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A Wolfish Reflection

A Literary Analysis of the Werewolf Story in “The King’s Mirror”

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Explanatory Notes

Since the Old Norse editions of *Konungs skuggsjá*, *Strengleikar*, *Úlfhams rímur*, *Grágás*, and *Hauksbók* used for this thesis are all diplomatic editions, when special letter forms—e.g., *æ*, *þ*, *ʀ*, *ǫ*—and italicization occur, they are kept unstandardized as printed in the sources; but any symbols marking out editorial insertion/alteration/omission/ms variance are dismissed, to avoid with my own insertion or omission of the text. In other Old Norse works, special letters are standardized as in the editions specified. When referring to specific lines/sentences from the diplomatic editions, page number or *ríma* number (in the case of *Úlfhams rímur*) will be followed by line/stanza number, divided only by a dot.

Abstract

Although werewolf story in *Konungs skuggsjá* is claimed by the author to have been included *til gamannsamligrar ræðu* or as entertaining digression, is it really meant to be treated so? After all, a text such as *Konungs skuggsjá* cannot be produced without a great amount of knowledge and the ingenuity to organize it to serve the book's purpose; and all the marvelous stories included are carefully selected and guaranteed to be true.

Then, why has the werewolf story been selected? How should it be read and understood? It is the goal of this thesis to answer these questions. To this end, two preeminent themes of *Konungs skuggsjá* are extracted based on previous as well as ongoing research: 1) the importance of the king's ability to render justice; 2) the author's attitude towards knowledge and knowledge acquisition. The two themes are closely related to each other and both are reflected in the werewolf story. To demonstrate, the nature of the werewolves' crime and punishment will be analyzed in detail and discussed in light of other passages in *Konungs skuggsjá*. In the end, a two-fold conclusion will be reached: on one hand, the werewolf story's embodiment of the two central themes strengthens the argument for *Konungs skuggsjá*'s thematic and structural integrity; on the other, the themes' relevance to the werewolf story speaks to werewolf literature as a whole, revealing possible new directions for future studies.

Ágrip

Höfundur *Konungs skuggsjár* staðhæfir að hann hafi sett inn varúlfasögu „*til gamannsamligrar ræðu*“ eða sem skemmtilega útúrdúr. En þarf í alvöru að líta þannig á hana? Texti eins og *Konungs skuggsjá* gat ekki verið saminn án mikillar kunnáttu og hugvits sem skipulegðu hann eftir ákveðnum tilgangi. Allar sögur sem finnast í textanum eru ennfremur valdar vandlega og sagðar raunverulegar.

Ef svo er, af hverju var varúlfasaga valin? Hvernig þarf að lesa og skilja hana? Tilgangur þessarar ritgerðar er einmitt að svara þessum spurningum. Til þessa verða dregin út tvö mikilvæg atriði *Konungs skuggsjár*, miðuð við fyrri og ennþá opnar samtímarannsóknir: 1) mikilvægi í hæfni konungsins að tryggja réttlæti; 2) afstaða höfundarins gagnvart lærdómi og öðlun lærdóms. Þessi tvö atriði eru vel tengd og hvort tveggja endurspeglast í varúlfasögunni. Eðli glæpsins og refsingar varúlfa verður athugað í smáatriðum til þess að sanna það. Einnig er rætt um þessi atriði í ljósi annarra textabrota í *Konungs skuggsjá*. Í síðasta lagi kemst að tvennri niðurstöðu: annars vegar er varúlfasagan í samræmi við gerð og þemu *Konungs skuggsjár* með því að fela í sér meginatriði verksins; hins vegar segir mikilvægi meginatriðanna í varúlfasögunni mikið um varúlfabókmenntir í heild með því að varpa ljósi á nýjar leiðir fyrir framtíðarrannsóknir.

Introduction

What does a mirror do?

According to Ludvig Holm-Olsen, a mirror does two things: first and most naturally, it reflects things as they are—that is, physically; second, it allows onlookers, having contemplated the image they see, to *see* what they truly are underneath, so they know “how conditions ought to be or ought not to be,” and, therefore, will improve themselves.¹ Similarly, Mary Carruthers in her comment on *Piers Plowman* says, “the mirror is the only way in which knowledge of invisible things can be gained in this world.”²

These words communicate two different kinds of “seeing,” the former preconditioning the latter while the latter completing the former: seeing in a sensory way allows us to gather knowledge of our surroundings, while *seeing* as a cognitive activity gives us power to interpret that knowledge and uncover Nature’s hidden treasure. This very message, as I will show in this thesis, is precisely what the werewolf story in *Konungs skuggsjá* tries to convey; it is also the method that we should adopt when approaching the subject.

Written in the Old Norse vernacular, the Norwegian *Speculum regale* or *Konungs skuggsjá* (referred to as *Kgs* below) was composed about mid thirteenth century by an anonymous author who most likely belonged to the court milieu.³ *Speculum* as a literary genre and title has been well studied: the mirror metaphor is customarily traced to St. Augustine, whose writings have influenced a number of *speculum* authors, including

¹ Ludvig Holm-Olsen, “The Prologue to *The King’s Mirror*: Did the Author of the Work Write It?” in *Specvlvm Norroenvm: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre*, ed. Ursula Dronke et al. (Odense: Odense University Press, 1981), 224-25.

² Mary J. Carruthers, *The Search for St. Truth: a Study of Meaning in Piers Plowman* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 128.

³ Larson dates *Kgs* to between 1217 (King Hákon Hákonarson’s succession) and 1260 (Magnús Lawmender’s legislation), and examines several theories concerning authorship, see Laurence Marcellus Larson, *The King’s Mirror (Speculum Regale - Konungs Skuggsjá)* (New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1917), 56-61. In more recent researches, however, *Kgs* tends to be dated within the last one or two decades of Larson’s range. For a summary of scholarship over dating, see Sverre Bagge, *The Political Thought of The King’s Mirror* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1987), 12-15, and for authorship see 216-24. It also needs to be pointed out, as it has been argued by some scholars, that there was more than one author, notably in Holm-Olsen, “The Prologue to *The King’s Mirror*.” The authorship of *Kgs* is not a concern of this thesis. Nevertheless, as the Prologue will play a part.

those who are believed to have inspired *Kgs*.⁴ *Kgs*, however, is quite unique in the sense that it includes not only moralizing anecdotes and instructions as befitting a Christian ruler, but also knowledge of nature, of the North and what is beyond. Structurally, *Kgs* is constructed as (written records of) a dialogue between father and son, and—as in its current form—adopts a tripartite division: the Merchants’ Part, the Kingsmen’s, and the King’s, though the last part is so densely laced with Biblical examples that it may as well be considered as God’s part. It is in the Merchants’ part that one finds natural and supernatural phenomena entering the scene, partly as practical knowledge useful to a merchant or anyone who wishes to travel in this part of the world, partly as entertaining stories for pupils who need a “coffee-break” between long, difficult lectures. This is also where the werewolves come in.

Or, more precisely, it is in the two chapters dealing exclusively with Irish wonders where the werewolves are found. Standing between the natural wonders of Iceland and Greenland,⁵ the section on Irish wonders distinguishes itself by covering two sets of marvels: *af lannzens naturu* [“native to the land”] or *mirabilia*, and *afiartægnum heilagra*

⁴ St. Augustine, though he did not use the title himself, has discussed the symbolic meaning of *speculum* in *Enarratio* 1, sermon 1.4: “Hoc tibi ostendit nitor ille quod es: vide quod es; et si tibi displicet, quare ut non sis. Si enim cum foeda sis, tibi ipsi adhuc displices, pulchro jam places. Quid ergo? Quoniam displicet tibi foedas tua, incipis confiteri [...] Primo accusa foeditatem tuam: foeditas enim animae de peccatis, de iniquitatibus. Accusando foeditatem tuam incipe confiteri, confessione incipis decorari.” My translation: “It (i.e., the mirror) will show you in brightness what you are: see what you are; and if it (i.e., your image) does not please you, then [you will know] what you shall not be. If indeed you are [shown to be] deformed, you are displeased with yourself up to now, you will become immediately pleased with beauty (i.e., you will desire beauty). What then? Since you are displeased with your deformity, you will begin to confess [...] First accuse your deformity: deformity of the soul from sins, from injustice. After accusing your deformity, begin to confess; in confession you will begin to be beautified.” Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 103, sermo 1.4. *Patrologia Latina* 37 (Paris: 1845), 1338. For *Speculum*’s root in Augustine, see Ritamary Bradley, “Backgrounds of the Title *Speculum* in Mediaeval Literature,” *Speculum* 29/1 (1954): 100-115, esp. 103-105; Mary Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), Kindle Edition, locations 5585-5796. In particular, under the subtitle “Reflections in the Greater Mirror” in chapter 6, she gives a detailed review of *specula* literature and its root in St. Augustine. For *Kgs*’ position within *Speculum* literature in the thirteenth century Europe, see Stefka G. Eriksen, “Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in The King’s Mirror,” *Viator* 45/3 (2014), 146-47, where she lists a few works that inspired *Konungs skuggsjá*; among them, she identifies Vincent of Beauvais, who is also heavily influenced by St. Augustine. Therefore, even though St. Augustine’s influence on *Konungs skuggsjá* may or may not be direct, it must have been channeled to some extent via Vincent of Beauvais.

⁵ Ludvig Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá* (Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt, 1983), 21.33-26.41; for an English translation see Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 105-18. Note that in Larson’s translation, the section comes before the Icelandic section. This is most likely due to their difference in editorial decision and choices of manuscripts; Holm-Olsen’s edition mainly follows AM 243 *bá* fol., supplemented by the Icelandic manuscripts AM 243 and *e* fol., and five Norwegian fragments. See Holm-Olsen, *Innledning to Konungs skuggsjá*, xi. Larson did not specify which manuscripts he used.

manna [“in the miraculous powers of holy men”] or *miracula*.⁶ The first set mainly has to do with waters and islands—Lake *Logheehag*, two springs on Mt. *Blaðma*, Lake *Loghica*, Island *In hisgluer*, Lake *Logri*, Lake *Loghærne*, and a weird creature dwelling in the woods, human-shaped but covered with feathers—and the second consists of seven *miracula* that the Father guarantees to be true and originated in God—St. Diermicus’ church, St. Kevinus’ healing apples, the fall of Tara or *Them* due to the king’s injustice and God’s rage, men cursed by St. Patrick and turned into wolves, men that fled battle and turned wild (*gelt*), a ship sailing in air in St. Kiranus’ parish, and a *gamans maðr* [“clownish fellow”] called Klefsan whose bones make onlookers laugh.

Considering the collection’s richness and variance, the scholarship on this particular section is surprisingly scant. Most of the writings concern possible sources and the nature of transmission (i.e. written or oral), while some read it against a larger background of medieval marvels instead of within the context of *Kgs*.⁷ The only attempt

⁶ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 21. 33-22.13 for overall description of Ireland; 22.13-23. 33, natural wonders; 24.1-26.41 divine miracles. The quote is taken from 24.1-3, written as a transitional paragraph between the two sets; translation from Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 111. For the definitions of and distinction between the words *mirabilia* (sing. *mirabilium*) and *miracula* (sing. *miraculum*), see Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, preface to book 3, trans. and ed. S.E. Banks and J.W. Binns (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 558-59: “Que inaudita percipiuntur amplectimur, tum ex mutatione cursus naturalis quam admiramur, tum ex ignorancia cause cuius ratio nobis est imperscrutabilis, tum ex assuetudine nostra quam in aliis uariari sine cognitione iudicii iusti cernimus. Ex his, duo proueniunt: miracula et mirabilia, cum utrorumque finis sit admiratio. Porro miracula dicimus usitatius que preter naturam diuine uirtuti ascribimus [...] Mirabilia uero dicimus que nostre congnicioni non subiacent, etiam cum sunt naturalia” [“When anything strange is observed we seize on it, partly because of the inversion of the natural order which surprises us, partly because of our ignorance of the cause, whose working is a mystery to us, and partly because of seeing our expectation cheated in unfamiliar circumstances of which we lack a proper understanding. From these causes arise two things, miracles and marvels, though they both result in wonderment. Now we generally call those things miracles which, being preternatural, we ascribe to divine power [...] while we call those things marvels which are beyond our comprehension, even though they are natural”]. Structurally, the work shows an interesting parallel to *Kgs*. The entire third book is devoted to marvels of the provinces described in book 2: “incipit tercia decisio continens mirabilia uniuscuiusque prouincie” [“here begins the third book, containing marvels from every province”]. Gervase’s motive of composing this book is to offer the Emperor refreshments, for these marvels—on condition that they are proved true by reliable sources are more suitable to His Majesty’s leisure time than “the prating babbling of players”. This statement echoes *Kgs*’ statement that the marvels are *til gamannsamligrar rædu* and the Father’s painstaking emphasis on their verity.

⁷ For the possible sources of *Kgs*’ Irish section, see Kuno Meyer, “The Irish Mirabilia in the Norse ‘Speculum Regale’,” *Folklore* 5/4 (December, 1894): 299-316. Based on Meyer, Jean Young focuses on two specific *miracula*, the *gelt* and Tara’s fall, and compares them especially with Gerald of Wales’ *Topographia Hibernica*. Jean Young, “Two of the Irish ‘Mirabilia’ in the ‘King’s Mirror,’” *Études celtiques* 3 (1938): 21-26. Carolyne Larrington, briefly touching on the Irish session in *Kgs*, uses it as a comparative point with descriptions of Vínland in the Vínland sagas. Carolyne Larrington, “‘Undruðusk þá, sem fyrir var’: Wonder, Vínland, and Medieval Travel-Narratives,” *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 14 (2004): 91-144, esp. 94-99. Another important source is John Carey’s reading on the werewolf story in *Kgs* in comparison to Celtic and Romance werewolf tradition, which will be looked into more thoroughly

to read (part of) the section in light of *Kgs*' political and historical background is William Sayers' short yet convincing analysis of Tara's fall, where he covers many areas related to his subject, including sources, Celtic rituals, royal-ecclesiastic relation and contemporary Norwegian political situations.⁸

Sayers' article will be discussed in full detail in the next section, but for now suffice it to say that, though I will be approaching the text from essentially different directions, Sayers' work offers this thesis a starting point, in which I intend to offer a reading of the werewolf story—told immediately after Tara's fall—within the framework of *Kgs*. On account of scantiness of research on the Irish wonders in *Kgs*, I will instead focus on major scholarly works on *Kgs* in general, and identify two central themes running through the whole text: the importance of the king's capacity as a judge, upon which the kingdom's wellbeing depends; and *Kgs* as a didactic text purveying not only knowledge but also the correct way to obtain it. The two themes are in fact supplemental to each other: in the discussion of the first theme, we will learn that the king's performance as a judge is vital to the kingdom, and for that reason he must strive to maintain justice. Yet no one was born with such capacity, not even those who are thought to be made of better materials. To render a just verdict requires wisdom and insight, which cannot be achieved without knowledge or a systematic method to approach it—in other words, one must be taught to see the world and the way to *see* it. It is quite logical, therefore, to provide the king with knowledge and, more importantly, a safe path to acquire it, so he may maximize his God-given potential, bringing justice and thus prosperity to his kingdom.

