Cairo had survived across cultures and centuries. His update of the *Book of Marzban* was something recognizable and as a work of advice literature it certainly had its place in the author's social and cultural world.[22]

The introduction of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* is very much a discussion of communicative strategies. Through a discussion of how individual animals communicate in unique ways, he moves on to how best an author can communicate with human beings. He writes that a 'wise group of people' realized they could bring wisdom out on the tongues of animals because such stories are better at catching people's attention and delivering memorable bits of wisdom that they will be more likely to retain.

The very fact that this work was commissioned is important and tells us about the tastes and interests of the men at court. One apparent courtly interest the author catered to and which guided part of his own presentation in the final chapter, was an abiding interest in the customary law and habits of the Mongols, who under Genghis Khan had upturned and subjugated much of the Islamic world in the thirteenth century (though notably the Mongols did not make it into Egypt after their defeat in Palestine against the sultans of Cairo). This ongoing interest in the Mongols and their successors continued in the form of Tamerlane as the great Mongol revivalist and who reigned as a towering figure of evil in much of Ibn ʿArabshah's literary output in the 1440s. Fifteenth-century members of the sultan's entourage, particularly in the reign of the previous sultan Barsbay (1422–38), were hungry for information and new perspectives on the Mongols and their customs which simultaneously enthralled and horrified them. The political elite of Cairo, many of whom had been part of a nomadic horse culture very similar to the Mongols, held some admiration for them and it influenced their reading of Islam, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, and past centuries of Islamic history.

Thus in the tenth chapter of his *Fruits of the Caliphs*, Ibn ʿArabshah presents the story of two partridges whose home is threatened and who seek the help of the King of the Birds. In the course of their discussion, the author places a lengthy digression on the Mongols, their history and customary law into the mouth of one of the birds. That Ibn ʿArabshah included such an extensive aside on Mongol cus-

tom suggests that he was likely aware that it was a topic of interest for his elite audience.

His presentation on the Mongols stressed that the Mongol law code or *törä* (also known as the *yasa*) was not compatible with Islamic law (Subtelny 15–18, 24–27). It seems likely that Ibn ʿArabshah's remarks in Sunni Muslim territory would have been more rigid whereas his attitude toward Mongol customary law might have had to be more fluid at courts in Transoxiana or Central Asia where many of the Muslim rulers traced Chinggiskhanid descent and the Mongol heritage was sensitive and mattered more (Bauden). In condemning the legal and social practices of the Mongols and later Tamerlane in texts composed for the Syro-Egyptian rulers he curried favor from, Ibn ʿArabshah might have felt the need to overcompensate and emphatically espouse widely held positions.

In both the text of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* and its introduction, the author fails to make clear who the book is dedicated to. Despite the emphasis on animals in the introduction, the first four framing narratives (spread across the earliest chapters) - in another presentist departure from the *Book of Marzban* - concern a fictional king of the Arabs (who he implies is the reason the book has been written - we might understand this as a symbolic representation of the sultan of Cairo who although of Circassian origins, still ruled over primarily Arabic-speakers in Egypt and Syria), as well as the king of the Persians in chapter 2, and the king of the Turks in chapter 3.

Ibn ʿArabshah had served Arabic, Persian, and Turko-Mongolian courts and was a functional and professional member of each of those linguistic communities. Titles he attributes to the sultan of Cairo in another work describing him as ruler of all Arabs, Persians, and Turks might also provide insight into how he viewed the sultan and transregional politics (Ibn ʿArabshah, *Sirat al-sultan* 166). We might read this as part of a call for the sultan Jaqmaq to come forward and exert his authority over all lands of Islam as a universal sovereign with legitimacy over all three of the major linguistic communities.

The *Fruits of the Caliphs*

To further hypothesize about the intentions of a premodern Arabic literary work, the title of the work and its latent meanings often hold clues for the modern researcher (Hirschler 66–76). The title of the work at hand captured the attention of this researcher for its use of

"caliphs" (*khulafaʾ*) during the mid-fifteenth century. In regard to Ibn ʿArabshah's choice of the more regal Arabic word *fakiha* to convey fruit, as opposed to the more mundane *thamr*, Sylvestre de Sacy has attempted some explanation:

> Quant à la première partie, [*Fakihat al-khulafaʾ*], je pense qu'elle signifie les fruits délicieux, ou, si l'on veut, le dessert, la collation des souverains, c'est-à-dire, livre digne d'être offert aux souverains et d'égayer leurs loisirs. Il ne faut pas croire que [*fakiha*] et son pluriel [*fawakih*] soient, rigoureusement parlant, synonymes de [*thamr*] et [*athmar*] : il y a cette différence que [*thamr*] signifie fruit d'une manière générale, tandis que [*fakiha*] signifie *fruit agréable au goût*, et *qu'on mange avec plaisir*. (De Sacy 603)

While De Sacy's likely observation that "Fruits" refers to choice bits of entertaining and edifying material worthy of being set before a ruler, one wonders about the possible significance in the author's choice of the term 'Caliphs', or *khulafāʾ*. It is indeed curious that Ibn ʿArabshah chose the word "caliphs" (*khulafaʾ*) as opposed to the perhaps more applicable "kings" (*muluk*) or "sultans" (*salatin*) for the title of his text. Indeed, in his panegyric for the sultan Jaqmaq, he recognizes that such sultans and kings (rather than caliphs) are the most appropriate targets of political wisdom. Jaqmaq, renowned for Islamic piety in his lifetime, had been especially fond of the three caliphs who tended to his courtly ceremonial needs. By at least the late ninth century, caliphs were no longer the holders of religious or political authority in the Islamic World. The contemporary Abbasid caliphs of Cairo were essentially ceremonial figures serving at the pleasure of the sultans. Ibn ʿArabshah himself describes the arrangement in his biography of Tamerlane, noting that the caliph was tethered powerlessly to the ruling sultan of his day in Cairo "like a donkey in the mud." (Banister, *Abbasid Caliphate of Cairo* 100).

That the author produced the text during the reign of Jaqmaq, mentioned him in some versions of the text and had earlier attempted to compose a panegyric for the same sultan, may be indicative of a unique observation embedded in the title of *Fruits of the Caliphs*. Jaqmaq was certainly a sultan, though caliphal epithets such as *khalifa* or "commander of the faithful" (*amir al-muʾminin*) were not among his many titles. 'Fruits' for the caliphs, essentially refers to the wise and beneficial stories and maxims of the text, deemed by the author to be fit to set before the highest and holiest office of classical Islam,

the caliph himself. It was perhaps Ibn ʿArabshah's intention that his new work would offer the advice capable of turning the reigning sultan and his companions into just and pious rulers on par with the earliest caliphs of Islam.

Given his proclivities for Sufism, one other option may be the Sufi usage of 'caliph' as the spiritual master of an aspiring adept. In earlier years, Ibn ʿArabshah sat at the feet of eastern masters such as Muhammad Parsa and ʿAlaʾ al-Din al-Bukhari and resided locally in Cairo at Sufi hostels such as the Saʿid al-Suʿadaʾ (Salahiyya) *khanqah* where he was ultimately buried. Understanding the title as 'fruits' of (spiritual) caliphs may also be akin to 'knowledge from the masters.'

Jaqmaq, Kingship, and Authorial Agency

As in the *Book of Marzban*, concepts of righteous kingship and justice are often alluded to throughout the text of *Fruits of the Caliphs.* Among the important qualities for kingship identified by Ibn ʿArabshah in the first chapter are: reason, civility, justice, leadership, intellect, physiognomy, virtue, and preciousness.[23] But it is the final chapter of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* which stands out for the author's elaborations on kingship and justice.

For the edification of the king of the eagles, the tenth chapter includes a discussion of justice, the just leader (*imam*), and exemplary anecdotes of prophets, caliphs, and kings, brought forth by the supplicating partridge.[24] The chapter ends with the eagle king being impressed by the counsel and inviting the partridge into service as an advisor to help administer his state. It is in the context of the final chapter of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* that Ibn ʿArabshah delivers his own lessons on justice for kings on the importance of balance between excessive ease and severity, and how balance is at the heart of all Islamic beliefs and religious practices.

It is noteworthy that Ibn ʿArabshah introduces anecdotes about Tamerlane and Jaqmaq into his *Fruits of the Caliphs* where there had obviously been no such "modern" intrusions into his translation of the original *Book of Marzban*. The stories about Tamerlane relayed by animal narrators, highlight his greed, overconfidence, and excessive anger, while the sole story of Jaqmaq concerns what the author perceives as his reestablishment of order after disruption. Broadly speaking, Ibn ʿArabshah's work intended for Jaqmaq's court sought to promote a favorable image of Jaqmaq and to project the sultan's

23. Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Najjar edition) 60.

24. Ibn ʿ*Arabshah, Fakihat al-khulafaʾ* (Najjar edition) 517–36.

claims to legitimate sovereignty by invoking his military successes, his maintenance of the divine law (*shariʿa*), and his justice.

Due largely to an absence of information in the sources, it is difficult to know much about the last eight years of Ibn ʿArabshah's life between 1442–50. Although he is known to have commuted between Cairo and Damascus (where his family lived), he seems to have lived at a Sufi hostel founded by Saladin in Cairo for much of this period, despite rumors that he also held office as a chief judge in a small Syrian town (Ibn Taghribirdi 15: 549). None of his later biographers claim that Ibn ʿArabshah found a position at the ruler's court in the final years of his life, rather he was arrested by Jaqmaq for insulting one of his courtiers (Al-Sakhawi 1: 111). It is thus somewhat challenging to comment on the agency and influence of Ibn ʿArabshah and his texts during his final years. The introduction of new material, text reuse, and alterations made to the original surviving text of the *Book of Marzban* suggest that *Fruits of the Caliphs* was no mere translation or update.

Ibn ʿArabshah's authorial agency, set in its communicative context of Jaqmaq's court, grew from his overall mission to cast Jaqmaq as an ideal Muslim sovereign, or caliph, who could correct history and stand as the antithesis to the arch-villain and anti-ruler figure of Tamerlane. It is thus that Ibn ʿArabshah mobilizes his insider information on Tamerlane, along with his lengthy discussion on Mongol customary law, to demonstrate his value as an advisor capable of helping to shape the sultan of Cairo into a worthy 'caliph' and to point out the evils of unjust rule through a number of tools at his disposal: verses from the Quran, sayings attributed to Muhammad, maxims attributed to ancient Iranian kings and Muslim caliphs, and animal fables. The end result is an entirely new text, meant to call attention to Ibn ʿArabshah's skillset, past experiences, and abilities to serve as an able advisor to the ruler, like the partridge before the eagle.

Reception History as Evidence

Whereas many similarly composed books were likely deposited into a ruler's book treasury (*kutubkhana*) only to languish forgotten, we can say with certainty that Ibn ʿArabshah's *Fruits of the Caliphs* enjoyed popularity well transcending the date of its original composition. Because the *Fruits of the Caliphs* was heavily copied, it is to be expected that it was popular. Many such books were read publicly in Cairene coffee houses beginning in the fourteenth century. Perhaps

Ibn ʿArabshah envisioned it as a work for popular consumption and thus embellished it with Arabic poetry (in many cases his own) and historical anecdotes about historical figures that listeners would have wanted to hear about. The rich manuscript tradition of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* as material objects whose different lay-outs, scripts, coloring, paratexts (attached by readers or owners), illustrations, sizes, marginal notes, and traces of usage, tell us about the intended and actual audiences of this text.

Additional manuscripts were completed during the last years of the author's life, suggesting that the book circulated among the circle of courtiers associated with Jaqmaq and his successors. We know that one manuscript completed in November 1448 under the supervision of Ibn ʿArabshah himself, now housed at the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, was commissioned by the vizier Abu al-Khayr Muhammad al-Zahiri, likely one of Jaqmaq's appointees.[25]

To confirm the wide attestation of its manuscript tradition, the online "Bibliography of 15th Century Arabic Historiography (BAH)" at Ghent University has identified no fewer than sixty-five unique manuscripts of the *Fruits of the Caliphs*.[26] Numerous copies appear in the collections of the Middle East: Egypt's *Dar al-kutub wa-l-wathaʾiq al-qawmiyya* collection as well as Azhar University Library; the Ottoman collections at Topkapi, Ayasofya, Nuruosmaniye Library, and Süleymaniye Library (the latter housing two manuscripts copied during the author's lifetime); the Library of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (Saudi Arabia), and the *Maktabat al-Haram al-Makki al-Sharif* (Mecca – Saudi Arabia).

As Arnoud Vrolijk likewise claimed of the *Fruits of the Caliphs*, "any important collection of Islamic manuscripts in the Western world possesses at least several copies."[27] Indeed copies of the text exist in the Bibliothèque nationale de France BNF, Leiden University Library, the Austrian National Library and subsequent editions have appeared ever since Georg W. Freytag published his version with a Latin translation as *Fructus imperatorum et iocatio ingeniosorum* (Bonn, 1832–52).[28]

However, two manuscripts at the National Library of Egypt (Dar al-Kutub, MS Adab Taymur 764 and MS Adab ʿArabi 2202) are dated during Ibn ʿArabshah's lifetime. One modern editor of the text, Ayman ʿAbd al-Jabir al-Buhayri, believed Taymur 764 (despite being copied in two different hands) was an autograph because it included the author's own colophon dated to 1436, though Vrolijk, points out that just because a manuscript contains an author's colophon, it is

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25. St. Petersburg, Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, MS 9172. The St. Petersburg manuscript includes Ibn ʿArabshah's writing on folio 272r: "The author has finished reading this text, all is correct – according to the will of God Most High." See: Petrosyan *et al.*, *Pages of Perfection* 192. There seems to be no further information about Abu al-Khayr Muhammad al-Zahiri in the Arabic biographical dictionaries of the era.

26. See the BAH website.

27. Vrolijk, "Review."

28. See also: Brockelmann 2: 29–30, no. 3; Suppl. 2: 25, no 3. In addition to an 1869 edition published by the Dominican fathers of Mosul, Vrolijk has numbered at least twelve Cairo editions of the *Fruits of the Caliphs* dating between 1860 and 1908. More recently Muhammad Rajab al-Najjar's edition of the Fakiha (Kuwait: Dar Suʿad al-Ṣabah, 1997) was joined three years later by that of Ayman ʿAbd al-Jabir al-Buhayri (Cairo: Dar al-Afaq al-ʿArabiyya, 2001).

not always an autograph, as Ibn ʿArabshah's colophon appears in several manuscript copies including Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS Petermann 295, Leiden Or. 135, and a later Cairo edition dating to 1898.[29]

When we look at Ibn ʿArabshah's immediate contacts in this later period of his life, about two years before his death, many were younger scholars – petitioning to be his students in Cairo which was, for him, perhaps a new development. Up until this point, Ibn ʿArabshah had largely been in search of senior scholars to learn from in Central and Western Asia as well as Asia Minor, and now, he was the one sought after (McChesney 232). It may well have been that he was speaking to a hungry new generation of scholar-historians and aspiring courtiers interested in devouring alternative genres and forms of wisdom literature that could in turn be brought into official settings.

Thus Ibn ʿArabshah sought to use this particular literary form of animal fables interspersed with historical anecdotes to negotiate his social position *vis-à-vis* other members of the court and ruling elites. He shared it with his students and younger scholars, some of whom were better placed than he was, in the hope that it would expand his reputation. Indeed, at least two prominent late fifteenth-century Egyptian scholars Ibn Taghribirdi (1411–70) and al-Sakhawi (1427–97) sought out Ibn ʿArabshah to receive diplomas of permission (*ijazas*) from him in order to transmit the *Fruits of the Caliphs* as well as his other texts.

Although it seems Ibn ʿArabshah was unable to capitalize on the renown of his works during his lifetime, the work continued to gain fame after he died. The text was copied fairly extensively into the Ottoman period and seems even to have eclipsed his famous biography of Tamerlane as his signature work. Ibn ʿArabshah's son Taj al-Din ʿAbd al-Wahhab later wrote a biography about him and titled it, *The Life Story of My Father, Author of the 'Fruits of the Caliphs'*. It seems as though it became his most popular and recognizable work in his final years and for centuries after his death and provided his son with social and cultural capital to mobilize on the Cairene literary scene of the later fifteenth century.

Despite the existence of numerous copied manuscripts, the *Fruits of the Caliphs* has received little attention from modern scholarship. The work has been treated by only two articles. The first, Sylvester de Sacy's 1835 French review of Freytag's Bonn edition of the text, provides only a brief introduction and summary of the contents (De Sacy). In 1999 Robert Irwin published a paper focusing on the ninth and tenth chapters of the book and what new information they contained on the history and customs of the Mongols. Irwin's anal-

ysis raises questions of what the work might suggest about interest in Mongol customary law within the context of the fifteenth-century Cairo Sultanate (Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle"). In modern Arabic scholarship, the work has attracted attention in recent years. A 2000–01 Kuwaiti Master's thesis by ʿAbd Allah Ghazali, explored the possibility of linking the book's seventh chapter to slightly earlier political tensions between Tamerlane and the Cairo Sultanate (Ghazali), while a 2009 study by Ahmad ʿAlwani engaged with some of the narrative and rhetorical tools used by Ibn ʿArabshah in the work (ʿAlwani). In a book published in 2012, Samiyah al-Duraydi al-Husni examined Ibn ʿArabshah's depiction of animals in relation to earlier works of Arabic literature (al-Husni).

Conclusion

Different notions and themes of movement or mobility are central to the case study of Ibn ʿArabshah. Over a period of twenty years (1401–21) he spent time moving between at least eight courts scattered across Muslim west Asia. As a translator and textual broker, he also moved texts in and out of languages and into new social contexts - bringing Persian works into Turkish for the Ottoman court and Turkish and Persian works into Arabic for the sultans of Egypt. Like many of his fifteenth-century peers, he had to find his social footing anew and reinvent himself after the upheaval and transformation that affected many Muslim polities and societies across Asia in the wake of plague, the invasions of Tamerlane, and the breakdown of social and political order. He thus actively sought social and professional mobility at the court, the judiciary and/or the chancery of late medieval Syria and Egypt between 1422 and his death in 1450.

Ibn ʿArabshah had a specific vision of kingship and righteous rule that was cultured by his past experiences and spread across three of his texts which he tried to transmit across linguistic and cultural boundaries between 1435 and 1442. His *Fruits of the Caliphs*, the third of the three texts following his biography of Tamerlane and panegyric for sultan Jaqmaq, was essentially the grand finale of his messages on kingly justice.

The introduction to the text contains a strong commentary on the contemporary religious and intellectual scene the author was writing to – bored as they may have been by traditional religious learning while harboring an abiding interest in Mongol customs. Ac-

cording to Ibn ʿArabshah, his enhanced translation of the *Book of Marzban* spoke to a hungry new generation interested in devouring alternative literature and consuming wisdom from non-traditional sources and means. Many younger scholars then sought him out for his lauded style, his firsthand stories of Tamerlane, and his flair for simultaneously edifying and entertaining Arabic prose. If we engage with more recent conceptualizations of the court of the Islamicate ruler as a locus of literary and intellectual performance, we can say that the form of the text produced by the author was one that he thought would be successful in its new cultural context and the way it was written, reorganized, reshaped, and injected with new intertextual references and anecdotes closely reflects its cultural context.

As a work of advice literature, *Fruits of the Caliphs* was meant to entertain courtiers and political elites alike. The work is different in its style and content, though it fits within the broader genre of advice literature and serves its main purpose as a means for an author to manipulate literary forms to negotiate their social position by finding employment and expressing contemporary commentary (Marlow, "The Way of Viziers" 170).

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Valentin and his Wild Brother in European Literature:

How French is a Medieval French Romance?

Abstract

The medieval romance about the two brothers Valentin and Orson (also known as Nameless) crossed various linguistic and cultural borders in the European Middle Ages and beyond. It is said to have originated in a Francophone context, but the French origin, which is believed to be a *chanson de geste*, has not been preserved – the earliest surviving sources are three Middle Dutch fragments. The different versions of the tale are generally divided into two strands: the first covers versions in Middle Dutch, Middle Low German, Middle High German, and Old Swedish, and the second includes versions in French, English, German, Dutch, Italian, Icelandic, and Yiddish. In this article, we give an up-to-date overview of the two strands and raise the question whether *Valentin* should be considered as a primarily French tradition. We argue that *Valentin* cannot be understood only in a monolingual or national context, and that a linear model of transmission does not do justice to the complexity of this tradition. We consider what it means to approach Valentin as a shared European narrative, how each version places itself in this larger tradition, and what insight this approach can give us into the tension as well as fruitful co-existence between local and supralocal. By putting the different versions of the tale in dialogue and paying attention to the places and social networks along which they travelled, the article presents a new way of understanding a literary tradition that once enthralled audiences from Flanders to Silesia, and from Venice to Sweden.[1]

What do you do when you find out you have a twin brother, who was carried off by either a wolf or a bear just after your mother gave birth, and who grew up to become the local wild man everyone at court fears? The tale about the knight Valentin and his wild twin brother Nameless or Orson (his name depends on the version at hand) circulated widely in medieval Europe, and continued to do so long af-

ter the Middle Ages. It is usually considered a 'French romance', though the earliest preserved sources of the tale are in Middle Dutch. Another early version, in Middle Low German, claims a French source, which has been considered proof of a lost French original. It may, however, be problematic to consider the entire textual tradition – here referred to as *Valentin* – as 'French' when the French source is only postulated, and when the references to a French book we find in the Low German text are just as likely a literary trick or an attempt to claim a prestigious source language.

Valentin has an awkward textual history full of lost texts, fragmentary evidence, and other absences and unknowns, which may explain why it has received relatively little scholarly attention. Another reason is that it is usually studied within one national canon or language, whereas this textual tradition is much better understood within a cross-cultural, multilingual framework. None of the surviving *Valentin* texts sit easily within literary histories that emphasize neat separations between literary cultures, operating instead within cross-European networks. Though there have been previous scholarly attempts to look at versions in multiple languages, these were source-based approaches: attempts to reconstruct a lost French original or to determine which of the surviving texts is closest to the hypothetical source.[2] Such approaches are limited, often ignoring the wealth of evidence that can be gleaned from later translations in the endless quest of postulating some sort of mythical Ur-text. They are attempts at fixing a tradition that in reality is by no means static, but gives insight into the dynamic nature of literary exchanges and the movement of people and texts across medieval Europe.

In this article, we will discuss the textual history of the *Valentin* tradition from an international perspective. We aim to do justice to a tradition whose complexity has not been sufficiently acknowledged in scholarship that has often been too eager to fit each text into a neat, linear model of transmission. Some of the key questions of this analysis are whether *Valentin* is really primarily a French tradition, what 'French' actually means in this context, and what it means to consider this a European tradition instead. For a start, a focus on the French origins of the tale ignores the fact that the earliest Dutch texts and the versions from the Low German language regions played a far more important role in its cross-cultural spread. Then, how should we understand the relationship between the first and the second strand of the tradition (presented below), and what can this tell us about when something is a rewriting and when it becomes a new sto-

2. See, for instance, Arthur Dickson's seminal study of 1929, which remains a valuable contribution to the field but was also a product of its time, reflected in Dickson's attempt to find a source for the motifs in the story. Dickson also published an edition of the English translation by Henry Watson in 1937.

ry? What can the surviving texts tell us about the relationship between the local – each individual version – and the supralocal – the idea of this being a European literary tradition? By putting the different versions in dialogue, and paying attention to the places and social networks along which they travelled, we aim to gain a richer understanding of a tradition that once enthralled audiences from Flanders to Silesia, and from Venice to Sweden.

This article ties in with a growing interest in studying medieval European romances as a transnational phenomenon.[3] *Valentin* is a particularly useful case study because it is so widely scattered, with versions travelling along different routes and across an impressive number of languages. This is not a traditional study of translation that focuses on differences in content between each version. Rather, it traces the patterns of transmission and circulation, and how each version places itself within the larger overall tradition. Although we want to shine light on the more complex patterns typically overlooked in traditional source-translation models, ultimately arguing that this is a shared European narrative, in order to understand why this approach is appropriate for a text like *Valentin* we must first go through each version in turn. *Valentin* offers an excellent jumping-off point for examining key issues of medieval textuality, such as instability and *mouvance*, the value of translation, the prestige of certain languages, and assumptions about typical routes of transmission. It is also a fascinating yet understudied textual tradition, and by presenting a comprehensive overview that also includes the lesser-known versions we hope to encourage further research.

The extant versions of *Valentin* are divided into two strands, traditionally linked to different genres. The first strand comprises the lost French source, thought to be a *chanson de geste*, the Dutch fragments, the Middle Low German translation, a Middle High German version, and an Old Swedish translation. This first strand is referred to as *Valentin and Nameless* (hereafter *VN*), since in this version Valentin's brother is abducted and raised by a she-wolf and he is called Nameless – or Sansnom, Nameloes, Namelos or Namnlös. The second strand (hereafter *VO*) starts with the fifteenth-century French prose romance *Valentin et Orson* and includes translations into English, German, Dutch, Italian, and Icelandic. This strand also inspired several plays, ballads, and pageants based on the story of the two brothers. In this strand, Valentin's brother is raised by a she-bear and is named Orson. The narrative of *VO* is much longer than that of the first strand, and it is this version that is considered a romance.

3. Key works in the field include those by Grieve; Tether and McFadyen; Edlich-Muth; Goldwyn and Nilsson; Lodén and Obry. Other recent studies, not focused exclusively on romances but which highlight the value of looking at translated material and taking a cross-cultural approach, include those by Rikhardsdottir; Besamusca, Willaert, and De Bruijn; Bridges. Recent projects like *Charlemagne: A European Icon* (University of Bristol) and *'Bevis' in Multi-Text Manuscripts* (University of Düsseldorf) are further evidence of a growing interest.

The core of the narrative stays the same in both strands: the sister of King Pepin of France marries a foreign king (king of Hungary in *VN*, king of Greece in *VO*) and she is calumniated, after which her twin sons are taken from her. One twin is raised in the forest and the other at Pepin's court, though Pepin does not realise it is his nephew. Valentin eventually conquers the local wild man and takes him to court to try to civilise him, which leads to various entertaining scenes including one where Orson discovers the joys of wine and tries to get his horse to drink some too. Valentin sets out on a quest to find out who his parents are, taking Nameless or Orson with him, and they find out the truth by means of a prophetic serpent (*VN*) or brass head (*VO*). *VN* ends soon after this, with happy marriages and the rule over France and Hungary. *VO* continues with further adventures of travels abroad, battles with Saracens, flirtations with princesses, deceptions through magic, and eventual rule over France, Hungary, Ankara, and Constantinople. One notable difference is that in *VO* Valentin accidentally kills his own father, for which he later does penance and dies a saintly death.

It is curious that most critical attention has gone to the early versions of *VN* and *VO*, and not their translations. After all, it is unlikely that readers from different parts of medieval Europe lost interest in this tale simply because it was a translation and an import. On the contrary, it seems that its status as a foreign text was part of its appeal. As we will see, the French source is often highlighted on the pages of printed translations, which could be seen as a marketing strategy designed to peak the reader's interest. One may wonder whether this is due to the prestige of French itself or rather an international culture transmitted through French, signalling a cosmopolitan and fashionable literature. Despite the tale's popularity on the European literary scene, little is known about its international appeal. This is a first step towards a broader approach, offering a more complete picture of its literary history.[4]

4. All translations into modern English are our own, unless indicated otherwise.

Strand 1: From Flanders to Sweden

As indicated at the start, for the earliest traceable origins of this narrative we should not look at a French-language context. Instead, the oldest surviving *VN* texts are three fragments in Middle Dutch, dated to the fourteenth century. Fragments I and II consist of two leaves, found together in a collection of fragments now in Berlin, Staatsbib-

5. The *VN* fragments are on pages 19–20. The fragments once belonged to August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, who also transcribed them: Haupt and von Fallersleben 204–06. The text of the Dutch fragments is reproduced in Kalff 204–20.

6. Each leaf of fragment III has two columns of fifty lines, but a section has been crudely cut away from the second leaf, so that three lines are missing from column b and two lines from column c. For a codicological description, see the article that first highlighted the discovery of the Ghent fragments: de Vreese 140–62.

