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Kings and aristocratic elites: communicating power and status in medieval Norway

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ABSTRACT

The article investigates the decisive developments of interactions between the Norwegian crown and the aristocratic elites in twelfth and thirteenth century Norway. It reflects on how the issues of social dignity, pre-eminence and legitimacy were negotiated in a constantly changing communicative environment of the time: from direct interpersonal performance based on charisma, gestures and speeches executed in public rituals, to indirect communication using the written word in the context of the royal court. The study highlights how the tenets of power distinction and corporate identity within the Norwegian aristocratic elite reproduced and adapted to new communication vectors.

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In the summer of 1195 King Sverre (1177–1202) displayed his royal authority at the public trial of Earl Harald Maddadsson of Orkney. The trial was played out dramatically in front of Christ Church in Bergen, where King Sverre had been crowned king the previous year. The Earl was put on trial for his support, or as he himself argued, for his lax attitude towards a rebellious group of islanders who revolted against the king. After the insurgents' defeat, the Earl sailed to Bergen to ask for the king's mercy. Sverre's response was to stage a trial and public passing of judgement, which simultaneously glorified his royal justice, authority, and displayed his pre-eminence over chieftains. The trial was meticulously orchestrated with the king sitting on his high chair, surrounded by his personal retinue, the *hirð*.¹ In front of him stood a crowd of men, and among them, the Earl. Speaking from there, together with his men, he pleaded his cause and begged for mercy. When finished, he 'went forward among the men and fell at the king's feet'. King Sverre, still sitting on his throne, demonstratively 'looked around and slowly began to speak'.² The dramatization of this public trial rested on a stark contrast: on the one hand, the earl was mingling in a crowd before finally kneeling at the king's feet. On the other side, King Sverre sitting on his throne in the middle of his most loyal subjects, in front of his coronation church.

Roughly a hundred years later, on 17 June 1308, a distant descendant of Sverre, King Hákon Magnusson (1299–1319) issued a royal ordinance for Norwegian nobility. The document reminded aristocrats to display moderation and soberness in their clothing because, 'when it comes to cloth fashion, some men are bolder than others and more than they should ... and from now on, we forbid anybody to have other clothes than we wear

our self, and let our retainers have in our own guard'.³ Apparently, decades of courtly culture had whetted the appetite of Norwegian nobles towards foreign fashions. The extent of this led the king to stipulate that nobody was to surpass him or his courtiers in terms of ostentation and physical appearance. Indeed, the king's admonition had to be taken seriously by the nobility, as the king threatened naysayers with the loss of their titles and his friendship.

These two contrasting episodes epitomize some of the decisive developments of interactions between the Norwegian crown and aristocratic elites during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They reflect the general transformation of how the issues of social status, pre-eminence, legitimacy and glorification were negotiated in a constantly changing communicative environment of the time: from direct interpersonal performance based on charisma, gestures and speeches executed in public rituals, to indirect communication using the written word in the context of the royal court.⁴

This study examines how the Norwegian inter-elite power relations were manifested and designed in a changing communicative context of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The basic premise departs from the assertion that socio-political reality is not only reflected in communicative practices but is also constituted through performative acts, reproduced through individual and collective acts of communication.⁵ The construction of social status and the shaping of power relations between partners are neither a given nor limited to the expression and manifestation of power. Far from it, power itself cannot be 'abstracted from the specific relationship', since it is created precisely at the very moment of expression and performance.⁶ Thus, power is fundamentally relational and shaped by communication processes.⁷ Following this approach, I will explore how Norwegian kings and lay aristocracy asserted their status, plotted and performed their social ascendancy, and cultivated their prestige at a time when they experienced dramatic social and political upheavals. The period also known as the Norwegian 'civil war' (1130–1240) enmeshed the kingdom of Norway in decades-long political competition over the royal throne that challenged the foundations of royal power and legitimacy, but also polarized aristocratic divisions. In such a context, local magnates and chieftains behaved as autonomous political actors. They mobilized their networks and resources against competing parties and royal candidates to satisfy their own ambitions.⁸ The end of combat and the instauration of monarchy in 1240 redefined relations between the kingship and the aristocracy. From being entangled in political instability, during which they were forced to battle for support and acceptance, Norwegian kings ultimately emerged as unchallenged monarchs who could fully engage in the consolidation and glorification of royal authority.⁹ The monarchy thus curtailed the aristocracy's independence, causing magnates to seek protection and privileges as royal servants within the ranks of the royal *hird*, i.e. the royal retinue.¹⁰

The drastic development within political culture among elites which this paper discusses addresses in filigree the all-encompassing and prolific debate on state-building in medieval Norway.¹¹ The Norwegian scholarship on this issue has developed alongside multiple contentions as for the extent and the nature of state-developments, and not the least, on what sources the scholarship should rely on. First, the debate has opposed a traditional political and institutional approach to what has been called the anthropological turn. Scholars like for instance J.A. Seip and Knut Helle endorsed a view that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Norwegian royalty and the lay elites underwent

substantial transformations in power-making and assertion; changes that fell into line with the genesis of a strong medieval state in Norway. They argued that during this period, power grew centralized and institutionalized, and that the Norwegian kingship exerted great control over aristocratic elites through the development of institutions that bonded the aristocracy into an instrumental and subordinated relationship to the ruler.¹²

In the early 80 s, scholars belonging to the anthropological approach challenged this belief in a strong monarchic state in the high middle Ages, the radical developments that brought it about as well as the focus on institutional frameworks. Focusing on political culture, norms and mentalities – parameters which had been played down so far, and to greater extent relying upon narratives (sagas, romances) rather than on normative texts, scholars have stressed persistency in political culture and mentality throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and in the way the power elite negotiated authority and political influence. However, behind the consensual questioning of the state paradigm defended by Helle, the critics do not constitute a homogenous group. Scholars like Sverre Bagge and Knut Dørum, while arguing that power relations within the lay elite in the high middle ages were still largely defined on traditional premises, i.e. friendship and personal relationships, do acknowledge that these relations were significantly affected by the development of state features, the growth of literacy, and European impulses on power legitimation in the late thirteenth century.¹³ During the last decades, however, scholars like H.J. Orning, J.V. Sigurdsson, and to some extent, Lars Hermansson for Denmark, have held a rather less compromise stance, and have gone far in advocating for a weak state in medieval Norway and even denying its very existence.¹⁴ Focusing on aristocratic network and power strategies, and largely emphasizing the long lastingness of values of charisma, honour, feud mentality among elites, as well as on 'traditional' means of communication like orality, feasts and popular assemblies, they advocate for quasi-permanency of political culture and power design throughout the middle ages in Norway. The breeding ground of this bias unmistakably rests on a systematic generalization of twelfth century conditions into late in the following century, as well as on the comprehensive reliance on sagas and, in particular, Icelandic, leaving aside thirteenth-century literary production such as laws and charters.¹⁵