Both themes and the chain of logic are reflected in the werewolf story; and my analysis will proceed along the same chain: first, I will demonstrate the importance of correct judgement by exploring the nature of the werewolves' crime and punishment. Then, with the help of Adam and Eve's tale in Part III, I will move towards the knowledge aspect and try to answer this question: What do the werewolves learn after their metamorphoses? From there, what can the readers of *Kgs* learn? Before I can bring

later: John Carey, "Werewolves in Medieval Ireland," *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 44 (winter 2002): 37-72.

⁸ William Sayers, "Konungs skuggsjá: Irish Marvels and the King's Justice," *Scandinavian Studies* 57/2 (1985): 147-161.

forwards the werewolves, however, it is necessary to examine the first central theme, namely, royal justice.

The King's Justice and His Kingdom

As stated above, one central message conveyed in *Kgs* is that, the king's ability to maintain justice within his kingdom is a determining factor for his capacity for ruling, which in turn will affect the prosperity of the realm.

The idea of close connection between the king and the fate of the entire realm is a widely spread one. Within Old Norse literature, we find in *Heimskringla* that Freyr's life or belief in it ensures good harvests and peace (*ár ok friðr*); King Dómaldi is believed to be the cause of bad seasons and killed by his people to make things right—"þeir skyldi honum blóta til árs sér;" and the tyrannous King Óláfr of Sweden is threatened by his own people and can only be king as long as he reconciles with Óláfr the Saint, whom he has unjustly treated earlier.⁹ Outside the Old Norse circle and much prior to *Kgs*, we find in *De civitate Dei*, St. Augustine attributes Rome's fall to the empire's lack of justice,¹⁰ and in Notker the Stammer's *De Carolo magno*, there is an eschatological interpretation of the four worldly kingdoms—taken from Daniel 2—and of Charlemagne's reign as postponement of the end.¹¹ Celtic sources are not to be forgotten either, where the figure of the Sovereignty Goddess and her marriage to the king are featured frequently in mythological tales and rituals.¹² Intriguingly, one and the last of these rituals was

⁹ *Ynglinga saga* 10 and 15, in *Heimskringla I*, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, Íslensk fornrit XXVI (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1941), 24-25 and 31-32. *Óláfs saga ins helga* 94, in *Heimskringla II*, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, Íslensk fornrit XXVII (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1945), 148-57. For the latter, Lars Lönnroth has analyzed the particular part called *fríðgerðarsaga* and concluded that the failure of King Óláfr the Swede is attributed to his "injustice and tyranny," while Óláfr the Saint won God's favor by being a just king. In particular, he incorporates the passage into the Christian idea of *rex iustus*, and compares it with ideology expressed in *Kgs*. Lars Lönnroth, "Ideology and Structure in *Heimskringla* (1976)," in *The Academy of Odin: Selected Papers on Old Norse Literature*, The Viking Collection: Studies in Northern Civilization 19 (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2011): 141-62, esp. 154-59.

¹⁰ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 2.16, *Patrologia Latina* 41 (Paris: 1841), 60.

¹¹ Benjamin Arnold, "Eschatological Imagination and the Program of Roman Imperial and Ecclesiastical Renewal at the End of the Tenth Century," in *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950 – 1050*, ed. Richard Landes et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 273. For the relevant passage in *De Carolo magno*, see Notker, *Charlemagne*, in *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, ed. and trans. Lewis Thorpe (London: Penguin Books, 1969), 93.

¹² Miranda J. Green, *Symbol and Image in Celtic Religious Art* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 10. For a fuller summary of the concept of the Celtic Sovereign Goddess, see Patricia Monaghan, *The Encyclopedia of Celtic Mythology and Folklore* (New York: Facts on File, 2004), 424.

performed under the reign of Diarmait mac Cerbaill, whose story—as marked out by Meyer, Young and Sayers—bears strong resemblance to the Tara story in *Kgs*.¹³

Yet the *Kgs* version of Tara’s destruction deviates considerably from that in Diarmait’s story, for the latter has nothing to do with the king’s misjudgement. In its stead, Young has proposed another possible source: the tale of Cormac mac Airt, preserved in *Rennes Dinnsenchas*.¹⁴ Here, while sitting on the judgement seat of Tara, King Lugaid mac Con delivered a harsh verdict in favor of his wife. Upon hearing this, his young foster son Cormac corrected him and announced a just verdict. As a result, the hall fell on the side where the unjust verdict was given, and Cormac was recognized as king.¹⁵ Young argues that the story in *Kgs* is possibly a confusion of the two tales, concluding with the oral nature of the author’s information to support Meyer’s theory.

It is only in Sayers’ work that we find a discussion concentrated on the significance of royal justice and its relation to the idea of sacral kingship. In his paper, he first gives readers a general picture of Norwegian political situation around *Kgs*’ composition, namely the ecclesiastical power had been growing before King Hákon’s reign and the king—as well as *Kgs*’ author—was trying to reverse the trend. It is against that background that *Kgs* was composed; and the Fall of Tara—as part of the text¹⁶—must have been included for a particular reason. To find out that reason, Sayers has briefly gone through the fourteen Irish wonders and, through analyzing Cormac mac Airt’s story and the *Kgs* version of Tara’s destruction side by side, concluded that its inclusion reveals the author’s mind: “national cohesion [...] requires a strong and effective (royal) judiciary.”¹⁷ According to him, what is key here is the king’s judicial power and ability to wield it properly. In the case of Irish sources, should the king fail in maintaining *fír flathemon* [“the king’s truth”], the Sovereignty Goddess will be alienated and the land will turn barren; in the case of *Kgs*, a dearth will fall upon both crop and men.¹⁸

¹³ Meyer, “The Irish Mirabilia in the Norse ‘Speculum Regale,’” 310; Young, “Two of the Irish ‘Mirabilia’ in the ‘King’s Mirror,’” 24. Sayers, “*Konungs skuggsjá*,” 149-50, for Diarmait’s ritual marriage, see 151.

¹⁴ Young, “Two of the Irish ‘Mirabilia’ in the ‘King’s Mirror,’” 24.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 24; see also Sayers, “*Konungs skuggsjá*,” 149.

¹⁶ It is worth noting that, though Sayers seems to be in line with Holm-Olsen that the Prologue might be partly written by a later compiler, he treats the Irish sections as an inseparable part of the text. Sayers, “*Konungs skuggsjá*,” 147-48.

¹⁷ Sayers, “*Konungs skuggsjá*,” 150-51.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 151-52. See also Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200* (London: Longman, 1995), 77-78. For the dearth metaphor in *Kgs*, see Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 50.31-55.8; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 193-203.

The dearth metaphor and the connection between the king's justice and nature are analyzed on a much fuller scale in Sverre Bagge's article published almost a decade after Sayers' analysis of Tara's fall.¹⁹ It is, of course, not Bagge's first full-fledged approach to *Kgs*,²⁰ but it is extremely relevant to this thesis for its incorporation of nature in Part I into the political discussion. In particular, I have extracted three points that I consider the most important here.

Firstly, nature in *Kgs*, understood as “partly autonomous,” follows a certain chain of causality.²¹ To demonstrate, Bagge zeroes in on the sun-wind allegory in Part I: in winter seasons, the sun's waning force causes discord among “atta hofðingia” [“eight wind-chieftains”], which in turn causes turmoil at sea, making sailing inadvisable; when spring returns, however, as the sun grows in force, “nyialeic grið” [“a new peace”] is established among the winds, allowing safety to seafarers.²² It also needs pointed out that, this definition of nature bears a strong resemblance to St. Augustine's concept of *rationales causales*, which features in his interpretation of God's Creation, its diversity and the mutability of the created.²³

Secondly, the same pattern is reflected in *Kgs*' presentation of human society, and the dearth metaphor—as Sayers has correctly remarked—only strengthens it.²⁴ Just as lack of sunlight leads to the quarreling of the winds and danger on the sea, loss of wise counsels and lack of a strong sole ruler lead to immorality, misjudgments (*misðæming*) and ultimately chaos. In the end, to make things right again, God will unleash His fury and send upon the kingdom various kinds of punishments, causing “oaran oc ran oc allz

¹⁹ Sverre Bagge, “Nature and Society in the King's Mirror,” *Arkiv för Nordisk filologi* 109 (1994): 5-42.

²⁰ Bagge, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*, where he provides an account so thorough that few things can be added concerning the relationship between *Kgs* and thirteenth century Norwegian politics. One of his focal points is the king's role as a judge and the notion of royal justice, a point that has not been expounded before yet runs through the entire text: the king receives from God not only a royal title but also a judgement seat; his capacity to ensure justice is the key to the kingdom's prosperity or even survival. For an evaluation of Bagge's book and that of Wilhelm Berges before Bagge, see Rudolf Simek, “The Political Thought of the King's Mirror: A Supplement,” in *Sagnaþing Helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni. Sjötugum 10. Apríl 1994 (Síðari hluti)*, ed. Kvaran Guðrún et al. (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1994), 723-24.

²¹ Bagge, “Nature and Society in the King's Mirror,” 7-18.

²² Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 36.10-37.41; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 158-62.

²³ Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 6.14.25-15.26, *Patrologia Latina* 34 (Paris: 1841), 349-50. For an analysis of Augustine's theory of *rationales causales* (also called *rationales seminales*) and its role in creation, see Simo Knuuttila, “Time and Creation in Augustine,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 2nd edition, ed. David Vincent Meconi and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 81-84.

²⁴ Bagge, “Nature and Society in the King's Mirror,” 18-25. For the dearth, see note 18 above.

kyns ofriðr” [“failure of crops, rapine, and unpeace of every sort”].²⁵ Bagge’s arguments here also imply that, in addition to nature and society, this chain of causality is also applicable to God’s *modus operandi*: divine punishment is not issued at random, but based on facts and logic; the consequence entirely depends on the action.

Thirdly, these chapters on nature must have been intended as an integral part of *Kgs*, at the core of which lies the king’s power and ability as a judge. In particular, he identifies *Kgs*’ composition method as “interlacement,” thus accentuating the unity of the work as well as the “analogous or typological” way of thinking in the Middle Ages; it also strengthens the parallel between nature and society.²⁶

Therefore, together Sayers’ and Bagge’s works provide a foundation upon which the current thesis can be developed and built. They both agree that *Kgs* must be treated as a work of integrity, something that one must constantly bear in mind even when treating merely one section. A central theme that runs through the whole text is the king’s justice. Within this world where both nature and society are subject to a chain of causality, the king’s capacity of maintaining justice is like the first tile in a game of domino effect: When he judges well, the kingdom thrives; but if he fails miserably, he will be punished and the kingdom will fall with him.

²⁵ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 54.38; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 201.

²⁶ Bagge, “Nature and Society in the King’s Mirror,” 25-29.

The Irish Werewolves: A Story of (Mis-)Judgement

This theme is also reflected in the werewolf story in *Kgs* and ties it to the entire text. Though on the surface the section is about a miracle involving a saint and a group of pagan Irishmen, it is essentially a story about misjudgement on the ruler's part and its consequences. To demonstrate, in the following I will analyze the nature of their crime and punishment, and reveal the consequences that the werewolves suffered. First of all, however, it is necessary to give some information about the story.

The werewolf story, as stated above, is the fourth of the seven Irish *miracula*. It comes right after Tara's fall and before the story of *gelt*, i.e., weak-hearted men who turned wild after fleeing battlefields. I have not yet looked into all the *miracula* and *mirabilia* in the Irish section, but there seems to be a fairly close relation at least between the werewolves, Tara and the *gelt*: the werewolf story is basically in the same vein with Tara's destruction, while the *gelt* shows a decreasing dominance of human reason, the danger of which the werewolves also face. Moreover, all three have kings for a main player.²⁷ This connection will be unfolded as the analysis proceeds, but for the moment we must strive for a deeper understanding of the werewolves; and the story goes as following:

Da er þar ænn æinn sa lutr i þpi lannde unndarlegr er mannum man þyckia mioc utrulegr en þat sægia þo þeir mann er lanndet byggia at hann er þist sannr oc þarð þat sacar reiðe heilags mannz Sþa er sagt at þa er hinn hælgi patricius boðaðe kristni ílannde þpi þa þar þat æitt kyn er myclo þar hanum gagnstaðligare en annat folk er íþar lanndino / oc leitaðu þeir mænn þið at gera hanum margskyns haðung bæðe mote guðe oc þeim hægum manne. En þa er hann bauð þeim cristni sþa sem aðrum monnum oc hann kom aþeira funnd. oc þar sem þeir hofðu þing sin þa toco þeir þat til raðs at yla at hanum sþa sem

²⁷ Young has pointed out that one of the possible source of the *gelt* in *Kgs* is the story of the Irish king Suibne Geilt, who went mad at the battle of Moira in 637, shunned society and eventually became a bestial figure. Young, "Two of the Irish 'Mirabilia' in the 'King's Mirror,'" 23. The kingly status of the werewolves are attested in John Carey, "Werewolves in Medieval Ireland," 53-58. I will return to this point below.

þargar En þa er hann sa at hann munnde sino ærcænnde litlo fram coma þið þætta folk þa þarð hann mioc reiðr oc bað þæss guð at hann skyllde hæfna þeim mæð noccorum þeim bargada er þær kyn qvislir mætti iamnan siðan taca minning moti sinni ulyðni. En þær kynqvislir fengo siðan micla hæfnd oc macliga oc þo mioc unndarlega þþiat *þpa* er fra sagt at allir þeir mænn er af þeim ættum koma. þa ero þeir iamnan þargar noccora stunnð oc rænna i skogum oc hafa slicca þ fæzlo sæm þargar oc ero þþi þærri at þeir hafa mannz þit til allra þela sinna en slicca agirnd oc graða til manna sæm til annarra kyckþænnda. En *þpa* er sagt at sumer fa þætta hværn siaunnda þætr oc eru mænn þæss amillum. En sumir hafa þætta *þpa* længe at þeir hafa . þii. þætr um samt oc fa alldri siðan optarr.²⁸

[There is still another wonder in that country which must seem quite incredible; nevertheless, those who dwell in the land affirm the truth of it and ascribe it to the anger of a holy man. It is told that when the holy Patricius preached Christianity in that country, there was one clan which opposed him more stubbornly than any other people in the land; and these people strove to do insult in many ways both to God and to the holy man. And when he was preaching the faith to them as to others and came to confer with them where they held their assemblies, they adopted the plan of howling at him like wolves. When he saw that he could do very little to promote his mission among these people, he grew very wroth and prayed God to send some form of affliction upon them to be shared by their posterity as a constant reminder of their disobedience. Later these clansmen did suffer a fitting and severe though very marvelous punishment, for it is told that all the members of that clan are changed into wolves for a period and roam through the woods feeding upon the same food as wolves; but they have the wit of men, though they are as eager to devour men as to destroy other creatures. It is reported that to some this

²⁸ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 25.22-39.

affliction comes every seventh winter, while in the intervening years they are men; others suffer it continuously for seven winters all told and are never stricken again.]²⁹

The story, like Tara's fall, involves an Irish ruling house. It has been generally accepted that the most immediate sources are the werewolves of Ossory told both in *Topographia Hibernica* and in a collection of Irish *Mirabilia* attributed to Nennius.³⁰ Neither is quite the same as the *Kgs* version, but all three seem to have been drawn from the same pool, and John Carey has traced it back to a Middle Irish text titled *De Ingantaib Érenn* or “On the Wonders of Ireland” as an important source for the Irish part.³¹ This text helps to locate the story in the region of Osraige, also known as Ossory, a detail that, according to Carey, the *Kgs* author may have known yet omitted on account of relevance to his Norse readers. From there, having examined a vast body of related materials, he further narrows the source down to the legend of Laigne Faelad, brother of King Feradach mac Duach (d. 583 or 584) and ancestor of Ossory's kings afterwards.³² In other words, the werewolves in *Kgs* may well have belonged to the royal house of that region.