7. Only one Charlemagne text from this period, *Karel ende Elegast,* is complete – all others survive in fragments. *Sibilla* is also complete, but this is a prose romance dating to the sixteenth century that is found only in print. Note that the Berlin manuscript containing *Valentijn* fragments I and II also includes fragments of *Renout* and *Gheraert van Viane* (*Girart de Vienne*). For an overview of the Dutch Charlemagne tradition, see Besamusca, "Medieval Dutch Charlemagne Romances" 167–93; also see the discussion of the Dutch and German Charlemagne tradition in Classen.

8. *Loyhier en Malaert* is another example.

9. *Ogier, Madelgijs,* and *Renout* were translated into Rhine Franconian (von Bloh 265–93).

10. Seelmann bases his hypothesis on a comparison of only a few names found in both versions.

liothek - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, mgf 751,3.[5] Fragment III also consists of two leaves and is held in Ghent, University Library, BHSL. HS.2749/9. They are no longer intact: fragment II in particular is so damaged that the text is illegible in places, and parts were cut off from the second leaf of fragment III, so that five lines of text have disappeared.[6] Nonetheless, we are lucky that more than 700 lines of verse text survive across the three fragments. It is not unusual for chivalric texts in Dutch from this period to survive only in a fragmentary state, and this is especially true for Matter of France material. Works like *Ogier van Denemarken, Madelgijs* (*Maugis d'Aigremont*), *Renout van Montalbaen,* and *Huge van Bordeeus* (*Huon de Bordeaux*) are known only from fragments.[7] In some cases, Dutch fragments provide the oldest surviving evidence of a hypothetical, now-lost French original.[8] Several texts were also translated into German dialects, showing the important – but rarely acknowledged – role the Dutch versions played in the spread and survival of these narratives.[9] As we shall see, this is likely the case for *Valentijn ende Nameloes* too.

The Middle Dutch *VN* fragments contain no prologue or epilogue. Fragment I describes how, while Valentijn and Nameloos's mother Phylla is being held prisoner, a steward tries to kiss her against her will. Phylla punches him in the face, breaking three teeth, but the steward later takes revenge by framing her for murder. Fragment II features Nameloos's wife Rosemund disguising herself as a minstrel to gain entry to court. Fragment III starts with Valentijn and Nameloos battling the Saracen giant Madageer in order to rescue their mother, who by now has been taken prisoner so often that it is starting to become a worrying habit. The three fragments do not appear to be from the same manuscript, and it is not clear whether they represent one redaction or two. Their linguistic features suggest that the fragments are from the southern Low Countries (de Vreese 146–49). Material like this is thought to have been written more for an urban elite than for a courtly context, though concrete evidence of the fragments' readership is lacking.

To better understand the context from which the earliest surviving texts emerged, we must consider the relationship between the Dutch fragments and the second oldest surviving version, the Middle Low German *Valentin und Namelos.* Though Wilhelm Seelmann suggested that the Low German version is a separate translation from the French, most scholars note that the Dutch and Low German versions are clearly related.[10] Recent scholarship has shown that a comparison of the rhyming pairs in each version strongly suggests that

the Low German was made after a Dutch example, and that several words used in the Low German version are more commonly found in Middle Dutch than in Middle Low German texts (Langbroek and Roeleveld, "Valentin" 150–60). A Dutch source seems likely, though the fragments give a more elaborate narrative than that found in the corresponding scenes in the Low German version. An intermediate source, possibly an abbreviated Dutch version, has been postulated, but it is equally possible that the Low German version itself is an abbreviated version. The fragmentary state of the Dutch material makes it difficult to make any definite claims. What is more interesting for our discussion is that the earliest versions give us insight into Dutch-German literary contact. In that sense, the terms 'Middle Dutch' and 'Middle Low German' are misleading. While the terms might suggest a clear separation between languages, in reality they are part of a linguistic continuum.[11] As we shall see, the surviving Low German manuscripts are a testament to the fruitful literary exchanges that took place along this continuum, showing us that *Valentin* is not a narrative bound by conventional borders but, if anything, one that thrived in connection with transcultural economic networks.

The Low German version is extant in two manuscripts. The best-known is Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 102C in scrinio, also called the Hartebok.[12] It is a paper manuscript dated to the end of the fifteenth century.[13] The Hartebok is a compilation of texts in Low German, most likely put together by a group of merchants associated with the Hanseatic league, known as Flanderfahrer (travellers to Flanders). These were merchants who came from northern Germany to trade with Flanders, who had their heyday in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The manuscript contains mostly religious texts, which at first glance makes *Valentin* appear out of place – until we remember that one of its recurring themes is that of Christians conquering Muslims, and the related western Christian expansionist fantasies this conjures up. Eight out of nine texts in this codex were written by the same scribe, though over a period of time; the indulgence prayer at the end is in a different hand.[14]

The texts in the Hartebok are all of mixed Dutch-German origins. For instance, *Van deme holte des hiligen krutzes* is likely based on a Middle Dutch example, and 'Die drei Lebenden' likely originated around the borders with the southern Low Countries. The texts that have an earlier Low German tradition are mostly associated with areas around the Rhine or Westphalia, also an area of Dutch-German contact. Folio 81r features the name of one of the owners of the man-

11. Both terms also cover a range of dialects rather than one unified language. One problem is that the English term 'Middle Low German' is much less precise than the Dutch and German equivalents, Middelnederduits or Mittelniederdeutsch, which more accurately reflect linguistic commonalities.

12. The older signature is germ. 20a. The first editor of the manuscript, N. Staphorst, gave it the name Hartebok. The cover page has a drawing of a heart being crushed by a press, with the words 'Hertz brich', or heart break, in it. Staphorst read this as 'Herz buck', heart book, and turned it into a Low German equivalent Harte Bock.

13. Langbroek and Roeleveld date the manuscript to c. 1471–84: Langbroek and Roeleveld, *Het Hartebok* 27–28. A Latin charter dated to 1476 was pasted into the binding, which has led others to suggest it must be dated after 1476.

14. *Valentin* is on a different type of paper from the rest and it was likely added to the codex at a slightly later stage; Langbroek and Roeleveld, *Het Hartebok* 19.

uscript, 'Johan Coep'. Coep does not seem to have been the manuscript's first owner, though he was one of its earliest. Coep was one of the Flanderfahrer's Äldermänner who ran the office in Bruges, looking after the finances and privileges of the Hanse together with the city's council (Langbroek and Roeleveld, *Het Hartebok* 30–33). He was an Alderman from 1533–42 and the linguistic features of his ownership note betray his northern German background. It is thought that the manuscript remained in the hands of the Flanderfahrer Gesellschaft, as they were the ones who gave it to the library in Hamburg in 1854.

Though we are in all probability looking at a Hanseatic context, it is not clear whether this manuscript was made in northern German regions – the area around Hamburg has been suggested – or was first created in the Low Countries and later travelled north-eastwards (Seelmann xv; Dieperink 157). Most scholars note that Bruges is the most likely candidate (Langbroek and Roeleveld, *Het Hartebok* 31–32). Bruges played an important role in the spread of French and Dutch literature in the Hanseatic regions. The city was a key trading hub but also a literary centre, and its economic links meant it had an important cultural influence on northern German cities. But it had connections with the French and Burgundian courts and with French literary culture too; this was a place where several worlds and cultural spheres met. Works in both French and Dutch were produced in Bruges, but also in Latin and Low German – even the translation work for the first book printed in English (*Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, c. 1474) was begun in Bruges. If the manuscript was indeed produced in Bruges, it is worth remembering that the Dutch fragments are likely from the southern Low Countries too. One cannot help but wonder: if there was indeed a French original *Valentin et Sansnom*, should it be associated more with the Francophone Low Countries than with France? As recent research has shown, 'French' literary culture does not automatically denote 'France', and Flanders and the Burgundian Low Countries played a significant role in the mediation of French literary culture across Europe.[15]

The Hartebok *VN* shows us that translation need not always involve a huge geographical movement. Especially in multilingual settings, a change in language is often more indicative of a change in social milieus or a different cultural orientation, in this case eastwards. However, the other Low German manuscript, though linguistically close, is from a completely different end of the Low German language region. Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Cod. Vu 73 is a pa-

15. This includes research associated with projects on the French of Italy, the French of England, and the French of Outremer, sponsored by the Center for Medieval Studies at Fordham University. See also the publications that came out of the Medieval French Literary Culture Outside France project, which pays particular attention to the role of Flanders (Morato and Schoenaers; Gilbert, Gaunt, and Burgwinkle).

16. Former shelfmark Vitterhet Tysk 29. *Valentin* is found on folios 1r to 33r; several folios of text are missing.

17. Geeraedts 7–25 gives the range as between 1420 and 1480, but most likely the first half of the fifteenth century.

18. For a description, see web.

19. See, for instance, de Bruijn and Kestemont 179; Meier 21. See also the discussion in Geeraedts 23–24.

20. Both Meier and Geeraedts note that this must be the manuscript's first owner, and subsequent scholarship has repeated their findings. For a transcription of the ledger, see Geeraedts 22.

per codex, usually dated to around 1420.[16] Loek Geeraedts's analysis of the manuscript's watermarks, possible ownership marks, and linguistic features shows that it certainly is from the first half of the fifteenth century.[17] The manuscript is another compilation of Low German texts, which opens with *Valentin*, followed by *Der Verlorene Sohn*, *Flos unde Blankeflos*, the Marian play *Theophilus*, three shorter narratives 'Die Buhlschaft auf dem Baume', 'Der Deif van Brugge', and 'Die Frau des Seekaufmanns', and a ledger of a traveller.[18] The texts are surrounded by prologues, epilogues, and other paratexts, which has prompted Elisabeth de Bruijn to suggest that this is a manuscript made specifically for a reading public, as opposed to the Hartebok, where *Valentin* appears in a performative context (de Bruijn 81–101). There are two scribal hands: the first writes *VN*, *Der Verlorene Sohn*, and the first part of *Flos*, then another hand takes over from folio 51v to 52r to finish the rest of the romance and copy the texts that follow. Two other texts in this codex, 'Der Deif' and *Flos unde Blankeflos*, are, like *VN*, based on Middle Dutch versions.

Although little has been written about the Stockholm manuscript in connection to *Valentin*, critics working on the Low German *Flos* and 'Der Deif' have noted that the manuscript is from central Pomerania, probably Stettin/Szczecin.[19] Stettin is another Hanseatic city, a seaport close to the Baltic sea, which is now in eastern Poland. This was also a multicultural hub, with Slavic roots but also a sizeable German population, which played an important role in connecting the Hanse cities to its west with key trading cities to its east, as well as with trade routes along the rivers Oder and Warta. It also provided commercial access to Denmark and Sweden. A key factor in the manuscript's association with Pomerania is the route recorded in the traveller's ledger found on the final page. The traveller is thought to have been the manuscript's first owner, and the record of expenses describes a route through Pomerania.[20] The traveller went from Ziegenort, now Trzebież, westward along the Baltic coast to Greifswald, yet another Hanseatic city, along the way passing through more Hanse cities like Anklam. Although we do not know who first owned this manuscript, it is tempting to think of another merchant context here.

It is interesting to consider the Stockholm manuscript in relation to the Middle High German and Swedish versions, which are both based on a Middle Low German version, as it is much closer to these geographically than the manuscripts discussed so far. Here is evidence that our story was spreading north-eastwards. Moreover, it looks like the manuscript itself soon travelled to Sweden. The binding fea-

21. The other side of the binding has several initials on it, including an A and B together, which Geeraedts says confirms that the manuscript belonged to Arend Bengtsson. For a discussion of the ownership marks, see Geeraedts 9–10; reproductions are in the book's appendix.

22. The fragment is found in the Gram collection but has no shelf-mark.

23. Wrocław/Breslau, Stadtbiblio-thek, Cod. R 304. *Valentin* is on folios 13r–38v. See also web.

24. For a copy of the notes, see the description of the Breslau manu-script in the Handschriftenarchiv of the Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: web. The text is included in Seelmann's and Klemming's editions.

tures a coat of arms belonging to the Swedish knight Arend Bengtsson (Ulv) (c. 1420 – c. 1475), who is thought to be the second or third own-er.[21] Next to this coat of arms is an image of a horn, which matches the horn that appears in the coat of arms of Arend's second wife Hebla Albrektsdotter (Bydelsbak). Both Arend and Hebla were from well-connected noble families; Hebla's father was involved in the trea-ty between Erik of Pomerania and the Polish-Lithuanian king Władysław II Jagiełło, and in the treaty of Copenhagen which ended the Dutch-Hanseatic war, breaking the Hanse monopoly on Baltic trade routes. The manuscript was likely owned by this family during the time of Arend's second marriage, though it is possible that Arend already owned it and simply had the manuscript rebound when he re-married. The Stockholm manuscript shows us that *Valentin* moved to Pomerania and easily travelled further to Sweden from there.

If we go by the dates of the surviving texts, next are the Middle High German versions, which go back to a Middle Low German ex-ample and survive in two manuscripts. A parchment leaf containing a fragment of fifty-two lines of verse text is found in the Royal Library in Copenhagen.[22] The other manuscript, a prose text, was in the Stadt-bibliothek in Wrocław/Breslau, but it is now marked as 'Kriegsver-lust'.[23] The Breslau manuscript would have presented another gap in the *VN* tradition, if it were not for the detailed notes made by Schoppe in 1928.[24] The manuscript was a compilation, with two parts bound to-gether. Part A opened with the chronicle *Die Königin von Frankreich*, followed by *Valentin und Namelos*, the so-called *Breslauer Apollonius*, and Heinrich von Mügeln's *Ungarncronik*. Part B contained an anony-mous translation of the *Buch von Troja* after Guido de Columnis, and Pribík Pulkava von Radenín's *Chronica Bohemorum*. The codex was a collection of chronicles and historical writings, and *VN* seems to have been included because of its pseudo-historical nature. The manu-script's origins are in Lower Silesia: on fol. 98v the scribe identifies him-self as 'Johannem Clementis' and says he completed his work in Waldau, near Liegnitz, in 1465. Its east central German (Ostmittel-deutsch) dialect confirms a Silesian provenance.

The Breslau manuscript shows a particular interest in Bohemian history, which is not surprising considering that Silesia was part of the Crown of Bohemia at this point. What is more striking is its in-terest in Hungarian history. Ralf Päsler suggests that this is partly a reflection of the political instability of Silesia at the time, as it had be-come a plaything of various political powers (Päsler 41). Silesia was to be ruled by the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus in 1469. Päsler

argues that this background might explain why part A of the manuscript, which also includes von Mügeln's chronicle about Hungary, has such a Hungarian focus. *Die Königin von Frankreich*, for instance, gives a prominent position to one of the ancestors of Duke Rudolf IV of Austria, the addressee of the Hungarian chronicle (Päsler 40–41).

What is more interesting for us, however, is that the beginning of *Valentin* has been adjusted to suit this new context. Whereas in the Low German the text opens with a reference to the French king Pepin, in the Breslau manuscript we are first told about the Hungarian king: "In Hungirn was eyn konig gesessin (...) ehe denne dy Hungirn yn das land quomen, der konig was genant Crisostomus" ("in Hungary a king was seated, at a time before the Hungarians came to that land. The king was called Crisostomus") (Seelmann 74).[25] The heading also leaves out the French king and notes instead that the story is about "eynem konige von Hungern vnd von eynis konigis swester von Frankreich vnde von iren kindern" ("a king of Hungary and about the sister of the king of France, and about their children") and their later adventures (Seelmann 74).[26] The focus has changed from a story centring on French royalty to one about the descendants of the king of Hungary. The text takes on new relevance here, suggesting that *VN* has largely lost its significance as a specifically 'French' text. The Breslau manuscript also highlights that looking at language alone can be deceiving: though *VN* was never translated into Czech or Polish, it was certainly known in central Europe, and again it is a German version that played a key role in this spread.

The Old Swedish *Namnlös och Valentin* was most likely translated from the Middle Low German version, even though nothing is said about its source in the translation itself.[27] The identity of the translator is not certain, but it has been suggested that it was Sigge Ulfsson (Sparre av Hjulsta och Ängsö), who was archdeacon and then bishop in Strängnäs in Sweden (Vilhelmsdotter 263–64). Sigge Ulfsson had studied in Leipzig, where one could assume that he came in contact with continental culture and also acquired a level in German that was sufficient to translate from Low German. It has been shown that he was the scribe of the oldest preserved manuscript of *Namnlös och Valentin*, Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Cod. Holm. D 4a (D 4a) (Wiktorsson 260–62).

D 4a presents a compilation of texts of different genres, which is also the case for the two other manuscripts containing *Namnlös och Valentin*: Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Cod. Holm. D 3 (D 3) and Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Cod. Holm. K 45 (K 45). Both D

25. Compare the opening in the Hartebok: "Dat was eyn koningh wys vormeten/ Jn franckryke beseten/ Pippingh was de name syn" (lines 1–3) ("There was a wise king, seated in France, Pepin was his name").

26. Päsler 39–40 discusses these changes.

27. For a more detailed presentation of the Swedish text, see Lodén.

4a, dated to c. 1448 and known as 'Fru Märtas bok', and D 3, dated to 1488 and referred to as 'Fru Elins bok', were owned by women of the Swedish aristocracy. D 4a belonged to Sigge Ulfsson's sister, the Swedish Lady Märta Ulfsdotter (Sparre av Hjulsta och Ängsö), and D 3 was compiled for Märta's daughter, Elin Gustavsdotter (Sture). In previous studies, these two manuscripts have been described as both entertaining and edifying, functioning as small libraries for the two women and their households (Vilhelmsdotter 264). Several texts in D 4a and D 3 are the same. *Namnlös och Valentin* is preceded and followed by the same group of texts in both manuscripts, namely the Swedish *Eufemiavisor*, three translated verse romances originally written in the beginning of the fourteenth century, which mark the beginnings of Swedish literature.[28] In D 4a, *Namnlös och Valentin* appears after the first of the *Eufemiavisor*, *Herr Ivan*, the Swedish translation of Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Chevalier au lion*, and is then followed by *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*, the second of the *Eufemiavisor*, which is said to be a translation of a German source that would go back to a French original – both unknown today – and tells the adventures of a certain duke of Normandy. In D 3, *Namnlös och Valentin* follows the third of the *Eufemiavisor*, *Flores och Blanzeflor*, the Swedish version of *Floire et Blancheflor*, and is once again followed by *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*. The third manuscript in which *Namnlös och Valentin* is transmitted, K 45, contains neither *Herr Ivan* nor *Flores och Blanzeflor*, but the text that opens the manuscript is *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*. *Namnlös och Valentin* is the last text in this manuscript, preceded by *Tungulus*, the Swedish version of *Visio Tnugdali*. *Tungulus* also appears in D 4a and D 3. Thus, the manuscript context of *Namnlös och Valentin* clearly links the Swedish translation to other translated romances. There are several links between the *Eufemiavisor* and *Namnlös och Valentin*, in terms of their literary style and courtly focus. However, whereas the *Eufemiavisor* were written in verse, *Namnlös och Valentin* was written in prose, with only shorter passages in verse.

The Swedish text is generally close to its Low German source text, although it features a prologue which is not found in the Low German version. In this prologue the narrator describes what will follow as a 'courtly adventure' about the heroic achievements of the two brothers: "Her effter børiæs eth høffuist æuintyr aff Nampnlos och Falantin, aff all theres mandom" (Wolf 2) ("Hereafter begins a courtly adventure of Namnlös and Valentin, and of all their heroic achievements"). The word æuintyr can mean both a "chivalric adven-

28. The three *Eufemiavisor* are *Herr Ivan*, *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*, and *Flores och Blanzeflor*. For a discussion of the role of these texts in the establishment of Swedish literature, see Lodén.

ture" and a "story of a chivalric adventure" and may evoke foreign and translated literature, in particular when described as "courtly" ("høffuist"). Æuintyr also appears in the first verse of *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*: "Eth æuintyr thet byriæs hær" (Noreen 1) ("An adventure begins here"). However, whereas *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie* is explicitly presented as a translation from French to Swedish via German in its epilogue, it is significant that the translator of *Namnlös och Valentin* does not refer to his work as a translation, neither in the prologue nor in the epilogue. Instead, he insists on the text's role as amusement: it is supposed to be "lusteligit at høræ" (Wolf 2) ("amusing to hear") and "fordriffuæ tiiden til thæs en høgre glædi komber" (Wolf 2) ("while away time until a higher form of joy arrives"). Thus, even though *Namnlös och Valentin* is associated with other translations in its manuscript context, its nature as a translation is not highlighted in the text itself, let alone any connection to a French source.

Having introduced the various surviving versions that make up the first strand, we can now reassess what evidence there is for a hypothetical lost French source. As mentioned in the introduction, proof of a French source hinges mostly on references to a French book found in the Low German version. The Low German text contains five references to a French source, repeating the phrase "also ik ût deme walschen las" ("as I read in the French [source]").[29] There are no such references in the Dutch fragments. They are also not repeated in either of the translations based on the Low German version, the High German and the Swedish versions. There are only five lines in one version, out of thousands of lines across the different versions, which refer to a French source. Moreover, there is a formulaic quality to these phrases, as they are always used to rhyme with a preceding line ending in 'was'. In fact, virtually all lines that end with 'was' in the Low German version are then rhymed with 'las' in the next line; this seems to be the poet's go-to phrase.[30] If we combine this with the fact that all of these lines are found in the main text, whereas one would usually expect to find important details like the identification of a source in a prologue or epilogue, there is a strong suggestion that the lines referring to a French book are fillers used to pad out the rhyme scheme.

If the oldest surviving texts contain no references to a French source and the references in the Low German version are fillers, this might not exclude the possibility of there being a French source but there certainly is no guarantee either. It is just as likely an indication of the pseudo-historical origins and geographical setting of the nar-

29. Lines 530, 1650, 1735, 2295, and 2526 in Klemming's edition. These correspond to lines 471, (missing page), 1385, 1945, and 2176 in Geeraedt's edition of Stockholm Vu 73.

30. The exceptions are ll. 1861 and 1982, where "was" rhymes with "gras" or grass, which is possible because the action takes place outside. This is not an option for the lines where the poet uses "also ik ût deme walschen las".

31. France still plays a central role in the narrative's geography in all versions discussed here.

rative than a true identification of an actual French source.[31] The main reason for the association with a French source may just be convention – because 'Matter of France' material is linked with French culture and political history it is also automatically associated with a French origin. This certainly seems to be the case for the Dutch fragments. Bart Besamusca has questioned Dutch scholars' eagerness to brand every Dutch Charlemagne text as a translation from a French original, since for many texts a clear source has not been identified, which has led scholars to either postulate a lost source or claim that the translator was working from an oral tradition (Besamusca, "Karlsepen" 26–35). But what if, Besamusca asks, we take a bold move and assume that, if no source is mentioned, there might not be one, and that Middle Dutch poets were more inventive than they are often given credit for? This does not mean that the core of the narrative material does not have its origins in French culture, but it should not be assumed that every Matter of France text also comes from a French source. Certainly, by the time the Dutch and Low German versions of *Valentin* were written, other Matter of France texts had spread across borders and this was becoming an international literary phenomenon more so than an exclusively French one. There is no reason why a non-French author could not invent a new narrative based on familiar material; as, indeed, is the case for several Dutch Arthurian romances.[32] Has the time come to reassess these claims about a lost French source?[33] One question to ask ourselves is what would happen if we did not have those lines in the Low German version. And is a French setting the same as calling this a French narrative? What do we mean when we call a story 'French'?

32. This is, of course, not limited to Dutch, or to Arthurian romances. *Rauf Coilyear* is an example of a narrative in Scottish that builds on a French Charlemagne tradition without claiming a French source.

33. Even when Dutch texts do mention a French source, this is not always true and may have other reasons. Remco Sleiderink has highlighted examples of Middle Dutch verse texts that claim a French source, when there is no evidence for one, and of authors trying to market their texts by linking it to popular French works. He notes this may be a reflection of the perceived status of French, where a Dutch text can borrow some of the prestige of the French literary tradition (Sleiderink 127–43).

There is much we can learn from the *VN* texts that actually survive. For one, they give us insight into various literary hubs and areas of cross-cultural contact that played a key role in the spread of narratives like this. They highlight how manuscripts belonging to the same language group may nonetheless belong in very different cultural contexts. They also remind us that choice of language matters when we look at how far translated material spread across Europe. Where translation into some languages forms an endpoint, with cultures mostly importing foreign works, other languages take on a mediating role, enabling a narrative to spread even further. Low German is one of those catalyst languages for *VN*. As the *lingua franca* of the Hanseatic league, it was spoken across a wide region, covering the eastern Netherlands and cities in the south, the northern parts of modern-day Germany and Poland, and even southern Scandinavia

and cities in the Baltic states. Note that these regions map very nicely onto the spread of the first strand of *Valentin*. We have manuscripts from the southern Low Countries, one of which moved to a northern German city, a manuscript associated with Pomerania that later moved to Sweden, and a manuscript from Silesia. The High German and Swedish versions are both based on the Low German version, which is itself likely based on a Dutch example. This suggests that the range of the postulated original French version was actually quite limited and, frankly, insignificant when considered in this larger scheme – it was the move to Dutch and then Low German that was key to the narrative's international spread.

Strand 2: From Lyon to Venice (and Across the Atlantic)

Whereas for the first strand there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding its possible French source, with the second strand we are on much firmer ground: its origins lie in the French prose text *Valentin et Orson*, which dates to the late fifteenth century. Written by an anonymous author, it is no doubt one of the most important versions of this tradition, if importance can be measured through the number of surviving texts and translations. *Valentin et Orson* has generally been considered a *mise en prose* of the lost French verse original (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* ix–x). It survives entirely in a printed context, with no known manuscripts. It is also the basis of almost all translations included in this strand. One of the reasons why *Valentin* has been seen as a French tradition may be because this second strand has a French origin, which was then projected back onto the first strand. There is a question here, however, as to what degree we should see these two strands as representing the same tradition or whether these are in fact two separate narratives with common elements. Scholarship has been too keen to make a linear story out of a textual tradition which is messy and has many gaps – we do not know exactly how and where this new version originated, for instance. Though on the surface *VO* looks like a later, newer tradition, it is important to note that the Swedish *VN* translation and the earliest French *Valentin et Orson* edition are in fact near-contemporary. The history of *Valentin* is again far more complex and multifaceted than previously acknowledged.

The earliest known edition of *Valentin et Orson* was printed in

34. Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC): 765978, Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke (GW): 12840, French Vernacular Books/Livres vernaculaires français (FB): 50247.

35. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, RES-Y2-82; London, British Library, IB.41942 (imperfect); Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, b15 P3(2) (fragment).

36. These woodcuts are on sig. B1v, D3r, H8r, and Q8r. See also Dalbanne and Droz 49.

37. Maillet's editions of *Baudoin* and *Jason* include images found earlier in editions printed by Schenck. For more on the reuse of images among Lyon printers, and the relationships between printers like Schenck and Ortuin, see Zeldenrust 108–09.

38. That von Kaden owned a French edition is all the more interesting considering that by 1526 the German translation had already been published, twice (see below).

39. For an overview of the editions printed in Lyon, see Shira Schwam-Baird's entry in the online catalogue *Éditions Lyonnaises de Romans du XVIe siècle (1501-1600)*.

Lyon in 1489 by Jacques Maillet.[34] Maillet printed works in French as well as Latin, both religious texts and secular narratives, including *Fierabras*, *Jason et Medée*, *Baudouin de Flandres*, *Recueil des hystoires troyennes*, and *Descrucion de Jherusalem*. Maillet's edition of *Valentin et Orson* is the first printed text that carries his name and three copies have been preserved.[35] The text is divided into seventy-four chapters and features forty woodcuts. As pointed out by Shira Schwam-Baird, who edited and translated Maillet's text, the woodcuts are typical of their time and the Lyonnais style of illustration, in that they have a clear German design (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* xix). Most early printers active in Lyon had connections with local German printers or were themselves Germans, who had moved in search of new opportunities and brought existing illustrative material with them, repurposing German images for editions in French. Lyon printers also borrowed and copied each other's printing materials, resulting in a great deal of image reuse.

We see this in *Valentin et Orson* too: four of the woodcuts in Maillet's edition are identical to those used by the printer Peter Schenck (or Pierre Boutellier) in Vienna in 1484 for another text, *l'Abuze en court*.[36] Schenck had worked in Vienna before settling in Lyon, taking his woodblocks with him. Several of Maillet's other editions also reuse woodcuts first found in editions printed by Schenck, and Maillet seems to have known Gaspard Ortuin, who worked together with Schenck in printing an edition of *Mélusine* in c. 1485.[37] Although this cross-cultural reuse and movement of images was typical of the early period of printing, it is interesting to link it to the European character of *Valentin*. Even when we are dealing with a strand where the first surviving text is definitely French, because of the international nature of the early printing market – which was characterised by a movement of people and materials – we see that the pages of the first edition are marked by other cultural connections too.

