Werewolves in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Minjie Su

Linacre College

University of Oxford

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Hilary 2020

Contents

Abstract

This thesis investigates ten Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf texts: *Vǫlsunga saga, Gibbons saga, Sigrgarðs saga frækna, Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands, Ála flekks saga, Úlfhams rímur, Tiodielis saga, Jóns saga leikara,* and, on the Norwegian side, *Bisclaretz ljóð* and a short episode in *Konungs skuggsjá*. Focusing on these texts and complemented by medieval Latin-Franco werewolf traditions, the thesis examines five aspects (in the form of six chapters) to interpret the dynamic between human and wolf, 'us' and 'other', and to offer new angles to approach these metamorphosis stories.

The first four chapters present a bidirectional journey. On an external level, they proceed further away from the body: via the skin, the surface of the body; clothing, the layer immediately placed upon the skin; diet, or what is placed on the (dining) table before the werewolf; landscape, or where the human body finds itself. At the same time, however, with each step a different aspect of the werewolf's interiority comes to light: the skin has the ability to draw out the latent, making visual the individual's moral/spiritual condition; clothing indicates the individual's personal and social identity; food, in addition to being another identity indicator, constitutes the body materially; landscape both reflects and affects the individual's emotional status. At the centre of each chapter lies the interaction between these two ends: the external and social and the interior and psychological. Thus, this thesis is essentially about the same narrative, but told in four different ways, with the last two chapters as the point of convergence, addressing the key questions of purpose and identity.

The first chapter considers the skin, for not only is the skin the outmost layer of the human body but putting on a *úlfhamr* (wolfskin) is also the most common means for a man to change into a wolf. Starting from the two skin models derived from the Franco-Latin werewolf

texts, this chapter demonstrates how change at skin level reflects and affects the human psyche and investigates how these models can be applied to the Old Norse-Icelandic sources. *Ála flekks saga* is singled out as a case study. In particular, Áli's four adventures are analysed in detail to show a parallel between werewolf metamorphosis and skin diseases such as leprosy: itself interpreted as a manifestation of the individual's moral/spiritual status.

Chapter Two considers clothing, for in some werewolf cases clothes and the skin are thought of as interchangeable; the substitution of clothing with the wolfskin blurs not only the wearer's identity but also the boundary between man and beast. The *Bisclavret* group (*Lai du Bisclavret*, *Bisclaretz ljóð*, and *Tiodielis saga*) provide an illustrative example for two reasons: (1) The hero's transformation entirely depends on the loss and reacquisition of his human, knightly clothes; (2) the werewolf tears open the wife's clothes in public, a detail not found in the French original. This leads to the question of nakedness and the possibility of discussing the werewolf body alongside two marginal, otherly creatures: the madman and the metaphorical she-wolf.

Chapter Three considers food. Although there is much medieval debate over how food turns into human flesh, the consensus is that food directly constitutes the human body. Diet, therefore, also communicates what we are; it not only differentiates human beings from beasts and monsters but also distinguishes one social class from another. Although the authors seldom depict what the werewolves feed on, the silence about the werewolf's possible diet in the woods speaks to an anxiety over what they might consume in their bestial form. This chapter also serves a transitional function. It continues the discussion of gender and sexuality – for the only wolfish characters who are manifestly associated with cannibalism are females: King Siggeirr's mother – who physically turns into a wolf and consumes Sigmundr's brothers – and Gorlagon's wife, who

is symbolically wolfish and cannibalistic. A list of the werewolf's potential food, ranged from the least unacceptable to the taboo, is examined and analysed, to demonstrate how each of the food has implications for the hero's identity and mental status.

While dealing with the physical environment, Chapter Four ventures deeper into the werewolf mind and focuses on the emotional impact of the metamorphosis. Applying the theory of psycho-geography and using the semiotic square as an analytic tool, this chapter examines in detail how the landscape changes in correspondence with the werewolf's mental status in particular sources. *Úlfhams rímur* is analysed as a case study, as it is the only text that directly links werewolf transformation to landscape changes (manifested in seasonal change) and emotions. Once a parallel has been established between Úlfhamr and his father Vargstakkr (arguing the validity of treating Úlfhamr as a figurative werewolf), the chapter explicates the interaction between landscape and Úlfhamr's mental status at each stage of the poem, with a special focus on the connection between winter/darkness and dark emotions.

Chapters Five and Six are the summation of the previous four and considers the essential question: how does the interaction with the wolf benefit the human? Reading the werewolf experience as a rite of separation, the two chapters divide the sources into two, according to the werewolf's role: either as learner (*monstratus*) or teacher (*monstrare*). The former includes not only those heroes who are turned into a wolf or but also disguised heroes who lose their identity to gain experience and knowledge, and the latter, the magical werewolves who instruct and intervene in the hero's rite-of-passage journey. Issues such as kingship, masculinity, and personhood will be closely addressed in the process. Lastly, *Konungs skuggsjá* will feature as a case study to demonstrate how the werewolf episode is re-contextualised in another genre to serve the overall purpose of these texts.

In the conclusion, I summarise the thesis's findings in relation to the werewolf's identity and social integration and evaluate this study. By problematising the boundaries between man and beast, the werewolf embodies both the light and dark sides of man; what hides under the shaggy *úlfhamr* is revealed to us as that which is indispensable to being human.

Introduction

What is a *werewolf*? At first glance, the answer seems simple. The clue is in the word itself: having its root in the Old English word *werewulf*, a werewolf is basically a *man-wolf*[1] – a creature in which the man and the wolf encounter and interact with each other, and somehow merge into one. Yet there is more to it, for the hyphen linking the two elements in this definition indicates some dynamic – some negotiation – between the man and the wolf. But what is it, exactly? A man-wolf can be simultaneously a man *and* a wolf, embodying characteristics defining both human and wolves: indeed, all werewolves are humans at some point, and then they tend to retain their mind and memory. It can be *neither* man *nor* wolf: how can a human be seen as a human if they are in the body of a wolf, and how can a wolf be seen as a wolf if it is a human in origin and in mind? It also implies transition and transformation, *from* man *to* wolf and then, if they are fortunate, from wolf to man. A single definition, therefore, is just as elusive as the werewolf's body: changing from one species to another, it is not a state but a process. The werewolf is always something in between.

From this in-betweenness arises a sense of uncertainty, and unfathomableness: uncertain things tend to cause fear. But, at the same time, it also awakens an impulse to seek answers and a hope of grasping a certainty, so as to dispel that fear. While the body changes from one form to the other, does some part of the man – however small – remains untouched and untouchable? Do some elements of the wolf become integrated into the man that he can never shake off even after the wolf form is long gone? When does a man stop being a man or a wolf stop being a wolf? What defines man, and what defines wolf? After all, as Caroline W. Bynum puts it, '[t]he question of change is […] the other side of the question of identity'.[2]

[1] *The Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), s.v. *werewolf*.
[2] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York, 2005), p. 19.

It is within these questions and the endeavour to find answers that the popularity of the werewolf lies. Indeed, to imagine a man reduced to a beast – to becoming a prisoner in his own body – is a horror, but it is a fascinating one, nonetheless. This fascination with the werewolf is attested by a wide range of literature and creative productions in other media, ranging from medieval romances all the way to popular television shows of the present day. A spotlight may be directed at a different aspect or aspects of the werewolf in each work: the horror, the monstrosity, the sorrow and the pain, the werewolf as a means to voice social commentaries, or its capacity for being a metaphor… But they are all parts of the same discourse – an investigation into what is human by turning the human into something else. Werewolf literature, in other words, is like an experiment, a 'testing of boundaries';[3] only that it is conducted not in a laboratory but in the human imagination, not with scientific equipment but with pen and paper (or parchment).

To understand the werewolf, therefore, is to shed light on how a given cultural group perceives its own identity and defines what is normative and what is 'other'. This is precisely what this thesis aspires to achieve, and the 'given cultural group' it focuses on is the Old Norse-Icelandic speaking world in the High and Late Middle Ages. The goal and the scope of this thesis will be further explained below, together with a detailed structure outlining how it will proceed and what topics it proposes to examine. Before that, however, just as one cannot build a long-lasting house without a solid foundation, it is necessary to look into what has already been written – not only on the werewolf texts in question, but also on those which directly or indirectly influenced them.

[3] Ibid., p. 92.

Section One: Werewolves in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's 2007 publication inaugurates a systematic study of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf literary corpus.[4] Although she is particularly interested in the development of the werewolf motif in medieval Icelandic literature, her research is valuable to this thesis especially for two reasons.

First, she identifies all the relevant texts (i.e. those making direct mentions of man-to-wolf transformation, as a major plot or in passing) in the Icelandic werewolf narrative tradition, from which this thesis draws a corpus of core texts. On the Icelandic side, Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir lists fourteen titles: *Gylfaginning*, *Hrafnagaldur Óðins*, *Vǫlsunga saga*, *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*, *Gibbons saga*, *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, Arngrímur Jónsson's *Skjǫldunga saga*, *Ála flekks saga*, the *Úlfhamr* group (both *rímur* and saga), *Tíódéls saga*, *Jóns saga leikara*, *Sagan af Þorsteini glott*, and *Hvað þýðir "sár"?*. She also calls attention to *Bisclaretz ljóð* and the werewolf episode in *Konungs skuggsjá*, but does not include them in her analysis as they are of Norwegian origin.[5] Of the Icelandic sources, not all are medieval materials, but some are stories collected in the nineteenth century, thus producing a more complete account and foregrounding the sense of continuity. Second, having identified the werewolf texts, she re-assesses Einar Ól. Sveinsson's categorisation of *ýkjusögur* (unrealistic sagas) and imports the system in order to categorise the werewolf texts into the older and the more recent variants, or the Old Norse/Germanic and the Celtic/courtly.[6] As a result, texts are discussed not in chronological order, but based on the source-tradition to which they can be traced. By doing this, she develops a werewolf literary

[4] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', *Journal of English and German Philology*, 106/3 (2007), 277-303.
[5] Ibid., 278. Not all these texts will feature in this thesis, however; I will explain my choice of texts below.
[6] Einar Ól. Sveinsson, 'Keltnesk áhrif á íslenzkar ýkjusögur', *Skrírnir*, 106 (1932), 100-23 (118-20), where he briefly discusses werewolf and werebear motifs and categorises them into 'Germanic' (i.e. from the *berserkr* tradition) and from 'keltneskum þjóðum' (Celtic nations), which involves a spell or a curse. I am aware that the term 'Celtic' is problematic and in itself a debatable subject; it will only appear in this thesis in quotations.

corpus that can be treated systematically rather than individually – and enables comparative readings between texts composed in different time periods. Another valuable point of her research from which this thesis benefits concerns the skin, which functions as a key categorising criterion for both variants. However, as the skin is the subject of Chapter One, I will not expound on the topic here, but rather I shall identify Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's categorisation of them.

The two criteria for categorisation as older are the ability to shapeshift (believed to be innate) and volition. Both are further linked to the Old Norse/Germanic traditions of the *berserkir* and the *úlfheðnar*, warriors wearing animal skins and fighting in a frenzy.[7] In these cases, the werewolf characters – usually warriors – embrace the beast by choice so as to benefit from the wolf's ferocity in battle. For this reason, Gustr (*Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*), Asper (*Gibbons saga*), and Hlégerðr (*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*) are also counted among the older variants alongside Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli, for all of them freely adopt wolfish forms to ensure victory over their opponents, even though the texts in which they appear are comparatively more recent.

In contrast, to the second category belong those who are forced into the wolf form temporarily, mostly through a curse. Unlike the *berserkir/úlfheðnar* warriors, these men are victims and, despite occasional savage behaviour, are 'extremely discontent as wolves and long to be freed'.[8] This category includes Áli flekkr (*Ála flekks saga*), Vargstakkr (*Úlfhams rímur*), Tíódél (*Tiodielis saga*), and Sigurðr (*Jóns saga leikara*), all believed to be strongly influenced by what Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir identifies as Celtic tradition. These characters are either turned into a wolf (Áli, Vargstakkr, Sigurðr) or trapped in the bestial form (Tíódél) against

[7] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 283-90. See also H. R. Ellis Davidson, 'Shape-changing in the Old Norse Sagas', in *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture*, ed. Charlotte F. Otten (Syracuse, 1986), pp. 126-42 (151-52).
[8] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 301.

their will. Reluctant to exploit the wolf's animality and brutality, these werewolves show reason and courtesy most of the time.[9]

Although Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir offers literary analysis of each of her core texts, it tends to be concise and limited in scope, since the questions she sets out to answer are those of origin and influence. Her journal article allows little or no space for analysing the werewolf characters either within context in a single work or comparatively in two or more texts; nor is there any attempt to analyse them in comparison to other characters nor how the werewolf metamorphosis may alter their relationships. However, as the first systematic treatment of werewolves in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, her research paves the way for more in-depth analysis of specific elements of the narrative.

Indeed, recent years have seen a growing interest in the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf as a literary topic and in the sagas in question, as is attested by publications on individual texts. There have been a number of scholarly editions and/or translations of less 'mainstream' texts, all furnished with detailed introductions. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's 2001 edition of *Úlfhams saga* offers a thorough study of the *Úlfhamr* materials, including both the *rímur* and the three prose versions dated to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[10] In addition to manuscript history and intertextual relationship, she also analyses the literary motifs, narrative structure, and characters, both within the *rímur* itself and in comparison with other relevant sagas. Particularly important to this thesis is her categorisation of all main characters into a system of light versus darkness and her reading of *Úlfhams rímur* as a rite of passage process, which proves fundamental to Chapters Four and Five, respectively. This thesis is also indebted to the 2013 English translation of *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, accompanied with the standardised

[9] However, Áli might be an exception, but his violence is part of the curse, which makes him even more sympathetic.
[10] *Úlfhams saga*, ed. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir (Reykjavík, 2001). An English translation of the *rímur* is in Appendix V.

Old Icelandic text, co-authored by Alaric Hall, Steven Richardson, and Haukur Þorgeirsson.[11] Although Hall and his co-authors do not dwell on the wolf element in the saga, their introduction offers insights into the psychological development of both Sigrgarðr and the *meykongr* (Maiden King), in which the wolfish characters play an important part. A diplomatic edition of *Tiodielis saga*, edited by Tove Hove Ohlsson, was published in 2009. This edition contains both main versions (A- and B-text); an English translation of the A-text is included in the Appendices to this thesis (Appendix II), and a translation of the B-text, prepared by Hall and his co-authors, is currently under preparation for publication.[12] An edition and translation of *Ála flekks saga* is published and recently made available in *Leeds Studies in English*.[13]

In addition to the increasing availability of the primary texts, attention has also begun to move from the making and transmission of the texts to the texts themselves. Especially notable are Ingvil Brügger Budal's research on *Bisclaretz ljóð* and Marianne E. Kalinke's works on *Gibbons saga* and *Tiodielis saga*.[14] Focusing on the nose-biting episode, Budal examines the wife's punishment in *Bisclaretz ljóð* and the implications of noselessness, leading to her discussion of the wife's identity as a metaphorical wolf and therefore counterpart to her werewolf husband. Kalinke, on the other hand, foregrounds this contrast through comparative readings of the *Bisclavret* group (i.e. *Le lai du Bisclavret*, *Bisclaretz ljóð*, *Tiodielis saga*). Although she glosses over the wolf figure (Asper) and his protégé Pluto, Kalinke's work on *Gibbons saga* is the first attempt at analysing the saga as a whole. In particular, she argues for

[11] Alaric Hall, Steven Richardson, and Haukur Þorgeirsson, '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*: A Normalised Text, Translation, and Introduction', *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada*, 21 (2012-2013), 80-155.
[12] The latest version of this translation is made accessible on Hall's Academia page (https://www.academia.edu/36813010/T%C3%ADodels_saga_A_Modernised_Text_and_Translation).
[13] Jonathan YH Hui, Catilin Ellis, James McIntosh, Katherine Olley, William Norman, and Kimberly Anderson, '*Ála flekks saga*: An Introduction, Text, and Translation', *Leeds Studies in English*, New Series 49 (2018), 1-43. My own translation of the saga is in Appendix I.
[14] Ingvil Brügger Budal, 'Ei historie om naselause kvinner og varulvklede', in *Francia et Germania: Studies in* Strengleikar *and* Þiðreks saga af Bern, ed. Karl G. Johansson and Rune Flaten (Oslo, 2012), pp. 203-29. Marianne E. Kalinke, '*Gibbons saga*, An Exemplary Frame-tale Narrative', *Scandinavian Studies*, 90/2 (2018), 265-88. Marianne Kalinke, *Stories Set Forth with Fair Words: The Evolution of Medieval Romance in Iceland* (Cardiff, 2017). Marianne E. Kalinke, 'A Werewolf in Bear's Clothing', *Maal og Minne*, 3-4 (1981), 137-44.

the saga's integrity, that it is an 'omnium-gatherum of classical, oriental, and contemporary continental motifs and figures',[15] with the indigenous *meykongr* story cleverly framed within an imported, fairy mistress tale. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, too, has continued her study on the *Úlfhamr* material in recent years: although her main goal is to highlight the Swedish characteristics (which would entail some motifs' possible Swedish origin), she nevertheless identifies a two-generation pattern in the *rímur*, that the story develops around a new, recuperated generation taking over the old, somewhat flawed regime.[16]

Section Two: Werewolves in the Franco-Latin Tradition

The Old Norse-Icelandic werewolves cannot be discussed without examining their Franco-Latin counterparts, for, as will be demonstrated in the next section, the two literary traditions are closely connected. Moreover, as the Franco-Latin werewolves have enjoyed scholarly attention for a much longer time than the Old Norse-Icelandic ones, the research is more mature, and the subjects discussed are more diverse: not only do we find innovative treatment of the werewolf characters, but also of those who interact with them – whether intradiegetically as supporting characters or extradiegetically as audience. Therefore, such comparative studies are extremely important and helpful, as research on the Franco-Latin werewolves offers a ready model for the treatment of various topics examined in this thesis.

The Franco-Latin werewolf corpus consists of six texts: *Le lai du Bisclavret, Melion, Guillaume de Palerne, Arthur and Gorlagon*, and the werewolf episodes respectively found in Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia Imperalia* and Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica*. Of these six, *Bisclavret* is probably the most frequently sought-out text for comparative readings. This comes as no surprise, considering that a clear genealogy can be established from *Le lai du*

[15] Kalinke, '*Gibbons saga*', 280.
[16] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Tales of Generations: A Comparison Between Some Icelandic and Geatish Narrative Motifs', *Scripta Islandica. Isländska Sällskapets Årsbok*, 67 (2016), 5-36.

Bisclavret to *Bisclavretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga*.[17] Indeed, as Budal's and Kalinke's work demonstrates, comparative research not only sheds light on the texts themselves, but also allows us a glimpse into the *mentalité* of the society that produced and read these texts. For, as the *Bisclavret* group shows, those who were responsible for the Norwegian and Icelandic versions were readers before they were translators or redactors. They must have asked questions and woven into their own versions their personal interpretation and understanding, just as modern readers do. Two other texts that enjoy a close and traceable relationship with the Old Norse-Icelandic corpus are *Topographia Hibernica* and *Arthur and Gorlagon*: while the latter shares a major motif with *Jóns saga leikara* (as will be considered in Chapter Three), Gerald of Wales's Ossory werewolves and the *Konungs skuggsjá* may have derived from the same tradition and, as Chapter Six will demonstrate, can shed light upon each other.[18] *Melion*, *Guillaume*, and *Otia Imperalia* will also be consulted in this thesis both for comparison and extra information, to varying degrees.

The critical tradition of work on werewolves is substantial but, due to limited space, only the recent secondary work is discussed below: that which is the most relevant and useful for the arguments of this thesis.

I start with Bynum's works on metamorphosis, for they situate the werewolf in a larger discourse of change and identity. Using the Ossory werewolves as example and starting point, Bynum defines two types of change: on the one hand, change is replacement and substitution,

[17] Kalinke proposes that *Tiodielis saga* may have been modelled on another exemplar of *Bisclaretz ljóð*, other than the one preserved in Uppsala De la Gardie 4-7. Kalinke, 'A Werewolf in Bear's Clothing', 140. I will give more details, including the relationship between *Bisclavret* and *Bisclaretz ljóð*, and between *Strengleikar* and *Vǫlsunga saga*, in the next section.

[18] John Carey, 'Werewolves in Medieval Ireland', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 44 (2002), 37-72 (48-57). See also Colmán Etchingham, Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, and Elizabeth Ashman Rowe, Norse-Gaelic Contacts in a Viking World (Turnhout, 2019), p. 78 and p. 106, where they re-assert the textual relationship between the werewolf episode in *Konungs skuggsjá*, Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica*, and two other Irish sources, as identified by Carey; they also argue that, while Gerald of Wales is 'one direct source' for the 'Wonders of Ireland' section in *Konungs skuggsjá*, the compiler must also have access to a fuller collection or collections of Irish materials.

but on the other it is also evolution, 'an unfolding of an essence or core forever present'.[19] The mid-twelfth century, however, she further argues, sees an increasing tendency to perceive change as the latter type: that is, 'an essential self' has been 'programmed' in an individual; their 'appearance or mode of being' may keep changing, but the end is always to achieve that ideal version of the self.[20] This is especially so in romance literature, where, despite their disguise or unknown lineage, heroes and heroines are always recognised as and grow into what they are meant to be. Bynum's findings open up the issue of appearance versus essence, of what can or cannot change. This entails an 'inside' and 'outside' – the external appearance that is subject to change, and the internal that remains the same, nonetheless. The werewolf – especially the so-called 'sympathetic' ones – provides a ready arena where appearance and essence encounter and clash with one another, giving rise to a series of questions. Are Gerald of Wales's werewolves really werewolves, since their bodies and souls remain untouched under the wolfskin? To what extent have Bisclavret and Gorlagon 'changed' when they turn into wolves, since they retain human intelligence and memory?

Focusing on the skin, Susan Small takes it upon herself to explore these questions. Borrowing the concept of *le Moi-Peau* (Skin-Ego) developed by the French psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu, Small examines all six Franco-Latin texts and distinguishes two skin models: the 'overlay' and the 'fusion', so as to reveal the mental effect of the man-to-wolf transformation through the wolfskin.[21] The importance of the skin is also explicated in Peggy McCracken's 2012 article on *Guillaume de Palerne*, in which she traces how skin is used to foreground human distinctiveness by contrasting the human hand and animal foot, and human speech and animal gesture.[22] But she also dwells on the skin's mutability and ability to uncover

[19] Bynum, p. 20.
[20] Ibid., p. 23.
[21] Susan Small, 'The Medieval Werewolf Model of Reading Skin', in *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture*, ed. Katie L. Walter (New York, 2013), pp. 81-97.
[22] Peggy McCracken, 'Skin and Sovereignty in *Guillaume de Palerne*', *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes/Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, 24 (2012), 361-75.

and reveal, and on the special bond between the werewolf (that is, an outlaw figure) and the sovereign. This last point is also explored by Emma Campbell and Victoria Blud, both borrowing the concept of *homo sacer* developed by Giorgio Agamben.[23] However, as Campbell points out, the exploration of humanity always comes at 'a human cost':[24] as will be demonstrated in Chapter Two, the unmasking of a *wer* within a *wulf* tends to be accompanied and compensated by the unmasking of a *wulf* within a *wer*, except this *wer* is usually a woman. This issue of gender and sexuality is at the centre of Blud's book, as also Lindy Brady's work on *Arthur and Gorlagon*, and Philip Bernhardt-House's work on *Bisclavret.*[25] In addition to establishing the parallel between the werewolf and the sovereign, Blud also examines the role of Bisclavret's wife and concludes that by the end of the story she has become 'a wolfish exile through the performance of her wolfish husband', exploring the connection between (were)wolf, outlaw, and the woman's wounded body.[26] Brady compares the three queens in *Arthur and Gorlagon* – Arthur's queen (who is *not* named Guinevere and who, according to Brady, is not necessarily adulterous), Gorlagon's queen, and Gorgol's queen – and concludes that expressions of sexual desire are gendered. While a man is allowed to display affection in public, a woman who does so transgresses gender norms. Bernhardt-House, on the other hand, refocuses on the werewolf figure and, situating *Bisclavret* in the domain of queer studies, draws attention to the werewolf-knight's apparent barrenness. Bisclavret is effectively 'neutered', for,

[23] Emma Campbell, 'Political Animals: Human/Animal Life in *Bisclavret* and *Yonec*', *Exemplaria*, 25/2 (2013), 95-109. Victoria Blud, *The Unspeakable, Gender and Sexuality in Medieval Literature 1000-1400* (Cambridge, 2017). In particular, by comparing the life of sovereign to that of the outlaw (that they are at the same time within and outside the law), Agamben extends his discussion to the werewolf, who 'dwells paradoxically within in both [man and beast] while belonging to neither'. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, 1998), p. 105.
[24] Campbell, 96.
[25] Lindy Brady, 'Feminine Desire and Conditional Misogyny in *Arthur and Gorlagon*', *Arthuriana*, 24/3 (2014), 23-44. Philip A. Bernhardt-House, 'The Werewolf as Queer, the Queer as Werewolf, and Queer Werewolves', in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Myra J. Hird and Noreen Giffney (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 159-83. Bernhardt-House also publishes a typological study of the Celtic werewolf and canid figures, which this thesis will consult in the discussion of the Ossory werewolves. Bernhardt-House, *Werewolves, Magical Hounds, and Dog-Headed Men in Celtic Literature: A Typological Study of Shape-Shafting* (Lewiston, 2010).
[26] Blud, p. 122.

like modern-day desexualised queer people, the werewolves must 'sacrifice their sexual activities in order to reach some sense of accommodation and acceptance within the mainstream society'.[27]

Section Three: Texts in Focus

Although Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir has identified sixteen Icelandic and Norwegian texts, not all of them will be considered in this thesis; and, of those considered, not all of them will be discussed to an equal extent, as in some texts the werewolf or wolfish characters are only minor. From her list, only the following ten are this thesis's major concern: *Vǫlsunga saga*, *Gibbons saga*, *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, *Ála flekks saga*, *Úlfhams rímur*, *Bisclaretz ljóð*, *Tiodielis saga*, *Jóns saga leikara*, and the werewolf episode from *Konungs skuggsjá*. They belong to different literary genres and their dating is imprecise. The most important criterion for choosing primary texts is the presence of a strong wolf-human dynamic. That is to say, at least one party interacting with the wolf is human, either it is a human turned into a wolf, or a magical shapeshifter helping or threatening humans. This criterion rules out eddic material and the mythical wolves, though they may be referred to whenever relevant.[28] Another criterion, of course, is that the texts have to be, broadly speaking, 'medieval', which rules out those preserved in written form only in the nineteenth century. The

[27] Bernhardt-House, 'The Werewolf as Queer', p. 168.

[28] These include *Gylfaginning*, *Hrafnagaldur Óðins*, and *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*. The werewolf transformation in *Gylfaginning* happens to Loki's son Váli, who is turned to a wolf (*í vargs líki*) by the Æsir; he kills his brother Nar(f)i and is never mentioned again. It seems that his transformation also applies to the mind; that, unlike the werewolves discussed in this thesis, Váli no longer possesses human (or *ás*) intelligence and is certainly no longer himself. In other words, his essence has been changed, too. Likewise, in *Hrafnagaldur Óðins*, a poem written in the eddic style and the dating of which is problematic and highly debatable, Iðunn is given a *vargsbelg* (wolf-pelt) so that she may transform into a wolf and stop grieving; her nature is said to have changed when she turns into a wolf. In both cases, the point of metamorphosis seems to be taking away the rational mind and emotion and becoming bestial. *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I* makes general references to the Vǫlsungs' wolfish affinity and particularly to Sinfjǫtli's metamorphosis; it will be referred to in this thesis as supplementary material to *Vǫlsunga saga*. Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. Anthony Faulkes, 2nd edn (London, 2005), p. 49. *Hrafnagaldur Óðins (Forspjallsljóð)*, ed. Annette Lassen. Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series, XX (London, 2011), stanza 8, p. 85; the dating of the text is discussed in pp. 9-18. *Helgakvæði Hundingsbana I*, in *Eddukvæði II: Hetjukvæði*, ed. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason. Íslenzk fornrit (Reykjavík, 2014), stanza 36, p. 254. See also *The Poetic Edda*, trans. Carolyne Larrington 2nd rev. edn (Oxford, 2014), p. 115.

texts selected are dated – if they can be dated at all – roughly to between the thirteenth century and around 1400.[29] With the only exception of *Konungs skuggsjá*, they all are *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur* or at least can be traced back to legendary (*Úlfhams rímur*) or chivalric (*Bisclaretz ljóð*) materials. Below, I introduce the ten texts individually, noting their relationship to other texts (if any), and the presentation of the werewolf character.

I start with the two Norwegian texts, *Bisclaretz ljóð* (with which I will discuss *Tiodielis saga* as well) and *Konungs skuggsjá*, for two reasons: first, both can be dated to the first half of the thirteenth century and belong to the same courtly milieu; second, both works were well-known in Iceland. *Bisclaretz ljóð*, translated from Marie de France's *Le lai du Bisclavret*, is one of the twenty-one *lais* that were translated into Norwegian, commissioned by and during the reign of King Hákon IV Hákonarson. Collectively known as *Strengleikar*, the collection contains twenty-one *lais* translated from Old French, including eleven of the *lais* attributed to Marie de France and preserved in British Library Harley 978, along with ten other *lais* (four of which have no surviving Old French sources).[30] Among them, *Bisclaretz ljóð* is one of the most faithfully translated, with the rate of abridgement being only five percent.[31]

The five percent is largely concerned with the lady's nose (or lack of it): whereas in *Bisclavret* the werewolf-husband bites off his (ex-)wife's nose in a rage ('Le neis li esracha del vis', He tore the nose from [her] face), Bisclaret only tears off her clothes. Yet, at the end of

[29] *Tiodielis saga* may or may not be an exception, as the oldest manuscript is dated to ca. 1600. Nor is Tíódél transformed into a wolf, but rather a bear. Nevertheless, considering its closeness to *Bisclavret* and *Bisclaretz ljóð*, *Tiodielis saga* is included as one of the core texts of this thesis.

[30] The translations are attributed to a *Bróðir Robert* (Brother Robert), who is also responsible for *Tristrams saga ok Ísǫndar*. The collection is preserved in a single manuscript, De la Gardie 4—7, which is dated to c. 1270 and is now kept in Uppsala University Library. For further information on *Strengleikar*, the manuscripts, and the translation of Arthurian materials into Norwegian, see 'Introduction', in *Strengleikar: An Old Norse Translation of Twenty-one Old French Lais Edited from the Manuscript Uppsala De la Gardie 4-7 – AM 666 b, 4°*, ed. and trans. Robert Cook and Mattias Tveitane, pp. ix-xxviii; Marianne E. Kalinke, 'Sources, Translations, Redactions, Manuscript Transmission', in *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus' Realms*, ed. Marianne E. Kalinke (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 22-47; Carolyne Larrington, 'The Translated *Lais*', in *The Arthur of the North*, ed. Kalinke, pp. 77-97, especially pp. 77-82.

[31] Kalinke, 'Sources, Translations, Redactions, Manuscript Transmission', p. 29.

the story, the audience are told nonetheless that all her female descendants are born noseless as opposed to only some of her female descendants in the French. Comparing the two passages, Cook and Tveitane suggest that the scribe chose to omit the nose-biting episode at the point because he 'decided that losing her clothes would be a greater disgrace', yet forgot to return to rectify this when he reached the ending.[32] Kalinke, however, argues that in the original translation, the translator must have rendered the line as biting off both her clothing and nose, 'in accordance with the translator's pronounced tendency towards augmentation for the sake of dramatic emphasis'.[33] Considering that both the wife's nose and clothes are torn is indeed found in *Tiodielis saga*, Kalinke further concludes that, first, *Strengleikar* was known in Iceland not through oral versions but indeed through a text, though the text(s) may not be De la Gardie 4—7; second, the text of *Bisclaretz ljóð* in De la Gardie 4—7 is corrupt, but *Tiodielis saga* derives from a different examplar and, in this case, the omission of the nose-biting is rather a slip of the eye than intentional modification or misreading.[34]

Konungs skuggsjá, or the King's Mirror, is the product of almost the same literate milieu, composed in Norway in the second half of the thirteenth century (with its earliest manuscript, AM 243 b α fol, dated to 1275 and believed to have been 'produced in direct relation to the royal court of Eiríkr Magnússon').[35] Although *Konungs skuggsjá* could be read as a 'secondary translation' (in the sense that it was written within an imported model), it is nevertheless 'appropriated and presented as an indigenous genre'.[36]

[32] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, in *Strengleikar*, pp. 94-95, note 4.
[33] Kalinke, 'A Werewolf in Bear's Clothing', 138.
[34] Ibid., 140.
[35] Karl G. Johansson, '*Konungs skuggsjá* and the Earliest Fragments – A Key to New Insights into Norwegian Literature Climate', in *Speculum septentrionale:* Konungs skuggsjá *and the European Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, ed. Karl G. Johansson and Elise Kleivane (Oslo, 2018), pp. 93-113 (93). See also Karl G. Johansson and Elise Kleivane, '*Konungs skuggsjá* and the Interplay between Universal and Particular', in *Speculum septentrionale*, ed. Johansson and Kleivane, pp. 9-33.
[36] Johansson and Kleivane, p. 10.

Presented as a father's conversation with his son, *Konungs skuggsjá* is traditionally divided into three parts: the Merchant's Part, the *Hirðmaðr*'s, and the King's. The werewolves come in in the Merchant's Part, which encompasses practical knowledge about the world, and are one of the Irish marvels that the father recounts to the son as entertaining anecdotes. Although, in terms of plot, the episode little resembles Gerald of Wales's account of the Ossory werewolves, the anecdote is believed to derive from the same tradition.

For the Icelandic indigenous materials, I follow Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's categorisation and examine first the older variants (*Vǫlsunga saga, Gibbons saga, Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands, Sigrgarðs saga frækna,*) then the more recent (*Úlfhams rímur, Ála flekks saga, Jóns saga leikara, Tiodielis saga*), roughly in a chronological order in each category.

Dated to the late thirteenth century, *Vǫlsunga saga* recounts the fate of six generations of the Vǫlsungs, warriors who identify themselves with wolves (*Ylfingar*).[37] The wolf motif runs throughout the saga, from Sigi's outlawry (*vargr í véum*) to Sigurðr's self-naming as *gǫfugt dýr* (noble beast).[38] Yet the physical man-wolf transformation only takes place in Chapter Eight, when Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli put on two wolfskins that they chance upon in the woods.[39] This episode – together with the previous seven chapters – is believed to be the creation of the saga-author, possibly independently of the eddic material, though, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir correctly points out, 'there has always been an evident connection between

[37] For the composition date of *Vǫlsunga saga* and its textual relation to other sources, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Origin and Development of the *Fornaldarsögur* as Illustrated by *Völsunga saga*', in *The Legendary Sagas: The Origins and Development*, ed. Anette Lassen, A. Ney, and Ármann Jakobsson (Reykjavík, 2012), pp. 59–81 (68-71). See also Torfi H. Tulinius, *The Matter of the North: The Rise of Literary Fiction in Thirteenth-Century Iceland*, trans. Randi C. Eldevik (Odense, 2002), p. 129, where Tulinius dates the saga to between 1200 and 1270 but most likely around 1250. For the Vǫlsungs' wolfish affinity, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 284.
[38] *Vǫlsunga saga – The Saga of the Volsungs*, ed. and trans. R. G. Finch (Edinburgh, 1965), chap. 1, p. 1, and chap. 18, p. 31.
[39] Ibid., chap. 8, p. 11.

the *fornaldarsögur* and oral tradition'.[40] In particular, elements are found in this episode that are in Marie de France's *Éliduc*, pointing to the possible influence of the Old French *lais* and/or *Strengleikar* on the saga.[41]

Yet Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli are not the only werewolves in *Vǫlsunga saga*: earlier in the saga, King Siggeirr's mother (supposedly) transforms herself into a wolf and devours nine of the Vǫlsung brothers, until she is killed by Sigmundr. The figure of a magical shapeshifter is also found in *Gibbons saga*, *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, and *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*.[42] Hléðgerðr, the trollish stepmother in *Sigrgarðs saga ok frækna*, is perhaps the closest parallel to King Siggeirr's mother, sharing the capacity of shape-changing and being a mother figure. However, whereas King Siggeirr's mother transforms into a wolf, Hléðgerðr temporarily manifests herself as a wolf: as a wolf she attacks Sigrgarðr, is killed by his companion, then she appears in person and transforms into a crow.[43] This rules out the possibility of a physical transformation as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir believes; nor can the she-wolf be Hléðgerðr's *fylgja*, since the individual tends to die if the *fylgja* is killed.[44] The wolfskin motif also appears in the same saga, in the character of Stígandi, a disguised outlaw wearing a wolfskin jacket (*í vargskinns stakki*) and whose name happens to be Sigmundr.[45] The wolf figures from *Gibbons saga* and *Sigrgarðs ok Valbrands* are magical dwarfs who exploit the wolf's nature as a beast

[40] Torfi H. Tulinius, 'The Matter of the North. Fiction and Uncertain Identities in Thirteenth-Century Iceland', in *Old Icelandic Literature and Society*, ed. Margaret Clunies Ross (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 242-65 (247). Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Origin and Development', p. 61.
[41] Carol J. Clover, '*Vǫlsunga saga* and the Missing *Lai* of Marie de France', in *Sagnaskemmtum: Studies in Honour of Hermann Pálsson on His 65th Birthday, 26th May 1986*, ed. Rudolf Simek, Jónas Kristjánsson, and Hans Bekker-Nielsen (Wien, 1986), pp. 79-84.
[42] The earliest manuscript used for *Gibbon saga*, AM. 335 4to, is dated to c. 1400. *Gibbons saga*, ed. R.I. Page. Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 2 (København, 1960), pp. x-xxx. For *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, the manuscript used, AM 556 a 4°, is dated to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances V*, ed. Agnete Loth. Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 24 (København, 1965), pp. vii-viii, and Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', 82-84. For *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, the manuscript fragments, Perg. 8:0 nr 10, are used; they date to the sixteenth century. *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances V*, pp. viii-ix. Due to the length of *Gibbons saga*, only excerpts of the translation are included in the appendices (Appendix IV).
[43] Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 11, 132-33.
[44] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 289.
[45] Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 8, 123. I will discuss Stígandr/Sigmundr's disguise in Chapter Six.

of battle in order to fight against supernatural adversaries. Their roles as father or guardian figures to the hero will be discussed in Chapters Five and Six, where I focus on how the human characters may benefit from the wolf.

Recounting the tragic fate of a Geatish royal house, *Úlfhams rímur* is preserved in a manuscript (AM 604 h 4to) dated to c. 1550 but is identified as from a now lost, fourteenth-century *fornaldarsaga*.[46] Spanning two generations, the *rímur* begins with the death of King Hálfdan, nicknamed Vargstakkr (wolf-coat), and evolves into the (mis)adventures of his son Úlfhamr (wolf-skin or wolf-form). Vargstakkr is classified as a more recent variant on the ground that his metamorphosis is caused by a spell. However, remnants of the older variety are still discernible: that wolf-form befits Vargstakkr and his bands as 'good warriors' and exiles, which brings them closer to Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli.[47] Moreover, *Úlfhams rímur* also sees a group of maidens who turn into cranes during the night but sleep in a *jarðhús* (underground house) during the day with their skins hanging above them;[48] not only do they resemble the princes Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli find in the woods, but their transformation is triggered by putting on and off the skin, normally a criterion for the older tradition. The eponymous hero Úlfhamr, though not physically transformed into a wolf, is also wolfish in a metaphorical sense: not only his name is 'wolf-skin', he is virtually an outlaw. Together with Vargstakkr, Úlfhamr's adventures will feature as a case-study in Chapter Four.

Both *Ála flekks saga* and *Jóns saga leikara* feature a werewolf transformed by a spell. Preserved in AM 589 e 4to (c. 1450-1500), *Ála flekks saga* tells of the clash between Áli and a

[46] Although it is impossible to date or reconstruct the saga, having compared the *rímur* as it is now to a variety of texts, Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir concludes that the *rímur* on the one hand contains older materials rooted in oral traditions, on the other shares motifs with other *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*, and shows influence from French romances. It also needs to point out that, the word *rímur*, albeit in plural form, is treated as single when it refers to *Úlfhams rímur* as a single work; plural verbs will only be used when the word refers to the fitts. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, *Úlfhams saga*, pp. ccxi–ccxxvi, cliv-clxii, and ccxi-ccxxvi. See also Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Tales of Generations', 13-14.
[47] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 296. See also Aleksander Pluskowski, *Wolves and the Wilderness in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 181.
[48] *Úlfhams rímur*, V. 36-41, pp. 29-30.

trollish family;[49] one of the curses they inflict on him is to turn into a wolf and ravage the kingdoms of his father and fiancée. Kittredge considers the saga to be an 'offshoot' of an Irish story, a hypothetical *x* to which *Bisclavret* is related and from which *Melion* and *Arthur and Gorlagon* are derived; however, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir suggests, the presence of apparently Celtic motifs is probably explained in terms of oral tradition.[50] Nevertheless, a wolfskin still appears in the saga, the burning of which seems a necessity to break the curse, even though it is not previously specified – it suffices to have someone recognise the human inside the wolf and beg mercy for him to effect release. The same condition is also found in *Jóns saga leikara*, a *riddarasaga* from around 1400, preserved in AM 174 fol. from the seventeenth century.[51] In addition to *Ála flekks saga*, *Jóns saga leikara* shares a number of motifs with other works, notably *Arthur and Gorlagon* and *Guilluame de Palerne*. The werewolf, Sigurðr, who is only a secondary character, is cursed by his stepmother through the touch of a wolfskin glove (*úlf hanzki*).[52]

Section Four: Goals and Structure

Building on Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's exploratory work, this thesis aims to offer a systematic, in-depth analysis of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf texts, to expand her discussion and to venture into new areas. This thesis is not a history of the werewolf but a

[49] For its dating, see *Drei Lygisǫgur: Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana, Ála flekks saga, Flóres saga konungs ok sona hans*, ed. Åke Lagerholm (Halle, 1927), 'Einhleitung', pp. LXVIII-LXX, and Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 295.
[50] Ibid.. See also *Arthur and Gorlagon*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston, 1903), p. 255-56, for his stemma, see p. 175, and Lagerholm, pp. LXIII-LXIV, where he not only re-asserts Kittredge's conclusions regarding *Ála flekks saga*'s possible Celtic origin, but also emphasises the werewolf motif's affinity to *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga*, two major primary sources of this thesis.
[51] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 298. The edition used in this thesis is the unpublished doctoral thesis by Martin Soderback, submitted to the University of Chicago in 1949. Soderback suggests that, considering that *Jóns rímur* is dated by Finnur Jónsson to ca. 1400, the saga may have been originally composed before that – that is, assuming the *rímur* is based on a saga – and the version preserved in the manuscript may be written after 1400. Martin Soderback, *Jóns saga leikara* (Unpublished PhD thesis, 1949), p. l. An English translation of *Jóns saga leikara* is included in Appendix III.
[52] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 19. The same transformation mode is also found in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, when Bjǫrn is turned into a bear. *Hrólfs saga kraka ok kappa hans*, in *Fornaldarsögur Norðlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, 3 vols (Reykjavík, 1943-44), II, chap. 25, p. 42.

thorough investigation of some key motifs: the skin, the clothes, the food, the landscape, and, most importantly, the purpose – why should the werewolf transformation take place at all? What are the werewolves expected to gain from such an experience and what are we, as audience and readers, supposed to gain from these stories? The thesis then aims to find and discuss thematic rather than historical relations (1) between the ten principal texts; (2) between these and the Franco-Latin werewolves; (3) and between the werewolf texts and other texts of similar genre and produced in a similar milieu. For instance, two texts that will frequently serve as comparative referents are *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)* and the *Tristan* romances; both are among the first to be translated into Old Norse.[53] Thus, the thesis shifts the focus of study of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolves from the texts themselves onto literary motifs. It thus engages with the trends of related recent scholarly research (as outlined above) but addresses the texts systematically as a group rather than individually. The issues discussed in scholarship focusing on the Franco-Latin werewolves, such as gender and sexuality, will also be imported, and considered in relation to their Old Norse-Icelandic counterparts. My objective is to find new approaches and open up new dialogues: not only will the werewolves be discussed as a literary phenomenon, but they will also be situated in a larger intellectual and social context as a means through which to explore the medieval understanding of the human body and the essence-appearance dynamic.

The chapters of this thesis are arranged as a 'four plus two'. The first four chapters present a bidirectional journey. On an external level, they proceed further away from the body: via the skin, the surface of the body; clothing, the layer immediately placed upon the skin; food, or what is placed on the (dining) table before the werewolf; landscape, or where the human

[53] Thomas of England's *Tristan* is the earliest Arthurian romance reaching Norway, translated in 1226 by the same Brother Robert who might have been responsible for *Strengleikar*. *Ívens saga*, commissioned by King Hákon IV Hákonarson, is dated to between 1232 and 1263. Kalinke, 'Introduction', in *The Arthur of the North*, pp. 1-4 (2), and Claudia Bornholdt, 'The Old Norse-Icelandic Transmission of Chrétien de Troyes's Romances: *Ívens saga*, *Erex Saga*, *Parceval saga* with *Valvens þáttr*', in *The Arthur of the North*, ed. Kalinke, pp. 98-122 (98-99).

and/or wolf body finds itself. At the same time, however, with each outward step a different aspect of the werewolf's interiority comes to light: the skin has the ability to draw out the latent, making visual the individual's moral or spiritual condition; clothing indicates the individual's personal and social identity; food, also an identity indicator, constitutes the body materially; landscape both reflects and affects the individual's emotional state. At the centre of each chapter lies the interaction between these two opposites: appearance and the social, and essence and psychological. Thus, this thesis essentially analyses the same narrative, but as told in four different ways, with the fifth and sixth chapters as the point of convergence, addressing the key questions of purpose and identity.

The first chapter considers the skin, for not only is the skin the outmost layer of the human body but putting on a *úlfhamr* (wolfskin) is also the most common means for a man to change into a wolf. Starting from the two skin models developed by Small and the concept of the Skin-Ego, this chapter demonstrates how change at skin level reflects and affects the human psyche and investigates how these models can be adjusted to the Old Norse-Icelandic sources. *Ála flekks saga* is singled out as a case study. In particular, Áli's four adventures are analysed in detail to show a parallel between werewolf metamorphosis and skin diseases such as leprosy: itself interpreted as a manifestation of the individual's moral or spiritual status. The topic of leprosy continues in Chapter Two where it is linked to the subject of sexuality and the problematisation of the female body.

Chapter Two considers clothing, for in some cases clothes and the skin are thought of as interchangeable; the substitution of clothing with the wolfskin blurs not only the wearer's identity but also the boundary between man and beast. The *Bisclavret* group provides an illustrative example for two reasons: (1) the hero's transformation entirely depends on the loss and reacquisition of his human, knightly clothes; (2) in addition to the nose, the werewolf tears open the wife's clothes in public, a detail not found in the French original. The social meaning

of nakedness and discussion of the werewolf body alongside two marginal, otherly creatures, namely the madman and the metaphorical she-wolf, are central.

Chapter Three considers food. Although there is much medieval debate over how food turns into human flesh, the consensus is that food directly constitutes the human body. What someone eats, therefore, also communicates what they are. Food not only differentiates human beings from beasts and monsters but also distinguishes one social class from another. Although the authors seldom make clear what the werewolves feed on, the silence about the werewolf's possible diet in the woods speaks to an anxiety over what they might consume in bestial form. This chapter also continues the discussion of gender and sexuality – for the only wolfish characters who are manifestly associated with cannibalism are females: King Siggeirr's mother and Gorlagon's wife, symbolically both wolfish and cannibalistic.

While dealing with the physical environment, Chapter Four ventures deeper into the werewolf mind and focuses on the emotional impact of the metamorphosis. Applying the theory of psycho-geography and using the semiotic square as an analytic tool, this chapter examines in detail how the landscape changes in correspondence with the werewolf's mental status in particular sources. *Úlfhams rímur* is analysed as a case study, the only text that directly links werewolf transformation to landscape changes (manifested in seasonal change) and emotions. Establishing a parallel between Úlfhamr and his father Vargstakkr (and arguing the validity of treating Úlfhamr as a figurative werewolf), the chapter explicates the interaction between landscape and Úlfhamr's mental status at each stage of the poem, with a special focus on the connection between winter/darkness and dark emotions.

The final two chapters are the summation of the previous four and considers the essential question: how does the interaction with the wolf benefit the human? This chapter distinguishes between sources, according to the werewolf's role: either as learner or helper.

The former includes the heroes who are turned into a wolf to gain experience and knowledge and the latter, the magical werewolves who instruct and intervene in those heroes' development. Issues such as kingship and personhood will be closely addressed in the process. Lastly, *Konungs skuggsjá* will feature as a case study to demonstrate how the werewolf episode is re-contextualised in another genre to serve the overall purpose of these texts.

In the concluding chapter I will summarise the findings. Whereas I started this thesis asking 'what is a werewolf?', I will end it with the question 'what is a human?'. Here the werewolf journey, then, will recast the original question and provide challenging insights into not only the werewolf literature but also our fascination with this type of monster.

Chapter One

'Þeir […] fóru í hamina':[54] The Werewolf's Skin

In Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives, skin occupies a critical position. The most common way to transform into and back from a wolf is to put on and to shed a wolfskin, as if all changes that occur to the appearance are attributed only to the skin; once the skin has settled on a form, the rest of the body – flesh, bones, muscles, and organs – will just fall into place. Constituting and making visual the physical difference between man and wolf, skin features in these narratives as the locus of metamorphosis, a point where the animal and the man converge.[55] Therefore, it is only natural that this thesis opens with the topic of skin.

The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate the skin's value for interpreting werewolf texts. First, I will show the skin's ubiquity in the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf corpus, address Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's categorisation and Small's skin models, and their usefulness and problems. Then, the skin will be considered in a larger medieval context; encyclopaedic and medical writings will be examined to show the skin's key position in the appearance-essence binary, so as to situate the werewolf narratives in the learned tradition. In Section Three, I will revert to Small's skin models and apply them to individual cases of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolves to show which texts fit the models proposed and which do not. In Section Four, *Ála flekks saga* – a saga in which the skin plays a significant part in the hero's identity and personal development – will be read in detail as a case study. Lastly, in Section Five, I will supplement the skin models by proposing a new approach that enables a comparison between the werewolf and skin disease.

[54] They got into the wolfskin. *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 8, p. 11.
[55] Unless otherwise stated, 'man' is used as a general term for 'human' as opposed to wolf or beast.

Section One: The Skin's Position in Werewolf Literature

In the Old Norse-Icelandic narratives of shapeshifting, the skin is essential to the completion of the transformative cycle. References are frequently found to gods or men changing shape by putting on an animal skin, and the action itself is described in terms such as *hamskiptask* (form or skin-change), *skipta ham* (change skin or form), and *eigi einhamr* (not of one skin or form) – all formed with *hamr*, meaning both 'skin' and 'shape'.[56] The werewolf texts explored in this thesis also see a strong presence of the skin and *hamr*-related terms. Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli's transformation in *Vǫlsunga saga* is triggered by putting on a wolfskin. *Jóns saga leikara* makes a *úlf hanzki*'s touch (wolfskin glove) an indispensable auxiliary to the transforming spell.[57] Despite a lack of description in *Úlfhams rímur*, the nickname 'Vargstakkr' (wolf-coat) hints the understanding and acceptance of the wolfskin's crucial position in man-to-wolf transformation.[58] As a congenital werewolf, Biscla(v)ret's is a distinctive case; he does not need anything external to transform, but simply becomes (*devint*). When the *lai* is translated into Old Norse, however, *devint* is replaced by *hamr*-related terminologies and, when the text is introduced to Iceland as *Tiodielis saga*, the story is augmented by adding a physical *vargs hamr* (wolf-skin).[59] Similarly, in *Ála flekks saga*, a physical *úlfhamr* is found when Áli transforms back to a human.[60] Although details of the metamorphosis are completely missing in *Gibbons saga*, the audience is nevertheless told that, after vanquishing the evil queen

[56] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, ed. Richard Cleasby and Guðbrandur Vigfússon, supplemented by William A. Craig (Oxford, 2006), s.v. *hamskiptask*, p. 237; s.v. *einhamr*, p. 121; s.v. *hamr*, p. 236. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir also devotes a section on terminologies in medieval Icelandic shapeshifting tradition, see Aðhalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 279-83.
[57] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 19.
[58] *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 3, p. 3: 'Vargstack kalla v*ir*da<r> þ*ann*. / veite ofn*n*is la*n*da' (The kingsmen also call him Vargstakkr, / the giver of Fáfnir's lair [= gold; its giver = man]).
[59] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 68. It also needs to point out, in *Tiodielis saga*, Tíódél is no longer a congenital werewolf; rather, he practises the man-wolf transformation as a *list* (art, skill). The saga is inconsistent regarding Tíódél's form – sometimes it is described as *hvitbjarnar ham* (white bear's skin/form), sometimes as *vargs hamr*. Nevertheless, Kalinke suggests that the saga 'retains the original werewolf motif', while Tove Ohlsson points out that the name Tíódél is developed from *þjóðólfr*, a compound word corresponding to the Old French *garwaf* and the Breton *bisclavret*. Kalinke, 'A Werewolf in Bear's Clothing', 141). Tove Ohlsson, 'Summary', in *Tiodielis saga*, pp. cxxx-cxxxi.
[60] *Ála flekks saga*, in *Riddarasögur*, ed. Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, 6 vols (Reykjavík, 1951) V, chap. 10, pp. 142-43.