The fact that the clansmen were having an “assembly” (*par sem þeir hófðu þing sín*) also confirms their ruling or at least elite status. There were three types of political assemblies in medieval Ireland: *oénach*, *dál*, and *airecht*—all mean assembly, and at least the last two also refer to a law court.³³ Of course, there is no way to find out what kind of *þing* the *Kgs* author had in mind or had heard of when composing the passage, but it does seem to be a common practice in early medieval Ireland that important political decisions were made in assemblies pertaining to an upper warrior class. It is also worth noting that the Irish word *airecht* is derived from *aire*, which—though it could mean

²⁹ Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 115-16.

³⁰ Meyer, “The Irish *Mirabilia* in the Norse ‘Speculum Regale,’” 311. Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica* 2.19, in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, vol. 5, ed. James F. Dimock (London: Longman, 1861), 101-107. For an English translation see Gerald of Wales, *The History and Topography of Ireland* 2.52, trans. John O'Meara (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), Kindle Edition. Nennius, *The Irish Version of the Historia Britonum of Nennius*, ed. James Henthorn Todd (Dublin: The Irish Archaeological Society, 1848), 204-205.

³¹ Carey, “Werewolves in Medieval Ireland,” 48-59.

³² *Ibid.*, 58.

³³ Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1987), 60-62. Ó Cróinín also briefly mentions that the king is sometimes addressed as *flaith airechta*, “lord of judgement” or “lord of assembly,” Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200*, 78. The relevance of law court will be demonstrated latter.

“man” in a general sense—tends to be used in a more restrained sense in literature denoting “nobleman, chief.”³⁴ Considering the clan’s probable kingly status, it is likely that the clan’s *þing* belongs to one of these exclusive and elite gatherings.

Though it is not possible to tell to what extent the *Kgs* author knew about the Laigne Faelad legends and early Medieval Irish social structure, he must have been familiar with the idea that wolves are commonly associated with kings and warriors in general, for such tendency is found in various Old Norse sources involving wolves/werewolves. For a start, Óðinn has two wolves—Geri and Freki—who stand by his table and are fed by him.³⁵ In the sagas, the most famous werewolves are perhaps Sigmundr and Sinfjötli from *Völsunga saga*, who accidentally found two wolf-skins (*úlffhamir*, belonging to another two *konungasynir*!) while wandering in the woods.³⁶ Moreover, the Völsung family tended to identify themselves with wolves throughout the text, from Sigi’s becoming a *vargr í véum* [wolf in sanctuary] to Sigurðr’s self-naming as *göfugt dýr* [noble beast].³⁷ Similarly, in the lost *Skjöldunga saga* (partially paraphrased in *Rerum Danicarum Fragmenta*), Arngrímur Jónsson records a Heidricus among the legendary Scyldingas, “cognomento Ulffhamur, eo quod se in lupum transformare noverit” [“surnamed *úlffhamr*, because he is capable to transform himself into a wolf”].³⁸ Analogously, it would not be a surprise if the werewolves in *Kgs* are also in or at least related to a position of authority in the region.

Then they are the decision-makers for the region, but have they performed their duty well? Obviously not. The story, though straightforward on the surface, embodies two storylines, both of which concern judgement and punishment. The first is quite

³⁴ eDIL (Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language) s.v. 3 *aire*. <http://dil.ie/1885>.

³⁵ Snorri Sturluson, *Gylfaginning in Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, chapter 38, ed. Anthony Faulkes, 2nd edition (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2005), 32: “Þá vist er á hans borði stendr gefr hann tveim úlfum er hann á, er svá heita: Geri ok Freki.”

³⁶ *The Sage of the Volsungs*, ed. and trans. Ronald G. Finch (London: Nelson, 1965), 9-12.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 1, 31. See also Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, “The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature,” *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 106/3 (2007), 284.

³⁸ Arngrímur Jónsson, *Arngrimi Jonae Opera latine conscripta* 1, *Bibliotheca Arnarnagæana* 9, ed. Jakob Benediktsson (Hafniæ: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1950), 353. Translation Mine. The same Heidricus (Heiðrekr) is also mentioned in *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*: “Angantýr var lengi konungr í Reiðgotalandi. Hann var ríkr ok hermaðr mikill, ok eru frá honum komnar konunga ættir. Sonr hans var Heiðrekr úlfhamr, er síðan var lengi konungr í Reiðgotalandi.” My translation: Angantýr was king in Reiðgotaland for a long time. He was a great and mighty warrior, and from him came many royal descendants. His son was Heiðrekr “wolf-skin,” who reigned over Reiðgotaland for a long time after him. *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, eds., Gabriel Turville-Petre and Christopher Tolkien (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1976), 67.

explicit: the clansmen at their meeting passed a sentence upon St. Patrick, presumably because his preaching had disturbed their peace and aimed to promote a god that must have been considered false by them—indeed, Christians would have done no less, had the situation been reversed. That decision, however, was made out of ignorance and was certainly unjust for St. Patrick. God was provoked by their sentence, for which they were punished.

The very last remark indicates that there is another storyline at play here, whose protagonists are God and the Saint. Looking at the story from their perspective, it becomes something like this: St. Patrick, angered by the clansmen, pressed charges against them as an accuser in front of God the judge (indirectly, through prayers). God viewed the case and judged the accused as truly guilty, so He sent down a punishment to amend the wrong they had done to St. Patrick. This version of the story also happens in a quasi-courtroom setting and the decision is collective in nature. According to the author, as demonstrated in the case of Adam and Eve, God never makes His decision alone but always holds an assembly with four virgins—Truth (*sannendi*), Peace (*friðsemi*), Justice (*réttvísi*), and Mercy (*miskunn*)—and asks each of them to give her own judgement (*dæma*); He would not pass a sentence unless the four “bliðu satt mali” [“came to a friendly agreement”].³⁹

Although the author never stated what happened to the land after the curse, it must have taken its toll on the region—a point that is in the same vein as in Tara’s destruction and has been discussed previously. The werewolves are either the ruling members of Ossory or an upper warrior class or both, but after the punishment they must disappear in the woods for a certain period. Are we to believe that nothing at all would happen to their land during their absence? A brief glimpse into other werewolf stories is more than enough to show otherwise: in *Úlfhams rímur*, despite the great power possessed by King Hálfðan, “hann matti ei ríkis rjota” [“he was unable to hold his kingdom”], for he and his ancestors had been cursed to become wolf in winters and only “Kome at sumri segger heim / sinum rikium hlifa” [“men came home in summer / to protect their kingdom”].⁴⁰ After his death at the hands of his wife, Hildir, who was very tired of being the bedfellow of a werewolf, the kingdom fell into civil wars and fragmentation: Hildir drove the royal

³⁹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 75.16-77.33; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 251-57. I have standardized the spelling of the four virgins’ names.

⁴⁰ *Úlfhams rímur* 1.14.3-4, and 3.41.1-2, in *Úlfhams saga*, ed. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 2001), 4 and 18.

heir Úlfham to the woods, and a good number of fighters with him, including two sons of a mighty earl who had formerly served as Hálfdan's best counsellor and supporter.⁴¹ Likewise, in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, Gorlagon took revenge on his wife and her new husband (i.e. the new king) by ravaging his own kingdom before he had to seek shelter in another; at the end of his wolf days, his kingdom fell into such a miserable condition that "Omnes uero nobiles et ignobiles prouincie illius regis qui lupo successerat importabilem gemebant tirannidem" ["all the men of that province, both of high and low degree, were groaning under the intolerable tyranny of the king who had succeeded Gorlagon"].⁴² In the end, the kingdom was easily invaded by the neighboring king, who "*eum cum regina cepit sueque dicioni mancipauit*" ["captured both him (i.e. the usurper) and his Queen and made them subject to his dominion"].⁴³

⁴¹ For the earl's support to Hálfdan, see *ibid.* 1.10.1-4, p. 4; for the prince's and his men's flight, and the war between the two parties, see 1.38.3-4 and 2.5.1-43.4, pp. 4 and 8-13.

⁴² *Arthur and Gorlagon* 11 and 20, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1903), 155 and 160. For an English translation, see "Arthur and Gorlagon," trans. F. A. Milne and A. Nutt, *Folklore*, 15/1 (1904), 48 and 57.

⁴³ Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon* 20, p. 160; Milne and Nutt, *Arthur and Gorlagon*, p. 57.

The Werewolves' Punishment: Its Cause and Consequence

With the big picture established, it is now time to move onto some details. That the werewolf story involves two judgement procedures in two storylines naturally leads to two verdicts. They are closely tied to each other, one as the cause and the other as the consequence of the werewolves' punishment; together they are the focus of this chapter.

It must be first of all pointed out, however, that the *Kgs* author seems to hold a rather retributivist view concerning punishment. One representative of such is Anselm of Canterbury. In his discussion of sin and redemption in *Cur Deus homo*, he interprets human sin as taking away something from God—therefore, creating a debt—which can only be redeemed by paying a bit more extra than what had been taken—like interest.⁴⁴ Two points can be extracted from this model: the punishment always echoes the crime, in the way that the harm that has been done to the victim will be imposed on the offender. But it is not the “an eye for an eye” type of a revenge; rather, it means an escalation: to rebalance the scale of justice, one will not only pay in accordance with a crime but also have to pay something extra for the intention of that crime. In other words, the punishment, while based on and corresponding to the offence, will be pushed one step further than that. Coincidentally, William Ian Miller also identifies a very similar revenge model that he terms as “balance and reciprocity” and expresses in monetary terms. In particular, he has examined a series of retaliatory activities between Hallgerðr and Bergþóra and established an escalating model of the feud, which he considers “the ideal type [...] consciously stylized to indicate that that is what is intended.”⁴⁵

Interestingly, the clansmen's punishment is also described in a language of revenge, which brings it closer to the feud in sagas. The sense of retaliation is primarily

⁴⁴ Anselm of Canterbury, *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis libri duo Cur Deus homo* 1.11, ed. Hugo Laemmer (Berolini: sumtibus G. Schlawitz, 1857), 20-22, esp 21: “Hunc honorem debitum qui Deo non reddit, aufert Deo quod suum est, et Deum exhonorat; et hoc est peccare. Quamdiu autem non solvit quod rapuit, manet in culpa; nec sufficit solummodo reddere quod ablatum est, sed pro contumelia illata plus debet reddere, quam abstulit.” My translation: “He who does not give back the honor owned to God, takes away what belongs to God, and dishonors God; and that is to sin. As long as he does not return he took away, he will remain at fault; nor will it suffice that he only returns what has been taken, but for the contempt he showed, he must return more than he took.” For the retributivist nature of Anselm's theory of punishment, see Thomas Talbott, “Punishment, Forgiveness, and Divine Justice,” *Religious Studies* 29/2 (1993), 154.

⁴⁵ See William Ian Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 183-85, where Miller, having examined the feud between Hallgerðr and Bergþóra, shows that the pattern of revenge is not based on exact equivalence as much as on escalation.

hidden behind the author's choice of words, especially in that he describes God's action as revenge (*hæfna*) rather than mere punishment (*refsa*). The same idea can also be found in the other of the two werewolf cases in Old Norwegian literature, namely *Bisclaret* in *Strengleikar*. Although it has been generally accepted that representing Bisclaret/Bisclavret's action as revenge is a way to justify his violence and emphasize his human rationality,⁴⁶ a comparative reading of the Old Norwegian translation and the Old French original shows that the idea of retaliation seems stronger in the former. In *Bisclaret*, four occurrences of *hefna* are found in describing Bisclaret's actions against those who have betrayed him almost to his death: “ok æf hann væri æigi hæftr þa myndi hann sua rettlega hava **hæfnt** sin. at allzækki myndi a hava skort” [“if he had not been held back, he would have had such a proper **revenge** that it would have been in no way incomplete”]; “ok villdi gjarna **hæfna** sin æf hann mætte” [“he would gladly have exacted **vengeance**”]; “ok var þat æigi kynlegt at Bisclaret villdi sin a honom **hæfna**. er clæðe hans tok” [“it was no wonder that Bisclaret wanted to take **revenge** on the one who took his clothes”]; and “hann liop at hænmi sem oðr væri ok matto allir sia huersso væl hann **hæfndi** sin” [“he sprang at her as if he were mad, and everyone could see how well he **avenged** himself”].⁴⁷ In Marie de France's original, however, only two instances are found: “Ceo dient tut par la meisun / Ke il nel fet mie sanz reisun;/ Mesfait li ad, coment que seit;/ Kar volenters se **vengereit**” [“all present in the court said/ this cannot have happened without reason;/ he must have done him something wrong, as it has been;/ because he wishes to avenge himself”], and “Vers li curut cum enragiez / Oiez cum il est bien **vengeiez!**” [“Towards [her] he ran with rage / Hear how he has been well **avenged!**”]⁴⁸ One may argue that Marie's different wording is due to consideration of rhymes, but even so the fact that the Norwegian translator substituted these perfectly befitting words (*mordrë* and *hai*) with *hefna* still has spoken something about his mind.⁴⁹ It is particularly intriguing that in the two additional instances of *hefna* (i.e., the first and the third), there is a sense

⁴⁶ Leslie Dunton-Downer, “Wolf Man,” in *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 206-209.

⁴⁷ *Bisclaret* in *Strengleikar: An Old Norse Translation of Twenty-one Old French Lais*, ed. and trans. Robert Cook and Mattias Tveitane (Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt, 1979), 92.32-33, 94.4, 94.9-10, and 94.20-21. Parallel English translation on opposite pages. Emphases mine.

⁴⁸ Marie de France, *Bisclavret*, in *Lais: Édition Biligüe*, lines 207-10, 233-34, ed. and trans. Philippe Walter (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 158 and 161. Parallel French translation on opposite page. Translation and emphases mine.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, line 203 (*mordrë*) and line 218 (*hai*), p. 158: in these two instances, instead of revenge, Marie de France used “bite” and “hate”, which are by no means improper in the context.

of regaining balance, which is missing in the Old French, for the translator emphasizes the “completion” of revenge and, more importantly, reminds the readers of the action of clothes-hiding, the original crime. Moreover, immediately following the last instance, a major deviation occurs in the Old Norse in that, instead of biting off her nose, Bisclaret tore apart his ex-wife’s clothes, which, according to the translator, is the greatest disgrace he can do to her.⁵⁰ Biting off the nose certainly sounds like a more severe (and bloodier) punishment, yet if we read the line in light of the wrong the wife and her lover had done to Bisclaret (i.e. hiding away his clothes, which the author has just emphasized) and the fact that Bisclaret refused to transform in public—“*honom þykkir skomm ok suivirðing at skæpnu sinni*” [“it seems to him a dishonor and disgrace to his person”],⁵¹ it fits the retributivist pattern: she (through her lover) took away his clothes in secret, he took away hers in public in return, for he considered it a greater shame and he himself would not deign to do so. Though Bisclaret (a victim) is different from the Ossory clan (an offender), *Strengleikar* and *Kgs* were composed about the same time and were both cultural products from King Hákon’s court, so it is highly probable that the authors of the two works shared a similar—if not the same—set of views and values.