Maillet's edition was followed by two other editions published in Lyon: by Jacques Arnoullet in 1495 and by Martin Havard in 1505. It was then published in Paris in c. 1515 by Michel Le Noir and in c. 1511–25 by the widow of Jehan Trepperel and Jehan Jehannot. One of the surviving copies of the edition printed in Lyon in 1526, by Olivier Arnoullet, was owned by Michael van Kaden, a German humanist who worked in the legal profession, showing that the French editions were also read outside France.[38] In all, another twelve editions were printed in the sixteenth century, mostly in Paris and Lyon, but also in Louvain in 1596.[39] Even though the texts of the first editions

are close to each other, there are a number of differences in their orthography and illustrations (Colombo Timelli 331). Many more editions followed in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, printed in Lyon, Rouen, Troyes, Lille, and Montbéliard. The last known edition is dated to 1846 and printed in Epinal, which shows that the tale captivated audiences for a long time. *VO* was also included in the 'Bibliothèque bleue' series, works similar to English chapbooks and German Volksbücher (Schwam-Baird, "La longue vie" 300–02) Altogether, there are fifty known editions of the French *VO* (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* 531–34).

Valentin et Orson is about ten times longer than the most complete version of *VN*, the Middle Low German version. Whilst the core of the first half of the narrative still revolves around the motif of the two brothers separated at birth, one of whom is raised by a wild animal, now a bear instead of a wolf, the second part is distinct. There are important additions, in particular the inclusion of the dwarf magician Pacolet and his flying wooden horse, as well as a large number of other characters. The story's geography also expands, most notably with new adventures in India. Previous research has stressed the difficulty of placing the French text within one specific genre: it contains elements from romance, epic, saints' lives, and other genres (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* xii; Szkilnik 104). To some extent, this may resemble other French prose texts from the same period, i.e. longer prose cycles that juxtapose elements with various generic origins (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* 104). However, as shown by Michelle Szkilnik, *VO* remains more disparate than most prose cycles, which she argues can be linked to the inclusion of the magician Pacolet, whom she says becomes an anachronistic figure (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* 104, 108). This disparity raises questions about when we call something a rewriting and how many changes are needed before it in fact becomes a new text. Are these not so much two versions of the same narrative as two separate narratives? The same question can be asked for other works, like *Quatre Filz Aymon*, which changes so much in being constantly translated and retold that it is difficult to speak of one coherent tradition.

Interestingly, it is the addition of Pacolet and his wooden horse which also shows that the narrative incorporated elements of other literary traditions as it transformed into *Valentin et Orson*. Pacolet and his flying horse are introduced in Chapter xxiv in the French text:

De grant sens et subtil engin estoit plain, lequel a l'escole de Toullette tant avoit aprins de l'art d'ingromance que par dessus tous les aultres estoit parfait et experimenté en telle maniere que par enchantement il fist et composa ung petit cheval de boys. Et en la teste d'iceluy cheval avoit fait et acomply artificiellement et par science subtille une cheville qui estoit tellement assise que toutes les fois qu'i montoit sur le cheval de bois pour aler quelque part, il tournoit la cheville qui en la teste de son cheval estoit devers le lieu ou il vouloit aler et tantost se trouvoit en la place sans nul mal et sans danger, car le cheval estoit de telle nature qu'il s'en aloit parmy l'air plus soudainement et plus legierement que nul oyseau ne sçait voler. (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* 208–10)

(He was quite clever and cunning; moreover, at the school of Toledo he had learned so much of the magical arts that he excelled in it above all others. In fact, with his magic he had formed and constructed a little wooden horse in whose head was inserted a pin fashioned with art and cunning knowledge. Thus, each time he mounted the wooden horse to go somewhere, he turned the pin in his horse's head in the direction of the place he wanted to go and soon found himself there without any harm or danger, for the horse was made in such a way that it flew through the air more quickly and lightly than any bird.) (Schwam-Baird, *Valentin et Orson* 209-11)

Both dwarf magicians and flying wooden horses were known literary motifs at the time *Valentin et Orson* was written: the figure of Pacolet could be traced back to several *chansons de geste* and the school of magic in Toledo had been mentioned previously too (Szkilnik 93). The enchanted horse was inspired by *Cléomadès* by Adenet le Roi, written in Paris around 1285.[40] It can also be linked to the closely related *Méliacin* by Girart d'Amiens, also written in Paris around 1285.[41]

However, the motif of the wooden horse goes back much longer: it appeared in the Indian collection of animal fables *Pañcatantra*, written in Sanskrit c. 200 BC (Houdebert, *Le cheval d'ébène* 32). It was picked up in the Persian empire and found its way into *One Thousand and One Nights* as well as the closely related *One Hundred and One Nights*. The latter was copied in Al-Andalus, the Muslim-ruled part of the Iberian Peninsula, in the Middle Ages, which is assumed to have played a key role in the transmission of the motif into European culture. The sister of King Philippe III of France, Blanche de France, has

40. This has been pointed out by several scholars. See, for example, Dickson, *A Study* 218.

41. For a close study of *Cléomadès* and *Méliacin*, see Houdebert, *Le cheval d'ébène*.

been pointed out as a person who likely brought the story to France: she is mentioned in Adenet's prologue as one of the commissioners, together with the queen Marie de Brabant, and also Girard seems to make reference to her, even though her name is not mentioned explicitly (Houdebert, "L'histoire du cheval d'ébène" 146). Blanche was married to Ferdinand de la Cerda and part of the Castilian court, until her husband died and she had to return to France. In her book on the two French texts, Aurélie Houdebert has argued that Blanche probably transmitted the Arabic tale orally to both French authors, who then separately wrote their own versions (Houdebert, *Le cheval d'ébène)*.

Cléomadès and *Méliacin* were written in octosyllabic verse, but the story was rewritten in prose in the fifteenth century. One of the prose rewritings, entitled *Clamades*, was printed in Lyon in 1480 by Guillaume le Roy, shortly before Maillet's edition of *Valentin et Orson*. Schenck, whose woodcuts Maillet's *VO* edition copies, also printed an edition of *Clamades* in Vienna around 1483–85. Did this prose version inspire the writer of *Valentin et Orson* to add the motif of the wooden horse?[42] One could indeed imagine that this part of the tale was born in Lyon, among networks of writers, printers, and other tradesmen who regularly shared materials.

Whereas Girard's horse mainly travels in Asia, Adenet's horse is of a more European character: it travels between places like Seville, Toscany, Salerno, Normandy, Britain, and France (Uhl 22). *Valentin et Orson* also contains references to different regions and cities, such as France, Portugal, Aquitaine, Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, India, Antioch, and Angory (Ankara). These place names reflect an interest in areas around the Mediterranean and in key crusading territories, covering a wide Eurasian space whilst also connecting the text to the Matter of France.[43] That so much action takes place in Constantinople probably reflects a reaction to the city's fall in 1453, with its eventual recapture from Saracen enemies representing a kind of shared western European chivalric wish-fulfilment. The presence of the wooden horse contributes to making travel between distant places possible in *Valentin et Orson*, at the same time as it links the tale to French as well as Spanish and Arabic sources. Even though *Valentin et Orson* is a French romance epic, anchored in a French literary tradition, it needs to be understood in this broader perspective. It matters that the earliest surviving text of this strand was printed in Lyon, whose printing market relied on skilled foreigners and had important connections with non-Francophone printing cities, and that it emerged from a literary milieu that also looked to other cultures for

42. This hypothesis is presented by Houdebert, *Le cheval d'ébène* 557.

43. For example, the mention of 'Esclardie' echoes 'Esclaudie' in the *Chanson de Roland* (Dickson, *A Study* 229).

inspiration. Considering how much the author recycles material from other literary traditions and that these episodes take up a considerable amount of narrative space, the question arises whether we should see *Valentin et Orson* more as a new version or a spin-off, which borrows from the earlier *VN* tradition as much as from other cultural traditions. Is it a case not of rewriting *VN*, but of putting together existing narrative elements not previously put together to create something new? This is more than mere 'influence' alone: the narrative attests to a co-evolving of narratives around the Mediterranean world.

Szkilnik notes that there are parallels between Pacolet and the author of *Valentin et Orson*.[44] Similarly, one could see a parallel between the wooden horse and the tale itself. The teleporting horse is an apt metaphor for how the story itself spread widely. The earliest French edition was published at a time when prose romances were in vogue not just in a French-language context but also on the international stage; translations of French prose romances had become fashionable. This meant that it did not take long before *Valentin* appeared in several other languages, starting in English. It also meant that translators and printers were often all too keen to highlight their French source material – which is very different from what we saw with *VN*.

The earliest edition of the English *The Hystory of the two valyaunte brethren Valentyne and Orson* was printed by Wynkyn de Worde around 1508–10.[45] It survives in only one fragment of eight pages.[46] However, we know what the original text must have looked like, because it was reprinted in its entirety by William Copland in 1555. The English translation generally stays close to its French source, though there are some differences.[47] It was not unusual for English translations of French romances in this period to stay close to their source material, so the English *Valentyne* is not an anomaly.[48] It was also translated relatively soon after the printing of the first French editions, so it may not have needed much updating. Though the French editions make no mention of an author, the English version proudly announces the name of the translator and the fact that he is translating from French: "I, Henrye Watson, symple of understondynge, haue translated [this history] out of frenche in to our maternall tongue of Englyshe" (Watson, *Valentyne* Sig. A2r).[49]

The English version is clearly presented as a translation from the start. In fact, Watson's identification of his French source appears to be part of an overall marketing strategy, where the book's status as a foreign text becomes a selling point. We must not forget that English at this time was far from the world language it is today and that Eng-

44. Szkilnik compares the way Pacolet loses control of events in the narrative to the way the author loses control of his character and the increasingly elaborate plot (Szkilnik 108). The narrative is not so much an example of *entrelacement*, or the careful interlacement of episodes typical of prose romances, as a spreading out that threatens to overrun authorial control.

45. Universal Short Title Catalogue no. 501165, Short Title Catalogue no. 24571.3. The USTC and STC give the date as 1510. Joseph Gwara has argued in a recent article that it dates from 1509, possibly 1508, based on the use of 'foul sorts' or individual pieces of type that stand out from the rest of the font used (Gwara 212, 232).

46. London, British Library, C.132.i.54. The fragment starts on sig. B3, with the text matching sig. C3 in William Copland's 1555 edition.

47. For instance, measurements are Anglicised, the translator sometimes adds explanatory details, and the text is divided into a larger number of chapters (Hosington 4–5, 13–14, 18).

48. See the discussion on invisibility and close translation in Zeldenrust 206–11, as well as discussions by Cooper 211, and Hardman and Ailes 26–27.

49. Quotations from Watson's translation are from Copland's 1555 reprint of De Worde's edition.

50. Hellinga notes that printing had been developing on the continent for at least two decades before the first book was printed in England, in Westminster (Hellinga 1).

51. Caxton's earliest types were modelled on the manuscript hand of David Aubert, a scribe and author who worked for Burgundian nobles. Aubert copied a manuscript of *Olivier de Castile* and adapted *Renaut de Monauban* into a *mise en prose* for Philip the Good. Caxton's later types were modelled on Flemish and French printing types, initially imitating those used by Colard Mansion (Robinson 65). Robinson notes that the types used by Caxton must have looked foreign to English readers, who were used to manuscripts written in Anglicana or the English secretary hand.

52. *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* is the first book printed in English (Ghent or Bruges c. 1473–74), endorsed by Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy. It is Caxton's own translation of the *Recueil des Histoires de Troye* by Raoul Lefèvre, secretary to Philip the Good. Caxton's *History of Jason* (Westminster, 1477) is also a translation of a work by Lefèvre and Caxton mentions Philip the Good and the Order of the Golden Fleece in his prologue. Caxton's *Blancardyn and Eglantine* (c. 1489) is a translation of a Burgundian prose reworking.

53. The vogue for Burgundian texts in England had been going on for some time, a notable example being Edward IV's collecting of Flemish manuscripts. He seems to have acquired a taste for them during his exile, when he stayed with the notable bibliophile Louis Gruuthuse.

54. The author of *Olivier*, Philippe Camus, also wrote a prose version of *Cléomadès*. It is not certain that *Ponthus* was produced at the Burgundian court, but it was certainly read there (Brown-Grant 17).

55. The page numbers in this section refer to those of Copland's 1555 reprint of De Worde's edition.

56. The same woodcuts appear in other editions by De Worde, including *Justes of May* 1507, *Ponthus* 1511, *Richard Coeur de Lion* 1528, *Bevis* after 1528; one

lish literary culture and book production lagged behind continental innovations. Printing came to England relatively late, and only after the first English printer William Caxton spent years learning his craft on the continent and had first tested the printing of books for an English audience from there.[50] Time spent in the Burgundian Low Countries and at its courts left a mark on the books Caxton printed, both in terms of their appearance on the page (his types, for instance, were modelled on Burgundian script) and his choice of texts, which often reflected Burgundian literary tastes.[51] This is certainly the case for the romances he printed.[52] When Caxton's apprentice De Worde took over his printing business, he continued this work, reprinting romances published by Caxton but also commissioning new translations of romances which similarly had Burgundian links. Some of these were new prose romances, whilst others were older verse narratives which were turned into prose romances within a Burgundian literary milieu. Even for several romances where the exact origin is uncertain, we know that they were eagerly read and collected by Burgundian dukes and duchesses (Cooper 226–27).[53] Since many Francophone texts printed by Caxton and De Worde have a Burgundian connection, one may wonder whether *Valentyne* had a similar trajectory. Its translator Henry Watson certainly also translated two other works which were a hit at the Burgundian court, *Olivier de Castile* and *King Ponthus*, also for De Worde.[54] There too, Watson highlights their status as texts translated "out of Frensshe into Englysshe/ oure moders tonge" (Watson, *Olyver* Sig. Aa6r). Prose romances like *Valentyne, Olyver*, and *Ponthus* represented the latest literary fashions.

If we look closely at the English *Valentyne*, it is, like the first French edition, a far more international text than first appears. Several of its woodcuts are copied after images from French editions.[55] For instance, the woodcut on sig. Y3r, depicting two knights jousting in front of a fountain, is modelled on a woodcut that appears in Guillaume le Roy's edition of *Ponthus et Sidoine* (c. 1483–87) and reappears in several other editions also printed in Lyon, including the *Olivier* printed by the widow of Jean Trepperel (1520) (Sánchez-Martí 93–97).[56] Another jousting woodcut on sig. Y4v, this one showing an open field and one knight reeling after being hit by the other's lance, and the woodcut on sig. Rr2v, depicting two men and a woman on horseback, also appear in Dennis Meslier's editions of the *Chroniques abrégées des Rois de France* (c. 1490) and *Paris et Vienne* (c. 1491).[57] De Worde's edition also features ornamental borders and grotesques (large decorated initials) which imitate styles used in continen-

reappears in Copland's reprint of De Worde's *Aymon* 1554.

57. Sig. C4v, D5v, E2v, F6v, F7r, H1v, H3v, I1v, K1v, N4r, O6r, and P5r for the jousting woodcut in *Chroniques*

abrégées; A4r, A5v, B3v for the same woodcut in *Paris et Vienne*. Sig. M3v for the horseback woodcut in *Chroniques abrégées*; Sig. D2r in *Paris et Vienne*.

59. The inventory lists more romances, including a French prose edition of *Doon de Mayence*, English translations of *Recueil des Histoires de Troye*, *Oliver of Castile*, and *William of Palerne*, and a copy of *Richard Coeur de Lion*. He also owned books on coats of arms and other chivalric subjects (Meale 297).

60. Edwards and Meale note that Stafford's patronage of the arts shows a man "who fostered an image of magnificence" and who was up on current cultural and political interests (99).

tal editions. It features a type modelled on the style of fonts used in Paris and Rouen, and it is printed on foreign paper.[58] These were not just aesthetic choices; for practical reasons, the English printing market depended a great deal on foreign materials and tradesmen in its early stages. Even De Worde himself, the most important printer of romances in England, was not native born. He came from northern France or the Low Countries and was granted status as a denizen of England in 1496, receiving the equivalent of a modern residence permit, though he continued his connections with Dutch and French printers and employed tradesmen from the continent (Hellinga 133–34).

Furthermore, the translation itself features many Gallicisms and often uses syntax that follows its French source. It does not allow the reader to forget that we are dealing with a foreign text. Close translations might seem to lack imagination, but for an English reader at the time such close fidelity to a French model likely added to the text's appeal and prestige. As a sign that a text like *Valentyne* was in demand, we need only look at the inventory of the books owned by Edward Stafford, duke of Buckingham and nephew to Edward IV's queen Elizabeth Woodville. The duke owned many fashionable works, mostly in French, or English translations from French or Latin, and most were purchased not long after printing, as the duke seems to have kept up with the latest literary hits.[59] He was a known patron too: he instigated English translations of *Le Chevalier au Cygne* and *La fleur des histoires de la terre d'Orient*.[60] He also owned a copy of De Worde's *Valentyne* edition, obtained soon after it was printed. If we consider how the text itself makes traces of the foreign visible, both in terms of the narrative and its material features, like images and type, this suggests that Watson's highlighting of his French source in the prologue is more than a linguistic identification. This is a marketing tool that signals an awareness of the latest literary innovations and a cosmopolitan, high culture mediated through French, which seems to have appealed to noblemen like Stafford.

Valentyne remained popular in England for some time. As mentioned, William Copland reprinted De Worde's edition in 1555; he may have obtained his printing material via his father or brother Robert Copland, who worked as a translator for De Worde. William Copland printed the 1555 edition for John Walley, a fellow printer and book merchant. He printed another edition in 1565, which suggests the work was commercially viable. In 1586 Thomas Purfoot was granted a license to print *Valentyne*, though we do not know if he exercised this privilege (Cooper 165). The license then transferred to his

son Thomas Purfoot jr., who printed an abbreviated version of the romance in 1637, where its potentially problematic parts, mostly scenes relating to the magician Pacolet and his demonic powers, were taken out. This abbreviated version continued to be reprinted throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Considering that quite a few English prose romances were printed only once or twice and then seemingly disappeared, *Valentyne* was relatively successful.

The story was also performed in pageants and on the stage. At the coronation festivities for King Edward VI in London in 1547, one performer was dressed as the knight Valentine and another as the wild man Orson, covered in moss and leaves and wielding a huge club (Mulready 50). Although the plays themselves do not survive, the Stationers' Register records that a performance of "Valentyne and Orsson, plaid by hir maiesties Players" was licensed to Thomas Gosson and Raffe Hancock in 1595, and another was licensed to William White in 1600 (Cooper 164). Henslowe's diary records that he received a payment of £5 from Richard Hathaway and Anthony Munday, known dramatists, for "a Boocke called vallentyne & Orson" in 1598, which they may have used as source material (Cooper 164). It is in this context that we also find one of the most noteworthy testimonies to the story's continuing currency in the English literary tradition.[61] In his critique of how dramatic adaptations of medieval romance too often break Aristotelian unities, the Elizabethan poet Philip Sidney mentions 'Pacolet's horse' as an example of a handy plot device that allows authors to quickly transport characters from one location to the next, showing rather than reporting a change in setting (Mulready 47). Sidney acknowledges that, writing as he does in an age of rapid global expansion and exploration, his world is much larger than that of his much-admired Classical authors. He brings up Pacolet's horse as the ultimate example of how one can bridge the gap between Classical narrative theories and the realities of an ever-expanding world. Pacolet's horse, "a fantasy of almost instant transport to exotic realms", becomes the quintessential globetrotter (Mulready 60). A literary motif that is itself an example of cross-cultural exchange, and of how stories and ideas travelled across the medieval Afro-Eurasian space, becomes a metaphor for how literary works might struggle to represent the realities of travel in an ever-expanding world.

More translations followed. The German "Hystori [...] von zweyen brůderen Valentino und Orso" ("history […] of two brothers Valentino and Orso") was first printed in 1521 in Basel. It was published by Adam Petri, a printer better known for his editions of Martin Lu-

61. As further evidence of how well-known this story was: Robert Ashley's autobiography of 1614 includes *VO* in a list of romances he read as a child, and the log of the buccaneer Basil Ringrose notes that he and his crewmates imprisoned a boy they had spotted off the South American coast and called him Orson, because they considered him a wild man who needed to be civilised, showing the darker side of this narrative.

62. Urs Graf was a colourful figure, who was regularly imprisoned on accusations of violence and consorting with prostitutes. He worked as a goldsmith, stained glass artist, and mercenary, during which time he travelled to Burgundy and Italy, and it has been suggested that he was present during the Sack of Rome in 1527.

63. Found on folios N4r, O1r, Q2v.

ther's texts and other reformed works. Petri's *Valentino* features woodcuts made by Urs Graf, an illustrator who also worked for printers in Paris and Strasbourg.[62] Many of the woodcuts feature scenes specific to this narrative, including the image of a wild man holding a club.[63] As we saw with De Worde's edition, it was not unusual for printers to reuse generic images of jousts, weddings, battles, and other often-recurring scenes to cut costs. That some of the woodcuts are tailor-made indicates that Petri thought they were worth the expense and tells us something about his confidence that the edition would sell.

Valentino was not published on its own but together with a German translation of *Olivier de Castille*, entitled *Olwyer und Arto*. This is another tale of two brothers who are separated and eventually reunited. Both translations are by the same translator, whose name we know, because he tells us several times throughout the edition that he is "Wilhelm Ziely von Bern in Ochtlandt" (Ziely, *Olwyer* A1r). Unlike with the English translation, where we have a name but otherwise know almost nothing about the translator, Ziely pops up rather frequently in historical records. He came from a family of artisans involved in the cloth trade, who may have originally come from Nice. He tells us in his prologue that at the time he translated *Valentino* and *Olwyer* he was a "diener im Kouffhuß" (K3v: "servant in a department store"). Ziely seems to have been a social climber, later taking up important roles in Bern, including as an administrative controller for the St. Vinzenz foundation, a judge, and an envoy representing the city in discussions about the Reformation (Putzo 130).

Ziely was writing at a time when German prose translations of French romances and *chansons de geste* were in fashion. These were typically prose adaptations from verse originals, which makes *Valentine*, a prose-to-prose translation, an interesting exception. Christine Putzo points out that Ziely does not match the typical profile of translators of French material in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (Putzo 130). Most translators belonged to the upper or lower nobility, or they were in service of the nobility, which meant they would have had a formal education. Examples of translations that arose from a courtly context include the Charlemagne texts *Herzog Herpin*, *Sibille*, *Loher und Maller*, attributed to the countess Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken; *Ponthus und Sidonia* translated by princess Eleanor of Scotland; and *Magelone* by the courtly diplomat Veit Warbeck, which was finished not long after Ziely's translations.[64] We might see in Ziely's *Olwyer* and *Valentino* further evidence of his social aspirations, at a time when literary activity, certainly for chival-

64. Another text translated in this period is Wilhelm Salzmann's *Kaiser Octavianus*. For the overall context of translation activity in German in this period, see Bertelsmeier-Kierst 17–47.

ric texts, was still largely associated with an elite minority.[65] It is also striking how many translations of French romances, like Ziely's works, originate from Bern and its surrounding areas. Other texts from Bern include Thüring von Ringoltingen's German *Melusine*, the oldest translation of *Ponthus und Sidonia* (a different version from Eleanor's, known as version C), and the *Clamades* fragment. As we saw with the English translated romances, these are largely Burgundian texts rather than strictly 'French' romances. If the idea of a French to German translation might suggest a movement from central France to central Germany, the reality is different. The more typical route is through Burgundian or northern French territories and, for those versions based on a printed source, via Lyon, with a great deal of translation work taking place in regions which are today part of Switzerland.

One noticeable feature of Ziely's *Valentino* is that he adds his own prologue, in which he highlights his French source several times. Ziely tells us that he is translating from a book "das ich funden han in frantzösischer sprach und welscher zungen" (K3v; "that I found in the French language and French tongue"), followed by a modesty topos saying that he has done his best even though "ich der kunst und der sprach nit eigentlichen underricht bin" (K3v; "I was not taught in the art and the language"). He repeats several times that he translated the work "von der welschen zungen" into "unsere Dütsche sprach" (K3v; "from French" … "our German language"), using the verb 'bringen' or 'to bring' to describe the process of moving the story from one language to another. The title page and the colophon at the end of the edition similarly highlight that the story comes "uß franßösischer zungen" (A1r) and that it was "Vertütscht durch den wysen Wylhelm Zielly" (Gg8r; "set to German [literally: German-ised] by the wise Wilhelm Ziely"). Such identifications of a French source are not unusual. Thüring's prologue to *Melusine*, for instance, also emphasizes that the story is based on a French example.[66] Such references no doubt give Ziely's text a degree of validity, especially considering that he spends part of the prologue defending the value of fiction, writing as he did at a time of increasing scrutiny over the supposed lies told by romances. But they can also be read as another marketing trick, meant to capitalise on the associations between French romances and chivalric culture, and to show interested readers that Ziely's work is in keeping with current trends.

Adam Petri printed another *Valentino* edition in 1522, where it is again presented together with *Olwyer*. *Valentino* was printed on its own by Weigand Han in Frankfurt in 1558, though it is worth noting

that there is evidence of an *Olwyer* printed by Weigand Han's heirs a decade later.[67] Peter Schmidt printed another edition via the presses of Kilian Han, Weigand Han's son, in 1572. The 1572 *Valentino* is a more stripped-down version of Petri's text: it no longer has a table of contents and the translator's prologue has disappeared, though Ziely is still mentioned as the translator. At least three more editions were printed at the start of the seventeenth century. The number of editions is similar to that of romances like *Ponthus*, being regularly reprinted throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and becoming familiar staples. The story was known to German audiences in other ways too, including in the theatre, as *Valentino* was dramatized by Hans Sachs in late 1556 and again by Jakob Ayrer in 1598.

The French *VO* was also translated into Dutch, by an anonymous translator. This second Dutch version is unrelated to the earlier *VN* fragments. However, as with the *VN* fragments, there are textual witnesses missing here too. The earliest edition of *Valentijn ende Oursson* has been lost. An edition printed by Jan II van Ghelen in 1557 is mentioned in an inventory of a bookseller from Kortrijk which dates to 1569, but no copies survive.[68] Willem Kuiper has suggested that this edition may have been a reprint of an edition published by Jan I van Ghelen, his father (Kuiper, "Valentijn ende Oursson" 223). Jan II was known as a re-printer of works that sold well, so it would fit his printing strategy for *Valentijn* to be a re-issue of an earlier successful edition. Because the 1557 edition does not survive, we must work with later, seventeenth-century editions to get a sense of what the original translation may have looked like. Petrus Joseph Rymers printed a *Valentijn* edition in Antwerp in 1624, Jan Jacobszoon Bouman printed one in Antwerp in 1657, and another edition was printed in Utrecht in 1696. At least four more editions were printed by the end of the seventeenth century, but again, not all survive. It is also not clear how close the texts of the later editions are to that of the 1557 edition or, indeed, whether the 1557 edition was itself already a modified version of an earlier translation.

Despite such difficulties, it is clear from the editions that do survive that *Valentijn* underwent some significant changes. For a start, the romance was subject to censorship. In 1624 Maximiliaen van Eynatten reviewed the narrative and added a mark of approbation, repeated in Bouman's 1657 edition, stating that "Dese Historie van Valentyn ende Oursson, van nieuws oversien ende gecorrigeert, mach profijtelijck herdruckt worden, ende inde Scholen gheleert worden" ("this history of Valentyn and Oursson, updated and corrected, may

67. The VD 16 database (Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts) lists an *Olwyer* edition by Han's heirs from 1568: web. There may also have been an earlier edition by Han from 1556.