Obscura, the wounds afflicted on Asper in his wolf form are visible on his human/dwarf skin, thus establishing a direct connection between the two skins.[61] The werewolf episode in *Konungs skuggsjá* mentions no wolfskin at all, but its source in *Topographia Hibernica* implies a similar process, namely that wolfskins are worn as a piece of clothing; when the wolfskin is unzipped, the human beneath is revealed.[62]

Whether within or outside the Old Norse-Icelandic literary corpus, the skin's value as an effective medium through which to understand the werewolf narratives is recognised in the relevant scholarship. Focusing on the six Franco-Latin werewolf texts, Susan Small treats the werewolf as a linguistic construct and the skin as the parchment on which it is made legible.[63] Working on that premise, she proposes two reading models based on the interaction between the human and the wolf skins: the 'overlay model' and the 'fusion model'.[64] The essential difference between the two models is the number of skin(s): the 'overlay model', as the name implies, denotes two individual skins; for a man to transform into a wolf, it suffices to lay the wolfskin onto the human skin as 'an adjunct'. In this category fall the Ossory werewolves, Guillaume, and Melior, whose 'metamorphoses' are thus merely a covering-over of identity.[65] In the 'fusion model', however, there is always only one skin, with the man and the wolf metaphorised as *recto* and *verso* sides; when the metamorphosis happens, one side *turns* into the other. This is more problematic than the 'overlay', because the authors of these texts do not tend to describe the metamorphic process in detail. Small recourses to examining terminologies used for 'were-wolf' as well as for its two constituents, 'were' and 'wolf'. She sees in the

[61] *Gibbons saga*, chap. 17, p. 88.
[62] For the possible sources of *Konungs skuggsjá*'s Irish section, see Kuno Meyer, 'The Irish Mirabilia in the Norse "Speculum Regale"', *Folklore*, 5/4 (1894), 299-316 (310-11), and Etchingham et al., pp. 66-83. Another important study is John Carey's reading of the werewolf story in *Konungs skuggsjá* in comparison to Celtic and Romance werewolf tradition, which will be examined more thoroughly in Chapters Five and Six. Carey, 48-64. For Gerald of Wales's account, see *Topographia Hibernica*, in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. James F. Dimock (London, 1861), V, 2.19, pp. 102-03.
[63] Small, pp. 82-83.
[64] Ibid., p. 83.
[65] Ibid., pp. 86-88.

compound the action of 'turning into' – the key element in distinguishing the 'fusion model' from the 'overlay' – and envisions the metamorphosis as a violent process of the *recto* taking over the *verso*, or an 'inversion of inner (metaphorical) and outer (literal) states of being'.[66]

Although this process of inside-turned-outside may not be what happens physically during the transformation, by employing this *recto-verso* metaphor, Small not only neatly visualises the relationship between the man and the wolf, but also enables a discussion about the werewolf experience's impact on the psyche (the invisible) in terms of the skin (the visible). Her major theoretical framework is the concept of *le Moi-Peau* (the Skin Ego), developed by Didier Anzieu. To Anzieu, the skin is more than the enclosing sack that holds the human together; it is the stage on which each element of the individual's identity – physical or mental – plays out. Sometimes the skin divulges secrets, but in other times it can be manipulated to deceive the self as well as others. In Anzieu's eyes, the skin 'displays variable characteristics according to the individual's age, sex, ethnicity, personal history, etc., which, like the clothing that forms a second layer over it, make it easy (or difficult) to identify the person'.[67] It reflects 'the complexity of the Ego on the psychical plane'.[68] In light of Anzieu's theory, since the human skin remains intact in the 'overlay model', we can argue that the werewolf perceives no discontinuity in their identity. In the 'fusion model', however, corresponding to the process of one skin 'turning into' the other, the individual's psyche must go through a similar process of 'splitting into' two: the wolf and the man. It must be pointed out that this is not to say there is no wolf in the first place. There is always something bestial about man. Even in the 'overlay model', the psyche could already be part wolf, part man. What makes the difference is that, whereas in the 'overlay model' the psyche remains as it is, in the 'fusion model', the interaction between the wolf and the man is more dynamic; there is a much stronger sense of change. The

[66] Ibid., p. 84.
[67] Didier Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*, trans. Naomi Segal (London, 2016), p. 17.
[68] Ibid., p. 15.

'splitting' of the psyche allows the wolf ego to emerge, to manifest as an independent, dominant ego, temporarily overwriting the man. Therefore, the *recto-verso* metaphor is given another layer of meaning: the two sides of the skin stand for essential humanness and wolfishness respectively. They co-exist, but the wolf is normally latent. As the wolfskin succeeds the human skin, however, the latent also gradually crosses over 'to the other side of the border […] causing a periodic and profound disturbance in the continuity of the self'.[69] The process is more violent and dramatic: the human and the wolf egos colliding with each other and fighting for domination, a process that is projected onto the skin. To visualise this, Small establishes a parallel between physical and mental wounds: changes on the skin are not only proof of the 'accident' – in the case of the werewolves, metamorphosis – but also of the memory or the trauma of that accident, which in turn causes disruptions in the psyche.[70]

Small's models are a useful tool for categorising and analysing the werewolves, but complications arise when they are applied to the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolves and cross-referenced with Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's two variants. This is mainly because these werewolves – even those in the more recent variants – are fundamentally located within a different tradition. This produces two difficulties. First, Small's linguistic approach is not as relevant to the Old Norse-Icelandic as to the Franco-Latin texts, since the closest word in Old Norse to the 'werewolf' compound is *vargúlfr*, which is a unique coinage in *Bisclaretz ljóð* and means 'wolf-wolf' or 'criminal-wolf' rather than 'man-wolf'.[71] Old Norse native vocabulary for man-to-wolf transformation – such as *skipta ham* and *hamskiptask* – does give a sense of change and, at first sight, seems to correspond to *versipellis* (adj., skin-changing), one of the words listed by Small for 'werewolf',[72] but it does not follow that all cases fit her 'fusion

[69] Small, p. 85.
[70] Ibid., p. 84. This wound imagery is particularly important to the discussion of leprosy; I will return to it below.
[71] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *vargúlfr*, p. 680.
[72] Small, p. 82. But even Small herself points out that the word *versipellis* only appears in *Arthur and Gorlagon* in describing the second unfaithful queen rather than the werewolf. It is used metaphorically and does not refer

model'. Second, the presence or lack of a physical skin in the narrative does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the werewolf in question belongs to one specific model. Granted, the older variants do accord well with the 'overlay model', as those werewolves, affiliated with the *berserkir* and the *úlfheðnar* tradition, embrace the beast by choice, so that to assume the wolf form is to augment and make visual their psyches, which already embody the wolf ego. But what about those werewolves – belonging to the more recent variants – whose transformation no longer involves wearing a wolfskin in order to transform, but where the wolfskin still plays a significant role? In these cases, the transformation is either triggered by a verbal curse or by physical contact with a wolfskin item; the characters, as we are told, simply 'turn into' a wolf. Yet this action of 'turning into' is by no means assumed to be a straightforward sign of the 'fusion model', for, as in the cases of *Ála flekks saga* and *Tiodielis saga*, while a physical wolfskin is indeed removed as a piece of clothing, its immediate burning is necessary to terminate the shapeshifting permanently. Where, then, does this skin come from?

In order to discuss these werewolf texts in terms of Small's models, modification and further development are needed; this requires examining each case in detail. Before that, however, it is necessary to understand the skin's role in metamorphosis in general. Therefore, I take one step back to look at the bigger picture and, in the next section, I examine the skin's function in a wider medieval context to see where exactly it is positioned between the key medieval conceptualisations of appearance and essence.

Section Two: The Skin's Position in the Appearance-Essence Binary

In medieval narratives about metamorphoses, however fluid appearance may seem, it does not change randomly; rather it always yearns to be aligned with essence. The skin is both the stage for and the witness to this movement. It is an intermediary between the internal and the external:

to an actual change of skin. *Arthur and Gorlagon*, in *Latin Arthurian Literature*, ed. and trans. Mildred Leake Day (Cambridge, 2005), p. 224.

on one hand, the skin is shape-defining and boundary-setting; on the other, it draws out and displays the latent and yet allows a glimpse of what stays unchanged, thus pointing to the individual's true identity.

The skin's shape-defining and boundary-setting potential is rooted in two of the skin's physiological characteristics: first, it is the top layer of the body. Second, the formation of the skin is thought to be the final stage when a body takes shape. Both are attested in medieval encyclopaedic and medical writings. All-enclosing and all-covering, the skin is the first and only information that, without dissection, any individual has access to regarding another body; it is the first thing to be encountered, whether visually or through touch, for it is the outermost bodily layer. Isidore of Seville defines skin (f. *cutis*) as the uppermost part of the body ('in corpore prima est'), hence the first to endure incisions from the outside.[73] Bartholomaeus Anglicus elaborates on this definition by emphasising the skin's defensive and protective function, while Lanfranc, a thirteenth-century Paris-based surgeon, extends Bartholomaeus's views by pointing out the skin's tempering role: by covering the sinews it moderates their extreme sensibility, so the body can adapt to a wider range of environmental conditions, and thus has a better chance of survival.[74] In other words, if the body is a castle, then the skin is the castle wall. It covers, conceals, and protects. Unless one enters the castle, the wall is the only thing to be seen, the only information from which an outsider can assess the whole building.

[73] Isidore Hispalensis, *Etymologiarvm sive originvm*, vol. 2: libros XI–XX, ed. Wallace Martin Lindsay (Oxford, 1911), 11.1.78. Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2016. A translation is found in *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. Stephen A. Barney (Cambridge, 2005), 11.1.78, p. 236.

[74] *On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' De proprietatibus rerum: A Critical Text*, 2 vols, ed. M.C. Seymour and Gabriel M. Liegey (Oxford, 1975), I, 5.64, pp. 285-86: 'Also for defence of þe inner partie of þe body þe skin put itself forth aȝeines diueres greues of þe aier' (Also for protection of the inner parts of the body, the skin put itself forth against different particles of the air). For Lanfranc, see *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie"*, ed. Robert von Fleischhacker, Early English Text Society Series no. 102 (London, 1894), 1.2.1, p. 28: '& þe skyn is maad temperat, for he schulde knowe hoot, coold, moist, & drie, soft, hard, scharp, & smoþe / & if þat þe skyn were as sencible as a senewe, þanne a man myȝte not dwelle in erþe ne in hoot eir' (and the skin is made temperate, for it should know hot, cold, moist, and dry, soft, hard, sharp, and smooth, and if that the skin were as sensible as a sinew, then a man might not dwell on earth nor in hot air).

The wall, however, is more important to the castle residents than to the outsiders, for it draws a clear boundary between 'in' and 'out', between 'us' and 'them'. It is only after the wall has been raised that the castle reaches its final form, with clearly defined territory. Likewise, if the skin is unformed, the body is uncontained and therefore unshaped, leaving the flesh open to change or to fall apart. It is no surprise that medieval embryological theory presents the skin as one of the final stages of shaping the embryo into human form. Drawing on Hippocrates and Galen, Bartholomaeus asserts that the foetus goes through four stages: in the first two, the foetus is no more than a mass of milk and blood. During the third, the heart, brain, and liver are formed within this mass, but the mass itself is still unformed. It is not until the fourth stage that *alle þe membres* ('all the [body] parts') become well shaped and the foetus can finally be called an *infans* (infant).[75] Although Bartholomaeus does not enumerate *þe membres* in the final stage, Lanfranc identifies nine and lists the skin as the last.[76] In other words, the skin is the finishing touch in shaping a body. It establishes a boundary between what is the body and what is not. Without the skin, the body is simply incomplete, unfinished, no more recognisable than an anatomical figure; it could be anything yet is nothing. In the same vein, Katie L. Walter comments, '[i]f skin is seen to coincide with body then flesh always threatens to exceed it; when unshaped by skin, flesh unravels form and, with it, humanness'.[77]

This last remark points to the skin's significant role as an identity-indicator and its potential for drawing out the latent traits of the individual, thus bringing the discussion back to the concept of the Skin Ego. The skin channels information from the inside and gives clues to the outside observers, allowing them at least some evidence for interpretation, if not for straightforward reading. Admittedly, whether through the individual's own agency or not, what

[75] *On the Properties of Things*, 6.3, p. 296.
[76] *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie,"* 1.2.1, pp. 22-28.
[77] Katie L. Walter, 'The Form of the Formless: Medieval Taxonomies of Skin, Flesh, and the Human', in *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture*, ed. Walter, pp. 119-39 (119-20).

is shown on the skin – colour, wrinkle, scar, tattoo – says a great deal about a person. The skin is essentially the parchment, and traces left behind by physical change, the alphabet. Together, they transform the body into a narrative that communicates the story of the individual.

The connection between form and identity lies at the core of Walter's arguments, as implied by the quotation above. She does not consider any werewolf texts, choosing another text to demonstrate the skin's position in the appearance-essence binary. The late thirteenth-century romance *The King of Tars* describes two transformative processes, both manifested on the skin level, but at different depths. The first, namely the transformation of the lump-child, is essentially a process from 'no skin' to 'skin', from formless to formed. It is important to note that the process is conditioned by baptism and the act of naming, for the two actions indicate how closely appearance, essence, and skin are tied to one other, and to identity.[78] The lump-child's skinlessness and its consequent unidentifiability make legible its status as the result of an unsanctioned union between an unwilling Christian mother and a Saracen father. The baptism is the initial step in setting things right and is the direct cause of the Sultan's and (some of) his men's conversion. Once it has become Christian and made verbally recognisable by being given a name, the lump-child's appearance must change too, for what the lumpish body signifies is no longer valid. It follows that the child grows organs, limbs, and becomes enclosed by skin to accord with his newly acquired status in the world.

The second transformation is the Sultan's, which is more dramatic and more demonstrative, for his case involves one skin simply *turning into* another.[79] The change occurs to both the skin colour and the texture. The Sultan's old skin is *blac & loþly* (black and detestable). The word *loþely* calls for some special attention. The word itself means 'terrifying' or 'detestable', and can be used substantively to describe the monstrous and sick – for instance,

[78] *The King of Tars*, ed. Judith Perryman (Heidelberg, 1980), vv. 774-82, p. 94.
[79] Ibid., vv. 919-30, p. 98.

the leprous and the disabled.[80] It is possible that the Sultan's skin is not only black but also marred or even monstrous. After the transformation, however, the Sultan's skin not only becomes white but also 'clere wiþ outen blame' (clear without blemish). The choice of the word *blame* implies that he also acquires a new conscience, now clear of sin, to accompany his new, white, and clean skin.[81] Through the change of skin colour and texture, the Sultan's 'growth' out of his old self and separation from his old religion are made visible on his body. The skin, therefore, does not lie.

The King of Tars also conveys a concept that is absent in Small's discussion of the werewolf's skin, yet which is no less important to the werewolf texts: social acceptance and rejection. The *turning* of the skin not only alters the individual's perception of self, but also others' perception of that individual. Before the Sultan's transformation, the author refuses to make sense of his black, rough skin; it is treated as obscured, hence unreadable, until it becomes as white and smooth as the *recto* of a parchment sheet. On the one hand, the change reflects the Sultan's acceptance of the social norms agreeable to the author (and his audience); on the other, it heralds the author's acceptance of the Sultan. Now 'normalised', he no longer stands out as the 'other', but becomes the 'same', deemed 'worthy of being incorporated into the social body', whereas the non-converted Saracens – the real 'other' – are cut down, reduced to a headless, unidentifiable pile of flesh.[82] The consequences of the werewolf experience also frequently entail a similar contrast of social acceptance and rejection. The most demonstrable

[80] *Middle English Dictionary* (*MED*), s.v. *lōthlī* (adj.). The *Promptorium parvulorum* lists as its Latin counterpart *abominabilis*, 'detestable, deserving abhorrence'. Geoffrey the Grammarian, *Promptorium parvulorum sive clericorum dictionarius Anglo-Latinus princeps*, ed. Albert Way (London, 1865), p. 314. It is derived from the verb *abominor*, 'to loathe, abhor, detest', see *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2nd edn, ed. P.G.W. Glare et al. (Oxford, 2012), vol. I, s.v. *abominor*, p. 10. The word *abominabilis* implies a sense of being shunned: for its usage, Lewis and Short quotes *Leviticus* 10:11 in the Vulgate, where the Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron about clean and unclean animals. *A Latin Dictionary. Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary*, ed. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (Oxford, 1879), s.v. *abominor*. It also appears in the form of *abhominabill* in *The Testament of Cresseid* to describe Cresseid's leprous body, which will be discussed in detail later with *Ála flekks saga*. Robert Henryson, *The Testament of Cresseid*, in *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, ed. Robert L. Kindrick. Teams Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo, 1997), v. 308.
[81] *MED*, s.v. *blāme* (n.).
[82] Walter, p. 131.

example is Biscla(v)ret and Tíódél and their wives, one restored and re-incorporated into central society (despite his congenital werewolf condition), the other disfigured and cast out. This theme will be illuminated in more detail in the case study of *Ála flekks saga* below, and again in discussion of the female body in the next chapter.

To sum up, the skin has two main characteristics: first, it defines the physical form; second, it is believed to have the power to make legible the internal upon the external. The first entails the skin's changeability: it can be as fluctuant as appearance, its function oscillating between concealing and revealing, between readable and unreadable. Thanks to the second characteristic, however, no matter how it changes, the skin remains faithful to the essence. In literature, at least, the narrator is constantly working to align appearance and essence, and the skin is the surface on which the process of alignment is written to reflect the process of alignment: as it changes as the character's essence unfolds. These efforts speak to a desire to perceive the internal through the external as much as a fear of uncertainty. In *The King of Tars*, that fear is revealed by the fact that the proper alignment is made possible only by a miracle – that is, something beyond human control. The question is quashed before it can be answered: what if there is no miracle? What if there is no way to tell? Chaos will arise, boundaries be breached; there will be a greater chance of being deceived. The situation is much less reassuring than a legible world where, as Robert Henryson's *Taill of the Paddoc and the Mous* proves, 'distortum vultum sequitur distortio morum' (a distorted complexion follows a distorted morality).[83]

The werewolf texts reveal that same desire and fear to an even greater degree. Whereas the Sultan's and the toad's skin always aligns with their essence, many werewolf stories start with already breached boundaries. This is especially true with the courtly werewolves, who are

[83] Henryson, 'The Paddock and the Mouse', in *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, ed. Kindrick, v. 2382.

victims unjustly confined in a wolf's body, while their treacherous wife or (step-)mother remains beautiful and powerful within mainstream society. The unreadable, identity-erasing wolfskin hides a man, while the fair, smooth human skin hides a moral, metaphorical she-wolf. In these cases, the skin's readability is put to the test. Such werewolf tales move one step further than *The King of Tars*, for they touch upon that unasked question: 'what if…' and allow a glimpse of the consequences of unmatching appearance and essence. In the end, however, balance is always re-established. During that process, a narrative is generated through the loss and restoration of the skin's readability. As Bynum puts it, 'metamorphosis reveals a world of stories',[84] and, as in the case of Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél and his wife, this world of stories is faithfully recorded on their skins.

Section Three: The Skin of the Old Norse-Icelandic Werewolves

Although there are no medical or encyclopaedic treatises that systematically explore the skin's properties in the Old Norse-Icelandic context, the skin's function as the bridge between appearance and essence is still strongly felt.

One clear example is the adjective *úlfgrár* (wolf-grey); its usage indicates that the skin is capable of transmitting latent wolfishness without even becoming furry. The *Old Norse Prose Dictionary* yields four hits,[85] all curiously having some wolfish and/or trollish connotation. The most representative is Egill Skallagrímsson, whose grandfather Kveld-Úlfr is said to be a shapeshifter and whose father Skalla-Grímr shows wolfish or *berserkr*-like traits, especially when he attacks Egill; Egill himself bites through the windpipe of Atli inn skammi ('beit í sundr í honum barkann').[86] The second *úlfgrár* figure is Glámr, the (in)famous undead

[84] Bynum, p. 31.
[85] *Ordbog over det Norrøne Prosasprog* (*ONP*), ed. Helle Degnbol, James E. Knirk et al. (København, 1989-2004), s.v. *úlf-grár* in the advanced wordlist. The website shows five results, but note that two of them are identical.
[86] *Egils saga*, ed. Bjarni Einarsson (London, 2003), for Kveld-Úlfr, see chap. 1, p. 1, where Bjarni also explains the hint of his werewolf nature in footnote no. 3; for Skalla-Grímr, see chap. 40, p. 54, the choice of *hamask* is worth noting on account on its linguistic affinity to *hamr*, which in turn is associated with shapeshifting and

creature in *Grettis saga*, whose encounter with the eponymous hero and the subsequent curse turn Grettir into an outlaw (*vargr*) and a trollish, if not monstrous, creature – in other words, a *doppelgänger* of Glámr himself. The other two occurrences of *úlfgrár* are found in *Hrólfs saga kraka* and *Færeyinga saga* respectively, each describing a beast that is by no means ordinary.[87] In the former saga, it characterises a boar that appears in the final battle; although it is never made clear where exactly the boar comes from, its appearance right after the disappearance of the bear – who is really Bǫðvarr Bjarki and who has up to that point warded off the enemy's magic – confirms its supernatural origin. Moreover, the successive presence of the beasts in each army and their significance in turning the tide of battle make it very tempting to view the boar as an evil twin to Bǫðvarr Bjarki. The wolf-grey bear in *Færeyinga saga* is much less supernatural, and its brief appearance in the saga makes it rather hard to hypothesise whether it is magical or not. Yet the role that the bear plays in Sigmundr's life is an important one, since its defeat marks the beginning of Sigmundr's rise to greatness and wins approval from his foster-father, an outlaw who happens to call himself 'Úlfr'.[88]

That grey seems a stereotypical colour of wolves is well attested in literature, and also accords with reality.[89] In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, grey wolves occur twice, respectively in 'Tereus, Procne, Philomela' and 'The Plague of Aegina', both describing actual wolves.[90] The

berserkir/*úlfheðnar*. See *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *hamask*, p. 236. For Egill, see *Egils saga*, chap. 67, p. 123. The wolfish trait that passes on through Egill's family has been long subjected to scholarly discussion in relation to *berserkir* and werewolf, for instance, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 278 and 281, footnotes 5 and 18; Anatoly Liberman, 'Berserkir in History and Legend', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 32/3-4 (2005), 401-11(409); Vincent Samson, *Les Berserkir: les guerriers-fauves dans la Scandinavie ancienne, de l'âge de Vendel aux Vikings (VI^e^-XI^e^ siècle)* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011), pp. 174-75; Ármann Jakobsson, '*Egils saga* and Empathy: Emotions and Moral Issues in a Dysfunctional Saga Family', *Scandinavian Studies*, 80/1 (2008), 1-18, especially 3-6, where he points out the hereditary wolfish/trollish characteristics that are passed on in Egill's family.

[87] *Hrólfs saga kraka*, chap. 51, p. 89. *Færeyinga saga = Føroyingasøga*, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson (Reykjavík, 2006), chap. 12, p. 27.

[88] Úlfr's story is told in *Færeyinga saga*, chaps 14-16, pp. 31-36.

[89] L. David Mech, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (Garden City, NY, 1970), p. 16, where Mech reports that, despite the wide range of colours of wolf pelts, grey by far is the most predominant colour.

[90] Ovid, *Metamorphoses, Volume I: Books 1-8*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G. P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 42 (Cambridge, MA, 1921), pp. 324-25, and pp. 380-81.

poet also uses grey hair (*canities*) to connect Lycaon the man and Lycaon the wolf.[91] The epithet occurs in *The Iliad*, too, where Dolon puts on 'the skin of a grey wolf' (*ῥινὸν πολιοῖο λύκοιο*) to spy on the Greeks.[92] In the Old Norse-Icelandic world, the phrase, *grár úlfr* (grey wolf), is also preeminent. Kirsten Wolf has conducted a thorough research of the usage of *grár* or related words or phrases in a variety of sources, ranging from the *Eddas* to the *Íslendingasögur*.[93] She concludes that *grár* appears frequently in eddic and skaldic poetry as a modifier for *úlfr*.[94] She also points out that *grár úlfr* and its synonyms are rarely found in the family sagas and *þættir*, but that is mainly because wolves – as carrion beasts – do not appear frequently in these works; instead, 'grey' is most frequently used to describe other (more domestic) animals, skin and furs, and sometimes extended to fabrics.[95]

Wolf's second conclusion implies another aspect of *grár*: that it does not tend to be used to describe ordinary human hair. Unlike the Latin word *canities*, which can describe old people's hair without supernatural or negative connotations,[96] *grár* describes human hair exclusively in the form of *úlfgrár*, which, as shown above, has more to do with wolfishness or trollishness than old age.[97] In his study of old age in *Íslendingasögur*, Ármann Jakobsson does not single out grey hair as one of the defining characteristics of old age; instead, the focus is

[91] Ibid., vv. 199-243, pp. 16-19, especially vv. 238-9: 'Canities eadem est, eadem violentia vultus, / idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est.' Bynum points out the importance of the four *idem* (f. *eadem*) in describing Lycaon the wolf: that he has 'the same grey hair, the same fierce face, the same gleaming eyes, the same picture of beastly savagery' as Lycaon the man. Bynum, pp. 169-70.
[92] Homer, *Iliad, Volume I: Books 1-12*, trans. A. T. Murray, rev. William F. Wyatt, Loeb Classical Library 170 (Cambridge, MA, 1924), Book 10, v. 334, pp. 472-3.
[93] Wolf points out that, although the Old Norse *grár* has a secondary meaning of 'hostile' and in some of her examples it refers to the wolf´s nature rather than its appearance, grey nevertheless is the most common colour of wolves and is likely to be evoked when describing wolves in general. Kirsten Wolf, 'The Color Grey in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 108/2 (2009), 222-38 (235); for her explanation of choice of sources, see 224-25.
[94] Ibid., 228-29. This also accords well with the *Lexicon Poeticum*, where *grár* is listed primarily as a modifier for wolves. *Lexicon Poeticum Antiquæ Linguæ Septentrionalis (Ordbog over det Norsk-Islandske Skjaldesprog)*, ed. Sveinbjörn Egilsson (København, 1931), s.v. *grár*, p. 201.
[95] Wolf, 231-34.
[96] *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. I, s.v. *canities*, p. 291.
[97] Wolf notes, but does not explicate, the occurrences of *grár* in describing human hair in the form of *úlfgrár*. Wolf, 227.

on the old men and women's corporeal weakness, personality, and social reception.[98] Other words or phrases are used to describe old age, such as *í elli sinni* (in old age) – to describe Þórólfr bægifótr, a major figure in Ármann Jakobsson's study[99] – or simply *gamall* (old). When the hair is mentioned at all, it is described as *hárr* (hoary), or *hæra* (grey, hoary hair), but never something like *grátt hár*. Although these words are frequently translated as 'grey hair',[100] Wolf does not include them under grey-related terms, for she considers that they convey 'a sense of age' rather than colour.[101]

Therefore, even standing alone, *grár* already has wolfish connotations; when it is combined with *úlfr* the above-mentioned characters become doubly wolfish. In these cases, wolf and man are connected through the grey hair or fur and thus, by extension, through the skin. One draws out the other, humanness and wolfish nature overlap and interact with each other on the skin level. The *úlfgrár* hair of Egill and Glámr brings their innate unruliness and animality to the surface for the outside world to see, just as the grey pelt of the supernatural boar in Queen Skuld's army hints at what it previously was or may be. In these individuals, whether human or beast, the skin both defines the external appearance and makes visible the internal. As in *The King of Tars*, the *úlfgrár* hair, whether it conceals the man in the wolf's body or vice versa, opens up the possibility of understanding the man through the skin and affects observers' responses to these characters. Thus, an audience seeing Egill's and Glámr's *úlfgrár* hair will suspect that there is something unnatural and inhuman about them; even if no

[98] Ármann Jakobsson, 'The Specter of Old Age: Nasty Old Men in the Sagas of Icelanders', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 104/3 (2005), 197-325, especially 301-08, where he discusses images of old age both within and outside *Íslendingasögur*.
[99] *Eyrbyggja saga*, in *Eyrbyggja saga. Brands þáttr örva. Eiríks saga rauða. Grænlendinga saga. Grænlendinga þáttr*, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson, *Íslenzk fornrit 4* (Reykjavík, 1935), chap. 7, p. 12.
[100] One example is found in *Skáldskaparmál*, when the Æsir are rapidly aging without Iðunn and her apples. Although frequently translated as 'grey-haired', the phrase used here is *hárir ok gamlir*. Snorri Sturlusson, *Edda: Skáldskaparmál I. Introduction, Text and Notes*, ed. Anthony Faulkes (London, 1998), p. 2.
[101] Wolf, 226-27.

full man-to-wolf transformation happens, some no less monstrous behaviour is expected from them. But what if full man-to-wolf transformation does happen?

Here I shall focus on *Vǫlsunga saga*, *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga*, and *Ála flekks saga*, because in these texts a complete, physical wolfskin does appear, as opposed to no skin at all (the magical werewolves) or partial skin (Sigurðr). *Úlfhams rímur* is not included here because it is arguable whether Vargstakkr wears and/or sheds a wolfskin. It is true that the crane maidens do take off their bird skins in the fifth *ríma*,[102] but it would be too speculative to conclude that Vargstakkr has the same experience, since we are never told whether they are enchanted by the same person or under similar circumstances. Following Small's method, for each text I will proceed from the physical to the mental: first examining the interaction between the human and the wolf skin, then the interaction between humanness and wolfness.

Vǫlunga saga is the most straightforward text as regards transformative method. It is also the easiest to assign to a specific model. Representative of Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's older variants, Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli put on two wolfskins to become wolves, as if putting on a coat: 'Þeir Sigmundr fóru í hamina ok máttu eigi ór komask, ok fylgði sú náttúra sem áðr var, létu ok vargrǫddu. Þeir skilðu báðir rǫddina ('Sigmund and Sinfjǫtli got into the skins and could not get out – the strange power was there, just as it was before, that they even howled like wolves, both understanding what was being said').[103]

The process of transformation parallels dressing and undressing, which essentially involves two actions: 'putting on' and 'taking off'. The transformative process thus fits the 'overlay model', in which the wolfskin is external to and separable from the human skin. On the psychological level, the werewolf experience not only causes no disruption to Sigmundr's

[102] *Úlfhams rímur*, V. 39-40, p. 30.
[103] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 8, p. 11. Parallel English translation is laid out on the opposite page.

and Sinfjǫtli's self-perception, it even enhances it. The Vǫlsungar family, states Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, is already 'a sort of wolf clan', and 'the wolf imagery continues throughout the saga'.[104] The wolf, therefore, already exists in Sigmundr's and Sinfjǫtli's psyche long before they put on the wolfskins; it is probably the reason why they do it. In turn, putting on the wolfskin awakens the wolfish nature, bringing out the savage and the violent. Sigmundr, for instance, would not kill Sinfjǫtli under normal circumstances – his remorse and his later attempts to save Sinfjǫtli from his treacherous wife confirm this – but being a wolf augments his bestiality and dims his human reason.[105]

As mentioned above, *Bisclaretz ljóð* deviates from *Bisclavret* mainly in terminology and the nose-biting episode, not in the transformative method. Therefore, Small's analysis of *Bisclavret* as an example of the 'fusion model' still holds for *Bisclaret ljóð*. During the transformation, the wolf simply 'grows' out of the man, and his psyche 'splits into' two, becoming 'part man, part wolf'.[106] Small's comment on Bisclavret's restoration, however, calls for some attention. By shedding the *semblance de beste* (beast appearance), she states, Bisclavret sheds 'the shadow of a self he no longer needs'.[107] Yet as the only example of a congenital werewolf, Bisclavret is an exceptional case. The wolf nature is already ingrained in his identity, or, as Joyce Salisbury puts it, he 'has the beast within him'.[108] The (were)wolf ego can be suppressed, but cannot be eliminated, for he remains a *bisclavret* who will turn into a wolf and hunt in the woods again. He has not been cured of his lycanthropy. If Bisclavret's

[104] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 284-88.
[105] Sinfjǫtli is never described as dead: when Sigmundr attacks him, he simply 'stakar við ok fellr' ('staggered and fell'), and when Sigmundr puts the magical leaf on him, he recovers 'sem hann hefði aldri sárr verit' ('just as he had never been hurt'). However, he is considered as 'an apparently dead person', considering the parallel between this episode and that of *Eliduc*, where Guilliadun, though not dead, is to be buried and the weasel is undoubtedly dead. *Éliduc*, in Marie de France, *Lais de Marie de France*, ed. and trans. Alexandre Micha (Paris, 1994): vv. 1032-1066, pp. 334-37; modern French translations are on the opposite pages. *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 8, pp. 11-12; Clover, p. 83. For his second (indirect) killing of Sinfjǫtli, see *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 10, p. 18. These two episodes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.
[106] Small, p. 90.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994), p. 165.

transformation were a one-off event or if this were the first time it ever happened, then it is quite probable that Bisclavret's self-perception would change – from man to man-wolf. But after he has been used to transformation on a weekly basis? Surely, he is aware of what he is all the time; what must have changed is society's perception of Bisclavret rather than his own. Therefore, Bisclavret does not necessarily experience the trauma once the transformation becomes regularised, which problematises and challenges Small's model.

Tíódél, Biscla(v)ret's Icelandic counterpart, is no longer a congenital werewolf. For him, transformation is a *list*, the same word used in translating the *artes liberalis* that are 'inn gengnar j hans hiarta' (rooted deep in his heart);[109] it is to be learned and practised. Yet the degree of complexity in the transformation process does not diminish when it comes to this text, for the Icelandic redactor clearly has borrowed from older variants the motif of wearing the animal skin. A wolfskin is consequently added to this process, but whereas the *Vǫlsunga saga* witnesses both 'putting on' and 'taking off', only the 'taking off' is described in *Tiodielis saga*. The skin appears neither before nor during the transformation. Apparently Tíódél practises the 'art' of shapeshifting out of the narrative's sight; it is only after his restoration that the narrator observes: 'en*n* audru meigin j h*er*b*er*ginu liot*an og* leidugl*ig*a*n* ham m*ed* fnyk *og* fylu' (and on the other side of the room [there was] an ugly and loathsome skin with a stinking stench).[110]

That the wolfskin appears only after the protagonist's restoration to human form is a feature also found in *Ála flekks saga*. The eponymous hero is cursed by Glóðarauga, a member of a trollish family; Áli is involved in a feud with them from the very beginning of the saga, and is turned into a wolf on his wedding night. Once Glóðarauga utters the curse, the

[109] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 6.
[110] Ibid., p. 68.

transformation takes place immediately, described in one sentence: 'hljóp Áli á skóg og verður að einum vargi' (Áli leapt out into the woods and turns into a wolf).[111]

In neither case is a wolfskin mentioned as triggering the transformation; nor are the heroes touched by any wolfskin item, unlike the cases of Alfonse and Sigurðr in *Jóns saga leikara*. Then how do they fit the models? Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir acknowledges this variation in detail, but she assumes that a wolfskin must have been *steypist yfir* (thrown over) Áli as well as over Tíódél.[112] The phrase *steypist yfir* occurs in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, when the already cursed Bjǫrn, having foretold the future, 'steypist síðan bjarnarhamrinn yfir hann' (a bear-skin or bear-shape came over him).[113] The term can be understood in two ways, depending on how *biarnar hamurinn* is translated: Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir clearly interprets it as a physical bearskin that falls over Bjǫrn, whereas Jesse Byock translates it metaphorically as 'bear-shape' that takes him over.[114] What Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir fails to see, however, is that this episode happens after Bjǫrn has already been turned into a bear by the touch of a *úlfhanzki* (wolfskin glove); it cannot be taken as an account of how his transformation happens in the first place. There is no mention of a bearskin being thrown over him at that moment; besides, there is no need, since the wolfskin glove is more than sufficient to make the magic work, and the transformation seems to be triggered by day-night alternation.[115] If Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's interpretation is accepted, a more likely scenario is that Bjǫrn sheds a bearskin the first time he turns back into human form, then he must re-use it to transform himself back into a bear. The cycle will not end until he is killed or, alternatively, the skin is destroyed.

[111] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 8, p. 139.
[112] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 296.
[113] *Hrólfs saga kraka*, chap. 26, p. 44.
[114] *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, trans. Jesse Byock (London, 1998), p. 38.
[115] That metamorphosis may be tied to the alternation of darkness/night and light/day will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Tiodielis saga and *Ála flekks saga*, I contend, present a third possibility, one which bridges Small's two models. When the hero turns from man to wolf, instead of one skin being laid over the other, the human skin *turns into* the wolfskin. When he returns to human form, however, a physical wolfskin is *taken off*, or shed, as if it has grown out of the original skin, leaving behind only the human skin. As the transformative model changes, so does the hero's psyche. The essence splits into the man and the wolf during the first transformation, as in *Bisclavret* in Small's discussion. But whereas Bisclavret never truly rids himself of the wolf, the separation here is more thorough, allowing the wolf to be separated out, but it can only be eliminated when (and especially if) the shed wolfskin is destroyed for good. What is left behind is a new layer of the skin, representing a new self. This model is especially well demonstrated in *Ála flekks saga*, examined as a case study below.

Section Four: *Ála flekks saga*: A Case Study

I focus on *Ála flekks saga* for two reasons. First, it makes rich use of the motifs of the skin and the werewolf. The identity of Áli flekkr (spot or birthmark) is already constructed on his skin. Later in the saga, he is first turned into a werewolf, then suffers severe skin wounds caused by a troll-woman. Second, Áli's werewolf experience is a one-off adventure. In a straightforward way, it provides a complete cycle of transformation, beginning with the curse and ending with the skin's destruction, without intervening repetitive metamorphoses, complicating the situation. Below I analyse the text and, by examining Áli's four ordeals, demonstrate the saga's parallel structure, followed by a more focused study of the hero's second and third trials, namely the werewolf experience and the skin wounds. The primary goal is to explicate how the skin models can be used to read Áli's story. Next I propose another reading of the werewolf's skin as a further development of the skin models.

The story of Áli flekkr is in essence a series of struggles between humanness and bestiality, a contest that 'is internalized in the hero'.[116] In turn, this battle is projected onto his skin; as the protagonist rises and falls in fortune, his skin changes colour and texture, to faithfully reflect what is happening off stage. These struggles are presented in the form of four ordeals, each initiated by a curse from a member of the same trollish family. Below is a summary of Áli's adventures:

1. Blátǫnn groundlessly accuses Áli of having failed to acknowledge her and curses him, sending him to her sister, Nótt the troll-woman, to become her husband and to be assimilated to the trolls.[117] Nótt invites him first to a cannibalistic repast and then to her bed, which Áli refuses. He eventually escapes with the help of Hlaðgerðr, Nótt's half-human, half-troll daughter.

2. Under the pseudonym Stutthéðinn (Short-skin), Áli establishes himself in the *meykongr* Þornbjǫrg's court and wins her hand in marriage. Before the marriage can be consummated, however, he is cursed by Glóðarauga, one of Nótt's brothers, to become a wolf. Áli is to ravage Þornbjǫrg's and his own countries, and will be put to death by his own father unless someone begs for mercy on his behalf – that is to say, the hidden human nature must be recognised within the wolf. Eventually, Áli is recognised by his foster-mother Hildr. He sheds the wolfskin, which is burned immediately; Áli is restored to his father.

3. Nótt whips Áli in his dream, resulting in rotten and foul-smelling wounds that will never heal unless they are healed by her brothers. Áli sends for Þornbjǫrg, who turns

[116] Hubert E. Morgan, '*William of Palerne* and *Álaflekks saga*', *Florilegium*, 6 (1984), 137-58 (150).
[117] The troll's food consists of human and horse meat; the significance and implication of such an invitation will be discussed in Chapter Three.

out to be a faithful lover and tricks Nótt's brother Jǫtunoxi into killing Nótt and curing Áli.

4. Before Jǫtunoxi is killed, he curses Áli that he will never have peace until he finds Hlaðgerðr. Áli finds Hlaðgerðr in Sweden, just in time to save her from being burned for her supposed trollishness. Áli vouches for her; she is married to the king of that region. Áli returns home, celebrates his second wedding to Þornbjǫrg, and reigns over England after his father's death.

These four ordeals form a journey that starts with Áli's departure from and ends with his reincorporation into human society. Together, they can be regarded as falling into and rising out of a pit, or moving down a scale of humanness, with the werewolf experience at the bottom. Áli does not, however, start in a position of pure humanness. He has trouble being incorporated into human society from before he is born. Before his birth, his father, King Ríkharðr, urges the queen to expose the child if it is a boy, despite the fact that they have been desperately hoping for an heir. Morgan reads this passage as the king's 'attempt to forestall fate', for he – 'allra konunga vitrastur' (the wisest of all kings) – has foreseen Áli's future misfortune.[118] When Áli is born, he is marked by a *flekkr* on his cheek, which comes to define his identity.[119] Marks on literary characters' skin can be positive or negative; they can imply a sense of destined greatness – as in the case of Havelok, who has a cross-shaped *kynemerk* on his shoulder[120] – or denote unnaturalness – Grímr Ketilsson has a hairy spot on one side of his cheek, which images his trollish lineage.[121] Although it is not explicitly indicated what Áli's *flekkr* signifies, judging from his father's decision for infant exposure and Áli's future fate, it

[118] Morgan, 141-42. *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 1, p. 125.
[119] It is noteworthy that Hildr and Gunni have trouble naming Áli. The boy's name changes every day until it becomes related to his physical feature. *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 3, p. 128.
[120] *Havelok*, ed. G.V. Smithers (Oxford, 1987), v. 605, p. 21.
[121] *Ketils saga hængs*, in *Fornaldarsögur Norðrlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjámsson, I, chap. 3, p. 255.

must be negative (or so he reads it). Whether Áli becomes involved with Nótt's family because of his mark, or he has the mark because he is destined to engage with the trolls, Áli already has trollishness in him from birth, imprinted on his skin to show his identity as a 'psychologically bi-natured' hero.[122]

In the first ordeal, Áli faces the danger of yielding to his trollish nature, defined by a cannibalistic diet and carnal relations with Nótt. Should he fail, he would deliver himself 'into the trolls' power, betraying his human nature'.[123] Fortunately, Áli is forewarned by Hlaðgerðr, who functions as an interesting parallel to him. Hlaðgerðr is Nótt's daughter by another human male, presumably someone who failed to resist Nótt's temptation and whom Áli could have become. Whereas Áli is psychologically a *blendingr* (mixture), Hlaðgerðr is only genetically bi-natured and, despite her trollish lineage, she maintains a human lifestyle and loyalties. Her humanness is the key to preventing Áli from falling onto the trollish side.

Áli wins the first round, but he does not get away unscathed. Stutthéðinn is a curious choice for a pseudonym. It may refer to Áli's clothes, which must have become tattered, since he has wandered in the wild for quite some time. But the imagery evoked here also bears resemblance to that of Nótt, who appears to Áli *í skorpnum skinnstakki* (in a shrivelled skin-coat), revealing her loins at the back.[124] It is likely that, having been forced into close contact with trolls, Áli's ambiguous nature is further tainted. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the trolls resort to more extreme measures. Áli temporarily re-asserts his status in the social world by winning the hand of Þornbjǫrg, who, as a suitable bride for a prince, represents the human world, as opposed to Nótt, the would-be troll-bride. The Þornbjǫrg episode shows Áli's effort to climb out of the pit, but he is turned into a savage wolf before his position can be solidified

[122] Morgan, 150.
[123] Ibid.
[124] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 5, p. 132.

through marrying the *meykongr*.[125] This time, he falls to the bottom: he is not a human any more, neither in appearance nor in behaviour.

The werewolf ordeal expands Áli's trollishness, displacing the humanness almost in its entirety. For trolls are closely linked to wolves. Not only do kennings frequently present wolves as troll-women's horses,[126] trollish characters also show wolfish traits. For instance, within my corpus of primary sources, Hléðgerðr in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* is seen fighting in wolf form.[127] Though Nótt never transforms herself, when her brother Jǫtunoxi attacks her, he bites through her windpipe, which is typical wolf behaviour.[128] As fur grows from Áli's skin, his psyche clearly goes through dramatic transformation, too. Now the troll-side of Áli's personality is both maximised and manifested; that which Áli the man had successfully resisted in the previous ordeal, Áli the wolf shows no reluctance in doing. The curse entails that Áli should behave like an actual wolf, killing both men and livestock ('reif þar bæði menn og fé til dauðs')[129] and showing little sign of human reason, unlike Biscla(v)ret, Tíódél, Gorlagon, and Melion. Although the author is careful not to implicate Áli in cannibalism, the fact that he kills humans – as Chapter Three will demonstrate – dangerously borders on embarking on a trollish diet, the taboo food that Nótt previously offered to Áli.

Yet Áli still manages to maintain some trace of humanness underneath, however slight and indiscernible. Hildr, his foster-mother, recognises Áli's eyes in the wolf, while all the

[125] It is significant that the second curse plays out before Áli shares Þornbjǫrg's bed. This detail echoes Nótt's attempt to have sex with Áli. Since a carnal relationship with Nótt would confine Áli in the trolls' world, it follows that, if the marriage between Áli and Þornbjǫrg were consummated, the trolls would lose their power over Áli. It is also striking that Áli's identity seems to be defined by and contested by the women surrounding him, a subject that will be explored in Chapter Two.
[126] Rudolf Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden: Ein Beitrag zur skaldischen Poetik* (Bonn und Leipzig, 1921), pp. 124-26.
[127] Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 11, p. 132.
[128] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 16, p. 151. Egill and Sigmundr also bite into the windpipe, the former in his *berserkr*-ish frenzy and the latter in wolf form. Biting in the throat area ('the death bite') is a typical strategy of wolves when attacking bigger animals. It allows the wolf to kill its prey rapidly and effectively. Eric Zimen, *The Wolf: His Place in the Natural World*, trans. Eric Mosbacher (London, 1981), pp. 217-18.
[129] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 9, p. 140.

others – including Áli's father and foster-father – fail. Hildr's pity for the wolf breaks the spell. During that very night, Áli sheds the wolfskin, which is burned immediately. The shedding and the subsequent destruction of the wolfskin signify Áli's total suppression of his trollish nature. Burning the skin is not a precondition of breaking the spell; for this, it suffices that someone recognise Áli and beg for mercy on his behalf. Nevertheless, the skin is then destroyed, eliminating all future possibility of Áli becoming wolfish or trollish again. To read Áli's werewolf experience in terms of Anzieu's Skin Ego and the 'fusion model', Áli's humanness and trollishness respectively are manifested in the human/*recto* and the wolf/*verso* of the skin. The falling off and destruction of the wolfskin emblematise the thorough disappearance of his trollish ego, a result further bolstered by the following two trials. On the surface, the third and fourth trials continue the feud with Nótt's family, but the trolls' objective has changed. Their aim is no longer to lure Áli onto the trollish side, but rather to kill him or to force others into the trollish family instead. To awaken his trollish nature is simply no longer an option; the struggle in which Áli is involved turns from that of human versus non-human (i.e. troll or wolf) to that of life (as human) versus death (as human). The roles of Áli and the women are also reversed. Whereas Áli needs Hlaðgerðr and Þornbjǫrg to bind him to the human world in the first part of his journey, in the second half it is (the now fully human) Áli who prevents Þornbjǫrg from marrying into Nótt's family and Hlaðgerðr from being burned as a troll-woman.

To return to my pit metaphor: if Áli's werewolf ordeal represents his lowest point, then from here onwards Áli starts to ascend. Although the third ordeal also involves a physical transformation, Áli's psyche remains intact throughout. This case is more like the 'overlay model' in the sense that, though he 'wears' a leper's skin, there is no change or interruption in Áli's self-perception. Nor do his family or friends change their attitude towards him. Þornbjǫrg, the crucial factor in keeping Áli human, is summoned and stands faithfully by his side, until he

is cured. Þornbjǫrg's reappearance in this episode paves the way for their second marriage and, consequently, the long-waited consummation that confirms Áli's position in the human world.

The result is the fourth ordeal, which hardly qualifies as an ordeal compared to the hardship Áli endures in the previous three; nor does he encounter any more hostility from Nótt's family. He simply makes a speech that saves Hlaðgerðr from the stake. Áli's effortless success indicates how firmly he is now established within the human domain, such that he can even get Hlaðgerðr out of trouble. He not only incorporates her into human society, he also ensures that her descendants will be fully human by marrying her into King Eireikr's family. It is worth noting that, before Áli finds Hlaðgerðr, he kills a giant called Kolr in the woods. This episode has no significance to the main plot. Nor is it any part of the curse. However, in his brief summarisation of Áli's four plights, Morgan describes the last one as Áli being 'a giant-killer'.[130] His statement asks us to examine the symbolism of this seemingly irrelevant episode. On closer look, it serves as an indicator of Áli's new role now as a giant/troll slayer, as opposed to the ambiguously bi-natured person he was at the beginning of the saga. The episode's position between Áli's recovery and his rescue of Hlaðgerðr is also crucial; presumably it adds credit to Áli's testimony about Hlaðgerðr's characteristics, demonstrating that he has no loyalty to trolls, and helping to smooth the way for his persuasion of Eireikr to free Hlaðgerðr.

As Áli journeys between the human and troll domains, between his two natures, his story is also recorded and displayed on his skin. The second and third ordeals are no doubt the highlights of the saga, when the fight over Áli is intensified and the measures taken by the trolls become more extreme. Both episodes are essentially attempts made by both the trolls and the human characters to align the internal and the external: both attempts are effected at a skin-

[130] Morgan, 147.

deep level. The trolls seek to separate Áli from the human world by turning him first into a wolf – a beast closely related to trolls – and then into a leper-like person. The juxtaposition of the two motifs is interesting, considering that, as will be explored below, werewolves and lepers are closely linked.[131] In this saga in particular, the two episodes are parallel to each other. Both involve shedding of a skin – one physical, the other metaphorical. Although it is never told how Áli is cured, the image associated with healing wounds is that of the forming and falling off of scabs. Whether Áli is spared this process or not, in this episode his skin transforms once again in both colour and texture. Only with the help of his friends is Áli restored to the human social and physical condition.

Section Five: From *Lupus* to *Leprosus*

In this sense, Áli's third ordeal can be read as a replication of the werewolf experience, though a more superficial one, since it never truly affects Áli's psyche. It is rather a pale echo of what had previously happened, a desperate move on the trolls' part. Yet questions remain: why must the third ordeal happen at all, if Áli's successful escape from the werewolf curse is enough to prevent any further attempt from the trolls to lure Áli into their camp? What does it symbolise: that the werewolf episode should immediately be followed by an episode of incurable wounds?

To answer them, I revert to two points that are made by Small and Morgan respectively: the physical-mental wound parallel,[132] and the association of Áli's third ordeal with leprosy.[133] The two are closely tied to each other, and together they strengthen the bond between Áli's second and third plights: Small explores the image of wounded skin to foreground the violence that accompanies the Skin Ego's split in the 'fusion model', while it is Áli's wounded flesh –

[131] In a study of Bisclavret's name, William Sayers points out two similarities between werewolves and lepers: rejection from central society and the implication of moral fault. His article strengthens the link between werewolf and skin disease/leprosy, and serves as a starting point for the next section. William Sayers, '*Bisclavret* in Marie de France: A Reply', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 4 (1982), 77-82.
[132] See Chapter One, p. 27.
[133] Morgan, 147.

rotten, stinking, hideous – that calls to mind the leper's deformed and disfigured body. Considered in combination, these two points suggest a double function to the third ordeal. On one hand, it echoes the werewolf experience by making visual the mental wound Áli suffered from the separation of the wolfskin ego. It replays the psychic injury on the physical level, so that the audience can see it more clearly. On the other hand, by summoning the image and the meaning of the leper – no less monstrous than the ravenous wolf, yet confined in the human domain – it accentuates the sense of progressiveness of Áli's character development, and offers yet another angle from which to view his ambiguous nature. Moreover, it also tests the faith of those surrounding Áli – especially Þornbjǫrg, who plays a central role in consolidating Áli's position in human society. Consequently, when Áli finally returns to human society, not only he will no longer suffer from the monstrous and bestial, nor will those who constitute that very society around him.