Then, what be said about the verdicts from and the verdict against the *Kgs* werewolves? Based on the retributivist logic, the crime and the punishment are closely tied, so that to understand one helps to understand the other. Therefore, the easiest way to crack the question is to start from the most obvious, tangible factor in the story: that they were turned into wolves. From there, I will first trace backwards to the cause of their crime, and then forwards to its consequence which fell on them.

The choice of wolf cannot be random. If someone is punished by being turned into a wolf, it is most likely because he/she has already shown some wolfish traits in his/her offence. Take Ovid’s Lycaon for example, he became a wolf on account of “*rabiem solitaeque cupidine caedis*” [“his rage and habitual desire of killing”], after his failed attempts to kill Jupiter and to trick him into feeding on human flesh (i.e., to turn

⁵⁰ Cook and Tveitane, *Bisclaret*, 94.21-23: “*hann upp ræistizc ok ræif af hænni klæði sin. ænga suivirðing matte hann mæire gera hænni*” [“He reared up and tore off her clothes—he could not do any greater disgrace to her.”] Whereas in the Old French: “*Le neis li esracha del vis. / Quei li peüst il faire pis?*” My translation: “He bit the nose off her face. / What worse could he do?” Marie, *Bisclavret*, lines 235-36, p. 160.

⁵¹ Cook and Tveitane, *Bisclaret*, 96.21.

him into a man-eating creature, just like a wolf).⁵² Likewise, the Ossory clan tried to turn St. Patrick into a wolf, though not by offering him human meat for dinner. The “turning” here is only on a metaphorical level—that is to say, it is one step shorter compared to what God has done to them: they howled at the saint in a wolfish manner. The logic here must be that they considered whatever St. Patrick was preaching as non-sense, so that he only deserved to be responded to with random animal sounds rather than human voice. In other words, by howling at him, they in fact lowered him to the level of animals—the lowest among the three kinds of God’s created, according to Gregory the Great.⁵³

It is very unjust for St. Patrick, for he was punished for his good intentions. What he did is actually to help the clan to avoid God’s punishment—in any form, at any time. The author states in the very beginning that the event happened before Ireland was fully Christianized, and that the Ossory clan were headstrong pagans. Just like the people at Tara, they did not have the “correct” faith, which is precisely why they erred.⁵⁴ St. Patrick here resembles the Father in the role of a guide, whose task is to make sure the audience will stay on the high path of virtue. According to the Father, “Ðat er unhaf spœki at rœðaz almatkan guð” [“to fear Almighty God, this is the beginning of wisdom”].⁵⁵ It is the precondition to do anything right: “En sa er þætta næmr oc getir. þa misser sa æigi sanrrar spæcðar oc allrar gæzko” [“whoever learns this and observes it shall not be wanting in true knowledge or in any form of goodness”].⁵⁶ Had the clan listened to St. Patrick and acted upon his teaching, they would not have committed such a crime or any crime, let alone be turned into wolves.

⁵² Ovid, *Die Metamorphosen des P. Ovidius Naso*, book 1, lines 163-239, ed. Hugo Magnus (Gotha: F.A. Perthes, 1892), Perseus Digital Library; the metamorphosis comes between lines 232 and 239.

⁵³ Gregory I the Great, *Dialogorum libri IV in Dialogorum libri IV de vita et miraculis patrum italicorum et de aeternitate anumarum* 4.3, Patrologia Latina 77 (Paris: 1849), 321: “Tres quippe vitales spiritus creavit omnipotens Deus: unum qui carne non tegitur; alium qui carne tegitur, sed non cum carne moritur; tertium qui carne tegitur, et cum carne moritur. Spiritus namques est qui carne non tegitur, angelorum; spiritus qui carne tegitur, sed cum carne non moritur, hominum; spiritus qui carne tegitur, et cum carne moritur, jumentorum omnimque brutorum animalium.” My translation: “God almighty created three living spirits: one that is not enclosed in flesh; the second that is enclosed in flesh but does not die in flesh; the third that is enclosed in flesh and dies in flesh. That which is not enclosed in flesh, is the spirit of angels; that which is enclosed in flesh but does not die in flesh, spirit of men; that which is enclosed and dies in flesh, spirit of all beasts of burden and wild animals.”

⁵⁴ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 25.6-5; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 114.

⁵⁵ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 3.23; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 77. The Father’s statement will be returned to, as it is central to the second main theme of the *Kgs*.

⁵⁶ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 3.30-31; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 78.

By metaphorically turning St. Patrick into a wolf, the clan in effect show a feeble attempt to venture into God's power domain, which leads to sin of transgression. For a start, metamorphosis is something that God alone is capable of. In *De civitate Dei*, St. Augustine relates the story of Arcadian werewolves told by Marcus Terentius Varro and, in the following chapter, lays stress on its falsity.⁵⁷ Such transformations, he says, are works of demons and cannot be real metamorphoses, for only "omnipotentem Deum posse omnia facere quæ voluerit" ["the almighty God can do all that He pleases"], while the demons can only achieve *phantasticum* at their best—and even that cannot be achieved without God's permission.⁵⁸ This *phantasticum* is nothing but an illusion, defined by Laurence Harf-Lancner in his analysis of the above-mentioned passage as "la représentation que le rêveur a de lui-même dans son rêve, et à laquelle la puissance de l'imagination imprime les formes les plus variées" [[This *phantasticum*, is first of all] the presentation that the dreamer has of himself in his dream, and in which the power of imagination imprints the most varied forms].⁵⁹ God remains the only one that can alter the *rationales causales* of the created; God remains the only one who can perform true metamorphoses in the form of *miracula*.⁶⁰

Following the same train of thoughts, it is probably not a random choice either that the werewolf story is placed immediately after the account of Tara's fall, which itself is a fine example of a crime by transgressing into God's domain. Apart from Adam and Eve's fall, this is the only story that is told more than once in *Kgs*, and it cannot be so by chance.⁶¹ In the first telling, as Sayers shows, Tara is indeed destroyed because of the king's injustice, but in the third telling, it becomes clearer that the fault lies also in the people's

⁵⁷ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 18.17-18, cols. 573-76. It is worth noting that Gerald of Wales is certainly familiar with Augustine's account and analysis, and *De civitate Dei* is listed as one influential source for the werewolf story in *Topographia Hibernica*; see Carey, "Werewolves in Medieval Ireland," 61-63.

⁵⁸ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 18.18, cols. 574-75.

⁵⁹ Laurence Harf-Lancner, "La métamorphose illusoire: des théories Chrétiennes de la métamorphose aux images médiévales du loup-garou," *Annales. Histoire. Sciences Sociales*, 40/1 (1985), 210. Translation mine.

⁶⁰ For *rationes seminales* and *miracula*, see note 23 and note 6 respectively. It is also worth pointing out that Harf-Lancner considers that the two seemingly conflicting werewolf traditions—in *littérature apologétique* and *littérature narrative profane*—in fact show remarkable unity (*remarkable d'unité*), for metamorphoses attributed to the demons are mere dreams, while metamorphoses caused by God are real shape-changing. In particular, he looks into werewolf stories reported by Gervase of Tilbury and Gerald of Wales, concluding that what makes them different is the origin of the metamorphoses: they are works of God (*l'œuvre de Dieu*), in other words, miracles. Lancner, "Le métamorphose illusoire," 208 and 218.

⁶¹ The fall of Tara is told again in Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 102.7-24, 104.12-19, and 104.35-40; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 308, 312, and 314. Adam and Eve's fall will be discussed later.

belief that “rangr domr munðe alldri koma af temere” [“a wrong decision could never come from Themar”].⁶² God is the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom, the ultimate judge who will eventually judge kings, but the people of Tara, not knowing God, mistook the king and his earthly throne for the sole source of justice. This is an act of transgression, transgression of power domains, for which the entire land was turned inhabitable as a reminder. To an avid and intelligent reader who follows the author to the werewolf story, the memory of Tara’s fall must still be vivid in his mind to the point that it may affect his interpretation of the werewolves.

Fortunately, God turned the tables in time, and countered the clan’s unjust verdict by a punishment that satisfies the requirement of retributivist justice. The clan regarded St. Patrick as making no sense, so they became those who truly cannot make any sense to men. A further point must be made (and will be returned to) on the loss of speech, which is almost a standard trope in werewolf stories—perhaps with the only exception of Gerald of Wales’ Ossory werewolf, who nevertheless gives the impression that he only approaches men and talks under the most urgent circumstances.⁶³ The Latin word for inability to speak is *infantia* (gen. *infantiae*, adj. form *infans*, *infantis*), which also denotes the period of infancy or something pertaining to newly born babies.⁶⁴ Stefka G. Eriksen demonstrates that human life cycle is not defined by age but by intellectual power and social status, especially in the case of childhood and adolescence, which are marked by lack of learning and wisdom.⁶⁵ That unwisdom (*insipientia*) is another featured characteristic of *infantia* is stressed by St. Augustine, who considers it a punishment (*poena*) for which we were born “non a risu, sed a fletu” [“with tears rather than laughter”].⁶⁶ Augustine explores the connection between infancy, speech and wisdom further in *Confessiones*—when describing his own infancy based on observation of other infants—and concludes that, to grow out of infancy (or have infancy grow out of itself), one must learn to speak—little by little, starting from diverse “gemitibus et vocibus variis” [“hoarse sounds and voices”]; then one moves on to school “ut discerem litteras” [“to

⁶² Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 104.14-15; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 312.

⁶³ Gerald, *Topographia Hibernica* 2.19, pp. 101-104.

⁶⁴ *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P.G.W. Glare (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968-1982), 894.

⁶⁵ Eriksen, “Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King’s Mirror*,” 163.

⁶⁶ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 21.14, col. 728.

learn letters”].⁶⁷ A similar idea is implied in the story of the dog king Saurr in *Hákonar saga góða*, who was given “þriggja manna vit” [“three men’s understanding”] and since then “gó hann til tveggja orða, en mælti it þriðja” [“he barked twice and spoke the third”].⁶⁸ Though the passage may have been composed in a spirit of mockery, it does shed some light on the author’s (and consequently, the readers’) understanding of wisdom in relation to human speech. Saurr’s particular way of speaking—a mixture of non-sense and comprehensible voice—seems a result of his partial rationality, that he has *þriggja manna vit* rather than *mannvit* in general. Moreover, the fact that he barks before he speaks also bears resemblance to the speech learning process of infants described in *Confessiones*.

Now, going back to the *Kgs* werewolves: though they have the understanding of mature human beings, the deprivation of speech brings them back to the earliest stage of human life cycle, which reflects their ignorance—the ultimate cause of their offence. Considering the connection between (lack of) speech and (un-)intelligence, the werewolves also face the danger of regression regarding human rationality, for they are right in between rationality and bestiality.⁶⁹ The story of the *gelts*, which comes *after* the werewolf story, also involves a ruler—King Suibne Geilt who fled into the woods from battle⁷⁰—and shows a further degradation of human status—or one step further into bestiality—than the werewolves. Like the werewolves, the *gelts* are also deprived of their ability to speak and run in the woods without clothes—the most important and human-defining feature in *Bisclaret*, yet they “lata þit sitt” [“lose their wits”]; when they have spent enough time in the wild, “þaxa fíaðrar alikamum þeira sva sæm a fuglum” [“feathers will grow upon their bodies as on birds”] and as fleeting “sæm apyniur eða ikornar” [“as apes or squirrels”].⁷¹ A parallel is found in *Ívens saga*, an Old Norwegian translation of

⁶⁷ Augustine, *Confessiones* 1.8.13-9.14, *Confessions I: Introduction and Text*, ed. James J. O’ Donnell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 7-8. Translation mine.

⁶⁸ *Hákonar saga góða* 12, in *Heimskringla I*, 164. Translation mine.

⁶⁹ Intriguingly, this “regression” is also traced by Augustine in *De Trinitate*, where he demonstrates how a man could slide little by little down to the level of a brutal beast. The process is mostly described in book 12, chapters 8 to 11, and is made quite clear by the titles they bear: *Deflexus ab imagine Dei* [“Turning aside of God’s image”], *Sequitur de eodem argumento* [“Same argument continued”], *Gradus ad turpissima* [“Gradually to the most disgraceful”], and *Imago pecudis in homine* [“Image of beast in man”]: *De Trinitate libri quindecim* 12.8.13-11.16, *Patrologia Latina* 42 (Paris: 1841), 1005-1007. Translation mine.

⁷⁰ See note 27.

⁷¹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 26.2-9; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 116.

Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion commissioned by King Hákon, where Herra Íven, having been rebuked by his lady's messenger, "hann hljóp [...] til skógar, ok týndi hann þá mjök svá öllu vitinu ok reif af sér klæðin" ["he ran into the woods, and he lost his mind entirely and tore apart his clothes"].⁷² Could it be the author's intention to put the werewolves *before* the *gelts*? Then the *gelts*' fate can be interpreted as another possible consequence of the clansmen's offence, that gradually their humanity may give in to bestiality, transgressing into the domain of animals.

Besides, the very fact that the story belongs to *miracula* speaks for itself, since miracles are defined as phenomena that do not follow the natural course of nature or *rations causales*. One such definition is given by Gervase of Tilbury, but much prior to him, St. Augustine, though he does not use the word *miraculum* or explain its distinction from *mirabilium*, already implies in his argument over God's creation that miracles are results of altered courses of nature:

Hæc opera Dei sunt utique inusitata, quia prima. Qui autem ista non credunt, nulla facta prodigia debent credere: neque enim et ipsa, si usitato naturæ curriculo gignerentur, prodigia dicerentur. Qui autem sub tanta gubernatione divinæ providentiæ, quamvis ejus causa lateat, frustra gignitur?⁷³

[These works of God [i.e., creation of Adam and Eve] are certainly extraordinary, for [they were] the first. Those who do not believe them must deny all prodigies: indeed, they would not be prodigies, had they followed the usual course of nature. But what [is there] in all this whole work of the divine providence that is not of use, though the cause is hidden?]

In addition to the "non-naturalness" of God's works, St. Augustine's words reveal another important aspect of *miracula*: even though men do not understand them, there must be a special purpose behind every act God deigns to perform, which must make sense for God's creation as a whole. Then, what purpose does the werewolves'

⁷² *Ívens saga* 9.9, ed. Eugen Kölbing, Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek 7 (Halle a.S.: Max Niemeyer, 1898), 64. The whole episode is found in 9.3-13, pp. 63-66,

⁷³ For Gervase of Tilbury, see note 6. For St. Augustine, see Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 12.25-27.1, cols. 374-76; quotation from col. 376. Translation mine.

punishment serve? What message does it convey? Surely we must not assume that the story ends with the “villains” being rightfully punished, but instead look further. The werewolf story in *Kgs* is a tale of misjudgement on the ruler’s part that serves well as a continuation of Tara’s destruction. The punishment follows a retributivist pattern, in that none of the terms are randomly issued, but all target specific elements of the offence. Now, putting the two together, considering that the werewolves were struck down because of bad decision-making, the punishment must have been issued to reflect the significance of making good decisions. To know the importance of judging correctly is one thing, but to know *how* to judge correctly is quite another. To be able to achieve the latter, one must acquire proper knowledge and apply it in the proper way—this is the ultimate message that the author means to tell; this is the topic that I will focus on in the rest of this thesis.