68. *Inventarissen van goede en verboden boeken, gevonden bij boekhandelaren in de zuidelijke gewesten. Kortrijk, 1569,* included in the archive of the Raad van Beroerten 1567–76, now held in Het Rijksarchief in België/Les archives de l'État en Belgique. De Raad van Beroerten was a show tribunal instigated by the Duke of Alva to punish political and religious dissent.

be reprinted and taught in schools"). Van Eynatten was a well-known censor, who also appears to have approved editions of the Dutch translations of the French *Quatre Filz Aymon* (*Vier Heemskinderen*) and of the English *Knight of the Swanne* (*Helias, Ridder metter Swane*). He was appointed by bishop Malderus of Antwerp as a 'scholaster', or an inspector of works for schools, from 1619–31 (Debaene 233). He removed a considerable amount of text from the Dutch *VO*, mostly erotic scenes and scenes involving magic, following the bishop's instructions that young schoolboys would learn nothing good from books that dealt with "amoreusheydt ende dierghelycke dinghen" ("romance and similar topics") (Debaene 323).[69] That the story was shortened because of censorship is perhaps not as surprising as the indication that it was being taught in schools. This probably explains why the 1624 edition opens with a prologue addressed "Tot de jonckheydt" ("To the Youth"), which then links the story to that of Remus and Romulus, another example of children raised by animals.[70] It has been assumed that so little survives of the Dutch *VO* because it appeared on early seventeenth-century censor lists, but Kuiper notes that it is more likely that stories like this were so popular that they were read to shreds (Kuiper, "Valentijn ende Oursson" 223–24).[71] That the romance was used in schools might be another reason why few copies survive.

Only in the earlier editions are we reminded that this is a translation. The 1657 edition by Bouman, for instance, inscribes itself in the international *Valentin* tradition by announcing on its title page that the romance is "Uyt de Francoysche in onse Nederlantsche sprake overgeset. Van nieus oversien ende verbetert" (A1r; "transferred from French to our Dutch language. Updated and improved"). Later editions remove this detail from the front page. If noting a French source was once a selling point, this no longer seems to be the case once we move towards the end of the seventeenth century. The place of printing may play a role too. For the editions printed in Antwerp, a city with a particularly international outlook and where printers tended to publish material in multiple languages (Jan II van Ghelen is an example of this) it makes sense to stress the romance's international nature. Readers could have seen the French counterparts of these romances being sold around the city too. But with a move to cities in the northern Low Countries also comes an apparent move towards a more exclusively Dutch-reading audience, where the romance loses its status as an international text.[72]

As in English and German-speaking regions, *Valentijn* had a continuing popularity in the Low Countries. The most recent count

69. On Van Eynatten's changes, see Kuiper, "*Valentijn ende Oursson*" 104. Kuiper notes that the Dutch translator may have engaged in self-censorship, as the treacherous bishop becomes a treacherous knight, perhaps to avoid raised eyebrows from Catholic censors.

70. The same prologue is found in a later edition by the heirs of Hieronymus Verdussen, printed c. 1684–1713.

71. Debaene notes that *VO* appears on lists in Bruges, Antwerp, and Mechelen (Debaene 211).

72. Scholars have pointed towards a general trend where Dutch literature went its own way after an initial close contact with French literary traditions. Frank Brandsma has noted how the emergence of Dutch as a more confident literary language was likely a reflection of the rise of the language's cultural prestige and the development of the region itself. In other words, this is not so much a turn away from French as a move towards Dutch (Brandsma 241–63).

comes to at least forty-four editions published by the nineteenth century, which is a high number for a Dutch medieval romance, though there were likely more (Kuiper, "Valentijn ende Oursson" 223). But the story was also known in other ways. Pieter Brueghel's painting 'The Fight Between Carnival and Lent', which dates to 1559, features a scene of a knight facing someone dressed as a wild man, holding a club, in the top left corner. The same scene was copied in a woodcut entitled 'The Wild Man or the Masquerade of Orson and Valentine' in 1566. This example highlights how the story was particularly well-known in a performative context, as we saw with the English version, and that the wild man Orson, especially, became a favourite of masquerades and street performances. The records of the city of Breda, for instance, show that in 1568 a procession known as the Omgang also featured a wild man, which has been linked to Orson.[73]

Although the Dutch *VO* is unrelated to the Dutch *VN* fragments, that the story returns to the Low Countries might tell us something about *VO* and *VN* being perceived as different versions rather than the same tale. Moreover, it turns out that, as with *VN*, the Dutch *VO* played an important role in the narrative's later spread. The Dutch version reached outside of the Low Countries in the second part of the seventeenth century, when it was translated into Icelandic. This Icelandic text was not printed, unlike the other translations, but is preserved only in a paper manuscript, today kept at the Royal Library of Stockholm: Isl. Papp. fol. nr 29. It contains seventy-four chapters, the same number of chapters as the earlier French editions and the earliest surviving Dutch editions. The manuscript opens with a brief sketch of the international genealogy of the story of "Falentin og Ourssom", noting that it was "Fyrstt Samsett I Frónskú Tale: Sydann aa Hollendsku" ("first composed in French, afterwards in Dutch") and now in Icelandic. This suggests that the source is one of the earlier Dutch editions, which still note that the tale is based on a French example. The Icelandic manuscript is not the only known *VO* translation not based directly on a French edition. There is also a Yiddish version, printed by Jahn Janson in 1756 under the title *Eyn vunderlikhe shene naiye historiye fun Falentin un' Orson*. This version is also based on the Dutch translation, underscoring that Dutch was an important mediating language when it comes to the narrative's post-medieval afterlife too.

As noted above, the Dutch version was first printed in 1557, even though this particular edition has been lost. This was the same year as the Italian version of *VO* was printed in Venice by Vincenzo Val-

grisi and Baldassarre Costantini: *Historia dei due nobilissimi et valorosi Fratelli Valentino et Orsone.* On the title page of the Italian text it is said that it is a translation from French. The printer Vincenzo Valgrisi was also French; his French name was Vincent Vaugris. He was born close to Lyon around 1510 and died in Venice in 1573. His family may have been related to German printers, in particular in Basel, an important printing city. Considering the fact that the French text was first printed in Lyon, one may wonder whether he had actually come across one of the French editions before moving to Italy. Six editions of the French *VO* had been published in Lyon by the time Valgrisi started printing in Venice, which suggests the work sold well, so it is intriguing to think this may have played a role in his choice of publishing an Italian version. Valgrisi was an important printer: between 1540 to 1572, he published 202 works (Grendler 5). Most of his activity took place in Venice, but he was also active as a printer for a shorter period in Rome. He owned bookshops in several Italian cities (Padua, Bologna, Macerata, Foligno, Recanati, and Lanciano), and also Frankfurt and Lyon (Grendler 16). The fact that the Italian version of the tale appeared in Venice fits nicely with the international character of this particular tale: during this period, Venice was "one of the main centres in the Western world for the production and commerce of printed material" (van der Sman 235). The Venetian print trade was marked by different kinds of exchanges and collaborations (van der Sman 247). Since Venice was a cultural melting pot, the publication of new narratives was not an unusual phenomenon and the foreign material did not necessarily need to be explained or adapted in a more substantial way to appeal to an Italian-reading audience.

In 1588 or sometime shortly after, *Valentin et Orson* found its way into Spanish literature through the dramatic adaptation *El Nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* by Lope de Vega (1562–1635). This time, we are not dealing with a translation of the French *VO* but a new version of the tale, in which we meet, among others, the king Clodoveo, his adviser Uberto, the queen Margarita, the gardener Luciano, and the two twin brothers Ursón and Valentin. As in the other versions, the two brothers grow up in different environments: Ursón is raised by a she-bear while Valentin is taken care of by his mother the queen. When the play ends, the two brothers are reunited, have married, and have both become kings of France. The focus of the play is on the opposition between the wild brother and the well-educated Valentín; the story of the wooden horse and the magician Pacolet has been left out.

Lope de Vega has been considered as the first writer to introduce

the theme of the wild man in the Spanish *comedia*, a motif that was later picked up by Calderón in his famous depiction of Segismundo in *La vida es sueño* (Meadows 183). *El Nacimiento de Ursón y Valentín* was the first play in which Lope de Vega explored this theme, to which he came back in the plays *El animal de Hungría* and *El hijo de los leones* (Meadows 183). Thus, while the theme of the wooden horse – a theme that had found its way into French literature through contacts with the Iberian Peninsula – was not picked up by Lope de la Vega, the story of the wild brother inspired new tales when it arrived in early modern Spain. Once again, the circulation of the tale about the two twin brothers seems to have been the starting point for a new literary exploration. With de Vega's adaptation we also see that the story of Valentine and Orson made it outside of Europe, travelling to the New World. *Ursón y Valentín* was included in collected editions of de Vega's comedies, such as that printed under the title *Las comedias del famoso poeta Lope de Vega Carpio* in Saragossa in 1603–04. A copy of this collected edition appears on a list of books shipped by a bookdealer from Seville to his associate in Lima, Peru; the shipment arrived in 1606 for further sale in the New World.[74] By the early 1600s our story had crossed continents.

74. For a transcription of the books received by Miguel Méndez in Lima, see Leonard 386.

Conclusion: A Shared European Narrative

As the other articles in this issue attest, scholarship is becoming increasingly aware that older models of the translation and movement of medieval texts are too neat and too linear, rarely reflecting the reality of the messy routes by which books, texts, and ideas travelled. Many medieval texts also blatantly defy later attempts at constructing literary histories that show a clear separation between literary cultures. *Valentin* is one such messy textual tradition, with a complex pattern of transmission which is much better understood once we move away from linear, source-based models.

Though it is often considered a French tradition, the earliest French source has been lost, the context from which the second French version emerged is shadowy, and we cannot see this tradition as an example of a clear pattern of transmission that moves outward from France. For a start, there are too many gaps, the Middle Dutch and Middle Low German versions play a far more important role in the story's spread than previously acknowledged, and we have examples of translations that sparked new translations. There are also man-

uscripts that belong to the same language group but which emerge from a completely different cultural milieu, manuscripts and printed texts that moved across borders, and texts where multiple cultural traditions come together on the page. Though there are two different strands, the Swedish *VN* and the early French *VO* editions are near-contemporary, defying any further neat categorisations. *Valentin* illustrates the tension between the scholar's desire to pin down a book or text in order to define it, and the medieval reality where books and narratives rarely stayed in place. Literary forms changed as human agents adapted stories or repurposed characters and motifs, and books themselves were forever being moved around and preserved, destroyed, rediscovered or remade, encountering new audiences along the way. Linear stories may be easier to understand, but they are not enough to capture the complexity and richness of shared literary forms like *Valentin*.

At the same time as it may be problematic to view the evolution of literary traditions as linear, *Valentin* also raises the question of the border between translations, rewritings and adaptations, on the one hand, and different texts and narratives, on the other. Should we consider the French prose version first published by Maillet as a prose rewriting of a lost French *chanson de geste*, or rather as a new tale that is closely related to a Germanic tradition, while also picking up elements from broader Eurasian story matter? The malleability of romances has often been pointed out, but in the case of these tales one may wonder whether we are not actually dealing with two romance traditions that share the same beginning before moving in two different directions. *Valentin et Orson* is not necessarily a later rewriting of a lost French source, but could also be seen as a new French text, written as a result of foreign influences. This is not a case of simply borrowing some additional motifs, but the additional episodes are woven into the structure of the tale and take up more space than the 'original' story matter. The idea of a *chanson de geste* being turned into a prose translation may fit a model we know, but we must be careful in treating all such texts the same way. One cannot help but wonder whether, if this had been an Arthurian story – where processes of adaptation and rewriting are well-established in existing scholarship – *VO* would have been treated differently, as a separate, off-shoot tradition.

One of the most striking features of both *VN* and *VO* is that they have a textual history marked by gaps, losses, and fragmentary evidence. This messy, uncomfortable history forces us to think about the incomplete records medievalists often deal with, and of problems

as well as opportunities – how such gaps offer the occasions for some good old-fashioned sleuthing that many of us find so rewarding. But there are dangers, too, with trying to fill in the blanks, when each missing connection is easily explained away by postulating yet another lost source, and when national traditions overlook foreign influences and too readily claim a text as their own. A search for lost originals often overshadows the important findings that can be unearthed from the material that does survive. Though it can be difficult to see the full picture when parts of a textual tradition are missing, it is important to consider this larger view nonetheless. With European narratives like *Valentin*, looking at one language or version alone is its own kind of wilful fragmentation, with scholars choosing to see one static snapshot where there is a kaleidoscope.

Even though the French prose text *Valentin et Orson* is a French romance epic, anchored in a French literary tradition, it needs to be understood in a broader perspective. Considering the crucial roles of Dutch and German traditions for the tradition as a whole, it becomes difficult to treat the tale about the twin brothers as a primarily French narrative, even though the French prose text was fundamental for the development of what we have referred to as the second strand. When looking at all these texts together, we learn more about literary contact across the Dutch, Low German, High German, and Scandinavian cultures, than about the spread of a French narrative alone.

It is notable that the Dutch and German versions played such an important role as mediators of *VN*, with the Dutch *VO* also triggering new translations in Icelandic and Yiddish. At a time when it is being recognised that important literary works in French actually originated in Flanders and not in regions belonging to the French crown, we see that for the translation and spread of French material across other regions of Europe Flanders is equally important. It is also worth noting that the German context plays a key role in the transmission of French romances, which is not sufficiently acknowledged by critics. *Valentin* is by no means the only example. If we take the spotlight off western Europe and look at Europe as a whole, we see, for instance, that some of the Swedish translated romances go back to German translations of French examples (Lodén 12–14), and that for central European romance narratives, especially in Czech and Polish, German translations were a crucial point of transmission.[75] Stories about the spread of French romances too often downplay the importance of such mediating cultures.

Yet, this does not imply that we should refer to these texts as pri-

75. Fulvio Ferrari points out that Low German was particularly important for the spread of chivalric texts in Sweden, especially since Low German was spoken and read at court "and it was the language of economic power" (Ferrari 79). All Czech romances are translations of German models. The Polish versions of *Mélusine* (*Historia o Meluzynie*), *Pierre et Maguelonne* (*Historia o Magielonie*), and *Octavian* (*Historia o Otonie*) also go back to German examples (Wierzbicka-Trwoga 267–69). Some of these translations were later translated into Russian. For romances from this part of Europe, German literary culture is a much more central and direct point of origin than French literary culture.

marily Germanic. Instead, we suggest that *Valentin* should be considered a shared European narrative. *Valentin* is not unique in any sense; on the contrary, it connects to other shared narratives, such as *Floire et Blancheflor* and *Paris et Vienne*, which also spread widely in medieval Europe. These shared narratives need to be approached as such: one individual text should also be related to the larger tradition. Texts like this have traditionally been overlooked in national histories, because their status as translations and international narratives means acknowledging the role of other literary cultures in the formation of one's own. But this is not a case of national versus European, but rather of realising that these are connected: at the same time as they could be linked to a larger project of Europeanisation of medieval culture, some of these narratives have also contributed to the emergence of new vernacular literatures (Lodén). The Swedish *VN*, for instance, takes an important place in the emergence of Swedish literary writing. The *VO* translations that mention a French source uncover another such link: these identifications seem to refer to an international literary tradition which also has French roots. Just as French is one of the "prestige languages with pan-European currency" that nonetheless had local variants (Putter and Busby 1), so French literature also had considerable status and appeal across Europe, with many romances in particular becoming shared European traditions that had localised versions. Texts like *Valentin* give insight into the tensions but also the fruitful co-existence between local and supralocal.

Valentin is not a particularly glamorous narrative – it is not a typically 'courtly' romance and it is often labelled as a 'popular' romance in English scholarship, a label that calls up association with low status, second-rate texts. It is also not a canonical text, so it often falls through the cracks. Our study shows the value of examining more peripheral, problematic literary texts. Texts that are considered aesthetically pleasing and examples of an elite, exclusive, high literary culture tend to steal the spotlight. Yet it is texts like this – whose international audience turns out to include noblewomen, well-travelled merchants, and those in the legal profession – that had more universal appeal and therefore spread far and wide. Such 'popular', non-canonical texts are a testament to the vitality of literary exchanges in the Middle Ages and remind us what we leave out when we consider one specific language or literary context as an isolated phenomenon.

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JONAS WELLENDORF

The Prosimetrum of Old Norse Historiography — Looking for Parallels

Abstract

The present paper charts the development of the prosimetrum in the Old Norse kings' sagas. An introductory section illustrates the two main kinds of poetic citations found in the kings' sagas and presents the stated rationale for the inclusion of poetry in the kings' sagas. Section two gives a diachronic overview of the material showing how the balance between the two basic kinds of poetic citations changes across time and proposes a developmental model. Section three looks beyond the Old Norse materials and considers possible parallels to the Old Norse prosimetrum in the Medieval Latin and Arabic traditions.

1. Introduction

1. An early version of this material was presented at the Centre for Medieval Literature symposium *Moving Forms* in Athen, Sept. 2019. A more mature version was presented at the 18th International Saga Conference in Helsinki in Aug. 2022.

Kings' sagas make up a considerable part of the Old Norse literary corpus. They were mainly composed in the late twelfth century and in the first half of the thirteenth although later writers continued to expand upon and rework texts that had come down to them until the late fourteenth century. The genre is generally held to have reached its apex with the compilation of *Heimskringla*, a compendium of royal biographies traditionally ascribed to the Icelander Snorri Sturluson, in the 1230s, which covers the rulers from the semi-legendary Norwegian ninth-century king Halfdán svarti until Magnús Erlingsson who fell in 1184. These biographical sagas are preceded by a saga that in a more cursory form traces the history of the Yngling dynasty back to its divine founders in legendary antiquity.

The writers and compilers of kings' sagas and compendia were concerned that their texts were regarded as trustworthy and reliable accounts of both the immediate and the more remote past, and different strategies of authentication can be observed in these texts. Among the more conspicuous ones, one may mention references to trustwor-

thy individuals and/or a specific line of transmission of information from the event to the moment of writing. In connection with the account of the killing of Sigurðr slembidjákn, a pretender to the Norwegian throne who caused a great deal of inconvenience for the ruling kings and their advisors in the 1130s, *Heimskringla* relates that a certain Hallr, son of Þorgeirr læknir Steinsson and a retainer of King Ingi,

> var við staddr þessi tíðendi. Hann sagði Eiríki Oddssyni fyrir, en hann reit þessa frásǫgn […] Enn nefnir Eiríkr fleiri menn, er honum sǫgðu frá þessum tíðendum, vitrir ok sannreyndir, ok váru nær, svá at þeir heyrðu eða sá atburðina, en sumt reit hann eptir sjálfs sín heyrn eða sýn. (*Heimskringla* III 318–19)

> (was present at these events. He told them to Eiríkr Oddsson who wrote this story […] Eiríkr also mentions other people who told him of these events, wise and proven to be truthful, who were close by so that they heard or saw the event, but he also wrote some as he himself had heard and seen it.)

Heimskringla's account of the killing of Sigurðr slembidjákn is, in turn, based on the written account of Eiríkr Oddsson. This strategy of authentication, which is relatively rare in the kings' sagas, is mentioned in the Prologue to *Heimskringla* where the author presents (some of) the sources upon which he has drawn when writing his account. He does however not spend much energy arguing for the validity of this procedure. This suggests that he considered it to be fairly evident as long as the individual links in the chain of transmission were wise, knowledgeable individuals in possession of a good memory. A similar strategy is occasionally used by the pioneering Icelandic historian Ari fróði Þorgilsson in his *Íslendingabók* (1122–33), who also refers more vaguely to old and wise men in the manner of other early works of history from the region.[2]

The *Heimskringla* prologue foregrounds another strategy of authentication that requires more authorial comment and justification, suggesting that its reliability was not considered to be equally obvious; and that strategy is the quotation of authenticating skaldic verses. The author proclaims that the formal court poetry and the commemorative poems presented at court constitute an important and trustworthy category of sources:

> En þó þykki mér þat merkiligast til sannenda, er berum
> orðum er sagt í kvæðum eða ǫðrum kveðskap, þeim er svá var

2. A reference to a chain of transmission is found already in the first chapter of Ari's text (Ari fróði Þorgeirsson, *Íslendingabók* 4), while a general reference to wise men (*spakir menn*) can be found on page 9 and elsewhere. Nonspecific references to older informants are also made by the author of the pioneering *Historia Norwegie* (late twelfth century), who claims to rely on the assertions of his elders in every respect ("in omnibus seniorum asserciones secutus [sim]", *Historia Norwegie* 52). The roughly contemporary Danish historian Sven Aggesen similarly states that his text is based on what he learned by questioning "the old and those advanced in years" ("quantum ab annosis et ueteribus certa ualui inquisitione percunctari") Sven Aggesen, *Brevis Historia* 94. Mortensen discusses a shift in attitudes to oral sources that happens around this time, and shows how some, including Saxo, were "sometimes very reluctant" to admit that they did not draw information from a written book ("The Status of the 'Mythical Past'" 116 *et passim*).

ort um konunga eða aðra hǫfðingja, at þeir sjálfir heyrðu, eða í erfikvæðum þeim, er skáldin fœrðu sonum þeira.
(*Heimskringla* II 422)

(And yet, that seems to me most noteworthy as proof which is said in plain words in formal poems or other kinds of poetry, which were composed about kings and other leaders so that they themselves heard them, or in the commemorative poems which the skalds presented to their sons.)

The historical trustworthiness of these poems, the prologue claims, is secured by the fact they were first performed publicly before eyewitnesses to the events that were commemorated in the poetry. These poems were composed by poets affiliated with the courts of individual rulers or poets traveling between courts (both referred to as *skalds,* ON *skáld*). Once composed and performed the poems were memorized and transmitted orally by skalds, sometimes for centuries, until they were written down.[3] To serve this authenticating function, the stanzas would have had to be memorized and transmitted verbatim. Medieval authors believed that these stanzas were by and large faithfully transmitted word for word and scholars studying these texts today tend to agree.[4] Thus skaldic poems are not generally thought to be susceptible to the verbal transformations and instability that have come to be associated with orally transmitted poetry. The main function of skalds at the courts of kings is held to have been to preserve a record of deeds of the kings for posterity.[5] One way to do this in a society with restricted literacy was to bind the words in poetic form.[6] In *Heimskringla*, king Óláfr Haraldsson (d. 1030) is represented as giving direct expression to this when he, before his final battle at Stiklastaðir, instructs his skalds to position themselves where the battle is expected to be hardest so that they can see what happens in the battle and create a record of the events by composing poetic accounts of it afterwards (*Heimskringla* II 358).

A stanza from *Heimskringla's* saga of Óláfr Haraldsson may serve as an example of this strategy of authentication. Óláfr's youthful Viking expeditions are listed early in the saga. Among other deeds, we read, Óláfr conquered the castle Gunnvaldsborg and took its ruler Geirfiðr captive, demanding and receiving twelve thousands gold shillings in ransom. The saga continues:

Svá segir Sigvatr:
Þrettánda vann Þrœnda,

3. They are almost exclusively preserved in sagas and treatises on poetics/grammar. It is unknown whether the poems/stanzas entered the written tradition with these texts or whether they had already been committed to writing before that.

4. Both medieval and modern scholars naturally admit stanzas may be imperfectly transmitted and interpreted. Cf. the prologue to the separate saga of Óláfr Haraldsson: "Þau orð, er í kveðskap standa, eru in sǫmu sem í fyrstu váru, ef rétt er kveðit, þótt hverr maðr hafi síðan numit af ǫðrum, ok má því ekki breyta" (*Heimskringla* II 422) ("The words used in poetry are the same as they were in initially, if the poetry is constructed correctly, even though it has gone from person to person, and they cannot be changed for this reason").

5. While the prose sources leave us with the impression that this institution goes back to times immemorial, Fidjestøl has argued that the court poets only became an institution at court under earl Hákon Sigurðarson (r. c. 970–95) ("'Have you heard a Poem Worth More'" 127–28).

6. Jesch, discussing skaldic poetry in terms of "literacy *avant la lettre*" has compared the fixing of words in skaldic verse to the incision of words on stone in runic inscriptions. Arguing that the role of the skald "was not conceived as a poetical one […] but rather the job of recording essential information to preserve it, which could be in either poetry or [runic] writing" ("Skaldic Verse, a Case of Literacy avant la lettre?" 192). See also Jesch "The 'Meaning of the Narrative Moment'", which lays out the rationale for Old Norse court poetry with great clarity.

þat vas flótta bǫl, dróttinn
snjallr í Seljupollum
sunnarla styr kunnan.
Upp lét gramr í gamla
Gunnvaldsborg of morgin,
Geirfiðr hét sá, gǫrva
gengit, jarl of fenginn. (*Heimskringla* II 24)

(Thus says Sigvatr: "The brave lord of the Þrœndir won a thirteenth famous battle south in Seljupollar. That was a misfortune for the escapees. The ruler had his host to enter old Gunnvaldsborg in the morning (and) capture the earl; he was called Geirfiðr).[7]

This (rather prosaic) stanza does not corroborate every detail of the prose-account, but it does authenticate the gist of it, namely that the castle was conquered, and its ruler taken captive. The stanza is a part of a longer poem, now known as *Víkingarvísur* "Viking Verses", that catalogs Óláfr's successes in his early campaigns. Sigvatr, the skald responsible for this poem, had not yet joined the retinue of Óláfr during these campaigns and was therefore not an eyewitness to the events he commemorated, but it is likely that the poem was performed in the presence of king Óláfr himself and his retinue.[8] Thinking of this stanza in the terms of the *Heimskringla* prologue's rationale for the inclusion of skaldic poetry in the text, one might state that the skald, Sigvatr, would not have said that Óláfr captured a castle and took its ruler hostage, if he merely camped on the fields beneath the castle and traded a bit with the locals, perhaps taking a few cows as he left. Hence, the information contained in the stanza is to be considered as trustworthy, or as the prologue expresses it: "Tǫkum vér þat allt fyrir satt, er í þeim kvæðum finnsk um ferðir þeira eða orrostur" (*Heimskringla* I 5) ("we consider all that which is said about their journeys and battles in those poems to be true"). The only caveat is that skalds are prone to flattery, but they would never dare to attribute deeds to their patrons which these had not committed; this would, as Snorri states in a celebrated phrase, be "háð en eigi lof" (*Heimskringla* I 5) ("mockery rather than praise").

The *Separate Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* is slightly earlier than *Heimskringla* but is otherwise closely related to that text and also traditionally held to have been composed by Snorri Sturluson. The prologue to this earlier work presents a more elaborate version of the argument for the greater trustworthiness of skaldic poetry over that of memory of events unaided by poetry:

7. Since this article focuses on the prosimetrum of the kings' sagas and the integration of prose and poetry, skaldic stanzas are quoted in the context of the kings' sagas in which they appear rather than from the skaldic corpus edition. In presenting Skaldic stanzas, the original text and a translation is presented in the main text. A footnote will, in accordance with standard practice, rearrange the words of the stanza into prose order with the aim of indicating how the stanza is understood to be constructed grammatically: "Snjallr dróttinn Þrœnda vann þrettánda kunnan styr sunnarla í Seljupollum; þat vas flótta bǫl. Gramr lét gǫrva gengit upp í gamla Gunnvaldsborg of morgin jarl of fenginn; Geirfiðr hét sá. (Cf. Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* st. 13).

8. Fourteen stanzas and one half-stanza have been preserved (for details, see Jesch "Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur*" 532). The king is directly addressed in sts. 2 and 11.

Þau orð, er í kveðskap standa, eru in sǫmu sem í fyrstu váru,
ef rétt er kveðit, þótt hverr maðr hafi síðan numit at ǫðrum,
ok má því ekki breyta. En sǫgur þær er sagðar eru, þá er þat
hætt, at eigi skilisk ǫllum á einn veg. En sumir hafa eigi minni,
þá er frá líðr, hvernig þeim var sagt, ok gengsk þeim mjǫk í
minni [*var.* í munni] optliga, ok verða frásagnir ómerkiligar
(*Heimskringla* II 422; for the variant, see *Den store saga* 4).

(The words that are used in poetry are the same as they were
in the beginning, if the poem is recited correctly, even though
it has been learned by one individual from the other, and
they cannot be changed. But when stories are told there is a
danger that not everyone understand them in the same way;
as time passes, some will not be able to recall them as they
had heard them, and the stories are often confused by the
mind/in the telling and become untrustworthy).

As a medium of exact preservation of information, words bound by
poetic meter thus have a distinct advantage over stories in unbound
words: They were perceived to be inalterable. The *Heimskringla* au-
thor, concerned as he is with the reliability and trustworthiness of
his text, has taken the consequence of this, and the text (as edited in
the *Íslenzk fornrit* edition by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson) contains more
than six hundred skaldic stanzas or half-stanzas. The vast majority of
these, 83%, can be said to serve to bolster the historical credibility of
the account in the manner of the stanza by Sigvatr quoted above.[9]
These stanzas are generally held to have been composed after rather
than during the event they authenticate and were often part of a lon-
ger poem recounting the deeds of the patron of the poet.