The history of *lepra* and its connection with *lupus* goes beyond *Ála flekks saga*. Guy de Chauliac, a fourteenth-century papal physician who became an authority on leprosy, traces the origin of the word *lepra* to *lupus*, because the disease 'devoureþ alle þe membres as a wolf doth. It roteth forsoþe alle þe membres as a cancrouse wolf' (devours all the body parts as a wolf does. It spoils all the organs as a cancerous wolf), a belief that was still strong in the days of Pierre Bocellin in the sixteenth century.[134] The modern-day skin disease lupus or systemic lupus erythematosus also owes its name to the Latin word and the medieval idea of (were)wolf.[135] The disease itself may have even been categorised under *lepra* in the Middle Ages, since the disease or diseases termed 'leprosy' then is not what is now called Hansen's

[134] Guy de Chauliac, *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, ed. Margaret S. Ogden, Early English Society Text Series no. 265 (London, 1971), 3.2, p. 378. Pierre Bocellin, *La practique de maistre Pierre Bocellin, chyrurgien, & citoyen de la noble cite de Belleys en Sauoye, sur la matière de la contagieuse & infective maladie de lepre* (Lyon, 1540), pp. 2-3.
[135] Ravi K. Mallavarapu and Edwin W. Grimsley, 'The History of Lupus Erythematosus', *Southern Medical Journal*, 100/9 (2007), 896-98 (896).

disease; the word covers a much wider range of diseases. Although it is impossible to pin down exactly what modern diseases are covered by the *lepra*, rooted in the Hippocratic *λέπρα* and the Hebrew *Zarã'at*, it is originally a general term, applicable to any skin ailment 'that turned the skin rough, scaly, or flaky and which were comparable to today's psoriasis or eczema'.[136] Lupus certainly qualifies under this description, and at least one medical source indeed names it as one of the modern illnesses covered by *lepra*.[137]

The juxtaposition of the two motifs is also found in literature. Within the core literary corpus of this thesis, in addition to *Ála flekks saga*, *Biscla(v)ret* features both the *lupus* and *leprosus*. It is common to compare Bisclavret's wife to a leper: physically, the loss of nose is one of the most distinguishing signs of leprosy;[138] spiritually, leprosy is believed to be associated with lechery and fraud, while a morally questionable woman is often referred to metaphorically as *lupa*.[139] Apart from the wife, Sayers also suggests that the *-clavret* part of

[136] Luke E. Demaitre, *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body* (Baltimore, 2007), p. 83. When *lepra* is translated into Middle English, the translators follow the same rule and choose a word – *meselrie* – that covers any skin disease characterised by swelling, sores, and ulceration. *MED*, s.v. *meselrie*. That medieval leprosy covers various skin diseases is accepted by many scholars. For instance, Monica H. Green, based on evidence found in leprosaria cemeteries, shows that many buried there had skin diseases that 'would not now be classified as Hansen's disease'. Monica H. Green, 'Bodily Essence: Bodies as Categories of Difference', in *A Cultural History of the Human Body in the Medieval Age*, ed. Linda Kalof (Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 141-62(157). Rawcliffe also talks about the development of *lepra* and how it comes to merge with other skin diseases such as *elephantia* or *elephantiasis*. Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2009) pp. 73-77.

[137] 'Report from the Section of the History of Medicine during the British Medical Association Annual Meeting at Edinburgh' (1927), published in *The Lancet*, 210/5431(1927), 708-11 (708-9).

[138] Tory Vandeventer Pearman, *Women and Disability in Medieval Literature* (New York, 2010), p. 80. The association of Bisclavret's wife with leprosy is strengthened by the disease's moral implication, which will be discussed below. Withering of the soft tissues in the nasal area is an unequivocal sign used in diagnosing leprosy; it is mentioned by Bartholomaeus, Lanfranc, and Guy de Chauliac. *On the Properties of Things*, vol. 1, 9.94, p. 424: 'þe nosethrilles beeþ streite and ireueled and ischronke' (the nostrils are narrowed, wrinkled, and shrunk). *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie,"* III.i.7, p. 197: 'Her noseþrilles becomeþ smal, ouþer wondirly greet, & her noseþrilles ben streit for to drawe yn wijnd' (Their nostrils become small or extremely large, and their nostrils are narrow to draw in wind). *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 2, p. 380: 'and writhinge or crokynge of þe nose þirles' (and withering or distorting of the nostrils).

[139] In *Rómverja saga*, for instance, Laurencia – foster-mother of Remus and Romulus – is nicknamed *lupa* because she is so beautiful that she would make a perfect prostitute; and for that reason, brothels are called *lupanaria* ('þui at þerse Laurencia var harðla fǫgr þa segiz þat af hennι at hon vǫri fullkomin portkona. Af þui kolluðu nagrannar hennar hana Lupam. Þat er a norǫnu vargynía. Af hennar nafni er siðan kallat a latínu lupanaria putna hus', because this Laurentia was so beautiful, they all said that she would be a perfect prostitute. And because of that her neighbors called her *lupa*, which is 'she-wolf' in the Norse tongue. From her name brothels are later called *Lupanaria* in Latin, that is the kind of rooms where prostitutes lived in). *Rómverja saga*, 2 vols, ed. Þorbjörg Helgadóttir (Reykjavík, 2010), II, p. 224. Though ideal and practice may differ, the

Bisclavret could have been derived from Middle Breton *claff*, meaning 'sick', used especially in the case of leprosy. He also points out that both lepers and (were)wolves are marginal figures akin to outlaws both symbolically and linguistically, strengthening the link between the two.[140]

When Morgan describes Áli in his third ordeal as 'a chancred "leper"', he offers no further explanation, but his assumption is a well-grounded one: Áli may not *be* a leper but he is certainly *like* a leper; and the image of leprosy matters just as much as the diagnosis itself. Various characters who suffer severe bodily wounds tend to be compared to lepers, even Christ Himself, represented as the Man of Sorrows, is described *quasi leprosus* (as if leprous).[141] The most intriguing example is found in the figure of Tristan, who is explicitly connected both to leprosy and physical wounds, and whose legend is believed to be the first French romance to be translated into Old Norse.[142] Tristan is mortally wounded three times – each event leading respectively to: his meeting with Isolde, his wooing of Isolde, and his own death – and in each episode he is described as incurable, rotten in skin and flesh, and giving off a foul smell. All these symptoms are akin to those of leprosy, and the fact that a leper is one of Tristan's disguises only strengthens the affinity.[143]

---

association between the disease and lechery has become a literary trope. It is richly evidenced in Béroul's *Tristan et Yseut*: the lepers – led by Ivain – are portrayed as a lustful troop, and the disease is thought a proper punishment for the adulterous queen. Brody discusses the moralistic representation of leprosy extensively in his book; though his use of sources has been questioned, the motif is easy to find in devotional and literary texts. Saul Nathaniel Brody, *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, 1974). For a critique of Brody, see Rawcliffe, p. 39. For use of leprosy for a moralising purpose, see Demaitre, pp. 95-96; Orlemanski, pp. 162-63.

[140] Sayers, '*Bisclavret* in Marie de France', 80-2. Although practice may have varied, it is universally agreed that lepers should be quarantined and separated from human company. *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 3.2, p. 383: 'þai schal be wiþdrawnen fro þe peple with good counseillynge wordes and ledded into þe mesondeux (i.e. into spitelles)' (they shall be withdrawn from the crowd with good soothing words and led into the leprosaria). Brody, p. 64. Peter Richards, *The Medieval Leper and His Northern Heirs* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 48-51. Demaitre points out that, *ußsetzikeit*, Middle High German word for *leprosy*, literally means 'the quality of being set outside', which reflects the 'social fate of the patients'. Demaitre, p. 82.

[141] Rawcliffe, pp. 60-64 (60-61). See also Julie Orlemanski, 'Desire and Defacement in *The Testament of Cresseid*', in *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture*, ed. Walter, pp. 161-81 (162). The concept of *Christus quasi leprosus* gives a new layer of meaning to leprosy, which will be discussed shortly.

[142] For textual transmission, the legend's adaptation and circulation in Iceland, see Geraldine Barnes, 'The Tristan Legend', in *The Arthur of the North*, pp. 60-76.

[143] *Norse Romance I: The Tristan Legend*, ed. Marianne E. Kalinke (Cambridge, 1999), the three episodes of physical wounds are found in chaps. 30 (pp. 84-85), 36 (pp. 98-99), and 95-96 (pp. 212-13); the leper's episode

Like Tristan, Áli suffers the same festering, incurable wounds that fit the descriptions of leprosy. Although the saga author is somewhat laconic about Áli's condition, the few symptoms he chooses to foreground overlap with the stereotypical image evoked by leprosy in both medical treatises and literature. Áli's wounds are described as a sickness curable only by supernatural means; his limbs are significantly weakened, and he is apparently confined to his bed; the body putrefies, gradually depriving him of human company.[144] Thought of as a faithful representation, the body of Robert Henryson's Cresseid, having been punished by the gods, becomes covered by lumps, her skin blackened and spotted; she has no choice but to leave home and court, even though her father shows no intention of rejecting her.[145] The Old Icelandic saga author/translators do not tend to be as detailed as the Scottish poet, yet they nevertheless show knowledge of the disease and apply the motif to their works in similar ways: in *Amícus saga ok Amilíus*, Amícus is stricken with leprosy (*líkþrá*, literally 'flesh-rotten') as a punishment for his false oath. He is disfigured (Amícus is only able to recognise him through the chalice), expelled from society (by both his wife and subjects), and so weakened that 'ekki mátti hann þá ur rekkju rísa' (he can hardly rise from the bed).[146] Likewise, in *Mírmans saga*, the eponymous hero becomes leprous through a magical philtre – also intended as punishment

is in chap. 90, pp. 206-07. English translation on opposite pages. The romance's structure, especially the parallel between Tristan's physical wounds, his 'love-wounds', and his leprous appearance, is discussed in Margit M. Sinka, 'Wound Imagery in Gottfried von Strassburg's "Tristan"', *South Atlantic Bulletin*, 42/2 (1977), 3-10, especially p. 8, where leprosy's relation to Tristan's other wounds – visible or invisible – is discussed. Note that although Sinka uses Gottfried's text, Gottfried claims to have based his version on Thomas', and both the German and the Old Norse versions share these episodes. The connection between Tristan and leprosy is also strong – if not stronger – in Béroul's version, which offers a more vivid image in the episode of Yseut's oath. Béroul, *Tristan et Yseut: Les* Tristan *en vers*, ed. Jean-Charles Payen (Paris, 1974), vv. 4166-84, p. 133.

[144] *Ála flekks saga*, chaps. 12-14, pp. 144-49. Chauliac lists six unequivocal signs, followed by eighteen that are shared by leprosy and other diseases, including distorted face, rotten skin and flesh, foul smell, and weak limbs; and he suggests removal from society as the first action to be taken against any patient suspected of leprosy. *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 3.2, pp. 380-81. A summary of signs used to diagnose leprosy in the Middle Ages is also found in Demaitre, pp. 210-19.

[145] *The Testament of Cresseid*, vv. 337-43. Johnstone Parr, 'Cresseid's Leprosy Again', *Modern Language Notes*, 60/7 (1945), 487-91, where Parr makes a detailed analysis of Cresseid's symptoms in comparison to those described in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century medical treatises.

[146] Eugen Kölbing, 'Bruchstück einer Amícus ok Amilíus saga', *Germania*, 19, NS 7 (1874), 184–89 (187).

– and is presented as being covered with appalling wounds (‘ógurligt giodizt hanz meĩn’), nearly dying (‘vanheilann’), and (believed to be) contagious.[147]

In addition to the wounds, Áli’s identity-defining epithet *flekkr* also hints his predisposition to leprosy. The word *flekkr* can be read as a harmless birthmark or mole, but it could also be something nastier: Cleasby and Vigfússon equate *flekkr* – in *Maríu saga* – with the Latin word *contaminatio*, which means ‘corruption, disease’.[148] The word also occurs in the Old Norse medical treatises, where it is used in the context of leprosy, and is translated as ‘infection’.[149] Besides, it is indeed possible for a child to be born leprous or predisposed to the disease. According to Chauliac, one may be infected with leprosy either by predisposition (intrinsic causes) or action (extrinsic causes); some people are simply predisposed to leprosy ‘a proprete in the body’ (by the property in the body).[150] As a hereditary and contagious disease, it can be passed onto a child from their parents[151] – if the nasal damage suffered by Bisclavret’s wife is read as a sign of leprosy, then this explains why her descendants tend to be leprously noseless as well. A child’s predisposition to leprosy could also be a result of its unnatural

[147] *Mírmans saga*, ed. Desmond Slay, *Editiones Arnamagnæanæ* Series A, vol. 17 (København, 1997), chap. 13 (A^2 text), p. 53: ‘skyllder þv ad þier hyggia […] ad þu giorer ei mein sialfumm þier’ (you should take heed […] that you are endangering yourself). The identification of the disease is found in the previous chapter, p. 52: ‘og hafde hann þa sott feinngid er lepra heiter æa latino, enn lykþra æa vora tvĩngv’ (and he had contracted what is called *lepra* in Latin, but ‘flesh-rotten’ in our language). It is also notable that the author carefully explains why Mírman’s eyes remain clear, demonstrating his knowledge in the leper’s dimmed eyesight: ‘enn augu hanz voru svo føgr sem adur hofdu verit. og fann hann ad þad olli er hann giordi mark hinns helga kross yfer augumm sier æadur \enn/ hann drack, og alldrei spilltuzt augv hanz’ (but his eyes were as clear as [they] had previously been. And he thought that the reason was that he made the sign of the holy cross over his eyes before he drank, and [so] his eyes were never corrupted) (p. 52). Demaitre offers a vocabulary commonly used in describing the disease; the attributes listed there convey the same imagery as the language in the sagas. Demaitre, pp. 98-102.
[148] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *flekkr*, p. 160.
[149] *An Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany; Ms. Royal Irish Academy 23 D 43 with Supplement from Trinity College (Dublin) L-2-27*, ed. Henning Larsen (Oslo, 1931), *Book of Simples*, chap. 33, p. 64, for the English translation, see p. 149. The mention of leprosy is supplemented from another manuscript (Ms. K): ‘[thæt ær got for likwærthing] ok fleiri adra flecka’ (‘*it is good for leprosy* and other infections’). Moreover, spots, or ‘stains’, on the skin has been accepted as the first step to determine leprosy, and are frequently seen in describing the disease. Demaitre, pp. 96-97.
[150] *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 3.2, p. 379.
[151] Bartholomaeus, for instance, claims that ‘sometyme it comeþ of fadir and modir, and so þis contagioun passiþ into þe childe as it were by lawe of heritage’ (sometimes it comes from father and mother, and thus this contagion passes onto the child as it were by law of heritage). *On the Properties of Things*, i. 64, p. 426.

conception, such as during menstruation or at an 'inauspicious time';[152] it may implicate the parents and the entire lineage. Now thinking back, King Ríkharðr's desire to dispose of Áli raises suspicion that the child may have been conceived in a questionable way, and it is thus no coincidence that he is born with a *flekkr* on his cheek and is prone to skin problems.[153]

That Áli can only be cured by Nótt's troll brothers suggests the rule of 'like' curing 'like', which also seems to be the rule for curing leprosy. Although leprosy is generally deemed as incurable, the disease progresses through several stages based on severity and, if treated in the earlier stages, can be somewhat mitigated or even cured. Treatments suggested by medical and encyclopaedic authors – Scandinavian or not – are intriguingly similar. While Bartholomaeus, Lanfranc, and Chauliac all recommend flesh of a poisonous snake dissolved in a mixture of spices and liquids, the author or compiler of the Old Icelandic medical charms substitutes for the snake the herb *dracunculus*.[154] Intriguingly, one of the four categories of leprosy is called *tiria*, named after 'an addre þat hatte *tyrus*, for as an addre leueth liȝtliche his skynne and is skaly' (an adder that is called *tyrus*, for as an adder he abandons his skin easily and scaly).[155] Bartholomaeus specifies that the snake has to be a *tirus*, while both Chauliac and Lanfranc, though omitting the details concerning the snake (except its colour), points out that it has to be from dry land – dryness being another trademark of leprosy. The Icelandic author does not explicate his choice of *dracunculus* except that the herb is *freknott sem ormur* (spotted like a serpent),[156] but the name suggests its derivation from *draco* in Latin; whether the word is translated as 'snake' or 'dragon', the image of a scaled (and most likely venomous) beast is

[152] Demaitre, p. 162; Rawcliffe, pp. 80-81.
[153] Ívarr Ragnarson, for instance, is conceived at an inauspicious time and against Áslaug's warning, resulting in his deformity. *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, in *Fornaldarsögur Norðrlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, I, chap. 6, p. 110.
[154] *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 3.2, pp. 387-88; *An Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, p. 125, English translation on p. 209.
[155] *On the Properties of Things*, i. 64, p. 423. See also *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, 3.2, p. 378. *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie"*, III.i.7, p. 198. The other three are *leonina* (lion), *elephantia* (elephant), and *alopicia* (fox); all named based on the infected skin's resemblance to these animals in colour and/or texture.
[156] *An Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, p. 125, English on p. 209.

certain. The recovery process also bears striking resemblance to symptoms of leprosy. Once the snake flesh has been duly consumed, the patient's body will swell, then the skin (and/or hair) will slough off. When the swelling subdues, new skin and hair will grow, and the patient is leprous no more.[157]

The parallel processes of contracting and recovering from the disease offer an interesting analogy to Áli's werewolf ordeal. Without the cure, the leprous skin will keep rotting until the patient's death. With the cure, however, though the patient's reactions are similar to the early symptoms of leprosy, the disease is terminated at a certain point and the rotten, scabbed skin will separate from the body. One layer splits into two, and while the contaminated skin falls off, the uncorrupted flesh beneath is covered with new, regenerated skin, giving a strong idea of separation and splitting. The sense of renewal is also strong, for this new skin layer may even be generically and biologically new – for it is generally believed by medieval authorities that once damaged, the skin cannot be truly replaced; the new layer that covers a wound will be something 'made like þe skyn' but not skin itself.[158] Adopting the concept of the Skin Ego into this process, if the leper's skin is read as representing a 'leprous'

[157] *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, p. 388: 'Neuerþeless it is to take hede þat the vse of ham maketh þe body firste to bolne. And after, þere falllen awaie flages or schales, and here skynnes ben vnhellede, and þai ben vnbolnede and helede' (Nevertheless it is to take heed that the use of it [snake flesh] makes the body swell first. And after, the spots or scabs fall away, and their skins are stripped, and their swelling subdues and they are healed). *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie"*, III.i.7, pp. 198-99: 'Þanne þe broþ herof is ȝeuen to drynke, & þe fleisch for to ete til þe pacient haue scotomiam & al his bodi to-swolle [...] In þis maner al his fleisch wole pile & alle hise heeris wolen falle awei & newe heeris wolen come vp aȝen' (Then the broth is given [to the patient] to drink, and the flesh [i.e. of the snake] to eat until the patient has dizziness and all his body swells [...] In this manner all his flesh will peel and all his hairs will fall away, and new hairs will grow again).

[158] *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, p. 214: 'While þat generacioun of þe skyn is inpossible for hardenness þerof, some þing is to be made like þe skyn' (while the regeneration of the skin is impossible because of the hardness, something is to be made like the skin). *On the Properties of Things*, 5.64, p. 286: 'And þe skyn haþ þis propirte, þat in a place wiþoute fleische, ȝif þe skyn is ikut of, it growiþ nomore' (And the skin has this nature, that in a place without flesh, if the skin is cut off, it grows no more). *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie,"* I.ii.1, pp. 21-2: '& þe skyn beþ engendrid of boþe þe spermes, as auicen & oþere auctouris tellen / If þat ony of þe lymes þat ben engendrid of þe spermes ben doon awey [he] moun neuere veriliche be restorid, for þe mater of hem is þe sperm of þe fadir & of þe modir' (and the skin is generated from both the sperms, as Avicenna and other authors say. If any of the organs that are generated from the sperms are lost, it will never be truly restored, because its matter is of the sperm of the father and of the mother).

ego, then its slouching-off makes visual the patient's growth away from the moral defect that leprosy implies, and the renewal of the skin then the forming of a new, clean conscience.

The sense of conscience or ego renewal is even stronger, when we take into consideration of the two representational schemes of leprosy in literature, as proposed by Orlemanski prior to her discussion of *The Testament of Cresseid*: the moralistic and the affective.[159] As its label suggests, the moralistic portrayal links corporeal corruption with spiritual corruption, the visible with the invisible: if one is stricken with leprosy, then it is probably meant as a punishment for some moral sin that one has committed – a belief that remains strong in nineteenth-century Bergen, according to the evidence found by Richards.[160] Consequently, Cresseid is punished by the disease for her blasphemy, lechery, and faithlessness, and Béroul's Yseut is sent to the lepers.[161] More often than not, however, the sinner-lepers are cured (miraculously). In these 'affective' cases leprosy is understood as a test, a purgatory on earth that makes the sinner realise and then atone for their offences – this is certainly the case for Amícus, who is punished for perjury, but whose disease functions like a mirror, revealing who are his true friends and who are not. While the moralistic scheme targets the patient, the affective targets those surrounding the patient. Orlemanski defines the affective scheme as especially intended to affect the audience or readers: 'the disfiguration of leprous bodies moves and unsettles us; it shakes us and transforms us, alternatively turning stomachs and enflaming hearts with love' and, again, 'affective accounts of leprosy … attend to sensory detail to trigger

[159] Orlemanski, p. 162.
[160] Richards, p. 70.
[161] The direct cause of Cresseid's punishment is her blasphemy against Cupid and Venus, yet the punishment also aims at her debauchery and faithlessness, considering that she is often contrasted to the 'true' Troylus. The fair Cresseid's loss of beauty echoes and makes visual her departure from what is true. It is interesting that Ivain calls Yseut *la givre* (the viper). It probably refers to Yseut's faithlessness, but, considering the close association between leprosy and snake, it also justifies Ivain's proposed punishment for Yseut: that she is already leprous in the soul, so it is only right that her appearance becomes aligned with it. Later, Yseut strategically explores the same idea to prove her innocence by showing that she is not afraid to get the disease by 'riding' the 'leprous' Tristan. Béroul, *Tristan et Yseut*, v. 1188, p. 40. See also Sally L. Burch, 'Leprosy and Law in Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*', *Viator*, 38/1 (2007): 141-54 (146-49).

readers' protean aesthetic and emotional reactions'.[162] But 'we', as readers, are only onlookers from a distance, whereas it is the other characters in the texts who are the most directly affected. In addition to revealing the soul of those who are afflicted with the disease, leprosy also tells something of those who may be affected by the leper's condition. It gives the others a chance to show charity or reveal their treacherous hearts. Sometimes the affected – should they behave treacherously – are eventually stricken with leprosy or some disease resembling it, such as Amícus' wife.[163] In her case, the affected and the moralistic types become merged.

In *Ála flekks saga*, the affective scheme matters more than the moralistic, since Áli has been rid of his trollish ego with the falling-off of his wolfskin.[164] Thus, in Áli's third ordeal, the focus shifts to Þornbjǫrg, as the affected party, and in this, the ordeal reveals her hitherto underdeveloped character. Her reaction is not depicted when Áli becomes a werewolf, even though her kingdom is also ravaged. (And surely, she must have wondered why her husband has gone missing on their wedding night.) Nor does she act like a stereotypical *meykongr*, one who, like Ingigerðr in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, constantly creates obstacles for the protagonists. She seems meek and does not show affection towards Áli. The third ordeal, however, gives her an opportunity to show some emotion. It is a test for her as much as for Áli. She is the one who is truly in danger of contracting leprosy: should she prove to be as faithless as the wives of Bisclavret and Amícus, she probably will follow in their footsteps – or worse, for she will

[162] Orlemanski, pp. 162-63.
[163] Kölbing, 189: 'En í þann tíma hljóp úhreinn andi í búk húsfrú Amíci, ok kvaldi hana mjök illa, ok í þeim ærslum fell hon fyrir berg ok lauk svá hörmuliga hennar lífdögum' (And during this time, an unclean spirit went into the belly of Amícus' wife, and tormented her greatly and in her madness she fell over a rock and thus ended her sorry life). The parallelism between Amícus' leprosy and his wife's mysterious disease is discussed by Andrew Hamer. See Andrew Hamer, 'Translation and Adaptation in *Amícus ok Amilíus saga*', *Leeds Studies in English*, 16 (1985), 246-58 (249-51). In particular, according to Hamer, the parallelism is stronger and more explicit in the Old Norse adaptation than in Vincent de Beauvais' version, where her case is only 'implicitly contrasted with that of her husband'. (249)
[164] Although, from the trolls' perspective, Áli is probably 'morally' in the wrong because, apparently, he 'betrays' the trolls.

become a troll bride. Her situation in the third ordeal curiously echoes that of Áli in his first ordeal; he would have been drawn to the trollish side had he yielded to Nótt.

Therefore, in Áli's first three ordeals, the hero's humanity is put to the test, set against three monstrous/marginal figures: the troll, the werewolf, and the leper, all curiously tied to the image of hideous, filthy skin. Following the order of the ordeals, Morgan summarises Áli's identities 'as a prisoner at Nótt's cave, as a werwolf, as a chancred "leper"', in opposition to 'as a giant-killer' in the last ordeal.[165] Considered together, these ordeals see Áli's movement from a defensive or victim position to an aggressive and heroic one. Juxtaposing the troll, the werewolf, and the leper, *Ála flekks saga* replays the same test for Áli three times, though to different degrees. The motif of skin is explored most explicitly in the werewolf and the leprous experience, with the leprous appearance's sloughing-off echoing the werewolf skin while, in the first ordeal, Nótt's shaggy skin-coat and her filthy cave produce imagery similar to that of the stinking wolfskin and repulsive leprous skin. In other words, *Ála flekks saga* offers an interesting case study that makes possible a discussion of werewolf on the skin level.

Thus, the saga strongly validates the fruitfulness of applying the concept of the Skin Ego and Small's skin models to analysing the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf texts. In this chapter I have investigated the medieval understanding of the skin both as a crucial body part that defines the form and as a window that allows a glimpse into the individual's mind, making visual the latent and the unseen. This capacity of the skin is fundamental to Anzieu's concept of the Skin Ego, a theory that recognises fully the skin's power as an identity indicator. To Anzieu, the skin becomes a book that can be written on, read, and interpreted. However, whereas in reality this book may be misleading and concealing, in medieval literature where the author works towards aligning the appearance with the essence, the Skin Ego becomes a

[165] Morgan, 147.

convenient analytic concept as it allows the audience/readers a means of understanding the characters in the narrative. By applying the Skin Ego to the Franco-Latin werewolf texts, Small's research shows that the story of the werewolf is narrated on its skin and, as the skin 'splits', the process of man-wolf metamorphosis leaves otherwise invisible wounds on the werewolf's psyche.

However, validating the skin models is not this chapter's sole aim, for the application of the skin models to *Ála flekks saga* not only furthers Small's conclusions, but also extends the discussion of the werewolf's skin to that of leprosy. The lack of similar terminology and the indigenous tradition of skin-related transformation complicate Small's models and, therefore, call for modification. In *Tiodielis saga* and *Ála flekks saga*, although no skin is mentioned pre-transformation, a skin is shed and destroyed after the restoration of the human form. This presents a variation of Small's models, one that is uniquely Old Norse-Icelandic and combines the two models. As demonstrated by Áli's journey to achieve full humanness, this third model starts as the 'fusion model' but ends as the 'overlay' type: once Áli's skin is 'split into' wolf and man, the wolf skin just keeps growing until it falls off, leaving behind only the human skin and ego. By paralleling this process, Áli's leprous experience juxtaposes the werewolf and the leper, two figures that are already linked by their outlaw nature. Leprosy has been believed to be a moral disease, and the festering, stinking skin a visible sign of the leper's questionable moral status and transgression. In addition to the wolf ego, therefore, *Ála flekks saga* also presents a leper ego. The connection between the two will be explored further in the next chapter, in the physical transformation of Biscla(v)ret and Tíódél and the metaphorical transformation of their wives. However, instead of the skin, I shift the focus on to a 'mimic' skin: the clothes.

Chapter Two

'Klæddr eða Nokkuiðr':[166] The Werewolf's Clothing and the She-Wolf

In *Bisclaretz ljóð*, upon hearing that her husband regularly turns into a wolf, the lady's first reaction is to ask 'huart h*ann* gengi klædr æða nœkkuiðr' ('whether he went clothed or naked').[167] This seems a very odd thing for the wife to say, for one would rather expect her to express fear or concern over the matter of shape-changing. One may also argue that this is necessary, since their conversation must take account of the werewolf's clothes or the story would go nowhere. On closer examination, however, it also makes one wonder whether there is some deeper meaning to being clothed and being naked. Would the lady's response differ if the werewolf did keep his clothes on? More intriguingly, Bisclaret confirms that he is indeed *nokkuiðr* (naked) but seems to have no qualms whatsoever about walking around as a 'naked' wolf, whereas we learn later that he refuses to appear as a 'naked' man in public, even though his life – as well as the life of that innocent man who was helping him – depends on his accepting the clothes again.[168] His answer and behaviour suggest that there is a fine line between being naked as a wolf and being naked as a human: the wolf is 'naked' only in the sense that he wears no *human* attire, yet the apparently naked body is not subject to the same shame when covered in the wolf's fur and skin.

Indeed, in donning or shedding the wolfskin, a transitional phase during which the werewolf is naked or at least not properly clothed, seems inevitable. In the case of Bisclaret, the transformative process is explicitly expressed in terms of clothes/skin-exchanging, but even when the author/redactor falls silent about transformation, it is to be understood that, having come out of the wolf form, the werewolf needs human attire so as to complete and confirm his

[166] Clothed or naked. *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 88.
[167] Ibid., pp. 88-89.
[168] Ibid., pp. 96-97.

restored human status and identity. It is a logical move, since clothes are made to fit the body – both physically and socially; when the body changes, so must they. In this sense, human clothes and the wolfskin become substitutions for and counterparts to each other; one succeeds the other, as the body changes between man and wolf. Therefore, since the skin has been discussed in the previous chapter, it is the goal of this chapter to move one layer 'outwards' to examine the clothes – the 'mimic' skin – and, more importantly, their dynamic with the werewolf's body.

Yet, the werewolf is not necessarily the only one who loses his clothes or skin. As the *Bisclavret* group – namely, *Bisclavret*, *Bisclaretz ljóð*, and *Tiodielis saga* – attests, the werewolf's wife also loses (part of) her skin and/or her courtly lady's clothes, reduced at the same time to characterisation as a *lepra* (leper) and *lupa* (she-wolf). As the werewolf husband loses and recovers his human, knightly identity, the lady's power and status also waxes and wanes; her story is both parallel and opposite to her husband's. This gender symmetry is central to this chapter, as it shapes its structure. In Sections One and Two, I will examine the clothes-body dynamics in both the werewolf's and his wife's stories: the first devoted to the man-wolves in the *Bisclavret* group and other relevant sources, while the second explores the wife's wolfishness and how her fate and portrayal differ from that of her husband. The aim of these sections is two-fold: to demonstrate how the clothes-body dynamic features in the werewolf tales and to identify the key questions this generates. Then, in Section Three, I propose to set the discussion in the context of the concept and classification of dress, which, as will be introduced in detail, ties together body, clothes, gender, and identity. Once this ground has been laid, medieval understanding(s) of the human body and the role of clothes will be examined with particular reference to gender. Finally, in Sections Four and Five, I will return to the *Bisclavret* group and discuss what each change of dress entails in the cases of the werewolf and the (metaphorical) she-wolf figure.

Section One: The Clothes-Body Dynamics: The Man-Wolf

Of all the Old Norse-Icelandic source materials considered in this thesis, *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga* are no doubt the most representative when it comes to clothes-body dynamics. This is not just because they are the only texts in which the werewolf's transformation is explicitly triggered by the removal of clothes, but additionally, the werewolf's wife also loses her clothes, a detail that is not found in the Old French original.[169] This addition on the Norse translator/redactor's part renders the story more symmetrical; the wife's storyline, as parallel yet also opposite to Bisclaret's, becomes thus foregrounded. However, that is the subject of the next section; as the wife's 'transformation' is defined against and compared to the werewolf's metamorphosis, here her husband will be discussed first.

To assume their wolf form, both Bisclaret and Tíódél must undress and hide their clothes; their restoration depends on access to them. This motif is an ancient and widespread one: as early as the first century AD, Petronius tells the story of a soldier who strips himself, urinates around his clothes, and turns into a wolf. Niceros, the eyewitness to this remarkable event, tries to steal the werewolf's clothes, only to find they have become stone.[170] The sudden petrification of the clothes may or may not be the source of Bisclavret's hiding his clothes under a rock, but it certainly serves the same purpose: to safeguard against theft, otherwise the werewolf cannot regain his human form.[171] A similar plot is also found in Gervase of Tilbury's report, where Chaucevaire must undress and roll naked in the sand to transform into a wolf; his

[169] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 94-95; *Tiodielis saga*, p. 38.
[170] Seneca Petronius, *Satyricon. Apocolocyntosis*, trans. Michael Heseltine, W. H. D. Rouse, rev. E. H. Warmington, Loeb Classical Library 15 (Cambridge, MA, 1913), sections 61-62, pp. 132-39. For the history of the motif and the importance of the (naked)body-clothes dynamic in werewolf tales, see Budal, pp. 224-25. In particular, she points out that these werewolves belong to the category of 'constitutional werewolf', namely werewolves that do not need external objects or spells to transform; the only necessary condition is to be naked ('det einaste som er naudsynt for metamorforsen er å vera naken', p. 224). She also recognises the importance of the original set of clothes in these tales ('ett og same sett klede', p. 225).
[171] José Vincenzo Molle, 'La nudité et les habits du « garulf » dans *Bisclavret* (et dans d'autres récits de loups et de louves)', in *Le nu et le vêtu au moyen âge : XII^e^-XIII^e^ siècles*, ed. Chantal Connochie-Bourgne (Aix-en-Provence, 2001), pp. 255-269 (261-62).

clothes must be safely hidden away as well, but Chaucevaire has no qualms about using a bush for concealment if rocks happen to be unavailable.[172] It is noteworthy that, in these tales, it is only the original set of clothes that can restore the werewolf to his human form, a point that is made especially clear in *Tiodielis saga*, where the redactor apparently feels it necessary to rationalise at some length the wife's failure to dispose of the clothes for good:

> [T]eckvr sydan i hans hond og leyder hann til skogar j þad sama her berge sem fyr var getid takande syns herra skallats klæde og so talande eg vil giefa þier þesse klæde minn vnnvst<e>, nei myn frv, ei vil eg þav bera helldvr vil eg bera þav hier vt ä modvna so þav meige alldre finnast, higg eg þann ver hafa sem þeim klædist nema herrann sialfann, hvn svarar þa, mann skræda ertv er þv́ þorer ei ad bera klæde epter davdann þræl eda for gleyma so ornvm skrvda sem einginn finst betre edvr so godvr, skal eg þav geima til þess xij maunder erv lidner og þv dreckvr brvd kavp til myn.
>
> [T]hen she takes his hands and leads him [i.e. the lover] to the forest and the very chamber as mentioned before. She takes her lord's scarlet clothes and says: 'I will give you these clothes, my love.' 'No, my lady, I will not take the clothes; I would rather toss them into the river so that they may never be found. I think anyone who wears them would fare badly, except the lord himself.' Then she answers: 'You are a weak coward, when you dare not wear the clothes of a dead slave or wish to give up such rich attire than which is there is none better or equally good? I shall keep them until twelve months have passed, and you drink at our wedding.'[173]

The emphasis on the significance of the werewolf's original clothes not only adds a further twist to the plot, but also establishes a stark contrast between the clothes' permanency and the

[172] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, ed. and trans. S.W. Bank and J.W. Binns (Oxford, 2002), III. 120, pp. 814-15, parallel translation on opposite page.
[173] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 24. It is interesting that the lady desires to give Tíódél's clothes to her new husband (to-be). This point will be returned to in the later part of this chapter, where the saga will be discussed in detail.

body's mutability. The hiding of the clothes – either inside a stone or a chest – echoes the subversion of the human skin by the wolf fur, the subversion of Bisclavret by *le bisclavret*; what has happened to the human is replayed offstage on a superficial level with the concealed clothes.[174]

The interplay between clothedness and nakedness, between the concealing and revealing of the body is also found in other werewolf tales, although the transformative process is not necessarily initiated by (the removal of) clothes. The hero needs to be naked or nearly naked before turning into a wolf and, implicitly or explicitly, needs to be clothed again upon restoration. In this type, the clothes that the werewolf receives upon restoration need not be the same ones he has had before transformation; nor must they belong to him. What is at stake here seems rather to be the avoidance of nakedness; the clothes are less associated with *an* individual than with *a type* of individual.

This group includes Melion, Alfonse, and, arguably, Áli flekkr. For Melion, the direct trigger of transformation is apparently the magic ring that serves as counterpart to Bisclavret's clothes, as both become lost through the actions of a deceitful wife and are recovered when the same wife is tortured or cajoled by a higher authority. The ring alone does the job, yet Melion nevertheless goes through an almost ceremonial act of undressing and, like Bisclavret, specifically instructs his wife: 'Por Deu vos pri, ci m'atendés / Et ma despoille me gardés' ('For God's sake, I pray you, wait for me here / And guard my clothes').[175] The underlying logic

[174] The relationship between Bisclavret's body and clothes is treated by Molle. In his reading, the clothes are substitute of the body ('les vêtements sont en fait le substitut du corps', p. 260). Molle, however, compares Bisclavret to the shamanic experience of shapeshifting, thus turning to the Augustinian idea of *phantasticum* as well as the Norse concept of *fylgja*. While his argumentation is interesting, it somewhat simplifies Bisclavret's situation by dismissing the fact that his body does actually physically transform and the 'human side' is by no means 'de l'être dormant' (of the dormant essence); inseparable, the man and the wolf are active at the same time.

[175] *Melion*, in Melion *and* Bisclarel*: Two Old French Werewolf Lays*, ed. and trans. Amanda Hopkins, Liverpool Online Series: Critical Editions of French Texts 10 (Liverpool, 2005), vv. 167-68, pp. 58-59, parallel English translation on opposite page. Despite similarities between *Melion* and *Bisclavret*, the motif of clothes is explored differently. Bisclavret relies on a specific set of clothes – *his* clothes – while any clothes will do for Melion, as long as they cover his body and presumably do not compromise his rank.

must be that he cannot possibly turn into a wolf without damaging the clothes and he needs clothes – any clothes – upon restoration, so that his naked body will not be seen by anyone. (Indeed, even when he undresses himself, he does it alone in the woods and wraps himself in a cloak before coming into his wife's sight). Alfonse goes through a similar process: he is naked when Queen Brande turns him into a wolf, and he has knightly clothes brought to him upon restoration, on the one hand to confirm his re-acquired identity as the prince of Spain, on the other to align his attire with the knighthood that is about to be conferred on him.[176] It is no surprise that it is Guillaume who is asked to dress him, for he is the one that links the (were)wolf with knightly status; he has adopted the white wolf image on his shield, thus identifying himself with the beast as knight.

Áli, on the other hand, is a curious case. He does take off his clothes, but unlike Melion, he does so without knowing that he is about to turn into a wolf; Áli only undresses to go to sleep with his bride. Nor is he completely naked: he is in his linen shift (*afklæddr*).[177] The shift or chemise is a special piece of cloth, for it functions in a liminal space between full clothedness and nakedness. It is true that the chemise covers the body, but unlike the outer garments, it is designed to be the innermost layer. Once revealed, it 'voile le corps d'un effet de nudité. Être en chemise, c'est être « nu »' (veils the body with an effect of nudity. To be in a chemise, is to be 'naked').[178] The location of Áli's transformation is also noteworthy: it is in the bedchamber, the *meykongr*'s bower. Both the chemise and the location may be explained away by

[176] *Guillaume de Palerne: roman du XIII^e siécle*, ed. Alexandre Micha (Genève, 1990), vv. 301-06, p. 47, for an English translation, see *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation of 12th Century French Verse Romance*, ed. and trans. Leslie A. Sconduto (Jefferson, 2004), vv. 301-06, p. 19; the whole restoration and dressing-up scene is found in *Guillaume de Palerne*, vv. 7728-7952, pp. 269-75; *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation*, vv. 7728-7952, pp. 209-14. When Alfonse is restored to human form, the queen immediately wraps him in her cloak to avoid his public nakedness and to reduce as much as possible his feeling of embarrassment. It is also noteworthy that, having been turned into a wolf at a very young age, Alfonse has never been knighted. With the bath and the knightly clothing, Alfonse is not merely restored to his human form and identity, but also to his rightful social and political position as a knight and heir to the throne.

[177] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 8, p. 138.

[178] Romaine Wolf-Bovin, 'Un vêtement sans l'être : la chemise', in *Le nu et le vêtu au moyen âge*, ed. Connochie-Bourgne, pp. 383-94 (384).

practicality: the author does not want to ruin Áli's good wedding clothes and to go to the bedchamber is a logical move after the wedding. The choice of the timing and the location, however, brings Áli closer to the other undressing werewolves. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned examples, and observing that the disclosure of werewolf identity is always associated with bedchambers and bowers, it would be careless to dismiss Áli's undressing in Þornbjǫrg's bower as merely coincidental or convenient. The saga author never mentions what kind of clothes Áli receives upon restoration – or whether indeed he does so, but even if Áli does retain his chemise underneath the wolfskin, he will have to get dressed at some point; it does not seem proper to meet the king in a chemise that must have been soiled by the stinking wolfskin.

Though the body in question does not belong to the werewolf, both *Úlfhams rímur* and *Jóns saga leikara* play with the idea of concealing and revealing the naked (human) body. The relationship between Úlfhamr's and Vargstakkr's storylines will be discussed in Chapter Four; suffice it to say that, parallel to each other, Úlfhamr's story can be read as an elaborated expansion of Vargstakkr's, or Vargstakkr's as a prototype of Úlfhamr's. In her curse, Hildr does not specify that Úlfhamr needs to be naked, yet the prince undresses himself before disappearing into Vǫrn's mound:

'K*ongur*in*n* for af klæd*um* hi*er*.	(The king undressed himself,
kuol u*ar* nog fy*rer* h*on*du*m*.'	he was to suffer a terrible pain).[179]

Ótta does the same, though she previously dresses herself in extremely rich attire to approach the mound:

[179] *Úlfhams rímur*, IV.16, p. 20. Hildr's curse is found a few stanzas earlier, where she only states: 'Wiser gack þu j Uarn*ar* haug / *og* u*er*tt þar fast*ur* j sæti' (King, you go into Vǫrn's mound / and sit there firmly). IV. 3, p. 19.

‘Hest*ur*in*n* gautz at haud*ri* snyr.	(The horse of Gaut [= ship] turns to shore,
haug*ur*in*n* stod æa l*an*di	the mound stood on the land.
brvd*ur*in geym*er* /bylgiu\ dyr.	The maiden moored well the billow-beast [= ship],
bue*n* m*ed* rin*ar* sande.	She was dressed in Rhine’s sand [= gold].
Dyruz geck j dr*a*uga ran.	The dearest maiden entered the *draugr*’s hall,
dr*o*s u*ar*d klædu*m* fleyia.	she took off her rich clothes.
Sæt*an* þen*an* sig*ur*in u*ann*.	That sweet girl won victory;
sæmr*a* uæ*ri* at dey*ia*.’	it would be better to die.)[180]

Soon to be concealed in the burial mound, the naked body is glimpsed only momentarily. The all-covering mound echoes the all-enclosing wolfskin, and the body of Úlfhamr – tormented and wasted away – is a reminder of the violence experienced by the ‘fusion-type’ werewolf during transformation, when one skin is ‘split into’ two. In *Jóns saga leikara*, the relationship between Jón and Sigurðr is more difficult to pin down, given the lack of detail about the werewolf’s history. The only comment the author makes is that ‘huor hafdj ödrum lijf gefid’ (each had saved the life of the other).[181] This seems to suggest that Jón and Sigurðr have formed a sworn brotherhood comparable to that between Guillaume and Alfonse, and both the hero and the werewolf play with the concept of concealing and revealing the (human) body. Jón, in a comical moment, hides the princess’s and his own naked bodies under her bedsheet to trick her father, just as Sigurðr’s evil stepmother tricks everyone by hiding Sigurðr beneath the appearance of a wolf. Jón’s (arguable) recognition of Sigurðr apparently is to his credit, so that

[180] Ibid., IV.43-44, p. 24.
[181] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 19.

he not only goes unpunished but also is rewarded with the princess's hand.[182] In both texts, the question is: why do Úlfhamr and Jón have to go naked at all? Heroes entering a *draugr*'s burial mounds are not lacking in Old Icelandic literature, but no one else undresses as Úlfhamr is obliged to. As for Jón, why does he need to undergo all these troubles to hide his love of the princess? Surely, as the hero who has just delivered the kingdom from a malicious dragon and been offered 'þad af vöru Rijkj ad hafa sem þu villt' (to have whatever you wish from our kingdom), he can just ask to marry the princess.[183] Nevertheless, the hero's hidden nakedness is added and emphasized – but whose storyline does it accommodate? The protagonist's, or that of the werewolf?

In all the cases mentioned above, the werewolves or werewolf-parallels are sympathetic, high-ranking male characters. The process of dressing and undressing necessarily entails a phase of nakedness, yet the naked body is carefully hidden away from sight and the werewolf's honour kept intact. The motif is particularly strong in the *Bisclavret* group, where public nakedness is explicitly associated with shame and therefore must be avoided at all costs.[184] Here *Tiodielis saga* is particularly noteworthy, as the shamefulness entailed in public nakedness is explicitly associated with original sin through the wise knight's biblical reference to Adam and Eve, thus anchoring Tíódél not only in the human, courtly world but also in the Christian sphere, and accentuating the contrast between him and his wife, who cares little about 'annars heims eilÿfa dyrd og da semd' (the glory and honour of the everlasting life of the other

[182] Ibid., p. 17: 'huorsu hardlegrar hefndar þu værer verdur af öss enn med þuj at eg vnder stend fijrer sök hræuargsinz at þu ertt eirnn agiætur madur vilium vier þessa þijna misgiord vid öss vpp gefa' (what harsh revenge you should receive from us, if I do not know that, because of what you did to the carrion wolf, you are a noble-hearted man. We will forgive your transgression against us). The author never explains precisely why Jón begs mercy for the wolf; it is unclear if Jón recognises the human beneath the wolfskin or he recognises the pattern of the werewolf story.

[183] Ibid., p. 8. Moreover, the immediate source of the dragon-slaying episode is *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, where the hero marries the princess as a direct result. The author follows his source quite closely, yet he dismisses the spear-shaft's function as the dragon-slayer's proof, over-complicating the story. The omission seems to accommodate the addition of the werewolf motif, so that, when opportunity arises, Jón has to ask for the wolf instead of the princess in order to form the bond with the werewolf. For Ragnarr's dragon-killing and marriage with Þóra, see *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, chaps. 3-4, pp. 101-03.

[184] Marie de France, *Bisclavret*, vv. 284-88, p. 140. *Bisclaretz ljóð*, p. 96-97. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 54.

world).[185] Likewise, in *Melion*, Gauvain suggests to Arthur that he should give the wolf some privacy before the wolf can respond to the ring, in case he might feel too ashamed to do so in public.[186] The clothes are not brought in until Melion is restored to human form. He is quickly wrapped in a cloak and then clothed according to his rank, a process that echoes Melion's earlier undressing prior to transformation. Although he is briefly naked in front of Arthur, it is the attempt to protect his privacy that is foregrounded. This point is also implied in *Bisclarel*, the fourteenth-century French retelling of *Bisclavret* where the restoration scene has been significantly altered. No sense of shame is expressed, the wolf transforms in public, yet the order of wolf-to-man metamorphosis is reversed: whereas Bisclavret and Melion apparently need to turn back to human form first and then put on their clothes, Bisclarel 'dedans se boute et hom devint' ('scrambled into them and became a man').[187] The effect, therefore, is the same; being the hero of the story, they must be spared the shame of public nakedness. The same motif of nakedness, as Kittredge points out, was probably also found in the source material of *Arthur and Gorlagon*, but there the author omits the werewolf's clothes and potential nakedness entirely.[188] Once freed from the wolf form, however, Gorlagon's corporeal beauty is greatly emphasised and admired. This point seems markedly to contrast the human body with the wolf; it becomes rather tempting to assume that he is indeed naked, which would in turn make *Arthur and Gorlagon* a unique case. Yet by being silent about the matter, the text successfully manages to avoid displaying Gorlagon's naked body to the audience, achieving the same effect as in *Bisclavret* and *Melion*.

[185] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 4.
[186] *Melion*, vv. 536-42, and vv. 548-62, pp. 74-79.
[187] *Bisclarel*, in Melion *and* Bisclarel, ed. Hopkins, v. 450, pp. 102-03. The restoration scene and the subsequent punishment are in vv. 447-60, pp. 102-05.
[188] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, ed. Kittredge, pp. 177-78.

Section Two: The Clothes-Body Dynamics: The Metaphorical She-Wolf

However, while the werewolf's body is protected from prying eyes, his treacherous wife experiences quite the opposite. In *Bisclaretz ljóð*, the wife only loses her clothes, though it seems that the translator knows about the loss of her nose, since he mentions that the women in her lineage are noseless. Yet to lose her clothes and be forced to be naked in public is a greater shame; the audience is told that 'ænga suivirðing matte h*ann* mæire gera hænn*i*' ('[h]e could not do any greater disgrace to her').[189] Tíódél's wife loses both at the same time: the wolf 'hafde hana | vnder og reyf af henne oll hennar klæde og þar med nefid og vyda holldid kramid' (got on top of her, and tore off all her clothes, and along with them her nose and furthermore clawed off her flesh).[190] The punishment for both women focuses on display of the naked body, so what has been carefully avoided for her husband is mercilessly enforced upon her. Here *Tiodielis saga* is particularly significant. The damage to the clothes and the damage of the skin/body can be read as two parallel processes, but at the same time they also form a progression: the woman's clothes – the artificial layer – must be removed first, in order that her body can be rendered vulnerable and therefore attacked.

According to Budal, the punishment that Biscla(v)ret's wife suffers is threefold: her nose (and clothes) are torn; she is exiled; her progeny is (partially) noseless; these punishments are imposed by three different parties and, with the increase in severity and scope, the issuer's authority also increases.[191] The first judgement is issued and executed by Biscla(v)ret in wolf form. Its justness is confirmed by the second sentence issued by the king, whose decree is in turn justified by God, the source of the third punishment.[192] The result is that she has 'become'

[189] *Bisclaret*, pp. 94-95.
[190] *Tiodielis saga*, pp. 239-41, p. 38. The phrase *hafde hana vnder*, in addition to describing the actual wolf attack, also constructs an image of sexual assault. This will be discussed in more detail in the last section.
[191] Budal, pp. 216-17. See also Blud, p. 126.
[192] While in the *Bisclavret* and *Bisclaretz ljóð* the divine nature of the last punishment is only implied, in *Tiodielis saga* it is identified as a sign of the anger of God. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 72: 'aull þau baurn s*e*m hun atte voru aull neflaus, ma þ*ad* sky*n*ia huad gud drottin*n* v*ar*d h*enn*e reijd*ur* fyr*er* sijn suik hi*er* j þ*essa*ri v*er*olldu' (all the children that she had were noseless. One can see that the Lord God was angry with her for her betrayal she

a wolf on the metaphorical level, for each consecutive sentence adds a layer of wolfishness to the woman by imposing on her a form of outlawry, pushing her further into marginality. Having lost her nose and been tortured by the king, the woman's wounded and broken body appears similar to the image of the leper (as in the case of Áli flekkr). Thus, by the end of the tale, her wolfishness is made visible on her body and she becomes a *lepra*, whose affinity with *lupa* has been discussed in Chapter One. This 'transformation' is further reflected on and confirmed by the next two penalties, which, according to Blud, can be read as double exile.[193] The second judgement targets the woman herself: although the term 'outlaw' is technically limited to men, women, if subjected to a similar sentence, 'may reasonably share the outlaw's expectation of attack' and, therefore, she too assumes the wolf's head.[194] The third penalty, targeting (part of) her progeny, conforms to the previous two. On the one hand, it extends her outlaw status to her (female) descendants, accentuating not only the irrevocability of her social and political position but also her wolfishness: children born in outlawry are automatically outlawed. They are metaphorically wolves and the wife, therefore, is not only a she-wolf but also a mother of wolves. On the other hand, the hereditary noselessness echoes the characteristics of leprosy,

committed in this world). It is also noteworthy that, despite the author's silence over the detail of the wife's torture, the violence inflicted upon the wife's body by the king doubles and, consequently, legitimises the werewolf's bestial act.

[193] Blud, pp. 124-28.