In earlier works, I have shown how the processes of communication were inherent to the making of a medieval state in Norway. I underscored how royal authority in the high middle Ages hinged upon a momentous redefinition of inter-elite relations in a changing communication landscape. In particular, I exposed how the constitution of new means and ways to convey sociopolitical messages contributed to consolidate and centralize power in thirteenth century Norway in a significantly different manner as during the previous century.¹⁶ Thus, if the issues of social distinction and pre-eminence, loyalty and obedience among elites remained constant throughout the middle ages, the ways these concerns were negotiated changed significantly. Thus, if orality remained a dominant form for communication, it increasingly obeyed to new standards and rules within environments that significantly differed from ancient practice. It also cannot be denied that the increasing use of the written word in elite interactions, and most importantly the growing plurality of written mediums (laws, diplomas, chivalric romances and didactic works) and contexts (the royal court) in which they develop constituted a key change during the period. Thus, if the issues of social distinction and pre-eminence, loyalty and obedience among elites remained constant throughout the middle ages, the ways these

concerns were negotiated experienced drastic changes as state-making resumed in the thirteenth century. Too, if orality remained a dominant form for communication in high medieval Norway, it increasingly obeyed to new standards and rules within environments that significantly differed from ancient practice. It cannot be denied as well that the increasing use of the written word in elite interactions, and most importantly the growing plurality of written mediums (laws, diplomas, chivalric romances and didactic works) and contexts (courts) in which they develop constituted a key change during the period. Although I strongly contend that in thirteenth century Norway, state features fundamentally altered the way power relations were negotiated, I wish here to explore the convolutions between the persistence of traditional aristocratic values and modes of communication, and the emergence of new ones. Bridging these two matters we allow us to better grasp how the nature and extent of changes in political culture and mentalities which are attested in thirteenth century Norway coexisted with enduring ideas and norms for how power and status were understood and manufactured. Indeed, the need to address the issues of continuity and change simply is forced upon us by the source material. The endurance of long-lasting norms and values within the elite is well attested in our thirteenth century sources and explains, for instance, why the author of the *King's Mirror* (c. 1250), a didactic work riddled with European courtly values, was compelled to adapt his discourse as to make it resonate in the Norsemen's mentalities and eventually to achieve its aims.¹⁷ Similarly, it is also noteworthy that thirteenth century translators of chivalric romances, *lais* and *fabliaux* not only linguistically adapted these foreign works to a Norwegian audience but also significantly modified their very plots as to conform to Northmen's 'traditional' aspirations.¹⁸

The scholarship of state building has significantly emphasized the study of the elite's political culture and interactions, as the most pertinent approach to assess the extent of changes that characterize the process of state-making.¹⁹ The interactive approach stresses not only the supportive and submissive role of the aristocracy towards princes but also how, through new channels and vectors of communication, interactions created new opportunities for their ambitions and agencies.²⁰ Through the examination of various kind of rituals and symbolic performances involving Norwegian kings and aristocracy, this paper's contribution is precisely to outline how these changes marked as much how power was expressed in a new fashion as how its very construction was established on new and former premises.

The present study is divided into two sections that follow the distinctive social, political and communicational contexts of the war period and of the succeeding period of peace that has been labelled as 'age of greatness' in the thirteenth century. Finally, in terms of method, this study follows traditional communication approaches, which consider communication as a system structured around the separate elements of sender, message and receiver. It focuses on the dynamic between the actors of communication – their motivations and intentions, and the vectors of communication (content, media and loci of communication).²¹

Kings and magnates. Words and swords

In the largely twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Norwegian society, literacy was not only a privilege of the elite but virtually limited to only a tiny fraction of it, primarily clerics.

In the wake of the foundation of the archbishopric of Nidaros (1152/53), and under the prelacy of Archbishop Eysteinn Erlendsson (1161–1188), Church reform was vigorously introduced in the realm of Norway.²² A corollary of this reform was a more rigorous education for its clerics. As a result, several written stories, mostly in Latin, were composed by clerics.²³ These works are the first witnesses of a new literary culture centred around the metropolitan seat of Nidaros. The introduction of the written word under the ecclesiastical aegis triggered the production of secular literature as well. Soon, the written word began to reflect secular political ambitions, which, in the context of the Norwegian civil wars, was readily employed for the service of partisanship. This concerns especially the two sagas were written by Icelanders during the conflict: *Sverris saga* (1185- after 1202)²⁴ and the *Baglers saga* (1209–1220).²⁵ The former told of King Sverre's march to power from 1177 on, and of his contested rule until his death in 1202. It is clearly a piece of propaganda history that aimed at portraying Sverre as a charismatic and successful leader of the Birkebein party. The *Baglers saga* picks up the history of the conflict after the death of Sverre and narrates events up to the acclamation of King Hákon Hákonsson (1217–1263) in 1217. Although both authors to different extents strove to provide a rather objective narrative of the events, they focused their attention on the faction of Baglers, the opponents of Sverre and his Birkebeiners. Both these sagas were written in vernacular and addressed an elite increasingly receptive to the written word. These new means of communication though narrated battles and intrigues concerning political schemes – themes which were traditionally popular among chieftains (*hofðingia*).²⁶ They most certainly functioned as entertainment for their respective audience – the Birkebeiner and the Baglers, but also illustrate a growing interest for historical narratives in general. More importantly, the sagas were powerful instrument in the construction of party identities in cultivating internal cohesion along narratives that exalted their common achievements, their successes as well as their defeats. The way events were recounted also highly contributed to strengthen support and loyalty to their commanders whose qualities and leadership was exalted.

Battle speeches

In the context of competing for the royal throne, military confrontations between ruling and rebel kings were decisive moments in the defence or conquest of power. They constituted also an incomparable platform for political dialogue between royals and chieftains. The saga literature abounds in examples of speeches held by kings both ahead of battles and in their aftermath. In the hours preceding the clash of arms, when warriors faced an uncertain fate, kings addressed their troops and their leaders to galvanize their energy for the coming battle and to strengthen their faith in their commander.