If 83% serve a need for authentication, what then of the remaining
17%? They have been characterized as situational rather than as authen-
ticating. They are, as Diana Whaley writes, represented as being "com-
posed impromptu, in response to an event, a situation, a verbal cue,
and they may themselves affect the course of events or the ensuing con-
versation" ("Skalds and Situational Verses" 251). Generalizing, one can
say that while the official court poetry is public and focuses squarely
on the ruler, chronicling his battles and victories, the situational stan-
zas are of a more private nature. They often deal with the king and the
relations between him and his court poets, but they bring the poet, his
experiences and not least his wit and poetic abilities into focus. While
the authenticating stanzas are composed after the deed they commem-
orate, the situational stanzas constitute deeds in and of themselves.

9. This figure is based on my own count
and classification of stanzas (see below
for details).

10. As an exception to this rather generalized picture, one may mention Sigvatr Þórðarson's *Austrfararvísur*. Although the stanzas that make up this poem are presented as direct responses to events in *Heimskringla*, the text also makes clear that they belong to a larger poem (on this poem, see Fulk "Sigvatr Þórðarson, Austrfararvísur" and Wellendorf, "Austrfararvísur and Interreligious Contacts").

11. Stavnem's distinction is between 'diegetic' and 'extradiegetic', but 'intra-' has been added to 'diegetic' for clarity here and in the following.

12. Determining to which of the two groups any given stanza belongs is not an exact science. By Whaley's count 480 stanzas out of a total of 599 (= 81.5%) serve to authenticate the narrative' ("Skalds and Situational Verses" 254). The result of her tally thus points in the same direction as my own.

This results in a neat bipartition of poetic quotations in royal biographies into authenticating and situational stanzas. As a rule of the thumb the authenticating stanzas derive from official formal court poetry and are excerpted from longer poems, while the situational stanzas are occasional, informal, and improvised.[10] Although this bipartition of poetic citations is well established in saga scholarship, it has also been questioned; and Whaley concludes her article on this matter by stating that the division does not "adequately capture what verses have to offer in their prose context" ("Skalds and Situational Verses" 263). A bipartition can nevertheless to a large extent be upheld if one uses an alternative set of more general labels that have been proposed by Rolf Stavnem ("Creating Tradition" 92–93). Using terms adapted from narratology, he differentiates between intradiegetic and extradiegetic stanzas.[11] That is: stanzas that belong to the level of the story and stanzas that belong to the storytelling. Determining to which level a given stanza belongs is usually quite straightforward and simply requires that one asks whether it is recited by the authorial voice of the saga (in which case it is extradiegetic) or by the skald to whom the stanza is attributed (which would make it an intradiegetic).[12] As an example of the former, extradiegetic, use of poetic citations, one may point to Sigvatr's stanza about Óláfr Haraldsson's youthful exploits. *Heimskringla* shows a strong preference for extradiegetic citations, but as the survey of the entire kings' saga complex in section 2 below will show, the approach of the *Heimskringla* author was not shared by all his predecessors. First, however, some examples of the intradiegetic, anecdotal use of skaldic stanzas will be given.

The nuts-stanzas

The so-called *Oldest Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* (late twelfth century) and the *Legendary saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* (early thirteenth century) both relate that king Óláfr Haraldsson one day sent some nuts from his table to Sigvatr skáld and Óttarr svarti, the foremost poets and eulogists of his court, and asked them to split the nuts justly between themselves. Experienced saga readers may predict that a contest between the two skalds will follow in which each of the two attempts to win the goodwill of the king by displaying their wit and poetic skill by extemporizing a stanza that memorializes this rather trivial event. It is even likely that the king attempts to

feed discord between the two for the sake of entertainment. Unexpectedly, the two skalds made common front against the king.[13] Sigvatr said:

13. Sigvatr and Óttarr were related, Sigvatr being Óttarr's paternal uncle.

> Sændi mer enn mære
> man þængill sa drængi
> sið mun ec hælldr at roðre
> nætr þioðkonongr vitrazc.
> Oft en okr bað skipta
> Ottar i tvau drottenn
> ændazc mal sem minndi
> manndiarfr faðurarve. (*Legendary saga* 136)[14]

14. The *Oldest Saga*'s text of this anecdote is fragmentary (*Oldest saga* 2), and I have therefore cited the stanzas from the *Legendary Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson*.

(The famous mighty king sent me nuts; that lord keeps the retainers in mind. I will reveal myself rather late in praise poetry. Meals often come to an end, and the brave ruler asked Óttarr and me to split them in two, as one would [divide] a paternal inheritance).[15]

15. Enn mæri þjóðkonungr sendi mér hnetr; sá þengill man drengi; ek mun heldr síð vitrask at hróðri. Opt endask mál, en manndjarfr dróttinn bað okkr Óttar skipta í tvau sem myndi fǫðurarfi. (Cf. Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Lausavísa* 9)

While the stanza is not completely clear, the gist of it is that Sigvatr is disappointed by the royal display of largesse and suggests that he will be less prompt to praise the king in the future. Understood thus, the line "that lord keeps the retainers in mind" would be highly ironic. Óttarr, the second court poet, is also unhappy being paid peanuts and advises the king in no uncertain terms to be more generous henceforth:

> Nætr sændi mer handan
> randaðr alunbranda
> aðr væntezc mer mæiri
> min þing konongr hingat.
> Mior er markar stiore
> mæir er þar til flæira
> niðrattu oss i aðru,
> islanz mikils visi. (*Legendary saga* 138)

(The generous king [thrower of arm-fire], sent nuts here to me from the other side; earlier I expected greater remuneration. The poet [ruler of the forest] is lean, there will be more later. Do not humiliate us a second time, king [chieftain of the great ice-land).[16]

16. Konungr, hrǫnduðr ǫlunbranda, sendi mér hnetr hingat handan; áðr væntizk mér mín þing meiri. Mjǫrr er markar stjóri; meir er þar til fleira. Niðrattu [*ms.* uiðrattu] oss í ǫðru, vísi mikils íslands. (Cf. Óttarr svarti, *Lausavísa* 1 784–86).

The anecdote concludes with Óttarr's stanza in both the *Oldest Saga*

and the *Legendary Saga*, and both texts launch into an anecdote about Óláfr and Þorfinnr munnr, another of the skalds of the king. The anecdote about the nuts is however found in a fair number of versions of the saga of king Óláfr,[17] and the younger versions round off the anecdote by mentioning that the king smiled when he heard the stanzas;[18] the point presumably being that he acknowledged that the court poets were disgruntled and that he was amused by the manner in which they alerted him to their dissatisfaction.

In a nutshell, the episode may be said to highlight the contractual nature of the relationship between a Norse king and his poets and the intersection of immaterial and material value systems. The king is expected to be generous towards his retainers, and his skalds will reciprocate by celebrating and immortalizing his munificence, his martial prowess, and his general awesomeness in verse. Should the king fail to keep his side of the bargain, his eulogizers may stop building his reputation and begin tearing it down. The anecdote is hardly alone in dealing with this theme, but it is fair to rank it among the minor episodes in the corpus of kings' sagas. Yet it found its way into one of the earliest specimens of the genre, the so-called *Oldest Saga of* Óláfr *Haraldsson*. From the *Oldest Saga,* it entered the *Legendary Saga of* Óláfr *Haraldsson*. Styrmir Kárason the Learned (d. 1245), who was prior of the Augustinian house at Viðey in Iceland, also included it in his now lost saga of Óláfr Haraldsson, whence it entered the late medieval version known as the *Great Saga of* Óláfr *Haraldsson* – it is on the other hand strikingly absent from the snorronic texts *Heimskringla* and the *Separate saga of Óláfr Haraldsson.* So, in spite of its trifling nature, the anecdote must have had some appeal to saga compilers and, presumably, audiences. These texts about Óláfr Haraldsson also include many other seemingly inconsequential anecdotes that similarly center on skaldic stanzas. In fact, the scant remains of the *Oldest Saga* contain no less than eight such anecdotal stanzas (or fragments thereof).

All the sagas about Óláfr Haraldsson mentioned above are biographical and narrate in various levels of detail Óláfr's career and deeds while in this world and from beyond the grave. They are likely to have been committed to writing in Iceland and it is equally likely that anecdotes such as the one about the nuts entered the written tradition not because they were particularly memorable, but because the stanzas at the center of the anecdote had been remembered. The stanzas, assuming that they are traditional, would have been committed to memory and transmitted orally for a century and a half or more

17. The anecdote is found in *Oldest Saga* 2 (fragmentarily), *Legendary Saga* 136–38 Tómasskinna (København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 1008 fol.), *Den store saga* II 703, Bæjarbók (København, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 73b fol.), *Den store saga* II 705 and Flateyjarbók (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, GkS 1005), *Den store saga* II 689.

18. Introductory remark: "Þa er þæir Sighvatr oc Ottar varo við Olave kononge, þa varo þæir æigi iammikils værðir sem fyrr. Þat var einn dag, at konongr sændi þæim nætr af borðe sinu. Þa quað Sighvatr visu þessa: […]" (*Legendary saga* 136) ("When Sigvatr and Óttarr were with King Óláfr, then they were not regarded as highly as earlier. It happened one day that the king sent them nuts from his table, then Sigvatr recited this stanza: […]"). Concluding remark: Konungr brosti at vísunum er þeir hǫfðu kveðit (*Den store saga* II 703) ("The king smiled over the stanzas which they had recited").

19. The possibility that the stanzas were composed by the individual who first committed the anecdote to writing, should not be excluded completely, but it does raise the question of why someone would invent a bagatelle such as the anecdote about the nuts.

20. The term is perhaps most closely associated with Beyschlag, "Möglichkeiten mündlicher Überlieferung". Von See, "Skaldenstrophe und Sagaprosa", is skeptical about the existence of such *Begleitprosa*. See also Hofmann, "Sagaprosa als Partner von Skaldenstrophen", von See, "Mündliche Prosa und Skaldendichtung", and more recently Ghosh, *Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History* 25–100. Males prefers to avoid the term because skaldic stanzas "were transmitted in contexts that bore little resemblance to sagas (*The Poetic Genesis of Old Icelandic Literature* 212)."

21. Although the stanza attributed to Sigvatr does bear some of the hallmarks of his style, namely formal mastery and a lack of kennings.

22. It must be admitted that Sneglu-Halli's poetry often is less tactful than that of a Sigvatr or an Óttarr, but Sneglu-Halli is ascribed improvised stanzas in which he, like Óttarr did, gives vent to his dissatisfaction with the fare he receives at court (*Sneglu-Halla þáttr* 271–75).

by generations of poetic specialists who were themselves active practitioners of the skaldic art.[19] Although little is known about how skalds memorized and performed the poetry of their forerunners in the art, it is surmised that extemporized and occasional stanzas, such as the two presented above, circulated orally along with some contextual information that staged the stanzas by explaining the situation that gave rise to them and attributing them to certain skalds affiliated with particular courts. Scholars studying the nuts and bolts of saga composition usually discuss this contextual information under the heading *Begleitprosa* "accompanying prose" and focus on the stability, detailedness and historical reliability of this *Begleitprosa*. As one would expect, opinions differ and some scholars have argued that the *Begleitprosa* is stable, detailed and hence reliable as a historical source (e.g. Beyschlag) while others have argued the opposite (e.g. von See).[20]

The author of the *Oldest Saga*, the first saga known to include the nuts-stanzas, was in all likelihood conversant with this traditional *Begleitprosa*, whether through active participation in the skaldic tradition or by having conferred with an active participant. The two stanzas presented above need however not have been transmitted with a comprehensive narrative context explaining the circumstances of their composition. The passing of the nuts as well as the king's reason for doing so could have been extrapolated from the stanzas at any point during their oral and written transmission. The contents of the stanzas do not point specifically to the court of king Óláfr nor do they indicate that the poets in question were Sigvátr and Óttarr.[21] It is therefore possible that the *Begleitprosa* could have contained this information, but one might equally well imagine that the stanzas became attached to these two poets at some stage in the course of their transmission because Sigvatr and Óttarr hold a prominent position in the tradition. One could also easily imagine a setting a quarter of a century later at the court of Óláfr's half-brother Haraldr harðráði, in which case the two stanzas could have been composed by other poets, such as Sneglu-Halli and Þjóðólfr Arnórsson.[22] The intradiegetic stanzas of the nuts-anecdote differ from the extradiegetic in that they occupy the center of attention, rather than having the subordinate evidentiary role typical of the extradiegetic stanzas. Knowledge of the situation that occasioned to the stanzas may have been transmitted along with the stanzas, but there is also a distinct possibility that this context was reimagined at any point during the transmission.

The sword-stanza

This potential for instability, misattribution, restaging and recontextualization of stanzas is illustrated by another anecdote contained in the *Oldest* and in the *Legendary Saga*. Again, a verse stands at its center:

> Sværð standa her sunda
> sars læyuum ver arar
> hærstillis þarf ec hylli
> holl rað buin gulli.
> Við tœka ec vika,
> vil ec enn með þer kænnir
> ællz ef æitthvært vildir,
> alvaldr geva skallde (*Legendary saga* 132).[23]

(Swords stand here, decorated with gold; we praise the swords [harbingers of wound ponds]. I need the favor of the army-commander, wholesome conditions [*or* sound advice]. If you gave the poet something, ruler of all, I would receive it. I want to remain with you, king [trier of fire of inlets]).[24]

The *Oldest Saga* gives the following, somewhat fragmentary, context:

> Þat er sagt at eitt hvert sinn at konungrinn Óláfr sat í loftum nǫkkurum, en [stóðu fyrir] honum sverð mǫrg ok hǫrfðu upp hjǫltin á ǫllum. Óttarr skáld [kvað] þá vísu þessa: […] Konungr mælti: "At vísu skal ek gefa þé| …" (*Oldest saga* 7).

(It is said that once when the king Óláfr sat in some loft, many swords stood before him and all their hilts pointed upwards. Óttarr the skald then recited this stanza: […] The king said: Sure, I will give you [one]).

The stanza is quite vague in terms of particulars. As in the case of the nuts-stanzas, neither the persons involved nor the specific setting can be extrapolated from the stanza: *allvaldr* 'ruler' and *skáld* 'poet' are fairly generic terms and could refer to many others beside King Óláfr and Óttarr.[25] The distinct detail that the hilts of the swords are pointing upwards is not necessarily drawn from the stanza although that could be a literal interpretation of the first verb: "swords stand. . ." rather than, say, "swords lean . . ." or "swords lie . . .". Be that as it may, at this point in time both hilts and blades of swords could be decorated with gold,[26] so the mention of the inlay does not help identifying the exact positioning of the swords either. On the other hand, the

23. The *Oldest Saga*'s text of this stanza is incomplete, and I have therefore cited the stanza from the *Legendary Saga*.

24. Sverð standa hér, búin gulli; vér leyfum árar sárs sunda. Ek þarf hylli herstillis, holl ráð. Allvaldr, ef eitt hvert vildir gefa skáldi, ek tœka við. Vil ek enn með þér, kennir elds víka. (Cf. Bersi Skáld-Torfuson, *Lausavísa* 795–7). As the text is preserved in the text of the *Legendary Saga* the phrase "hærstillis þarf ec hylli | holl ráð ("I need a favor of the army-commander, wholesome conditions [*or* sound advice]") is unsatisfactory from a semantic and grammatical point of view. An anonymous reviewer of this article suggests constructing "gulli búin" with "holl ráð": "I need a favor of the army-commander, good advice decorated with gold". Whaley who avoids the problem by following the more satisfactory *Kringla*-text in AM 36 fol., prints "herstillis verðr hylli | hollust" ("the favor (of the army-commander) [RULER] BECOMES MOST GRACIOUS").

25. This would be the same Óláfr and the same Óttarr as in the anecdote about the nuts.

26. See e.g. the eleventh century Leikkimäki sword (Pierce 138).

stanza mentions that the favor of the king is at stake, which is not reflected in the prose context.

The *Oldest* and *Legendary Saga* agree in all essential details, but other sagas present the stanza in other contexts. In Styrmir Kárason's *Articuli* the stanza is not attributed to Óttarr but to a certain Bersi Skáld-Torfuson. The context reads:

> Annarr var sá maðr er Bersi hét ok var Skáld-Torfuson; hann var ok skáld gótt. Bersi var rœgðr við konunginn ok sagt at hann kynni ekki at yrkja né kveða þat er ei var áðr kveðit. Þá lét konungr taka mǫrg sverð ok bregða ok setja niðr nǫkkut [*ms.* nǫkð] í eina litla stofu. Þá let konungr kalla Bersa, en er Bersi kom þá mælti konungr at hann skyldi yrkja um þat er sverðin váru upp reist. Þá kvað Bersi: […] Þá gaf konungr Bersa eitt gótt sverð. (*Den store saga* II 690)

> (A second one [skald at court] was the one who was called Bersi and was the son of Skáld-Torfa. He was also a great skald. Someone slandered Bersi in front of the king and it was said that he was unable to compose or recite poetry which had not already been composed. Then the king had many swords taken and drawn and fixed somewhat [in the floor] in a small room. Then the king had Bersi called and when Bersi came the king said that he should compose about the fact that the swords stood erect. Then Bersi recited: […] Then the king gave Bersi a good sword).

In terms of staging, this anecdote presents a variant of a well-known and fairly common motif in such anecdotes: the king challenges the poet to improvise a stanza that fulfills certain criteria of a formal nature or as regards the content of the stanza. Its conventional nature can be illustrated by the fact that the following anecdote in the *Legendary Saga* gives another example of the same motif. In that case, king Óláfr challenges a skald by the name of Þorfinnr to compose an ekphrastic stanza about a tapestry hanging on a wall.[27] Although, one may think that Bersi does not really fulfill the challenge by describing the erect swords, the king was apparently satisfied with the outcome and rewarded the skald.[28]

Heimskringla and the *Separate saga of Óláfr Haraldsson,* finally, cite the very same stanza, but they attribute it to Sigvatr skáld and present it in a very different context. The version in *Heimskringla* reads:

27. Another example is found in the saga of Óláfr Tryggvason where the king challenges the skald Hallfreðr to compose a stanza in which he uses the word sverð 'sword' in every line (*Heimskringla* I 331).

28. The intercalated phrase in which the poet expresses his wish to remain with the king fits well with what we know about Bersi's biography. For *Heimskringla* (which does not attribute this stanza to Bersi) tells that Bersi had been affiliated with Jarl Sveinn (one of king Óláfr's opponents) and had been put in chains by Óláfr. *Heimskringla* then cites three stanzas of a flokkr Bersi composed for Óláfr (presumably "head-ransom stanzas" composed to save his life) (*Heimskringla* II 65–67).

Óláfr konungr hafði jólaboð mikit, ok var þá komit til hans mart stórmenni. Þat var inn sjaunda dag jóla, at konungr gekk ok fáir menn með honum. Sigvatr fylgði konungi dag ok nótt. Hann var þá með honum. Þeir gengu í hús eitt. Þar váru hirðir í dýrgripir konungs. Hann hafði þá hafðan viðrbúnað mikinn, sem vanði var til, heimt saman dýrgripi sína til þess at gefa vingjafar it átta kveld jóla. Þar stóðu í húsinu sverð eigi allfá gullbúin. Þá kvað Sigvatr: . . . Konungr tók eitt hvert sverðit ok gaf honum. Var þar gulli vafiðr meðalkaflinn ok gullbúin hjǫlt. Var sá gripr allgóðr, en gjǫfin var eigi ǫfundlaus, ok heyrði þat síðan (*Heimskringla* II 296–97).

(King Óláfr had invited many to the Christmas celebrations and many men of rank had come to him. It was the seventh day after Christmas and the king was out walking and a few men with him. Sigvatr attended the king day and night and was with him at this point. They entered some building. In this building, the king's treasures were kept. He had then made great preparations, as was customary, and gathered his treasures in order to give his men tokens of his friendship on the eighth night of Christmas. No small number of swords adorned with gold stood there in the building. Then Sigvatr said: [the stanza is quoted]. The king took one of the swords and gave it to him. The haft was wound with gold and the hilt had gold inlays. This was a very precious item, but the gift was not without envy and this came to light later).

It is commonly held that the author of the *Heimskringla* compendium had access to and used at least one of the three earlier texts containing the stanza.[29] So when *Heimskringla*'s staging differs from those of earlier texts, it is likely that the author of this text made a conscious choice to replace the received context and with a newly devised one that suited his aims and taste better. In this particular case, the *Heimskringla* author shows great skill in his ability to incorporate the stanza into one of the larger narrative threads of his version of the saga of Óláfr Haraldsson. Sigvatr is by no means a random choice when it comes to attributing the stanza to a skald for in another poem he mentions that the king gave him a gold-inlaid sword. This is in his memorial poem on Óláfr, *Erfidrápa Óláfr Haraldssonar*, where Sigvatr mentions that he did not bring the gold-wound sword, given to him by the king, on his journey to Rome (*Erfidrápa* st. 27). It is likely that this mention first spurred the author of *Heimskringla* to attribute the

29. See e.g. the charts the interrelations of the texts belonging to the kings' saga complex presented by Andersson, "Kings' sagas" 204, and Fidjestøl, *Det norrøne fyrstediktet* 10.

stanza on the swords to Sigvatr, as Sigurður Nordal once suggested (*Om Olaf den Helliges saga* 156). It is however impossible to determine whether the author saw this as an innovation and improvement of the tradition or an emendation and correction of tradition. In either case, depicting Sigvatr as stealing a march on the other retainers and thus receiving the best gift from the king at Christmas certainly feeds into the prominent theme of jealousy and competition among the skalds at court. The deftness of the *Heimskringla* author is also evident in the way he integrates a reference to the sword with the golden hilt much later in the saga when Þórmóðr, yet another of the king's skalds, compares his own undying loyalty to the king to Sigvatr's more lukewarm attitude: "Þess vætti ek, konungr, hvárt sem friðr er betri eða verri, at ek sjá nær yðr staddr, meðan ek á þess kost, hvat sem vér spyrjum til, hvar Sigvatr ferr með gullinhjaltann" (*Heimskringla* II 362) ("I expect, king, that, regardless of how this turns out [*lit.* whether the peace is better or worse], I will remain by your side, as long as possible, no matter what we hear of the whereabouts of Sigvatr and the golden hilt").[30]

This second example then, in addition to showing how skaldic stanzas may form the poetic core of anecdotes that play out at the court of kings, also highlights how the relatively stable nucleus formed by the stanza is presented against a flexible backdrop that may vary in many, if not all, details. That the stanzas have primacy is shown by the simple fact that the anecdotes would have little point without the poetry. Of the three different contexts for the swords-stanza suggested by the sagas, the editor of the classic corpus edition, Finnur Jónsson, chose to present the stanza among those of Bersi Skáld-Torfuson (*Skj* BI 256). The recent corpus edition does the same, but without presenting arguments for preferring this attribution over the alternatives (Whaley, Bersi Skáld-Torfuson 795–97). While it is impossible to determine the actual historical situation that gave rise to the stanza and the identity of the originator and the addressee, this dubious contextual information is paradoxically indispensable for any attempt at understanding the meaning of a stanza. Severing stanzas from their prose context may be possible, but whether one accepts the prose contexts or rejects them, turning a blind eye to them, is not an option.

The royal biographies of the kings' sagas were generally conceived of as historical texts, relating historical fact, and their authors, Snorri Sturluson in particular, were at pains to stress the veridical nature of their accounts by including authenticating poems about "journeys and battles" that had been performed before eyewitnesses to the events

30. Another reference to the gift of the sword with the golden hilt is found in an addition to *The Great Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* that is found in the Flateyjarbók manuscript. There, Þórmóðr sarcastically asks the king why he does not ask Sigvatr to entertain the men "ok launa gulllinhjaltann er þú, konungr, gaf honum í jólagjǫf í fyrra vetr" (*Den store saga* II 821) ("and give recompense for the golden hilt that you, king, gave him as a Christmas gift last year"). The king, however, defends Sigvatr and tells that he is more useful where he is now, praying in Rome, than he would be by the king's side.

commemorated. This apparent need to include sources has been connected with a newly arisen "impersonal concept of truth" that followed in the wake of the recent spread of parchment literacy, in which the truthfulness of an account no longer depended upon the perceived reliability or authority of the narrator but on his ability to trace it back to commonly recognized authorities (paraphrased from Meulengracht Sørensen, "The Prosimetrum Form" 175).

Of the three examples discussed above, it is only the example from Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* that can be said to fulfill this authenticating, extradiegetic, function. The stanzas about the nuts and the sword served a different, more anecdotal, intradiegetic function and it is striking that the *Heimskringla* author choose to leave out the stanzas about the nuts and recontextualize and reattribute the sword stanza. By doing so, he was able to integrate an anecdotal stanza into one of the larger narrative threads of his account of the life and rule of Óláfr Haraldsson and thus turn a trifling stanza into a consequential one. This however came at a cost and the example focused attention on the instability of whatever *Begleitprosa* there might have been.

This distinction between intra- and extradiegetic stanzas brings out a characteristic feature of Old Norse historiography and the following section will trace the development of this feature diachronically by studying how the proportion of intradiegetic to extradiegetic stanzas change over time.

2. A Diachronic View

83% of the stanzas quoted in *Heimskringla*, the apogee of the kings' saga genre, are as mentioned extradiegetic and it has become a commonplace of saga scholarship to observe that the kings' sagas and the sagas of Icelanders use verses in different ways.[31] Using the terms adopted here, one may say that verses in the kings' sagas mainly are extradiegetic while verses in the sagas of Icelanders predominantly are intradiegetic. But while the stanzas of the sagas of Icelanders remain predominantly intradiegetic throughout the history of that genre, the proportion of intradiegetic stanzas to extradiegetic ones decline over time in the kings' sagas.[32] This variance may partly be attributed to literary development, the availability of materials, and the changing taste and shifting priorities of authors and audiences over time. While the fragmentary preservation of the earliest representatives of the genre, uncertainties of chronology, and other factors

31. See Bjarni Einarsson, "On the Rôle of Verse", who, distinguishing between stanzas quoted as evidence and stanzas that are a part of the narrative, gives figures for various genres and texts.

32. The use of poetic quotations in the sagas of Icelanders will not be discussed in the present context, but the cause of the dearth of extradiegetic stanzas in this genre may be that the chieftains of saga age Iceland do not appear to have had a *hirðskáld* institution like that of courts abroad.

make it difficult to trace a neat unidirectional development, the proportion of extradiegetic stanzas to intradiegetic ones is overall lower in the older part of the corpus, while the younger show a marked predilection for extradiegetic stanzas.

The table and chart below present the texts in the kings' saga complex in rough chronological order (from oldest to youngest) and indicate the proportion of intradiegetic to extradiegetic stanzas. The figures are based on my own count and classification of stanzas. In most cases it is fairly straightforward to determine the category to which a stanza belongs. Intradiegetic stanzas are often part of an anecdote where the skald plays a prominent role and they are typically introduced with the phrase *þá kvað N.N.* 'then N.N. spoke [a verse]' (or something similar), indicating that the skald responds to the situation in which he finds himself. Extradiegetic stanzas on the other hand typically follow a statement of fact made by the saga author and are often introduced with the words *svá kvað N.N.* 'N.N. spoke thus'. The tallies have been made using the Íslenzk fornrit editions where available; the *Oldest Saga*, the *Legendary Saga*, the *Separate Saga* and *Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* have not been published in the Íslenzk fornrit, and for these texts, I rely on the editions by Storm, Heinrichs *et al.*, Johnsen and Jón Helgason and Jón Helgason and Jakob Benediktsson respectively. The texts within the corpus vary significantly in terms of length and the number of stanzas they include. The table and the chart therefore also present the total number of stanzas of each text (N). The figures in the last column (Stanzas per page) are only approximate as the number of words per page varies considerably from one text to the other, often depending on the number and length of the notes added by the editors, they nevertheless give an indication of the density of verse in each text. Three texts normally included in the kings' saga complex are not included in the chart because they do not contain any stanzas in their present form. These are *Færeyinga saga*, *Bǫglunga sögur* and *Magnús saga lagabœtis*.