Konungs skuggsjá as a Didactic Text

Although knowledge as a main theme of *Kgs* has not been extensively researched, it is on the rise, and has already been discussed in some excellent scholarly works produced within the past two decades. Andrew Hamer is among the first to study *Kgs* as a didactic text concerning knowledge. He approaches the subject from the Prologue, supporting Bagge's thematic unity theory and acknowledging the author's political agenda, but arguing instead that the text as a whole serves "a moral, didactic purpose, namely to provide as a mirror for everyone's benefit a study of the progress of a soul towards self-knowledge."⁷⁴ Reading *Kgs* side-by-side with the fourteenth century *Piers Plowman*, Hamer points out that the Son is in fact facing the spiritual danger of intellectual pride or *curiositas*. The wise Father understands it only too well, therefore he cites examples—notably of Lucifer, and of Adam and Eve—to warn against immoderation and intellectual arrogance, to ensure that the Son stays on the "highways of virtue."

The Father's fear is well grounded, for knowledge and wisdom are two completely different things,⁷⁵ and pursuing knowledge in an unwise way can indeed bring serious consequence. To a learned medieval mind, knowledge is certainly not "the more, the better," otherwise Dante's Ulysses would not burn in Hell for his "long desire [...] to understand how this world works, and know of human vices, worth and valour,"⁷⁶ nor would those who wanted to examine the body of St. Lawrence in Rome be struck dead, even though some of them did so out of good intentions.⁷⁷ Yet it has nothing to do with knowledge itself, but all depends on the pursuer and the way he/she pursues it. Commenting on the Fall of Man, Gervase of Tilbury makes a distinction based on why and how one acquires knowledge: knowledge bestowed by the Tree of Knowledge would

⁷⁴ Andrew Hamer, "Searching for Wisdom: *The King's Mirror*," in *Speculum regale: Der Altnorwegische königsspiegel (Konungs skuggsjá) in der Europäischen Tradition*, ed. Jens Eike Schnall and Rudolf Simek (Wien: Fassbaender, 2000), 47-62; for the purpose of the paper and the quote, see 49. For an overview of relevant previous research, see Eriksen, "Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King's Mirror*," 148-49.

⁷⁵ On the distinction between knowledge and wisdom, one of the most influential medieval texts is probably St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, where he considers knowledge the inferior of the two (*quæve inferior est*). The discussion is mostly found in Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12, cols. 998-1012.

⁷⁶ Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, ed. and trans. Robin Kirkpatrick (London: Penguin Books, 2012), *Inferno* 26.85-142, 117-19; the quotation is taken from lines 97-99, pp. 117.

⁷⁷ Ælfric, *St. Edmund, King and Martyr in Ælfric's Lives of Saints: Being a Set of Sermons on Saints' Days Formerly Observed by the English Church*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. Walter William Skeat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 332.241-46. Parallel English translation on the opposite page.

only be good, had Adam and Eve followed God's rules, but the knowledge acquired through transgression immediately becomes evil.⁷⁸ This sense of relativity is also found in St. Augustine's teachings, except that he approaches the question from the pursuer's frame of mind when he intends to use that knowledge: in *De civitate Dei*, he explains that knowledge is only good when it is "cum charitas inest" ["applied with charity"], otherwise it will "inflare, id est in superbiam" ["puff up, that is to say into arrogance"].⁷⁹ Therefore, to approach knowledge correctly is not any easier than to judge correctly, both require strict instruction and insightful teaching, which is why *Kgs* had to be written.

This idea is further developed by Eriksen. In her essay, she compares *Kgs* to major European didactic texts and concludes that *Kgs* reflects a systematic and academic approach towards knowledge, which is influenced both by a larger European learned context and by contemporary Norwegian society. Two of her main arguments are particularly inspiring: *Kgs* aims to show the proper way to acquire knowledge. In the process, the way that the text itself is constructed reveals the author's attitudes towards knowledge and knowledge acquisition. Starting from the origin of knowledge (God), she analyzes man's capacity to learn (according to each individual's social status), the way the human brain processes information (logic) and, last but not least, where knowledge is to be found (in nature, supernatural phenomenon, and history). In this way, though she does not analyze any particular passage or example as thoroughly as Hamer has done, she nevertheless finds a thread that is woven through the entire text to bring different passages in *Kgs* together.

How, then, does the werewolf story reflect the didactic aspect of the text? To answer this question, I will adopt a tripartite approach: first, I will zero in on one very specific term of the werewolves' punishment—that they will retain human reason—to argue that it is a necessary part of the clansmen's punishment, and designed so for their benefit, so they may have an opportunity to amend. Then I will return to the question of loss of speech and *infantia*, but discuss it in light of learning process and knowledge

⁷⁸ Gervase, *Otia Imperialia* 1.14, pp. 82-83: "Lignum scientie boni et mali dicitur ex effectu et per consequentiam. Si enim non contempserunt mandatum, scientiam tantum boni dedisset, qui est fructus bonus obedientie meritorius; quia uero contempserunt, scientiam mali habuerunt." ["The tree of knowledge of good and evil is so-called from its effects and consequences. For if they had not defied God's command, it would have bestowed only the knowledge of good, that is, the good fruit consisting of merit won through obedience; but because they did defy it, they acquired the knowledge of evil."]

⁷⁹ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 9.20, col. 273. He repeats the same idea in *De Trinitate*. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12.14.21, col. 1009. Translation mine.

acquisition. At last, I will touch upon the theme of exile and some related elements in relation to knowledge. In the meantime, other literary examples—both within *Kgs* and without—will be brought up to illuminate the arguments, among which the foremost is the Fall of Adam and Eve in *Kgs*. Afterwards, in the last section of the thesis, I will talk about St. Augustine's theory of knowledge and propose what the werewolves are expected to learn, and then I will go back to the beginning of *Kgs*.

Punishment as a Learning Opportunity

That the werewolf somehow retains his memory and human reason is another standard trope of werewolf stories (though exceptions are occasionally found—Gervase’s furious Raimbaud de Pouget and, of course, werewolves from horror movies).⁸⁰ It is also essential to the plot, for without human intelligence, none of those lupine heroes would be able to turn the tables and the story will end at the very moment of metamorphosis—that is probably why the author of *Arthur and Gorlagon* purposely makes the faithless wife utter the curse wrong, which seems a rather foolish and implausible mistake. The *Kgs* werewolves, however, do not have the need for any kind of revenge—indeed, it will be outrageous to harbor even the idea of vengeance against God, and the storytelling does end with the metamorphosis. Then what purpose does their intelligence serve? Why does God allow them to retain it? The answer has already been spoiled by the title above: they are punished so they will know better.

First of all, it needs to establish the fact that, in spite of all their faults, God does not give up on the clansmen, and the retaining of human reason confirms it. What makes men fundamentally different from animals is no other than human reason—often rendered as *mannvit* in Old Norse.⁸¹ It is also one of the determining factors in salvation: according to St. Augustine, man embodies two selves—the outer man (*homo exterior*) and the inner (*interior*). The crucial difference is *animus*, which is rendered as general seat of thoughts, memory, desires, opinions, and various emotions in the OLD.⁸² While the outer man represents the bestial and the low within us, the inner is our link to God and exalted spiritual things (*spiritualibus excelsa*) hence our path to salvation—an idea explored also by both Joyce E. Salisbury and Dunton-Downer.⁸³

⁸⁰ Gervase, *Otia Imperialia* 3.120, pp. 812-15.

⁸¹ Although the word in compound words sometimes has the meaning of “wise” (e.g., in *mannvits-maðr*, “wise man”), standing alone it is primarily and etymologically associated with the word for “mind, understanding.” See Jan de Vries, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1961), 669.

⁸² *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 134-35.

⁸³ Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12.1.1, cols. 998-99. For a brief summary of St. Augustine’s theory on distinction and connection between man and beasts, and how man should explore that difference to aspire to higher things, see Ronald H. Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine’s Theory of Knowledge* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1969), 6-11; Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 5-7; Dunton-Downer, “Wolf Man,” 206.

Furthermore, to have one's crime cleansed by punishment, i.e. to clear one's "debt" to God, in fact amounts to a second chance to make amends and prevent others from committing the same crime. A close reading of the chapters on capital punishments and the biblical examples intended for the judge-king in *Kgs* reveals that the author's attitude towards punishment is rather Boethian,⁸⁴ in the sense that righteous punishment is issued for the benefit of the punished, rather than destruction:

En hinn er þolir ræfsingar dom þa gengr hann til skripta oc iðraz hann þa misgerninga sinna er hann munnde ænga iðran oc kþol er hann þolir idauða sinum oc er hanum bætra her at taka skiotar hæfnder en kþol oc pinsl utan ænnda þpi at æigi hæfnir guð tyspar hins sama oc þærðr firi þpi konongs ræfsing gott þærc oc ast|sæmðar þærc pið alla þa sæm unnder hanum ero at hann þill at sa er firi ræfsingom þærðr † taki her skamma pinsl firi illzkur sinar hælldr en hann se æilifliga tynndr annars heims [...] Spá er oc þat marcannde at ræfsing er gott þærc æf hon er gor æpter rettdomi.⁸⁵

[But one who is to suffer punishment will confess his sins and repent of his misdeeds; though if he did not see a sudden death prepared for him, he would show no repentance. He is, therefore, saved by his repentance and the pangs which he suffers in his death. And it is better for him to suffer a brief punishment here than endless agony and torture; for God never punishes the same since twice.

⁸⁴ The idea that to be punished helps to cleanse one's sin is also expressed by Lady Philosophy: "Habent igitur improbi, cum puniuntur quidem boni aliquid adnexum poenam ipsam scilicet quae ratione iustitiae bona est, idemque cum supplicio carent, inest eis aliquid ulterius mali ipsa impunitas quam iniquitatis merito malum esse confessus es" ["The wicked, therefore, at the time when they are punished, have some good added to them, that is, the penalty itself, which by reason of its justice is good; and in the same way, when they go without punishment, they have something further in them, the very impunity of their evil, which you have admitted is evil because of its injustice"]. Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae* 4.4.66-70, in *The Theological Tractates: with an English Translation by H.F. Stewart and E.K. Rand and S.J. Tester; The Consolation of Philosophy: with an English Translation of S.J. Tester*, trans. H.F. Stewart et al. (London: William Heinemann, 1978), 344-45. Parallel English translation on opposite page.

⁸⁵ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 107.3-12.

Consequently, the king's punishment becomes a good and kind deed toward all those who are subject to him, for he would rather have the one who is to be punished suffer a brief pain here for his wickedness than to be lost forever, in the world to come [...] We may, therefore, conclude that punishment is a good deed, if it is exacted according to a righteous verdict.]⁸⁶

So to be punished, like to be hurled from the top of Fortuna's whimsical wheel, is as much a misfortune as a unique opportunity to gain insights, to repent, and to improve. "God never punishes the same sin twice," says the Father, implying that, if one has to sin—as most people do—he/she'd better get punished for it in this transitory and earthly life than to bring it in front of God's judgement seat and be sentenced to suffer in Hell for eternity. Of course, one has to be serious about the punishment and show true repentance (*iðran*), which is easier to achieve if there is something dramatic and impressive to remind and help the sinner to discipline him/herself. Shimei and Bishop Abiathar are punished, so they may have "a reminder (*íminning/aminning*)" of their offence to feel remorseful and, consequently, to wash off their sin by repentance.⁸⁷ The same applies to the werewolves, for had they continued their behavior without being checked at all, they would go straightly to Hell after death—indeed, what else can a headstrong pagan expect? Then their punishment turns out to be a privilege; quite contrary to being abandoned by God, they are given a new start. This is probably why the Father says in the very beginning of the Irish chapters, that Ireland "mun kallat vera helgara en onnur lond" ["may be called holier than all others"].⁸⁸

One precondition of repentance is to be aware of one's fault and feel the severity of the punishment, which is impossible for the werewolves if they have no human reason. A punishment is a punishment only when the punished feels the pain, the rage, the remorse, or even the desire for revenge—depending on the context. It is as much about the body as about the emotion, for in order to truly feel a punishment, one must be aware of it and constantly brew in mind the difference between now and then, between worse and better. So it is about loss and, more importantly, the awareness of that loss—do you think Edmund Dantès would become the Count of Monte Cristo at all, if he were just a

⁸⁶ Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 319.

⁸⁷ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 117.10 and 121.13; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 342 and 352.

⁸⁸ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 21.35-36; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 105.

random vagabond who had nothing to lose? One has to feel a certain amount of pain and suffering to have the motivation to react, and in the case of Dantès it is the loss of a fulfilling life and a wonderful wife, especially when he was so close to having them both. It is the same with the werewolves, except that the aim here is remorse rather than revenge, but both require a good deal of emotional disturbance. What is the point of punishing them, if their minds are reduced altogether with their bodies to the level of wolves, meaning that they become one hundred percent wolves? Will a wolf consider itself at a loss by being a wolf? Will a man, as long as he firmly believes that he is a human in every possible way, consider himself at a loss by being a human? Probably not.

What the punished may feel, however, is only one side of the coin. It also concerns what other people may feel, or what the punished thinks of what others may think. Here we go back to the retributivist justice that I have mentioned above. Like I said, the clansmen gave St. Patrick a verdict that the holy man did not deserve, so in other words, they wronged him. According to the retributivist model, the clansmen must be punished by being wronged—more strongly—and they must feel it. What can be better than turn them into wolves that consciously know they are not wolves? Due to their appearance, everyone else will take them as wolves and treat them as wolves, while only they know they do not deserve such treatment—because they are men! This by extension explains why they have to be silenced: to make sure that they will not even have the chance of persuading others *not* to wrong them.

Speaking of speechlessness, the *infantia* connection will be brought back for the moment. In addition to a period of human life, *infantia* also denotes a period of human history. In *De civitate Dei*, the base of St. Augustine's sexpartite division of human life is the six stages of human history which he has identified in *De catechizandi rudibus*.⁸⁹ To him, the human *infantia* is analogous to the period from Adam to the Deluge, for, whereas human history before Noah's Ark has been washed out by the Flood, human infancy is drowned in oblivion, only in the age of *pueritia* (Noah to Abraham) did men begin to "speak" in the form of the Hebrew language.⁹⁰ By the time of Gervase, the idea

⁸⁹ Augustine, *De catechizandi rudibus* 1.22.39, Patrologia Latina 40 (Paris: 1857), 338; Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 16.43, cols. 522-23, where he clearly names *infantia*, *pueritia* and *adulescentia* in accordance with the first three stages of human history.