In his eponymous saga, King Sverre is portrayed as a particularly eloquent speaker. Dozens of different episodes involving speeches illustrate the king's particular taste for public orations and his qualities as orator.²⁷ Destined to conquer the throne of the incumbent King Magnus Erlingsson by the force of arms, Sverre waged many battles but also used the medium of speech to win them. As aristocratic support was decisive, he spoke to his followers using techniques and arguments that ranged from elucidating his tactical choices, praising his men's martial qualities, and promising bright prospects and

rewards. Thus, in 1201, besieging the town of Tunsberg, King Sverre typically spoke to his men and asked them for their advice.²⁸ Not only could the invitation to discuss tactical choices prove to be genuine, it also was meant to cultivate the bonds that tied Sverre to his men. Their exchanges underscored the importance of his supporters' cooperation, and ultimately it also served the king to demonstrate how important and decisive they were in the struggle. As a rule, however, the saga suggests that the tactics proposed by Sverre were always chosen, yet, on one occasion, he did follow his men's battle tactics. That battle, which took place in 1178 near Nidaros resulted in a disaster, however.²⁹ We can question if, from a literary perspective, this episode was meant to exonerate Sverre from the defeat and to save his often-proven reputation of military excellence, which by the way, was decisive element in the construction of his rulership.

In acclamatory terms, the saga recounts on many occasions the enthusiastic reception of the king's speeches, with loud applause and shouting.³⁰ Promises of victory and laudatory arguments were also part of the kings' persuasive strategies. Before the battle of Nordnes in 1181, Sverre held a speech for his men that exalted the righteousness of their cause, described as 'God's will', *guðf vilia*, and praised their boldness and confidence, which would make their enemies shake with fear. His words generated loud applauses from his men and cries of their unswerving loyalty.³¹ The stakes of victory could also generate arguments of lucrative social prospects for the king's followers. A successful battle increased Sverre's power and further consolidated his personal march towards the throne. Yet, it also played into the magnates and chieftains' ambitions. Before the 1179 battle of Kalvskinnet, waged against Earl Erling Skakke (1163–1177) father and military leader of King Magnus Erlingsson, King Sverre held a speech where he alluded to what practical gains his men could expect from a victory:

Whoever slays a baron, and can bring forward evidence of his deed, shall himself be a baron; and whatever title a man shall cause to be vacant, that title shall be his: he shall be a King's man who slays a King's man, and he shall receive good honour besides.³²

The saga notes how the king's speech was well received, and this reveals the chieftains' interests in their relationship with their leader.

This victory was to prefigure others. But, most importantly, it inaugurated other acts of public performance that nurtured a dialogue between the king and his men, these being the post-battle rituals.³³ Military victories were celebrated with the much-awaited sharing of the spoils and with banquets where mead flew abundantly. The deaths of enemy leaders on the battlefield, and the subsequent burial ceremonies, provided as much reasons to rejoice as new opportunities to garner aristocratic support and exalt the victors' claims. The staging of Erling's burial is described succinctly in the *Sverris saga*. It mentions that the corpse of the earl had been brought to Christ Church in Nidaros and that King Sverre stood over Erling's grave outside the walls of the cathedral. As the episode in this introduction demonstrates, Sverre was comfortable with creating dramatic situations that generated an atmosphere of suspense and expectation.³⁴ Thus, just few metres above the dead body of the earl, Sverre held a eulogy where he attacked the legal foundation of Magnus Erlingsson's rights to the throne. Sverre noted how Erling had elevated, on entirely false grounds, his own son to the rank of king and deprived other rightful claimants of their rights.³⁵ These arguments supported Sverre's own supposedly legitimate claims, which were dubious to many.³⁶ The way the loyalty and support of his

men were framed in the speech was central. Sverre praised their triumph, which he interpreted as a divine sign: Erling's defeat and death was God's will. There were, therefore, no reasons to doubt future success. The speech also aimed at collecting support from another audience: Erling's surviving supporters. According to the saga they were present in great number at the burial ceremony.³⁷ Vanquished and leaderless, these men could be persuaded to rally behind Sverre. Sverre's oration sought to elevate his victory as the foundational act of a new era. This idea was a way of creating doubt in the minds of his enemies and their supporters. Sverre portrayed his victory as a turning point and more particularly in the balance of power:

Times are greatly changed, as you may see, and have taken a marvelous turn, when one man stands in the place of three – king, earl, or archbishop – and I am that one. Much to be seen and known is occurring here now, of great import.³⁸

His enemies were invited to reassess their situation. They were in a position to choose between a decisive victor, King Sverre, who was now a major force to be reckoned with, or their allegiance to a party that was now diminished and in disarray. Sverre urged these men to, 'let every man among you do now what seems best, and what he thinks best for himself'.³⁹

Both in the pre-battle speeches and post-battle rituals, the inter-elite communication was all about physical and symbolic positioning. Through posturing and speeches, the king occupied a central place in these public performances. He elaborated a staging that magnified his pre-eminence and success. This impression clearly owes much to the saga, which was clearly meant to be a eulogy. Yet, even if the participation of the aristocratic elite during these rituals remains discreet, the prominence of his monologues shows that these events were at the very centre of Sverre's preoccupations. Promises of bright prospects and social advancement, laudatory arguments, as well as references to the divine, aimed to respond to the social and political ambitions of his partisans. Since they had taken sides in a struggle for royal power they had risked their lives and economic positions, they expected to be rewarded for it accordingly. Chieftains from the opposite faction, an even more silent audience, were also addressed under very dramatic circumstances.

Kings, chiefs and *pings*

Under more peaceful, though no less dramatic circumstances, the voice of chieftains was significantly louder. The death of a king and his succession offered the aristocratic elite opportunities to publicly stage and reassess their polity. The ritual of royal acclamation, *Konungstekja*, occurred at a public assembly of the *ping*. We know little concerning the origins and staging of the ritual. What is clear, however, is that in the thirteenth century when the institutional processes gradually moved towards monarchic kingship, the *Konungstekja* changed from being a ritual of election to that of sanction of a single heir. Before, the candidates to the throne were chosen based on their personal qualities, their fitness to rule and their descent. The ritual was public and attended by all strata of society: clergy, chieftains, and the people. The candidate was chosen by the assembly with clashing arms, shouts, and raising of hands.⁴⁰ The ritual of acclamation was predicated on persuasion and exposition of arguments, however.