Text	Intradiegetic	Extradiegetic	N	Stanzas per page
Ágrip	43%	57%	7	0.13
Orkneyinga saga	74%	26%	82	0.27
Jómsvíkinga saga	85%	15%	7	0.05
Oldest Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson	100%	0%	8	1.33
Sverris saga	94%	6%	18	0.06
Legendary Saga of Óláfr H.	41%	58%	63	0.58
Morkinskinna	23%	77%	328	0.58
Hákonar saga Ívarssonar	20%	80%	10	0.29
Fagrskinna	10%	90%	272	0.88
Óláfs saga by Oddr munkr	7%	93%	17	0.14
Separate Saga of Óláfr H.	29%	71%	212	0.32
Heimskringla	17%	83%	604	0.72
Knýtlinga saga	2%	98%	60	0.26
Hákonar saga	7%	93%	121	0.28

Some comments on the inclusion of poetry in individual texts are warranted:

Ágrip, the only vernacular text among the early Norwegian histories, contains only seven poetic quotations, four of which are extradiegetic. The text is however an outlier in the corpus, and it is generally held that it was composed by a Norwegian not well versed in the courtly skaldic tradition (see Driscoll, *Ágrip* xvii–xviii).

Orkneyinga saga and *Jómsvíkinga saga* are often discussed along with the kings' sagas although they do not focus on kings, and they have therefore been included in the chart. *Orkneyinga saga*, which focuses on the earls of Orkney, Earl Rǫgnvaldr in particular, is the most interesting of the two in regard to prosimetrum. It contains no less than eighty-two stanzas, the majority of which (74%) are intradiegetic. As these stanzas are clustered in the first third of the saga and mainly attributed to Arnórr jarlaskáld, they call attention to the fact that the availability of skaldic materials may have been an important factor as well and it can be assumed that the author would have included additional extradiegetic stanzas had they been available to him. The saga, as published in the Íslenzk fornrit edition used here, is reconstituted on the basis of a number of manuscripts that show considerable variation and none of which presents *Orkneyinga saga* as a complete integral text. In her discussion of these and related issues, Jesch argues that the manuscripts should not be considered as witnesses to an original saga composed at a specific point in time but as witnesses to the development of the saga across time. Jesch also illustrates the tendency of the late manuscript Flateyjarbók Reykjavík, GkS 1005 fol., 1387–94,

which is the only available witness for about half the saga as reconstituted in the Íslenzk fornrit edition, to excise extradiegetic stanzas found in the text at earlier stages in its development (Jesch, "*Orkneyinga saga*: A Work in Progress" 162). The proportion of intradiegetic to extradiegetic stanzas given in the table and the chart for *Orkneyinga saga* may therefore not accurately represent those of the hypothetical early saga.

The so-called *Oldest Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* is only preserved in the form of small parchment fragments dated c. 1225 (Oslo, Riksarkivet, NRA 52). The fragmentary preservation of the saga has prevented scholars from making certain pronouncements about the entirety of the saga, but it is noteworthy that all eight stanzas that are contained on these scraps of parchment, that is 100%, are intradiegetic and hence part of the narrative. *The Oldest Saga* is considered an early version of the work that is known as *The Legendary Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* which is preserved in its entirety. In the *Legendary Saga* on the other hand the majority of the stanzas are extradiegetic. Given the close relationship between the *Oldest* and the *Legendary Sagas* it is possible that the *Oldest Saga* also included many extradiegetic stanzas in its original form, but it is impossible to tell with certainty. The *Legendary Saga* stands out among the early texts in that extradiegetic stanzas outnumber intradiegetic quotations. This is partly explained by the fact that some extradiegetic stanzas are quoted in larger chunks (sts. 2–11 *Liðmannaflokkr* and sts. 45–50 *Tøgdrápa*).

Figure 1: *Left axis and columns: Intradiegetic (light gray) and extradiegetic (dark gray) stanzas. Right axis and line: Number of stanzas per page*
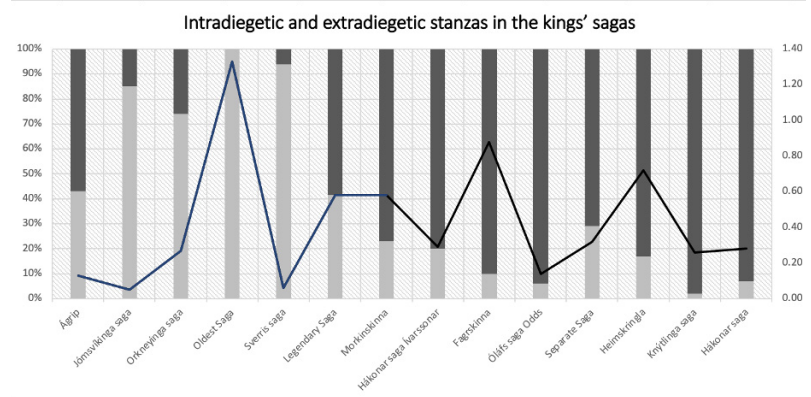
From the same early period stems *Sverris saga*, the saga of king Sverrir Sigurðarson. Although commissioned by the king himself, the saga is difficult to date and was not completed until after the death of Sverrir in 1202. It contains eighteen poetic quotations of which one stanza (st. 1) is extradiegetic. This number is surprisingly low when one considers that Sverrir, according to *Skáldatal* 'the Enumeration of Poets' was the ruler with whom most skalds were associated.[33]

33. The Kringla-version of *Skáldatal* 255, lists no less than thirteen named poets who composed about the king. Of these, it is only Blakkr skáld who is actually cited in *Sverris saga*.

34. Only one folio of *Magnús saga lagabœtis* has been preserved, so the absence of skaldic material in that text may be explained by the fragmentary state of the text.

35. Some, see Stavnem, "Creating Traditions" 88–90, have suggested that the stanzas entered the vernacular version of the saga via the kings' saga compilation *Fagrskinna*, conventionally dated to c. 1220.

36. The vernacular version of the stanza has usually been given primacy, but Gottskálk Jensson, "Nær mun ek Stefna", argues that it is the Latin version which is oldest. He does not discuss why Oddr would include a self-composed stanza or whether there were others. For a discussion that defends the conventional view, see Andersson, *Oddr munkr* 20–26.

37. The saga relates the following interchange which took place before the battle by the mouth of the river Niz: Þá váru þar með jarli skáld nǫkkur. Spurðu þeir þá ef jarl vildi láta yrkja nǫkkut. Hann kvezk ekki vilja yrkja láta, bað menn meir gæta at berjask sem bezt enn yrkja sem flest. Kvazk engum trúa skáldunum [*ms.* skálkunum] (*Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* 28) ("Some skálds were with the Jarl at that point. They asked whether the jarl wanted to have some poetry composed. He said he did not want to have poetry composed, and asked his men be more concerned with the quality of their fighting than with the quantity of their poetry. He said that he did not believe any of the poets").

38. *Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* has traditionally been considered to be among the sources for *Heimskringla* and dated to the 1220s. Bagge, "*Hákonar saga Ívarssonar*" has recently advanced arguments for dating the saga to the late Middle Ages (see also Andersson, "*Hákonar saga Ívarssonar*" and Bagge "Dateringen av *Hákonar saga*"). The arguments given by Bagge and Andersson do not settle the question conclusively, and I have provisionally placed the saga earlier than *Heimskringla* in the table.

One explanation for the dearth of skaldic materials in *Sverris saga* can be that its author, Abbot Karl Jónsson, was not well versed in the Skaldic tradition and knew little of the poetry composed about the king. An alternative explanation, which does not exclude the first, could be that *Sverris saga* relates events of the recent past that were still within communicative memory when the saga was written, and that the author therefore did not see a need to back up his account with skaldic evidence. This could also explain the complete absence of skaldic stanzas in *Bǫglunga saga* and *Magnús saga lagabœtis* (not included in the chart).[34]

Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar by Oddr munkr is usually considered among the earliest preserved kings' sagas and dated to c. 1190 (see Andersson, "The First Icelandic King's Saga"). This text contains seventeen or eighteen stanzas (depending on which manuscript one reads), the majority of which are extradiegetic. Oddr composed his work in Latin, but the preserved texts are in the vernacular and date from the second half of the thirteenth century. Given that it is difficult (though presumably not impossible) to translate skaldic poetry into Latin, scholarly consensus holds that most of these stanzas were added to the text when it was translated or reworked into the vernacular. Unfortunately, the questions of the date of the translation/vernacular reworking and the extent to which the translation has been interpolated at a later stage are unlikely to be resolved.[35] Because of these complexities, the saga is placed among the later rather than the earlier kings' sagas in the chart above. There is evidence to suggest that at least one Latin stanza was included in Oddr's original text. It would seem that this stanza was extradiegetic in its original Latin context, but it can hardly be said to have been evidential in the manner of the later kings' sagas.[36]

None of the stanzas in the fragmentarily preserved *Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* are attributed to or associated with its protagonist. This can be attributed to the fact that Hákon, according to his own saga, did not appreciate skaldic poetry.[37] This is also reflected in *Skáldatal* 257, which does not list any poets next to his name.[38]

The *Morkinskinna* compilation, finally, is usually dated to c. 1220, but the Morkinskinna manuscript (København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GkS 1009 fol.) is half a century younger and it would seem that at least some of the extradiegetic stanzas were added to the manuscript after the initial composition of the text. See the discussion in Andersson and Gade, *Morkinskinna* 25–57, in particular the discussion of Ívarr Ingimundarson's *Sigurðarbálkr* on pages 46–56.

Returning to the nuts and bolts of saga writing, it is worth recalling that the extradiegetic stanzas typically are attached to reports of battles and journeys of the kings, that is to political history and events that can be considered to be of general or public importance within the kingdom. Intradiegetic stanzas on the other hand are usually connected with minor anecdotes that may be entertaining and humorous but that can hardly be considered of great importance for the kingdom as a whole. It should also be reiterated that there are many uncertainties regarding the dating and transmission of these texts. Nevertheless, it seems feasible to draw a line between earlier texts (ending with the *Legendary Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson*) where one sees a preponderance of intradiegetic stanzas and later texts beginning with *Morkinskinna* where the extradiegetic stanzas dominate.

This does not mean that writers of the early group of texts did not draw facts from official skaldic poetry, only that they did not see the same need to systematically authenticate their accounts by citing this poetry as the later writers did. Already Theodoricus, writing in Latin, probably writing around 1180 (McDougall and McDougall, *Theodoricus monachus* xii; Kraggerud, *Theodoricus* xxxiv), claims in the opening paragraph of his prologue that he has drawn much information from the ancient poems in which the deeds of the Norwegian kings were mentioned.[39] However, he does not cite any of this poetry, preferring to quote authorities from Classical Antiquity, often poetry, in a manner reminiscent of Latin historians. Gudrun Lange has sought to identify the skaldic poems that Theodoricus is likely to have built upon and it is striking that they all belong to the formal courtly kind, i.e. are *drápur* or *flokkar* (Lange, *Die Anfänge* 55–98).[40] The texts in the early group also occasionally appeal to the evidentiary authority of skaldic poetry without citing particular stanzas. One example of this is found in *Ágrip* where the author mentions that the information he gives on King (later Jarl) Hersir can be supported by Eyvindr Finnsson's poem *Háleygjatal* (*Ágrip*, 24–26), but without including an evidentiary stanza. The assumption appears to be that the status of the poem as a container of historically reliable information is sufficient to vouch for the trustworthiness of the report.

Looking beyond *Heimskringla*, it should be mentioned that poetic citations lose part of their evidentiary function towards the end of the tradition when they turn into a more formal decorative element in *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* from the 1260s. The author of *Hákonar saga*, Sturla Þórðarson, included 121 stanzas in his saga.[41] While 93% of them are extradiegetic, their evidential status is more

39. Opere pretium duxi, Vir Illustrissime, pauca hec de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium breuiter annotare et prout sagaciter perquirere potuimus ab eis, penes quos horum memoria precipue uigere creditur, quos nos Islendinga uocamus, qui hec in suis antiquis carminibus percelebrata recolunt ("I have believed it worth the effort, most distinguished of men, to write these few brief notes on the early kings of Norway and as accurately as we have been able to ascertain from those among whom their memory is thought especially to thrive, the folk we call Icelanders, who often mention and recall events in their age-old poems") (Theodoricus 4).

40. To the question of how Theodoricus gained this knowledge, she proposes that he drew on a manuscript which contained an anthology of such poems (Lange, *Die Anfänge* 96–97; see also Kraggerud, *Theodoricus* lxvii–lxviii). While this is certainly not impossible, no such anthologies are known from the middle ages.

41. In addition to the 120 numbered stanzas in the ÍF edition, there is an unnumbered stanza by Jarl Skúli (eds. Þorleifur Hauksson et al., 2013, II, 21).

questionable since by far the majority were composed by the author himself, parallel to his composition of the saga. Interestingly, Sturla still uses conventional third person phrases so introduce his verse into the narrative in the manner of the earlier sagas: "svá kvað Sturla […]" ("Sturla said thus […]"). Later compilations (not included in the table and chart above) continue to cite poetry and also add extradiegetic stanzas, although some of these postdate the information they are meant to authenticate by more than a century.[42]

Taking the use of poetic quotations in the sagas as an indicator, one may therefore sketch the following development of the use of poetic citations in the kings' saga tradition:[43]

1. Official skaldic verse is seen as a storehouse of facts that the historiographer can draw upon but does not need to cite (e.g. Theodoricus).
2. Occasional (intradiegetic) stanzas are cited for their own sake as they form the core of interesting anecdotes and humorous incidents highlighting certain aspects of life in the royal retinue (e.g. *Oldest Saga*). Official skaldic verse continues to function as a storehouse of fact but now need to be cited as the authority of the historiographer no longer suffices to authenticate the account (e.g. *Orkneyinga saga*).
3. Saga writers begin to weed out anecdotal intradiegetic stanzas and their related anecdotes with the result that the more official extradiegetical authenticating stanzas dominate (e.g. *Separate saga of Óláfr Haraldsson*).
4. Skaldic verse appears to lose its authenticating function and becomes a formal decorative element of Old Norse historiography (*Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*).

The transition from the first to the second stage can possibly be explained as a consequence of the increased importance of Icelandic authors who in addition to being conversant with the tradition of official court poetry also were well-versed in the tradition of occasional verse that had accrued around Icelandic court poets. The addition of this lighter material off-set the more chronicle-like focus on major events of large-scale political significance with minor, unofficial, but also entertaining anecdotes. The proportion of these two different kinds of material varies from one text to the other, but it seems that author of *Separate Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson* and *Heimskringla* actively sought to weed out some of the anecdotal material and strike a different balance between the two kinds of material. That this was

42. An example of this is discussed by Stavnem, "Creating Tradition" 95–100.

43. This developmental model modifies and elaborates upon Meulengracht Sørensen, "The Prosimetrum Form" 182–83.

a matter actively reflected upon is evident from the conclusion of the longer version of the prologue to the *Separate Saga of Óláfr Haraldsson*, where one reads:

> Veit ek, at svá man þykkja, ef útan lands kømr sjá frásǫgn, sem ek hafa mjǫk sagt frá íslenzkum mǫnnum, en þat berr til þess, at íslenzkir menn, þeir er þessi tíðendi sá eða heyrðu, báru higat til lands þessar frásagnir, ok hafa menn síðan at þeim numit. En þó rita ek flest eptir því, sem ek finn í kvæðum skálda þeira, er váru með Óláfi konungi (*Heimskringla* II 422).[44]

> (If this account becomes known abroad [i.e. outside of Iceland], I know that it may seem as if I have focused unduly on Icelanders. But the reason for this is that Icelanders, who saw or heard about these events, brought these accounts out here to this land and people have subsequently learned from them. Yet, I write most in accordance with that I find in the poems of those skalds who were with king Óláfr.)

Although the author had made a conscious effort to weed out some of the anecdotal material about Icelanders, he understood his account has a distinct Icelandic bias.

3. Comparisons

Before beginning to search for parallels to the prosimetric form of Old Norse vernacular historiography, it may be useful to consider briefly why this is a worthwhile undertaking. A great deal of scholarship on Old Norse literature and literary history is still carried out under the aegis of a desire to highlight features that are uniquely distinctive of the saga literature and Old Norse poetry. Another, more ecumenical, tradition has sought to emphasize how the Old Norse literary tradition grew from the soil of the literary traditions of papal Europe through adoption and modification. Naturally, these two positions only provide the outermost points of a scale, and most scholars place themselves somewhere along this scale rather than at its extremes. While I may tend to adopt the more ecumenical position as my point of departure, there are features of the tradition that lend themselves poorly to explication within this paradigm of cultural transfer. As suggested above, the Old Norse prosimetrum of

44. It is uncertain whether or not this passage was written by Snorri Sturluson or a later redactor (see Johnsen and Jón Helgason, *Den store saga* 1125–27).

Heimskringla and similar texts (stage 3 in the model outlined above) is the result of a historical development in the course of which poetry was integrated into the text in order to serve a specific (evidential) purpose. This development can be understood as a response to a perceived need among saga writers for authentication. Since this development is understood as an internal process within Old Norse vernacular historiography – although it happened in response to intellectual currents reaching Old Norse historiographers from abroad – one would not necessarily expect that Old Norse writers found inspiration for this form in some other historiographical tradition and imitated that tradition.[45] At the same time, it may be worthwhile to avoid the essentializing pitfalls that follow most arguments for Old Norse cultural exceptionalism. I therefore find that a comparative approach that attempts to contextualize the comparanda properly is likely to be illuminating, even when direct lines of transfer cannot be established.

Before continuing, it will also be useful to reiterate the central characteristics of the prosimetrum of the kings' sagas that have been discussed above:

1. The authors incorporate already *existing poetry* into their works.
2. This poetry is composed by, or at least believed to be composed by, *historical* individuals, often professional poets, that
    a. play a part in the events narrated
    or
    b. based their poetry on reports from others who had participated in the events.
3. The relation between prose and poetry can generally be characterized in two different ways:
    a. The historical narrative *stages* and *contextualizes* the poetry by creating or recreating a/the situation giving rise to the stanza (intradiegetic stanzas).
    b. the poetry *authenticates* the historical narrative some facts of which may be *extrapolated* from the poetry (extradiegetic stanzas).[46]

Many scholars have sought the origin of the Old Norse prosimetrum in prose elaborations on Eddic poetry as one can see it in the heroic section of the *Codex Regius* compilation of Eddic poetry. This topic is most recently discussed by Males who also points to parallels in Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* and Irish texts. While Males, *The Poetic Genesis* 194–276, emphasizes some of the characteristics out-

45. Fidjestøl, *Det norrøne fyrstediktet* 20–21, suggested in passing that it was *Ágrip* that introduced the practice of citing verse into ON historiography and that the author of *Ágrip* used was inspired by the use of verse in Theodoricus's *De antiquitate regum norwagiensium*. Röhn, "Skaldenstrophe und norröne Geschichtsschreibung", following a comparison and analysis of the use of verse in the two texts, rejected this suggestion, but without suggesting an alternative.

46. These characteristics do not apply to *Hákonar saga* which as, mentioned above, represents a late innovation in the use of verse in the kings' saga tradition.

47. See the discussions by Lassen, "Indigenous and Latin Literature" and Wellendorf, "Ecclesiastical Literature and Hagiography".

48. Pabst does not discuss the ON tradition in any detail, but he does touch upon it in connection with his discussion of Saxo Grammaticus's use of the prosimetrum (*Prosimetrum* 924–38) where he argues that the influence of the historical sagas on Saxo is minimal ("sehr gering", *Prosimetrum* 932); Friis-Jensen attributes greater significance to the vernacular tradition (see below).

49. Males, in his discussion of possible Latin parallels to the Old Norse prosimetrum, considers Henry of Huntingdon the "the nearest counterpart" (*The Poetic Genesis* 207 n. 56). In six cases in his *Historia Anglorum*, Henry probably translates very short passages of pre-existing, but now lost, vernacular poetry into Latin; and in one additional case, he renders the Old English poem *Brunanburh* into a Latin that seeks to imitate the rhythm and alliteration of the original text. His stated purpose for this effort is to render the "foreign words and [rhetorical] figures" of the old poem faithfully into Latin so that "we may learn the gravity of the deeds and spirits of that people from the gravity of their words" ("extraneis tam uerbis quam figuris [...] Vt [...] ex grauitate uerborum grauitatem actuum et animorum gentis illius condiscamus") (Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum* 310). The various versions *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* include some poems and Henry 'no doubt' worked from a now lost manuscript the *Chronicle*, often referring to this vernacular sources as "the writing of the ancients" (Greenway, *Henry* xci).

50. This is in *Gesta danorum* i.1.1 where Saxo disagrees with Dudo on the origin of the Danes. The other two historians, to whom Saxo refers, are Bede (*Gesta Danorum* i.1.2) and Paul the Deacon (*Gesta Danorum* viii.13.2), but their histories are not prosimetric (though both do contain a few poems).

51. Christiansen's translation of Dudo's text contains a handy index of the poems in the text and their meters (Christiansen, *Dudo of St. Quentin* 236–37).

lined above, his subsequent discussion takes a different direction and focuses on the sagas of Icelanders and the pseudonymous stanzas included in this part of the corpus.

Most saga scholars would agree that the earliest Old Norse writings are somehow indebted to Latin textual models that reached Scandinavia from papal Europe.[47] Looking to the continent and Latin historiography for parallels or even models for the prosimetric form therefore seems obvious. Nevertheless, perusal of Bernhard Pabst's *Prosimetrum*, a colossal monograph on Latin prosimetra from Late Antiquity to the Late Middle Ages did not bring to light any texts that integrate prose and poetry in a composite form comparable to that of the Old Norse historiographical tradition.[48] The closest contender may be the Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus who is roughly contemporary with the early Old Norse vernacular specimens of the prosimetrum.[49] Saxo's use of the prosimetric form will be discussed briefly below, but first some remarks will be made on Dudo of St. Quentin's *Historia Normannorum* (early eleventh century); another exuberantly prosimetric work of historiography and one of the few texts to which Saxo refers directly in *Gesta Danorum*.[50]

Dudo included almost ninety poems or verse sequences in his four-book long history of the Normans, and like Saxo he employs a great number of different meters.[51] All but two of Dudo's verse sequences are extradiegetic. The two intradiegetic sequences are found in his second book, and this book will be given as an example of how verse sequences are employed by Dudo. The second book is devoted to the founding figure Rollo who is portrayed as a 'Viking Aeneas' fulfilling the destiny laid out for him (Christiansen, *Dudo of St. Quentin* xix). It contains eleven verse sequences, all but one of which are composed in epic dactylic hexameters; the sole exception is the first verse sequence which is composed in elegiac distichs. Nine of the verse sequences are extradiegetic: The book is framed by authorial poetic paratexts in the form of a preface and an epilogue where Dudo expresses concerns about his ability to complete his lofty undertaking and prays for divine support. Six of the remaining verse sequences are authorial apostrophes addressing Rollo, spurring him onwards and reassuring him that a great future awaits him in Normandy. There is also one apostrophe addressed to Dacia (i.e. Denmark) and Francia, assuring them that there will be peace between the two peoples in the future. Two poems, finally, are intradiegetic and given as direct speech in the text: In one, the English King Alstemus beseeches Rollo to stay in England and take as much of it as he wishes

and suggests that they enter a pact of mutual help and support. In the second, the still unbaptized Rollo prays to the Christian God for a safe crossing from England to Francia. These verse sequences, which were all composed by Dudo himself, would not have circulated independently of the text prior to its composition, rather they were "designed to function, specifically with, and inextricably from, the prose text" (Pohl, *Dudo of St. Quentin's* Historia 134). They can for the most part be removed from the text without damaging the narrative of the work,[52] although they do of course shape the reader's perception and experience of the narrative presented by Dudo. The only real exception is Alstemus' address to Rollo, which forms a part of a dialogue between the two, and Rollo's prayer (Dudo of St. Quentin, *De moribus* 148 and 149; transl. Christiansen *Dudo of St. Quentin*, 31 and 32). As mentioned above, these are the only two verse sequences in the entire work that are given in the voice of characters in the story.[53]

It has been suggested that Dudo's use of the prosimetric form betrays some indirect familiarity with Norse prosimetric narratives, but the "oral stylisms from his vernacular sources and the saga-like *prosimetrum* form of his narrative are so overlaid with clerical rhetoric … that it is pretty difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the oral source materials" (Amory, "The *dönsk tunga*" 284). However, the content, style, and purpose of the verse sections of Dudo's work are so unlike those found in preserved Norse texts that this seems unlikely. Another work of historiography which provides a better illustration of what a work inspired by Latin and vernacular Scandinavian forms could look like is Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* (probably completed by 1208; Friis-Jensen, "When did Saxo Finish his *Gesta Danorum*?").

While Saxo may have studied a manuscript of Dudo closely, as argued by Friis-Jensen, ("Dudo of St. Quentin and Saxo Grammaticus"), the two historiographers do not see the same need to refer to sources. Overall, Dudo is fairly vague on the topic of his sources and stresses the pioneering nature of his endeavor, but he does mention that Count Rodulf of Ivry related the contents of the book to him.[54] Rodulf was the half-brother of Richard I and had commissioned Dudo's work. Saxo on the other hand declares in his preface that partly has relied on songs (*carminibus*) in the vernacular carved on rocks, and he continues: "Quorum [*sc.* carminum] uestigiis ceu quibusdam antiquitatis uoluminibus inhaerens tenorem ueris translationis passibus emulatus metra metris reddanda curasse" ("Adhering to the tracks of these verses, as if to some ancient volumes, and following the sense with the true steps of a translator, I have assiduously ren-

52. Indeed, a number of manuscripts leaves out the verse sequences. For a discussion of this, see Pohl, *Dudo of St. Quentin's* Historia 84–108.

53. Two additional verse sequences, a description of Alstignus (Dudo of St. Quentin, *De moribus* 130; transl. Christiansen, *Dudo of St. Quentin* 16–17) and a description of the meeting between Rollo and his son William (Dudo of St. Quentin, *De moribus* 182; transl. Christiansen, *Dudo of St. Quentin*, 60), seem closer integrated with the text than the remaining ones.

54. "Rodulfe … cujus quæ constant libro hoc conscripta relatu" (Dudo of St. Quentin, *De moribus* 126) ("Rolf … who told what in this volume stands inscribed"; transl. Christiansen, *Dudo of St. Quentin* 11). This is in a prefatory poem addressed too Rodulf.

55. Saxo also refers more generally to the historical treasure-trove of the Icelanders whose accounts he has adopted: "[Tylenses. . .] quorum thesauros historicarum rerum pignoribus refertos curiousus consulens haut paruam presentis operis partem ex eorum relationis imitatione contexui" (Pr.1.4, Saxo Grammaticus *Gesta Danorum* 6).

56. Although he may have invented some of the verse sequences and amplified or expanded on others, Old Norse vernacular parallels show that at least some of them are based on preexisting vernacular poetry. The claim that these verses were carved on rocks is less credible.

57. On Saxo's prosimetrum and its relation to Latin and vernacular Old Norse prosimetra, see Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as a Latin Poet* 29–63 *et passim.*

58. "Hans kvæði eru fornuzt þeirra sem menn kunnu nú (*Skáldatal* 251) ["his poems are the oldest of those people know now."].

dered one poem by another") (Saxo Grammaticus *Gesta Danorum* 6 and 7). The result of this procedure is that his chronicle should be considered "quam antiquitus edita" ("as the utterance of antiquity") (Saxo Grammaticus *Gesta Danorum* 6 and 7).[55] Saxo's verse sequences thus contrast with those of Dudo by being based on poems that had an existence prior to and independently of Saxo's history.[56] In his study of Saxo's use of the prosimetrum, Friis-Jensen stresses that all poetic sections are given as direct speech by the characters in the text.[57] Saxo's use of poetry is in other words overwhelmingly intradiegetic. Jaeger characterizes the contrasting use of verse by Dudo and Saxo well, writing: "Dudo's poems happen outside the narrative, looking in; Saxo's happen exclusively within the narrative" ("Dudo of St. Quentin and Saxo Grammaticus" 245).