⁹⁰ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 16.43, cols. 522-23: "demergit oblivio, sicut aetas prima generis humani est deleta diluvio", and "et ideo in lingua inventa est, id est Hebraea. A pueritia namque homo incipit loqui post infantiam [...] quod fari non potest."

seems to have already become quite common; though Gervase does not divide the stages of life and human history the same way Augustine does, a parallel between early human history and human infancy is still found in his account of the Fall, where he compares pre-transgression Adam and Eve to infants (*more infantium*).⁹¹ Either way, what is key here is lack of knowledge.

Both Noah's Ark and Adam and Eve's Expulsion, however, mark the start of a new journey. Both can be read in light of development of self-understanding, one on a macrocosmic level (for human as a whole), the other microcosmic (for each individual human). Siding with St. Augustine's division, the history of men will be a history of men's cognizance of that very history: the period between Adam and the Deluge is infancy because men do not know about it—all the traces have been wept out by the Deluge; they only started to record history after they learned to use language again (*pueritia*). So to St. Augustine the pre-Deluge period is more or less like the Greek Dark Ages to modern classicists, providing little written record to reconstruct that era. Siding with Gervase, the starting point is pushed backwards to the very moment when the tie between each man and God is severed, the moment that he becomes "a stranger to himself."⁹² For before Original Sin, the earthly body and its sensation are perfectly controlled by the soul that makes men excel in reason and understanding.⁹³ After it, however, human life has become a constant struggle to bring what is common to beasts (the outer man) into subjection of what is in common with God (the inner man). According to St. Augustine, men's ascension to God is basically a journey to search for the inner man, or to search within the *imago Dei*; but if they are drawn to corporeal and temporal things, the inner man will be made old (*inveteratur*) and little by little give way to the beast within (*ad similitudine pecorum*).⁹⁴ This journey does not only resemble the struggle of the werewolves who, torn between two natures, might give away and become something like the *gelts*, but also echoes what Hamer has said about *Kgs*: "a study of the progress of a soul towards self-knowledge."⁹⁵

⁹¹ Gervase, *Otia Imperialia* 1.15, pp. 84-85. Banks and Binns render the word as "children", which is not sufficiently accurate.

⁹² Henri Rondet, *Original Sin: the Patristic and Theological Background*, trans. Gajeten Finegan (Shannon: Ecclesia Press, 1972), 120.

⁹³ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 12.23, col. 373: "qua per rationem atque intelligentiam omnibus esset præstantior."

⁹⁴ Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12.8.13-11.16, cols. 1005-1007.

⁹⁵ See note 74.

At last, I would like to combine the Expulsion and the journey metaphor, and approach the Fall of Man from the theme of exile, a theme that is also closely tied to werewolves in general. The Fall of Man is probably the most illuminative biblical example in *Kgs*, and certainly one of the weightiest, considering how many pages the author has devoted to it and the fact that the story has been told twice in full detail. The case will help us to understand the werewolves' punishment, for the two are quite similar in essence. For a start, Adam and Eve, whom God “skipaði hann [i.e. God] tþæim mannum til karlmanni oc kono at gæta allra þessara luta” [“he appointed two human beings, a man and a woman, to have dominion over everything”], are in effect the first king and queen in the world.⁹⁶ Yet they lent their ears to the wrong counsellors—Adam listened to Eve, who listened to the serpent, while according to God, Eve was created as Adam's companion and the serpent his subject, not as his counsellors.⁹⁷ As a result, they made the wrong decision of breaking God's law and trying to become like Him, knowing both good and evil when it had been decreed to them that they can only know good. The passage is interpreted by Bagge as a warning to kings by showing them what they ought not to do, making it a suitable follow-up to the examples of kings and queens told in the previous section: as a ruler, Adam “has not taken seriously enough his position as a servant of God, who has received everything from Him.”⁹⁸

But how can Adam and Eve be serious about their position, when they—like the clansmen—were too ignorant to understand the consequence in case of failure? When Eve was tempted by the Serpent to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, her greatest concern

⁹⁶ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 75.18-19; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 251-52. It is especially noteworthy that the word *skipa* appears both before and after Adam and Eva's story. Before, it is used in the example of Constantine the Great, first to denote his own “appointment” as emperor: “Guð hafði hann **skipaðan** hofðingia ipir allum heimi” [“God had appointed him ruler of all the world”]. Holm-Olsen, 70.24-25; Larson, 240-41; then to the appointment of Constantine's judges Caton and Zenophilus: “En Constantinus keisari **skipaðe** Cratonem oc Zenophilum i domara sæti” [“Emperor Constantine placed Craton and Zenophilus [...] in the judgement seat”]. Holm-Olsen, 72.16-7; Larson, 245. After, the same word reappears in the Father's statement concerning kingship: “at *konongdomur* se meirr sættr oc **skipaðr** at bera ahpggiu *firi nauðsynium* allrar alþyðu” [“kingship was established and appointed to look after the needs of the whole realm and people”]. Holm-Olsen, 97.26-27; Larson, 297; and “ma hvær *konongr* kenna sec [...] hvær *hann* er oc hvær *hann* skal vera æf hann þill þvi fylgia sëm *hann* er til **skipaðr** af Guðs halpp” [“every king [...] can learn in this way what he actually is and what he ought to be, if he wishes to achieve what God has intended for him”]. Holm-Olsen, 100.31-33; Larson, 304. Emphases mine.

⁹⁷ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 82.35-36, 83.4-6; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 269.

⁹⁸ Bagge, *The Political Thought of The King's Mirror*, 94-95.

was death, but she understood “death” wrongly—she must have interpreted it as corporeal death, otherwise her fear would not be so easily dissolved when the Serpent, having eaten the fruit first, did not die on the spot.⁹⁹ The same goes for Adam, who immediately let go of his concerns and fear once it had been proved to him that he would not die.¹⁰⁰ The death of the body as a subject of fear brings to mind a dialogue between Fear (*æðra*) and Courage (*hugrekki*) recorded in *Hauksbók*, which is itself a translation from *Moralium dogma philosophorum*, generally attributed to either William of Conches, Walter of Châtillon or Alan of Lille.¹⁰¹ In this dialogue, one of Fear’s main arguments is the inevitable death of men (*deyja skalltu*), while Courage, in line with the Old English Wanderer, emphasizes the transitory nature of human life and encourages Fear to focus on the eternal life after death. One of the most striking point Courage makes here likens this life to exile:

*Þat er flestra siðr er gongv taka at vanda heim þa er fvlngengit er. Orlendi er manz lif a iarðriki ok a fostrlandi at vera með fystum en vtlegð með leiðv ok er eigi rett at maðr kveini vm þat at hanvm se heim visað or vtlegt.*¹⁰²

[It is the manner of most men who went [on a journey], that they begin to head home when the journey is completed. Man’s life in this world is a banishment, and we prefer to return to our native land over this irksome exile, so it is not right for a man to complain that he shall be shown the way home out of exile.]

Two things in this speech are particularly relevant to the God vs. Adam-Eve case and the werewolves: exile, and home-return. That Adam and Eve’s punishment bears an exilic nature is explicitly expressed in the author’s choice of words—*ut lægr*, *ut lægð*, and *ut laghr* in the sentence are all terms denoting full outlawry.¹⁰³ The loss of

⁹⁹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 81.2-11; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 265.

¹⁰⁰ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 81.17-19; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 266.

¹⁰¹ *Hauksbók: Udgiven efter de Arnemagnæanske Håndskrifter no. 371, 544 og 675, 4^o*, ed. Eiríkur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson (København: Thieles bogtrykkeri, 1892), 303-308. For a brief description of the dialogue and its background information, see Stefka G. Eriksen, “Arthurian Ethics in Thirteenth-century Old Norse,” in *Riddarasögur: the Translation of European Court Culture in Medieval Scandinavia*, ed. Karl G. Johansson and Else Mundal (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 2014), 176-77.

¹⁰² Eiríkur Jónsson and Finnur Jónsson, *Hauksbók*, 304.8-11. Translation mine.

¹⁰³ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 77. 25-29; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 256-57. These terms, examined Turville-Petre, all denote full outlawry: Gabriel Turville-Peter, “Outlawry,” in *Sjöttú Ritgerðir*

security in the open, however, was effected immediately after their crime, when they had to hide among the trees and bushes. On the surface this may seem to be due to the shamefulness of their nudity, but Peace's speech makes it clear that it is a matter of personal safety: "þilec æigi hallda ycr frælsi længr i opinbærri þiðatto sæm fyrr hofðu þit. En ec man hallda yccr frælsi ilœyniligo fylgsni þar til er domr fællr amal yccart" ["I will no longer give you the security in the open fields that you have thus far enjoyed; but I will keep you safe in a secret hiding place until judgment is pronounced in your case"].¹⁰⁴ The word *fylgsni* signifies a hiding place, which appears twice in *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, both under circumstances that the already-outlawed Grettir sought or was thought to have sought shelter and protection.¹⁰⁵

Wolves are also generally associated with outlawry. The word *vargr* itself is used for outlaw in legal terminologies, and in most cases it is hard to determine if it means a wolf metaphor or an outlaw.¹⁰⁶ The most famous might be the Old Norse term *vargr í véum*, which, as mentioned above, appears in *Völsunga saga* describing Sigi's outlawry. The usage of *vargr* in expressing outlawry also appears in *Grágás (Konungsbók)*: for instance, in chapter 115, it is said that a man who breaks legally established treaties "*scal hann sva viðá vargr rækr oc rekin sem menn viðazt varga reka*" ["shall be a wolf despised and driven off as far and wide as ever men drive wolves"].¹⁰⁷ Counterparts are also found in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman laws: outlawed criminals are described as someone who shall bear a wolf-head (*lupinum enim gerit caput*) in *Leges Edwardi confessori*,¹⁰⁸ while in the fourteenth century *Le mireur a justices* they "qe des adunc le tiegne lem pur lou e est criable Wolvesheved, pur ceo qe lou est beste haie de tote gent; e des adunc list a chescun del occire al foer de lou" ["shall be accounted as wolf, and 'Wolfs-head!' shall

helgaðar Jakobi Benediktssyni 20. júlí 1977, ed. Einar G. Pétursson et al., (Reykjavík: Stofun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1977), 769.

¹⁰⁴ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 76. 18-19; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 254.

¹⁰⁵ *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar / Bandamanna saga / Odds þátrr Ófeigssonar*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, Íslensk fornrit 7 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1936), 157 and 186.

¹⁰⁶ Turville-Petre, "outlawry," 777-78.

¹⁰⁷ *Grágás: Konungsbók. Genoptrykt efter Vilhjálmur Finsens udgave 1892* ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1974), 206.10-12. For an English translation see *Laws of Early Iceland: Grágás. The Codex Regius of Grágás with Material from other Manuscripts*, vol.1, trans. Andrew Dennis, Peter Foote, and Richard Perkins (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1980), 184-85, but I have changed "outcast" to "wolf" for *vargr*, so the sentence may be read in its explicit meaning and fit the context better.

¹⁰⁸ [Edward the Confessor], *De fractione paucis ecclesiasiae in S. Edwardi leges ecclesiasticae et saecularibus suis depromotae*. Patrologia Latina 151 (Paris: 1858), 1192.

be cried against him, for that a wolf is a beast hated of all folk; and from that time forward it is lawful for anyone to slay him like a wolf”].¹⁰⁹ The other wolf-related term for full outlawry in Old Norse is *skóggangr*, “forest-going,” which is thought to “have originated in Norway or even further afield,” though they were commonly used in Iceland.¹¹⁰ This is attested in *Grágás* (*Kon.*), where the sentence of full outlawry is termed as *skóggangr* and full outlaws *skógarmaðr* or *skóggangsmaðr*.¹¹¹ Thus it is no surprise that the first reaction of Adam and Eve, right after their lawbreaking, is to hide among trees and bushes. Forest-going, quite conveniently, is also what the werewolves do. That forest is wolf’s normal abode is further adduced by wolf kennings in skaldic poetry, where the beast is sometimes found represented by domestic and herbivorous animals, such as forest-calf (*skógar-kalfr*) and reindeer of the mountain (*hreinn Lista gnípu*).¹¹² The Forest is also where the hunt happens and werewolves in literature are mostly encountered by men: Bisclaret/Bisclavret is driven out by the king’s hounds in hunting, while Gorlagon and the accursed prince Alfonso actively seek out the rulers after they have entered the forests, ready for a good chase.¹¹³ Hunting is not as preeminent in Old Norse werewolf traditions—after all, it is hard for any ruler to surpass the Anglo-Norman kings in fondness of hunting. Nevertheless, Old Norse werewolves still run off to the woods after transformation.

The second element, home-return, is only possible when exile occurs; like the loss felt by the punished, the value of home-return reaches its maximum when it is made difficult to achieve. “Home,” says Miller, “for those who can take it for granted needn’t inspire all that much thought, talk, or self-consciousness. Take it away or threaten to take it away and people might of a sudden construct a theory of home out of their misery.”¹¹⁴ But such “thought, talk, or self-consciousness” is a good thing, indeed a mark of

¹⁰⁹ Andrew Horn, *The Mirror of Justices* 4.4, ed. and trans. William Joseph Wittaker (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895), 125. Parallel English translation on the opposite with same page number.

¹¹⁰ Turville-Petre, “Outlawry,” 769.

¹¹¹ Finsen, *Grágás*, 18.18, 95.6, 122.18, 126.23, and 127.19; Dennis, Foote, and Perkins, *Laws of Early Iceland*, 35, 97, 120, and 124.

¹¹² Rudolf Meissner has summarized five types of wolf kennings; the above-listed examples are found in the fifth group, which is wolf as other four-foot animal. Rudolf Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden: Ein Beitrag zur skaldischen Poetik* (Bonn und Leipzig: K. Schroeder, 1921), 124-26.

¹¹³ Cook and Tveitane, *Bisclaret*, 90.26-7. Marie, *Lais*, 154-57; Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon* 12, p. 156; *Guillaume de Palerne: roman du XIIIe siècle*, lines 396-411, ed. Alexandre Micha (Genève : Droz, 1990), 50-51.

¹¹⁴ William Ian Miller, “Home and Homelessness in the Middle of Nowhere,” in *Home and Homelessness in the Medieval and Renaissance World*, ed. Nicholas Howe (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 128.

intellectual progress. Besides, outcasts are also given a unique opportunity for solitude so they may look inward, and thus have a better chance of finding St. Augustine's inner man. It may sound very cruel for the poor outlaws, but there must be some truth in it, otherwise they would not have been so romanticized in literature: the best example is probably the Old English Wanderer, whose monologue undoubtedly reveals a journey of self-discovery and intellectual ascension to God, which has been interpreted as a mirror of St. Augustine's meditative theory, a point that I find quite convincing and will return to later.¹¹⁵ The theme of self-discovery and knowledge acquisition is also preeminent in other outlaw stories or those involving some kind of otherworldly journey. For instance, Miller examines the cases of Grettir and Gísli and, though he does not explicitly follow the Augustinian model, reaches a strikingly similar conclusion: "It is psychological inner spaces that now fill the void occasioned by the deprivation of the social *innangarðs*. Exile to *utangarðs* creates psychological *innangarðs* [...] The outlaw is condemned to a kind of complete freedom by being denied the freedom of making any bonds at all. He is his own man banished into an awareness of himself as a pure and perfectly detached individual."¹¹⁶

The same goes for the punishments of Adam and Eve and the werewolves. Reading them in light of the retributivist and Boethian models combined, both are issued forth for the offender's benefit in a way that they will acquire some insight and knowledge, since both crimes are committed out of ignorance and, consequently, misjudgement. Adam and Eve have not treated their position and privilege seriously, so the loss of both forces them to learn the value of what they had enjoyed before. By acquiring knowledge of the bad, they will also understand the value of the good, for good is only good when there is bad to compare with. If everything is good, then nothing is good. With that understood, they will have a more heartfelt motivation to strive towards the good. The clansmen know nothing about God and—more grievously—lack the desire to change that, but through punishment they will know the power of the One True God, so that they will learn to appreciate what has been granted to them before and for the day of redemption.