Pretenders to the throne sought to convince the assembly of their practical ability to rule as well as the legality of their claims. Even though the candidate was central in the ritual, in the process, the aristocratic elite took the stage with speeches to assist the candidate in the promotion of his claims.

In 1208, for instance, following the death of King Erling Steinvegg, the assembly of the *ping* of Borg gathered to discuss his succession. At the centre of deliberations stood the farmers and a Bagler chieftain, Lodin of Løykin, who on behalf of his warriors held a speech in favour of the king's sons.⁴¹ The arguments they voiced were decisive in the final outcome. Other examples from the sagas suggest that chieftains' interventions could also be more numerous, and the content of their orations more thoroughly detailed. When Duke Skuli rebelled against King Hákon Hákonsson in 1239, he went to Nidaros to be acclaimed king at its assembly. The chiefs, Amundi Cockscomb, Arnfinn Thief and Erling Soundhorn delivered long speeches in defence of the rebel's royal claims. At the core of their pleas laid the duke's royal pedigree, which ran 'up to the saint king Olaf', *til hins Helga Ólafs konungs*.⁴²

During these performances, royal candidates and prominent chieftains acted together as a manifestation of their common ambitions. Apart from their arguments and rhetoric, the high social status of the speakers displayed the extent of the pretenders' resources and network; a guarantee for the success of his future rule. By performing in front of the local audience, chieftains not only validated and officialized their status and prestige, which justified their very presence but also elevated these to another level. They were offered an opportunity to exhibit their charisma and eloquence, and consequently to underscore the qualities and legitimacy of their leadership.

Inter-elite communication during the 'age of greatness'

Studying the communication among the Norwegian elites in a strictly diachronic fashion presents some challenges, particularly when it comes to sketching long-term evolution of different communication forms as much as the persistence of traditional ones. Still, it is useful to demarcate a distinct stage in this period with the label as a new era of communication when monarchic rule solidified and when the processes of state-making became more conspicuous.⁴³

The end of the long-lasting age of political turmoil in 1240 gave way to the consolidation of King Hákon Hákonsson's rule (1217–1263) and of his heirs as sole monarchs over the kingdom of Norway. Unchallenged in their realm, Hákon and his thirteenth-century successors devoted their energy to cementing their authority over society. The crucial element was the strengthening of the bonds to aristocracy by means of submission and assuring of their loyalty after decades of splitting conflicts for the Norwegian throne. The saga of Hákon records the monarch's efforts to gather the whole aristocracy under his rule, focusing on the way he pursued truces with leading opponents in order to eventually obtain their support.⁴⁴ As magnates and local leaders morphed into an aristocracy in the royal service, a new relationship with the kings began to emerge. This, in turn, paved the way for a more instrumental use of inter-elite communication which to some extent also moved to new arenas. From that point on, the communication between the aristocracy and Norwegian kings gravitated towards the court and took the form of more institutionalized rituals and ceremonies.

Even during the periods of consolidated kingship, the aristocracy could represent a real threat or problem to royal power. It appears clear that King Hákon Hákonsson was deeply concerned with his aristocracy's propensity to violent behaviour and indiscipline. In a letter dated to 1247, the French king, Louis IX, invited King Hákon and his men to lead a crusade on the Holy Land. The Norwegian king responded unenthusiastically about the project as he expressed his embarrassment concerning the behaviour of the northerners, which he described as quarrelsome, 'impetuous and imprudent, impatient of any sort of injury or restraint'.⁴⁵

Obviously, aristocratic indiscipline was a royal concern, but this also highlights the new tenets of inter-elite communication: regulation of conduct and manners. The adoption of new norms of aristocratic conduct that nurtured self-control, moderation, and etiquette in thirteenth-century Norway also attests to an increasing openness of the elite for the influx of the European aristocratic courtly culture.⁴⁶ The reception and exchanges of foreign delegations, and the growing popularity of courtly romances strengthened the Norwegian elites' connections with foreign courts and favoured cultural transfers between them. This new culture was aristocratic in essence, but it was inasmuch embraced by kings and queens. Although scholarship has readily perceived courtliness as a process of domestication and control of the aristocracy by the crown, it was also a culture which the aristocracy voluntarily imposed on itself as a new means of socializing, identity-making, and for the sake of social distinction.⁴⁷

The reign of King Hákon Hákonsson and that of his heir, Magnus the Lawmender (1263–1280), well exemplify these aforementioned processes and how they helped forming a mutual platform for verbal and non-verbal communication. The consolidation of monarchic rule significantly altered the landscape of public rituals and ceremonies. Thus, the ritual of *Konungstekja* had by now lost its elective function which considerably reduced the aristocracy's political role in the choice of rulers. Indeed, the Law of succession of 1273 shows that the aristocratic performances during the ritual increasingly limited to the sole function of visual representation. The culmination of aristocratic participation took place in the processions accompanying the king to and from ritual locations. According to the Law, the *hirð* was expected to come together before the ritual to discuss how they 'shall prepare themselves in the most becoming manner [...] in order that their entire deportment might be as stately as possible'. The martial organization and the magnificence of their deportment and clothes enhanced the prestige of the ritual and of the king. But it also augmented the participants' own dignity and social pre-eminence vis-à-vis the audience. This performance echoed the content of *The King's Mirror* (c. 1250), a pivotal work in the introduction of courtly conduct at the court of King Hákon Hákonsson. The book compelled the king's men to arrange their escort symmetrically around the king in order to increase the prestige of the cortege by either riding horses, walking or sailing.⁴⁸ Hákon's saga confirms that during coronation, marriage, and funeral ceremonies, the king's retainers organized similar well-orchestrated processions.⁴⁹ For instance, when King Hákon was crowned (1247), purportedly the entire aristocracy accompanied him through the streets of Bergen. A procession of 80 members of the royal retinue, arranged by rank, led the king to the church. They walked in double file, preceded by banner-bearers, and carried the clothes of consecration, the two royal sceptres, the crown, and the sword of coronation.⁵⁰ Public processions became the privileged vehicle for communication exchanges where the aristocratic elite and the

kings displayed their symbiotic power relationship through their coordinated public performance as well as displayed their social distinction for non-elite viewers. The processions of the kings' men also exhibited their cohesion as group, and their subordination to the king.