A crucial difference between Saxo and the kings' sagas in their inclusion of pre-existing poetry is that they draw on two different bodies of poetry. The authors of the kings' sagas, as discussed above, avail themselves of poetry attributed to historical individuals, mostly professional skalds, and the biography of the skald helps to anchor them in time and space. Saxo, on the other hand, draws on poetry of the Eddic kind and his prosimetrum thus resembles the prosimetrum of the legendary *fornaldarsǫgur* rather than that of the historical kings' sagas (see Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as a Latin Poet* 58–62). In the *fornaldarsǫgur* characters, who are not otherwise presented as poets, may at moments of heightened emotion or narrative intensity, often in connection with heroic deeds, suddenly burst into verse instead of communicating in regular prose. The main exception is the legendary warrior Starkaðr/Starcatherus, whose poetic abilities are widely acknowledged in the tradition. Starkaðr belongs to the very beginning of the tradition and according to *Skáldatal* his poems are the oldest that are known.[58] *Skáldatal* does not link him to a particular ruler, but simply states that he composed about the kings of the Danes suggesting that he is understood to have preceded the time of the institutionalization of role of the court poets. Indeed, it has been suggested that Starkaðr should be understood as a *þulr*, an "ancient court functionary, who was warrior, poet, prophet, historian, and satirist" (Clunies Ross, "Poet into Myth" 37 *et passim*), rather than a *skáld*. The poetry ascribed to him is of the Eddic rather than Skaldic type and the deeds attributed to him in the saga tradition also show that he belongs to the legendary rather than the historical period. Starkaðr is thus a figure of a very different caliber from a Sigvatr or an Óttarr and belongs squarely in the legendary past. Finally, it is

noteworthy that all verse sequences in Saxo's text are found in the legendary section, suggesting that the verses are indeed "utterances of antiquity" rather than statements of a more recent date.[59]

The absence of obvious parallels to the Norse historical prosimetrum in the medieval Latin tradition may be explained by pointing to two circumstances that have been important for the development of Old Norse historiography that are not generally paralleled in the Latin language historiography. Firstly, Old Norse historiographical works partly cover the period before the parchment-based book culture had established itself in the North and a sizeable part of the poetry included in the texts originated as oral poetry and stems from this largely pre-literate age. To this point, one may also add that the kings' sagas covering the thirteenth century, i.e., a period in which both parchment literacy and a textual bureaucracy were firmly established in Norway and Iceland, use poetry in a different way from texts covering earlier periods, in the case of *Hákonar saga* (phase 4 in the model outlined above); or they leave out poetry altogether, in the cases of *Bǫglunga saga* and *Magnús saga lagabœtis*.[60] Secondly, but of equal importance, there is the issue of language. Poetry predating the *ritöld* or age of writing would be composed in the vernacular poetic idiom of the poet which means that a historian writing in Latin would need to recreate the poetry in Latin, and hence forfeit at least some of the evidentiary function, dependent as it is, on verbatim preservation. Thus Saxo Grammaticus did not include "old poems as they were, but rather as they would have been had pre-Christian Danes been in a position to write Latin" (Meulengracht Sørensen, "The Prosimetrum Form" 186). While I do not wish to propose inordinately simple explanations for complex literary developments, I would like to suggest that the two factors of orality and vernacularity in tandem played a considerable role in the shaping of the Old Norse prosimetrum of the kings' sagas.

This suggestion might be given some weight if it were possible to identify other traditions that developed under similar circumstances – i.e. traditions where historiography was produced that a) represents a period with little or restricted use of literacy, that b) uses sources from that period, that c) is written in the language that was used during that period – and developed with similar results: prosimetric historiography that combines prose with intradiegetic and extradiegetic stanzas in a manner similar to that of the kings' sagas. Identifying and discussing such a tradition necessitates looking beyond materials that are usually discussed in the context of Old Norse

59. The final verse sequences in the work are Starcatherus'/Starkaðr's poems found in Book 8.

60. *Magnús saga* is only fragmentarily preserved and it is uncertain whether the lost parts contained any poetry. *Bǫglunga saga*, which covers the period 1202–17, does not include any poetry in its present form.

historiography. As an example of such a tradition, I would like to present briefly some aspects of the early Arabic language tradition which is indeed partly prosimetric.

As is the case with the Old Norse tradition, the early Arabic tradition spans the semi-oral and the literate period and, while pre-Christian poetry remained an important intangible heritage in the Old Norse world after the conversion to Christianity, pre-Islamic Arabic poetry came to enjoy a similar position in the Islamicate world.[61] Pre-Islamic poetry was valued for a variety of reasons of a linguistic, poetic and social nature, that may also to some degree find parallels in the Old Norse tradition. In this context, it is the poetry's reputed importance for the transmission of historical information that is of relevance. The scholar al-Jāḥiẓ, who was active in ninth century Baghdad, articulates this function of poetry as follows:

> Every nation relies on one of several ways and means for the full preservation of their exploits and the protection of their glories [from falling into oblivion]. The Arabs, in their Time of Ignorance [before Islam], used to strive to immortalize them [i.e., their glorious deeds] by relying for that on poetry . . . and that was their archive.[62]

The notion that societies without literacy or with restricted literacy use poetry to keep the memory of past deeds alive is fairly commonplace and can be found in many writers from antiquity onwards. One example is Tacitus who claims that old songs are the only form of historical tradition among the Germani.[63] The notion of poetry as the 'archive of the Arabs' is echoed by many subsequent writers and one may see it fulfilling this function in the body of materials that is referred to as *Ayyām al-ʿarab*, literally "the days of the Arabs", but conventionally rendered as "The Battle Days of the Arabs". These tales contain pre-Islamic tribal lore of various groups of North Arabian Bedouins and usually relate battles, minor skirmishes and raids. They are held to have been collected and committed to writing in the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods by philologists, the most prominent collector being the Basran Abū ʿUbayda (d. 209AH/825AD).[64] While his collections of Battle Days have not survived, they were used and quoted extensively by later authorities – philologists, encyclopedists and eventually historians – whose works have been preserved.[65] The Battle Days are generally narrated in a fairly straightforward vivid realistic prose style interspersed with dialogue. Occasionally one finds that shorter poems improvised by participants in

61. One may also suggest that there are significant and interesting parallels between the way Muslim writers drew on pre-Islamic poetry in order to create an Arab identity and the way in which Old Norse authors sought to create a Norse identity using pre-Christian poetry.

62. Cited from Heinrichs, "Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 251, upon whom I rely for a part of the following. The quote is from *Kitāb al-Hayawān.*

63. "[. . .] carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriae et annalium genus est [. . .]" (Tacitus, *Germania* 70) and Jordanes mentions *carmina prisca* (*Getica,* 61). In literate societies on the other hand, poetry may have a very different status. Cf. e.g. Plutarch who mentions the saying: πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοὶ ["Many the lies the poets tell"] (Plutarch, "How a Young Man Should Study Poetry" 82 and 83.)

64. The biographical encyclopedist Ibn Khallikān (d. 1282) ascribes two collections of battle days to Abū ʿUbayda; a shorter one containing seventy-five such accounts and a longer one containing no less than 1200 accounts (Ibn Khallikan, *Biographical Dictionary* III 393). The reliability of these figures is naturally open to question.

65. The rather complex textual and transmissional history is presented by Toral-Niehoff, "Talking about Arab Origins". The constructedness of the pre-Islamic age as it appears in the pre-served sources is highlighted by Drory, "The Abbasid Construction of the Jahiliyya" and more recently Webb, *Imagining the Arabs.*

the course of the events related have been inserted in the narrative. At the end of the narratives, one often finds longer panegyric poems connected with the events in which victors are praised, opponents are mocked, and the dead are remembered.[66]

In his article on the prosimetrum in classical Arabic literature, Wolfhart Heinrichs divides the poetic citations in the Battle Days into action poems and commentary poems ("Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 259), a division that recalls the situational (intradiegetic) and authenticating (extradiegetic) poems of Old Norse historiography. The action poems are spoken by characters in the narratives while the commentary poems corroborate the accounts; "there is a dialectic between prose and poetry," Heinrichs writes, "the poetry cannot really be understood without the prose, and the prose is not considered trustworthy and true without poetry to corroborate it" ("Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 260). A consequence of this, Heinrichs continues, is that "evidentiary verse . . . became the ubiquitous method of proving a point which in turn transformed the ancient poetry into a corpus of classical authority" ("Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 261).[67] Irrespectively of whether these features, which are characteristic of the Battle Days in their written forms, are inherited from their original oral mode of presentation, as argued by Heinrichs ("Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 253–61) or not, the characterization of the written prosimetric Battle Days resembles characterizations of the equally prosimetric kings' sagas to a remarkable degree. One could also highlight the importance of genealogies, geographical accuracy, the ideals of aggressive masculinity, the commitment to revenge and the notion of shared honor (see Toral-Niehoff, "Talking about Arab Origins" 48–50), as well as the prominent role of female inciters in the narratives in the forms in which they have been committed to writing. These are all features which can easily be found in Old Norse literature as well, although they may be more pronounced in the sagas of Icelanders than in the saga of kings which are the focus of this discussion. In the most general terms, one can then observe parallels between the Arabic accounts of Battle Days and Old Norse saga literature in respect to narrative, ideological and formal elements. In the present context, narrative elements and ideology will be left aside and the focus will be on the prosimetric form. Two examples of Battle Day accounts with integrated verses will be briefly presented and examples of how verse are integrated in these two accounts will be given. The first, the *Bat-*

66. See the characterizations by Heinrichs, "Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature" 254–55 and Toral-Niehoff, "Talking about Arab Origins" 45–46. A foundational and informative treatment of the literary aspects of the corpus is found in Caskel, "Aijām al-ʿArab", while Meyer, *Der historische Gehalt der Aiyām al-ʿarab*, discusses the use of these texts as historical sources.

67. While the present contribution focuses on prosimetrum of the kings' sagas, this point is also of interest for the grammatical and mythological materials in contained in the Prose *Edda*.

68. See Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry" 401–13, for a presentation of the two and their poetic contest. She writes inter alia: "The naqāʾiḍ became a vehicle of competition in which poetic skill was demonstrated. Large audiences gathered round the poets, each standing in his corner in al-Mirbad [in Basra, present-day Iraq], often especially dressed up for the occasion. The audiences would often break out into peals of laughter, especially when they listened to Jarīr's invective, which was full of mischievous barbs and comical imagery" (Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry" 410).

69. The isnād or chain of transmission of the preserved text of the main manuscript used in Bevan's edition is Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb > al-Sukkarī > Muḥammad ibn al-ʿAbbās al-Yazīdī. All three, but especially the last have added to the text (Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq I xi). This makes it difficult to tell the different historical layers of the text from one another and determine what Abū ʿUbaida wrote initially.

70. Below I rely on Lichtenstädter's English translation of the Battle Day of Shiʿb Jabala, but her translation has excised the account from the philological commentary and does not include the text by Jarīr that motivated the inclusion of the account. I have not been able to locate a full translation of Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq and cite the original along with my own translation here. Where translations are available, I do not cite the Arabic text.

71. Two verse sequences are exchanges in verse between characters in the narrative.

tle Day of Shiʿb Jabala, is drawn from a philological work commenting on poetry while the second, the Battle Day of Dhū Qār, is from a historiographic work.

The Battle Day of Shiʿb Jabala is found in the compilation and commentary on the naqāʾiḍ 'flytings' of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq. Jarīr and al-Farazdaq were engaged in a poetic duel or quarrel that lasted more than forty years and resulted in more than one hundred (often lengthy) poems in which they lampooned and lambasted each other and their respective tribes.[68] Their rivalry did not come to an end until al-Farazdaq died in 729. Both came from a Bedouin background and their poetry, which included many archaic expressions and references to tribal lore and genealogy, was compiled by the Abū ʿUbaida mentioned above. He also produced a lengthy commentary on their poems focusing on philological and historical matters.[69] Several Battle Days are recounted as parts of this historical commentary. In l. 65 of poem 64, Jarīr says (Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq II 652):

ولَسْنا بِذِبْحِ الجَيْشِ يَوْمَ أُوارَةٍ   ولَمْ يَسْتَبِحْنا عامِرٌ وقَنابِلُهْ

We are not the victims of the troops on the (battle) day of Uwāra

and ʿĀmir and his band of horsemen did not plunder us.[70]

To this line is added a comprehensive commentary that elucidates the references to the "Battle of Uwāra" and "ʿĀmir and his band" by relating the Battle Day of Uwāra (Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq II 652–54) and the lengthy Battle Day of Shiʿb Jabala (Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq II 654–78), both of which combine prose and poetry. Shiʿb Jabala 'the Ravine of Jabala', the place where the battle was fought, is a mountain in Central Arabia. The text states that this battle was "one of the [three] most violent warfares of the Arabs" in pre-Islamic times and dates it to "seventeen years before the birth of the Prophet" (Lichtenstädter, Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature 160 and 174). In this battle, ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa routed his opponents, among whom were ancestors of al-Farazdaq. The account of the Battle Day includes twenty-one verse sequences;[71] thirteen of these are extradiegetic, while the remaining are intradiegetic and part of the narrative. As a simple example of an intradiegetic verse citation, one may quote the following lines which contain the sixth verse citation in the Battle Day of Shiʿb Jabala:

Then Muʿāwiya b. ʿUbāda b. ʿUqayl who was left-handed

came up to them and said:

> I am the left-handed youth
> in me is good and evil
> but evil in me is more.

The B. Asad took that as an evil omen [and] said: 'Turn back from them and obey us.' (transl. Lichtenstädter, *Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature* 166)

As an example of an extradiegetic quotation, one may cite the seventeenth verse quotation:

> ʿAmr b. Ḥasḥās b. Wahb b. Aʿyāʾ b. Ṭarīf al-Asadī was encircled by attackers and Maʿqil b. ʿĀmir b. Mawʾala saved and nursed and clothed him. About this event Maʿqil said:
> I have extended help to Ibn Ḥasḥās b. Wahb at the plain of Dhu-l-Jidhāt with a noble hand
> I held back from him the horse al-Dahmāʾ when I was present while any friend of his was far away . . .
> (3 additional lines of poetry follow, transl. Lichtenstädter, *Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature* 171).

The *Battle Day of Shiʿb Jabala* is, as mentioned, found in the philological and historical commentary to a vast body of poetry where its inclusion is motivated by the reference to "'Āmir and his band of horsemen".

The second example of a Battle Day given here, the *Battle Day of Dhū Qār*, illustrates how such an account may be inserted in a work of historiography. It is found in al-Ṭabarī's massive early tenth century *History of Prophets and Kings* (V 338–70).[72] In this section of his work, al-Ṭabarī combines two basic Battle Day accounts, ascribed to Abū ʿUbayda and ibn al-Kalbī. Al-Ṭabarī's work postdates these two sources by more than a century, but he is held to have reproduced the accounts, including their poetry, faithfully in his text (see Heath, "Some Functions of Poetry" 46–47). Dhū Qār is the name of the location near the Euphrates where the battle that forms the climax of the account was fought. This particular Battle Day stands out in the corpus in that it does not recount a conflict between two Arab tribes or confederations but rather a fairly large-scale confrontation between the Banū Bakr tribe and the host of the Sasanian king (which also included his Arabic vassals). This clash would have happened in the early 600s. Al-Ṭabarī's account of this battle day contains twenty-four poetic passages varying in length between one and nine lines.

The Arabist Peter Heath has discussed the poetic quotations in

72. Although Al-Ṭabarī wrote in Arabic, he is generally considered a Persian historiographer and his *nisba* indicates that he hailed from Tabaristan (on the south coast of the Caspian sea).

this part of al-Ṭabarī's work using Heinrich's division into commentary poems and action poems as his point of departure ("Some Functions of Poetry" 47–50). As was the case with the division of Old Norse poetic quotations into authenticating and situational poems, the distinction turns out to be difficult to uphold.[73] However, dividing the quotations into intradiegetic and extradiegetic quotations seems a fairly straightforward task. By my count, there are fourteen intradiegetic quotations and ten extradiegetic. A clear example of the first (intradiegetic) category is provided by some lines in which one of the leaders of the Banū Bakr urges his men forward:

> The people began to urge on their fellows and to compose *rajaz* verses [to encourage them]. Ḥanẓalah b. Thaʿlabah recited:
>
> > Your host have already become a compact mass, so fight fiercely! What excuse shall I have, since I am strongly armed and robust? . . . [five additional lines follow] (Al-Ṭabarī, *History of Prophets and Kings* V 363).

A clear example of an extradiegetic citation comes at the beginning of the account when the sons of the Lakhmid king al-Mundhir b. al-Mundhir are introduced:

> Because of their handsome appearance, the entire group of his sons were known as al-Ashāhib ("the Shining Ones"), as al-Aʿshā says:
>
> > The sons of al-Mundhir, the Shining Ones, go forth in the morning in al-Ḥīrah with their swords (Al-Ṭabarī, *History of Prophets and Kings* V 341).

It bears mention that the line quoted here is an excerpt from a longer poem that is more fully preserved elsewhere and that al-Aʿshā is a well-known contemporary poet and panegyrist who is also quoted further on in the *Battle Day of Dhū Qār*.[74]

Al-Ṭabarī's history contains a second account of a Battle Day: *The Battle Day of al-Ṣafaqa* (V 289–94). This Battle Day contains two poems: one intradiegetic by a certain Ubayy bin Wabh (in which he relates how he forces open the gates of the fort of al-Mushaqqar) and one extradiegetic by al-Aʿshā (which authenticates the information that a hundred captives were released, although they were not grateful).

Formally speaking, the parallels between the prosimetra of the Old Norse kings' sagas and the Battle Days of the Arabs as regards their use of intradiegetic and extradiegetic poetic citations are clear.

The examples from the historian al-Ṭabarī resemble the examples of the Norse prosimetrum better than those of the philological commentary in that the extradiegetic verse is not only given as evidential quotations, but also in that they are by a professional poet.[75] The intradiegetic verses in both the examples of both the philologist and the historian, on the other hand, are not by professional poets, in the manner of those of the kings' sagas given above (the examples of the nuts-stanzas and the sword-stanza), rather they recited by characters who at moments of heightened emotion bursts into verse instead of communicating in regular prose; similarly to the way poetry is used in the *fornaldarsǫgur* and in Saxo.

4. Concluding remarks

Comparative endeavors can be, and have been, criticized as being essentializing at their core. They work by stripping away, arbitrarily or at least according to the whims of the one doing the comparison, particulars in order to bring a specific element into focus. The historical contexts of the comparanda may suffer as these are raised to the level where comparison becomes meaningful. Furthermore, comparing and contrasting, observing parallels and hopefully invoking some sense of wonder at the fact that A in some respects is similar to B, cannot count as a goal in itself. If one is satisfied that the parallels presented are indeed parallels, the obvious next step would be to evaluate the significance of the similarities and account for their existence. In this particular case, one may wonder why the Old Norse and the Arabic works of historiography presented here resemble one another in their deployment of the specific prosimetric form.

Reliable historical evidence suggests that representatives of the Islamicate and Norse worlds met on various occasions during the Viking age (in particular in the areas around the Black and the Caspian Seas and on the Iberian Peninsula) and in the twelfth century (in connection with pilgrimages and crusades). Cultural exchange is likely to have occurred on these occasions, but an explanation relying on direct historical contact does not seem likely in this case. It seems more promising to argue that similar circumstances led to similar outcomes. Both two traditions discussed here valued poems by historical characters from a period with little or restricted literacy. This poetry entered the two written traditions in different ways and the development of the two historiographical traditions follow dis-

tinct paths which means that the stages of the development of the use of poetic citations in Old Norse historiography outlined above cannot be paralleled in the Arabic tradition.

While the materials examined do not suffice to show that traditions that have preserved poetry from a period with restricted literacy as a rule develop a tradition of prosimetric historiography, it should be worthwhile to examine other traditions that developed against such a background. It would also be of interest to explore the Arabic tradition in greater detail, in particular in order to see how anecdotes about poets are incorporated into works of historiography.

This paper has argued that one can detect a development in the quotation of skaldic materials in historiography. The skalds served as the creators and custodians of the memories of the deeds of kings. Early historiographers of the local past drew on this skaldic material when fashioning their works but without seeing a need to cite this material. Soon the chronicle-like works of the earliest historiographers were supplemented by anecdotal materials about skalds and their experiences at court as well as a smaller number of stanzas whose primary function was to strengthen the authorial claims of truthfulness. As the tradition develops the later kind of verse-quotations begin to dominate at the expense of the anecdotal materials. At the end of the tradition, the importance of the court poets appears to diminish.[76] The final skaldic stanza quoted in *Knýtlinga saga* is by a disgruntled skald who notes the Danish king prefers "*fiðlur* [. . .] *ok pípur*" ("fiddles and flutes") (*Knýtlinga saga,* 275; Einarr Skúlason, *Lausavísur* 3) to skaldic poetry. At the same time, it seems that the expectation that a proper kings' saga should contain verse celebrating the deeds of kings remained. Sturla Þórðason addressed this situation by including many of his own stanzas in the saga he wrote about Hákon Hákonarson. The final section of the article discussed possible parallels to the Old Norse prosimetrum in Latin and Arabic language historiography and showed how one might find parallels to the Norse prosimetrum in Arabic language texts.

76. Little is known about the court poets and their poetry from the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. See the survey by Gade, "Poetry and Its Changing Importance" 81–84.

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CORNELIA HERBERICHS

Conference Report:

Paradigmes et perspectives de la littérature médiévale comparée

Paradigmen und Perspektiven einer Mediävistischen Komparatistik

Paradigms and Perspectives of a Comparative Medieval Literature

1. Hugo Bizzarri (Filología hispánica), Paolo Borsa (Letteratura e filologia italiane), Elisabeth Dutton (English Philology), Cornelia Herberichs (Germanistische Mediävistik), Martin Rohde (managing director of the IEM), Marion Uhlig (Langues et littératures françaises du Moyen Âge).

Organised by medieval literature scholars of the Institut d'études médiévales at the University of Fribourg,[1] the Fribourg Colloquium 2021 discussed current paradigms, perspectives and methodologies in Comparative Medieval Literature Studies. Specialists from a range of medieval disciplines from seven countries converged physically and virtually in Fribourg to present their research and reflections on comparative themes. The contributions will be published in the book series *Scrinium Friburgense* by 2024 and can then be read in full. The following detailed account of the conference documents only the core issues and theses of the papers given at the conference, and outlines the main features of the discussions that followed them.

The Fribourg Colloquium was introduced by one of the organisers: **Cornelia Herberichs** (Germanistische Mediävistik) outlined the background for the conference by describing a lack of attention to Comparative Medieval Studies within the Comparative scientific community. On the one hand, the relevance of comparative approaches for the study of medieval literature has been apparent from the beginnings of this field; questions concerning the transmission and translations of literary texts as well as the transfer of cultural and

technical knowledge constitute an important foundation for the work of many scholars in Medieval Studies. On the other hand, as Caroline D. Eckhardt noted in 2004, despite the thriving body of medievalist research on comparative themes, there is a certain lack of visibility, insofar as Medieval Studies seem often to be "taking place outside named associations and journals" of the Comparative discipline (Eckhardt 140). One of the reasons that Medieval Comparative Studies are rarely grouped with Comparative Studies could be that, in the twenty-first century, scholars of Comparative Studies see themselves as part of a "presentist discipline", and are "preoccupied with objects of knowledge and kinds of discourse that entail direct engagement with the social and political issues of our own times" (Eckhardt 140). With reference to the first academic journal devoted to Comparative Literature Studies, the *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum*, founded in 1877, and one of its founding editors, the Hungarian Germanist Hugo Meltzl, Herberichs compared the status of Medieval Studies within the Comparative discipline then and now. In his essay "Vorläufige Aufgaben der Vergleichenden Litteratur" ("Preliminary Tasks of Comparative Literature") Meltzl counts the comparative study of medieval literature among the tasks of Comparative Literature as a universalistic "Zukunftswissenschaft" (Meltzl, "Vorläufige Aufgaben, I" 179) ("discipline of the future" transl. Damrosch, "Present Tasks, I" 72), and recognizes that research in medieval literary traditions has a significant impact on the understanding of political affairs of his own time. By contrast, today there seems to be little concern about the relevance of Medieval Comparative Studies for current intercultural discourses. One of the aims of the Fribourg Colloquium was to incite a discussion about the ways in which the study of Medieval Literature, History and Art History can reciprocally motivate reflections on the methodology of General and Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies which are devoted to modernity. Another aim was to promote explicit discussion of the paradigms and perspectives of medievalists' comparative work. This was also to confirm that the historical and cultural peculiarities of the medieval period could contribute decisively to the improvement and differentiation of comparative categories such as 'alterity', 'historicity', and a historically differentiated definition of concepts of 'culture'.

For the organisers, two peculiarities of Medieval History and Literature formed a focal point for the Colloquium's comparative discussions: the first was the materiality and mediality of medieval manuscript culture (Section 1), and the second, the crucial role of the Lat-

in language as a trans-regional *lingua franca* and a driving force for exchange and innovation beyond linguistic borders (Section 2). A third important aspect of the Colloquium was methodological reflection on Comparative Studies in a historical perspective (Section 3).

In her introduction to the **First Section**, *Codices Compared: Manuscript Cultures from a Comparative Perspective*, **Marion Uhlig** (Langues et littératures françaises du Moyen Âge) emphasised the importance of material aspects for a Medieval Comparative Literature. Research on literary texts that were transmitted, translated and appropriated across linguistic borders in the Middle Ages cannot be limited to linguistic variation. For Uhlig it is also crucial to include aspects of palaeography and codicology, for example the *mise en page*, text-image relationships, illustration and rubrication techniques etc. Moreover, as Uhlig stated, traces left by manuscript readers could also be fruitful for comparative research. These material aspects can inform us today about the significance of cultural contacts and exchanges in the Middle Ages. Finally, in order to be able to assess linguistic variation as precisely as possible, Uhlig pointed out the necessity for scholars to study the original manuscripts when engaging in Comparative Studies, and not simply work with modern editions.

In his paper, **Fabio Zinelli** (Philologie romane, École pratique des hautes études Paris): *Langue et littérature ou 'scripta et littérature': un paradigme nouveau pour l'histoire littéraire*, made the case that, unlike in modern times, where the political force of language is related to the 'discourse' in the Focaultian sense, for the Middle Ages the *scripta*, thus the spelling and grammar, equates to the discourse. Zinelli discussed on the one hand the different factors creating change in a *scripta*, and on the other hand the stability a *scripta* preserves. For Zinelli, a possible formalisation of the model-/copy relationship is provided by the structuralist concept of Diasystème, which serves to describe linguistic variance concerning two closely related languages. In the medieval continuum of romance languages, Zinelli used the concept of 'translation zones' (cf. Apter, *The Translation Zone*) to focus on two main linguistic and cultural borders: the moving frontier of the Mediterranean and the geopolitical border between Catalonia and the Languedoc. He illustrated his claim that in medieval culture *scripta* and *discours* were inseparable with various case studies, among others focussing on the transmission of the *Histoire ancienne*, the formation of cyclical narrative structures such as the *Tristan en prose*, and the transmission of religious literature in the networks of communities or religious orders within the discursive

continuum of the Catalan-Occitan *scripta*. – The **discussion** took up the question of further possible common issues between linguistic and literary studies in a comparative perspective, the possible role of the concept of Diasystème for constructing stemmas of manuscripts, and the significance of linguistically mixed *scriptae*. Concerning the need for a precise terminology, the boundary between 'dialects' and 'languages', and the concept of a 'standard language' in the Middle Ages were questioned. The question was also raised whether and in relation to which stage of the fabrication of a manuscript one could speak of a 'koiné' in regard to medieval *scripta*.

Stefan Abel (Germanistische Mediävistik, Universität Bern), *Paläographische Zugänge zu den altfranzösischen Vorlagen von Wolframs Parzival*, demonstrated the importance of taking into account codicological aspects when aiming to identify the written source of an adaptation of a literary text. Using the example of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* (c. 1200), a German adaptation of the unfinished *Conte du Graal* by Chrétien de Troyes and of parts of the *Première Continuation*, Abel discussed how palaeographic and codicological observations can support the arguments of textual equivalence. Whereas up to now researchers in the field of German Studies had mainly considered content-related, motivic and linguistic criteria for identifying the source manuscript, Abel expanded the field of research by examining palaeographical indications. The use of capitals at the beginning of verses, certain abbreviations and the use of lombards etc. in a manuscript source may have had an influence on the manuscript design of an adapted version in another language. – In the **discussion**, possible models of how authors, translators and *scriptoria* may have interacted in the adaptation processes of written sources were discussed. From a comparative perspective, Abel's argument also raised further questions about the cultural specificity of concepts and models such as authorship and adaptation.