The werewolf experience is as much a trial as is man's life on this transitory earth. It is not told what happened after the clansmen's transformation or any other details of

¹¹⁵ For an overview, see John L. Selzer, "The Wanderer and the Meditative Tradition," *Studies in Philology* 53/3 (1983): 227-37, especially 228-31.

¹¹⁶ Miller, "Home and Homelessness in the Middle of Nowhere," 134-35.

their punishment, but at least some of them will be freed for good after suffering continuously for seven years.¹¹⁷ Considering that the number seven is one of the most important biblical numbers, its choice is probably not random: both Augustine and Gervase believe seven signifies completion, hence the number of perfection, for the seventh day is the first day that we have a fully-created world, the first day that marks the completion of God's work.¹¹⁸ The sense of trial is more strongly felt in St. Augustine's retelling of the Arcadian werewolves, which is considered to be one of the main sources of Gerald's account in *Topographia Hibernica*, for these werewolves may regain their human forms if they restrain themselves from feeding on human flesh for nine years.¹¹⁹ Within the Norse werewolf tradition, though the same deal is not found, those who go through a werewolf experience do tend to rise above their former status once they have pulled themselves out of the predicament. It is reasonable to assume that the *Kgs* werewolves will have learned to respect and believe in God. Indeed, Gerald's Ossory wolves may well have been descendants of the *Kgs* werewolves, and they are obviously very well disposed to Christianity: the male wolf gives "a Catholic answer in all things" while the female fears death without the last rite.¹²⁰ The tendency is clear even without a Christian frame: Aðalheiður interprets Sinfjötli's lupine experience as some sort of rite of passage, which is traced back to certain archaic Germanic traditions.¹²¹ The idea is also implied in *Bisclaret*: at the end of the story, Bisclaret's old property and status have not only been restored, but also enhanced.¹²² Moreover, Bisclaret must have also become more esteemed and closer to the royal power—though the author states in the beginning that our protagonist was dearest (*kæraste*) to his king,¹²³ I suspect there is exaggeration. For, if he was really that important and highly regarded, why was there no one to report it to the king? Is it not suspicious that his "widow" married so soon, let alone to someone that she had not been much interested in before? Instead, Bisclaret was "skiott glæymör.

¹¹⁷ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 25.38 and 83.40; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 116 and 271.

¹¹⁸ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 11.31, col. 344, and Gervase, *Otia Imperialia* 1.15, cols. 86-87.

¹¹⁹ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 18.17, col. 574: "Si autem carne non vescerentur humana, rursus post novem annos eodem renato stagno reformabantur in homines."

¹²⁰ Gerald, *Topographia Hibernica* 2.19, p. 101; *The History and Topography of Ireland* 2.52.

¹²¹ Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, "The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature," 284-85.

¹²² Cook and Tveitane, *Bisclaret*, 96.31-32: "Sem þetta var sua buit þa gaf konongrenn honom myklo mæira en hann hafði aðr ok ver kunnum yðr at sægja" ["When this had happened, the king gave him much more than he had owned before and than we can related to you"].

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 86.14.

sem sa er dauðr er” [“forgotten as swiftly as one who is dead”].¹²⁴ Even the king had to be reminded by someone else that his “dearest friend” had gone missing for a year; despite the author’s/translator’s description of how happy the king was to find Bisclaret again, it is quite clear that it had not even occurred to him to search for him or to investigate the matter. After this adventure, however, and after Bisclaret has proved his loyalty and love towards the king, I doubt he would ever be forgotten again.

Furthermore, that the werewolf’s journey is a trial is strengthened by the forest-motif, which as mentioned above is preeminent in both werewolf and exilic literature. Both Jacques Le Goff and Corinne J. Saunders have spilt considerable ink on the forest’s symbolism in medieval literature, and both conclude that the forest—metaphorically interchangeable with the biblical desert/wilderness—is a place of opportunity: successful survival leads to holiness and God, while failure leads to temptation of the Devil and demotion to the bestial level. Both extend the theme to vernacular literature, where heroes—be they Sir Yvain or King Haraldr harðráði—enter the woods not knowing their future, yet emerge with new self-identities and ready to rise to power.¹²⁵ Therefore, the forest is the Wanderer’s path, the Seafarer’s ocean; it is Miller’s *utangarðs*, where men can find their “psychological *innangarðs*,” where men can find their inner man.

An opportunity, however, is just an opportunity. The possibility of a rise does not rule out that of a fall. That grand tour granted to Dante is an opportunity, but he probably will not get much—or even get himself—out of it without the guidance of Vergil. Similarly, the Son in *Kgs* has plenty of opportunities to learn and improve—I am sure he has sufficient means and intelligence to try out those occupations he talks about—but he may well end up on the low paths of vice in the end. That is why he approaches his father in the first place, and why there is this little book. Neither are the werewolves deprived of guidance; though they do not have a physical guide throughout the whole journey as the Son and Dante do, their experience nevertheless has pointed them in the right direction—faith in and fear of God—and to a right method—meditation on what they have learned through experience—in case they do care to seize the chance.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 90. 24-25.

¹²⁵ Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 53-59; Corinne J. Saunders, *The Forest in Medieval Romance: Avernus, Broceliande, Arden* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1993), 10-24 (biblical tradition) and 58-80 (Chrétien de Troyes’ Arthurian romances).

What Can the Werewolves Learn?

The right direction is the most urgent thing; it is the primary reason why the Son desires to talk to the Father, hence the rock upon which the entire book is built. In the opening of the Prologue, the Son “passes all the crafts before his mind’s eyes” and observes:

*mikinn fiolda mæðast j villi stíjugum. þeim er frá kolludu Gudligum þíodgotum. og leiddu j villu og osídu og tyndust allir j obyggiligum dolum. þeir er þá stígu giengu er mest lágu forbreckis. þuiat þeir þreyttust af langri mædu lángs vegar og hófdu eigi brecku megin til vppgongu og eigi fundu þeir gagnstígu þá er þá mætti leida til þíoduegar sídar.*¹²⁶

[a vast multitude walking wearily along the paths that slope downward from the highways of virtue into error and vices. Some of these were very steep, and those who followed them perished in desolate ravines; for the long, wearisome road had fatigued them, and they had not enough strength left to climb up the hillside, nor were they able to find the by-paths that led back to the highways of virtue.]¹²⁷

Two kinds of people are addressed in these lines, but only one issue is at stake. Explicitly, the readers see with the Son those who have already embarked on the wrong way; but what they do not see are those who are like the Son, watching and about to start the journey, and are the most immediate addressees of the book. Yet the direction towards the highways of virtue is just as important to the errant as to the beginner, for, according to the Father’s comment on capital punishment, every sinner has a chance to make amends and be cleansed of his crime as long as they have not reached life’s end; and, since one is already on the wrong road, will it not appear more urgent to turn back to the right?

In response, the Father promises to address three things: 1) practical information for each craft, targeting at the same subjects observed by the Son; 2) what the paths of error are like, which men enter upon after they have left the highways of virtue; 3) the by-

¹²⁶ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 1.2-6.

¹²⁷ Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 72.

path by which the errant could return.¹²⁸ The last two points form a two-way journey: going astray and return, which are metaphorically equal to exile and home-return. Then, faithful to his words, the Father in the immediately following chapter identifies a precondition based on which the right path can be found: “Ðat er unhaf spæki at ræðaz almatkan guð” [“to fear the almighty God, this is the beginning of wisdom].”¹²⁹

Having traced its source back to the Holy Writ, Hamer pinpoints the sentence’s purpose as prohibiting idolatry, from which he builds up the Father’s understanding of true wisdom based on the Christian faith.¹³⁰ Lack of fear of God certainly lies at the core of the crimes of Adam and Eve and the werewolves, and Hamer’s interpretation is convincing, but by going directly to the Bible, it has been “fast-forwarded” to its conclusion and become restrained in only one aspect. What I am particularly interested in, on the other hand, is a more literal reading of the sentence.

Three key words are extracted from it; they will be analyzed one by one and their relation to the werewolves will be revealed in due time. These three are: fear, beginning, and wisdom. The fear here, as the Father explains, is not the kind that one would feel for his enemy—that only gives rise to a desire for destruction—but fear out of love, which inspires awe, respect and obedience:

Nu skal guðe unna umfram hvætpætna en ræðaz guð hvært sinne er maðr girniz rangra luta. oc lata þo laust ranga girnð firi guðs sakar. þo at maðr hafi dirfð a at halla firir manna sakar.¹³¹

[Now one should love God above everything else and fear Him at all times when evil desires arise; he should banish evil longings for God’s sake, though he were bold enough to cherish them for men’s sake.]¹³²

These words give out a clear admonishing sense. They also call to mind the function and necessity of capital punishment: the king wields the sword so those who harbor criminal

¹²⁸ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 1.22-26; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 73.

¹²⁹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 3.23; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 77.

¹³⁰ Hamer, “Searching for Wisdom,” 52-60.

¹³¹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 2.26-29.

¹³² Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 78.

thoughts will not dare to put them into action. Instead, they will show respect and obedience to the king's law, which, in addition to repentance, is a decisive factor to make an offence relatively more forgivable. “þþi at ængi er æin soc þungari en þæta u lyðni yfir boða sinum” [“For no offence is graver than to be disobedient to one's superiors”], says the Father, when he explains why David's killing of Uriah differs in severity from Saul's refusal to kill the people of Amalek.¹³³

The next in line is “beginning.” The word not only foregrounds the sense of premise and the fundamentality of the sentence, but also stresses that the quest of knowledge and human life as a whole are but a trial, and much depends on the individual in question. Surely it is important to have a guide, but that guide will not be there for the entire journey. Much still depends on one's own intelligence and willingness to make a difference. The Son is certainly aware of it from the beginning, when he tells the Father:

þildi eco c giarna þærða noccors luttakare af arfe spæcðar yðarrar oc þilde ec at þer lærðet mec hvært stafrof eða up haf er ec mæga þat næma af yðr at ec mæga þæðan af læsa allar ritningar monþitz yðars.¹³⁴

[I should also like to share somewhat in the heritage of your wisdom. Wherefore I wish to have you point out to me the beginnings and the alphabet of wisdom, as far as I am able to learn them from you, so that I may later be able to read all your learned writings.]¹³⁵

When reading it together with the Father's answer, namely the “beginning of wisdom” sentence that is being analyzed now, the alphabet metaphor here is very striking, for it is a common practice to teach children the alphabet in conjunction with Jesus' crucifixion in the Middle Ages.¹³⁶ The metaphor also makes it quite clear that the Son only asks for

¹³³ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 109.28-29; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 325.

¹³⁴ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 3.14-15.

¹³⁵ Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 77.

¹³⁶ Nicolas Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2001), 254-55, where he examines a few survived writings about alphabet tablets and an English alphabet poem to see “how it [i.e., the alphabet tablet] was put into children's hands and heads.” Two points extracted from his analysis are particularly relevant here: 1) the alphabet tablet, however small and simple, is thought to be the first step; only after learning it can one proceed to “letters from a more sophisticated book.” 2) The tablet is

a beginning, a tool that enables him to read on his own initiative. The Son's purpose remains unchanged throughout the whole book and the structure of *Kgs* confirms it: though at first sight the Father is the teacher and the Son the learner, it is, in fact, the latter that takes initiative and, by posing various questions, controls the direction of their conversation. Therefore, it is quite correct when Eriksen's concludes: "fear and love of God may be necessary starting points in the search for knowledge, but the individual's agency in this process is central as well."¹³⁷

The word "read" used by the Son must not be taken literally, for a person at the Son's position cannot still be illiterate at this point of life. He can read *what is written* whenever he wants, but to read *what is meant* is a different matter, for the former conveys knowledge but the latter wisdom; and, judging by the Son's choice of words (*arfe spæcðar yðarrar*), it the latter that he asks for. Eriksen does not talk much about the distinction between knowledge and wisdom, though from her wording (e.g., she uses the phrase "knowledge and wisdom") I think she accepts the difference. Besides, the choice of "knowledge" in the above quotation is not accurate, for in the original it is the beginning of wisdom, which, though it cannot be obtained without knowledge, cannot be used interchangeable with it. Knowledge, as discussed above, does not necessarily make one wise—I am sure that the werewolves with their *mannvit* intact also retains at least some knowledge of the world, but that does not prevent them from being "degraded" to a status resembling *infantia*. Wisdom, on the other hand, is not something that can be so easily given or taken. It is a system, an attitude, and a way.

The theoretical frame to be adopted here is Augustinian, partly on account of his influence throughout the Middle Ages,¹³⁸ partly on account of its striking similarity to the *Kgs*' author's attitudes towards wisdom. Both consider wisdom as higher than knowledge, for wisdom embodies all knowledge in the world and is the only way leading towards God and true happiness. To St. Augustine, knowledge (*scientia*) belongs to the sensual, the corporeal, the temporal, while wisdom (*sapientia*) pertains to the spiritual, the divine,

compared to the crucifixion of Christ—the beginning of redemption—and the learner is invited to contemplate upon it.

¹³⁷ Eriksen, "Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King's Mirror*," 150.

¹³⁸ For the transmission and influence of St. Augustine's works in the Middle Ages, see Karla Pollmann, "Augustine's Legacy: Success or Failure?," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 331-48, esp. 335-37.

the eternal.¹³⁹ The movement from knowledge to wisdom can be visualized as intellectual and spiritual ascension from earthly matters to heavenly, from men to God. Likewise, in the speech of Wisdom in *Kgs*, Wisdom herself gives an account of her origin: “Guðleg bõn Ek em getin af hiarta Guðs oc gecc ek fram af munnni hins hæsta” [“I am begotten of God’s own heart; I have proceeded from the mouth of the Highest”].¹⁴⁰ Where can she be found? In nature, everywhere, for she accompanies God throughout the entire Creation; she is the reason why the physical world functions as it does.

Therefore, one has to understand the physical world through corporeal senses to get access to wisdom. In other words, knowledge, though lower in nature, preconditions wisdom. St. Augustine agrees with this point, and Nash’s charter makes it quite clear that knowledge lies at the foundation of the “upward way of knowing”. The *Kgs* author obviously understands it too, for the entire book—according to Eriksen—has been constructed to convey a systematic, ascending way of knowledge acquisition.¹⁴¹ It is especially so in the first part, where the Father passes on knowledge about Nature he has acquired either by his own experience or that of other eyewitnesses—belonging to the first Augustinian category of *scientia*, namely things that one has seen with one’s own eyes (immediate *Scientia*).¹⁴²

So knowledge is indispensable, but there is another element that enjoys even greater indispensability—meditation or contemplation upon acquired knowledge. To Augustine, contemplation is the ultimate wisdom, the end of knowledge acquisition. “It is to understand that wisdom pertains to contemplation, knowledge to action,” says the saint.¹⁴³ Though the *Kgs* author does not adopt expressions as straightforward as such, it is quite clear that meditation is an important feature, as Bagge correctly points out.¹⁴⁴ In particular, the author incorporates meditation into judiciary and practical decision-making processes, hence his highlighting of the central theme of the work: immediately after

¹³⁹ Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12.14.22-23, cols. 1009-11. See also Nash, *The Light of the Mind*, 4-11; in particular, I find the charter on page 5 especially illuminating.