Although public rituals were the decisive means of communication for the elites, the environment by excellence for aristocratic communication was the court.⁵¹ The *Hird Law* (1274–77) and in particular the above-mentioned *King's Mirror*, witness the development of these new frames of dialogue between courtiers and sovereigns.⁵² The authors of these works with forth persuasion and pedagogy aimed to teach the courtiers-to-be the befitting attitudes, movements and postures, dress, and codes of conversation, effectively construing their social status and distinction as well as cultivating their allegiance to the royals in the process.⁵³ These works portray the court as a ritualized stage where appearances and acts were meticulously orchestrated and bound by strict rules. The *Hird Law* and *The King's Mirror* invited courtiers to pay particular attention to their dress while in the presence of the king. Thusly, within the court's precincts, clothes visually set up encounters between courtiers and kings, and conditioned the nature of their exchanges. At the same time, the text of the *Hird Law*, in keeping with the ideals of courtliness, preached moderation and compelled courtiers not to be too ostentatious.⁵⁴ Thus, the dress code achieved two goals at the same time. It made clothing a means of aristocratic distinction from the rest of society, but also established a hierarchical differentiation within the courtly elite, who were limited in their display of luxury and costliness vis-à-vis the royals who apparently were not bound by these prescriptions. If power relations were visually exposed in the day-to-day business at the court, it was no less present during ceremonial activities. The *King's Mirror* devotes an entire chapter to the reasons why courtiers seeking an audience with the king should not wear a mantle. Possibly, in order not to shock its audience with the bare fact that it was a mark of servitude, the author advances considerations concerning security, such as hiding weapons under the coat.⁵⁵

Beside regulations towards non-verbal forms for communication, principles of courtly conduct also dealt with the spoken word. The authors of these books had strong opinions regarding the way courtiers engaged in conversation. In a society where orality remained the dominant mode of communication, these precepts concerning rules of courtly speech illustrate how deep-reaching the civilizing efforts were. Eloquence and elegant sociolect were important qualities for those who reckoned themselves as honourable, tells the author of *The King's Mirror*. In contrast, verbosity was the quality of foolish men.⁵⁶ Moderation in words was the rule. The author's strongest censorship concerned speaking in the direct presence of the king. Highly practical advices were given, suggesting that northerners may have had quite a long way to go to change their ancestral manners. Thus, if courtiers happen to discuss together when the king was speaking, our author urges them to cease their conversation and proposes the exact wording to do it: 'Wait a moment, my good man, while I listen a while to what the king says; later I shall be pleased to talk with you as long as you wish'.⁵⁷ Speaking directly to the king was also strictly regulated. In the inconvenient event that a courtier missed a king's question, courtiers were strongly advised not to utter *haa*, 'Eh!', or *hvat*, 'What?'. Instead, they were instructed to use the more reverential *hærra*, 'Sire', or the more refined, 'My Lord, be not offended if I ask what you said to me, but I did not quite catch it'.⁵⁸

Evidently, showing respect to the sovereign was already a prerequisite for aristocrats in a 'pre-state' context, where contempt was a grave offence to one's honour. However, these recommendations meant that conversations at court, and *a fortiori* the dialogues involving the king, were now a controlled and formalized act of communication of a new type that inherently engineered aristocrats' submission to king's person. The choice of terminology in addressing the king illustrates how the conditions for communication manufactured relations of power. In two lengthy chapters in *The King's Mirror*, the author discusses why and when courtiers should address the king in the plural form. First, he argues that the plural form is a mark of deference to princes. It endorses subjects' submission to the king. Lastly, it refers not only to the king but also to all those who are closely associated with his government, his councillors, and advisers.⁵⁹ As such, the *pluralis majestatis* orally symbolized the synergetic partnership between the king and his men. It equated aristocratic obedience with the very foundation of their pre-eminent social status.

These observations on public processions and courtly conduct appear to blur the lines of previous rules of behaviour. These are either new means imposed by sovereigns to domesticate and control their nobility, as Norbert Elias argued, or they can be considered as a progressive force, empowering aristocrats to assert their status.⁶⁰ If royal political intentions and benefits for kings are conspicuous in these texts, then the aristocratic elite were mere victims of absolutism. However, an aristocratic demand for foreign etiquette and fashions most certainly played a decisive role in the adoption of these new ways and norms.⁶¹ Rules of conduct were as much self-imposed as they were adopted for the sake of courtier's social distinction. In his pedagogy, the author of *The King's Mirror* made a point of insisting on the benefits for a courtier to act and speak honourably.⁶² It both strengthened group cohesion, but also placed courtiers in a situation of internal competition. While aristocratic processions and courtly behaviour organized the lay elite hierarchically, it contributed to assert the courtiers' present status, while opening prospects of advancement and self-elevation. The author makes no mystery out of the notion that those who behaved along the defined rules of conduct were most likely to receive the king's favours, and, thus, reach a higher rank.⁶³ A further expression of this process is evidenced through the development of the written word in court communication.

'An illiterate king is no more than a crowned ass', stated William of Malmesbury, and by saying so, he made the written culture a prerequisite to royal rule.⁶⁴ Nearly all the great thirteenth-century monarchs in the West were hailed for their wisdom and learning.⁶⁵ Norwegian kings were no exception. It is no wonder that the first mention of Hákon Hákonsson in his eponymous saga displays him attending the school of Christ's Church.⁶⁶ His successors would also be consistently praised for their cultivation and polish. The need for knowledge and literacy was not limited to kings, however. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the ideal of *miles litteratus*, the literate knight, proliferated on the European courts.⁶⁷ However, our contemporary sources provide little direct evidence that the Norwegian lay aristocracy conformed to this ideal in any substantial way, even though the *Hird Law* and *The King's Mirror* compelled the king's men to 'search for learning'.⁶⁸ Still, the most significant change in elites' communication was the expansion of the use of the written word at the courts, particularly for the purposes of entertainment. Kings were key players in this process. King Hákon Hákonsson and his thirteenth-century successors led a

comprehensive patronage that transformed the royal court into the main literary cultural centre of the kingdom.