[194] Ibid., p. 126. Only in *Bisclaretz ljóð* is the royal sentence of outlawry for life explicitly expressed: 'gærðe hana utlæga um alla hænnar lifdaga' ('made her an outlaw for all the days of her life'). *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 96-97. That the expression 'wolf-head' is used to denote outlaws is found in *Leges Edwardi confessori*: 'lupinum enim gerit caput' (he shall bear a wolf's head) and in the fourteenth-century *Le mireur a justices*: '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' ('he [i.e. the outlaw] shall be accounted as wolf, and "Wolfs-head!" shall 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'). The same idea is also found in the Exeter Book Riddle 53(5), where the compound *wulfheafedtreo* (wolf-head tree) is generally translated as 'gallows' or 'cross'. Although similar constructions are not found in the Old Norse language, the word *vargr* can be used for both 'wolf' and 'criminal', as indicated in *Grágás*: for instance, in chapter 115 (*Konungsbók*), it is said that a man who breaks legally established treaties 'scal hann sva viða 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'). [Edward the Confessor], *De fractione paucis ecclesiasiae* in *S. Edwardi leges ecclesiasticae et saecularibus suis depromotae*. Patrologia Latina 151 (Paris, 1858), 1192. Andrew Horne, *The Mirror of Justices*, ed. and trans. William Joseph Wittaker (London, 1895), IV.4 p. 125. *The Old English Riddles of 'Exeter Book'*, ed. Craig Williamson (Chapel Hill, 1977), p. 300 and p. 303. *Grágás. Konungsbók: islændernes lovbog i fristatens tid*, 2 vols, ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (København, 1852; repr. Odense, 1974), I, p. 206.

namely, as pointed out in Chapter One, the disease is sexually transmitted and can be passed from mother to child.

That the treacherous wife, perceived as a metaphorical wolf, is punished corporeally is also found elsewhere. In *Úlfhams rímur*, Hildr not only beheads her werewolf husband but also proposes an incestuous union with her son. When she is turned down, she tries to kill Úlfhamr – twice, first by battle, then through a curse. Although she is never 'turned' in the same way as Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife, Hildr is frequently described in wolf-related terms: *grimm sem vargar* (savage as a wolf), *móður varga* (mother of wolves), and *ylg* (she-wolf).[195] Another such is Gorgol's faithless queen in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, who, curiously, is the only character in the entire text modified by *versipellis*, one of the werewolf terms listed in Small's summary.[196] Both Hildr and the nameless queen are sentenced to die a horrifying death: the former is burned, the latter first quartered in public and then burned. Death by fire, like cutting off the nose, is a standard punishment for adulteresses and female traitors.[197] Since it is customary that the condemned woman mounts the pyre in her shift, there is also an element of revealing of the body, immediately followed by damage to the body. The function of the punishment, however, is different; so is the sequence of events: whereas Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife's public humiliation and disfigurement lead to revelation of her crime, Hildr and Gorgol's

[195] *Úlfhams rímur*, I.20, II.17, and III. 18, p. 5, p. 10, and p. 15. In the latter two instances, Hildr is referred as the mother of wolves (i.e. her soldiers, not Úlfhamr).
[196] See Chapter One, p. 26.
[197] Budal, pp. 221-22. In particular, she mentions that after a Welsh rebellion in 1165, the women were punished by having their noses cut off, whereas the men were castrated. The event may have influenced the lady's fate in *Bisclavret*. Burning seems to be another form of punishment for similar crimes. Barbara Hanawalt, having examined materials from the fourteenth-century England, concludes that burning as punishment is standard for female traitors, including those who killed their husbands (i.e. their lords). Barbara Hanawalt, 'The Female Felon in Fourteenth-Century England', *Viator*, 5 (1974), 253-68 (265). To conduct a historical survey as Hanawalt has on female felons burnt in medieval Scandinavia is not among the objects of this thesis, but suffice it to say that female characters who plot or are believed to have plotted against their husbands, lords, and kings do tend to be burned in the source materials. In addition to Hildr, a couple of other women are found in texts investigated in this thesis: Blátǫnn is cursed to turn into a stone-slab and have 'fire set upon' her by Áli. Helga, Þorsteinn glott's stepmother is wrongly accused of turning into a wolf and devouring Þorsteinn and would also have been burned, if Þorsteinn had not reappeared in time. Lunette in *Yvain* is almost burnt at the stake because she is thought to have betrayed Laudine, a detail that is faithfully retained in *Ívens saga*. *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 4, p. 130. *Sagan af Þorsteini glott*, in *Íslenzkar þjóðsögur og æfintýri*, ed. Jón Árnason (Leipzig, 1862-64), pp. 580-82.

queen's crimes are already confirmed before the sentence. Moreover, the latter two women are already recognised as 'she-wolves' before the punishments, and the act of burning rather aims at thorough destruction of their bodies than marking them out as 'she-wolves'. This difference in treatment also lies in the women's progeny. Both Hildr and Gorgon's queen have children who are fully recognised by their father. The total erasure of the maternal body by fire may signify the children's severed tie to their mother, and the paternal bloodline is thus purged.[198]

In these examples, the story of the werewolf is also the story of the she-wolf; they are as symmetrical as contrasting to one other. While the werewolf has a threatening appearance yet a gentle heart, the lady has a beautiful face but a treacherous heart. The lady's loss of clothes and the consequent exposure of her body parallels Bisclaret's loss of clothes, and the permanent wound in her face reflects and compensates for Bisclaret's temporary loss of human status. In the end, however, the husband successfully proves himself essentially human and is re-accepted into courtly society, while the wife, revealed to be a *lupa* under a fair woman's skin, is compromised, marked, and expelled. In other words, *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga* present two types of human-wolf, fundamentally different yet related to each other: the physically transformed, victimised male werewolf, and the metaphorically transformed, villainised she-wolf. One is trapped in the wolf form against his will, the other 'becomes' one through her own actions. What distinguishes these two 'wolves', as Blud correctly states, is gender.[199] The *Bisclavret* group, therefore, boils down to a struggle between two sexes; wolfishness passes between the husband and the wife and each stage is marked by change of clothing and body.

[198] This leaves Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife a curious exception: her marriage with the werewolf is a childless one, yet she starts to reproduce after she is disfigured and outlawed. Why is she not eliminated as the other she-wolves are? Why does she give birth only after the crime, but not when she and Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél are married? These questions will be addressed in the last part of this chapter, where the wife is central.
[199] Blud, p. 118.

Section Three: Dress: Definition, Classification, Function

Adhering to the structure of male-female symmetry, the rest of this chapter centres on the (naked) body – of the wolf, of the knight, and of the woman – in relation to its interaction with clothes, what this entails in each case and how those differences comes about. Before that, however, it is necessary to clarify some terminology, for, as my discussion will show, the term 'clothes' will prove to be rather too limiting and ambiguous. 'Dress' is the more inclusive and preferred term, for 'dress' also includes changes made directly on or to the body, avoiding the risk of overlooking non-sartorial items that nevertheless can be 'worn', and which constitute and communicate the wearer's personal and social identity.

Joanne B. Eicher and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins propose an essential classification and definition of the term 'dress'.[200] They argue that dress is essentially 'an assemblage of body modifications and body supplements', a term that covers 'the full range of things we do to the body or put on the body to get dressed'.[201] What the term entails, therefore, is very broad, allowing the inclusion not only of things that are directly worn on or added to the body – such as clothes, jewels, and other related accessories – but also of transformations of body parts and objects that are held by or are next to the individual in metonymic relation. This classification system, as pointed out by Eicher and her co-researchers, has several advantages when it comes to the study of clothes: first, highly body-centred, the term 'dress' takes into consideration not only what is worn, but also its interaction with the wearer and their culture. Second, 'dress'

[200] See, for instance, Joanne B. Eicher and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, 'Definition and Classification of Dress: Implications for Analysis of Gender Roles', in *Dress and Gender: Making and Meaning in Cultural Contexts*, ed. Ruth Barnes and Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford, 1992), pp. 8-28. A more detailed explanation is found in Joanne B. Eicher and Sandra Lee Evenson, *The Visible Self: Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture, and Society*, 4th edn (New York, 2015), pp. 3-27, where Eicher and Evenson discuss, on a case-by-case basis, what the term 'dress' entails and how it is related to and interacts with other concepts such as 'appearance' and 'shape'.

[201] Eicher and Evenson, p. 28. Notably, their table lists all the items that are counted as 'dress', divided into 'body modifications' (i.e. things that are *done to* the body) and 'body supplements' (i.e. things that are *added to* the body). The first category includes transformations of various body parts; the second includes 'enclosures', 'attachments to the body', 'attachments to body enclosures', and 'handheld objects'. Eicher and Evenson, p. 5, and Eicher and Roach-Higgins, p. 18.

minimises the linguistic bias active in different languages, thus avoiding any possible confusion caused by difference in terminologies and mistranslation. Third, as a means of non-verbal communication, dress is closely tied to identity and status, both personal and social. More importantly, this automatically includes gender and sexuality; as 'both an indicator and a producer of gender', dress gives 'a revealing image of the qualities associated with "feminine" or "masculine"'.[202]

These advantages do not diminish when dress – as a term – is applied to the study of the werewolves as in this chapter. Within the Eicher-Roach system, both the husband and wife's transformations in the *Bisclavret* group can be read in terms of change of dress: the werewolf metamorphosis – whether belonging to the 'overlay' or the 'fusion model' – inevitably involves transformations of skin, hair, and the entire physique, thus falling into the category of 'body modifications'. The uncovering of the she-wolf, in the case of Bisclaret/Tíódél's wife, involves damage to her clothes and face, and at the same time exposure of her body. Both transformations, therefore, are essentially movements between different types of dress and, by extension, between that which is entailed by different types of dress. By adopting the definition and classification of dress, therefore, it becomes possible to discuss the two processes of transformation and revelation in equal and comparative terms, linking together the triangle of the animalistic, the male, and the female body as well as leaving room for (lack of) clothes. In addition, the system's focus on and inclusion of the (unclothed) body allow discussion of the werewolf in comparison to the Wild Man figure, such as Yvain. It also raises a new question concerning the relationship between Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél and the king, and Yvain and the Lion: during all that time when the wolf or bear or lion is keeping its master

[202] Eicher and Evenson, pp. 23-26. Dress's close association with gender and sexuality is also discussed in Eicher and Roach-Higgins, pp. 17-21; the quotations are taken from Barnes and Eicher, 'Introduction', in *Dress and Gender*, ed. Barnes and Eicher, pp. 1-7 (p. 7 and p. 3).

company, could the beast be considered as part of the king's or Yvain's dress? What, then, will the beasts communicate to the onlookers about the king's or Yvain's identity?

The critical consensus is that dress is primarily a means of nonverbal communication. To dress correctly and in accordance with the individual's cultural background, therefore, is essential; a lot of social information can be surmised based on a person's dress. Ideally, both the body – the foundation, the core of dress – and whatever is added on or taken off should be consistent with the individual's identity and social behaviour. Take for instance the giant herdsman in *Yvain*, hideous in appearance and wearing animal skin; at best he defines himself as *uns hom* (' a man'), as opposed to the animals in his charge, but he certainly does not belong to the same class as Calogrenant, who is well armoured, rides a warhorse, and seeks quests and adventures.[203] Yet it does not necessarily follow that dress always tell the truth, for it is manipulable and the information it yields can be highly ambiguous. Deploying it with skill grants considerable power over the viewer. This is especially advantageous to women, who otherwise have limited space to exercise power. In *Le roman de la Rose*, a nameless wife is reproached by her elderly, jealous bourgeois husband, for she uses extravagance to transform herself into a courtly figure, thus attracting courtly lovers and achieving a certain degree of social mobility.[204]

[203] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, v. 328, p. 11, for the English translation, see Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight of the Lion (Yvain)*, in Arthurian Romances, ed. and trans. William W. Kibler (*Erec and Enide* trans. Carleton W. Carroll) (London, 2004), p. 299. In the Old Norse version, the translator adds that the herdsman has never changed his shape ('Aldri skipta ek skepnu minni'). This addition suggests that the herdsman carefully distinguishes himself not only from the beasts in his charge, but also from shapeshifters like Bisclavret. What he emphasises here is the permanency of his form and, therefore, his identity – although he himself is a mixture of animalistic features, he stresses the fact that he remains firmly in the realm of the human. *Ívens saga*, in *Norse Romance II: Knights of the Round Table*, ed. and trans. Marianne E. Kalinke (Cambridge, 1999; repr. 2012), pp. 40-41. Parallel English translation on opposite pages.

[204] Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le roman de la rose*, ed. Armand Strubel (Paris, 1992), vv. 8459-9364, pp. 508-558. For a full analysis of the jealous husband in the aforementioned episodes, see E. Jane Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed: Reading Through Clothes in Medieval French Culture* (Philadelphia, 2002), pp. 44-49.

The possible imbalance between dress and identity raises the same question that has been identified in the previous chapter: what if the exterior and the interior do not match? 'opt erű flogd i fogrű skinne' (often are troll-women in a fair skin), says the redactor of *Tiodielis saga*.[205] The anxiety, however, is considerably reduced in romance literature and similar genres, where corporeal beauty and inner nobility tend to be aligned. Hjǫrdis in *Vǫlsunga saga* for instance, despite her change of attire, is recognised as of higher birth simply because she is *fegri* ('better-looking'), for being beautiful is apparently part of a princess's dress. It comes as no surprise that soon the balance between her status and clothes is restored.[206] Likewise, Guillaume's inherent nobility is manifested in his external beauty, and his mobility up and down the social ladder is marked by a series of dress-changes: from the richly clothed royal infant to the cowherd's boy, from the knight in the Emperor's court to the fugitive wandering in the woods, from the queen's champion to the rank of prince and king that is his birth right. Although his body and his beauty remain constant, his dress changes each time his identity does – even to the point of becoming – figuratively – a beast.[207] Once discovered, the misalignment of dress and identity is immediately 'corrected'. Although dress throughout the *Bisclavret* group is constantly subject to change, oscillating between revealing and concealing,

[205] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 26.
[206] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 12, pp. 22-23.
[207] The manifestation of Guillaume's nobility in his physical beauty and the aristocratic ideology of the appearance-essence relation are discussed in Hartley R. Miller, '"Hey, you look like a prince!" Ideology and Recognition in *Guillaume de Palerne*', *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes/Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, 24 (2012), 347-60. In particular, discussing the recognition scene of Guillaume by the Emperor, Miller compares the difference in the emperor's and the herdsman's logic: the former conforms to the ideology and rules of romance literature, while the latter is entirely practical, deducing Guillaume's possible extraordinariness from his rich clothes, 348-51. Miller's discussion also opens another interesting question: who performs the recognition or revealing is just as important as who is concealed or disguised. To be able to discern what is hidden also confirms or enhances the recogniser's status. Another point worthy of notice in *Guillaume de Palerne* is that, as Guillaume and Melior approach Guillaume's native country, the animal skins they wear begin to differ: in the beginning both Guillaume and Melior wear the white bear's skin – it is understood that the two skins are identical; Melior's 'attire' looks just as fierce and fearsome as Guillaume's. Then they wear the skins of a stag and a doe – gender difference becomes marked, and Melior becomes more of Guillaume's companion than his equal. This difference is especially foregrounded when they are approached by the queen of Sicily in her disguise. She addresses Guillaume as her equal, foreshadowing Guillaume's sovereign status. *Guillaume de Palerne*, vv. 5224-25, p. 194; *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation*, vv. 5224-25, p. 146. See also McCracken, 'Skin and Sovereignty in *Guillaume de Palerne*', 361-75.

balance is restored in the end: the wife's and her (female) progeny's facial beauty is taken away, permanently barring them from the courtly world. The *Bisclavret* group also confirms the importance and necessity of external judgement; a decision must be made as how to interpret and act appropriately upon the information that seems mis-aligned with the current state of dress. In the texts, the king (and his advisors) make this decision. The stories, nevertheless, recognise the ambiguity and the risk of misinterpretation of the werewolf's vengeance. This is made especially clear in *Tiodielis saga*, where the king does not seem particularly wise or patient while the lady – unlike her silent predecessors – is both loquacious and eloquent in her own defence.[208] All these versions show a disruption of the dress-identity balance when the werewolf exchanges his knightly clothes for the wolfskin, yet a new balance is established when the lady loses her clothes and nose.

Section Four: From Naked to Clothed: The Knight

The next two sections examine what and how Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's and his lady's dress change communicates in their world. Here I return to the chapter's original question: what is the difference between being 'naked' as a human and being 'naked' as a wolf? Three types of dress are at stake here: the wolf-dress, nakedness, and clothedness; the current section focuses on the latter two states. Here the naked will be discussed as opposed to the clothed, first in a Christian framework, then in the world of courtly literature, where the motif of the Mad Man will be discussed in comparison to the werewolf. Although it starts out discussing both man and woman, this section will concentrate on the human male, followed by a discussion of the man-wolf. The wolf will be discussed along with the she-wolf, a weighty subject in its own right, in the last section.

[208] Whereas the kings in both *Bisclavret* and *Bisclaret* are firmly aligned with the werewolf and the wise advisor, *Tiodielis saga* interrupts the pattern by making the king impatient and prone to anger: at various places he threatens to kill both the beast and the advisor, who is no longer a valued member of the court but a poor knight. Tíódél, therefore, is in graver danger than his French and Norwegian counterparts. More will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Being clothed is inherently the natural state of the human being, while the naked body – in the sense of unclothed – is most directly associated with shame, as demonstrated by the cases of Biscla(v)ret, Tíódél and Melion. This sense of shame has its roots in Adam and Eve's Fall and in the uncontrollability of sexual desire. Having consumed the fruit, Adam and Eve felt shame when they saw their naked bodies, hence the urge to cover themselves with leaves – the first instance of dress-changing for mankind. Yet it was not the whole body that they chose to cover, but only the genitalia. St. Augustine identifies these organs as the 'location' of shame, insomuch that they, now disobedient to the mind, serve as the reminder of Adam and Eve's offence: 'quae [i.e. pudenda] prius eadem membra errant, sed pudenda non errant. Senserunt ergo novum motum inoboedientis carnis suae, tamquam reciprocam poenam inoboedientiae suae' ('these had been the same organs before, but had not then been shameful. Thus they experienced an unprecedented movement of their own disobedient flesh as punishment in kind, as it were, for their own disobedience').[209] That the uncontrollability of these *pudenda*, 'organs of shame', results in unbridled sexual desire is also emphasised in the Old Norse *Elucidarius*: 'Efst*er* synþ g*er*þesc fyse munoþliues ílicomom þ*ei*ra. oc sc*om*þosc þau þeira liþa sinna mest. es til synþar fys-tosc. þ*uia*t þau visso þegar at [alt] cyn þeira mønde liggia und*er* þ*ei*re enne somo svnþ' ('After the fall the desire for a lustful life developed in their bodies. They were most ashamed of those limbs which desired to sin, because they knew right away that all of their kin would be subjected to the same sin').[210] Thus, nakedness is fundamentally connected to sexuality, which in turn opens up questions of reason and control. Reason, the key faculty of humanity that separates mankind from animals, is now partially

[209] Augustine of Hippo, *City of God, Volume IV: Books 12-15*, trans. Philip Levine, Loeb Classical Library 414 (Cambridge, MA, 1966), IV, 13.13, pp. 178-79; English translation on opposite pages. See also 14.17, pp. 354-61.

[210] *The Old Norse* Elucidarius*: Original Text and English Translation*, ed. and trans. Evelyn Scherabon Firchow (Columbia, 1992), I. 80-81, pp. 20-21; English translation on opposite page. That Adam and Eve's progeny will be born with sin is a noteworthy one. It not only echoes the notion that children born in exile are exiled by default, but also provides an interesting parallel to the lady's noseless daughters.

diminished, and each act of propagation becomes both a reminder of this and the medium whereby it is passed onto the next generation. However temporary, that loss of reason blurs and breaks down boundaries between human and beast.

It follows that anyone in their right mind would avoid making a show of their naked body and – most crucially – of the *pudenda*. Even under those circumstances, both literary and historical, when medieval people – mostly women – are forced to have their bodies examined, they do not remove their chemise and settle for *the effect of* nakedness rather than nakedness: one such example would be Lanval's mistress who, in order to save her lover, lets fall her mantle and stands *en chemise* in front of Arthur's court so they can see her better.[211] A person willingly going about naked has to be insane or 'unnatural', their lack of clothes evidencing lack of reason. Such a person is dehumanised by their loss of reason, sometimes even degraded so that they are regarded as a beast and/or physically becoming like one. For instance, the *gelts*, according to the author of *Konungs skuggsjá*, become animal-*like* after they have lost their wits in fear of battle and presumably death; if they remain in this state for twenty years, their bodies will sprout feathers and they become as fleeting among the trees 'sæm apyniur eða ikornar' ('as apes or squirrels').[212] Something similar happens to Owein, the Welsh counterpart to Yvain; having wandered in the woods for some time as a madman, he becomes covered with hair and

[211] Marie de France, *Lanval*, vv. 605-06, p. 174; *Janual*, in *Strengleikar*, pp. 226-27. McCracken reports that Blanche de Castille appears before her councillors in her chemise to disprove her rumoured pregnancy. McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery:Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Pennsylvania, 1998), p. 170.

[212] *Konungs skuggsjá*, ed. Ludvig Holm-Olsen, (Oslo, 1945), p. 26; for the English translation, see *The King's Mirror (Speculum Regale - Konungs Skuggsjá)*, ed. and trans. Laurence Marcellus Larson (New York, 1917), p. 116. For the possible sources, see Meyer, 312. Based on Meyer, Jean Young has pointed out that one of the possible sources of the *gelts* in *Konungs skuggsjá* 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. Jean Young, 'Two of the Irish "Mirabilia" in the "King's Mirror"', *Études celtiques*, 3 (1938), 21-26 (23). There is a sense of progress and test in the *gelt* story. The twenty years that they spend in the woods is a liminal period, during which their humanity is suspended yet not forfeited. Perhaps this will be the fate of Yvain and the werewolves, if they stay wild long enough. A similar word *gǫltr* (dat. *gjalti*) appears in *Hávamál*, meaning 'a panic-stricken person, madman'; it has been argued that it may have been coined from the Irish word, rather than having its root in the Old Norse. *Hávámál: Glossary and Index*, ed. David A. H. Evans (London, 1987), s.v. *gjalti*, p. 12; cf. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *gǫltr*, p. 223. See also Etchingham et al, p. 79.

lives among the wild beasts.[213] In both stories, the boundary between human and beast is thoroughly or – in the case of Owein, who is later brought out of this sorry state – almost completely blurred. Their cases represent an extremity, the danger madness may lead to. Here the madness becomes a transitional phase, a liminal space that borders on the abyss of animality. Other madmen may not become as physically animalistic, yet their madness nevertheless imbues them with some effect of beast-likeness; they are treated as animals, not unlike the outlaw, the man who carries a 'wolf's head'.[214]

The adventure of Yvain offers an interesting case study of how a series of dress changes – from clothedness to nakedness to re-clothedness – is interwoven with the development of the character's identity. It is also ideal for discussion in comparison to the werewolf texts, for not only was the romance itself translated into Old Norse at an early date, but it shows a different approach to challenging and (re)defining human identity.[215] Yvain's storyline is essentially divided into two parts, separated by his temporary loss of mind. This transitional period of madness, interpreted as 'an act of spiritual purification', begins with him ripping off and tearing at his clothes and ends with his reacquisition of clothes.[216] Before his madness, Yvain is essentially a knight of Arthur's court; despite his acceptance of his role as Laudine's husband

[213] *Owein, or the Countess of the Fountain*, in *The Mabinogion*, trans. Jeffrey Gantz (London, 1976), p. 209. The wildman's growth of feathers like a bird as a literary trope finds its parallel in the tradition of Nebuchadnezzar, who is called 'the father of most literary madmen'. See Penelope B. R. Doob, *Nebuchadnezzar's Children: Nebuchadnezzar and the Conventions of Madness in Middle English Literature* (New Haven, 1974), pp. 55-66, where she shows that Nebuchadnezzar connects the traditions of the Unholy and Holy Madman and how he transcends one category to enter the other; pp. 81-90, Doob analyses the representation of Nebuchadnezzar's madness in *Cleanness* and *Confessio Amantis*, where the mad king's penitential madness is brought closer to the romance tradition and, in particular, to Yvain.

[214] The madman's outlaw status and his affinity to beast are discussed by Sylvia Huot, who also points out that the madman only lives in the sense of the corporeal, since the mind – 'the noblest' part of human – is dead. Sylvia Huot, *Madness in Medieval French Literature: Identities Found and Lost* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 67-68 and p. 77. Yet dehumanisation, as Huot marks, leads not only to animality but also to transcendence; Yvain would be one example of the latter.

[215] For textual transmission of *Ívens saga*, see, for instance, 'Introduction', in *Norse Romance II*, ed. and trans. Kalinke, pp. 35-6; Bornholdt, pp. 98-101 and pp. 107-12. Note that, as pointed out by Bornholdt, though the Old Norse version deviates from the Old French considerably in terms of focused motifs, the Nordic translator/compiler nevertheless acknowledges Yvain's identity development before and after his madness.

[216] Huot, p. 19. For the scene of Yvain going mad, see Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 2806-28, p. 86; Chrétien de Troyes; *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 330; *Ívens saga*, chap. 9, pp. 66-71.

and Knight of the Fountain, he speedily complies with Gawain when the latter reproaches him for lack of knightly activities. Yvain still has not figured out his position in the world, caught between Laudine's fairy-like territory and Arthur's court. He is torn between two realities, but lacks one of his own.[217] In other words, at the early point of the romance, when Yvain successfully defeats Esclados lo Ros, his identity is split into two: retaining his old self, he now takes on something from the man whom he has just killed and whose wife he married, except that, at this stage, he is unable to balance or integrate the two selves. His madness, therefore, serves as a transitional phase, a 'blank', during which his old identity is no longer valid, while the new has not yet been formed. What happens to the mind is manifested in his dress. Yvain's rejection of his old self is symbolised by rejection of his old dress, and the blankness of identity by the bareness of the body.[218] His reestablishment of his new identity is thus a progression. The re-clothing is only one step, but a crucial one, out of the 'blank', its primary function being to rehumanise Yvain;[219] his new identity proper only comes into being when the lion attaches itself to Yvain.[220]

The bareness of Yvain's body and the blank in his identity is also manifested in his total absence from the courtly society during the period. Like the werewolves, his naked body is

[217] The conflict between Yvain's two worlds and the two types of values entailed by them is discussed in L.T. Topsfield, *Chrétien de Troyes: A Study of the Arthurian Romances* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 182-83. See also Saul Nathaniel Brody, 'Reflections of Yvain's Inner Life', *Romance Philology*, 54/2 (2001), 277-98 (280).
[218] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 2808-09, p. 86; Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 330.
[219] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 3016-28, p. 92; Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 333. The saga puts more emphasis on body and clothing at this stage, and has a more realistic touch. Íven's life as a madman leaves marks on his body, which has turned rough and sunburnt. Like the French Yvain, he is also given clothes and horse, but whereas the French maiden only leads an extra palfrey, her Old Norse counterpart leads 'hinn bezta vápnhest ok hægjan gangara' ('a very fine charger and a gentle palfrey'); strangely, she leaves the charger behind and gives Íven the palfrey instead. Is this a deliberate act? Perhaps the lack of the charger symbolises Íven's non-chivalric identity at this stage – he is no longer the 'sir knight' of Arthur's court, nor does he become the Knight with the Lion yet. In this sense, this dress – composed of non-military clothing and the palfrey – can be read as symbolising a reduced 'blank' phase in his identity as well. *Ívens saga*, chap. 9, pp. 70-71.
[220] The lion's function in rehumanising Yvain and reconstructing his identity is discussed in Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, 'The Lady and the Dragon in Chrétien's *Chevalier au Lion*', in *From Beasts to Souls: Gender and Embodiment in Medieval Europe*, ed. E. Jane Burns and Peggy McCracken (Notre Dame, 2013), pp. 65-86 (69). Also note that the lion's 'taming' is marked by an act of dress-change: the tip of his tail is chopped off, an act that 'others' the lion as a rational animal, whereas previously Yvain was an animalistic man.

well protected from the public gaze. He chooses when and where to go mad and manages to restrain himself until he is safely alone, so that he will not make his shame publicly known. There is minimum overlap between Yvain's madness and contact with human society. No one from that society has seen him being mad and naked, except the youth from whom he takes the bow and arrows and the hermit, both inconsequential figures with whom Yvain's secret is safe. In fact, the lady and her maiden have also seen him naked, but they take special care to pretend they have not – the maiden in the Old Norse version even puts on quite an elaborate show to convince Yvain of this.[221] No question is asked. As far as Yvain is concerned, what would have been his greatest shame is kept from him via skilful and silent manoeuvring. As a result, Yvain is never made to assume the role reserved for the ordinary (low-ranking) madman – *le fou* – who, as Huot points out, is customarily subjected to recreational violence and ridicule. Such a person becomes a public spectacle, staged upon his body, a fate that other deranged knight errants are also generally spared.[222] Yvain is sheltered by the all-enclosing forest, a liminal space, a vacuum that separates him from human society.

Yvain's experience offers an interesting model for interpreting Bisclaret's. Yvain's story is more linear: he starts as 'a knight', then becomes 'no one' and 'no knight', then finally 'the knight with the lion'. Bisclaret, on the other hand, cycles through change regularly and repeatedly. In Chapter One I argued that, within the 'fusion model', two Skin-Egos co-exist in Bisclaret, alternately dormant and manifest; the shift between the two is played out in Bisclaret's two dresses – as wolf and knight. In between, there are two latent stages of Bisclaret's experience that are only fleetingly suggested. One is his nakedness, which occurs behind closed doors. The other is before Bisclaret becomes attached to the king. Disrupting

[221] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 3054-60, p. 93; Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 333; *Ívens saga*, chap. 9, pp. 70-71.
[222] Huot, pp. 28-38 and pp. 65-68. Her interpretation of Yvain's madness as effacement from society is found on p. 31. Lancelot in the *Vulgate* is an exception to this general rule, however.

Bisclaret's hitherto unchanged pattern, his encounter with the king divides his wolf-life into two stages. During the first stage, he lives in the woods as an ordinary wolf, living on raw games. But does he still show the same human wits and behaviour as in the king's court? It is not answered.[223] Like the werewolf's nakedness, this period that resembles most the madman's life is hurriedly passed over. If, as in *Yvain*, nakedness represents his reduction to the mere human, but nothing beyond human, then the wolf-in-the-woods is nothing but wolf. The deliberate silence over these two comparable stages, however, reduces them to minimum existence. Whether man or wolf, as far as the audience are concerned, Bisclaret never gives in to animality. What is narrated is when Bisclaret returns to the courtly world, in which, though in wolf form, he acts as he should as a human, as a knight at the king's court. Although at the start of this transitional stage Bisclaret has not recovered his clothes, a change does take place regarding dress: having become the king's close companion, Bisclaret now (temporarily) becomes part of the king's dress, in the same way that the lion is part of Yvain's. As will be demonstrated in Chapter Five, the tamed wolf's presence at court and his attachment to the king enhance one other's status, which paves way to the recovery of the clothes.

It is important, therefore, that the knight's clothes remain untouched, for they stand for his human ego, a key constituent of Bisclaret's identity and everything this identity entails. In this sense, both the wife's attempt to present them to the lover in *Tiodielis saga* and her lover's subsequent refusal have symbolic meaning. By becoming her husband, the lover literally takes over what had been part of Tíódél's identity; his wearing of his clothes would confirm this. For Tíódél, this would be symbolic death; he would have no (human) position to return to. That the clothes' change of ownership is suggested as an alternative to their destruction is thus not coincidental; rather, either course of action would achieve the same effect regarding Tíódél. In

[223] The point will be returned to in the next chapter, where it will be demonstrated that what is unseen is acceptable.

the end, it is the lady's avarice and the lover's cowardice that gives Tíódél a chance to turn the tables. The lady's wish to keep the clothes is in line with the kind of Old Norse-Icelandic practicality shown in *Ívens saga*; it also conforms with the lady's characterisation as valuing earthly possession over spiritual wellbeing.[224] The lover's timorousness distances him from the chivalrous knight, whose chief characteristic should be prowess and bravery. Yet his refusal is well-grounded and speaks to an anxiety about the mysterious nature of cross-species transformation and of the clothes' role in it: what would happen if Tíódél's clothes became the lover's? In that case, both Tíódél's and the lover's dress will be changed. Would Tíódél become a ferocious wolf, now that what anchors him in the human world belongs to another man? Would the lover also take on some of Tíódél's ego and become to some extent wolfish, if he should take on what had been part of a werewolf's dress? And what might happen to him once he removed these clothes?

Section Five: From Clothed to Naked: The Lady

Like her husband, the wife also goes through three types of dress: the lady's dress, the naked body, and the dress of the metaphorical she-wolf (i.e. the condition of noselessness), the change from one to the other signifying the gradual reduction in her power and human identity.

At the beginning of the *Bisclavret* story, whereas her husband changes between human and wolf dress, the lady is firmly anchored in the human, courtly world, always richly attired and with a beautiful appearance. In the first half of her tale – that is, up to the re-encounter with her husband – her power is on the rise. According to Noah D. Guynn, werewolf stories as such are essentially stories of inverted gender hierarchy; when the wife successfully extracts his

[224] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 4: 'hvn var allra kvenna hard lindvst, grimm og gæ̈lavs til godra hlvta og af of bellde og elskande allt hid lasta fvlla veralldar lyf, enn fyrerlatande annars heims eilyfa dyrd og da semd' (she was of all women the most hard-tempered, grim and unmindful of good works. She was overbearing, fond of a sinful, worldly life, but gave up the glory and honour of the everlasting life of the other world).

secret from her husband, she gains power and – in a sense, she becomes his equal.[225] Then, armed with that knowledge, she overpowers him and exiles him to the periphery of the human world. The lady's power reaches its peak as her husband's is at its lowest ebb, trapped in the wolf form and believed to be only a wolf. Her dominance at this stage is confirmed and strengthened by her active role in her relationship with the lover. Despite the lover's aristocratic status, the lady does not marry into his household, but the other way around. Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's property seems to have automatically passed to his wife and the second husband simply moves in. This is also the case with Gorlagon's queen; despite her lover being a prince, he rules in her kingdom instead of taking her to his own, which, logically, would be much safer for them.

The weapon that she uses to achieve all this is her sexual desirability. This is made clearer every time the text is translated and/or rewritten. In *Bisclavret* she simply *blandi e losenga* (coaxed and cajoled), but in *Bisclaretz ljóð* 'lokkaðe hon h*ann* ok mœdde sua lengi með bœn*om* ok bliðlæti' ('she enticed him and wore him out by her begging and blandishments') and in *Tiodielis saga* she is 'honvm biodande med heimsins lyst og blydvm kossvm' (begging him with worldly craft and sweet kisses) and later 'hendvr vm halsinn leggiande og hann blydlega kyssande, honvm syna alla blydv biodande' (laying her arms around his neck, kissing him joyfully, and bestowing on him all her affection).[226] Similarly, *Bisclarel*, the fourteenth-century reworking of *Bisclavret*, presents in the opening lines a Bisclavret who has blindly and completely fallen under his wife's feminine spell; the moral of the story is thus that one should never trust a woman, however madly one might love her.[227] It is impossible to determine what behaviour exactly Marie de France has in mind when she writes

[225] Noah D. Guynn, 'Hybridity, Ethics, and Gender in Two Old French Werewolf Tales', in *From Beasts to Souls*, ed. Burns and McCracken, pp. 157-84 (158).
[226] Marie de France, *Bisclavret*, v. 60, p. 128; *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 88-89; *Tiodielis saga*, p. 10 and p. 12. To put one's arms around her husband/lover's neck is standard seductive behaviour in Old Norse texts.
[227] *Bisclarel*, vv. 1-32, pp. 14-15.

blandi e losenga, but the interpretation implied in the two Nordic texts – *Tiodielis saga* especially – points to the sexual and erotic nature of the lady's complaint and persuasion. The gesture of Tíódél's wife particularly gives a sense of control: the man is literally confined within the woman's arms; he is caught, ensnared, overpowered. In doing this, the lady acquires a position of dominance.

The case of Hildr in *Úlfhams rímur* offers the most explicit example of a woman exploiting her sexuality to overpower the man; the other wolfish wives could scarcely outdo her. When Vargstakkr returns from the woods, she takes him to a private bedchamber detached from the palace and offers to have sex with him:

'Skem*m*a stod sk*rey*ttu*m* voll.	(A decorated bower stood in the field,
skylldv þ*ar* hion j li*ia*.	to which the couple should retire.
dr*e*inger b*ra*tt af dy*rre* holl.	Men left the splendid hall;
dros uill heid*ra* ti*ia*.	the queen wishes to honour the king.
Hilld*ur* tal*ar* m*ed* h*e*rra sin.	Hildr spoke with her lord:
h*r*ind*it* ang*ur og* pina.	'Cast away your pain and sorrow;
skiolldu*n*g uil e*g* þi*er* skei*n*kia uin	for you, lord, I shall pour wine,
skylldu gi*o*re e*g* þa mina.'	then I shall fulfill my duty'.) [228]

The location of Hildr's seizure of power deserves some attention: it is in the queen's *skemma* (bower) that Vargstakkr yields to his wife, giving her an opportunity to undermine his status and identity as man, human and king. The tragic fate of Vargstakkr speaks to the anxiety and doubt attached to the bower, the place that, although suggestive of mutual intimacy, is often

[228] *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 25-26, p. 6.

portrayed as the lady's territory, where she wields (usually sexual) power over the man. What happens behind the bower's door is unknown; what is unknown is always mistrusted and feared. Although the queen or lady's role and power are defined in terms of her male relatives, she may alter the lord's decisions through her sexual influence.[229] In her study on the relation between power, sexuality, and bedchambers, Megan G. Leitch sees the lady's bower as standing between the public and the private, a liminal space where different powers – of the father, the lover, the woman – clash and are negotiated.[230] When the woman gains the upper hand, as is usual in these tales, and as in the case of Hildr, the bower becomes a locus for her to 'exert power and express their [i.e. the women's] desires'; the bower for the lady is the equivalent of the forest for the knight, an 'unknown place where danger and desire lurk, where the knight can be made or unmade'.[231] Clearly, such a sense of intimacy – no less strongly felt in the *Bisclavret* texts, though no bower is mentioned – derives from the bower's association with the potentiality of nakedness, which, as mentioned above, includes the liminal status of being *en chemise*. In *Úlfhams rímur*, the audience is told that, before entering the bower, Vargstakkr removes his clothes at Hildr's request ('bid*ur* /þa\ kæran klæd*um* ur / k*on*gi helld*ur* flyt*a*'); he is thus reduced to a status of nakedness and, therefore, vulnerability.[232]

---

[229] See John Carmi Parsons, 'Introduction: Family, Sex, and Power: The Rhythms of Medieval Queenship', in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. Parsons (Stroud, 1998), pp. 1-13, especially pp. 5-7, when he discusses the general feeling of mistrust towards queens in court and the courtiers' anxiety over the royal chamber, especially if the queens are believed to be adulterous.

[230] Megan G. Leitch, 'Enter the Bedroom: Managing Space for the Erotic in Middle English Romance', *Sexual Culture in the Literature of Medieval Britain*, ed. Amanda Hopkins, Robert Allen Rouse, and Cory James Rushton (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 41-53.

[231] Ibid., p. 51 and p. 49. McCracken in *The Romance of Adultery* also discusses how queens achieve position of power via influence over her husband and/or son. The anxiety over what may happen in the queen's bower is made evident how the queen – and her body – becomes the site of accusation, if power struggles arise within the court. Also see McCracken, 'The Queen's Secret: Adultery and Political Structure in the Feudal Courts of Old French Romance', *Romanic Review*, 86/2 (2004), 289-306, where she focuses on the case of Isolde and how her affair with Tristan mediates and stabilises the power balance within the king's court.

[232] *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 24, p. 6. Though discussing a different story and context, Yvette Kisor also discusses how the 'naked' female body in bedchamber scenes is manipulated to gain power over the knight. Focusing on the story of Elaine, daughter of Pelles, Kisor makes a strong case of Elaine's exploitation of her body – whether completely naked or *en chemise* – to obtain Lancelot's forgiveness and even a certain degree of admiration. Kisor reads this episode as a demonstration of Elaine's aggression rather than passivity. Yvette Kisor, '"*Naked as a nedyll*": The Eroticism of Malory's *Elaine*', in *Sexual Culture in the Literature of Medieval Britain*, ed. Hopkins et al., pp. 55-67.

In the *Bisclavret* group, however, the werewolf's vulnerability is only temporary. The lady's power is eventually nullified when Bisclaret and Tíódél *hafde hana vnder* (got on top of her) and tear off her clothes. Far from being interpreted as the *garwulf*'s uncontrollable ferocity, the wolf's violence is rather read as an act of revenge, therefore a justification of the werewolf's human reason. Moreover, being 'on top', the wolf-husband also reclaims his sexual and social dominance over his wife; his action echoes and compensates for his temporary loss of power through the wife's trickery. Amy N. Vines reads rape or (sexual) violence against women in medieval romances as a means for a knight to confirm and solidify his social identity. The significance of the wolf's act, then, also lies in the confirmation not only of his human reason but also of his individual identity as a knight.[233] The woman is 'uncovered' – quite literally. With her clothes, her surrogate body thus destroyed, her social identity and position are also gone. The lady is reduced to nothing but woman. But even that she cannot retain for long, for, with the destruction of the clothes the physical body is rendered visible, therefore vulnerable; it is immediately mutilated, marked, then expelled, thus made into a *lepra* and *lupa*.[234]

Therefore, the symmetry of the tale is retained, and the shift of the power structure in the tale is reflected in the characters' changes of dress. While Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's dress and identity change from knight to wolf, (to naked), and to knight again, his wife changes from lady to mutilated (and naked) to (metaphorical) she-wolf. Yet this is also where the two storylines diverge: while the man-wolf is easily admitted into the king's court and eventually restored to his former status with more riches and glory, the she-wolf is disgraced and expelled.

[233] Amy N. Vines, 'Invisible Woman: Rape as a Chivalric Necessity in Medieval Romance', in *Sexual Culture in the Literature of Medieval Britain*, ed. Hopkins et al., pp. 161-80.
[234] The detail offers an interesting parallel to *Mǫttuls saga*, where the faithless women's bodies are more graphically 'exposed' before they are exiled and deprived of their previous status. Granted, the women are probably not naked, since they must have clothes on when they try the mantle on, but Kay's words construct a rather graphic image of the female body, achieving the same effect of nakedness. The fact that the women's 'exposed' body parts correspond to their sexual offends brings together the body, the crime, and the punishment. *Mǫttuls saga*, ed. Marianne E. Kalinke. *With an Edition of* Le lai du cort mantel by Philip E. Bennett. Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 30 (København, 1987).

This difference in their ending has its roots in the difference in wolf symbolism when applied to different genders. The wolf-image, when associated with the male, is that of a warrior in battle, one with which the aristocratic warrior class can identify; this is a natural connection, given that the wolf is a carrion beast normally represented as roaming across the battlefield. This special bond has been examined thoroughly by Pluskowski, who, though he admits the negative elements in wolf imagery, nevertheless concludes that wolves are generally a favoured emblem for the warrior class.[235] Likewise, after comparing the motifs of man-wolf and man-bear, Davidson concludes that the wolf represents a style of doing battle that is desired and respected by the Scandinavian elite warrior class.[236] In legendary fiction, famous heroes such as the Vǫlsungs identify themselves with wolves (*Ylfingar*), while it is customary for aggressive or warlike men to have wolves as their *fylgjur*.[237] Even Fenrir, the monstrous wolf responsible for Óðinn's death, is represented as capable of negotiation and as honourable. The wolf, son of Loki, is related by blood to the Æsir and raised by them. Despite the Æsir's fear of him, he formed a bond with them (in particular Týr) until his size became too alarming. Fenrir shows a sense of honour when he refuses to try the silken band on the ground that he would achieve no fame by performing such a trivial deed.[238] In other words, he is rather like the young saga heroes who are eager to try their strength and establish their name. The fact that

[235] Pluskowski, pp. 134-42. Berhardt-House, tracing the wolf imagery to hunter-gatherer society, also emphasises the wolf's association with the 'warrior capacity'. Bernhardt-House, 'The Werewolf as Queer', p. 160.
[236] Davidson, 'Shape-Changing in the Old Norse Sagas', pp. 148-51 (150).
[237] For the Vǫlsungs, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Old Icelandic Literature', 284-86. For *fylgjur*, see Davidson, 'Shape-Changing in the Old Norse Sagas', pp. 155-56; a summary of examples in *fornaldasögur* and *Íslendingasögur* is found in William Friesen, 'Family Resemblances: Textual Sources of Animal *Fylgjur* in Icelandic saga', *Scandinavian Studies*, 87/2 (2015), 255-280.
[238] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, 2nd edn, ed. Anthony Faulkes (London, 2005), *Gylfaginning* 34, pp. 27-28, especially p. 28: 'Svá lízk mér á þenna dregil sem ønga frægð munak af hljóta þótt ek slíta í sundr svá mjótt band' ('It looks to me with this ribbon as though I will gain no fame from it if I do tear apart such a slender band'). The English translation is taken from Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, trans. and ed. Anthony Faulkes (London, 2008), p. 38. Fenrir and wolves in general also enjoy a special relationship with Óðinn, despite his inevitable death brought about by Fenrir. For Óðinn as a 'wolf god', see Pluskowski, pp. 155-57.

Týr, renowned for courage, wisdom, and victory in battle, is the only one who dares to feed the wolf also strengthens Fenrir's association with the warrior image.[239]

When the wolf is associated with the female, however, its connotations are different. The female wolf is still ferocious, but in a negative way; the focus shifts from warriorlike qualities to monstrosity. Women who are associated with wolves – either physically or metaphorically – in the source corpus are depicted as villainous or as supernatural in a negative way: in addition to Biscla(v)ret and Tíódél's wives and Hildr, other she-wolves include King Siggeirr's mother (allegedly a shapeshifter) and Hlégerðr in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*. Both these two are evil, monstrous, and apparently magical: Hlégerðr, who curses Ingigerðr and her sisters, appears to Knútr/Sigrgarðr in the form of a *ylgur* (she-wolf).[240] The wolf seems to be some kind of manifestation of her, rather than being her in wolf-form, for only after the wolf is killed by Knútr/Sigrgarðr and his companions does Hlégerðr reveal herself; later she transforms into a crow and flees. As for Siggeirr's mother, despite her brief appearance, she devours each of Sigmundr's brothers serially.[241]

These examples raise the question of what is allowed and what not, and for whom. They also recall the Aristotelian idea of the perfect body which must accord with its social function. Granted, Hildr is no less warriorlike than Úlfhamr or any other male character in the *rímur*, having beheaded her husband and waged wars. Yet this very ferocity, while positive in and socially expected from male warriors, is neither expected from, nor desirable in, her. This makes her doubly monstrous, for she has not only committed treason against her husband and lord, but she also transgresses against her woman's nature. The same can be said for the other

[239] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, *Gylfaginning* 25, p. 25: 'Hann er djarfastr ok bezt hugaðr ok hann ræðr mjǫk sigri í orrostum' ('He is the bravest and most valiant and he has great power over victory in battles'). Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, trans. and ed., Faulkes, p. 24.
[240] Alaric Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 11, 132.
[241] The problem of cannibalism and the werewolf's food is the subject of the next chapter, but a brief examination shows that, though life as a wolf dangerously borders on cannibalism, the authors are careful not to implicate their heroes in it.

wolfish wives, who, though not as warriorlike as Hildr, also breach the boundary between the two genders by taking a man's position in their active display and realisation of their sexual desires. In her discussion of the adulterous queens in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, Brady points out that Gorgol's queen's punishment is unusual in its combination of both dismemberment and burning. This bipartite punishment is read as a combination of what is appropriate to either gender, since quartering is customarily reserved for men while burning is for women; thus the punishment accords with the nature of the woman's crime.[242] Perhaps this is also why Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife is officially sentenced to outlawry, a punishment normally reserved for men. Perhaps, as in the case of Gorgol's adulterous queen, she too is being punished as a man for trying to wield power like a man.

Yet, as their cases demonstrate, the woman's political aggression is more often than not translated into sexual aggression. So too the wolf's symbolic value for the woman: although the she-wolf's ferocity must have been assumed as a matter of common sense, it tends to be somewhat downplayed. Perhaps anxiety about powerful women is just too strong even to fictionalise. The focus is rather on the she-wolf's sexual desire, an aspect that is not considered in male wolves.[243] This she-wolf characteristic is found both in medieval encyclopaedic and literary works. The connection between she-wolf and lechery is only ascribed to metaphorical wolves, for real wolves are said in bestiaries to copulate only for twelve days per year; thus they are sometimes interpreted as symbols of chastity.[244] When used as a metaphor for women,

[242] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 226-27. Brady, 32-36.
[243] When the werewolf's sexuality is indeed brought up, as in the case of Gorlagon, it is normally family and faithfulness that are emphasised. Gorlagon's wolfish family is interpreted as the 'perfect nuclear family', the one that he and his wife should have had. Moreover, Gorlagon's union with the she-wolf is represented as an act of necessity (i.e. he needs the cubs for revenge) instead of an act of lust. *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 216-27; Brady, 31. Brady also points out that the verb used here, *conjungere*, 'to unite sexually', signifies marriage. A search through its other meanings shows that it seems to primarily denote any relationship built on mutual trust – precisely what is missing in Gorlagon's previous marriage. Day translates the word as 'mated', emphasising the sexual aspect, but in an earlier translation by F. A. Milne and A. Nutt translated *conjunxit* as 'allied'; perhaps they are trying to emphasise Gorlagon's reason in 'marrying' the wolf and downplays the unnaturalness of their union. *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. I, s.v. *conjungo, -ere*, pp. 448-49. F. A. Milne and A. Nutt, 'Arthur and Gorlagon', *Folklore*, 15/1 (1904), 40-67 (47).
[244] See, for instance, Isidore, *Etymologiae*, 12.24.

however, *lupa* becomes a synonym for prostitute, and the she-wolf's ferocity is transposed as sexual aggression and the lecherous woman's ability to destroy men – physically or financially – through her sexual attractiveness.[245] Drawing on *Le roman de la rose*, Chaucer compares lecherous women to she-wolves, for she-wolves are willing to mate with even the 'the lewedeste wolf … or leest of reputacioun' whenever the desire arises.[246] The connection between the prostitute and *lupa* is clearly known in Old Norse, as evidenced in *Rómverja saga*.[247] This comment is a very odd addition, since there is no hint whatsoever that Laurentia may be morally questionable. Perhaps the translator just feels the need to explain the etymology of *lupa* and *lupanaria*, but the explanation nevertheless exemplifies the negative associations the she-wolf has for female characters; even someone as virtuous and motherly as Laurentia cannot escape suspicion, once she is tainted with wolfishness.

The word *vargynja* (she-wolf), intriguingly, is identified as cognate with the Old English *wyrgen*, which appears in *Beowulf* to describe Grendel's mother.[248] She is also referred to twice as *brim-wylf* (sea-wolf), while earlier in Hrothgar's account, her and Grendel's abode is said to be located below the *wulf-hleoþu* (wolf-slopes).[249] The connection raises an interesting question: why, in contrast to the unfaithful wife, does the she-wolf tend to be a

[245] Willene B. Clark, *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Secondary-Family of Bestiary: Commentary, Art, Text and Translation* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 142. Ann Payne, *Medieval Beasts* (London, 1990), pp. 48-49. Although Payne makes no gender distinction when she points out the wolf's appetites both for food and sex, she remarks that 'the equation was made of a she-wolf to a prostitute'. See also *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, ed. E. Hoffmann-Krayer and Hans Bächtold-Stäubli (Berlin, 1938-1941), vol. 9, s.v. *Wolf* 4, col. 727. The Latin word for she-wolf, *lupa*, also means 'prostitute', and *lupanar* is a term for 'brothel'. *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. I, s.v. *lupa* and *lupanar*, p. 1156.

[246] Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Manciple's Tale', in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Dean Benson and F. N. Robinson, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1988), vv. 183-86. That she-wolves are not choosy about sexual partners may perhaps explain why Hildr suggests marriage to her son Úlfhamr, since she proves herself perfectly capable of seizing the throne with or without the prince. The same belief is also recorded in *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, col. 727.

[247] See Chapter One, footnote no. 139, p. 53.

[248] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *varg-ynja*, p. 680. *Beowulf: A Dual-Language Edition*, ed. and trans. Howell D. Chickering, Jr. (New York, 1977; repr. 2006), v. 1518, pp. 104-5: 'Ongeat þā se gōda grund-wyrgenne' (the good man observed then the she-wolf of the depths). Here the English translation is mine, for Chickering's translation is rather literary and not sufficiently accurate.