¹⁴⁰ The whole speech is found in Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 98.33-100.7 and Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 300-303; the quotation in Holm-Olsen, 98.33-34 and Larson, 300.

¹⁴¹ Eriksen, “Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King’s Mirror*,” 155-57.

¹⁴² For the classification of *scientia* into knowledge acquired by seeing and by hearing, see Augustine, *Contra academicos libri tres*, 3.11.26, *Patrologia Latina* 32 (Paris: 1841), 947-48. See also Nash, *The Light of the Mind*, 28-29.

¹⁴³ Augustine, *de Trinitate* 12.14.22, col. 1010: “intelligendum est ad contemplationem sapientiam, ad actionem scientia pertinere.” Translation mine.

¹⁴⁴ Bagge, *The Political Thought in the King’s Mirror*, 90-91.

Wisdom's speech and the Son's comment on the importance of contemplating upon these words, the Father tells about the Prince's Vision.¹⁴⁵ Once upon a time, the story goes, a wise king was slighted behind his back by his own sons and subjects for taking too much time in rendering judgement. “*Konongr munnde skiotari lysa domum sinum eða lœysa mal || manna æf hann þæri allþitr*” [“He would surely be able to settle the law suits and speak his verdicts more promptly, if he were truly wise”], they all complained.¹⁴⁶ One day, the king felt indisposed and asked his favorite son to sit in the judgement hall in his stead. So went the prince, confident that he would be able to judge faster, until he saw three handsome yet fearful young men with a scale, writing tools to record his verdicts, and a drawn sword. As a result, “*þarð ængum malum lokit a þeim dægi*” [“no suit was settled on that day”], and the prince would ever reproach the king for pondering too much over each case. Reading this example together with the Speech, we see how a righteous decision can be reached: first of all, one needs knowledge of all things in this God-created world—nature, the human world, present and past, etc. Then, one spends time and brainpower to meditate upon what is in the knowledge database. Last, for each individual case, one draws from one's personal repertoire and reaches a conclusion.

The Prince's Vision leads back to both the “fear of God” sentence and the werewolf story. It first of all concerns fear, which motivates the prince to slow down and contemplate each case more carefully. The sharp, terrible sword, ever ready to smite, is what checks the young judge's tongue, and forces him to think twice. Indeed, even within the Augustinian system, where wisdom is the end and knowledge the means, neither can be surpassed by will (*voluntas*), the third and very last factor of Augustinian instruction on meditative exercise.¹⁴⁷ What, then, can be more motivating than fear of spiritual death, fear of divine punishment? Home is the sweetest when it is taken away or threatened to be—so I quoted Miller earlier—but is not life even more so? Before his vision, the prince did not know sufficiently the consequence, so he could not feel the threat, nor the preciousness of life and the kingdom. Likewise, before their transformation, the

¹⁴⁵ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 101.2-102.7; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 305-307.

¹⁴⁶ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 101.14-15; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 306.

¹⁴⁷ Louis L. Martz, *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1964), 18-31. *Voluntas* as a precondition of knowledge and wisdom is also discussed in Nash, *The Light of the Mind*, 34-35. The other two factors are memory and understanding, which, as discussed above, the werewolves still retain.

werewolves did not know God, so they thought they would get away with judging and punishing St. Patrick unjustly. Once they have tasted the loss, however, they would learn to fear God and the consequences, and do better next time.

Meanwhile, the threat is also a privilege, something that spurs the judge to polish a decision, and spend more time contemplating upon the facts before reaching a conclusion. What the prince saw is clearly a vision, for no one but he who sits upon the judgement seat could see it: “hann kallaðe til sín en sa hværr er til hans kom þa sa þessa luti alla sæm þer hafum nu fra sagt” [“he called them to him, so everyone who came saw all these things that we have now described”].¹⁴⁸ Without the vision, the prince probably would have been quite content with himself, believing that he has rendered just verdicts when in fact the scales were by no means nearly balanced. If he—or indeed, anyone in his position—proceeds with no cognizance of his fault, the kingdom will probably follow the example of Tara and be stricken down by the dearth. Similarly, the werewolves would have gone directly to Hell after death, had they not learned that they had done wrong and been shown the consequences. In both cases, learning to fear sets the protagonists on the right track, which eventually leads to wisdom.

¹⁴⁸ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 102.4-5; Larson, *The King's Mirror*, 307.

Conclusion, or What Can We Learn from the Werewolves?

With that last note on Tara, the quest has come to an end. The analysis of this thesis can be summed up in the following: the werewolf story in *Kgs* reflects the two central themes of the work as a whole—the king’s performance as a judge, and knowledge. To this end, the story itself is a mirror, which, however small in size, enables the readers to *see* the entire world. In the first half of the thesis, I have proceeded from the first theme, examined the story of Tara and established the werewolf tale to be a close follow-up to it on the grounds of its sources—especially on the Irish side, a topic that has been thoroughly explored by John Carey—and the two storylines that I have extracted. In particular, I have proposed that they involve two judiciary processes and therefore two verdicts, one unjust and the other just, one as the crime and the other intended as the punishment. Then, the thesis takes a closer look at these two verdicts, and offers an analysis based on the retributivist model of punishment, which means that none of the terms of God’s verdict are randomly issued, but rather that all target specific elements of verdict one.

To be merely punished, however, is not the end of the story, for the God portrayed in *Kgs* is a God of love and mercy, a harsh but loving father, who expelled Adam and Eve but did not rob mankind of the opportunity for home-return and forgiveness. Nor did he want for Adam and Eve to live in everlasting suffering and sin.¹⁴⁹ The werewolves’ punishment should be read in the same light, that they are punished so they may have an opportunity to make amends instead of directly falling into Hell. To be punished is a good thing, for it first of all leads to cognizance of sin and the emotion intensified by misery can be turned into the motivation to change for the better.

What, then, are the werewolves supposed to gain from their experience? They may gain knowledge of and belief in God, and learn the significance of contemplation—which is considered an ascending road to true wisdom in the Augustinian theory of knowledge, and listed as one of the king’s daily tasks in *Kgs*. Therefore, in the second half the thesis, another main theme of *Kgs* was addressed: that *Kgs*, didactic in nature, reveals the author’s attitudes towards knowledge and gives out instructions on how to acquire and use knowledge wisely. Having read the werewolves’ *mannvit* in the Augustinian framework, I have argued that the werewolves’ punishment in fact opens an

¹⁴⁹ Holm-Olsen, *Konungs skuggsjá*, 83.21-84.4; Larson, *The King’s Mirror*, 270-71.

opportunity for them to learn to fear and respect God, and to meditate upon the knowledge that they have acquired through corporeal senses, so that they may make better judgements in the future.

In this part, I have returned to the Prologue of *Kgs*, and analyzed in relation to the werewolves the sentence “to fear God Almighty, that is the beginning of wisdom,” which is placed in the very beginning of the conversation. Thus far, the quest conducted by this thesis is like a circle, starting from *Kgs*, and landing back on it, though the beginning and the end are at different spots. By doing so, it has been demonstrated that *Kgs* is not a collection of loosely related or unrelated topics, but a work of integrity. Although this thesis is far from being able to complete the big picture, it has nevertheless shown that it is possible to find connections between the central themes, individual stories and certain attitudes expressed or implied by the author. The werewolf story is the focus here, but by comparing to the work as a whole, it is shown to reflect the central themes and bear similarities to ideas extracted from other stories from various parts of the book. Together, those similarities indicate a thread running through the entire work, which leads to *Kgs*’ unity.

By reading the werewolves against the larger context of *Kgs*, the thesis has also revealed something about the overall structure of the work. It is a structure that makes sense logically and thematically. The prologue informs the readers of the purpose of the work: to teach a man to remain virtuous, no matter what position in the world he is put in. The beginning of the conversation gives a premise against which all things in the world must be interpreted, making sure that the readers will remain firmly in the Christian faith. It also provides a premise based on which all the tales in the book can unfold in a legitimate way—not unlike Snorri’s Prologue to the *Prose Edda*. Only with clearly-declared faith can the author safely tell a miraculous tale such as that of the werewolves and human-animal transformation, a phenomenon that both St. Augustine and St. Boniface believe to be an illusion caused by the Devil.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Boniface, *Sermo XV: de abrenuntiatione in baptisate in Sancti Bonifacii Moguntini archiepiscopi operum quae exstant omnium pars secunda*, Patrologia Latina 89 (Paris: 1850), 870A-B: “Quid sunt ergo opera diaboli? Haec sunt superbia, idololatria, invidia, homicidium, detractio, mendacium, perjurium, odium, fornicatio, adulterium, omnis pollutio, furta, falsum testimonium, rapina, gula, ebrietas, turpiloquia, contentiones, ira, veneficia, incantationes et sortilegos exquirere, strigas et **fictos lupos** credere, abortum facere, Dominis inobedientes esse, phylacteria habere.” My translation: “So what are the works of the Devil? These are arrogance, idolatry, jealousy, murder, slandering, falsehood, perjury, hatred, fornication, adultery, defilement in all, theft, false testimony, plunder, gluttony, intoxication,

The tripartite division shows an ascending progress in terms of knowledge and human understanding, in parallel to the Son's own advancement. The Merchant's part conveys facts about the physical world—things that can be obtained through the senses—through seeing. It is the initial step of learning; without it, to achieve more advanced study would be as much painful and useless as trying to read before learning the alphabet. Then, the readers journey with the Son to the court, and acquire practical knowledge of human society—things that cannot simply be acquired by mere observation or touching, but by a certain amount of understanding and interpretation. Finally, they move to the top of the hierarchical ladder and are given the unique chance to learn how to be a king. Here, gradually, the author brings in examples from the Holy Writ, and the readers suddenly find themselves invited to gloss and contemplate upon the Father's words. By doing so, they are in fact also invited to look back and contemplate upon what has been said before, as when a grown-up man searches in his memory and reexamines the past. And, as in most instances of retrospect, one often has a different understanding of the past events and discovers a deeper layer of meaning.

Furthermore, this thesis has also identified a few medieval works—contemporary or not—that are worth comparing to *Kgs* more thoroughly in the future. The Augustinian system has been explored and its similarity to *Kgs* revealed through the analysis. Other authors I have mentioned include Boethius and Gervase of Tilbury, whose works and *Kgs* were demonstrated to have shared common views. Though it is not possible to know the author's reading list for certain or whether these similarities are due to direct or indirect influence, their existence not only anchors *Kgs* in the Continental learned tradition of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but also demonstrates how that tradition can be incorporated into a very specific social and political situation.

Last but not least, this analysis has along the way revealed several new directions in the study of werewolf literature as a whole. Firstly it needs to be said that, the *Kgs* werewolf story should enjoy a place of its own in the werewolf literary corpus. Considerable scholarship has been produced on its sources, but it is not sufficient from the perspective of literary criticism. The sources are indeed indispensable and of great value, yet they are only the first steps. It is time to move on. Besides, comparison between

obscene speeches, disputes, wrath, poisoning, enchantment and consulting soothsayers, to believe in witches and **fashioned-wolves**, abortion, disobedience to God, to wear amulets." Emphases mine.

the *Kgs* werewolves and the various possible sources makes it quite clear that the story is not the same as any of the sources. Rather, the result shows that the *Kgs* werewolf tale belongs to a larger tradition, which not only includes the Celtic and the Latin, but also the Old Norse, Germanic and Anglo-Norman. The same may be said for the Old Norwegian *Bisclaret* as well. Though the *Strengleikar* tale is meant to be a direction translation, this thesis' analysis on *Bisclaret* has briefly touched upon the difference between the French original and the Old Norwegian, and shown that at least some ideas pertaining to the Norwegian cultural milieu have found their way into the Anglo-Norman work.

In particular, a few points proposed and examined in this thesis are worth exploring and developing further in relation to the theme of werewolves in general. The first is the werewolf's lack of speech, which in this analysis has been connected through the word *infantia* to the early stage of human life as well as human history. In addition to being a standard trope in literature, speech problems in relation to wolves are also found in medieval bestiaries. Take the thirteenth century Bodleian version (MS. Bodley 764) for example, if a wolf sees a man before he sees it, the man will lose his voice ("because it has won victory over his voice"); but if the wolf thinks itself to be seen, it will lose "its wilderness and cannot run away."¹⁵¹ The Bestiary author does not explain precisely why he believes such would happen, but I suspect—apart from all possible Christian interpretations—it has something to do with the emotion of fear, a theme that has been mentioned and discussed only in relation to *Kgs*. It is common sense that in extreme fear one may lose control of his/her body, become speechless, or be unable to move. But it is also interesting to see that the wolf seems to be put in a middle position: no doubt, it is feared by men and can cause grave harm, yet it also fears men and can be—indeed, is quite frequently in literature—put into the position of victim, which also corresponds to the wolf hunts in Europe throughout the Middle Ages.¹⁵² The middle position, however, makes it possible for the wolf to "ascend" or the man to "descend." One of the most illustrative examples is the wolf in Ælfric's *Martyrdom of St. Edmund*, where a wolf appears "by God's direction" to guard the martyr's head against all other wild animals,

¹⁵¹ *Bestiary: Being an English Version of the Bodleian Library, Oxford M.S. Bodley 764 with All the Original Miniatures Reproduced in Facsimile*, ed. Richard W. Barber (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992), 70.

¹⁵² Salisbury, *The Beast Within*, 70. See also Jean Delumeau, *La peur en occident: XIVe-XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1978), 63.

while the chief villain Hinguar is described “as a wolf.”¹⁵³ So the man-wolf, torn between bestiality and humanity, embodies both the best and the worst of mankind. He blurs the boundaries between men and beasts, yet belongs to neither group. His very existence represents the constant struggle within ourselves, between the desire and fear of letting ourselves go. This is perhaps the reason why werewolf tales have been and still are so fascinating.

¹⁵³ Ælfric, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, 316.39-40: “And se fore-sæda hinguar færlice **swa swa wulf** / on lande bestalcode” [“And the aforesaid Hingwar suddenly, **like a wolf**, / stalked over the land”]; 324.145-47: “Wæs eac micel wundor þæt **an wulf wearð asend** / þurh godes wissunge to bewerigenne þæt heafod / wið þa oþre deor ofer dæg and niht” [“There was eke a great wonder, that **a wolf was sent**, / by God’s direction, to guard the head / against the other animals by day and night”]. Emphases mine. For parallelism in Ælfric’s composition, see Michael Benskin, “The Literary Structure of Ælfric’s *Life of King Edmund*,” *Loyal Letters: Studies on Mediaeval Alliterative Poetry & Prose*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald, (Gronningen: Egbert Forsten, 1994), 9-16.

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