The paper of **Darwin Smith** (Littérature et histoire médiévale, LAMOP – Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), *Le théâtre 'médiéval' en 'France': ce que disent les manuscrits*, explored characteristics of French medieval play manuscripts. At first Smith drew attention to textual repetitions that were indicated by *marginalia* in the manuscripts. Smith posited that this practice of repetition had parallels in the liturgy, where repeating a phrase or a chant with slight variation can intensify the words expressed. Studying this textual specificity in French play manuscripts, as for example in the *Ystoire de la destruccion de Troyes le Grant* by Jacques Milet, could help ex-

plain analogous phenomena in German play scripts, as Smith illustrated comparatively with the example of a textual repetition in the *Donaueschinger Passionsspiel*. Finally, in his lecture Smith analysed the performative function of the so-called *crochets alinéaires*, a kind of stage direction written in the margins of some play manuscripts. Drawing on these handwritten signs, Smith discussed the possible import and transfer of a technique of glossing from the domain of learned into the domain of vernacular literature. – In the **discussion** of Smith's paper, the question was raised how a pan-European perspective on plays could make apparent analogous functions of manuscripts: with reference to the only surviving French conductor's book, the *Abrégé* of Mons (Bibliothèque de l'Université de Mons, MS 1086) and its counterpart in a German conductor's manuscript, the *Frankfurter Dirrigierrolle* (Frankfurt a. M., Universitätsbibl., Ms. Barth. 178), is it possible to discern international conventions and traditions for the production of different types of play scripts? The comparative view was also regarded as fruitful insofar as historical sources from different countries can provide information about practices of performance, which were supra-regional.

Jessica Brantley (Medieval English, Yale University): *Books of Hours in Comparative Perspective*, outlined in her paper that a comparative consideration of books of hours revealed the limitations of imagining a monolithic pan-European culture. Regarding the multilingual texture of some of the books of hours also makes clear that this cultural archive cannot be carved up simply according to nation or language. As a case-study in intermedial comparison, Brantley examined in her paper a late thirteenth-century book of hours from England, Baltimore (Maryland), The Walters Art Museum, Walters Ms. W 102, which incorporates texts, images, and written music. With special attention to line-filling images and the complex techniques of *mise-en-page*, Brantley demonstrated how a textual page can become a visual one. A media-comparative approach can therefore reveal that a categorical distinction between the two art forms is impossible to maintain. – Among other aspects, the **discussion** focussed on the role of punctuation and line fillers for interaction with readers and for the vocality of reading aloud, but also on their potentially mnemonic function. Images of instruments within the prayer book might even represent sound. Another question was related to the omnipresence of worldly images in some books of hours, which might indicate that the manuscript offers a co-presence of practices of meditation and practices of devotion.

William Duba (Philosophie, Universität Freiburg), *The First*

Word: Inaugural Speeches in Universities and Mendicant Studia, engaged with inaugural speeches, the so-called *principia*. This genre of speech is best known for the *principia in theologia*, which constituted the first formal act following the promotion of a Master in theology and marked the beginning of his magisterial lectures on theology, but similar *principia* existed also for lectures on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, and they often appeared at the beginning of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century commentaries on the *Sentences*. Since the *Sentences* were taught both at the universities and at the mendicant *studia*, Duba's comparative study of *principia* on the *Sentences* at Paris and in Florence at the time of Dante revealed the different nature of teaching and society in the two centres. The comparative approach, moreover, revealed the inflections in the presentation and teaching of scholastic thought outside the traditional centres of Paris, Oxford, and Bologna, identifying characteristics unique to each milieu. Comparing the speeches of Remigio de Girolami given in Paris and in Florence makes it evident for Duba that the sermons were adapted to the public given. – The **discussion** of Duba's paper focussed on material aspects of the manuscripts and the different kinds of interaction of author and public in the *principia*. It was pointed out that the comparative approach revealed that the textual differences of the *principia* can only hardly serve to extrapolate 'national' peculiarities, but could indicate different cultural situations in terms of the degree of conventionality.

Guillemette Bolens (Medieval English Literature and Comparative Literature, Université de Genève), *Embodied Cognition, Kinesic Intelligence, and Comparative Literary Analysis in Medieval Studies*, analysed text-image relationships in the *Utrecht Psalter* (AD 820–35), the *Harley Psalter* (eleventh century), the *Eadwine Psalter* (mid-twelfth century), and the Great Canterbury Psalter. Based on the premise that neurophysiological cognition is grounded in sensorimotricity, Bolens argued that perceptive simulation has also to be taken into account when interpreting images from former epochs in order to avoid anachronism. According to Bolens, a comparative approach of kinesis in literature and art helps not only address readers' and audiences' cognitive participation, but also account for historical traces of cognitive acts, perceptual simulations, and kinesic intelligence in medieval works. As Bolens demonstrated, attention to the question of perceptual simulations may help our understanding of one strand in the refined pictorial strategies developed by the Carolingian artists of the Utrecht Psalter and the Canterbury artists who responded to their art. Innovative iconographic solutions for the vi-

sualization of psalms could therefore be understood as traces of perceptive simulations. – In the **discussion** of Bolens' paper the question was raised as to what other contemporary practices could have influenced the innovative iconographic patterns. It was stated that the text-image-relationship indicates a very precise understanding and a high level of reflection on the text. The pictures were discussed as being at the same time allegorical exegesis of and commentary on the text. It was generally noted that in order to historicise adequately text-image analysis in a comparative perspective, the interaction of various factors should be taken into account: iconographic influences, pre-texts and anthropological universals.

The question of the significance of anthropological universals for comparative research was also addressed in the evening lecture of **Michael Borgolte** (Geschichtswissenschaft, Humboldt Universität Berlin): *'Das Mittelalter' in neuen europäischen und globalen Herausforderungen. Der Vergleich in der Historiographie.* Borgolte surveyed prominent historiographical works of Comparative Studies (among others by Marc Bloch and Otto Hinze) and contrasted their concepts of Comparative Studies with approaches from Literary Studies. Utilizing the example of foundations, Borgolte discussed the specific historical benefits of comparative research, namely the fact that intercultural comparison not only serves to illustrate similarities or irreversible cultural diversity, but also often allows insights about global historical contexts. In conclusion, Borgolte also pointed out both the methodological and practical challenges of his comparative approach compared to more regionally historically oriented or more traditional approaches.

The **Second Section** was devoted to *Comparative Approaches at the Intersection of Latin and Vernacular Languages*. **Hugo Bizzarri** (Filología hispánica) and **Paolo Borsa** (Letteratura e filologia italiane) opened the section by underlining that there is no other period in literary history where translation has played such an important role, whereby it must be noted that the languages of the author, the translator and of the copyist of a text intersect. At the same time, the languages of the medieval period are neither a homogeneous nor a stable language system, which is true of Latin as well. Bizzarri and Borsa also discussed the political relevance of language, recalling the first grammar of a modern European language, published in 1492 by Antonio de Nebrija: *The vernacular Castilian grammar* (*Gramática de la lengua castellana*) was structured after the model of Latin grammars and is therefore an example for the intersection of Latin and vernacular. Borsa and Bizzarri explained that at the same time Ne-

brija's Grammar serves as an example that language is 'a partner of the empire', insofar as the grammar book imposed the vernacular languages on colonialized peoples. In their introduction, the co-organisers of the Colloquium also pleaded for a change of focus from researching to teaching Comparative Medieval Literature. Usually restrained by the boundaries of 'national' literatures and languages, University curricula often fall short in informing students about Comparative Medieval Literature. This affects the individual disciplines in different ways. For the 'Romanistes', for example, the loss of the umbrella of Romance philology is serious: national literatures probably gain in terms of number of students and academic positions, but in the medium and long term the gain is a loss. Borsa and Bizzarri concluded that curricula that involve the integration of different languages, literatures and disciplines, and that provide students with the indispensable tools, also in terms of the historical and cultural contextualisation of literary phenomena, for perfectly informed comparative activities, in the long term would also have an important impact on societies.

Johannes Bartuschat (Italienische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Zürich), dedicated his paper to an enormously successful historiographical text: *Lire, traduire et réécrire les historiens romains entre le XIIIe siècle et le XIVe siècle: Li Fet des Romains en France et en Italie.* He elaborated in particular how different cultures saw themselves in the mirror of Roman history. Italian translations of the French *Faits*, which are based on a Latin source, were very numerous, but vary greatly in length and content, so that in the end none reproduces the French version completely. In his paper Bartuschat demonstrated that, in choosing a comparative approach, a continuum between faithful translation and rewriting has to be taken into account and scaled, and also a great fluidity between different categories of appropriation of a source model. – The **discussion** focussed on the question of whether, in the process of vulgarization of knowledge, a translation or adaptation could also serve as a reflection of the political system, for example concerning military and political vocabulary; this question assumes particular importance in the context of the Angevin court. It was also asked whether it was possible to determine the concrete influence of an adaptation in regard to the knowledge of Latin terms of political concepts, since the Italian translations are based not on Latin but on French models. The discussion also touched on possible different reception interests, which could be political-ideological, but also epic-entertaining: reception interests might also have been different depending on the geographical distribution (e.g. the manuscripts of the Tuscany).

Elizabeth Tyler (Medieval English Literature, University of York): *Entanglements: Vernacular Literary Cultures in the Latin West (c. 350 – c. 1150)*, presented in her paper part of a collaborative project in which she investigates the vernacular literary cultures of Latin Europe from late Antiquity to the twelfth century as interconnected elite phenomena rather than as the beginning of national literatures. Therefore, Tyler pleads for research that disregards what have become modern national boundaries, but situates the texts in the political context of their transmission: By choosing an 'entangled' approach, regarding the process of vernacularization as a series of dynamic, contingent, non-linear interactions, she also situates Europe within wider geographical horizons. In a series of detailed text analyses, e.g. of Otfried's *Evangelienbuch*, *Eulalie* and the *Ludwigslied*, Tyler demonstrated that entanglement is a structural feature of the writing of vernaculars in the Early and Central Middle Ages. – The **discussion** deepened various issues raised in the paper, such as the historical validity of various linguistic or political concepts like 'Old High German' or the medieval notion of 'England'. Furthermore, the comparability to other entangled texts was discussed, such as *Beowulf*, *Waltharius*, or the *Strassburg Oaths*. Another focus in the discussion was the relationship of dependence on and independence of *translatio imperii* and *translatio studii* in the Early Middle Ages.

Rossana Guglielmetti (Letteratura latina medievale e umanistica, Università degli Studi di Milano): *La Navigatio Brendani et ses versions vernaculaires: les frontières nébuleuses entre tradition et remaniement*, demonstrated in her paper the complex textual history of the widely disseminated legend of Saint Brendan. For Guglielmetti it often seems impossible to describe the cultural profile of a certain translator, since each new version of the Brendan legend represents a fusion of both tradition and innovation, and because of the difficulty in discerning in which phase of an adaptation process, and by whom, additions were made. Moreover, polygenetic textual histories must also be taken into account, considering the existence of clear similarities between some Italian and some German versions which cannot be traced back to a common Latin source. Guglielmetti considered also what the aim and form of a critical edition should be from a comparative point of view. – In the **discussion** the question was raised of the quantitative proportions in which the different vernacular traditions were transmitted, and how the differences were to be explained. The paper's example of a Pisan translation that was influenced by a French version also raised some interest in the discus-

sion. Moreover, it became apparent that influences from other Latin works (e.g. geographical, legendary works) and the survival of the 'matière de Brendan' in hagiography might be worth further investigation from a comparative perspective.

Christian Høgel (Byzantine Literature, Syddansk Universitet), in his paper *The Rise and Reappearance of Greek as an Imperial Language – and as Model for Latin*, proposed to write a history of language by using an approach different from traditional ones. Høgel focussed especially on the status of an imperial language and its ability to live beyond the time of the empire. In his sense, an imperial language gains this status by canonization and through its use for acts and texts of self-representation of an empire. Moreover, for Høgel it is typical that new imperial languages often rise on the model of other ones. Høgel also proposed a differentiation between an imperial language and a 'secondary imperial language', which he illustrated with the example of ancient Greek. Furthermore, Høgel formulated a historized definition of the concept 'World Literature', which applied to the Middle Ages in the sense of literature that is translated from one imperial language to another. Using the example of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, Høgel defined World Literature in critical discussion with the definitions of David Damrosch, Mads Rosendahl Thomsen, Alexander Beecroft and others as 'trans-imperial literature'. – In the **discussion** the concept of 'empire' was debated, and also the implications of the centrality of power for cultural processes. The temporal and procedural dimensions of an empire attracted much attention in the discussion. The paper also elicited the question of how to study literary transfer between cultural borders that are not also political borders. In engaging with the proposed definition of World Literature, the mechanisms and power structures, and also the qualities necessary for a text to become trans-imperial were being discussed.

The **First Round Table**, which took place at the end of the second day, picked up on various aspects of the first two sections of the Colloquium and discussed overarching questions, subjects, and hypotheses. **Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann** (Lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters, Universität Zürich), **Cédric Giraud** (Langue et littérature latines médiévales, Université de Genève), and **Karin Schlapbach** (Klassische Philologie, Universität Freiburg) gave short keynote speeches which were followed by a discussion with the audience. The Round Table touched among others on the following three focal points: the status of Latin, the concept of 'culture', and the notion of 'Comparative Literature'. **1.)** *The status of Latin*: Under dis-

cussion was the applicability of the concept 'Hiéroglossie' to compare the relations between Latin and vernacular languages in relation to 'entanglements' and imperialism. Techniques and functions of auto-representation of Latin, which was both a transnational and transethnic language, but also a regional language, were also investigated. Translations were to be examined and located within the spectrum of appropriation and assimilation. Also under discussion was a comparison with the present time, in which English is predominant and under certain conditions triggers counter-movements against this form of cultural dominance. It was also discussed what consequences result for Comparative Studies from the fact that the diffusion of Latin texts changed decisively in the age of printing; moreover, bookhistorical aspects should be taken into account when discussing the relations between Latin and vernaculars. **2.)** *The concept of 'culture'*: The discussion focussed on the differentiation of cultures and languages. With which categories can we distinguish cultures within a language, which would form the basis of a comparative approach within a speech community? Also, it was stated that the understanding of 'Latin cultures' is to be distinguished from 'Latin literary traditions'. What could be the task of Medieval Comparative Studies here: Is the comparison of a classical Latin text with a medieval Latin text part of Comparative Studies? **3.)** *The notion of 'Comparative Studies'*: It was stated that not every comparison is 'comparative', even if a special feature of Medieval Studies is precisely that it has a very capacious understanding of what 'literature' is, and has also a strong tradition in interdisciplinarity. Extending Comparative Studies to other intermedial studies in the fields such as music, visual arts, theatre, etc. could thus tie in with already established medievalist traditions and practices, but it would have to be considered whether a limitation to one terrain or to central points of comparative work would have to be a premise. The question that then arises is: What is the conceptual distinction between interdisciplinarity, history of reception and Comparative Studies? The question of whether literature can be regarded as a system at all (in the sense of Claudio Guillén) also proved worthy of discussion. One task would be to differentiate what is (or should remain) actually incommensurable, because the first step of comparing is to make things comparable. It was stated that the principle of comparison does not define the criteria of its possibilities; they depend on the functions and aims of the comparison. Medieval Comparative Studies should be aware that they build a bridge by comparing or neglect connections by not com-

paring. At the end of the First Round Table, the participants reflected on the multilinguism of the ongoing discussion itself, that made evident how the use of different terminologies can invoke different intellectual worlds. It was stated that the different approaches resulted from the different subjects as well as from the different disciplinary traditions. The discussion led to the question of how and under what circumstances different methods could be combined in the future.

The **Third Section**, entitled *Comparative Medieval Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Tasks and Visions*, was opened by a short introduction by **Elisabeth Dutton** (English Philology) and **Cornelia Herberichs**. They pointed out that for them the aim of the Colloquium could not be to define a unique methodology of Comparative Literature, but rather to ask what relevance the research results of medievalists have beyond their own discipline. When scholars examine texts and literature across language and cultural boundaries, they make a number of preliminary decisions about what distinguishes between two cultures, be it language, religion, learning. These preliminary decisions need to be discussed in an interdisciplinary approach. Herberichs and Dutton reflected on the possibility of articulating common interests across different disciplines by using shared terminologies. One of the difficulties would lie in the fact that this would need to happen without neglecting traditional disciplinary identities, which would nevertheless stay important and meaningful for university structures as also for student formation, research and school teaching.

Andreas Kablitz (Romanistik/Komparatistik, Universität zu Köln) and **Maximilian Benz** (Germanistische Mediävistik, Universität Bielefeld), in their paper *Der fremde Text. Zur kulturgenerierenden Leistung der Rezeption biblischer Texte als Grundlegung mittelalterlicher Kultur*, outlined a research program that conceived of the Middle Ages not in terms of a replacement of the ancient culture, but as the product of a symbiosis. From this perspective, Christian theology appears to be an adaptation of biblical tenets to the philosophical thinking of antiquity and vice versa. For Kablitz and Benz, this dialectic continues to be valid today. They differentiated various effects of this symbiosis by offering two case studies, one of the medieval receptions of the *Barlaam und Josaphat*-legend and another of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Both speakers moreover challenged the concept of 'Renaissance' (also in the plural: 'Renaissances'), identifying it as one-sided and not adequately accounting for historical complexities. – The **discussion** raised questions about the similarities and differences between the two case studies in relation to the paper's

main thesis of intercultural symbiosis. Turning attention to the Reformation, it was moreover discussed whether Protestant theology tends to disintegrate this symbiosis. The analysis of the concept of 'Renaissance' was deepened in the discussion by considering in what respects the shifts in the eleventh and twelfth centuries raise the problem of periodisation respectively. Finally, a proposal was formulated to distinguish in a comparative perspective the biblical text in the Western world from its counterpart in the Orthodox world.

Jan-Dirk Müller (Germanistische Mediävistik, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München): *Der fehlende Urtext*, threw new light on the specifics of literary transmission in a transitional phase between orality and literality with the example of the *Nibelungenlied*. Developing details of his current research project, he demonstrated, by analysing the entire manuscript transmission including the fragments of this heroic epic, that already at an early stage textual stability on the level of the plot structure contrasted with a great variance on the level of the concrete wording of the text. Müller emphasised that general structural conditions had to be taken into account, to which literary texts in different languages and in different cultures are subject in certain historical phases, and which can only be described and explained comparatively. With reference to Greek, Indian, Jewish, and Egyptian literatures, Müller proved that surprising parallels exist with the evidence of the transmission of German heroic epic, insofar as oral and written practices intersect in each case. With his conclusion that textual variance need not be the result of oral performance, he decisively turned away from models of literary transmission that have hitherto been unquestioned. For Müller, Comparative Literature Studies has among others the task of lining up similar literary or cultural phenomena at different historical times or from different geographical regions, and studying the premises of their parallels. The **discussion** of the paper opened up a series of reflections on the semantic dimensions of textual variance and on the temporal extension of its occurrences. It was stated that stabilisation processes, like the stabilisation of the *Nibelungenlied* from the fourteenth century onwards, allowed informative insights into the historical contexts of text transmission. The paper elicited also the question about the augmentation of epic texts due to knowledge of oral sagas, especially in late medieval manuscripts. The discussion also picked up on the specificities of the transmission of heroic epic, the oral poetry formulaic tradition, and cultural differences of writing, with the example of Italian, where the occurrence of literality is different from German speaking regions, and with reference to the *Chanson de Roland*.

The paper of **Victor Millet** (Filología Alemana, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela), *Chrétien de Troyes and Hartmann von Aue. A special relation revisited*, was devoted to the second Arthurian novel of Chrétien, *Yvain*, and its German adaptation. For Millet, the case of Hartmann's adaptation of this early Arthurian novel poses special problems for comparatistic research insofar as the two authors are close in time and place, and have a similar audience. Millet problematized in a critical overview terms and interpretations used by former research, such as the term *adaptation courtoise*, and the concept of 'irony'. For Millet the comedic structure of *Yvain* seems to be a core element for interpreting the story correctly. Since irony also characterizes Hartmann's text, to Millet this is a clear sign of his kindred understanding of Chrétien's literary strategy. The aporetic juxtaposition of love and chivalry, Millet suggested, is not solved in the two novels, but simply mitigated by the humorous tone, yet with partly different strategies. The **discussion** of the paper focussed among others on the cultural conditions to produce and to recognize irony. From the point of view of a foreign culture or from a certain historical distance, it appeared debatable how irony can be analytically studied. Moreover, linguistic irony could not always be transposed into another language. Other points in the discussion were the literary negotiations of the problem of integrating an individual into society, which was also a crucial subject of both *Iwein*-novels. Finally the question was discussed how to identify the concrete manuscript source of Hartmann, in order to be able to judge his handling of Chrétien's text adequately from a comparative perspective.

Michele Bacci (Kunstgeschichte des Mittelalters, Universität Freiburg): *Comparative Perspectives on Medieval Arts: Limits and Advantages*, made the point that, given the interconnectedness of artworks with each other, many traditional methodologies of art history, like those of Bernard Berenson or Erwin Panofsky, have always been distinctively comparative. Recent scholarship, according to Bacci, tries to understand art in a global perspective, and he outlined two methods prevailing in the current discourse. The one compares pre-modern artistic phenomena on a world scale even when they are mutually unrelated, in order to work out new interpretive frameworks; the other is interested in verifiable facts of interaction and mutual interchange of different cultures. In his case study, Bacci explored the limits and advantages of the two perspectives by comparing townscapes, architectures and artworks of the two cities Toledo and Famagusta. Both places were at the time meeting points of mul-

ticultural networks, and were home to a composite population, different languages, rites and beliefs. Bacci demonstrated that between the two cities parallel developments can be supposed that were independent from each other as well as developments due to direct connections; the paper showed therefore that art history should not regard the two possibilities as alternatives, but face the complexity of the issue of Comparative Art Studies. Based on some of the concepts the paper touched upon, the **discussion** raised questions about spatial concepts like 'centre' versus 'periphery'. Other terms and metaphors which art history traditionally uses to work comparatively were also discussed: The concept of 'rhizomatic' structures, as well as metaphors such as 'influence', 'translation', 'adaptation', 'appropriation', 'transformation', 'recreation'. Questions of the impact of geographical conditions on similarities and differences of artistic styles were also deepened in the discussion. It was stated that parallels can be evidence of the fact that similar aesthetic answers could be given to similar questions and needs.

Rüdiger Zymner (Allgemeine Literaturwissenschaft, Bergische Universität Wuppertal): *Mediävale Weltliteratur*, argued that the role of the concept of 'World Literature' is central to Comparative Studies dealing with modern literature. Approaching the question of 'Paradigms and Perspectives of Comparative Medieval Literature' from a point of view of the 'Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft' which is mainly occupied with modern literature, he pondered in what way one could speak of a medieval 'World Literature'. Zymner emphasised the great importance of comparative perspectives for Medieval Studies, and underlined and illustrated that it would be worthwhile to extend these studies to non-European contexts. Moreover, Zymner pleaded for a concept of Comparative Medieval Studies that must not be reduced to a science of comparison, but to reflect on general principles of literature. In the **discussion** the medieval concept of 'literature' was contrasted with the modern concept of literature. It was also discussed whether the models of medieval World Literature and modern World Literature were commensurable.

Sabine Haupt (Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft, Universität Freiburg): *Kanon und Kanonen. Vom Politischen (in) der Komparatistik. Oder: Warum die moderne Komparatistik lieber aus- als vergleicht*, opened her paper with a differentiation between different types of comparison, the inductive and the deductive comparison. After an overview of different models of Comparative Literature, she contrasted theories of the universality of

comparability with models of incommensurability and alterity. She emphasised that the method of comparison creates its object, and that Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies scholars are not neutral observers of objectively existing relations. The etymological relationship between 'canon' and 'cannons' illustrates for Haupt the reality of the book trade, namely that market, might and manner are linked together. This alliance of political and cultural hegemony should be overridden by modern Comparative Studies, according to Haupt, by balancing ("ausgleichen") rather than merely comparing ("vergleichen"). In view of the practical limits already imposed by the limited linguistic competence of each scholar, Haupt stated that a truly 'balanced' Comparative Literature cannot be achieved, but at least a counterweight should be set by following the principle of mindfulness. **Discussion:** Questions were asked concerning the valuations implied by the different types of comparisons, which were defined by Haupt. The possibilities of allowing "mindfulness" ("Achtsamkeit") to prevail were discussed in the context of school and university teaching. It was also asked whether 'ausgleichen' could also lead to 'levelling', in a negative sense. Hegemonies that arise through translations were also discussed. In view of the utopian aspect of 'Ausgleich' through Comparative Studies, the proposal was discussed whether this concept might not be able to do justice to literature in reality, but at least express a researcher's perspective and vision.

The **Second Round Table** closed the last section and provided also the occasion to look back at the conference as a whole. The participants **Jens Herlth** (Slavistik, Universität Freiburg), **Lars Boje Mortensen** (Ancient and Medieval Cultural History, University of Southern Denmark), and **Michael Stolz** (Germanistische Mediävistik, Universität Bern) gave short input statements that led to a discussion open to the floor. Among others three subjects were treated in the Round table: Methodology, Institutionality, and Political aspects of a Medieval Comparative Literature, past and present. **1.)** *Methodology*: The discussion began with the observation that two basic motivations for Comparative Studies generally could be distinguished. Either researchers conduct groundwork from which they formulate a research question that extends beyond a single field or philology, or researchers are engaged with a general problem or hypothesis and draw in comparative material. The motivation will influence the choice of methodology, and, closely related to this, the choice of terminology. The participants stated that a plenitude of metaphors have been used during the Colloquium, and the advan-

tages and disadvantages of some of them were discussed, like 'connection' vs. 'entanglement', 'transfer' vs. 'translation', 'rhizom' and 'paradigm'. It was highlighted that every metaphor used makes a researcher or student of Comparative Studies see and interpret things differently. It was stated that scientific research cannot do without metaphors, but all kind of studies, perhaps especially Cultural Studies, had to be aware that their view is shaped by them. In this context it was seen as significant that the metaphor of 'influence' had been used extremely sparingly at the Fribourg Colloquium. For the participants in the discussion, this was an indication that nowadays Comparative Studies use a different language. There was a consensus that because of the differences of motivations, cognitive interests, subjects and cases no single methodology should be dominant for Comparative Literature as a whole, and that Comparative Medieval Studies should also shape the discipline General Literary Studies. **2.)** *Institutionality*: The discussion touched on the given academic reality, where course schemes often do not allow the teaching of Medieval Studies as comparative. The circumstances under which a comparative approach would be reasonable in the formation of language teachers was also debated. Furthermore, for the formation of future University teachers it is crucial to train specialists in one field, in order to avoid superficiality. It was agreed that interdisciplinarity had to be distinguished from trans-disciplinarity. It was also stated that in order to compare methodological practices it is important to understand the 'thought style' ("Denkstil", cf. Fleck, *Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache*) of other disciplines. It was stated that the situation for Medieval Studies at universities is very different in different countries, and that this should be taken into account in the planning of international networks on Comparative Medieval Literature. **3.)** *Political aspects of a Medieval Comparative Literature, past and present*: The question was raised as to what Medieval Studies could learn from research history like the work of Ernst Robert Curtius, who wanted to move Comparative Literature to General Literature Studies by employing the concept of 'Topoi', which was incited by Aby Warburg's 'Pathosformel'. It was stated that Curtius' book bears the mark of its own time of conflict in World War II; nowadays, since contemporary challenges are global in nature, researchers tend to aim at a global literature. The contribution of a Medieval Comparative Studies to this goal could be to provide anthropological insights. It was stated that there were also risks when the Middle Ages serve (or are misrepresented) in Reenactments and so-called 'revivals' of the Middle Ages. There

is a special risk in national and political contexts: Postcolonial Studies are in this context a very important source of inspiration for medievalists, but can also serve tendencies towards nationalism through retrospective national projections. It would therefore be important for medievalists to present the Middle Ages as complex, polyglot, polycultural, and polyreligious. In doing so, in contrast to current trends in Comparative Studies concerned with modern literature, it is debatable if it is indeed always important to stress the globality of the Middle Ages. It was stated that Europe (in the wider, medieval sense of 'Europe') is and has always been a legitimate subject of Medieval Comparative Studies. It was asked whether medievalists sometimes lack sufficient self-confidence in describing the Middle Ages in all its peculiarities and complexities, and tend to take a defensive position. What happens to the Middle Ages in public history, in cultural politics, in current political discourses, is also a task for Medieval Comparative Studies, which has to address itself to these processes.

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