[249] *Beowulf*, v. 1506, pp. 104-5 and v, 1599, pp. 110-11; v. 1358, pp. 94-5.

mother? This highlights another facet of wolfish women's monstrosity: their maternity entails the potentiality of producing more monsters. Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife, though seemingly barren with Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél, is progenetrix of generations of noseless women, carrying their ancestress's punishment in and on their bodies. Hildr is also referred to as 'mother of wolves', referring not to her son Úlfhamr, but rather, metaphorically, to her ferocious soldiers. A similar image of a monstrous woman unleashing wolves onto the world is also found in *Vǫluspá*, where an old crone breeds gigantic wolves.[250] This fear of monstrous, wolvish reproduction finds its parallel in the adulterous queens in romances, but here is treated in more detail. Whereas the issue of those queens' fertility is often deliberately evaded because its implications provoke too much cultural anxiety even to fictionalise, authors enjoy greater freedom to explore the maternity of the wolf-wife, located in a world more remote from reality.[251] Just as with leprosy which, as discussed in the previous chapter, is closely associated with lechery and illicit sexual intercourse, the she-wolf's reproduction of a line of no less monstrous descendants could be interpreted as sexually transmitting a disease.[252] But the threat, fortunately, is either short-lived or marginalised: the she-wolf is killed, mutilated, or cast out; whatever progeny she has shall not pose a future threat to human society.

One question, however, remains. If the woman is feared and must be contained somehow, then why is she not killed? As mentioned above, both Hildr and Gorgol's queen are executed; their ties to the dynasty, despite having children, are severed and the lineage is purged by their death. Why, therefore, is Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife allowed to live and, more importantly, to reproduce? It seems rather paradoxical: on the one hand, the monstrous woman

[250] *Vǫluspá*, in *Eddukvæði I: Goðakvæði*, ed. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason, Íslenzk fornrit (Reykjavík, 2014), stanza 39, p. 301.
[251] McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery*, pp. 26-28, where she examines previous scholarship and discusses the adulterous queen's sterility.
[252] Though focusing on films and fictions in the modern era, Bernhardt-House compares the spread of lycanthropy to that of sexually transmitted diseases. Bernhardt-House, 'The Werewolf as Queer', pp. 172-73.

is feared, marked, and kept at a safe distance, but on the other, she remains fertile and produces more monstrous women (and/or men). Indeed, the lady is unique, and her uniqueness can be understood in terms of Bisclaret.

Bisclaret is the only congenital werewolf in the corpus, yet how he comes to acquire this nature remains unexplained even by the Icelandic redactor, who seems to be keen to rationalise the text on other occasions.[253] Is he just unfortunate, born unique, or might he come from a line of werewolves? *Konungs skuggsjá* (the focus of Chapter Six), tells of an Irish tribe that is cursed by St. Patrick to become wolves either continuously for seven winters or every seven years until they die; the curse is supposed to be hereditary. Similar stories are also found in *Topographia Hibernica* and in *De civitate Dei*.[254] In all versions, the first werewolf commits some crime and suffers divine punishment. Could Bisclaret be such a descendant? If this reading is accepted, then the parallel between Bisclaret and his wife is strengthened, especially considering that Bisclaret himself has no descendants.[255] The tale of Bisclaret, then, is a story of the termination of such a line, while the wife's story is a tale of origin. Both stories involve a test – a test of trust and loyalty. The werewolf, no matter how his ancestor earned this accursed life, sets himself apart from the stereotypical *garwaf* and is readmitted to the courtly world through his loyalty and obedience.[256] The wife, on the other hand, fails in the trial of trust when

[253] Tíódél's situation, of course, is more complicated, for it is not clear if he is born a shapeshifter. The capacity for metamorphosis is presented as a skill (*íþrótt*), implying that it can be learned. Yet Tíódél does not seem to have any control over whether, when, and for how long he must be a wolf or bear. Like Biscla(v)ret, it seems compulsory for him to go through this on a weekly base.
[254] Augustine of Hippo, *City of God, Volume V: Books 16-18.35*, trans. Eva M. Sanford and William M. Green, Loeb Classical Library 415 (Cambridge, MA, 1965), 18.17-18, pp. 420-21. 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, 61-63.
[255] Marie de France falls silent over what happens to Bisclavret afterwards. Although the Icelandic redactor does tell about Tíódél's travels and second marriage, no children are mentioned; the focus seems to be on the friendship between him and the wise advisor. Tíódél's second wife may be just like Gorlagon's, silenced, unnamed, an instrument for his revenge and a decorative element at his gruesome dining table. Brady, 36.
[256] Bisclavret's individuality as a wolf at this stage is pointed by various scholars. Marie's verse, 'Cest afere les ore ester; Del bisclaveret voil cunter' ('I leave such matters for the moment, for I wish to tell you about Bisclavret') is read as her departure from the Norman *garwaf*, thus announcing Bisclavret's uniqueness as an individual rather than a member of a species. See, for instance, Sharon Kinoshita and Peggy McCracken, *Marie de France: A Critical Companion* (Cambridge, 2012; repr. 2014), pp. 170-71. Blud, p. 119. Marie de France,

she divulges the secret, even though her motivation for inquiring after her husband's whereabouts is natural and innocent enough. Bisclaret and his wife, in other words, may well form a single story-complex, operating along different timelines.

The wife, on the other hand, only starts to reproduce after her exile. Are all her children fathered by her lover, who accompanies her in exile? This is of course possible, especially if the lover bears no grudge against the woman who urged him to the crime. But it could also be possible that, having been degraded into a symbolic *lupa*, she indeed becomes prostitute-like and mates with even 'the lewedeste'. The wife, then, would appear more sympathetic in *Bisclavret* and *Bisclaretz ljóð*, where her priority is to strive to maintain a legal, stable marriage with a more or less equally ranked man. But, as Bynum points out, she makes the mistake of 'stereotyping' and confuses her husband with the conventional, violent sort of werewolf.[257] Unlike Gorgol's queen, she does not take a lover while married to Biscla(v)ret; nor does she engage in any sexual relationship before Biscla(v)ret is believed to be dead. The condemnation, it seems, rather *makes* her into the monster that she has just revealed herself to be in her confession. This sets her on the path to further moral degradation, from betrayal of the secret to infidelity to (possible) lechery and prostitution. *Tiodielis saga*, however, does not raise this question. The lady's love affair has been going on for ten years; in the meantime, she has married and disposed of three husbands. The last-minute addition of this detail is no doubt an effort at rationalisation on the redactor's part; it also prevents any sympathetic feeling the story may produce in its readers/audience. This wife is always a she-wolf. The belated justice is a moment of revelation rather than metamorphosis.

Bisclavret, p. 68. The line has been faithfully into Old Norse. *Bisclaret*, pp. 86-87: 'Nu læt ec þat standa sua buet þuiat ec vil sægia yðr fra Bisclaret' ('Now I will let it stand at this, for I want to tell you about Bisclaret').
[257] Bynum, p. 172.

The she-wolf's fertility contrasts with her husband's barrenness. He is, in a sense, 'neutered'. This paradoxical contrast is examined by Bernhardt-House, who reads Bisclavret as queer and asexual; his desexualisation is the condition on which he can be tolerated within the mainstream society.[258] His hyper-sexualised wife, on the other hand, takes his place as the wolf and monster in the story. In this sense, the husband and wife are parallels to each other. They both wear a wolf's dress, and both of their transformations are completed through the act of undressing and a series of change of dress. However, they are also opposites. The werewolf's origin is rooted in the supernatural, and the specific set of clothes that triggers his metamorphosis is an analogue to its unfathomable nature: even at the end of the story, precisely how and why Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél transforms remains a secret not only to the other characters in the narrative but also to the audience, just as his clothes must be hidden in a hollow stone, shielded from inquisitive eyes. This secrecy excites fear and mistrust, as evidenced by the wife's initial concern and the lover's refusal to take Tíódél's clothes. The metaphorical she-wolf, however, does not excite these emotions for, not only does she change her dress in public – first from lady to woman, then from woman to she-wolf – but the whole process comes about through human violence and the operation of the law. She is, in other words, a 'man-made' monster, and her wolfishness is only a mitigated version, strictly contained within human society. While the werewolf's wolfish lineage – with its unknown origins – is terminated or simply negated, it is substituted by and re-emerges as, a much lesser, therefore more reassuring, type, one that has its origin in the human and with God. Transformed from *la femme Bisclavret* to *la femme bisclavret*, the wife becomes only an echo of her werewolf husband in the human world, subdued, marked, and controlled. The danger of confusing the beast with the human, therefore, is resolved by the degradation of the woman, and her noseless face replaces the mysterious *úlfhamr* as the new wolf dress.

[258] Bernhardt-House, 'The Werewolf as Queer', p. 168.

Chapter Three

'Ét eg þeirra hold':[259] The Werewolf's Food and Food Taboo

We are what we have eaten. Although it was debatable precisely how food and drink were thought to affect the constitution of the human body and soul during the Middle Ages, my opening statement represents a consensus. What one consumes has a direct impact on one's body and, by managing one's food, the bodily humours can be balanced or disrupted, causing changes in both the individual's body and mind.[260] Food, therefore, plays a significant role in maintaining an individual's well-being; it must be prepared and consumed in accordance not only with the consumer's physical disposition but also with the external situation, such as seasonal and temperature changes.[261] In addition to physically affecting the eater, food is also an important identity indicator: it distinguishes human from beasts, the civilised from the barbarian, the aristocratic from the plebeian – in other words, like dress, it too defines 'us' against 'the other', or, as in the case of cannibalism, defining 'the other' against 'us'. Moreover, occasions such as great feasts are often performative in nature, displaying to the public both the consumers and the consumed.

The problem of food becomes more complicated when it comes to werewolves. The metamorphosis tears a rift – whether on a one-off occasion or repeatedly – between the werewolf's external and internal identities. As a man on the inside, the werewolf often strives to manifest his inner humanness through non-wolfish behaviour; as the *Bisclavret* group attests,

[259] I eat their [i.e. the wild animals'] flesh. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 16.
[260] For a summary of the Hippocratic theory of the four humours, see Plinio Prioreschi, *A History of Medicine II: Greek Medicine*, 2nd edn (Omaha, 1996), pp. 269-73. The theory is picked up and developed by Galen, who associates the humours with the four temperaments of man. For a summary of the Galenic interpretation of the Hippocratic Corpus, see Gerald J. Grudzen, *Medical Theory about the Body and the Soul in the Middle Ages: The First Western Medical Curriculum at Monte Cassino* (Lewiston, 2007), pp. 56-57; Jacques Jouanna, 'The Legacy of the Hippocratic Treatise *The Nature of Man*: The Theory of the Four Humours', in *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen*, ed. Philip van der Eijk (Leiden, 2012), pp. 335-59.
[261] Food itself shares the four temperaments which are determined by the humours. To moderate and maintain the balance of the humours, food must be prepared in accordance with the consumer's temper. Terence Scully, 'Tempering Medieval Food', in *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson (New York, 1995), pp. 3-21 (especially 6-11).

this turns out to be essential to realising his restoration. Yet it is inevitable that the hero, as a wolf on the outside, must spend a period of time living in the wilderness, running and hunting like a real wolf. This means, as Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél informs his wife, that the werewolf must have lived on raw game meat during that period, a diet that is under normal circumstances non-human.[262] He must also have come very close to tasting human blood and even flesh, as many werewolves are said to have sunk their teeth in men (and women).

What, then, can (and does) the werewolf possibly eat? How does their food affect their identity? These are the questions this chapter means to address; and at the core lies the problem of cannibalism. P. Kenneth Himmelman, having examined both the act and the metaphor of cannibalism, concluded that 'only cannibalism which cannot be seen can be deemed morally acceptable'.[263] This chapter will, following Himmelman's statement, proceed in structure from the arguably acceptable to the absolutely unacceptable and, after acknowledging the broad symbolism of cannibalism and its usage, discusses complete monstrosity and acceptable monstrosity in comparative terms. Section One will be devoted to a brief survey of the wolf's eating habits. In Sections Two and Three, the source materials and other related texts will be examined regarding what the were- and she-wolves are shown eating or not eating. Here the discussion of gender and sexuality continues, and the werewolves analysed in contrast to the she-wolves. Afterwards, in Sections Four and Five, the werewolf's (possible) foodstuffs will be identified, and treated one by one from the most acceptable (or the least unacceptable) to the taboo. In each category, individuals or creatures that have knowingly consumed such food will be examined for comparison's sake, ranging from blood-drinking warriors to wolf-related creatures known for having cannibalistic tastes, in particular, the trolls. The problem of horse

[262] *Bisclavret*, v. 66, p. 130: 'S'i vif de preie e de ravine (where I live on prey and on what I catch); *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. ok livi ec við dyra hold þæirra sem ec dræp' ('and I live from the flesh of animals which I kill'); *Tiodielis saga*, p. 16: 'et eg þeirra holld' (I eat their [i.e. the wild animals'] flesh.
[263] P. Kenneth Himmelman, 'The Medicinal Body: An Analysis of Medicinal Cannibalism in Europe, 1300-1700', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 22/2 (1997), 183-203 (187).

meat will also surface here, as it always appears side by side with human flesh in the trollish diet, and serves, for particular reasons, to test the hero's humanity.

Section One: What and How Does a Wolf Eat?

Regarding the wolf's appetite and eating habits, there are certain core medieval beliefs. Firstly, these beasts are known both for great hunger and for not refraining from human flesh, whether living or dead. Bartholomaeus Anglicus warns that the wolf is at its most evil when it eats; the underlying logic, presumably, is that hungry wolves devour, or at least, attack, men. He also compares the hyena to wolves for devouring and gluttony, and in its tendency to feast on corpses.[264] That the wolves are carrion beasts roaming in the battlefields is also attested in the kennings in Old Norse-Icelandic poetry, where they frequently appear in warrior- and related kennings: triumphant warriors are described as 'feeder of the wolf' in the sense that, by slaughtering their enemies, they provide the wolves with food and drink, while the butchered ones naturally become 'food/drink of the wolf'.[265] Yet, on the other hand, wolves are also known for their ability to fast. It is believed, in the French region of Berry, that they 'bekomme […] 9 Tage die Zähne nicht auseinander und sei unschädlich' (cannot draw apart the teeth for nine days and are [then] not dangerous), a fast following on nine-day's flesh eating; in the Côte du Nord, the period of flesh-eating goes up to three months, followed by three three-month periods feeding respectively on blood, herbs, and wind (which is equal to fasting).[266] The harmfulness of the wolf abates as its diet changes from carnivorous to herbivorous to nothing

[264] Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things*, 18.81, p. 1222-23. Here Bartholomaeus is following Isidore, who states that wolves are known for great appetite but also remarkable ability to endure hunger: 'famem diu portant, post longa ieiunia multum devorant' ('they endure hunger for a long time, and devour a large amount after a lengthy fast'). Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, vol.2, 12. 2. 24; *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, p. 253.

[265] The largest wolf-related kenning group is the warrior kenning, where a (triumphant) warrior is described as 'feeder of wolf / wolves' – for instance, *fyllir úlfa* and *fæðir úlfs*. The second largest group is kennings for corpse and blood, which are 'food / drink of wolf' (for example, *tafn úlfs*, *verðr íms*, and *bekkr úlfs*). For a summary of kennings with wolf, see Minjie Su, 'Taming the Wolf: Reading *Bisclaret* in Light of Old Norse Kennings', in *Margins, Monsters, Deviants. Alterities in Old Norse Literature and Culture*, ed. Rebecca Merkelbach and Gwendolyne Knight, The North Atlantic World 3 (Turnhout, 2020), pp. 45-67 (56).

[266] *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, s.v. Wolf 4, cols. 725-26.

at all and, and the beast's flesh-eating alternates with fasting. The root of this belief may be in practicality: the wolf needs time to digest, as carnivores do, but it nevertheless points to two possibilities: the beast's unbridled appetite and wildness gradually give way to self-control and discipline. This also accords with the (were)wolf's dual nature: he can be both violent and tame.

The polarisation of the wolf's eating habits, therefore, suggests a spectrum on which the beast's food lies, its manner of eating, and the degree of its dangerousness. This further indicates that, though the wolf could yield to corporeal desires, it could also exhibit a high level of self-control. A similar polarisation is also found in the wolf's sexual appetite which, as will be discussed later, is closely tied to diet and eating habits.[267] This opens up various interpretations and functions for wolves – real or metaphorical – in medieval literature, ranging from the divinely inspired to the pure evil. One illustrative example would be from the *Life of St. Edmund*, when '[þ]ā lǣg se grǣga wulf þe bewiste þæt hēafod and mid his twām fōtum hæfde þæt hēafod beclypped, grǣdig and hungrig, and for Gode ne dorste þæs hēafdes onbyrian ac hēold hit wið dēor ([t]here lay the grey wolf who guarded that head, and had the head clasped between his two paws, greedy and hungry, but because of God it dared not taste the head, but kept it against other wild animals).[268] This story captures the wolf's two contrasting natures in one instance: on the one hand, the beast is gluttonous and would devour the human head under normal circumstances; on the other, when divinely inspired, it is capable of enduring that

[267] Hopkins has noted that, according to Isidore, wolves only mate for twelve days per year; she reads it as a virtue on the wolf's part which makes Gorlagon's wolf family an exemplar for his human family. Amanda Hopkins, 'Why Arthur at all? The Dubious Arthuricity of *Arthur and Gorlagon*', *Arthurian Literature*, 26 (2009), 77-95 (89); see also Brady, 31, where she reads the female wolf as providing 'the model of an ideal wife'. Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, vol. 2, 12. 2. 24; *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, p. 253. For the she-wolf's sexual appetite, see also Chapter Two, pp. 96-98.

[268] Ælfric, *Ælfric's Life of St. Edmund*, in *A Guide to Old English*, ed. Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, 8th edn (Chichester, 2012), p. 209; English translation is my own. St. Edmund's guardian wolf is more of a metaphor; it poses an interesting parallel and contrast to Hinguar, the saint's murderer and the metaphorical wolf in the story. The juxtaposition of the two not only foregrounds Hinguar's bestiality but also points to a two-direction path: whereas the wolf can ascend under divine power, the human can fall and, therefore, become dehumanised. The connection between the wolf and Hinguar is discussed in Michael Benskin, 'The Literary Structure of Ælfric's *Life of King Edmund*', in *Loyal Letters: Studies on Mediaeval Alliterative Poetry & Prose*, ed. L. A. J. R. Houwen and A. A. MacDonald (Groningen, 1994), pp. 1-27 (14).

hunger and it bends its corporeal desire to God's will. Here the wolf's ability to fast must seem the more admirable, for, being so gluttonous in nature, he must have made an extra effort to subdue the urge to feed, particularly since that food is literally within his grasp. It also shows that, as far as literary texts are concerned, wolves can be represented in both positive and negative lights, depending on what, how, and whether they eat.

Section Two: Food and Taboo: What Werewolf Does or Does not Eat

In the werewolf narratives, this difference overlaps with the difference between the gendered treatments of the werewolf and (metaphorical) she-wolf discussed in the previous chapter. Although it is obviously inevitable that the werewolves should be implicated in a bestial diet, what they may actually eat in the woods tends to be glossed over by the authors/translators. Granted, the werewolves must have killed animals and even men in the woods, but the violence is always justified, and the werewolf's activities tend to be described in human terms. Some are simply doing what they have been doing as men. In the case of Melion, for instance, turning into a wolf enhances his efficiency and increases his success in hunting, an activity that he is known for and which would interest the aristocratic audience.[269] Sinfjǫtli and Sigmundr in their wolf forms at least taste some human blood in the woods, but the words used to describe their activities are *drepa* (kill) and *vinna mǫrg frægðarverk* (carry out many daring exploits).[270] Presumably that they performed these feats with their claws and teeth, in the same way as Egill attacked and killed Atli inn skammi, but the words used are at best ambiguous – a wolf kills,

[269] *Melion*, vv. 65-70, pp. 54-55, where Melion's fondness of the forests is made clear. Moreover, judging by the sequence of events in the story, Melion seems to find in hunting a substitute for family life; it is little wonder that he should meet his wife in the woods and while hunting the stag. The circumstance of their meeting also points to something about the Irish princess's character: why is she alone in the woods? Perhaps she is also a creature of wilderness – indeed, she clearly partakes in his hunting and shows no less great desire in obtaining the game. For Melion's transformation and subsequent hunting, see vv. 181-88, pp. 60-61. Melion's new form apparently enhances his hunting ability, for this time he manages to catch the stag which he had no luck with previously. The complicated relationship between wolf and aristocrats, who construct their identity partially based on hunting activities, is explored by Pluskowski. Both wolves and aristocrats are hunters of wild ungulates (such as deer and stag); this on the one hand leads to the aristocratic hunter's self-identification with and therefore respect for the wolf, but on the other to conflicts and competition. Pluskowski, pp. 74-78.

[270] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 8, pp. 11-12.

but so does any warrior.[271] What Sinfjǫtli and Sigmundr do as wolves is represented as no different from what they do as fugitives in King Siggeirr's kingdom. Other werewolves have legitimate – and often human – reasons to kill; even when they are shown causing great harm among the livestock, it is seldom food that they are after: Áli kills both men and livestock because this has been specified in the curse; Gorlagon ravages his wife's country and kills her kinsfolk because he remembers her crime, and attacks Gorleil's herds because he temporarily loses control due to grief.[272] The only time Alfonse is shown hunting is when he kills the stag and doe to provide the lovers with a set of new skins, while elsewhere he does not even hunt – his intention is, like any knight errant, '[n]e sai quell part querre aventure' ('I know not where, to seek adventure').[273]

But surely the werewolves have to eat during this period, however brief. What do they eat? What do they do to the animals (and men) that they have killed? Of all the werewolf texts treated in this thesis, only the following texts expressly mention food: the *Bisclavret* group, *Arthur and Gorlagon*, and *Melion*. In particular, the latter two expressly show the werewolves eating, but their food functions to confirm the werewolves' humanity.[274] It is only in two references – *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I* and *De civitate Dei* – that the kind of food that may incriminate the werewolf is revealed.

In the *Bisclavret* group, when Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél explains his werewolf nature to his wife, he briefly (and ambiguously) states that he lives on wild animals in the woods.[275] Neither the author, the translator, nor the redactor follows up on this point; instead they all gloss over

[271] Both Egill and Skalla-Grímr bite their opponents in a rage – they are not even physically wolves. In particular, it is at Atli's windpipe (*barkann*) that Egill bites, which, as discussed in Chapter One, is typical wolf hunting behaviour. See *Egils saga*, chap. 40, p. 54, and chap. 67, p. 123.
[272] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 8, p. 139. *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 218-19.
[273] *Guillaume de Palerne*, v. 3298, p. 136; *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation*, v. 3298, p. 96.
[274] In contrast, in the case of the (metaphorical) she-wolves – who will be discussed below – food is used to foreground their monstrosity.
[275] *Bisclavret*, v. 66, p. 130: 'S'i vif de preie e de ravine (where I live on prey and on what I catch); *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. ok livi ec við dyra hold þæirra sem ec dræp' ('and I live from the flesh of animals which I kill'); *Tiodielis saga*, p. 16: 'et eg þeirra holld' (I eat their [i.e. the wild animals'] flesh.

Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's actual life in the woods. Nevertheless, two conclusions can be drawn from this detail. First, it is evidence that it is both acceptable and expected that the werewolf must feed on raw meat. This is only logical, for the werewolf must eat in order to survive in the wilderness, but he has no access to proper human (or aristocratic) food as befitting his human identity; therefore, compromises must be made. Second, in all three versions, this detail is disclosed in Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's speech, one that which he makes as a human. The statement is already an ambiguous one and can be interpreted in two ways. As human Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél could be cooking and eating the game that he caught as wolf. Indeed, as the Norwegian translator informs us, such men 'biuggu i morkum ok i skogum. ok þar atto hus ok ʀik hibili' ('lived in the forests and woods and had houses and splendid homes there'), suggesting that, even in the woods, these men maintain traces of human life.[276] As wolf, he has no choice but simply devouring the raw meat. However, the fact that he utters this as human invokes the former image. Even the Icelandic redactor refrains from directly portraying Tíódél devouring wild beasts, though he changes the verbs *vivre/lifa* (to live) to the more explicit *eta* (to eat). In other words, despite their knowledge, the audience/readers do not 'witness' the werewolf in action, which accords well with Himmelman's statement. What is unseen is indeed acceptable.

In both *Arthur and Gorlagon* and *Melion*, although both werewolves have or must have tasted raw meat, the authors offers detailed description of their food and eating manner only *after* the wolves have been brought to court.[277] Gorlagon not only shares bread with the king and drinks from the same cup, but also exhibits extraordinary table manners: he is said to stand by the table *prioribus erectis branchiis* ('[with] forepaws erect'); presumably it is also with

[276] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 86-87.
[277] As part of his revenge, Gorlagon's wolf family first attack the queen's children with her lover and tear them apart (*inuasosque crudeliter discerpens*), then fall upon her brothers and tear their intestines out (*extractis uisceribus*). However, it is unclear what part Gorlagon has played in the attack, and the verbs used in this paragraph are verbs for physical violence, such as killing, attacking, and tearing, rather than verbs for eating or drinking activities. *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 218-19. Melion manages to keep the stag meat which he has hunted for his wife until he arrives in Ireland, and only consumes it because '[g]rant faim avoit' ('[h]e was very hungry'), emphasising that it is a matter of necessity, rather than of choice. *Melion*, v. 251, pp. 62-63.

those mock 'hands' that he breaks the bread.[278] Similarly, Melion receives bread from the king's hands. The king, greatly amazed, confirms that the wolf is *privés* (tamed) and feeds him a piece of meat:

Li rois le regarda sovent.	(The king glanced at him frequently.
Un pain li done et il le prent,	He gave Melion a piece of bread and he took it;
Puis le commença a mangier.	Then he began to eat it.
Li rois s'en prist a merveillier;	The king began to marvel at this;
Al roi Yder dist: 'Esgardés!	He said to King Yder: 'Look!
Sachiés que cis leus est privés'.	You can be sure this wolf is tame.'
Li rois .I. lardé li dona	The king gave Melion a piece of meat
Et il volentiers le manga.	And he ate it gladly.)[279]

The sequence of events is noteworthy: it must be remembered that, unlike Gorlagon who has already been tested through hunting at the king's command,[280] Melion at this moment has only just been taken in by the king. Judging by Arthur's public announcement that the wolf is indeed tame, it seems that doubt remains among the courtiers. The choice of bread is hardly random: bread, to begin with, is apparently not wolfish food. It is not only 'first in importance' on the dining table, but also a marker of civilisation, for to make bread involves a wide range of activities and tools – growing and harvesting crops, producing flour, making dough, actual baking, and so forth.[281] Feeding the wolf with bread, therefore, could be read as a test of the

[278] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 222-23. That the wolf eats with his forepaws is an important notion, for eating with hands marks the line between beast and human.
[279] *Melion*, vv. 421-28, pp. 70-71.
[280] Hunting at command is not only a sign of the wolf's reason and self-control, but also an opportunity for the wolf to prove its ability to fast: the wolf kills not eats, and he does so not for its own appetite but for the king.
[281] The importance of bread is summed up in Bridget Ann Henish, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (University Park, PA, 1978), pp. 155-161 (p. 155). Eating bread is essentially human: in the *Odyssey*, for

beast's humanity and even Christianity. By accepting it, Melion draws the line between himself and real wolves – such as those he formerly allied himself with; he proves that as a wolf he is, as Sir Gawain remarks, indeed *tous desnaturés* ('completely unnatural').[282] The offering of cooked meat from the king's table – completed by the following wine – is a token of Melion's inclusion. Having been allowed to participate in the king's feast and share food from the same table, the wolf is now incorporated not only into the human world but also into the courtly one, heralding his full restoration. The change of the werewolf's food from (presumably) game to bread then to cooked meat and wine finds a close parallel in *Yvain*: having gone mad, Yvain robs a youth of a bow and some arrows, and feeds himself on raw game until he encounters the hermit.[283] His preference for bread – however coarse – over uncooked meat confirms his essential humanity. He is not beyond hope yet, a fact that is soon confirmed by his recovery.[284] Yvain's experience also implies that game seems to be the least acceptable food for decent characters. The dominance of game meat in his life in the wild retains traces of his knightly existence and social class; even in his animality he is a predator, just like the lion that he is going to tame and to incorporate into his identity. Hunting and feeding on game meat also saves Yvain from the social incongruity of eating only plants directly – like Nebuchadnezzar – which would push Yvain further towards the realm of 'the other'.[285]

---

instance, Odysseus's men are described as 'men who eat bread' (*σιτοφάγῳ*), as opposed to the Lotus-eaters and, even worse, the Cyclops. Homer, *Odyssey, Volume I: Books 1-12*, trans. A. T. Murray, rev. George E. Dimock, Loeb Classical Library 104 (Cambridge, MA, 1919), book 9, pp. 330-31. Parallel English translation on opposite pages. Likewise, the Mermedonians, the self-eaters (*sylfætan*) in the Old English *Andreas* have to adopt such monstrous diet because they have no access to bread and water. Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Middle English Literature* (New York, 2007), p. 21. The bread and wine in *Arthur and Gorlagon* – as well as in *Yvain* discussed below – must also have a religious undertone. By willingly accepting something that resembles the Eucharist, the werewolf also confirms his place in the Christian community.

[282] Gawain's exclamation here – 'Segnor, veés; / Cis leus est tous desnaturés' ('My lords, look; / This wolf is completely unnatural') – comes immediately after Melion accepts the bread and the meat; afterwards, Arthur orders wine to be brought out for the wolf to drink. *Melion*, vv. 429-38, pp. 69-70.

[283] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 2821-60, pp. 86-87. *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, pp. 330-31; the passage has been faithfully translated in the Old Norse version, *Ívens saga*, pp. 68-69.

[284] Doob, p. 148, where Doob discusses the importance of Yvain's encounter with the hermit and the subsequent dietary change: that his ability of recognising and responding to *caritas*, in the form of water and bread, prepares for his restoration.

[285] It is noteworthy that Nebuchadnezzar, the 'prototype of later literary madman', only sticks to a vegetarian diet, while Yvain mostly eats game meat. This is probably because, first, Nebuchadnezzar believes himself to be

That the werewolf could eat carcasses or even human flesh surfaces in the insults exchanged between Sinfjǫtli and Guðmundr. Sinfjǫtli is taunted with having eaten *úlfa krásir* ('wolves's corpse-leavings', a kenning for carrion), presumably when he was trapped in the *úlfhamr*, but as in *Vǫlsunga saga* the circumstances are never spelled out; the only clear ground of this accusation seems to be that wolves are known as carrion beasts.[286] In other words, Guðmundr is stereotyping his opponent, just like Biscla(v)ret's wife, who mistakes her husband for the sort of vicious *vargúlfr* described in the opening lines of the *lai*.[287] Nevertheless, Guðmundr's insults speak to a fear about what the werewolf might have eaten if he chose to. Although, as in the matter of nakedness, the werewolf's morality and humanity tend to be protected either by the author's ambiguous wording or total silence over the matter, being a wolf borders dangerously on deliberate consumption of tabooed food and even cannibalism.

Varro's account of the Arcadian werewolves, though only briefly mentioned in *De civitate Dei*, pushes this point even further. According to Varro, a handful of Arcadians are chosen to turn into wolves and live among real wolves in a certain wild region; if they refrain from eating human flesh for nine years, they can return and regain human form.[288] Two points can be extracted from this tale: first, real wolves do consume human flesh – they probably desire it more than other kinds of meat, otherwise there would not be much value in using it as a condition. The werewolves could thus join in the wolf-feast if they wanted to; it is a matter

---

an ox, a beast that must walk on all fours and constantly gaze at the earth, as opposed to man who can lift his eyes to heaven; eating grass, therefore, is baser. Second, game points to hunting, an activity that ties Yvain to his former life and the human, chivalric self. For Nebuchadnezzar's diet, see Doob, pp. 67-79. Even in Froissart's adaptation, which is tailored to his contemporary French audience, Nebuchadnezzar still sustains himself with a non-meat diet composed of 'acorns and crab-apples' (p. 79).

[286] *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*, in *Eddukvæði II: Hetjukvæði*, stanza 36, p. 254; 'First Poem of Helgi Hundingsbani', in *The Poetic Edda*, trans. Larrington, p. 115. Guðmundr goes on to mention in the same stanza Sinfjǫtli's fratricide that he committed as human rather than as wolf. But the juxtaposition of the two acts – eating wolfish food and killing brothers – points to the latter act's comparability to wolfishness and beast-like cruelty; it also speaks to the metaphorical function of cannibalism, that monstrous deeds are aligned with monstrous diet, and Siggeirr's sons are metaphorically 'devoured' by the wolfish Sinfjǫtli. The idea will be revisited below in the discussion of Signý, and again in the section that deals with cannibalism.

[287] Bynum, p. 172.

[288] Augustine, *City of God*, 18.17, pp. 418-21.

of personal choice and self-control. Second, eating human flesh marks the point of no return; once the werewolf embarks on a cannibalistic diet, he will be condemned to remain as bestial and other. The final borderline between man and beast would be erased and, by choosing the food of the natural wolves, the werewolves would forfeit their remaining human elements. These two points indicate the werewolf's in-between status. Transformed, he is not 'us', but nor is he quite 'the other'. Like St. Edmund's guardian wolf, the werewolf's identity and status can be negotiated through what he chooses to (or not to) eat.

Section Three: Tabooed Food and Tabooed Sex: The She-wolf's Appetite

When it comes to the (metaphorical) she-wolves, however, the bridge is often crossed, and the horror of cannibalism is explored and exhibited either through real acts of consumption or through metaphor. Here cannibalism's potential as a metaphor is also explored, as it is expanded from consumption of tabooed food to the consummation of a tabooed union. Monstrosity, therefore, is internally contagious; if a person is monstrous in one aspect, he or she is seldom innocent in another.

Of all the were- or she-wolves treated in this thesis, King Siggeirr's mother is the only one who manifestly devours human beings. Having devoured nine brothers of Sigmundr, she would have eaten the hero and ended the story prematurely if Signý had not smeared honey on Sigmundr's face and in his mouth.[289] The scene is both highly disturbing and sexually charged; it is very mouth-centred too. The she-wolf's choice of honey over human flesh is a strange one – honey not being the stereotypical food of a wolf. Perhaps it hints at the she-wolf's hidden human identity (despite her highly non-human behaviour). The 'kiss' shared by Sigmundr and Siggeirr's mother then points, once again, to the she-wolf's insatiable lust. Indeed, food – or

[289] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 5, p. 8. Note that, though Finch's translation has 'killed and ate', the only verb used here is *eta* (to eat), giving a sharp contrast to Sinfjǫtli and Sigmundr's wolfish activities. The she-wolf's preference for honey over human flesh is also worth noting in that honey is a privileged food; by licking the honey off Sigmundr's face, the she-wolf seems to have betrayed her identity as human of high standing.

the act of eating – and sex are closely connected, particularly for women, for both are acts of the incorporation of something or someone else into one's own body, an idea that will be revisited frequently in this chapter.[290] It must come as no surprise that, in medieval accounts of the nature of the wolf, the beast's sexual desire is discussed immediately after its *großer Hunger* (great hunger).[291] Since both are desires of the flesh, one easily passes into the other.

Considering that Sigmundr will eventually commit incest and also turn into a wolf, there is probably more to his unsettling and quasi-sexual encounter with the she-wolf. The condition of animality, after all, relates to bestial food and behaviour as much as to unnatural sex; and incest can be understood as a form of cannibalism in the sense that the family is 'devoured' by itself.[292] The act foreshadows Sigmundr's two unnatural deeds and reveals his latent wolfishness, suggesting perhaps another reason for his donning the *úlfhamr*, for the mouth-centred struggle between Sigmundr and the she-wolf must lead to an exchange of bodily fluids – of saliva and blood. The she-wolf then in a sense also becomes Sigmundr's food, and by ingesting something of her, Sigmundr must have taken on some of her nature. That the consumption of body parts and/or fluids should impart to the eater characteristics of the eaten is attested later in the same saga, when Sigurðr acquires wisdom after eating Fáfnir's heart and Guttormr eats serpent and wolf's flesh so he may be bold enough to kill Sigurðr.[293] It also casts

[290] Cannibalism tends to be read as a metaphor of conquest. To brand the conquered with the vice of cannibalism justifies the violence on the conqueror's part, as in the story of Maria of Jerusalem, and the Old English *Andreas*. For a summarisation of using cannibalism as a metaphor to define 'us' and 'the other', see Blurton, pp. 2-9; Blurton's reading of *Andreas* as a story of conversion as much as of conquest is found in pp. 15- 33. For Maria of Jerusalem, see Merrall L. Price, *Consuming Passions: The Uses of Cannibalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 2003), pp. 65-81. Maggie Kilgour expands the concept into any kind of consumption, including non-material acts such as knowledge acquisition. Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 5-10.

[291] *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, s.v. *Wolf* 4, col. 726: 'Sein Hunger ist groß' (Its hunger is great).

[292] Price, pp. 24-25, where she points out the 'symbolic relationship' between cannibalism, incest and the maternal body that can hold another human being. See also Hopkins, 'Why Arthur at all?', 88-89. Hopkins discusses the questionable union between Gorlagon and the she-wolf and connects the matter of metamorphosis and unnatural sex. She sees the Arthurian context as a way to justify the otherwise censorable content.

[293] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chaps. 19-20, pp. 33-34, and chap. 32, p. 58. The same motif is also twice found in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, first when Bǫðvarr drinks his brother's blood to gain strength, then when Hǫttr drinks the monster's blood and eats some of its heart. *Hrólfs saga kraka*, chap. 31, p. 53 and chap. 35, p. 60.

a curious light on Signý and, through her, Sinfjǫtli. It is Signý who takes the initiative in the incestuous relationship and, as a result, bears the blame.[294] Although she neither literally devours her children nor anyone else, her urging of Sigmundr to infanticide resonates with the broader symbolism of cannibalism. Kilgour, focusing on *Metamorphoses*, *The Odyssey*, and *Inferno*, also sees return home as a metaphor of incorporation that can be discussed alongside with cannibalism.[295] In a broader sense, 'return-home' encompasses not only the physical journey but also a metaphorical return to previous stages, including returning to the maternal body – this perhaps explains why many cannibals in literature are mothers – or at least parents – whose 'food' is their own children.[296] Signý's infanticide – direct or indirect – may also be read in this light, in the sense that she, the origin of her children, also becomes their end. Does this make Signý comparable to a she-wolf, a somewhat milder parallel to Siggeirr's mother? Moreover, the transformation of Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli into wolves makes Signý a kinswoman of wolves, which is a frequent kenning for wolf – indeed, as the sister, lover, and mother of

[294] Torfi H. Tulinius briefly analysed the two offences of Signý, namely her commanding of infanticide and incest, which are the reasons why her survival is intolerable. However, as he correctly points out, the guilt is not shared by Sigmundr, who only commits the sin of incest unknowingly. Torfi H. Tulinius, *The Matter of the North*, p. 143.

[295] Kilgour, p. 11.

[296] The best example is perhaps Mary of Jerusalem, recorded in Flavius Josephus's *The Jewish Wars*, where in a lengthy speech she expresses her infanticidal cannibalism as her child's 'return'. Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War, Volume III: Books 5-7*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library 210 (Cambridge, MA, 1928), Book 6, iii.4, pp. 236-39. It is also probably no coincidence that it is Demeter who devours (part of) Pelops. It has been explained that she ate the dish absent-mindedly because she was grieving over Persephone – having just lost one child, she takes another into her body. The *Pindar Scholia* replace Demeter with Thetis, another mother who has lost or is doomed to lose her child. Mark P. O. Morford, Robert J. Lenardon, and Michael Sham, *Classical Mythology*, International 10th edn (Oxford, 2015), p. 446. Another type of cannibalistic tale has the mother feeding her children to the father, who has caused grave harm to the woman's birth family. One of the best-known examples is Procne, whose Nordic parallel is found in Guðrún. Her sons are 'returned' to their father, by the hand of their mother. With the unnatural re-incorporation of his progeny, Átli's line becomes 'reverted' and, therefore, 'closed'; by (unwittingly) devouring the continuer, the genealogy unmakes itself. Notably, in *Atlamál*, Guðrún's sons accept their fate rather calmly and refer to their death as *blót* (sacrifice). Their calmness implies that Guðrún (and Átli) do have a right – albeit differently – to do with their offspring's life and body. This bears a curious similarity to Mary of Jerusalem's speech, in which she justifies herself by emphasising her being the 'material' of the infant. Guðrún's infanticide and the subsequent cannibalistic feast are discussed in Carolyne Larrington, '"I Have Long Desired to Cure You of Old Age": Sibling Drama in the Later Heroic Poems of the Edda', in *Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend*, ed. Paul Acker and Carolyne Larrington (London, 2015), pp. 140-56 (especially pp. 144-50). *Atlamál in Grœnlenzku*, in *Eddukvæði II*, stanza 77, p. 396; 'The Greenlandic Lay of Atli', in *The Poetic Edda*, trans. Larrington, stanza 78, p. 221.

wolves, what else could Signý be but a wolf?[297] This Vǫlsung nuclear family, therefore, poses an interesting parallel as well as contrast to Siggeirr's natal family (which, presumably, only consists of the mother and the son): whereas among the Vǫlsungs it is the male members who physically transform into wolves, it is the female (and the maternal) in Siggeirr's family. The non-metamorphosed, namely Signý and Siggeirr, exhibit wolfish behaviours.[298] It is also interesting that both she-wolves are mothers, progenitors of future wolves. Here the motif of exchange of bodily fluids surfaces again, this time between mother and son. In addition to the material flesh the mother provides for the child in the womb, the mother's milk is also vital in shaping the child's characteristics.[299] If Signý is read as a she-wolf, then it follows that Sinfjǫtli is not only doubly Vǫlsung but also doubly wolfish. Wolfishness, therefore, circulates within this incestuous family, until the premature deaths of Sinfjǫtli and Signý exterminate the incestuous branch, rendering it impossible to implicate Sigurðr or any other Vǫlsung descendants, in the same way that Gorlagon's wolfish family must also be made extinct.

In *Arthur and Gorlagon* and *Jóns saga leikara*, the connection between tabooed food and tabooed (female) sexual appetite not only appears more clearly but also includes another symbolic meaning of cannibalism, namely knowledge acquisition, even though these she-wolves are also only metaphorical. Both texts share the motif of an adulterous queen punished

[297] Meissner, pp. 124-26.
[298] King Siggeirr betrays and kills his father- and brothers-in-law, a monstrous deed that heralds those of Gunnarr, Hǫgni, and Atli.
[299] Romulus and Remus, for instance, are believed to have been imbued with extraordinary ferocity because of the she-wolf's milk; this also explains (and justifies) Romulus's fratricide. Layinka M. Swinburne, 'Milky Medicine and Magic', in *Milk: Beyond the Dairy: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1999*, ed. Harlan Walker (Totnes, 2000), pp. 337-44 (pp. 340-41). In particular, Swinburne points out how the important the mother's milk affects the child (p. 340). Likewise, according to Malory, Arthur was nursed by Kay's mother (i.e. a noble woman) while Kay was sent to a lower-class, sharp-tongued woman, from whom he acquires his characteristic sharpness of tongue. Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur: The Winchester Manuscript*, ed. Helen Cooper (Oxford, 2008), 1.3, p. 7, see also n. 6, p. 531. This detail is also implied in Robert de Boron's *Merlin*: when Sir Entor asks Arthur to make Kay his seneschal, he blames Kay's nurse for any potential wickedness or foolishness on Kay's part ('puisqu'il a pris ces défauts dans le lait d'une femme de basse condition et que c'est pour que vous soyez nourri comme il se devait qu'il a perdu sa veritable nature', 'for whatever faults he may have come to him only from the woman who nursed him – and it was on your account that his nature was changed'). Robert de Boron, *Merlin: roman du XIII^{e} siècle*, ed. and trans. Alexandre Micha (Paris, 1994), p. 167; Robert de Boron, *Merlin and the Grail*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Cambridge, 2001), p. 108.

by having to (be)hold (and kiss) her lover's head at a banquet. *Arthur and Gorlagon* in this regard is an especially important text, because it combines three actions of the mouth – eating, kissing (whence sex), and speaking – in one.[300] The act of (not) eating is persistent in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, where Arthur takes an oath not to eat until he learns about women's nature and is repeatedly tested in it. Gorlagon's frequent invitations – *descende et comede* ('dismount and eat') – are highly formulaic and important to the textual structure. As Hopkins points out, the exact same wording in each repetition emphasises Arthur's presence, thus supporting her argument that the Arthurian context is added to legitimise the scandalous plot.[301] Aisling Byrne reads the refusal to eat as highlighting Arthur's self-restraint and, therefore, as reconciling the lavish, courtly feast and the virtue of moderate consumption.[302] These textual interruptions, therefore, can be read as subordinate tests prepared for Arthur – not only, as Byrne argues, for his chivalric virtue but also for his determination and worthiness to acquire the knowledge he took upon himself to seek out. It must be remembered that Arthur had failed in his previous two attempts of exacting answers from Gorgol and Gorleil by agreeing to eat, thus betraying his own earlier vow. It is as if speaking and eating, the two acts that centre on the mouth, are exclusive; one may only perform one at a time. Gorlagon's invitations are not placed randomly across the text, rather they occur at the end of each sequence within the werewolf's tale; in other words, they function as narrative markers, and each intermediate block can be read as an independent story.[303] One may assume that, should Arthur agree to dismount and eat, Gorlagon

[300] The textual relationship between the two is discussed in Henry Goddard Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Cambridge, MA, 1921), pp. 213-15, and Soderbach, 'Motifs and Sources', in *Jóns saga leikara*, pp. xviii-xxviii. Soderbach concludes that *Jóns saga leikara* does not draw directly from *Arthur and Gorlagon* but from a very close, but now lost source.
[301] Hopkins, 'Why Arthur at all?', 79.
[302] Aisling Byrne, 'Arthur's Refusal to Eat: Ritual and Control in the Romance Feast', *Journal of Medieval History*, 37/1 (2012), 62-74 (69).
[303] In Kittredge's edition, the text is conveniently divided into twenty-two episodes in the form of twenty-two chapters. The first invitation only comes after Gorlagon's transformation, that is after the lengthy opening of Gorlagon's tale. If the goal is only to emphasise Arthur's presence and virtue, why cannot the phrase be inserted in the previous three *capita*? If rubrics were to be created at each invitation, they may well be: Gorlagon's foiled revenge (chap. 10), his encounter with Gorgol (chaps. 11-13), the werewolf's position in court (chap. 14), the queen's betrayal (chap. 15), the queen's execution (chaps. 16-17), the wolf's return (chaps. 18-19), Gorgol's

would stop speaking and Arthur would acquire only fragments of knowledge instead of coming to see the whole picture; nor would he observe the morbid scene involving the wife that he probably should have noticed as soon as he entered Gorlagon's hall. Gorlagon's wife, likewise, tricked Gorlagon into disclosing his secret by refusing to eat – '[l]ecto per triduum nihil omnino cibi sumens decubuit' ('[s]he lay in bed three days without taking anything to eat').[304] Yet the result is the opposite: while at the end of the story Arthur develops from listener into speaker (that is, he has learned to and is permitted to ask questions), the faithless queen is silenced. Her story is told both by Gorlagon – in the form of words – and by herself – in the form of gestures and symbols. It is the placement of the lover's head, like food, on a plate and the kissing in the feast scene that transforms the woman into a *lupa*. Her own lust, as well as his lust *for* her, has devoured the man; this is clearly something that Arthur needs also to understand. These two acts also put the woman's sexuality on display: the physical incorporation of the lover's body in the act of sex is now manifested by its symbolic incorporation through consumption; the carnal has been made into the cannibal.

The human head at a banquet motif is also adopted in *Jóns saga leikara*, but its symbolism is less powerful, and the significance of eating far less obvious than in *Arthur and Gorlagon*. The embalmed head is still presented at the feasting table, in a procession very similar to the one which bears the Holy Grail in *Perceval.*[305] The queen, however, is no longer required to kiss it – she does not even have to touch it, and it is made clear that her tears are

conquest (chap. 20), the werewolf's restoration (chaps. 21-22), and Arthur's question and the queen's punishment (chap. 23). The story ends with Arthur finally dismounting and eating at Gorlagon's request.

[304] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 214-15. Perhaps this is also why Gorlagon repeatedly tests Arthur's determination; he has learned, too.

[305] In addition to the procession, a few other passages in *Jóns saga* find parallels in other texts. Having slain the dragon, Jón cuts off the tip of its tongue and leaves the spearhead in the wound. These two actions are respectively found in *Tristrams saga* and *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*. But whereas in these two sagas, the evidence proves to be indispensable due to some evil opponents claiming the glory, no one questions Jón as the dragon-slayer; Jón's decision to both cut out the tongue and leave the spearhead, therefore, is only a precaution. It also indicates that Jón, or the saga author, has knowledge of the other two *sögur*, based on which Jón foresees what could have happened. It is as if *Jóns saga* operates in a different narrative world; as a saga hero and a saga reader at the same time, Jón's world stands between the world of the sagas and that of the readers. In this sense, the saga is a 'cannibalistic' text in it 'incorporates' motifs from other stories.

tears of contrition. Without physical contact between woman and head, the cannibalistic image is much diminished, even though it is still the queen's and the lover's lust, materialised in an act of bodily incorporation, that causes the lover's head to be displayed on a piece of fabric among the feasters. Nor does Jón need to use fasting as a lever to acquire knowledge; he uses the (were)wolf, or, rather, the king's curiosity about his release of the wolf. This is perhaps because, unlike Gorlagon, Sigurðr the werewolf has no ties to the royal family in question; he enters the story out of nowhere at a much later stage. The narrative priority is to establish a parallel between Jón and Sigurðr, who later become foster-brothers; once the symbolic equivalence between husband and wife, and werewolf and she-wolf no longer exists, it may be unnecessary to present the faithless queen as a metaphorical *lupa*. Her punishment, as a result, is much mitigated, and she is apparently given a second chance – the fact that she is still the queen and her bastard sons are spared (though mutilated so as to invalidate their claim to the throne) is more than sufficient as demonstration.

Nonetheless, the saga still plays with ideas about words, knowledge, and metamorphosis. What Jón told the king regarding his affair with the princess was the ambiguously phrased truth, playing on the word *haldinn* (seized), meaning both being literally seized by the princess and by a seizure.[306] The whole affair with the princess may be only an elaborate ruse that Jón employed to ask about the strange procession. It is notable that the sequence of events is different in *Jóns saga* from in *Arthur and Gorlagon*: whereas the head is nowhere mentioned before Arthur remarks on it, it is clearly stated that Jón has observed the whole performance at the banquet, but he apparently knows the romance genre too well to ask the question there and then. The werewolf's sudden appearance and capture not only prevents the exposure of Jón's secret, but also gives Jón a chance to turn the tables: now the king becomes the one who asks the question. Jón has, in other words, created an opportunity to

[306] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 12, p. 13, and p. 14.

exchange questions, though there is no possible way for him to predict the capture or even the existence of the werewolf.[307] Another major difference between *Jóns saga* and *Arthur and Gorlagon* is that, whereas the message in Gorlagon's story is obscure and Arthur does not necessarily understand it, the moralising tune is clearer in *Jóns saga*. The possible consequence of Jón's ruthless and morally questionable behaviour is pointed out by the king: 'Gudz hialp þu ertt frelsaadur af suo miklum haska sem þu sellder þig j fijrer mikla skammsijne og Ovisku' ([with] God's help you are saved from such a great danger that you got yourself into due to short-sightedness and foolishness).[308] Following the king's admonishment, the immediate revelation of the queen's past offence sounds more like a warning than simply an inset tale; it could have been Jón's head that ended up on a plate, if he were not so fortunate. The princess's behaviour is not entirely unquestionable; rather, she fits very well the profile of an unfathomable and desiring woman. When she is told of Jón's deeds and is asked to honour him, she appears rather haughty and condescending ('hun liest Sem hennj findist þar fatt vmm', She behaved as if it [Jón's dragon-slaying] were trivial), only to reveal later that she wants to sleep with him.[309] The queen's story, therefore, could well have been that of the princess and Jón, but it is a happy ending that the saga works towards. Whereas it is unclear if Arthur, who is expected to leave Gorlagon's court *parum inde doctior* ('little the wiser'), has learned anything

[307] It is impossible to be certain whether Jón recognises the human in the wolf when he asks for him, but there are reasons to believe that he does. Firstly, he – or the author – has been making considerable efforts to show that he knows many sagas; Jón could have guessed that the werewolf is a cursed prince and the curse could be broken in a certain way (as occurs in, for instance, *Ála flekks saga*). Granted, this is something of a gamble, but Jón is not nicknamed *leikari* (gambler) for nothing. Moreover, Jón clearly tells the king that he released the wolf not because he would let the beast cause harm as he did before: 'Eigi er þad sätt herra ad eg hefi varginn lätid fijrer þa grein ed eg villda ydur giora skömm' (It is not, lord, that I have released the wolf for that reason [i.e. to repeat the damage he caused before] or I wanted to do you harm). He seems rather certain that the wolf will not return, presumably because he indeed has discerned something extraordinary in this wolf, or he simply recognises the pattern characteristic of this type of stories. *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 16. Soderbach also points out the similarities between the werewolf episode in *Jóns saga leikara* and that in *Ála flekks saga*. Soderbach, 'Motifs and Their Sources', p. xxii.
[308] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 17.
[309] Ibid., p. 9.

at all,[310] Jón takes his lesson from the queen's punishment and legitimises his affair with the princess by marrying her, saving both her and himself from disgrace and severe consequences.