Among works commanded by kings and queens were books of political literature, such as the aforementioned, *The King's Mirror*,⁶⁹ royal sagas⁷⁰ and in particular dozens of translations of Old French chivalric romances into Old Norse.⁷¹ All of them clearly addressed the local aristocratic elite at court and, *inter alia*, aimed at satisfying their appetite for foreign courtly culture. The literature consumed and discussed at the royal court created a favourable environment for cultural communion, but also for the assertion of prestige and status. Like *the King's Mirror*, the literature produced at the court could be didactic in character. Royal sagas and chivalric romances, on the other hand, had an obviously entertaining function.⁷² Indeed, courtly culture delivered pleasure and leisure, which we today readily label as inherent to the aristocratic lifestyle, while simultaneously cementing the social distinction and refinement of its proponents against the lower social strata. Literary production was also a suitable vehicle for royal pre-eminence. *The King's Mirror* taught its readers many different things, but crucial among them was the instruction for the king's subjects to show him their unreserved love and loyalty.

Apart from glorifying a king's personal qualities and actions, royal sagas aimed also at providing a written testimony of the past. The historiographical continuity that characterizes the Norwegian royal sagas – from *Sverris saga* to *Magnúss saga Lagaboetiss*⁷³ (nearly hundred years of uninterrupted narrative!) – constituted an historical argument that legitimized dynastic power. In this regard, as Sverre Bagge has argued, the saga of Hákon was unprecedentedly saturated with royalist ideology that exalted the monarch ruling on God's behalf.⁷⁴

The entertaining qualities of chivalric romances were not necessarily the best medium to exalt the kingship, however. Indeed, many kings of Old French romances, poems and fables were mocked or portrayed as deceitful and powerless, whereas knights personified bravery and honour – a characteristic that Bandlien also points to.⁷⁵ Previous scholarship has highlighted how in the processes of translation into Old Norse, writers censored or shortened these depreciatory sections to emphasize the royals' courage and power.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the cultivation of aristocratic values was not essentially antithetical to loyalty and dedication to kings. For instance, the Arthurian *topoi* nurtured aristocratic loyalty towards their king. Embarked in the quest for the Holy Grail, on King Arthur' order, the knights of the round table travelled the world fighting against supernatural creatures and facing dangers to their moral integrity and even the temptations of love, as steadfast vassals to their lord.

Issues of social status and prestige played an eminent part in patronage relations as well.⁷⁷ As the court developed into a cultural environment, its actors increasingly defined and redefined their position and interactions in cultural terms. The ideals of courtliness, the rules of etiquette, and chivalric values conveyed in romances, all established a cultural ladder that opened for competition and advancement of those who excelled in these behaviours, but also for downward movement for those who lacked them. *The King's Mirror* insists that wealth and kin did not suffice to qualify for the highest ranks within the *hirð*, 'those who are chosen to this dignity should be perfect in all things [...] but above all in conduct'.⁷⁸ The king's men were also pitted against each other. In their quest for glory and status elevation at the court, courtiers were invited to surpass themselves and others in order not to be judged as honourless *ufroðr maðr*, 'imbeciles'.⁷⁹ The stakes were very

high indeed, as *The King's Mirror* warns courtiers that perfection in manners directly reflected on the king. In particular, when the king would meet foreign princes, his men ought to be perfect in deportment and refined demeanour; otherwise, they would bring shame on their lord, damaging his prestige as an enlightened monarch. Because of such a *faux-pas*, according to the author, the exposed offender would 'suffer a well-deserved but ignominious death'.⁸⁰ Of course, the exigencies of courtesy also concerned the Norwegian kings and queens themselves as 'no man needs to be more learned [...] in all subjects than a king'.⁸¹ Standing at the helm of the ranks of courtliness was not sufficient. In order to gain, maintain, and secure their ascendancy over their men, Norwegian kings and queens needed to develop new cultural strategies towards the rest of the elite. The substantial and continuous patronage activity of the Norwegian kings and queens illustrate that their socio-political pre-eminence was not enough but needed to be paralleled with cultural supremacy.

Apart from the indigenous royal sagas, most of the court's literature was imported. The prerequisite of needing to adapt the narratives for the native language of Norwegians required expensive and time demanding translations that, for long, only kings could provide.⁸² For it was not only kings who had the capacity to finance these works but also only them who could attract professional writers to engage in this type of activity. Yet, in order to reap the benefits of their literary sponsorship, royal commissioners also needed to communicate their artistic largesse.⁸³ Numerous prologues and epilogues of chivalric romances and poems revealed and praised royal patronage, providing aristocratic audiences with vivid evidence for their dependency and gratitude. The prologue of *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, for example, hails King Hákon Hákonsson's mediation in a translation that was made, 'at the behest and decree of honourable King Hákon'.⁸⁴ To an aristocratic audience that wished to emulate their Western counterparts, the kings positioned themselves as necessary intermediaries of foreign cultural impulses. It was on this ground that Norwegian kings and queens also erected their cultural prestige over their court and consequently added a new layer of pre-eminence over their most powerful subjects.

Redefining inter-elite interactions

As the preceding discussion emphasizes, twelfth- and thirteenth-century Norway underwent profound social, political and communicational upheavals that were the trademark of a state in the making. These changes brought about new rituals and texts that redefined the patterns of cultural interactions between kings and aristocracy, i.e. how they negotiated their everlasting struggle for social status, pre-eminence and legitimacy. Correspondingly, through this process the members of the aristocracy, hitherto confined to relatively independent regions, gradually morphed into a 'realm'-wide elite, whose members were much stronger bound to the monarch. The turn towards a more centralized polity with the king at its centre resulted in creation of public performances foregrounding new kind of political asymmetry between kings and aristocrats. Processions and ritual staging instrumentalized aristocratic participation, which heightened royal prestige and glory. As I argued, within the new environment of the thirteenth-century royal court the internal distinctions among elites became more tangible and fluid. The ritualization of courtly behaviour and the

adoption of the written word as a new means of communication became the crucible for the exercising of new kind of power dynamic. Aristocratic ranks and status were again open for competition. Now status was not only based on the bravery shown on the battlefield but also by the agility to navigate the strict codes of etiquette governing the court. In the context in which kings assumed a new kind of leadership the elevation of the individual members of the elite was increasingly measured in cultural terms.

The systems of communication described above also coalesced the unity of elites against of the rest of society. Public performances displayed aristocrats and kings as a harmonic collective. These performances exposed their corporate identity as well as the commonality of their political interests. The propagation of literacy and literary culture not only offered new ways of communication within the Norwegian elite but also assured its social cohesion and cultural distinction. Communication processes were multivalent and helped navigating the changing power relations among members of the elite. In the context of the competition for the throne, the inter-elite communication was structured by the principles of adhesion and partisanship. The political power of local leaders was manifested during the public meetings allocated to the regions of the realm, and triggered discourses and performances to gain and cultivate their support for the kings' ventures.