Section Four: The Scale of the Werewolf's (Possible) Food: The Acceptable

This investigation of the texts allows a scale to be constructed based on the degrees of acceptability of the were- and she-wolves' diet. At one end, there is proper aristocratic food – the good bread, cooked meat, and wine that Gorlagon and Melion are eager to consume as soon as they have been admitted to the king's dining hall; at the other end, there is human flesh, the absolute taboo. But there are many grey areas in between; to consume less ideal food does not necessarily incriminate the werewolf. The texts, for instance, tend to acknowledge the hero's lack of access to proper food, stating or implying that it is at least not entirely unacceptable for the protagonist to consume uncooked game meat. The werewolf could also be excused for not having proper table manners or dining with minimum pomp, as in the case of Melion, who drinks wine from a *bacin* (basin).[311] The point of no return is the consumption of human flesh – and horse meat, as will be argued in the last section. Once cannibalism is committed, there will be no hope of restoration. In other words, there is a scale of otherness that corresponds to the degree of acceptability of what has been or may have been consumed, even though the werewolf's eating habits tend to be ignored in the narrative. In the absence of direct description,

[310] The phrase is paired with 'Arture, descende et comede' ('Arthur, dismount and eat') in all instances but at the very end of Gorlagon's tale, when Gorlagon rephrases it into '[c]aue tibi si inde sapiencior haberis' ('[t]ake care that you are wiser for it'). *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 232-33. Although it sounds like a friendly advice as well as a rather subtle warning, it accentuates the whole episode's nature as a test: whereas previously Gorlagon is simply warning Arthur of his potential failure, now it is time for Arthur to show if he has taken any lesson from Gorlagon's tale at all. However, it is debateable what lesson it is that Gorlagon has intended for Arthur. Conventionally, it is believed to refer to Arthur's own marital problem, that Guinevere has committed or will eventually commit adultery; then Gorlagon's story would reflect Arthur's own and, as the readers are aware, Arthur never learns his wife's adultery until it is too late. Brady however argues against this interpretation on the ground that, first, Guinevere is not always portrayed as a (willing) adulteress, especially in the early Arthurian traditions, and second, she is not named in *Arthur and Gorlagon* – she is simply addressed as *regina* (queen), so that she may just be *a* queen instead of *the* queen. The lesson that Arthur is supposed to learn, according to Brady, is that while it is acceptable for men to kiss and embrace their wives in public, women cannot be seen active in pursuing and displaying their sexual desire. Nevertheless, for a later audience who have already become familiar with the tradition of Guinevere's adultery, the conventional reading is quite possible. In that case, then, they would interpret the ending as Arthur's failure.

[311] *Melion*, v. 434, pp. 70-71.

I shall analyse instead individuals and creatures who have knowingly consumed each food to compare them and to demonstrate how food symbolically affects and reflects the eater's identity.

The section starts with discussion of blood, for it is simply the most unavoidable and excusable. When Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél bites off the lady's nose, he must have tasted her blood, though the texts never make it clear what happens to the severed nose – does the werewolf swallow it or spit it out? Or, when Gorlagon's wolf pack attack the Queen's children and her brother, if Gorlagon does take part, he must have tasted their blood, too.[312] Likewise, Alfonse cannot avoid shedding blood when he kills the deer and doe to provide the royal elopers with new skins, even though he does not seek out blood for its nutritional value. Elsewhere, heroes occasionally drink blood – sometimes their own, sometimes of other creatures; this is seen as proof of valour or as a means of gaining knowledge or power.

First, I will investigate the properties of blood. As a bodily fluid, blood carries and distributes nutrition throughout the entire body. It is the force of life; to lose too much of it leads to inevitable death. According to Isidore, the Latin name for blood, *sanguis*, precisely derives from its life-sustaining potency: it is called so because 'vegetetur et sustentetur et vivat' ('it is animated, strengthened, and alive') when it runs in the (living) body.[313] Its nutritional value is plain: no creature survives without blood; if one cannot produce blood on one's own, one must feed on others' blood to maintain life – this explains why bloodless creatures, such as worms and flies, feed on beasts with blood.[314] The close contact between blood and the other parts of the body makes it the carrier of truth, for, by flowing through the entire body, it takes

[312] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 218-19.
[313] Isidore, *Etymologiarum sive originum*, XI.122, p. 17; *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, p. 239.
[314] *On the Properties of Things*, 4.7, p. 151: 'and a best þat haþ no blood is ifedde wiþ blood or wiþ þing þat acordiþ to blood, as it is i[s]eye in flies and wormes þat sittiþ on fleissche and soukeþ out þe blood and takeþ þerof fedinge ' (and a beast that has no blood feeds upon blood or upon things that are similar to blood, as it is seen in flies and worms that settle on flesh and seek out the blood and take thereof their feeding).

on the body's properties and thus encompasses secrets about the individual – just like the skin, but far less manipulable.[315] As a result, consuming blood becomes both dangerous and useful. It is taboo because, as it is the seat of life and vessel of the soul, ingesting blood would fuse two different life-forces. It is highly transgressive and contaminating, breaking not only bodily boundaries but also spiritual ones. For this reason, the Anglo-Saxons abhor and warn against eating flesh with blood.[316] Only the essential other – such as Grendel – would enjoy such a feast.[317] At the same time, however, one way to gain access to those secrets is to consume or at least come to contact with the blood. Kvasir's blood, for instance, contains the gift of poetry; whoever drinks of it will have access to that knowledge.[318] For similar reasons, in *Amícus ok Amilíus saga*, it takes the innocent children's blood to cure Amícus of leprosy.[319] Although blood has long been regarded as a cure for leprosy, the emphasis on the children's innocence

[315] Janet Carsten, *Blood Will Out: Essays on Liquid Transfers and Flows* (Chichester, 2013), pp. 59-61. See also Bettina Bildhauer, *Medieval Blood* (Cardiff, 2006), pp. 16-22, where she reaches the same conclusion by studying miracles and the nature of the Eucharist.

[316] For the taboo on eating blood among the Anglo-Saxons, see Mary Clayton, 'Ælfric's Letter to Brother Edward', in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg*, ed. Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser (Tempe, 2002), pp. 264-83, especially p. 268 and pp. 276-77. Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscripts* (Toronto, 2003), p. 64. In particular, Clayton argues that Ælfric's letter juxtaposes three acts of transgression: between bodies and species, between Christian and pagan customs, between ingestion and excretion; all three aims to evoke strong feeling of disgust, which links all three passages together. See also Carolyne Larrington, 'Diet, Defecation and the Devil: Disgust and the Pagan Past', in *Medieval Obscenities*, ed. Nicola McDonald (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 138-55, where she discusses similar connections in an Old Norse context.

[317] The *Beowulf*-poet paints a disturbingly vivid image of Grendel eating one of the Geats. In particular, Grendel drinks (*dranc*) the blood before consuming the flesh, accentuating the thoroughness with which he eats. The explicit portrayal of blood drinking, as Orchard argues, strengthens Grendel's kinship with Cain and foregrounds his otherness. Orchard also suggests a connection between the Arcadian wolves mentioned in *De civitate Dei* and Grendel and his mother, especially considering that both mother and son are referred to in lupine terms and that they live in isolated *wulfhleoþu* 'wolf-slopes'. This would make Grendel and his mother a parallel as well as antitype to the Arcadian werewolves: on the one hand, the man-eating Grendel and his kin represent the real 'other', a fate that the werewolves could avoid; on the other, they represent what the werewolves would become, had they broken the taboo. *Beowulf*, vv. 740-43, pp. 90-91; Orchard, p. 75.

[318] Snorri, *Edda: Skáldskaparmál I*, pp. 3-5; Snorri, *Edda*, trans. Faulkes, pp. 61-64. It is especially noteworthy that Kvasir is born from spittle and later turned into mead: the transformation from saliva to blood to mead joins together the two mouth-centred acts – speaking and eating – and knowledge acquisition. For Kvasir's 'transformation', see also Thomas D. Hill, 'Beer, Vomit, Blood, and Poetry: *Egils saga*, Chapters 44-45', in *New Norse Studies: Essays on the Literature and Culture of Medieval Scandinavia*, Islandica LVIII, ed. Jeffrey Turco (Ithaca, 2015), pp. 244-54 (249).

[319] Kölbing, 187.

here foregrounds Amícus and Amilíus's sin.[320] The shedding of it forces the pair to realise and repent of their deceit and moral impurity, which eventually leads to redemption.

Five instances of blood-drinking are to be found, in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, where the act is deemed as – if not wholly acceptable – at least not condemnable. Ranked from acceptable to somewhat questionable, they are the cases of: Folki (*Gesta Danorum*), Bǫðvarr (*Hrólfs saga kraka*), Reginn and Sigurðr (*Vǫlsunga saga*), and Hjalti (*Hrólfs saga kraka*). In all these cases, blood is not sought as food, but rather as a means of acquiring knowledge or power. In other words, it is the prioritisation of blood's medicinal or magic potency over its dietary value that makes it the least unacceptable. Here physical and figurative incorporation are combined, but it is the former that is foregrounded.

Among these five instances, Folki, Bǫðvarr, and Reginn may be grouped together, for all drink their own blood or that of their kin, thus creating a closed system either within the body or within one family. During the battle between King Vermund's army and the Swedes, Folki is caught drinking his own blood from a helmet, because 'Folco uulneribus ac labore hebetatus, set et estu pariter sitique perfusus […] recreandi corporis gratia' ('Folki's wounds and exertions had weakened him and he was saturated through with heat and thirst […] and in order to recuperate his body').[321] Several details call for attention. First, this passage confirms blood's fundamental role as the seat of life. By re-incorporating his blood into his body, Folki manages to maintain his circulatory system while avoiding the danger of mixing the life-forces of two different individuals. It is notable that the word for blood used here is *cruor* – blood that has been shed – rather than *sanguis*, blood in a living body.[322] Nor is Folki drinking directly from the body as carrion beasts do. This is further confirmed by his employment of the helmet,

[320] For blood as a cure for leprosy, see Himmelman, 192.
[321] Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum: The History of the Danes*, vol. 1, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, trans. Peter Fisher (Oxford, 2015), iv.3.6, pp. 226-27, parallel English translation on opposite page.
[322] Saxo, iv.3.6, pp. 226-227. *The Etymologies of Isidore*, xi.1.122, p. 239.

which not only adds a touch of civilisation but also brings the audience back to the royal banquet recounted immediately preceding the blood-drinking scene.[323] However, the parallel between wine-thirst and bloodthirst (both figurative and literal) also reveals a sense of anxiety over the possibility of consuming blood as food, though Folki's deed is justified by Vermund's praise and the young man's earlier vow. Bǫðvarr drinks not from himself but from his elder brother Elg-Fróði, so that he can gain some of the latter's power. Notably, it is from Elg-Fróði's calf ('Fróði nam sér blóð í kálfanum', Frodi took his blood from the calf), which is elk-shaped, that the blood is taken, clearly because it is from where Elg-Fróði's famous strength derives.[324] His blood, having flowed through that supernatural body part, takes on its magic property. Here blood also circulates within a closed system – in the Middle Ages, blood relatives are generally believed to share the same blood.[325] Moreover, Bǫðvarr's family is already a self-consuming one: Bera's unwilling eating of the bear meat passes the father's flesh to that of the sons, which produces the boys' unnatural qualities. The children, therefore, are born of two types of bodily incorporation, namely sexual intercourse and cannibalism: Bjǫrn's essence is incorporated into Bera's body first through the act of sex, resulting in the conception of the children, and then as food, resulting in the children's hybridity. Another self-eating family is Reginn's, who also drinks blood from his own brother. The scene is glossed over, but extrapolating from what happens to Sigurðr later, he does so to gain knowledge.

The cases of Sigurðr and Hjalti, on the other hand, are more problematic, for they not only drink blood from something entirely unrelated to them, but also eat some of the flesh.[326] It is unclear exactly what knowledge and power Fáfnir's blood contains (or bestows), besides

[323] The banquet is found in Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*, iv.3.5, pp. 224-27. Folki vowed that he 'percepte potionis mensuram propria cruoris haustu usurum' ('would sooner drain a draught of his own blood') than flee in the upcoming battle (pp. 224-25). It is also intriguing that Saxo carefully adds a quantitative modifier, *potionis mensuram*; perhaps it is yet another effort to distance Folki from other more monstrous blood-drinkers.
[324] *Hrólfs saga kraki*, chap. 31, p. 53.
[325] Bildhauer, pp. 134-35.
[326] These two cases are treated here because in both blood is consumed separately from and prior to the flesh.

extra linguistic ability, though a parallel between flowing words (of knowledge) and flowing blood is suggested when Fáfnir starts to instruct Sigurðr as he is bleeding out. Moreover, Sigurðr and Fáfnir are similar creatures in that both hover between man and beast – Sigurðr's self-identification as *gǫfugt dýr* (noble beast) is hardly coincidental – and the blood that he drinks is nearly cooked and is a very small quantity.[327] But what if someone of a very different nature were to drink a large quantity of Fáfnir's blood, uncooked? To eat a little of Fáfnir's heart is enough to make Guðrún 'miklu grimmari en áðr' ('far grimmer than before')[328], and grimness is one of Fáfnir's characteristics. Would consuming more change her nature more drastically and make her more like Fáfnir?

Hjalti's case, while posing the same questions, pushes the point even further. Initially a coward, Hjalti is made fearless and strong by drinking *tvá sopa stóra* (two big mouthfuls) of the monster's blood and eating *nokkut af dýrshjartanu* (a bit of the creature's heart).[329] Two points are worth noting. First, it is Bǫðvarr who comes up with the idea and who forces Hjalti to drink and eat from the dragon. This is probably no coincidence, considering that Bǫðvarr himself has experienced the benefits of blood-drinking. Second, here too the quantity is carefully calibrated. Yet Hjalti's blood-drinking proves to be more questionable than that of the other four and turns Hjalti into more of an 'other' than them. In a later episode, he bites off the nose of his mistress, presumably because he finds her loyalty doubtful.[330] This sudden burst of violence brings Hjalti closer to Biscla(v)ret and Tíódél (at their most *vargúlfr*-like moment),

[327] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 18, p. 31.
[328] Ibid., chap. 28, p. 48. In a later chapter, Guttormr is said to have eaten some boiled snake and wolf flesh (chap. 32, p. 58), so that he may have the courage to kill Sigurðr. The choice of snake and wolf is probably not random: it is perhaps meant to make Guttormr a weak parallel to Sigurðr, who is wolf-related and has consumed Fáfnir's blood and heart, though, as it turns out, Guttormr is still no match to his brother-in-law. The stanza quoted immediately after this detail, however, makes no mention of the cooking of the meat, indicating the possibility of Guttormr consuming raw meat and blood in the older sources. This reading, if accepted, would lead to two conclusions: first, it would yet another example of heroes drinking blood and eating flesh to gain the nature and property of the eaten; second, comparing the verse and the prose, the addition of the cooking (*létu sjóða*, '[they] boiled them [i.e. the serpent and the wolf meat] up) indicates the saga author's awareness of the implications of eating raw meat and blood. For the discussion on raw meat, see below.
[329] *Hrólfs saga kraka*, chap. 35, p. 60.
[330] Ibid., chap. 49, p. 84.

Egill, and Skallagrímr, as well as to Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli when they attack each other in the wolfskins, but unlike those whose animality is inherent, Hjalti has acquired it solely from consuming part of a creature that is wild and foreign to him. He also provides an interesting contrast to Bǫðvarr, who is apparently more stable and more capable of self-control, even when he is in bear form. The difference between the two draws a line between drinking from someone related (i.e. of the same blood) and drinking from something entirely 'other', pointing again to the anxiety and fear about mixing two life-forces; although Hjalti does not become the essential 'other', he comes dangerously close.

In comparison, eating raw game meat demands more care in its narration, for there can be little doubt that such meat is sought out as food, and cooking is universally accepted as a marker of civilisation. But, as the *Bisclavret* group attests, if it is explained or understood that there was no other option, eating raw game meat can be accepted. Helgi Hundingsbani is caught eating *hrátt kjǫt* (raw meat), but as Larrington points out, this is not to be read as Helgi's loss of 'understanding of civilised behaviour' – rather, the fact that he feels embarrassed and tries to cover it up by rephrasing *hrátt* as *lítt steikt* (scarcely roasted) points to the very opposite and certainly sets him apart from the like of *berserkir* who eat raw meat by choice.[331] Whether or not one's food is acceptable, therefore, can be circumstantial – sometimes a nonhuman diet is indeed demanded by warrior existence, as in the case of Folki, and, therefore, does not necessarily implicate the heroes in wrongful behaviour. Likewise, the werewolf existence demands that the metamorphosed men eat raw game meat; they simply have no other choice. Granted, this distances them from the human characters – for instance, the 'fake' were-bears in *Guillaume de Palerne* consumed 'blanc pain et char cuite' ('white bread and cooked meat')

[331] Carolyne Larrington, 'A Viking in Shining Armour? Vikings and Chivalry in the *Fornaldarsögur*', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 4 (2008), 269-88 (277). *Helgakvæða Hundingsbana II*, stanzas 7 and 9, p. 272. 'A Second Poem of Helgi Hundingsbani', pp. 129-30.

and ‘vin molt bon’ (‘very good wine’), using their hands which stretch out from under the skin – but this does not condemn the werewolves as occupying the realm of the ‘other’.[332]

In the absence of any direct portrayal of the werewolf eating raw meat, we can once again focus on Yvain. In both the French and the Old Norse versions, Yvain is expressly shown eating raw meat, though the fact that this information is limited to only one sentence and is never mentioned again may be an effort to exonerate him on the author/translator’s part.[333] The progress of Yvain’s recovery is not only reflected in his change of dress – as discussed in the previous chapter – but also in his change of food. These can be broken down into three stages: raw game meat, bread (first coarse then white) and water, cooked or processed game meat; each stage symbolises Yvain’s acquisition of a new status in his journey toward restoration of full humanity.[334] Concepts such as ‘raw’ and ‘cooked’ – along with ‘rotted’ – are discussed by Claude Lévi-Strauss, who reads them not only as culinary terms but also as categories of individuals and societies. A person may be deemed ‘raw’ if they are socially unincorporated; in such cases, they must be symbolically ‘cooked’ in order to be readmitted into the community.[335] Following the same line of argument, Yvain can be seen as developing from a

[332] *Guillaume de Palerne*, vv. 3252-82 (v. 3257), pp. 135-36 (135); *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation*, pp. 95-96 (95), where the werewolf attacks a peasant to acquire the food; vv. 3334-49 (v. 3336), pp. 137-38 (137); pp. 97-98 (97), where he robs a clerk of his wine. The importance of the human hands in the act of eating is discussed in Peggy McCracken, ‘Skin and Sovereignty in *Guillaume de Palerne*’, 362-65.

[333] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 2826-2828, p. 86; *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 330; *Ívens saga*, p. 68-69. It is also notable that in the Middle English romance *Ywain and Gawain*, Yvain eats not only roots and raw meat but also drinks blood. *Ywain and Gawain*, ed. by Albert B. Friedman and Norman T. Harrington, The Early English Text Society Series no. 254 (Oxford, 1964), vv. 1667-70, p. 45: ‘Þare he lifed a grete sesowne / With rotes and raw venysowne; / He drank of þe warm blode, / And þat did him mekil gode’ (There he lived the life of a great beast, with roots and raw venison; he drank of the warm blood, and that did him much good). Clearly, it is blood’s nutritional value that is emphasised here.

[334] Chrétien expressively states that the hermit cooks the meat and leaves plenty for Yvain (v. 2882: ‘pain a planté et veneison’); in the Old Norse the hermit ‘gerði homum þat til matar’ (fixed it for him to eat) rather than *eldaði* (cook by fire). It is not certain whether the hermit cooks the meat, salts it, or simply prepares the game more correctly, but in whichever way it is an improvement for Yvain. Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, v. 2882, p. 88; *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 331; *Ívens saga*, pp. 68-69.

[335] Claude Lévi-Strauss, ‘The Culinary Triangle’, in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, 3rd edn, ed. by Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik (London, 2013), pp. 41-47 (41). See also Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology* (London, 1994), pp. 334-39. Interestingly, he also points out the linguistic connection between ‘raw’ and ‘naked’, which ties more closely the two distinctive characteristics of the Wild Man, respectively discussed here and in the previous chapter.

'raw' person to a 'cooked' one; the meatless middle stage would be a stage of purification, a period of fast that enables Yvain to permit the raw meat to pass out of his circulatory and other physiological systems as well as to purge the 'rawness' from his identity. Furthermore, this middle stage can be broken down into eating 'coarse bread' and 'good bread', foregrounding Yvain's progress not only towards reincorporation within human society at large, but also towards a return to the courtly.[336] The third stage brings Yvain's restoration to the human world, but he is clearly still one step short of the aristocratic and the chivalric: Chrétien carefully specifies that the venison the hermit serves Yvain is 'sanz sel et sanz poivre' ('without salt or pepper'), thus creating a further transitional phase in Yvain's development.[337] At this stage, Yvain has only returned as the rational man, but not quite as the knight.

The eating of raw game, therefore, marks the lowest point of Yvain's life; it is fortunate that he does not stay there long. The same can be said for the werewolves. Like Yvain, they have or must have been sustained on raw game, until they are brought to court by the king, a turning point not only in their fates, but also in what they can choose to eat. But what would have happened if they had not met the king? What if they stayed 'raw' for too long? Their metamorphosis would probably become irreversible, as the *gelt* story from *Konungs skuggsjá* suggests.[338] Returning to Lévi-Strauss's culinary triangle, food that remains raw for too long will rot. 'Rotted' is a stage both parallel and opposite to 'cooked', in the sense that in both cases food is 'elaborated' – but one by nature, the other by culture.[339] Lévi-Strauss does not

[336] The French version is more interesting on this score, for Chrétien de Troyes offers a careful estimate of the cost of the hermit's breadmaking. While the change from raw meat to cheap bread symbolises Yvain's return to the human world, the change from cheap to expensive bread symbolises Yvain's rise on the economic and hierarchical ladder. He is regaining not only his human identity but also his aristocratic identity. Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, vv. 2844-51, p. 87, and vv. 2878-80, p. 88; *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 331.
[337] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, v. 2876, p. 88; *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, p. 331.
[338] If the *gelts* have stayed in the wild and lived as beasts for twenty years, it will become impossible for them to be restored to human status. They will remain animal-like. See Chapter Two, footnote 212, p. 84, and also Chapter Six, pp. 247-49.
[339] Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 41.

elaborate on the 'rotted' type of individual, but if the 'cooked' stands for the socially incorporated and the 'raw' for the yet-to-be, then it is reasonable to read the 'rotted' as the socially rejected. Within the scope of this chapter, these would be those who have passed the point of no return; namely, those who consume human flesh.

Section Five: The Point of No Return: Human and Horse Flesh

The horror of cannibalism lies in the meaning of the word. Essentially, the word 'cannibal' denotes any creature that consumes its own species.[340] Cannibalism, therefore, is not just about any 'other' but an 'other' that originates from 'us'. It entails a process of transformation – or rather, of degradation – from norm to monstrosity as well as pointing to a possibility that an individual or a group of individuals may turn on its own. The cannibal is at once the same and the other; this makes cannibalism more horrifying than a wild beast devouring man. The best demonstration would be Grendel, whose descent from Cain makes him a close kinsman to human and whose sinful heritage makes him monstrous.[341] By consuming human blood and flesh, Grendel replays Cain's crime: whereas Cain's fratricide only figuratively 'devours' his own kin, Grendel devours the Danes and Geats literally. Even worse, he apparently savours every bit – joints and sinews, blood and flesh, and lastly, the feet and hands. The detailed account of Grendel's attack depicts a grotesque picture of feasting, providing a strong contrast with the Danes and the Geats who are seldom clearly shown *eating* at a feast.[342] Grendel's feast is thus a feast that has gone wrong, just as Grendel himself is an example of humanity gone

[340] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. *cannibal*.
[341] Hugh Magennis, *Anglo-Saxon Appetites: Food and Drink and Their Consumption in Old English and Related Literature* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 79-80.
[342] For the parallel between Grendel's cannibalism and Cain's fratricide, see Orchard, pp. 65-66. For the scarcity of eating scenes in *Beowulf*, see Magennis, pp. 51-84, where he enumerates every feasting scene in *Beowulf* and discusses the anxiety over the physicality as well as animality that the act of eating entails. An interesting parallel is also found in Susan E. Farrier, 'Hungry Heroes in Medieval Literature', in *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson (New York, 1995), pp. 145-59, where she argues that feeling (and showing) hunger is simply not aristocratic, and description eating would draw the focus onto the corporeality of human experience; it is more fitting for 'the stereotyped *vilain* or lower class person of romance and *chanson de geste*'. (p. 146)

wrong; each act of cannibalism only confirms and strengthens his otherness. Monstrosity is in itself cannibalistic: it begets monstrous acts and then feeds upon them.

In the Old Norse-Icelandic literary corpus, the archetypal man-eater is the troll. What precisely a troll is, as Ármann Jakobsson points out, is impossible to define, except that it is both the essential 'other', yet uncannily 'us'.[343] This makes the troll especially unsettling, for, although the troll as a creature is strictly non-human, it is alarmingly humanlike. The saga trolls prepare their food, make beds, and dwell in a cave with basic living facilities. Nótt, for instance, upon returning home, 'bjó sér fæðu, hrossakjöt ok manna […] En er hún hafði etið sem hún vildi, geymdi hún fæðuna, en bjó sér sæng með þeim hætti, að hún lagði einn beð undir höfuð sér; hann var ger af geitskinnum' (prepared food for herself, horse and man flesh […] And when she had eaten as she pleased, she put the food into storage and prepared a bed for herself in such a manner that she placed one piece of bedding under her head; it was made of goat skin).[344] It is not clear how Nótt 'prepares' her food, but it is most likely that Nótt's meat is pre-salted and stored, as Ketill hæng finds in Surtr's hut.[345] This way of cooking confirms the trolls' affinity to humans, for salting the meat serves the same purpose as cooking with fire; both methods of food processing that prevent the meat from rotting. Yet they are eating the wrong sort of food; this confines the trolls to the realm of monstrosity. This combination only amplifies their grotesqueness, for the image of 'like eating like' becomes more pronounced.

In the case of Nótt in particular, another detail is noteworthy that may foreground the connection between the ambiguity of the trolls' food and that of their nature: having crawled

[343] Ármann Jakobsson, *The Troll Inside You: Paranormal Activity in the Medieval North* (Santa Barbara, 2017), pp. 18-20; see also Martin Arnold, '*Hvat er tröll nema þat?*: The Cultural History of the Troll', in *The Shadow-Walker: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous*, ed. Tom Shippey (Arizona, 2005), pp. 111-55, especially pp. 124-43, where he examines the troll(ish) figures in the sagas and interprets the troll as a cultural metaphor for what may threaten social stability.
[344] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 5, p. 133.
[345] *Ketils saga hængs*, chap. 2, p. 249: 'Hann fann þar í af hvölum ok hvítabjörnum, selum ok rostungum ok alls konar dýrum, en á botningum í hverri gröf fann hann mannakjöt saltat' (He found there [meat] of whales and polar bears, seals and walruses and all kinds of beasts, but at the bottom of each pit he found salted human meat).

out of Nótt's cave, Áli notices first that Hlaðgerðr's lapdog carries 'á baki sér flesk af svíni' (on his back pig meat); then the author adds '[k]læði hafði hundurinn meðferðar og svo góða fæðu, að konungssonur mátti vel neyta' (the dog had clothes in his keeping and such good food, so that the prince could eat well).[346] Is this 'good food' the same as the pig flesh? Is the pig flesh cooked or raw? The mystery deepens when, a moment later, Áli puts the pig flesh down on the path at the mountaintop, as instructed by Hlaðgerðr.[347] No further explanation is given regarding either the meat or Áli's action. But it is understood that the pig flesh might be reserved for Nótt – that it is left behind presumably to distract Nótt, should she follow Áli in pursuit. As Timothy Bourns shows in his research into meat taboo, special care is required when it comes to consuming pig meat, for pigs are omnivore and the possibility that they may have consumed human flesh or other tabooed meat 'creates category anxiety'.[348] That Nótt should be attracted to pork flesh implies that she is not afflicted by such anxiety, and the eating of ambiguous food both echoes and strengthens her own nature. Therefore, as different as they are, life as a troll is emblematic of human life; it allows a glimpse into what life humans might have if they become less human and, therefore, come to defy categorisation. Anyone can become trollish, if they behave like one; 'trollness' is rather a set of behaviours than a creaturely identity. For this reason, the troll functions as 'a devastating reminder of the fragile state of humanity'.[349]

One the other hand, although trollness defies categorisation elsewhere, food draws a firm line between troll and non-troll. Brana, for instance, distances herself from the other trolls by stating 'hvorki er ek blóðdrekkr, nè mannæta' (I am neither blood-drinker nor cannibal).[350]

[346] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 5, p. 133.
[347] Ibid., chap. 5, p. 134.
[348] Timothy Bourns, 'Meat and Taboo in Medieval Scandinavian Law and Literature', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 14 (2018), 61-80 (63). The same logic lies behind prohibitions against eating taloned birds; they are driven by the fear of indirectly consuming human flesh.
[349] Ármann Jakobsson, *The Troll Inside You*, p. 141.
[350] *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra*, in *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, chap. 6, p. 334. It is noteworthy that Brana is singled out from her sisters because she wears a red tunic

She further confirms her essential humanity by actively participating in the killing of Járnhauss, thus figuratively severing her trollish connection, though the death of her abductor does not restore her human appearance.[351] Likewise, in *Ála flekks saga*, the difference between Hlaðgerðr and Nótt is reflected in what they eat. The human eats a certain type of food, cooked in certain ways, as opposed to the man- and horse-eating troll; having been given the choice between 'the good food' and human and horse flesh, the real choice that Áli faces in his first ordeal is between human and troll identity, between this world and the other. It is also a matter of control: Áli has to wait – therefore, to fast – for one night in order to obtain the food and drink befitting him as a human prince. Furthermore, the appetite for food is again coupled with that for sex, when, after Áli has refused to share her food, Nótt resumes her attack by inviting Áli to share her bed. Should Áli concede, he would become the troll-woman's sustenance, as he would be incorporated into her body. The power balance between the man and the (troll)woman would also be inverted: whereas previously Áli had the freedom to choose his food, he would then be reduced to 'food', chosen and devoured by Nótt.

Another important component of the troll's diet is horse meat, which tends to be found alongside with salted human flesh in their food stores. Eating horse meat (hippophagy) is just as tabooed and othering as eating human flesh; even indirect consumption should be avoided: if a pig eats horse meat, it must starve for three months and be fattened for another three before it can be safely consumed by man, whereas if a pig eats human flesh, one must double the period of time.[352] Therefore, as Bourns observes, to (indirectly) consume horse flesh is at least 'half as bad' as (indirectly) eating human flesh, especially considering that there are no laws

(*rauðkyrtill*), which hints at her humanity and morality. It is not stated what her two sisters wear, but chances are that they dress rather immodestly – as in the case of Nótt in *Ála flekks saga*, who wears a skin coat that cannot cover the loins in the back. *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 5, p. 132.

[351] *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra*, chap. 7, pp. 335-36.

[352] *Grágás: Konungsbók*, I, p. 34; *Laws of Early Iceland: Grágás: The Codex Regius of Grágás with Material from Other Manuscripts*, I, ed. and trans. Andrew Dennis, Peter Foote, and Richard Perkins (Winnipeg, 1980), pp. 48-49.

against eating a pig that has consumed other animals.[353] Bourns further traces the prohibition against hippophagy to the horses' economic value, their status as human companion animals, and, most importantly, their role in defining Christian against pagan: hippophagy is an effective marker of paganism in both law and literature, and is associated with the emotion of disgust.[354] To consume horsemeat, therefore, corrupts the body and makes the eater unclean in a specifically Christian context.

The harm is especially great if a knight is implicated in hippophagy, for the horse is an inherent element of the knight's dress and identity, as is the lion of Yvain's, as demonstrated in Chapter Two; for a knight, to eat his horse would be no different from self-eating, in the sense that he 'eats' his own identity.[355] Focused on the *chanson de geste* genre, Paul H. Rogers correctly concludes that the horse is the knight's mirror image; it is the embodiment of his masculinity, prowess, and nobility.[356] To demonstrate, Rogers has examined the bond between Bucéphale and Alexander in the *Roman d'Alexandre*: master and horse were born on the same day; the taming of Bucéphale signifies the beginning of Alexander's conquests, and his death heralds the end.[357] Similar horse symbolism is found in the Old Norse material. Íven, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is given a *hægr gangari* (gentle palfrey), despite the possibility of receiving a *beztr vápnhestr* (very fine charger).[358] This choice of horse reflects Yvain's transitional status: that he neither asks for nor is offered the *vápnhestr* points to the incompleteness of his re-assumption of chivalric identity, even if a good *gangari* (ambler),

[353] Bourns, 63-64.
[354] Ibid., 68-76.
[355] Etymologically, the word for 'knight' in several European languages is either derived from 'horse' or the action of riding a horse. For instance, *eques* in Latin comes from *equus* (horse) and *ire* (to go) and the French *chevalier*, from *cheval* (horse). *Riddari*, the Old Norse-Icelandic word for 'knight', is derived from *ríða* (to ride); likewise, *Ritter* in German also descends from the verb 'to ride'.
[356] Paul H. Rogers, 'Rediscovering the Horse in Medieval French Literature', *Neophilologus*, 97 (2013), 627-39 (636).
[357] Ibid., 634-38.
[358] See footnote 219 in Chapter Two, p. 86.

though normally a woman's mount, is just as expensive as any warhorse.[359] The change from having no horse to gaining a *gangari* provides a curious parallel to the move from eating cheap to expensive bread; Yvain may not be ready to reclaim his knightly status yet, but he is ready to be restored to the aristocratic world. The horse also plays an important role in the hero's development in *Jóns saga leikara*. On the day he is dubbed a knight, Jón receives an extraordinary horse that is said to parallel him in exceptionality.[360] Jón apparently understands what is expected from the master of such a fine horse: as soon as he accepts the horse, he declares his plan to seek adventure so he may live up to the expectations and vows that he shall stop at nothing while he rides this horse.[361] It is also noteworthy that, upon departure, Jón takes *annann hest lausann* (another spare horse), which he rides when he anticipates danger ahead.[362] It is as if the spare horse is taken just to be killed, so that the horse-rider parallelism can be kept intact. Again, the saga author showcases his knowledge: the fine horse is meant to be the knight's mirror image; it must rise and fall with its master.

[359] Ann Byland, *The Medieval Warhorse from Byzantium to the Crusades* (Stroud, 1994), p. 86.

[360] *Jóns saga leikara*, p. 2: 'þa vil ec gefa þier med Riddara nafni Suo frijdann hest ad einginn faest hanz jafnj edur annar þujlijkur j öllu frackl̈andi þiker oss þad saman Bera og kom So sem þu ber af odrum monnum suo bere hesturinn af ödrum hestum' (Then I will give you, to accompany the name of knight, such a fine horse that no one would find its equal or a similar one in the whole of France. It seems fitting to us that, as you distinguish yourself from other men, the horse shall distinguish itself from other horses).

[361] *Jón saga leikara*, p. 3: 'skal ec skiott far af minnj fodur leifd ei sijdar enn a mörgunn rij[d]andi þeim frijda heste sem minn fade[r] Gaf mier' (I shall depart immediately, with my father's permission, no later than in the morning, riding that beautiful steed that my father gave to me); and again on p. 4: 'nu er ec kominn a þann frijdasta hest er minn kiærj fader gaf mier fijrer þa grein at eg er vel af gardj gior og eg þikunnst mikid eiga vnder mijnum frækleika Streingi ec þess heit ad þar sem eg ætla framm ad Rijda mijnum Hesti ad mier skal einginn Hlutur talma' (now I have come on this finest horse that my dear father has given to me to demonstrate that I have distinguished myself at home, and it is only fitting for me to show valour. I make a solemn vow, that wherever I intend to ride on my horse, nothing shall hinder me).

[362] Ibid., pp. 4-5: 'lætur epter hest sinn med pokum þeim er a uoru enn lijkur vpp Borgar hlidinu slær hest spörunum og Rijdur framm sinn veg' (he leaves his horse behind with the bags that were there, opens the gate of the fort, and kicks the horse with spurs and rides straight on). From this passage, it is not clear which horse is left behind and which is taken, but it is most likely the spare one that is taken to the dragon and, consequently, is burned to death. Otherwise, why should Jón take along a spare horse at all? Moreover, the author keeps referring to the fine horse either as *fridastur hestur* (the finest horse) or *sinn hestur* (his own horse), while the horse Jón rides to confront the dragon is just *hestur* (a horse) and *hestur hans* (his horse). There seems to be a difference in the author's tone when referring to different horses. The horse does not re-appear until nearly the end of the story, where it is again referred as *frida hestur* (fine horse); chances are that it is the first horse that survives.

Thus, the coupling of human and horse meat in the troll's meal images this close bond between the knight and his horse, especially in the chivalric texts that form the majority of this thesis's primary sources. If the knightly heroes – such as Áli – consume such a dish, it is not only their human status that is undermined, but also their chivalric and aristocratic position. For a knight, eating horse meat is also an act of self-eating, for by eating away at the horse, the knight also eats away at an integral part of his dress and identity. For what is a knight but a man with a horse?

In conclusion, the scale on which the werewolf's possible diet is calibrated points to a scale for the understanding of monstrosity. As Bourns shows in his analysis of *Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana*, the Norse system of meat taboo 'presents gradations rather than a simple forbidden/permitted dichotomy'. [363] Likewise, a spectrum of 'monstrousness' can be discerned from the spectrum of tabooed food. Between the two extremities, there is also an ambiguous area in which monstrosity is only relative and therefore reversible. To drink blood or eat raw meat is not normal, but it does not necessarily implicate the individual in evil if the amount consumed and/or duration of consumption is moderate. The werewolf, though metamorphosed, can still re-negotiate his place within human society by regulating his diet and behaviour. The one line that the werewolf cannot cross is the eating human (and horse) flesh if he wishes to be re-incorporated into the human society again; doing so would transform him on a spiritual level and render him a complete 'other'. The troll, on the other hand, provides a mirror-image to the werewolf; it represents another approach towards the definition of humanity from the opposite direction. Both creatures represent efforts to explore the grey area between humanity and monstrosity, but whereas the werewolf is a human

[363] Bourns, 74.

being who comes a bit too close to monstrosity, the troll is a monster with disturbing traces of humanity.

Chapter Four

'Á skóg með hryggðum':[364] The Werewolf's Landscape and Mindscape

In the previous chapters, I have examined the dynamics between the werewolf's body and mental or spiritual status. Although the werewolf's mind is hidden under his fur and in narrative silence, his interiority is nevertheless revealed by some exterior, physical traits or behaviour, as if solving a riddle: to unveil what is concealed, one must see through and interpret the appearance.

In this chapter, while still travelling in two opposite (yet correlated) directions, I intend to take my examination of the relationship between exterior and interior one step further: this chapter ventures even further away from the individual into the investigation of the landscapes the werewolf finds himself in. These encompass not only geographical features but also other occupants sharing the same landscape, not only those features that are visible but also the sensory elements. As for interiority, I move deeper into the werewolf's mind and focus on the emotional impact of the metamorphosis. Here I recur to the skin models and the Skin Ego discussed in Chapter One: if the psyche suffers 'wounds' and splits into the human ego and the wolf ego, resulting from and made visual by the 'splitting' of skin, then how does the disruption in the perception of the self affect the individual's emotional state? How, in other words, does the werewolf *feel* when trapped in the wolf's body, yet still possessing a human mind, especially if the metamorphosis is intended as a curse or punishment? Surely the situation must be desperate, when, deprived of voice and language, his appearance is no longer able to communicate the self correctly.

In other words, if one imagines the werewolf metamorphosis as an axis, then this line can be triangulated by two other structural elements – termed in this chapter as landscape and

[364] In the forest in sorrow. *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 17, p. 5.

mindscape; these are the variants that rotate and mutate around it. Furthermore, the three elements interact with each other, so that to understand one is to shed light on the other. To explore the landscape-mindscape dynamic, I borrow the concept of psycho-geography and rely on Paul Langeslag's work on seasons – especially on winter – in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, where he convincingly demonstrates the fruitfulness of the concept's literary application. The concept will be discussed in detail in relevant sections, but now suffices it to say that psycho-geography allows a glimpse into the werewolf's mind, invisible and often unvoiced, through the depiction of his physical surroundings.

In Section One, I will explain the theories and tools employed in this chapter, including, in addition to psycho-geography, studies on emotions in literature, and the semiotic square, which will serve as a demonstrative tool. Once this foundation has been laid, I turn in Section Two to the relevant texts to map out the werewolf's emotion – how it is described, inferred, or glossed over – and to examine how the triangle of appearance, landscape, and mindscape is manifested. The main source here is *Úlfhams rímur*, which will furnish a case study, not only to demonstrate the interaction between landscape (winter and darkness in particular) and emotion, but also to bring the werewolf face-to-face with the *draugr*, the unquestionable 'other'.

Section One: Theories and Tools: The Foundation

The project of conceptualising emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic texts has been ongoing for decades, therefore there is no need for a full account of what has been previously done. I give here a summary of the major works and concepts based on which the analysis of this chapter will be built.

Although Old Norse-Icelandic prose texts are generally considered notoriously lacking in descriptions of emotions, it does not mean that emotions do not exist in these texts. Rather,

in William Ian Miller's words, 'emotion in the sagas […] must be inferred'.[365] But how to infer it? Miller has listed four ways: to look for direct lexical descriptions; descriptions of somatic responses; actions, dialogues, and behaviours; and the underlying social value.[366] For direct descriptions, Barbara H. Rosenwein's work on emotion words offers a starting point, and Sif Rikhardsdottir, having compared the French *Yvain* and the Old Norse *Ívens saga*, complements Rosenwein's findings by identifying an Old Norse methodological counterpart.[367] The second and the third ways depend on emotion being 'at once cognitively penetrable and somatic': even when words are scanty or absent, emotion can still be inferred from the physiological manifestations and specific actions of the character.[368] On the physiological level, emotions are essentially related to the motion of the vital spirits, which in turn causes somatic reactions, such as changing colour and swelling; these responses are simply beyond the individual's control, revealing the surge of emotion and opening up the possibility of interpretation. On the cognitive level, emotion is inherently 'action-ready': the individual/character must recognise and evaluate the situation, make a decision, and put it into action.[369] Last but not least, one cannot interpret emotion without considering the social and cultural background where it originates: though Miller only focuses on honour and shame as a case study, a spectrum of normative

[365] William Ian Miller, *Humiliation and Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Ithaca and London, 1993), p. 111.
[366] Ibid., p. 98.
[367] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Emotion Words', in *Le sujet des émotions au Moyen Âge*, ed. Piroska Nagy and Damien Boquet (Paris, 2008), pp. 93-106. Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 34-37. See also Miller, pp. 98-101.
[368] Peter King, 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford, 2009), pp. 167-87 (187). See also Corinne Saunders, 'Mind, Body and Affect in English Arthurian Romance', in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Body, Mind, Voice*, ed. Frank Brandsma, Carolyne Larrington, and Corinne Saunders (Cambridge, 2012; repr. 2015), pp. 31-46 (32-35). Carolyne Larrington, 'The Psychology of Emotion and Study of the Medieval Period', *Early Medieval Europe*, 10/2 (2001), 251-56 (252-53).
[369] Larrington, 'The Psychology of Emotion', 255-56, where she briefly analyses Beowulf's fight with Grendel to demonstrate how to infer literary emotions based on the character's action and how the author could manipulate the text to induce the desired emotion in the readers / audience. It should also be pointed out that certain actions may be intended to supress or feign emotion (such as Hallgerðr's and Guðrún's smile upon hearing their husbands' death), or as performance (such as Laudine's mourning). For emotion's performativity and public masking, see Sif Rikhardsdottir, 'Translating Emotion: Vocalisation and Embodiment in *Yvain* and *Ívens saga*', in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature*, ed. Brandsma et al., pp. 161-79 (especially 171-77); Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 119-30.

emotions is suggested based on the individual's gender, class, and age.[370] In other words, emotion can serve as an identity indicator. Even in the case of public masking of emotions, the feigned emotion speaks to the society's perception of that emotion and its social display rules: instead of displaying grief, for example, Hallgerðr Hǫskuldsdóttir and Guðrún Ósvifrsdóttir choose to smile to disperse the killers' doubts, an emotion behaviour generally believed to express pleasure and contentment. In both cases, the killers mark out the women's reaction as highly unanticipated to the point of appearing suspicious, but they interpret the smiles at face value. Clearly, both women understand the emotional indication of the smile and the underlying social expectation well enough to successfully manipulate those in the same society. The idea that emotions – literary or not – are in part social constructs underpins the concept of emotional communities; these can help the researcher to 'uncover systems of feeling' within a social or a textual group with shared values.[371] Based on Rosenwein, Sif Rikhardsdottir coins the term 'emotive script' to shift the focus from real-life emotion to literary emotion and to accommodate generic difference; the latter is especially important and useful to this thesis, since the majority of the primary sources analysed here are texts influenced by or contained within the romance genre.[372]

The second domain that this chapter aims to examine is landscape, which interacts not only with the werewolf's physical change, but also with his mental transformation. To investigate that interaction, I borrow the theory of psycho-geography (*la psychogéographie*). Introduced by Guy Debord in 1955 and used in urban design, psycho-geography devotes itself

[370] Miller, p. 115-30.
[371] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions', *History Compass*, 8/8 (2010), 828-42 (832). See also Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006), pp. 24-25. It is worth pointing out that the emotional community is not necessarily a physically constituted social community, but could also be a textual one: a community that produces, reads, and is shaped by a common group of texts.
[372] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 28-32. For another example, see Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 69-71, where she examines Kveld-Úlfr's and Egill's expression of grief in their old age: whereas it is proper for a young man to channel grief into action, it is acceptable for an old man to retire into isolation and grieve for the dead with women.

to 'l'étude des lois exactes, et des effets précis du milieu géographique, consciemment aménagé ou non, agissant directement sur le comportement affectif des individus' (the study of the exact laws and of the specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously arranged or not, acting directly upon the emotional behaviour of individuals).[373] Further, it incorporates two sub-concepts, psycho-geographical projection and psycho-geographical injection: the former means that pedestrians project themselves onto the physical environment, thus associating it with a particular set of meanings and emotions; in turn, the emotionally charged landscape affects the feelings of the pedestrian and evokes in them emotions they otherwise would not feel: injection.[374] Therefore, by appropriating the environment, the urban and architectural designer can achieve the desired effect upon the pedestrian's mind. Interestingly, these two sub-concepts run parallel with the double functions of the emotive script: the script can be both descriptive and prescriptive, in the sense that it both reflects existing values and emotional codes within the community (i.e. the community projects itself into the text) and institutes new ones (i.e. the text injects these codes into the community).[375] One feeds into and feeds upon the other and, catalysed by imagination, the emotion only grows stronger.

Langeslag's research on seasons foregrounds psycho-geography as a methodology for investigating medieval literature. The author is essentially the architect of their own work: when building a literary world, they can foreground the character's emotion by setting the story in suitable landscapes and thus evoke the same emotions within the audience. As a result, the literary landscape holds the key not only to the character's emotion, but also to the perception of and associations with a given landscape within an emotional community. Particularly relevant to this chapter, Langeslag examines winter and its emotional connotations in Old

[373] Guy Debord, 'Introduction à une critique de la géographie urbaine', *Les lèvres nues*, 6 (1955), 11-15 (11). The English translation is my own. For the development of the concept, see Paul S. Langeslag, *Seasons in the Literatures of the Medieval North* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 67-68.
[374] Langeslag, p. 67.
[375] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature*, p. 29.

English and Old Norse literature, and concludes that elements of winter are invoked not necessarily for chronological purposes but for their 'associative effects': antithetical to the human space, winter tends to be associated with the supernatural, the monstrous, and the emotively disturbing.[376]

While psycho-geography offers a method to bridge the landscape and the mindscape and thus strengthens the triangle, the diagram of the semiotic square (Figure 1) proves a convenient tool to demonstrate graphically how the triangle plays out in a specific text. Proposed by the linguist Algirdas J. Greimas, the semiotic square aims to reveal the 'deep structures' of any given narrative, thus offering a structure sufficiently generalised and abstract to be applied to tales of different plots and genres.[377] The dotted double arrow denotes 'contrary relation' (i.e. total opposition, such as life and death), the double arrow denotes 'contradictory relation' (i.e. S and non-S), and the single arrow denotes 'complementary relation' (i.e. $\overline{S}_2$, which is non-S_2, implies S_1).

[376] Langeslag, p. 113.

[377] A. J. Greimas and François Rastier, 'The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints', *Yale French Studies*, 41 (1968), 86-105 (especially 87-92); Greimas and Rastier distinguish three stages of constructing cultural objects: deep structures, superficial structures, and manifestations. They are only concerned with the deep structures, which 'define the fundamental mode of existence of an individual or a society', Greimas and Rastier, 87. The figure is taken from A. J. Greimas and Joseph Courtés, *Sémiotique: dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage I* (Paris, 1979), s.v. *carré sémiotique*, p. 31. For a summary of the development of the semiotic squares, see Sémir Badir, 'How the Semiotic Square Came', in *The Square of Opposition. A General Framework for Cognition*, ed. Jean-Yves Beziau and Gillman Payette (Bern, 2012), pp. 427-39. Granted, Greimas's structuralist approach has its own limitations and has been criticised for being reductive and rigid; it presents a risk of reducing a narrative to its bare bones and dismissing its context, details, and narrative variations. However, much depends on how and to what a method is applied, and, thanks to its abstractness, it can be adapted to any element of a given narrative. Such fluidity and its potential benefit to literary analysis are recognised and discussed in, for instance, Matthew Burroughs Price's work on minor or inactive characters, where he defends the semiotic square for 'helping analysts to construe an interactive relational model of logical possibilities'; rather, he argues, the model is 'a diagram of limit-cases, a semiotic compass that orients us on an ideological plane'. Matthew Burroughs Price, 'Old Formalisms: Characters, Structure, Action', *New Literary History*, 50/2 (2019), 245-69 (252).

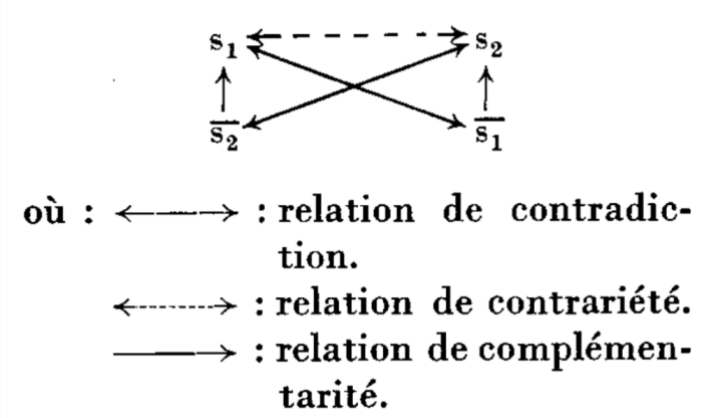


Figure 1.

For illustrative purpose, Greimas and Rastier give an example of the American traffic light system (Figure 2). First, suppose that S_1 is the green light and S_2 as its contradictory is the red light. Then, $\overline{S}_2$ is the orange light following the red: it is not red (therefore non-S_2); though nor is it quite green, it *implies* the green by preceding it. $\overline{S}_1$, on the other hand, is the orange following the green (therefore non-S_1) and therefore implying the red.[378]

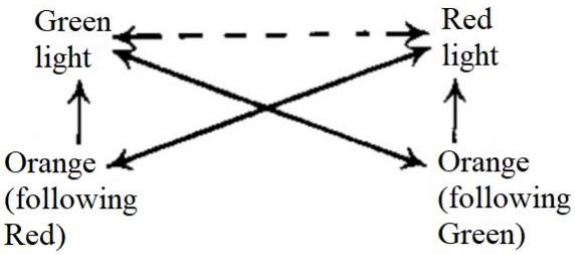


Figure 2.