Furthermore, it is remarkable that the personal charisma required of the Norwegian kings in the twelfth century, exemplified by King Sverre's prodigious rallying speeches, resurfaced with the rise of a literate court during the thirteenth century, though in a new, reconfigured fashion. At this point, however, its social magic did not concern the king's individual voice, but his patronage of others' voices. The Norwegian kings continued to control the cultural and historical narratives and the flow of legitimizing glory towards themselves and they did so by orchestrating a far more complex story and broader set of participants. A king's prestige/glory and their power were now communicated through their successes as promoters of a refined courtly culture.

As a concluding observation, it must be noted that the communicational changes that are sketched in this study, notwithstanding their far-reaching significance, and by no means to undermine my line of argument, should not be overestimated. Indeed, the persistence of orality and face to face communication, though along new premises, to some extent emphasizes the limits of literacy, as well as of the centrality of the court and its culture. Much of the inter-elite interactions are not apparent in the extent written sources and continued to develop on more 'traditional' bases. For instance, fourteenth century evidences indicate that royal agents still greatly relied upon the spoken word in the governmental tasks. The very hybrid character of verbal communicational interactions (spoken/written) in high medieval Norway, which I argue is a novelty in itself, thus opens up for different interpretations, and will most certainly keep alive the debate on change/continuity.

Notes

1. Imsen, 'King Magnus,' 206–220.
2. "Éptir þetta tal gecc Jarl fram imilli manna oc fell til fota konungi" and "Konungrin litaðiz um oc tok feint til orða oc mælti". *Sverris saga*, Ch. 125. The English translation of the *Sverris saga*

- used here is: *The Saga of King Sverri of Norway*. Ed. J. Sephton. (Somerset: Llanerch Press, 1899). (Later abbreviated SvS). See also Wærdahl, *The Incorporation*, 71–78.
3. 'Vm kløða skurð er sumir menn dirfua sik meir en sumir. ok vera ætte ok in draga j varo riki mote vaare skipan ok vaara forældra þa viti þat allir menn at ver firirbiodum at nokor hafue heðan af. annan kløða bunað en ver hafuum sealfuir ok bera laatum suæina vara j sealfs vars garðe.' *Diplomatarium Norvegicum* Vol. XI nr. 6 (Christiania and Oslo: C.C.A. Lunge et al., 1849–1995). See also Benedictow, 'Konge, hird', 233–284.
 4. Concerning rituals in the medieval North, see Jezierski, *Rituals, Performatives*. About literacy in medieval Norway, see Melve, *Med ordet*; and Nedkvitne, 'Literacy,' 65–92 and form the same author, *The Social Consequences*.
 5. Hermanson, 'Introduction,' 1–40.
 6. Castells, *Communication power*, 11.
 7. Stollberg-Rilinger, 'The Impact of Communication Theory,' 313–318.
 8. Bagge, *From Viking*, 40–53; Helle, *Norge*; Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence*; and Dørum and Holberg, *Frå Høvdingdøme*.
 9. Helle, *Norge*, 73–75.
 10. Sigurdsson, *Det norrøne samfunnet*, 117–137; and Bagge, *From Viking*, 53–55.
 11. For a fruitful overview over the debate in Norway, see Dørum and Holberg, *Frå Høvdingdøme*, 197–249 and 309–320. Helle, 'Den primitivistiske,' 572–609.
 12. Helle, *Norge*; and Seip, 'Problemer,' 49–133.
 13. Bagge, *From Viking*, 379–387 and from the same author «Borgerkrig», 145–197; and Dørum and Holberg, *Frå Høvdingdøme*, 309–316.
 14. «Historians have for a long time acknowledged that there was no state [in Norway] in the middle ages" 'Historikere har i lang tid erkjent at staten ikke fantes i middelalderen' [My translation], Orning, *Klassekampen*, 18 November 2019. See the thesis of Orning, *Unpredictability*. From the same author, 'Norsk middelalder,' 249–62; and 'Borgerkrig', 193–216.
 15. Dørum, «Materiell basis», 87–105. See also the critic of Orning's thesis by Helle, 'Den primitivistiske,' 601–603.
 16. I refer here to some of my earlier publication, *Vox regis*, 'Civilizing,' 1–19, 'Royal patronage of Courtly Literature.'
 17. Brégaint, «Civilizing», 1–19.
 18. Barnes, 'The Riddarasögur,' 140–158; Kalinke, King Arthur. See for instance, specific analyses of chivalric romances in Larrington, 'The Translated,' 77–97; Bornholdt, 'The Old-Norse,' 98–122; and Irlenbusch-Reynard, 'Når en roman,' 245–259.
 19. Jean-Philippe Genet considers the genesis of the state first and foremost as a cultural process that affected in priority the power elites, often precursory to institutional changes, Genet, *La genèse de l'État moderne*, 3–4.
 20. Blockmans, *Empowering Interactions*, 16–19; and Reinhard, 'Introduction,' 1–18.
 21. Genet, *La genèse de l'État moderne*; and Menache, *Vox Dei* and Brégaint, *Vox regis*.
 22. Bagge, "Den heroiske tid», 47–79.
 23. We can here name, *Historia Norwegie*, *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium* and *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum*. See Andersson, 'King's Sagas,' 197–238.
 24. *Sverris saga* was truly started in 1185 and completed shortly after King Sverre's death in 1202. Brekke, *Sverre-sagaens opphav*.
 25. The *Baglers saga* is known through to versions; a short version, probably written between 1209 and 1218, and a longer one written in the 1220 s. According to scholars' interpretations, the older version is rather less tendentious than the longer one, which shows greater sympathies for the Birkebeiners. Helle, *Omkring Bøglungasögur*.
 26. With 'chieftain' we understand local political leaders. The term stands in contrasts to aristocrats who refers to members of a small privileged class integrated in the royal government.
 27. Knirk, *Oratory*; Bagge, "Oratory," 215–228; Bagge, *From Gang Leader*, 13–88; and Krag, *Sverre*.
 28. SvS Ch. 179.