In addition to its clarity, this example is reproduced here also because it distinguishes two liminal stages, namely the orange lights. This relation, as will be shown below, is particularly relevant when it comes to analysing the werewolf texts, for indeed werewolves are liminal creatures active in liminal spaces. All considered, the semiotic square not only identifies each key element of a narrative but also delineates their interaction and development; as a tool, it is

[378] Greimas and Rastier, 92.

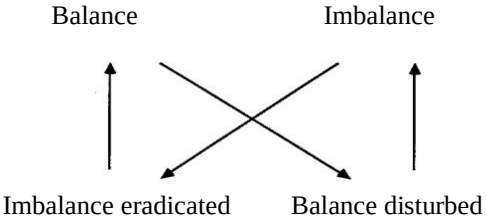
particularly useful to introduce and present the triangle in *Úlfhams rímur* and to demonstrate the interaction within it.[379]

Section Two: Mapping the Werewolf's Mindscape: An Overview

Among the core primary sources discussed in this chapter, the mindscape-landscape dynamic is best demonstrated in *Úlfhams rímur*. Vargstakkr, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir correctly points out, is a unique case in the sense that his transformation is bound directly to the alternation between winter and summer landscapes, and he is expressly shown grieving over his unhappy condition:

A sumru*m* rædu*r* siklin*g* riku*r*.	(In summer the king rules in the kingdom,
soma ollu*m* hei*m*a.	at home with all honour.
u*m* uintu*r* sk*yll*di h*ann* uorgu*m* liku*r*.	In winter he had to don the wolf's form,
og u*ar*d æa skog at sueim*a*.	to glide around in the woods.
Ui*ntur* ein*n* at uis*er* læa.	One winter, the king lay

[379] In her paper 'Winter Darkness in Icelandic Fairy Tales' presented at 'The Dynamics of Darkness in the North Conference' (February 26-28, 2015), Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir discusses the advantage of using the semiotic square to stories with strong fairy-tale characteristics, for structurally these tales tend to follow a strict pattern. She reconstructs the square as



Although she has never explicitly applied this square to *Úlfhamr rímur*, her analysis of the *rímur*'s structure fits the pattern: she reads the story as featuring two opposing forces pulling at each other in hope of achieving a new *status quo*. Ending with the establishment of a new dynasty, the tale is essentially about balance disrupted and balance restored. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', 5.3.1.1-5.3.1.2, pp. ccxxxiv-ccxxxvii.

uist skog m*ed* | hrygdum. in the forest in sorrow.)[380]

and, again, later in the *rímur*, when the original curse is revealed:

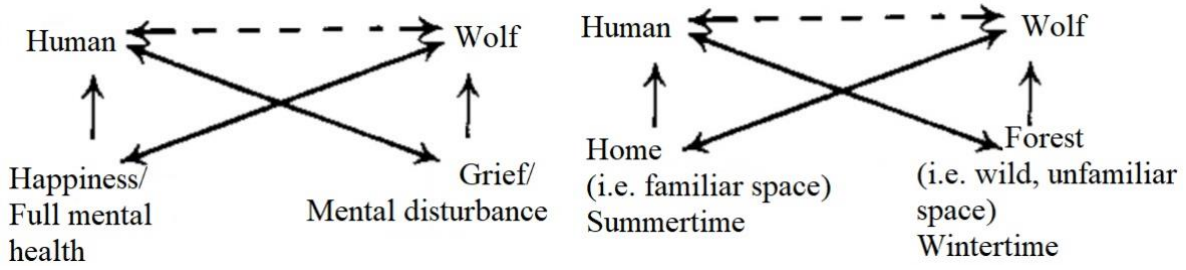
W*er*e þi*er* ut m*ed* v*ar*ga sveit. ("You shall be out in the company of wolves,

uint*ra* natt so la*n*ga. during the long winter nights.

Æfin se þ*ei*m alld*ri* teit. No joy you shall receive from life,

allt sk*al* moti g*an*ga. (III. 40) and all shall go against you.")

Despite the brevity of the narrative, a *status quo* (S_1), its immediate opposite (S_2), and their complementaries are easily identified: on the one hand, there is human-happiness-home-summer, while on the other side lies wolf-grief-forest-winter (figure 3).



And in combination

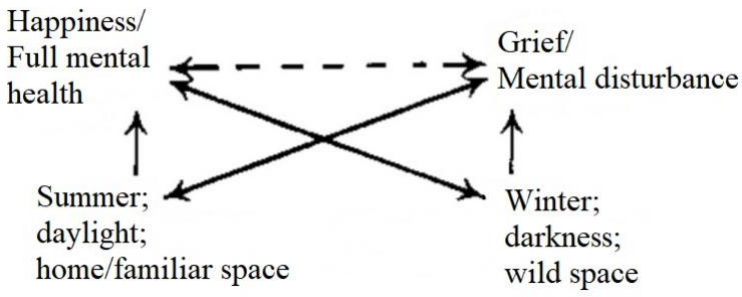


Figure 3.

[380] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 296-98. *Úlfhams rímur*, I.16-17, p. 5. All quotations of *Úlfhams rímur* are taken from this edition; only in-text reference will be used henceforth in this chapter.

In her conference presentation, Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir examines the relationship between dark winter and enchantment, which she summarises in a similar square (Figure 4):

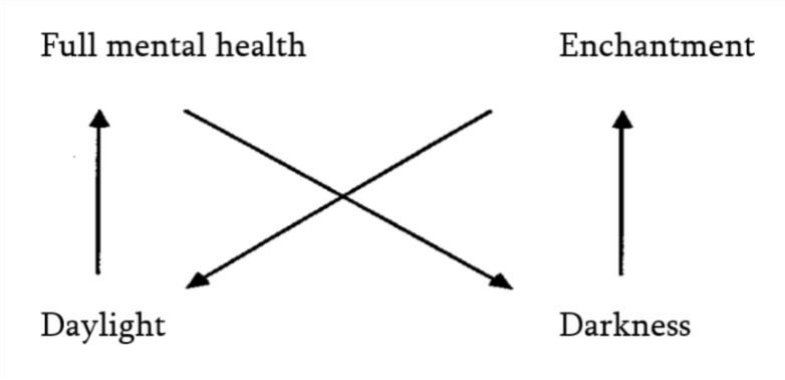


Figure 4.

In particular, she proposes that 'enchantment' may be a manifestation of negative emotions, such as depression; it is a 'figurative darkness of the mind', as opposed, yet related, to the Nordic winter landscape: the physical darkness over the land.[381] Although Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir does not cite *Úlfhams rímur* as an example, Vargstakkr's story seems to fit the pattern.

Although Vargstakkr's story ends early with his death in the first *ríma*, it is doubled by the adventures of his son Úlfhamr, which can be read as an elaborated version of Vargstakkr's. As a result, it sheds light on the werewolf's fate. This parallelism will be explicated in the next section, but before that, it is necessary to examine the other primary sources to offer an overview of how the triangle plays out in other werewolf texts. This also helps to demonstrate *Úlfhams rímur*'s value as a case study.

The first to be analysed is *Bisclaretz ljóð*, for this text, since it is fairly faithful to the

[381] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Winter Darkness in Icelandic Fairy Tales'. She further suggests that the enchantment stories in Icelandic fairy tales may be read as a manifestation of and a way to cope with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

French original, displays a rich vocabulary of emotion and emotion-indicating behaviour.[382] However, a close look shows that the emotions most frequently associated with the werewolf are *æði* (rage, fury) and affection. The *æði* is of two kinds. The first type is attributed to werewolves in general, who dwell in houses in the woods;[383] here *æði* is a sign of lack of control and is presented through random bursts of violence, as the audience are warned in the opening lines: 'En vargulfr var æitt kuikuændi mæðan h*ann* byr i vargs ham. þa slitr h*ann* i þæirre œðe men*n* ef h*ann* nær' ('A werewolf was a creature; while he is in the form of a wolf, he tears men apart in a rage (if he catches them)').[384] The second type pertains specifically to Bisclaret, describing his attitude towards his (ex)wife and her current husband, whom he confronts in the king's court and in his old home; it appears in apposition with *reiði* (anger, wrath) and *grimmleikr* (cruelty, fierceness) and is intensified by the wolf's violent actions. Unlike the first type, which denotes random, stereotypical werewolf violence, Bisclaret's *æði* is well justified; he is merely executing justice, sanctioned by the king and by God.[385]

It is important that Bisclaret immediately checks himself at the king's command, not only showing that he exercises perfect self-control, the very opposite of the werewolf's *æði*, but also foregrounding the werewolf's capacity for care and affection; this too can be divided into two types: a domestic, heterosexual love and a political, homosocial love.[386] In the

[382] A large corpus of emotion words are used to describe Bisclaret's wife and the king. Since they are not my focus, their emotions are not discussed here. But it is worth pointing out that the two display opposite emotions to Bisclaret: the lady's main emotion grows from (sexual) love to fear, which spurs her into betraying her husband; the king's emotion, however, changes from fear to care and trust, once he recognised the wolf's (political) love and devotion.

[383] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 86-87: '[...] biuggu i morkum ok i skogum. ok þar atto hus ok ʀik hibili' ('[…] lived in the forests and woods and had houses and splendid homes there'). Although this does not seem to be Bisclaret's case, the magical dwarf-werewolves in *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands* and *Gibbons saga* do dwell in similar houses. The house in the woods, or the familiar within the unfamiliar landscape, will be discussed in this section below and in the section on *Úlfhams rímur*.

[384] Ibid.

[385] See Chapter Two, p. 74.

[386] Fredric L. Cheyette and Howell D. Chickering, Jr., 'Love, Anger, and Peace: Social Practice and Poetic Play in the Ending of *Yvain*', *Speculum*, 80/1 (2005), 75-117 (84), where Cheyette and Chickering divide 'love' into two kinds: love in the erotic sense and love as political and personal loyalty, which further leads to trust. The lady's love, apparently, only dwells on the corporeal and erotic level; it is more of the *amor concupiscentiae* (covetous love) in Aquinas's categorisation, which 'seeks the object for one's own good'. On Aquinas, see King, p. 176.

beginning of the *lai*, when Bisclaret lives at ease at home with his wife, the audience are told that the couple love (*unna*) each other very dearly and he is *bliðr ok glaðverr* ('happy and gay').[387] It is out of such love that the wife's fear and distress arises, following on Bisclaret's divulgence of his secret. However, as Bisclavret moves from home to court, his love transforms into the latter type, manifested through the wolf's gestures: for instance, upon recognising the king in the forest, 'lagðe h*ann* baða fœtr i kne k*onon*gsens ok kysti læggi hans ok fœtr' ('he laid both feet on the king's knees and kissed his legs and feet').[388] When he is brought to the king's court, the wolf is 'kurtæist ok hogvært ok miuklynt ok goð viliat ok alldri angraðezt þat við men*n* ok æn<gom> gærðe þat mæin. þui likaðe þat væl ollu*m*' ('courteous and gentle and meek-tempered and benevolent, and it never showed anger toward men nor did them harm. Thus it was well-liked by all'), which confirms the king's apprehension that the wolf loved (*unna*) him.[389]

But what happens in Bisclaret's mind in between, when he is living alone in the forest? Clearly, happiness and pleasure are associated with familiar spaces: his own estate and the king's court, but does it necessarily follow that he must feel sorrow in the forest, as Vargstakkr does? The audience are simply not told how Bisclaret may feel out there, nor how he may feel about being a wolf. Bisclaret's possible mental state is further complicated by his congenital condition, the weekly repetition of the transformation, and the wife's betrayal. To what extend can one read Bisclaret's *æði* as a manifestation of the werewolf transformation's emotional impact, and to what extent as an expected reaction to his wife's treachery?[390] This brings us back to the discussion of Bisclaret's skin in Chapter One: though the psyche splits into the man

[387] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 86-87.
[388] Ibid., pp. 90-91.
[389] Ibid., pp. 92-93.
[390] Similar problems are found with Gorlagon and Melion. Gorlagon, for instance, displays a wide spectrum of emotions, ranging from grief to anger to affection, but each emotion is presented as reaction to very specific events: the death of his wolf family, his wife's and Gorgol's queen's betrayals, and the king's kindness. In other words, he feels and reacts in the same way as he would as a human; what is emphasised here is mental continuity rather than disruption.

and the wolf during the 'fusion' type of metamorphosis, does the individual still feel the trauma once the transformation has become habitual? The author/translator's silence over the twelve months when Bisclaret is trapped in wolf form renders it hard to speculate about the answers.

Tiodielis saga, too, is problematic as regards the werewolf's emotional life in the woods and how he might feel about his condition. The wolf/bear displays three major emotions: affection (*blíða/blíðr*), when he is at home and at the king's court; distress (*harmr/pína*), when he sees his wife's (feigned) sorrow and when the king is angry with him; ferocity (*grimmliga/grimmligr*), when he attacks the traitors.[391] As for Tíódél in the woods, however, the author only comments once, apparently addressing the audience, that 'ér nv̋ hormvlegt ad heira og fra ad seigia, hvorninn hormvlega for vm þann goda mann eda huorsu hormvlega ı hans kv̋inna giorde til hans' (it is now sad to hear and to relate how tragically things turned out for the good man, or how harshly his wife treated him).[392] Again, the direct emotion trigger seems to be the act of betrayal, not the transformation. Furthermore, Tíódél's transformation is no longer depicted as congenital but rather a matter of personal choice: he chooses to practice this *list* (art) on a weekly basis, presumably for the sake of knowledge acquisition. In this regard, he is more akin to the magic werewolves than to Bisclaret, since he enjoys greater control over his body.

[391] A fourth emotion that is expressly attributed to Tíódél is *skammask* (to be ashamed), an emotion inferred from his refusal to take the clothes in public. Other emotion words and phrases in the saga are mostly used of the lady, but unlike Bisclaret's wife, whose emotions are genuine at the beginning, Tíódél's wife is presented from the very start as 'hard lindvst, grimm og gæ̋lavs til godra hlvta' (hard-tempered, fierce, and unmindful of good works); when she displays affection or sorrow in front of Tíódél and the king's court, the author makes sure to forewarn the audience/reader that it is nothing but deceit. The king's key emotion is anger, while his affection is downplayed in *Tiodielis saga*: in the final recognition scene, he just 'geing*ur* nu ad sængine *og* styd*ur* a h*a*nn' (approaches the bed and prods him). Instead, the political love is shifted to occurring between Tíódél and the wise advisor. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 1 and p. 68.

[392] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 26. The word *hǫrmuligr*, translated as 'sad, distressing', derives from *harmr*, which is one of the major emotion words in *Bisclaretz ljóð*. According to Cleasby and Vigfússon, *harmr* means both 'grief' and 'sorrow'; in poetry, it also conveys a sense of 'hurt', implying the injustice and mistreatment that cause the emotions. *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *harmr*, p. 240; s.v. *hǫrmuligr*, p. 311. See also *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *harmr 1*, p. 212. Note that there is also a sense of anger (of being hurt) attached to the word.

Thus, although some parts of the werewolf's emotional life are not spelled out, his mindscape can still be mapped, based on the landscape in which he moves. In both *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga*, each change in the protagonist's appearance and identity (as perceived by others) is marked out geographically. As the protagonist moves between the human world and the wolf world, his geographical surroundings change along a scale of wildness, with the court (zero-wildness) and the forest (full-wildness) standing at the two ends. It should be noted however that, though they are part of the kingdom, the personal estates of Bisclaret and Tíódél are slightly off centre. Compared to the court, they are one degree further towards the wild: in both stories, they lie on the king's way to the forest, and Tíódél seems to dwell in a semi-independent kingdom surrounded by forests.[393] The werewolf's identity, at this stage, has not yet been revealed to the court; it remains unknown whether the human world will fully accept him, and the werewolf's chosen abode reflects this uncertainty.[394] Further along the scale lies another in-between place: Bisclavret un/dresses by *æin fornn kapella* ('an ancient chapel') deep in the forest and hides his clothes in a nearby hollow stone, while Tíódél uses as a changing room 'þad littla herberge sem eg bigge' (that little room where I live) and emerges onto the other side as human or beast.[395] On the one hand, as an edifice crafted by man, this chapel or little room has a touch of the domestic and the familiar, but on the other hand it stands amidst the unfamiliar and the wild like an isolated island. It is at the same time both and neither the worlds of man and of wolf, but rather signifies motion between the two. The liminality of its geographical location reveals the oscillating identity of the individual whom it shelters:

[393] Tíódél's land is frequently described as *sitt rike* (his own kingdom) and his wife is later referred as *dróttning* (queen) instead of *frú* (lady). When his wife enquires about his whereabouts, he tries (and fails) to convince her that he is out hunting in *eyde merkvr* (wilderness) and gets lost in *mirkrid* (darkness). *Tiodielis saga*, p. 14.
[394] The same can be said for Melion, who lives near the wilderness because he does not fully belong to the court. That the werewolf tends to live at some distance from the central court echoes the opening lines of *Bisclaretz ljóð*: the werewolves live in splendid houses in the woods, which is certainly the case with the magic dwarf-shapeshifters in *Gibbons saga* and *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*. *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 86-87. Also note that, while the stories of Melion and Bisclaret end with their readmission into the court, Tíódél, whose king appears not as wise as Melion's and Bisclaret's, travels *i fiarlæg riki* (to a faraway kingdom) and re-establishes himself there. He never truly enters the central world. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 74.
[395] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 88-89. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 18.

presumably naked, he has quit one world but not yet entered the other.

Further away from the romance tradition, the story of Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli differs from that of Bisclaret/Tíódél in several ways: first, the werewolf episode offers no explicit emotion words or expressions. Second, their transformation model fits the 'overlay model', suggesting no interruption of the psyche. Third, Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli have already lost their home when the werewolf episode takes place. Nevertheless, the interaction between mindscape and landscape is still in play.

As Vǫlsungs and as outlaws (therefore symbolic wolves), although Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli already have the wolf ingrained in their identities, the wolfskin still causes profound emotional disturbance and results in Sigmundr's (temporary) loss of self-control.[396] Sigmundr's attack on and consequent apparent killing of Sinfjǫtli speak to a mixture of emotions: he must first have felt shame and, subsequently, envy upon witnessing the youngster's deed and hearing his taunts, or so we surmise; this further leads to anger.[397] There is also a certain degree of fear involved, since Sinfjǫtli's defiance threatens to undermine Sigmundr's position of dominance and, by emphasising his own tender age, he challenges the older man's masculinity. Therefore, the tension here is as much between two warriors as between two generations.[398] To worsen the situation, Sigmundr at this stage still believes that Sinfjǫtli is the son of King Siggeirr; to be outdone by a child – the inferiority of whose lineage has already been proved twice by his (half)brothers – must be doubly humiliating to Sigmundr. Having lashed out at Sinfjǫtli, however, Sigmundr's anger soon turns into regret and grief; these are not spelled out but can be inferred from his actions: he 'leggr hann nú á bak sér ok

[396] In *Helgakviða Hundingsbana II*, Helgi identifies the Vǫlsungs as *Ylfingar*, 'Wolflings'. *Helgakviða Hundingsbana II*, in *Eddukvæði II: Hetjukvæði*, stanza 4, p. 271. For the Vǫlsungs' connection with wolf and outlaw, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 283-84. See also Chapter One, pp. 39-40.
[397] For the interaction between these emotions, see Miller, pp. 117-30.
[398] This point will be returned to below in Chapter Five.

berr heim í skálann, ok sat hann yfir honum, en bað troll taka úlfhamina' ('hoisted him over his shoulder and carried him back to the hut, and watched over him, and wished the wolf skins to the devil').[399]

That Sigmundr blames the wolfskin for his violence hints at the metamorphosis's affective potential. It suggests that, if Sigmundr had remained in human form, he would have controlled his actions, even though he might still feel the same emotions; or, perhaps, should Sinfjǫtli have remained in human form, he would not have been so bold and so disobedient. Either way, at stake is the matter of self-control. It is particularly worthwhile to compare this episode with Sigmundr's second and actual 'killing' of Sinfjǫtli, when he is drunk and tricked by his wife.[400] There alcohol blunts his reason, just as the wolfskin clouds his judgement. After Sinfjǫtli collapses, Sigmundr is expressly described as grieving ('Sigmundr ríss up ok gekk harmr sinn nær bana', 'Sigmundr rose to his feet, almost succumbing to his grief' – or his grief nearly killed him).[401] This episode is at the same time a parallel and a sequel to the werewolf episode, in which Sigmundr becomes more emotionally expressive. This might be accounted for by his age; as in the case of Egill, it is socially more acceptable for Sigmundr to express grief as an old man. Sinfjǫtli also reacts differently: he obeys his father even though he knows perfectly well that it means his death, whereas earlier he refuses to do so, even though Sigmundr's order is intended to preserve his life. Is it because Sinfjǫtli has grown more mature, too? Or (in plot terms) he simply has to die to make room for Sigurðr and to end the incestuous family line? It is also possible, however, that the werewolf experience has brought both men into contact with the dark side of their minds; it shows them the point beyond which they could lose control over themselves.

[399] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 8, p. 11.
[400] Ibid., chap. 10, p. 18.
[401] Ibid.

Granted, unlike in *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tiodielis saga*, the geographical movement in *Vǫlsunga saga* is no longer between a home space and the wilderness via an in-between place but rather between that in-between place and the wilderness; the landscape in the werewolf episode still changes at every turn as the narrative evolves. Unable to return to his homeland, Sigmundr holes up in a *jarðhús* ('underground lair') in Siggeirr's kingdom, where he and Sinfjǫtli bake and eat bread as humans, as opposed to hunting and probably eating raw game as wolves out in the forests. After Sinfjǫtli's apparent death and resurrection, the pair wait in the *jarðhús* until the wolfskins' magic wears off.[402] Why do they stay put, if the purpose of putting on the wolfskins is to train Sinfjǫtli and to carry out daring deeds in the woods? It is as if they know that, if they run into the woods, they may again make irrevocable mistakes. Staying in the *jarðhús* prevents just that. As a physical space, the house shelters them from those who want to capture them; as a psychic space, it keeps them safe from the mental disturbance that they have already experienced once and apparently do not wish to experience again. The *jarðhús* thus functions as a stronghold for Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli's human identity; to stay there is a countermove to the wolfskins' magic, an effort of self-preservation. It is no coincidence that they should shed the wolfskins here, for this is the location where Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli exert maximum control. This is further evidenced by that, when they put on the wolfskins, they are in some other people's *hús*: 'þeir finna eitt hús ok tvá menn sofandi í húsinu með digrum gullhringum. Þeir hǫfðu orðit fyrir óskǫpum því at úlfahamir hengu í húsinu yfir þeim' ('they came to a cabin, and in the cabin there were two men asleep, wearing heavy gold rings. An evil fate had overtaken them, for there were wolf skins hanging above them in the cabin').[403] This cabin, like theirs, is a shelter and transitional place for those two men. It is, therefore, not a place of wilderness. But unlike their own *jarðhús*, this is a space over which

[402] Ibid., chap. 8, pp. 11-12.
[403] Ibid.

Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli have no control; they enter as humans but leave as wolves.

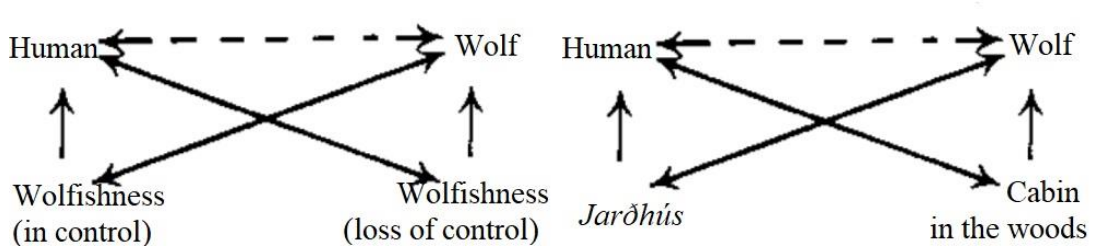


Figure 5.

In the episode of Sinfjǫtli's second and final death, however, the locations are reversed. Sinfjǫtli's death takes place in Sigmundr's home space, and Sigmundr takes his corpse not only into the forest but also as far as the river, the boundary between the living and the dead.[404] He journeys now much further into the wilderness than he did before, just as he is now more affected and consumed by his grief. It comes as no surprise that Sigmundr dies in the chapter immediately following Sinfjǫtli's death. Sigmundr is no longer in control of either physical or mental space. Whereas he manages to maintain his dominance in the previous episode, he now must make way for the next generation.

In *Ála flekks saga*, where the man-to-wolf transformation exemplifies the 'fusion model', it is already established that the metamorphosis causes damage to the mind as the psyche splits into two egos. Áli the wolf's behavioural change further evidences this. The curse determines that he is *grimmastur* (cruellest), *skæður* (dangerous), and he does great damage to both men and livestock.[405] But, despite all that ferocity, the wolf walks into Gunni and Hildr's yard one day and behaves *allt í friði* (in a very friendly way).[406] This scene allows a glimpse into the wolf's struggling mind and reveals his capacity for other emotions. The wolf's highly uncharacteristic behaviour leads to Hildr's comment: 'Engi augu hefi ég líkari séð en í vargi

[404] Ibid., chap. 10, pp. 18-19.
[405] *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 8, pp. 138-39; chap. 9, p. 140.
[406] Ibid., chap. 10, p. 141.

þessum og var í Ála flekk' (No eyes have I ever seen like these except in this wolf and in Áli flekkr).[407] Presumably, the sight of his foster-parents stirs up memories within Áli and temporarily allows Áli's human ego to overwrite the wolf's; his identity is restored and recognised, which paves the way towards his physical restoration.

The sequence of events here calls for some attention: Áli comes into the yard before he sees the old couple, suggesting that the farm matters just as much as the people who dwell in it. Why does the wolf decide to walk into this specific farmstead at all, if not that he recognises it as his childhood home, a place associated with care and kindness? To Áli, Gunni and Hildr's farm is probably more of a home than the king's palace, where he only moves after adulthood. The farm sheltered him once when he was left to die in the wilderness as an infant, now it shelters him again against the power of the werewolf curse. Furthermore, the farm is divided into two spaces: the outer and the inner, or the open and the covered, each playing a different role in Áli's progress. It is noteworthy that Hildr's first recognition of the wolf takes place in the outer space, 'í garð þann, er var fyrir bæ karls' (in the yard, which was in front of the man's farm).[408] Áli only enters the inner space – especially, the bedchamber – after Hildr begs for his life and brings him back to himself.[409] In other words, he only enters the inner, covered space when the curse is broken and he is about to shed the wolfskin. The door, though not mentioned, functions as a portal not only between the outside and the inside worlds but also between the wolf and the human; once Áli enters that threshold, he is no longer bestial. Greimas's square can thus be applied to *Ála flekks saga*, as below (Figure 6):

[407] Ibid.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Ibid., chap. 10, p. 143.

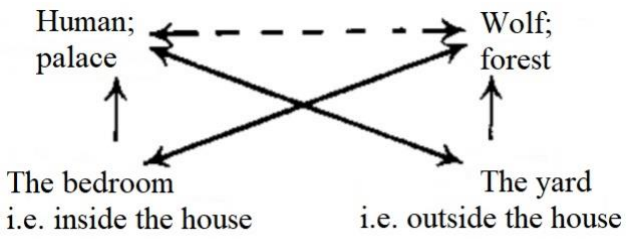


Figure 6.

To summarise, in the texts analysed above, each werewolf's transformation is accompanied and monitored by a series of landscape changes, while the werewolf's emotional development, though sometimes not directly spelled out, can also be inferred from these landscape changes. A generalised pair of Greimas's squares can be constructed as such (Figure 7):

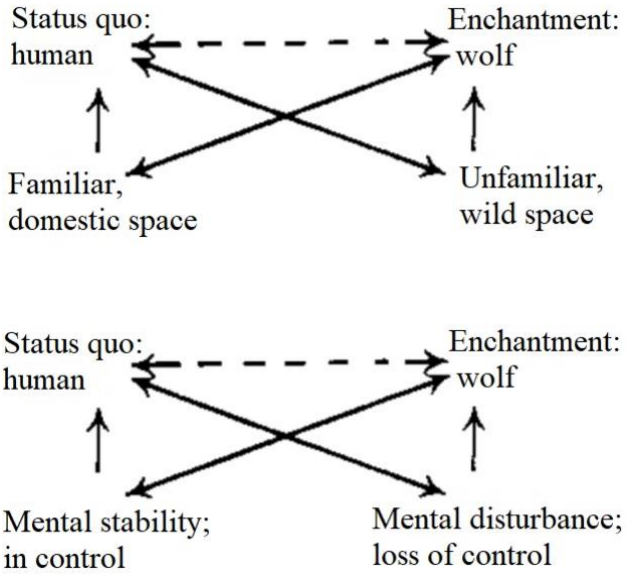


Figure 7.

In each case, the human form is considered as the status quo, which encompasses familiar, domestic space – such as the royal court, the werewolf's own estate or house – and mental stability, namely the state of being in control over his own identity and body. On the opposite side, the wolf form encompasses unfamiliar, wild space – in most cases, the forest – and mental

disturbance, or loss of control. The combination of the two squares results in Figure 8, which demonstrates the complementary and contradictory relationships between the werewolf's mindscape and landscape. In particular, I call attention to the single arrows on both sides: even when the werewolf's emotional or general mental state is not described, it can still be inferred from the landscape which he finds himself in. The square in Figure 8 will resurface in the next section, serving as a foundation for the analysis of *Úlfhams rímur*, where the 'unfamiliar, wild space' not only includes the forest but also winter, darkness, and a *draugr*'s mound.

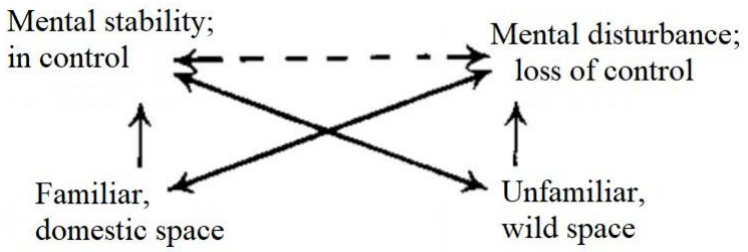


Figure 8.

Section Three: *Úlfhams rímur*: A Tale of Generations

In the two sections below, I give a close reading of *Úlfhams rímur* as a case-study. This *rímur* is singled out first of all because it demonstrates close landscape-mindscape interaction – this is already seen in the case of Vargstakkr, whose storyline is semiotically summarised above in Figure 3; as will be shown below, these squares are also applicable to the entire *rímur*. Second, compared to the other texts discussed above, *Úlfhams rímur* presents a more complicated scenario: it is essentially a tale that spans two generations. Vargstakkr's storyline ends early with his murder; he can never be restored to human form and mental stability. His story, however, is passed on to his son Úlfhamr, who can be read as a 'split' of the father and who continues and completes Vargstakkr's journey. If the ideal status quo of the tale is the sovereign ruling over his kingdom all the time as a human, then it takes two generations – father and son – to restore it and reach full circle. What is more, in addition to the palace-forest (or home

space-adventure space) movement, which is customary in romance and romance-related literature, *Úlfhams rímur* is complicated by the introduction of the *draugr*, thus enabling a comparative discussion between the werewolf and another otherly creature.

However, since Úlfhamr never actually transforms into a wolf, it is necessary to explicate his wolfishness and establish the parallel between him and Vargstakkr, in order to establish that his story should be treated as a werewolf tale and therefore relevant to the whole discussion. This is the goal of this section. Below, I examine Úlfhamr's name, identity, and storyline to foreground the sense of continuity between Vargstakkr and Úlfhamr.

Úlfhamr's wolfish connection is most strikingly manifested in his name, 'wolf-skin', which is synonymous with Vargstakkr, 'wolf-coat'. Character names in *Úlfhams rímur*, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir correctly points out, are highly symbolic, and can be arranged into a system of opposing forces (Figure 9).[410]

[410] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', 5.3.1.1, pp. ccxxxii-ccxxxvi. One end of the dichotomy consists of *svart* (black), *nótt* (night), and *sókn* (aggression), respectively represented by Bǫlsóti (evil soot or evil fighter), Ótta (pre-dawn), Álfsól (elf-sun or moon), Hermann (army-man), and Hildr (war). In opposition are ranged *hvítt* (white), *dagur* (day), and *vörn* (defence), represented by Snækollr (snow-head), Dagbjǫrt (day-bright), Sólbjǫrt (sun-bright), Skjǫldur (shield), and Vǫrn (defence). Ásmundr seems not to have a counterpart, but Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir argues that he should be paired with Arngrímr, the mysterious knight in the woods who challenges and kills Ásmundr. Ásmundr, whose name can be roughly translated into 'he whom the gods protect', belongs to the *varnarmegin* (the defensive side), whereas *-grímr* in Arngrímr puts him on the *sóknarmegin* (the offensive side). Hálfdan-Vargstakkr, being alternately man and wolf, is seen as an embodiment of both sides. He is, in other words, paired with himself. A second binary system is suggested to solely accommodate Úlfhamr and Ótta's family members. As it has been argued that Ótta is probably of trollish lineage, the two houses represent the worlds of human and of troll, brought together in the unions of Úlfhamr and Ótta and of Dagbjǫrt and Atram. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir reaches this conclusion by comparing the *Úlfhamr* materials with *Ormars saga*, focusing on the possible indications of the name Atli (in one *rímur* text and all the prose versions, Ótta's father is named Atli rather than Áti); she concludes that Atli is nonhuman. That the names are intended as symbolic is further strengthened by their uniqueness; their difference from customary Icelandic saga names is discussed on p. ccxxxv and reprised in her more recent studies on the *rímur*. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Tales of Generations', 17.

Figure 9.

These two systems are valuable as groundwork for my discussion, but they are not without problems. Úlfhamr remains somewhat unaccounted for; Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir dismisses the name merely 'as a personal name, rather than a symbolic one' and one that he inherits from his father so as to reflect the generational and dynastic transition from father to son.[411] But it is highly unlikely that, within a work where all major characters are symbolically named, the eponymous hero is not. As discussed in Chapter One, the *úlfhamr* as a physical object is key in man-wolf transformation. As a personal name, it also appears in Arngrímur Jónsson's Latin retelling of *Skjöldunga saga* as a nickname for a certain Heidricus, who is believed to be able

[411] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Tales of Generations', 17, n. 21. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', 5.3.1.1, p. ccxxxv: 'Svo virðist sem nöfn sonanna tveggja, Úlfhams og Atrams, felist í því hlutverki þeirra að taka við af feðrum sínum, því at þau eru mynduð út frá nöfnum þeirra. […] Þetta undirstrikar kynslóðaskiptin og þá endurnýjun sem sagan boðar (It appears that the name of the two sons, Úlfhamr and Atram, lie in their role to take over from their fathers, because they are made from their fathers' names. […] This emphasises the generational change and the renewal that the saga leads up to).

to transform into a wolf.[412] According to Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, this is the same Heidricus mentioned in *Hervarar saga*, *Sörla þáttr*, and *Þorsteins þáttr bœjarmagns*, but since none of these sources indicates any werewolf connection, Heidricus's shapeshifting ability is most likely Angrímur Jónsson's own addition, therefore 'a late sixteenth-century rationalization'.[413] Nevertheless, this speaks to the audience's expectation: if a character is (nick)named *úlfhamr*, he is expected to be a werewolf or at least wolfish. The same logic underlies the origin of Vargstakkr; the king is renamed only after he has been cursed to become a werewolf. Therefore, even though Úlfhamr does not metamorphose, his name invites comparison with Vargstakkr and with the wolf.

Indeed, Úlfhamr is a wolf on the metaphorical level. When he gives up his inheritance and flees to the forest, he and his companions effectively become outlaws and thus figurative wolves, as opposed to Vargstakkr and his men who become actual wolves. Besides, as in the case of Sinfjǫtli, wolfishness runs within Úlfhamr's family, too. It is unclear when Vargstakkr was cursed, but the audience are under the impression that this must have taken place in a distant past and the younger generation are not even aware of it – if everyone is already familiar with the fact, why would Hildr choose that story to tell at the banquet? Could it be that the curse existed before Úlfhamr was conceived? In that case, the father's werewolf identity will implicate the son, in the same way that (some of) the descendants of Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife are inherently metaphorical (she-)wolves. In addition to his father, Úlfhamr's mother Hildr once appears in the jarl's dream as a 'mod*er* u*ar*ga' (mother of wolves); this is likely meant to be her *fylgja*.[414] Admittedly, it is explained in the next stanza that Hildr's wolf-children are her

[412] Arngrímur Jónsson, *Arngrimi Jonae Opera latine conscripta* 1, *Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana* 9, ed. Jakob Benediktsson (Hafniæ, 1950), p. 353: 'cognomento Ulffhamur, eo qvod se in lupum transformare noverit' (surnamed Ulfhamur, because he is capable to transform himself into a wolf).
[413] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 289-90. See also Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', 5.2.4-5.2.5, pp. ccxxii-ccxxiii.
[414] *Úlfhams rímur*, II. 17, p. 10: 'Drey*m*di m*ig* seg*er* dy*ri* j*ar*ll. / dal*iga* mod*er* u*ar*ga' ('I dreamed,' says the worthy jarl, / 'of a wicked mother of wolves'). For this figure as a *fylgja*, see Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', p. ccxxi and Friesen, 255-280.

soldiers, but still how can Úlfhamr escape wolfishness if both of his parents are wolves or wolf-related?[415]

In this sense, Úlfhamr can be understood as a recuperated version of Vargstakkr; the father's wolfishness is continued and contained within the son, but in a much more acceptable, figurative form. In both cases, there is a process of 'splitting' and 'merging', but on different levels. For Vargstakkr, as a werewolf, the change takes place on a skin-deep level: though it is never explained how Vargstakkr transforms, since no wolfskin is expressly involved (unlike the crane-maidens, who apparently shed their skins) and since his metamorphosis is initiated verbally as in Áli's case, it is most likely he belongs to the 'fusion model'; his skin simply 'turns' or 'splits into' man and wolf seasonally. Úlfhamr, on the other hand, becomes concealed by the mound, an entirely detached layer, therefore his 'transformation' corresponds to the 'overlay model'. The supernaturalness of the werewolf metamorphosis and the mental impact of the wolf ego are manifested instead in the form of the *draugr* – they are, in other words, externalised in another creature. The symbolic meaning of the *draugr* will be discussed in more detail below, but now suffice it to say that in Úlfhamr's story the *draugr* becomes his 'wolfskin'; when the *draugr* is destroyed, Úlfhamr's full recovery is achieved. This contrast between the father and son's different endings foregrounds not only a sense of continuity but also a progression towards full humanity. This is further evidenced by the clear parallel between mother and daughter. Dagbjǫrt bears a strong resemblance to Hildr: twice the poet stresses that she is well-versed in magic, thanks to Hildr's instruction.[416] She counters Hildr's spells at the banquet and orchestrates Hildr's death. After Hildr is gone, she takes over Hildr's role as the

[415] *Úlfhams rímur*, II. 18, p. 10: 'Ylgi*ar* born þ*ar* æstuzt med*ur*. / Wlfha*m* uilldu slita' ('The she-wolf's children were incited, / they wanted to tear Úlfhamr apart'). Curiously, Vargstakkr and Hildr are rather similar to Bisclavret and his wife: one is a wolf by form (though Vargstakkr's metamorphosis is not a congenital condition), the other is a wolf in her deeds. Úlfhamr (and Dagbjǫrt), therefore, may offer a glimpse into what Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's children could be like, if he had any children with his wife.

[416] *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 9, p. 7: 'Mod*er* kendi mey*iu* flest. / m*en*ia gefn*n* hin fr*i*da' (The mother taught the maiden much, / the fair Gefn of necklaces [= woman]). Then again, in IV. 13, p. 20, Hildr mourns: 'Þi*er* h*efe* eg kær*an* kent of m*ar*tt. / kuelur þ*at* hugx*an* mina' (I have taught you, dear, too much, / it torments my mind).

'witch' in the tale and as the one who knows about Vǫrn: she is the keeper of the stories of the older generation. In a sense, Hildr lives on in Dagbjǫrt in the form of the knowledge that she passes onto her, and Dagbjǫrt is a recuperated version of Hildr. Following the same line of reasoning, Vargstakkr's legacy should comprise rather more than just the kingdom, thus also the wolfishness, just as Hildr's legacy includes not only royal power, but also knowledge and magic. Although, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir argues, Úlfhamr's dynasty may still be flawed and fall into chaos in the end, the new generation clearly moves further and does not fare as tragically as their parents.[417]

Like his father, Úlfhamr also suffers mental distress, which is most manifested in the second half of his adventure, when he is trapped in Vǫrn's mound. Since emotions are the focus of the next section, here I focus on Úlfhamr's rescue, which, I argue, shows a seasonality parallel to Vargstakkr's winter-summer alternation. In the Nordic regions, the change between summer and winter equal that between day and night, light and darkness.[418] Lightness is associated with Úlfhamr's status quo: in the beginning of the *rímur*, he is twice introduced as 'bright': *fylkis jóðit hreina* (this bright child of the king, I. 6, p. 3) and *ljósan hal* (bright prince, II. 2, p. 8); Vargstakkr, too, is referred to as *kóngrinn hreinn* (bright king, I. 20, p. 5), when he is temporarily restored to human form and comes back home in summer. Both experience

[417] Aðalheiður Guðsmundóttir argues that *Úlfhams rímur* ends 'í því ójafnvægi' (in imbalance) and Úlfhamr's new dynasty may yet fail as Vargstakkr's, because Ótta's obscure, possibly troll lineage may turn her into another Hildr. However, her argument for Ótta's potential trollishness is solely on the ground of the names of her family members and their affinity with characters with same or similar names in sagas that may be related to *Úlfhams rímur*. There is no indication in the *rímur* itself as regards Ótta's family, except that they do seem to possess occult knowledge. Moreover, to have trollish blood in the lineage is not necessarily a bad thing: many legendary heroes, such as the Hrafnistumenn, claim trollish ancestry. Nor is it irredeemable: Hlaðgerðr in *Ála flekks saga* is incorporated into the central, human world and marries into the Swedish royal family. Besides, even though Úlfhamr's rule may turn out to be not a perfect status quo, he does restore peace and stability within the royal family and in the kingdom at the end of the *rímur*, which is an improvement compared to Vargstakkr's reign.
Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', 5.3.1.2, pp. ccxxxvi-ccxxxvii, and again in 'Tales of Generations', 16.

[418] In *Landnámabók*, for instance, dayless winter is used as an identifier for Iceland: 'þar sagði hann eigi koma dag á vetr ok eigi nótt á sumar, þá er dagr er sem lengstr' (there he [Bede] said there is no day in winter and no night in summer, when the day is the longest). *Landnámabók. Fyrri hluti*, ed. by Jakob Benediktsson, Íslenzk fornrit 1 (Reykjavík, 1967), p. 31.

manifestations of darkness. For Vargstakkr (who does not survive it), darkness is winter, forest, grief, and wolf-form. Úlfhamr, though not concealed by a wolfskin, is concealed by the all-enclosing mound, a place referred to as *dimmr* (dark): 'Þo g*an*gi dr*o*s j dim*m*an havg' (though she [i.e. Ótta] may enter the dark mound, IV. 6, p. 19) and 'D□g*g*ling g*eck* j diman haug' (the prince entered the dark mound, IV. 17, p. 21). His 'restoration' is realised and completed through a series of characters: Ótta (pre-dawn) frees him from the mound, thus physically restoring him to the human world; Sólbjǫrt (sun-bright), with the help of the magic potion, restores his memory; Dagbjǫrt (day-bright) makes it possible to destroy Vǫrn and extract Ótta, leading towards the *rímur*'s happy ending: the establishment of the new status quo. Symbolically, these names in the stated order denote the transition from night to day. In particular, Ótta's name calls for more attention. Although in Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's system of opposing forces, Ótta is placed on the 'dark' side, she in fact belongs among the neutral or third parties. Cleasby and Vígfússon define the word as 'the last part of the night just before daybreak'.[419] As a time indicator, *ótta*'s transitional nature is clear: though it is still part of the nightly hours, it brings the night's end and heralds the coming of the day.

The close relationship between the father and son's storylines is further strengthened by the 'villains'. Both the father and son's plights are tied to Vǫrn, who apparently is good at making people unhappy. When she is alive, she lays the werewolf curse on Vargstakkr and causes his grief; when she is dead, she terrorises Úlfhamr (and later, Ótta) in her mound, making them extremely depressed.[420] Maybe this is what Vǫrn does, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir suggests: turning the human into a wolf when her life is threatened.[421] If so,

[419] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *ótta*, p. 473.
[420] One of the conditions of Hildr's curse is that 'ei*n*gin gleði þi*g* mæti' (no one could make you [i.e. Úlfhamr] joyful), IV. 3, p. 19. Similar expressions occur in IV. 46, p. 24, where Úlfhamr is described as 'mædd af sorg*ar* modi' (wasted away in a mood of sorrow), and in Ótta's plight: she is subject to enduring torment and sits in the mound *eigi teit* (not cheerful), V.2, p. 25.
[421] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', p. ccxli. In one of the later prose versions, when Ótta is rescued from the mound, she is said to have shed a trollskin: 'fór hun þä ur þeim tr□lls ham sem hun hafde ï vered og

then can one assume that Vǫrn's achievement in the enchantment of Úlfhamr and Ótta is fundamentally the same? Although she does not transform the young couple into anything other than a more pitiable version of themselves, the process her victims go through in essence echoes the werewolf transformation. The mound covers and conceals the human body as the wolfskin does, functioning like a layer of dress. Both Úlfhamr and Ótta must undress before entering the mound. This not only brings them closer to the *Bisclavret* group but also opens up the issue of identity: upon quitting the human world, they must leave their former identity at the threshold. It is also safe to assume that they immediately dress themselves accordingly once they are rescued, though the poet omits such details. While they are within the mound, their identities are at stake, but identity loss is manifested in different ways. For Úlfhamr, it is mostly physical: his mental torment – aggravated by sleeplessness ('fird*ur* ollu*m* suef*n*i', deprived of all sleep, IV. 17, p. 21) – alters his appearance and renders him unrecognisable even to the girl who has loved him for a long time; for Ótta, identity loss is more metaphorical, as she is doomed to be forgotten by Úlfhamr once she takes his place in the mound.[422] The mound, therefore, not only physically conceals her from the world of the living, but also erases her from Úlfhamr's memory. The issue of memory will resurface below, but now suffice it to say that, if memory is considered as a space, then Ótta is banished into the realm of the forgotten.

Hildr also connects the two storylines, a woman just as powerful and magical as Vǫrn. Hildr and Vǫrn, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir argues, are essentially 'tvær hliðar á einni og sömu konunni' (two sides of one and the same woman).[423] Their names form an opposite yet closely bound pair. Both are war-related terms representing different aspects or strategies of

brendu þeir han*n*' (she then got out of the troll's skin which she had been in and they burned it). Has Vǫrn turned Ótta into a troll once she entered her mound? 'Efned ur Vlfhams Rïmum', in *Úlfhams saga*, ed. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, p. 60.

[422] *Úlfhams rímur*, IV. 47, p. 24: 'Fan*n* e*g* eigi þ*ann* flei*na* lu*n*d, / at fyr*ri* vildi e*g* þrey*ia*' (I recognised not the pike-grove [= man], / whom I desired before.), and IV. 5, p. 19: 'mu*n*a sk*all*tu alld*r*i me*n*ia hlid. / ef mætta e*g* þ*ui* r*ad*a' (you shall never remember the hill of necklaces [= woman], / if my decree should prevail').

[423] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', p. ccxxxii.

warfare: Vǫrn (‘defence’) is defensive and Hildr (‘war’), aggressive. This is also reflected in their fates: both wage wars against the men, and both are defeated by the same trick, but whereas Vǫrn’s army is quickly defeated and she herself is killed on the spot, Hildr survives to fight another day. Furthermore, the relationship between Vǫrn and Hildr is comparable to that between Hildr and Dagbjǫrt, in the sense that the younger generation always fares more successfully and becomes more ‘human’ than the older.[424] The continuity of knowledge – even memory – is manifest here, too: although Vǫrn and Hildr are trapped by the same type and number of trees (the men fell four oak trees), only Vǫrn dies. Hildr, however, recognises the pattern and immediately (*þegar*) resorts to sorcery.[425] Although they both become trapped, Hildr’s quick reaction indicates her pre-knowledge of Vǫrn’s defeat and death. She has, in other words, learned and benefited from Vǫrn’s story. Hildr’s survival leads to the banquet in *rímur* III and IV, where nearly all characters are assembled for the first time after Vargstakkr’s death. As the text reaches its mid-point, the narrative also reaches its climax and bridges the storylines of Vargstakkr and Úlfhamr. The banquet itself echoes Hildr’s scheme to get rid of Vargstakkr in *ríma* I, but more importantly, it allows Hildr an opportunity to become the transmitter of Vǫrn’s story and to merge the two storylines. The past is brought back to life, while the future is set into motion.

[424] Vǫrn, Hildr, and Dagbjǫrt form an interesting triad: all three women are sovereigns, powerful, and magical, yet their supernaturalness decreases as the ‘now’ in the narrative approaches. Vǫrn is killed, turns into a *draugr*, and in the end is beheaded and burned; Hildr is burned and killed once and for all; Dagbjǫrt, using her power for good causes, not only survives but also thrives as the new king’s sister.

[425] *Úlfhams rímur*, II. 36, p. 12: ‘Þegn*ar* fella þung*an* uid. / þess mu*n* drossen k*en*na’ (Men fell heavy woods, / the woman senses this), and again, II. 38, p. 12: ‘Fior*ar* eikur fyrd*ar* nu. / fella ǽuif m*ed* hr*ey*sti. / þ*at* h*efe* e*g* fr*e*tt at þron*na* br*u*. / þeg*ar* ǽgalld*ra* tr*ey*ste’ (four oaks the warriors now, / bravely fell upon the woman. / I have heard that the bridge of brooches [= woman], / immediately resorted to sorcery). Vǫrn’s defeat is revealed by Hildr at the banquet, III. 37, p. 18: ‘fiellu eik*ur* fliode æa bak. / fyrd*ar* sty*ra* ha□i’ (The flying host fell four oaks behind, / luck is on the warriors’ side). It is noteworthy that, though the men start to fell trees in II. 36, Hildr does not resort to sorcery until the oaks are felled, as if she recognises the pattern and knows no good can come from four fallen oaks. It is also interesting that both episodes are placed in about the same position of each *ríma*, suggesting that the narrative parallelism is reflected structurally. Both *rímur* end almost immediately after the accounts, with the display of the women’s magic power.

Given this, I have shown that Úlfhamr can now be paired with Vargstakkr and be read as his 'split'. Úlfhamr represents the figurative in the sense that he is a metaphorical wolf and experiences a symbolic death by dwelling in a *draugr*'s mound, as opposed to his father who was both physically transformed and killed. A few supplementary changes can be made to Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's table: the 'dark' side can be expanded to cover all things murky and obscure, things not only invisible to the eye but also the figurative, things forgotten, and foreign to the mind. The 'light' side, on the other hand, represents the literal, along with the remembered, and the familiar. Within this scheme, the story on the whole is not only about struggle between two opposing forces, but also about the transition from one end of a scale to the other. If the characters of Úlfhamr's family are arranged into Greimas's squares, it will be as below (Figure 10).

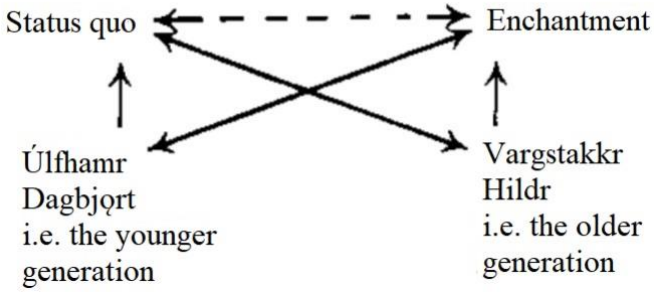


Figure 10.

Section Four: *Úlfhams rímur*: Dark Land, Dark Mind

Once the parallel between Úlfhamr and Vargstakkr and their storylines has been established, it is now possible to venture to explore Vargstakkr's mind through Úlfhamr's. Below, I navigate through Úlfhamr's mindscape based on key geographical locations: the palace, the fortress in the woods, the jarl's estate, the palace (temporarily), Vǫrn's mound, (Valland), the ship, and

the palace.[426] Also taken into consideration are the factors essential to Úlfhamr's happiness: stable family relationships, friends and companions (especially Skjǫldr and Hermann), and Ótta, who is bound to Úlfhamr's wellbeing by the curse and who allows the establishment of a new stable family. As Úlfhamr journeys from one location to the other, his relationship to these factors also changes.