29. SvS Ch. 27.
30. Knirk, *Oratory*, 104–106.
31. SvS Ch. 52.
32. "Sa er lendan man fellir með faunnum vitnum. Ía ícal lendr maðr vera. Oc þes-kynín maðr ícal hvern vera íem hann íalfr ræðr ser til rumí. Sa hirðmaðr er hirðr-mann drepr. oc taca þar af aðra marga goða luti i læmðum af os." SvS Ch. 35.
33. Brégaaint, 'Staging Deaths,' 3–21.
34. Brégaaint, *Vox regis*, 114–123.
35. SvS Ch. 38.
36. When the defrocked priest, Sverre arrived on the Norwegian political scene 1177, his claim to the throne rested upon his alleged descent with King Sigurd II Haraldsson (1133–1155). Sverre's claims were questionable, and actually questioned as much by his adversaries as by his followers. Helle, *Norge*, 52–53.
37. SvS Ch. 38.
38. 'Allda-íscipti er mikít orðit íem þer megut íía. oc er undarliga orðit. er ein maðr er nu fyrir.iii. Ein fyrir konung. oc einn fyrir Jarl. einn fyrir erkibyscup. oc em ec íía. her ero nu morg tíþindi at íía oc vita. þau er mikilí ero verp.' Ibid.
39. 'geri hvern maðr íem íyniz oc hann ætlar ser bezt gegna muno. oc þeim erf ram ero farnir af heimum.' Ibid.
40. Brégaaint, *Vox regis*, 35–37; Vestergaard, 'A Note', 119–123; and Taranger, 'Om kongevalg,' 120–124.
41. *Bagler sagas*, Old Norse *Bøglunga saga*. Ch. 26.
42. *The saga of King Hákon Hákonsson*, Old Norse, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*. Ch. 221. (Later abbreviated HsH).
43. Bagge, *From Viking*, 379–387.
44. Brégaaint, *Vox regis*, 174–179; and Wærdahl, 'For å oppnå,' 175–193.
45. 'Gens mea impetuosa est et indiscreta, impatiensque omnium injurrium' Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, Vol. IV, trans. by H.R. Luard (Wiesbaden, 1964), 651.
46. Leach, *Angevin Britain*; Ferrer, *Emotions in motion*; and Bandlien, *Strategies of passion*.
47. See the pivotal works by Elias, *The Court Society* and *The Civilizing Process*; See also, Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness*.
48. *The King's Mirror*. The text has been translated into English, Larson, *The King's Mirror*, Ch. XXXVII. (Later abbreviated Kgs).
49. Monclair, *Forestillinger*, 51–107.
50. HsH Ch. 254.
51. See, Vale 'Ritual,' 13–27, and from the same author, *The Princely Court*.
52. Orning, 'The Konungs skuggsjá,' 245–264.
53. Brégaaint, 'Civilizing,' 1–19.
54. Hsk Ch. 29.
55. Kgs Ch. XXXI.
56. Kgs Ch. XL and XXXIV.
57. 'Bið litla rið goðr (maðr) mæðan ec lyði stunnð æina rœðu konongsens. en ec vil siðan giarna við þec rœða slict er þer þycki sialfum gott.' Kgs Ch. XXXII.
58. 'hœrra minn latið yðr æigi firi þikkia at ec spyria hvat þer mælltur til min þvi at nam æi gorla' Ibid.
59. Kgs Ch. XXXIII and XXXIV.
60. Bagge, *From Viking*, 324–334; and Elias, *The Civilizing process*.
61. Brégaaint, *Vox regis*, 186–193.
62. Brégaaint, 'Civilizing,' 5–7.
63. Kgs Ch. XXVI.
64. 'rex illiteratus est quasi asinus coronatus'. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, V, no. 390; and Giles, *William of Malmesbury's*, 170.
65. Brégaaint, *Vox regis*, 214.
66. See above 50. 13.

67. Aurell, *Le chevalier lettré*.
68. 'þui at nam kiænnir' Hsk Ch. 29 and Kgs Ch. XLI.
69. *The King's Mirror* has no direct reference to royal patronage but is so intimately connected to the court and the king that it must have at least received King Hákon Hákonsson's approval. Brégaint, *Vox regis*, 220.
70. King Magnus the Lawmender (1263–1289) commissioned *Hákon saga Hákonarsonar* (1265), *Magnúss saga Lagaboetiss* (ca. 1280) and a *saga of the Jews* (*Gyðinga saga*).
71. For an outline over the Norwegian kings' literary patronage see, Halvorsen, 'Norwegian Court Literature,' 17–26; King Hákon Hákonsson is mentioned as patron for five translations of chivalric romances: *Elis saga*, *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, *Ívens saga*, *Strengleikar* and *Möttuls saga*. Other texts such as *Parcevals saga*, *Florés saga ok Blankiflúr*, *Partalopa saga*, *Flóvents saga Frakkakonungs* and *Erex saga* are traditionally associated with King Hákon. King Hákon the young (1240–1257) is believed to have been the author or commissioner of *Barlaams ok Jósaphat saga*. According to the epilogue of the *Gyðinga saga*, King Magnus Hákonsson commissioned the translation of a twelfth century poem, *Alexandreis* into its Old Norse version, *Alexanders saga*. Finally, at the turn of the thirteenth century, under the command of Norwegian queen, Euphemia (1299–1312), three romances in rhyme known as *Eufemiavisor*, were translated from Old French and German into Old Swedish: *Herr Ivan*, *Hertig Fredrik af Normandie* and *Flores och Blanzeflor*. Brégaint, *Vox regis*, 221–226.
72. Leach, *Angevin Britain*, 153 and Kalinke, *King Arthur*, 45.
73. The saga recounted the reign of King Magnus Hákonsson. It was written between 1278 and 1284. Grímsdóttir, 'The works of Sturla,' 8–19.
74. Bagge, *From Gang Leader*, 89–107.
75. Irlenbusch-Reynard, 'Translations,' 387–405 and Pedersen, 'Den høviske krigeren,' 112–124.
76. For an overview, see Brégaint, *Vox regis*, 244–254.
77. Duindam, *Myths of Power*, 159–180.
78. 'værdða kosnir at væra algorvir at ollum lutum [...] oc þo hinir siðsamazto'. Kgs Ch. XXIX.
79. Kgs Ch. XXV.
80. 'se heimill hæðiligr dauðe'. Kgs Ch. XXIX.
81. 'ængi maðr etti at væra marghfroðari [...] en konongr' Kgs Ch. XLV.
82. Cassagnes-Brouquet, *La passion du livre*, 9–23.
83. Brégaint, *Vox regis*, 231–241.
84. Cited from Kalinke, *The Tristan legend*, 28.

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