Úlfhamr's as well as the kingdom's sorrow begins with Vargstakkr's murder, to which Úlfhamr's immediate respond reads: 'Ferl*i*ga h*efur* mi*er* fei*ng*i*t* neÿd. / fliod j yndis k*ar*mi' (You have caused me great distress, / woman, in the chamber of delight [= breast], I. 35, p. 7). Although the royal family's happiness must have been already shadowed by Vargstakkr's curse, Úlfhamr's choice of kenning in response to Hildr's proposal images a powerful contrast between sorrow (*neyð*) and happiness (*yndi*), foregrounding the event's emotional impact on Úlfhamr's mind.

With the family structure destroyed and his status quo interrupted, Úlfhamr flees the palace and hides in the woods. What is particularly interesting about this episode is that, unlike Vargstakkr, Úlfhamr does not exactly live in the wild. Rather, he builds himself a fortress and spends the days with his friends free of care:

Kuaddi reck*ur* ka□a t*itt*.	(The prince said to his men swiftly:
k*on*gsens flyu*m* uær hall*er*.	'We shall flee the king's halls.
v*ir*k*it* stofn*it* uæ*n*t *og* fr*i*tt.	You build a fortress beautiful and peaceful,
og uiku*m* þang*ad* all*er*. (I. 38, p. 7)	and we shall go there all.')

[426] I have not included Úlfhamr's temporary return to the palace and Valland here, because his emotions are not indicated in these episodes. However, these locations will be analysed, for they play a role in restoring Úlfhamr's and his companions' peace of mind.

and then:

lyd*er* f*ar*a m*ed* lios*an* /hal\.	(the troop travel with the bright prince,
langt j burtt æ skoga.	for a long time away in the woods.)

[…]

Skiolld*ur og* H*er*ma*nn* ske*m*ta si*er*.	(Skjǫldr and Hermann enjoyed themselves,
Skiott hia ræses arfa. (II. 2-3, p. 8)[427]	for a short while with the king's heir.)

According to Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, Úlfhamr's forest-retreat is significant in both revealing and soothing his mental distress at this point: on the one hand, the wilderness and the untrodden paths symbolise Úlfhamr's mental distress – if the mind is conceptualised as space, then Úlfhamr, experiencing unfamiliar emotions, is indeed in an unfamiliar place. On the other hand, it is also a way of coping. The forest offers him shelter and (temporary) peace by concealing him and allowing him (and the audience) a brief respite from the intensely traumatising events both before and after. To retreat into the woods is an action of defence, which, as it turns out later, prepares him for more aggressive action.[428] This is further evidenced by the building of the fortress, which, just like Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli's *jarðhús*, stands amidst the forest as a stronghold against the wilderness. The fortress is not a random place in the woods that just conveniently appears as a plot device; it is purposely built (*virkit*) and actively established by Úlfhamr. These defensive walls, physically, fortify Úlfhamr and his army – apparently, as long as they remain there, there is nothing that Hildr can do to vanquish them; she has to lure the young men to her palace with a deceptive message. Metaphorically, however,

[427] Although the subjects here are Skjǫldr and Hermann, the line suggests the general emotion within the prince's forest fort.
[428] For Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir's discussion on the forest's function and its interaction with other episodes, see 'Inngangur', pp. ccxxxix-ccxl.

the walls also fortify Úlfhamr's mind against the traumatic events he has just experienced. It is, in a sense, an alternative reality that Úlfhamr creates to counterbalance Hildr's influence as well as to restore his peace of mind: 'Wlfham sit*ur* þ*ar* ept*er* kyr' (Úlfhamr sits there in peace, II. 13, p. 9). The fortress in the woods represents the beginning of Úlfhamr's effort to restore the court. It may even resemble what the royal court used to be before Vargstakkr's curse – after all, as the poet informs the audience, the king was an accomplished ruler before the curse and the realm was at peace:

Fyr*er* Gautl*an*di gaufug*ur* red.	(Over Gautland ruled a noble king,
gr*a*m*ur* sa Hald*an* heit*er*	he is called Hálfdan.
m*ar*gr*a* u*ar* h*onu*m m*en*ta led.	He was endowed with great accomplishments,
m*eckt er* gorp*um* ueit*er*. (I.2, p. 3)	grants power to many men.)

Úlfhamr's decision to retreat may not be the most effective way to solve the problem of the queen's behaviour, but the recreation of the happier community that belongs to the past is perhaps a manifestation of Úlfhamr's wish to undo the present. Hildr must have felt threatened by it, otherwise why would she attack Úlfhamr's army? She could have just let the prince be, since Úlfhamr indicates no intention to take back the kingdom that is rightfully his. The first part of Úlfhamr's plight, therefore, can be semiotically constructed thus (Figure 11):

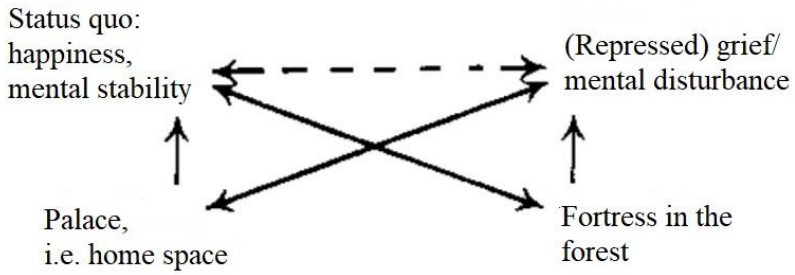


Figure 11.

Úlfhamr's longing to re-establish a status quo results in his acceptance of Hildr's invitation, despite the wise jarl's warning and the fact that Hildr just attacked his force. The young man's tender emotions towards his mother and family is betrayed by his reactions – both somatic and verbal – to Hildr's message:

Þegar at budl*v*ng b*refit* s.	(As soon as the prince saw the letter,
bleikiz kin*n* en*n* rioda	the red cheek turns pale.
[...]	
Wlfham su*ar*adi yt*um* þa	Úlfhamr answered the messengers then:
armt e*r* slikt at f*re*tta.	'It is sorry to hear such news,
ef sk*al* uor mod*er* mestr*i* þr*a*.	if our mother's greatest hardship
mæta ongv*m* letta (III. 13-14, p. 15)	should not be relieved.'
[…]	
Berri e*g* e*i* þ*at* ku*ad* blidi m*ann*.	'I shall not hear it,' said the gentle man,
br*udur* af s*or*gum spr*i*ngi	if the lady should die of sorrow.
| leik*ur* os so u*it* lioda ʀ*ann*.	It moves us thus in the house of songs [= heart],
log*an*di h*ar*ma stingi. (III. 16, p. 15)	a burning grief will stab.)

For Úlfhamr, peace with Hildr would mean restoration of happiness; his family might still be reunited and re-stabilised, though Vargstakkr cannot be brought back. In other words, Úlfhamr is trying to make the best of the current situation. It is interesting that Úlfhamr should receive and accept the invitation at the jarl's estate. Although, as far as Úlfhamr is concerned, it is still

a familiar, friendly space, it is not his own space. He has left the fortress he built for himself – that is to say, he has now ventured out of the safe zone for both his body and mind. He is not in the wild, but nor is he in a place he controls. Perhaps, if Úlfhamr were still in his own fortress, he might have listened to reason, for his mind would be better fortified there. The jarl's palace, therefore, is at best *like* home, but it is not home. Like the two princes' *hús* where Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli turn into wolves, the jarl's estate marks out a transitional stage for Úlfhamr; it prepares him to venture out into the wider and the wilder world. Whereas in the fortress Úlfhamr asserts control and successfully represses disruptive emotions, he is now about to enter a place where he will lose all control of both the space and the self: the *draugr*'s mound.

As it happens, the invitation proves to be yet another of Hildr's plots; Úlfhamr's effort is futile, his return to the palace (i.e. home) is temporary, and the recovery of the desired status quo is only illusory. Úlfhamr is forced into contact with his darkest emotions as he enters Vǫrn's mound. As the home space of a *draugr* amidst human spaces, the mound stands both in parallel and in opposition to Úlfhamr's forest fortress. And there, all hell breaks loose; Úlfhamr loses control over both his body and mind: his appearance changes to such extent that he becomes unrecognisable to the girl who has loved him for a long time; he cannot sleep nor rest; he knows no joy but endless sorrow:

Wiser gack þu j Uarn*ar* haug	('King, you go into Vǫrn's mound
og u*er*tt þ*ar* fast*ur* j sæti.	and sit there firmly.
un þu þ*er* uit ilsku d*ra*ug.	When you live with that evil *draugr*,
ei*n*gin gledi þ*ig* mæti. (IV. 3, p. 19)	no one could make you joyful.)
D□g*g*ling g*eck* j diman haug.	(The prince entered the dark mound;

dap*ur*t e*r* þ*e*tta ef*n*i.	this event is sad.
fast*ur* u*ar* h*ann* /v*id*\ f*ir*na dr*a*ug.	To the monstrous *draugr* he was firmly bound,
fird*ur* ollu*m* suef*n*i. (IV. 17, p. 21)	deprived of all sleep.)
mæren /ueik\ at millding þa.	(Then the maiden turned to the king,
mædd af sorg*ar* modi.	wasted away in a mood of sorrow.
Fan*n* e*g* eigi þ*ann* flei*n*a lu*n*d.	'I recognised not the pike-grove [= man],
at fyr*ri* uilldi e*g* þrey*ia*. (IV. 46, p. 24)	I desired before.')

The dark emotions that Úlfhamr experiences here are materialised through the *draugr* and darkness, two interactive elements that compose the landscape of the mound.[429] That the *draugr* and darkness can affect the human mind is an idea also found elsewhere, most notably in *Grettis saga*. Although Glámr is physically vanquished, he haunts Grettir's mind. During the winter nights, Grettir not only sees Glámr's eyes but also sees *with* his eyes:

> Á því fann hann mikla muni, at hann var orðinn maðr svá myrkfælinn, at hann þorði hvergi at fara einn saman, þegar myrkva tók; sýndisk honum þá hvers kyns skrípi, ok

[429] The *draugr* itself is a creature of darkness and winter; its activity heightens when winter advances. One example is Þórólfr in *Eyrbyggja saga*, where the author takes pains to specify the timing of death, burial, and haunting. Þórólfr's death happens not long after an autumn feast (*haustboð*), and his burial soon afterwards. But 'er á leið sumarit' (when the summer passed), people become aware that Þórólfr does not stay dead in his mound and 'máttu menn þá aldri í friði úti vera, þegar er sól sttisk' (the men could never go outside in peace, once the sun had set). Then, as winter draws on, Þórólfr's activities become more and more alarming, as if his 'power' is growing as nights grow longer: at first, 'um haustit' (during the autumn, presumably between his burial and the official coming of winter), a shepherd is found dead near Þórólfr's cairn – but there is no evidence of his coming out of the mound. '[O]k er vetr kom' (and when winter came'), however, Þórólfr manages to go to the farm at Hvamm, rides on people's roofs, and drives the mistress mad so that she dies. Later, 'tók Þórólfr nú at ganga svá víða um dalinn, at hann eyddi alla bœi í dalnum' (he starts walking around the valley so widely that he devastated all the farms), killing many men. The haunting at Hvamm only abates when 'er af leið vetrinn, váraði vel' (winter passed and fine spring days began), until Þórólfr can be safely approached and removed 'er þeli var ór jǫrðu' (once the earth was completely thawed). *Eyrbyggja saga*, chap. 34, pp. 93-95. Glámr in *Grettis saga* shows a similar pattern, which is analysed in Langeslag, pp. 113-23.

> þat er haft síðan fyrir orðtœki, at þeim ljái Glámr augna eða gefi glámsýni, er mjǫk sýnisk anna veg en er.
>
> (He noticed a marked difference in that he had grown so afraid of the dark that he did not dare to go anywhere alone after nightfall – he thought he could see all kinds of phantoms. It has since become a saying about people who suffer hallucinations that Glam lends them his eyes or they see things with Glam's eyes.)[430]

It is as if Glámr's curse mentally transports Grettir into a *draugr* landscape, where he sees what *draugar* normally see. His mindscape and the landscape become one, and the *draugr*'s land is in his mind. Compared to Úlfhamr, who is only physically in the *draugr*'s territory, Grettir presents a more severe, extreme case, but his fate suggests a possibility: what would have happened to Úlfhamr and to Ótta, had they not been rescued? Glámr's power grows with the years, as the haunting moves from outside into the farmstead; the *draugr* progressively intrudes further into the home space. Following the same pattern, Grettir's fear worsens each winter, as if Glámr progressively intrudes deeper into his mental space. That Grettir's body is dealt with as if he were a *draugr* speaks to Þorbjǫrn ǫngull's fear that he may well return as one.[431] This suggests that a line exists in the darkness, as well as a sense of temporality: if one stays in the *draugr* landscape and sees *skrípi* for a certain length of time, there will be no return. Perhaps this is also what happened to Vargstakkr: he has spent too many winters in the landscape of wolves and in the state of sorrow; there is no recovery for him.

[430] *Grettis saga*, in *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar. Bandamanna saga. Odds þáttr Ófeigssonar*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, Íslenzk fornrit 7 (Reykjavík, 1936; repr. 2001), chap. 35, pp. 122-23. The English translation is from *The Saga of Grettir the Strong*, trans. Bernard Scudder, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson, (London, 2005), chap. 35, p. 86.
[431] *Grettis saga*, chap. 82, p. 262. *The Saga of Grettir the Strong*, chap. 82, p. 185. That Grettir, by becoming a monster slayer, becomes a monster in the eyes of the human society is discussed in Ármann Jakobsson, 'The Fearless Vampire Killers: A Note about the Icelandic *Draugr* and Demonic Contamination in *Grettis saga*', *Folklore*, 120/3 (2009), 307-16 (312-13).

Fortunately, Úlfhamr does not cross that line, but nor does he leave the mound unaffected. Hildr's curse decrees that he retains no memory of Ótta and the mound:

Lina sk*al* ei*n*gi lofdu*n*gs mein.	(The one who can ease the king's suffering
lyda mega j heime.	could not be found in the world,
Ne*m*a su listug lauka ʀein.	except that graceful leek-land [= woman],
e*r* lios*um* prydizt sei*m*e.	who is adorned with shining riches.
Þo at þitt lilian leyse strid.	Though the lady may free you from your suffering
ok lofdu*n*g afli nada	and give peace to the king with strength,
mu*n*a sk*all*tu alld*ri* m*en*ia hlid.	you shall never remember the hill of necklaces [= woman],
ef mætta e*g* þ*ui* r*ad*a.	if my decree should prevail.
Þo g*an*gi dr*o*s j dim*m*an havg	Though she will enter the dark mound,
og dog*g*li*n*gs leyse v*an*da.	and alleviate the king's difficulty,
fast sk*al* fliod v*id* f*i*rn*n*a dr*a*ug.	the woman shall be firmly bound to the *draugr*,
forlaug þ*es*se standa. (IV. 4–6, p. 19)	this fate will stand.)

Úlfhamr's partial amnesia resembles the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).[432] To repress the traumatic memory is a way of self-protection: by 'forgetting' the event, consciously or not, the patient dissociates themselves from the undesirable experience, as if it had never happened. The traumatic memory is separated and hidden away from the

[432] For trauma theory, see, for instance, Laurence J. Kirmayer, 'Landscapes of Memory: Trauma, Narrative, and Dissociation', in *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*, ed. Paul Antze and Michael Lambek (London, 1996), pp. 173-98, especially pp. 178-82.

conscious mind – in other words, it is wished away. To recover from the trauma, however, it is essential for the patient to remember and to re-incorporate that memory to become mentally 'whole' again. This is precisely Úlfhamr's goal after the mound experience. What he had lost before, he now starts to retrieve; in the meantime, he also transforms from a victim of (negative) emotions to a restorer of (positive) ones. After a temporary return to his kingdom, he immediately sets off to release Hermann and Skjǫldr, who are suffering, both mentally from unobtainable love (their desire for the uncapturable cranes) and physically from the wounds dealt by the berserker brothers:

Brædur .ii. med banuænn saʀ	(The two brothers with mortal wound
beint j tialldi liggia.	are just lying in the tent.
holdum mvn nu huerfa far.	Ill-fate will leave them now,
er hier sia uænan tiggia. (V. 30, p. 28)	when they see the fair king.)
[...]	
Bunden eru nu bragnna sar.	(The brothers' wounds are bound now,
beint og leitad nada.	and peace is sought straightaway.
huerfur eckі holdum faʀ.	ill-fate leaves not the men,
ef Hilldur mætti rada.	if Hildr could prevail.
Þegar er dreinger drecka gæ̋.	As soon as the men go to drink,
d□ggling for at sitia.	the king went to sit down.
traunnunar komu j tialldit þa.	The cranes came into the tent then,
travstra brædra uitia	to call on the strong brothers.

V*ir*dar sp*ru*t[tu] vist fæt*ur* The men sprang to their feet,

og uilldu fugla þ*ri*fa. and wished to catch the birds.

þei*n*gils arfe*nn* /þ*ri*fe*nn*\ *og* mæt*ur*. The king's heir, effective and powerful,

þa red gorpu*m* hlifa (V. 33-35, p. 29) then decided to hold the men back.)

Afterwards, Úlfhamr releases the subjects of the brothers' love interest. The cranes turn out to be transformed maidens; they only take on crane-form during the night, but sleep in an underground *jarðhús* during the day as humans:

Jard h*us* und*er* yt*ar* sia (The men see an earth-house underneath;

Atʀam fylg*er* tiggia. Atram follows the king.

hold*ar* lita huilu þa. The men see a bed then,

e*r* heid*ur*s fliod j lig*g*ia. in which the women of honour lie.

| Audli*ng* tal*ar* u*id* At*r*am þa. The king speaks to Atram then:

e*g* sk*al* flioda gæta. 'I shall take care of the girls.

hamina lattu hal*ur*in*n* na. You, warrior, have the skin taken

heit*u*m elldi \at/ mæta. (V. 39-40, p. 30)to burn in hot flames.)

The girls' discovery and their release from the spell show an interesting parallel to that of Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli, as well as to that of the two princes whom they encounter in the woods. The day-night alternation of the crane transformation echoes the journeys of Vargstakkr and Úlfhamr, strengthening the connection between darkness and transformed appearance. The story is never told from the crane-maidens' perspective, so discussion of the mental impact of the transformation is at best speculative. However, it is certain that their freedom restores the

brothers' mental stability, since, as in the case of Ótta and Úlfhamr, the crane-maidens are bound by Hildr's curse to the brothers as an essential part of their happiness.

The next key location is the ship, an in-between place where Úlfhamr's recovery of memory takes place. A sailing ship in itself is an ambiguous space: it is a human space – made by humans and sheltering humans – but it is surrounded by the wilderness of the sea; it can be driven in any direction by the waves and thus be lost, but it can also be steered by men. In other words, the ship is a location where loss of control and controllability converge. Úlfhamr's ship is clearly under control – it is his own ship, sailing at his command. The image of Úlfhamr calmly deciding the ship's course offers a stark contrast to the brothers' previous journey, when they are blown off course and land in Valland. The difference between the two sea journeys also points towards the progressive recovery of Úlfhamr and his companions from their previous suffering. Moreover, when Úlfhamr drinks the potion, the ship happens to be approaching the mound and is sufficiently close to feel its influence (in the form of sea-storms). Thus placed, the ship both harkens back to the past but also looks to the future, as it passes by a site of sorrow but on the way to a site of joy. This transition, too, is reflected in Úlfhamr's mind. The memory of the mound – strengthened by the sight of it – certainly revives the pain:

gullaz t*ro*du g*re*ini e*g* list.	'I recognise the art of the branch of golden beads [= woman],'
g*ra*m*ur* fær stor*an* ec*k*a.	the king was seized by great sobbing.
Haug*ur*in*n* f*eck* mi*er* h*ar*dan ku*an*t.	'The mound gave me great pain,'
hilm*er* tal*ar* m*ed* br*u*de.	he speaks with the woman.
bei*n*t e*r* þ*e*tta b□l s*vo* u*an*t.	This misfortune is so painful,
bry*n*iv þu*n*d e*r* ludi. (VI.18-19, p. 32)	the Þundr of chainmail [= man] is wearied.

but it is now a thing of the past, just as the mound is now a shape on the distant horizon. However traumatic this pain once was, Úlfhamr is now able to face it and take control. The negative effect of the mound is still on his mind, but it is on the wane; as the surrounding sea surges up in increasing turmoil as they approach the mound, Úlfhamr's ship sails through it smoothly.

Instead, Úlfhamr's mind turns to Ótta, the last missing piece he must retrieve to be a 'full' person. However painful the memory of his own experience may be, he does not dwell on it but transforms it from trauma into commiserating with Ótta and a desire of relieving her of the same fate:

Ed þ*ri*dia sin*n*e þei*n*gill d*ra*ck.	For the third time the man drank
þ*at* mv*n* v*er*da at sky*ra*.	– this will be explained –
hi*ar*tad nær af h*ar*mi sp*ra*ck.	his heart is nearly torn
h*an*s f*yrer* b*ru*de dy*ra*.	from sorrow for the dear girl.
Þei*n*gill tal*ar* m*ed* þorn*n*a hlin.	He speaks with the brooch-Hlín [= woman]:
þ*ra* byr*r* oss j hi*ar*ta.	'Distress lives in our heart.'
K*ongur* h*efur* fei*ngit* kr*a*nka pin.	The king has felt a sickening pain.
k*æru* man e*g* s*vo* bi*ar*ta. (VI. 20-21, pp. 32-33)	'I remember the dear maiden so bright.')
[...]	
an*n*t e*r* oss at avdling ku*ad*	('We are anxious,' the king said,
aud*ar* þollu at nada. (VI. 26, p. 33)	'to give peace to the fir of treasure [= woman].')

The full recovery, however, only comes with Úlfhamr's brief re-entry to the mound, Vǫrn's destruction, and Ótta's rescue. Taking place simultaneously, these three events consolidate Úlfhamr's recovery on two different levels: as an individual and as a ruler. For Úlfhamr, by revisiting the mound and remaining unaffected, he proves that he has fully recovered from the trauma caused by the series of disturbing events, starting from Vargstakkr's murder. Moreover, he is now even capable of restoring mental stability to Ótta, another victim of the mound. By vanquishing Vǫrn, Úlfhamr vanquishes a menace to the kingdom which Vargstakkr had only partially destroyed; thus, he confirms his readiness to succeed to the throne. The royal family's broken relationship that previously divided the kingdom is not only mended by Úlfhamr and Ótta's marriage, but also by that between Atram and Dagbjǫrt. The kingdom revives with the younger ruling generation. The grief and sorrow left by Vargstakkr's reign are finally laid to rest as the young couples settle down in power in the palace (Figure 12):

br*a*gn*n*a /hu*e*r\ ried b*o*r*g*ena j.	(Each of the heroes rides into the city,
m*ed* br*u*di sina dyr*r*a.	with his own dear bride.
Sezk at rikium sęmd*ar* þiod.	The men of honour are placed in power;
sorg na*m* b*u*r*t*v lida. (VI. 52-53, pp. 36-37)	sorrow began to fade away.)

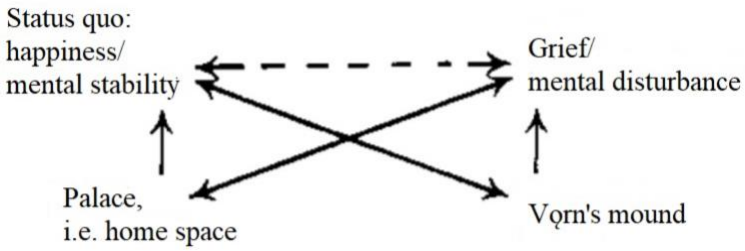


Figure 12.

The story of *Úlfhams rímur*, therefore, is a tale of one kingdom through two generations. Its narrative cycles through appearance, landscape, and mindscape; in both Vargstakkr's and

Úlfhamr's storylines, change in physical form corresponds to change in mental condition, further matched by alternation between dark and bright landscapes. The climax of the *rímur* is no doubt the events that take place in the *draugr*'s mound, where Úlfhamr comes into direct contact with the darkest of his emotions. As in *Ála flekks saga*, Úlfhamr's journey can also be pictured as falling into and getting out of a pit or moving down a scale of humanness: he starts with an imperfect status quo, with a legacy tainted by his father's werewolf identity. Then he descends the scale by first turning into an outlaw – therefore, a metaphorical wolf – and then by becoming a *draugr*'s companion and a mound dweller. Here Úlfhamr is pushed dangerously towards the boundary between 'us' and 'other'; his psychic state reaches the lowest point, teetering on the edge of madness and loss of humanity. Even the narrative leaves Úlfhamr upon his entry into the mound ('Hu*a*rf e*g* f*ra* þ*a*r h*err*an u*a*r', I turn away from where the lord was, IV. 18, p. 21), as if to foreground Úlfhamr's isolation in the mound as well as his absence from the human world at this point. However, once Úlfhamr is freed from the mound, his ascent begins. In the end, he not only re-establishes the status quo but also he rises higher than he used to be. In other words, *Úlfhams rímur* is a story not only of restoration but also of reincorporation and recuperation; it is about becoming 'us' by experiencing the 'other'.

The juxtaposition of the *draugr*'s mound and negative emotions calls for further attention, for together they offer an interesting extension to the discussion of the landscape-mindscape dynamic and shine a spotlight on a triad that is distinctively Nordic: the physical darkness of the land, the figurative darkness of the mind, and of the wolfish form. In addition to Úlfhamr, the other characters, though not expressly distributed across a light-darkness dichotomy, go through similar process from full mental health to suffering (both mental and physical) to full mental health again. Appearance-wise, all those who metamorphose in *Úlfhams rímur* – physically or metaphorically – experience manifestations of darkness: for Vargstakkr, it is winter; for Úlfhamr and Ótta, it is the *draugr*'s mound; for the crane-maidens,

it is night. Therefore, based on Figure 12, a summarising set of squares can be drawn as below, using light-darkness as the axis (Figure 13):

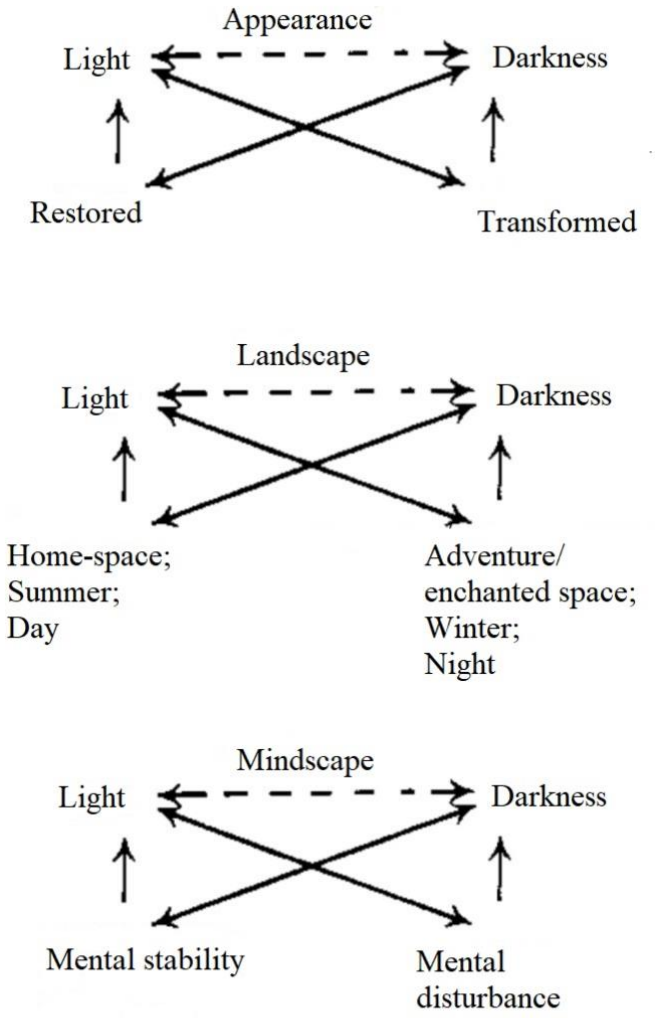


Figure 13.

In all three diagrams, in order to reclaim the status quo – that is to say, 'light' – the characters must experience 'darkness' and all its implications (i.e., the $\overline{S}_1$s); these have been discussed in detail in this chapter. However, the goal itself is left somewhat underdiscussed: in a werewolf context, what can 'light' and its implications be? This question opens up the main issue of the next two chapters, which aims to answer a fundamental question regarding the werewolf transformation: why must they be subjected to this whole process in the first place?

Chapter Five

'Beið hann veita þér lið':[433] What the Werewolf Learns

In the previous four chapters, I have focused on the period when the characters are wolves and examined four different aspects that build the werewolf's interiority for the audience. This fifth chapter and the one that follows form the point of convergence, addressing the key questions of purpose. On the intradiegetic level, by comparing the 'before' and the 'after' of the werewolf experience, I aim in these two chapters to answer the why and the how: why should such an experience take place at all? Whether he turns into a wolf himself or merely encounters one, how is each hero supposed to learn, to benefit from their interaction with the wolf? Then, on the extradiegetic level, I will ask: what is the purpose of the author/narrator in relating these adventures? How are we, as readers or audience, supposed to benefit from reading or hearing them?

Structurally, this chapter is divided into three sections. In Section One, I explain the classification of the werewolf or werewolf-like characters and lay out the theoretical frameworks. Here the relevant characters will be grouped into two types, based on their main function in the narrative: either as *monstratus*, '(to be) taught', or *monstrare*, 'to teach, to demonstrate'. The former includes Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli, Áli flekkr, Úlfhamr, Pluto in *Gibbons saga*, and Sigrgarðr (*inn frækni*); the latter comprises Vargstakkr, Bisclaret and Tíódél, Sigrgarðr's foster-brothers, and the magical dwarves in *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands* and *Gibbons saga*; the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves will feature as a case-study for reasons to be explained in Chapter Six. Whereas the first section serves a general framework to be shared by the current and the next chapter, Sections Two and Three, which comprise the bulk of Chapter Five, home in on the *monstratus* type alone. Here an analysis will be offered of each character,

[433] Ask him to lend you support. *Gibbons saga*, chap. 15, p. 84.

proceeding from the physically transformed to those who are only metaphorically wolfish and are merely in disguise.

Section One: Classification of the Characters

That the heroes are turned into wolves in order to acquire a certain knowledge and, with that knowledge, to improve on their former circumstances has already been signalled in the individual analyses throughout the previous chapters. The most evident example would be *Arthur and Gorlagon*, which is itself about a knowledge quest. Although Arthur's question – 'artem et ingenium mentemque femineam' ('[what are] the heart, the nature, and the ways of women') – is never explicitly answered, it is made clear that the answer lies in Gorlagon's werewolf experience.[434] Chapter Three has already discussed how, although Arthur leaves Gorlagon *parum inde doctior* ('little the wiser'), his journey is not entirely unfruitful: Arthur develops from listener to speaker and learns (or becomes permitted) to ask questions.[435] The last revelation about the queen's punishment – entirely triggered by Arthur's observation – is especially important, for Arthur, though currently unaware of it, may also be caught up in a story about an unfaithful wife but is yet to experience the blow of the revelation.[436] In other words, Arthur and Gorlagon can be perceived as moving through the same narrative, but along different timelines: whereas Arthur is only about to reach the beginning (and may or may not see the end), Gorlagon has already reached the end and survived the suffering (in the form of

[434] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 214-15. Note that the tree to which Gorlagon's life is tied to is described as a *virga*, 'sapling', a word that which shares the same root with *virgo*, 'virgin', indicating lack of experience, social and sexual. To turn Gorlagon into a wolf, it is necessary to cut down the sapling and touch the king with the rod. The sapling, therefore, is comparable with Biscla(v)ret / Tíódél's clothes; it is a surrogate body that anchors Gorlagon within the human world. However, without the adventure, Gorlagon would remain a 'sapling'. The death of the sapling therefore symbolises the death of Gorlagon's social infancy; it gives Gorlagon an opportunity to mature. This pattern fits the rite-of-passage theory, which is discussed in detail below. *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, II, s.v. *virga* and *virgo*, pp. 2282-83; Michel de Vaan, *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the other Italic Languages* (Leiden, 2008), s.v. *virga* and *virgo*, p. 682.
[435] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 230-31.
[436] The debate over how to interpret the behaviour of Arthur's queen – who is not necessarily Guinevere and therefore may not be implicated in adultery – in *Arthur and Gorlagon* has been discussed in Chapter Three, in particular footnote 310, p. 122.

the werewolf experience) caused by his wife's betrayal; therefore he alone in the narrative is in the position to offer that knowledge.

Arthur and Gorlagon presents two models of knowledge acquisition: by experience (direct) – and by listening/reading (indirect). Arthur learns second-hand by listening to a story, while Gorlagon learns by living it. These two models, which will re-emerge in the analysis of *Konungs skuggsjá,* are useful not only in transferring the discussion from the intradiegetic to the extradiegetic level, but also in creating a third, middle level: that of the audience/readers within the story. Together, these models offer effective criteria by which to categorise the werewolves and wolfish characters in the core sources and this categorisation helps to shape the structure of not only this chapter but also Chapter Six. The subjects of the next section – Sigmundr and (especially) Sinfjǫtli, Áli, Úlfhamr, Pluto, and Sigrgarðr (*inn frækni*) and his companions – belong to the first model. They are taught (*monstratus*) by becoming wolves or identity-less themselves; learning by living the story, these characters are firmly grounded on the intradiegetic level. In Chapter Six, the werewolf experience aims to teach (*monstrare*) those who witness and interact with the werewolf, and the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode, as will be shown, ties the three levels together.

Another effective criterion is drawn from Derek Brewer's *Symbolic Stories*, Arnold van Gennep's rite-of-passage theory, and Karl Mannheim's 'generation' theory and concerns emergence into adulthood. According to Brewer, the majority of traditional stories essentially address the experience of maturation, recounting through different manifestations the same narrative of 'the transition or passage from childhood to adulthood, inferiority to independence, virginity (more important for women) to sexual maturity'.[437] It comes as no surprise that

[437] Derek Brewer, *Symbolic Stories: Traditional Narratives of the Family Drama in English Literature* (London, 1988), pp. 7-12 (11). For evaluation of Brewer's theory and its application to medieval texts, see T. A. Shippey, 'Breton *Lais* and Modern Fantasies', in *Studies in Medieval English Romances: Some New Approaches*, ed. Derek Brewer (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 69-91, where Shippey offers an overview of criticism that Brewer's theory has received and argues for its applicability by analysing Marie de France's *lais* with it.

Brewer's reading is protagonist-centred, focusing on their relationships with other characters, especially with parent figures. Each non-protagonist character is read only in relation to the protagonist; they enjoy either a direct or indirect relationship with the protagonist, as parents, siblings, love interests, companions, or as their 'splits', in the sense that they present different aspects of the same character-type. This interpretation has two advantages: first, it narrows the plot down to relationships within a family. Second, it takes geographical change into consideration, for, in order to 'grow up', more often than not the hero(ine) must leave home; this harks back to the topics discussed in Chapter Four.

Brewer's theory is in line with the concept of the rite of passage. According to van Gennep, a rite-of-passage ritual encompasses three phases: separation (pre-liminal), which separates the initiand from their previous state in society; transition (liminal), during which the initiand becomes 'a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, on which is inscribed the knowledge and wisdom of the group, in those respects that pertain to the new status'; and incorporation (post-liminal), which not only re-incorporates the initiand – now initiated – into society but grants them new – enhanced – status.[438] In the werewolf context, the three phases would translate to: pre-transformation, the werewolf experience and post-restoration. The werewolf character is first deprived of his personal identity and social status; whether physically turned into a beast or merely made to assume a disguise, he is no longer recognised as himself. Then he remains in the wild in wolfish form. This liminal stage, however, is but brief: upon restoration the hero remerges, not only reclaiming what belonged to him but also becoming better and stronger, more firmly grounded in the central, human world. Symbolically, therefore, this process is a

[438] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (London, 1960; repr. 2004), p. 11. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York, 1995), pp. 94-106 (p. 103).

passage from one (social) life to another, with the liminal stage functioning as a temporary (social) death.[439]

While Brewer and van Gennep focus on individual maturation, Mannheim's 'generation' theory widens the scope by incorporating the hero(ine)'s personal development into the dynamics of different generations within a given society and time period. Within the generational framework, each individual occupies a certain generational location (*Lagerung*) based on their age, background, and social experiences; membership of the same generation, in Mannheim's terms, is largely defined by how the members respond to the outside world, which is simultaneously experienced by people with different generational locations.[440] When applied to literature, the theory offers a structuralist model of narrative roles as distributed across and organised by their generational location, demonstrating a model of individual, familial and social progress through the experiences of the younger generation. Its applicability to medieval literature is attested in Annick Sperlich's work on the four ancestral Middle English romances, where she classifies the romance characters into a parent generation and a children generation.[441] The parent generation is further divided into three groups based on each character's narrative role: the father, the guardian, and the enemy; the children's generation includes the hero, the bride, and the friends. The 'complete' romance would thus expand across two generations. The father, though a capable ruler himself, fails and is killed by the enemy, destabilising the dynasty and leading to the hero's exile. The hero, however, eventually returns and defeats the enemy, proving himself not only the father's equal but also and rather, a

[439] That the liminal stage is likened to death is discussed in Turner, p. 95, and, again, pp. 100-1, where he analyses the installation rites from Zambia, which take place in a shelter known as *kafu* (derived from the term 'to die') and start 'just after sundown' (i.e. the symbolic darkness is manifested through visual darkness). Indeed, what separation from this world can be more thorough than death itself? To be deprived of one's identity and social status is a form of social death; in ritual, it tends to be made visual through symbolic corporeal death.

[440] Karl Mannheim, 'The Problem of Generations', in *Karl Mannheim: Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, vol. 5, ed. Paul Kecskemeti (London, 1997), pp. 286-322.

[441] Annick Sperlich, *Family and Friends: Generation in Medieval Romance* (Heidelberg, 2014), see pp. 37-46.

recuperated and improved version of him. The romance ends with the hero's marriage and details of his progeny, to ensure the continuity of the newly restored and ameliorated dynasty.

Although not all the core texts studied in this thesis follow this pattern, it is nevertheless useful to adopt Sperlich's classification where it is relevant. Sinfjǫtli, Áli, Úlfhamr, Pluto, and Sigrgarðr are no doubt heroes in their own storyline; they belong to the children generation. The stories of Bisclaret and Tíódél take place within a single generation, but they may be considered as belonging within the king's generational unit and be treated as his companions.[442] Vargstakkr is the father, and the magical dwarves in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* and *Gibbons saga* are both 'splits' of the father and guardians to the hero. Therefore, if we juxtapose the two analytic criteria, the *monstratus* type of werewolf is shown also to belong to the children generation, while the *monstrare* type figures (except Bisclaret and Tíódél) belong to the parent generation. This further suggests that the difference between the two categories is only temporal, and there is mobility between the two. In terms of the knowledge acquisition models, in order to teach by story, one must have a story first. The werewolves who learn by living through the story, therefore, may well become teachers at a later stage and pass on what they have learned, as in the case of Gorlagon. In terms of generations, the parent generation was once, it is implied, heroes on their own timeline, who also learned from and surpassed their fathers. The children generation, under ideal circumstances, will grow up and become fathers and guardians themselves; they will pass on their knowledge to the next generation.

Section Two: (Were)wolf as Learner/*Monstratus*

I start this section with brief discussion of *Vǫlsunga saga* and *Ála flekks saga*; these have been analysed quite thoroughly in the previous chapters. The werewolves – Sigmundr, Sinfjǫtli, and Áli – have several points in common: first of all, they are physically transformed, as opposed

[442] Neither Bisclaret nor Tíódél fits the two-generation model, since both stories only operate in a single-generational plane and, as none of the characters seems to have children, it is impossible to decide if they belong to the parent or the children generation. In other words, *Bisclaretz ljóð* and *Tíódéls saga* create a third, rather isolated generation that stands in between.

to Úlfhamr who is only metaphorically wolfish and to Sigrgarðr and Pluto, who are merely in disguise (but appear in stories where a wolf-transformation is present). Second, both sagas present a non-binary understanding of humanity and monstrosity. This is particularly demonstrated in the characterisation of Sinfjǫtli and Áli, who start their journeys neither firmly grounded in the human world nor sufficiently otherly to be considered as monsters. However, their circumstances are rectified or at least improved by the werewolf experience.

Of the two, *Ála flekks saga* is the more straightforward, for it centres on the 'passage' of a single hero, his maturation, and development from a foundling to a wise, just ruler.[443] As discussed in Chapter One, Áli starts his journey not only as a 'psychologically bi-natured hero' but also with dubious origins, which results in his predisposition to leprosy.[444] Áli's successful survival of his werewolf experience, as one of his four ordeals and as the lowest point of his identity crisis, plays a key role in his re-incorporation into central society and grounds him more firmly within the royal family.

The story of Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli is more complicated, as it involves both father and son, whose stories overlap. The werewolf experience is obviously instructive to the young Sinfjǫtli. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir is correct in pointing out that Sigmundr takes on Sinfjǫtli 'to accustom him to hardship' and that the werewolf experience familiarises Sinfjǫtli with 'the wild animal within him', which is important for a warrior and a Vǫlsung.[445] It was also concluded in Chapter Four that Sinfjǫtli emerges from the wolfskin more mature, having learnt to be obedient to Sigmundr. But Sinfjǫtli is not the only one who learns and improves. One must not forget that, within Sigmundr's own storyline, he too belongs to the children generation at this point. Compared to Sinfjǫtli, Sigmundr's adventure follows more closely the pattern of

[443] *Ála flekks saga* closely follows the two-generation pattern, with a mention of Áli's sons and the expansion of his dynasty: Vilhjálmur reigns over Valland, and Ríkarður takes over Saxland; the youngest son Ólafur succeeds the throne of England, 'ríkti lengi í Englandi og jók þar sína ætt' (reigned for a long time in England and increased there his wealth). *Ála flekks saga*, chap. 19, pp. 159-60.
[444] Morgan, p. 150. See Chapter One, pp. 55-56.
[445] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', 284.

generations and Brewer's family drama. For *Vǫlsunga saga* itself, 'composed along genealogical lines', is a saga of six generations, one succeeding the other in similar fashion: the father is betrayed to his death by his enemy (normally an in-law), the son avenges the father; the son succeeds to the throne and becomes the father in his turn … The cycle continues until it terminates with Sigurðr, who does not reclaim his patrimony and whose son is killed with him.[446] When the werewolf experience takes place, Sigmundr has yet to avenge his father and to reclaim his kingdom. In other words, though he has become a father (without realising it) and has stayed in the forest for a decade or more, in terms of social experience, he remains still in the liminal phase, transitioning from his old life to a new one.[447] On the social level, this period is, on the one hand, the continuation and consequence of his father's fall – set in motion by Signý's ill-fated marriage; on the other hand, it prepares Sigmundr for his revenge and paves the way for his return and restoration. On the individual level, this period of Sigmundr's life sees the loss and re-establishment of his identity. After his escape from the she-wolf, Sigmundr is assumed dead by King Siggeirr and his court (except Signý), as having perished alongside his brothers in their nightly encounters with the she-wolf. In other words, in the eyes of the outside world, he simply does not exist anymore; this outlaw-like figure in the woods is in practical terms no-one. More intriguingly, Sigmundr is believed to have been consumed by a wolf, since the she-wolf not only kills the Vǫlsung brothers but eats (*etr*) them.[448] Sigmundr is thus thought to have been literally incorporated into a wolf's body, becoming part of that body as her food. The werewolf transformation thus replays the death experienced by his brothers, but without actually killing him. After the werewolf experience and his 'exile' in the woods,

[446] Torfi Tulinius, *The Matter of the North*, pp. 140-41.
[447] Considered independently of Sinfjǫtli, Sigmundr's story fits better the 'exile-and-return' type of narrative, in which, according to Diane Speed, '[f]or a limited time the hero undergoes displacement from his home and the security of self-definition in relation to familiar circumstances. In unfamiliar territory, which is testing or threatening, he goes through a process of learning and maturing'. The werewolf transformation is part of the 'testing and threatening' and, as demonstrated in Chapter Four, takes place in 'unfamiliar territory'. Diane Speed, 'The Construction of the Nation in Medieval English Romance', in *Readings in Medieval English Romance*, ed. Carol M. Meale (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 135-57 (146).
[448] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 6, p. 8.

however, Sigmundr now re-emerges as the son of King Vǫlsungr. On the generational level, this period also allows Sigmundr to transition from the younger generation to the older, preparing him for fatherhood. In addition to his maturation and improved self-control, as discussed in Chapter Four, Sigmundr seems to have also become tenderer with the younger generations: previously, he has killed Signý's two children and (apparently) kills Sinfjǫtli in wolf form, but he now refuses to kill any more – 'Eigi vik ek drepa bǫrn þín, þótt þau hafi sagt til mín' ('I'll not kill your children, even if they have given me away').[449] Instead, the children-killing business is passed onto Sinfjǫtli.

The child who carries on the Vǫlsung lineage and surpasses his forefathers, however, is not Sinfjǫtli, but Sigurðr. Despite being doubly Vǫlsung, Sinfjǫtli's incestuous parentage problematises his position in the genealogy; like Signý, he too has to die and makes room for Sigurðr.[450] What is Sinfjǫtli, then? He is Sigurðr's split, an alter-ego or a prototype who fails to survive – in this sense, the relationship between Sinfjǫtli and Sigurðr is comparable to that between Vargstakkr and Úlfhamr. As a split, Sinfjǫtli's story parallels Sigurðr's, and the darkness surrounding him in the wolfskin parallels the darkness of Sigurðr's pit, occupied when he kills Fáfnir, as a liminal stage. For Sinfjǫtli, the werewolf experience marks as much a transition point as it does for Sigmundr. It is part of the younger man's training, but it is also a test – the last of a series of three that he must pass to 'grow up'. Each test deals with a different form of concealing and revealing. The first one is the sewing and tearing off of the sleeves: an artificial layer of skin is attached to the skin itself, then 'shed', leaving behind painful and bloody wounds, a process that foreshadows the wearing and shedding of the wolfskin. Sinfjǫtli thus survives being a kind of artificial wolf; he is now ready to be sent to the woods to live as

[449] Ibid., chap. 8, p. 12.
[450] Torfi Tulinius argues that Signý must die because she has violated two taboos: infanticide and incest. However, the fire in which she perished does not cleanse the lineage of her crimes, for they live on in Sinfjǫtli. For that reason, Sinfjǫtli cannot be legitimised in any way. He is rather an 'offshoot' of the lineage, who plays an auxiliary role to the legitimate heirs (e.g. Sigmundr and Helgi). Torfi Tulinius, *The Matter of the North*, p. 143.

a metaphorical wolf (i.e. an outlaw). The second is the bread-kneading and the snakes. This test is about the fear of the unseen and the unknown, and of death – the poisonous snakes are first concealed in the sack, then in the flour and bread. If Sinfjǫtli does not recoil from it, he will not recoil from the wolfish nature concealed beneath the wolfskin. The third, the werewolf experience, is the epitome of them all, for it not only replays the first test on a deeper level but also realises what the second fails to achieve: Sinfjǫtli is (apparently) dead, killed by the ferocity and animality triggered by the werewolf transformation – a 'mental poison' concealed in a (skin)sack. Whereas Sinfjǫtli's survival of the first two tests confirms his readiness to leave home – to grow out of infancy and to be separated from his former self, his survival of the third (albeit with magical help) confirms his readiness to be reincorporated into the central, human world as a young man and a warrior in his own right. The poisoned cup can be considered as a fourth and final test, which Sinfjǫtli is doomed to fail. This ending is already hinted at in the second test: 'Sigmundr var svá mikill fyrir sér at hann mátti eta eitr [...] en Sinfjǫtla hlýddi þat at eitr kœmi útan á hann, en eigi hlýddi honum at eta né drekka' ('Sigmund was so hardy that he could take poison […] But though Sinfjǫtli was able to stand outward contact with poison, he could neither eat nor drink it').[451] However strong he is, Sinfjǫtli cannot outdo his father; he is finally killed by him.[452]

[451] *Vǫlsunga saga*, chap. 7, p. 10.

[452] The four 'tests' also bring together Sigmundr's two encounters with a wolf: by ingestion into a wolf's body and by wearing the wolfskin (i.e. physically turning into a wolf). Skin alternates with ingestion here in Sinfjǫtli's adventures; they can be further grouped two by two. In the first stage, Sinfjǫtli endures the pain of the sewing and the tearing off of the skin, and is brave enough to eat the poisonous bread, but Sigmundr stops him (therefore saves his life). However, the second stage is marked out by Sinfjǫtli's failures: in the wolf form, he challenges his father and is (apparently) killed, then he braves the cup but Sigmundr offers no help this time. Sinfjǫtli's death as caused by Sigmundr evidences his status as an outlier of the Vǫlsung lineage, as it breaks the generational pattern and continuity within Mannheim and Sperlich's model. It also speaks to Sigmundr's inadequacy in his role as father and ruler. Perhaps it has to do with the extended period of the transitional stage and his slow maturation; by the time he has completed the 'passage', he is simply too old to be the hero. In this sense, Sigmundr's story also disrupts the generational pattern. As will be shown below, Úlfhamr is also subjected to the same danger, but fortunately for him, he has helpers, key in Sperlich's analysis; the hero of the children generation needs helpers. Sinfjǫtli does not even have a sworn or foster brother, until the Helgi material is incorporated into *Vǫlsunga saga*. However, even then, it is Helgi who assumes the role of the hero, while Sinfjǫtli acts as his helper and companion. Perhaps this is why Sinfjǫtli cannot succeed in the saga. For the negative image associated with old age, see Ármann Jakobsson, 'The Specter of Old Age', 302-05. That age is an impediment to masculinity is discussed in Gareth Lloyd Evans, *Men and Masculinities in the Sagas of*

Úlfhamr, too, experiences three concealing layers analogous to the wolfskin, each marking a new stage of the young prince's maturation. The previous chapter proposed that *Úlfhams rímur* is a tale of the younger generation taking over from the old, and Úlfhamr's travails are a rite of passage that prepares him for personhood, manhood, and kingship. According to Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, to become a king – i.e. to regain his patrimony and to establish a new status quo, Úlfhamr must fulfil three conditions: '[r]yðja þarf núverandi valdhafa úr vegi' (the current powerholder needs to be got rid of); '[h]inn óþroskaði ríkisarfi þarf að öðlast reynslu' (the immature heir needs to experience hardship); 'finna sér drottningu við hæfi' ([and] find himself a suitable queen).[453] The first task – realised in the form of the death of the parents – is completed for Úlfhamr by the three women, who can all be read as 'splits' of the same figure: Vǫrn places the werewolf curse on Vargstakkr, which leads to his murder by Hildr; then Hildr, having held power for a brief period, is killed and replaced by Dagbjǫrt, her successor both in blood and narrative function (as the enchantress and the story's memory-carrier). For Úlfhamr, each parent's death results in a discrete occurrence of concealment, gradually separating him from his former life. Vargstakkr's death leads to Úlfhamr's hiding in the fortress in the woods, an all-enclosing space that temporarily fortifies his psyche as well as shelters his body; after the death of Hildr, he is forced deeper, into Vǫrn's mound, which shrouds him in physical and mental darkness, as the wolfskin does Vargstakkr. However, more positively, the mound-entering experience initiates the bridal quest and brings about the third concealing layer that Úlfhamr must go through and overcome in order to succeed. This is the lingering, mental effect of the mound, namely the 'concealment' of Úlfhamr's memory of Ótta.

Icelanders (Oxford, 2019), pp. 64-83; he argues that both being too young and too old affects one's manliness and therefore one's social status.

[453] Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Inngangur', p. ccxxxvi.

Of the three layers, Vǫrn's mound is obviously the most significant, for not only is it the location where Úlfhamr faces his darkest emotions and experiences the full effect of the trauma, but it also binds together the three conditions, strengthening the narrative structure. The mound-dwelling is the direct result of Úlfhamr's failure in fulfilling the first condition. The young man seems unwilling (and perhaps unable) to get rid of his mother, the current *valdhafi* – even after Hildr's defeat, he prefers to be reconciled with her against the wise earl's counsel, as if he simply refuses to grow up and recognise his mother's flaws. Yet the story will go nowhere until the hero leaves the parents, for 'the womb becomes a tomb if not left behind'.[454] Although Hildr is soon killed, this is on the orders of Dagbjǫrt, who experiences no apparent difficulty in taking over power from the previous generation. In contrast to his sister, Úlfhamr has had to bear the consequence of his unwillingness to depose his mother. The womb has indeed literally become a tomb, where the danger of the dominating parent is now manifested in the form of the horror of the *draugr*. As Hildr's 'split' and therefore a mother figure, Vǫrn however makes visual the monstrous side of mother-love; something that Úlfhamr has already experienced, yet refused to confront directly when Hildr proposed marriage to him.[455] The mound also reveals the danger of overstaying in a certain stage of life. In Úlfhamr's case, this is his (social) infancy. If the passage takes too long, the initiands may waste away and be suffocated by the extended stasis. They may or may not reach the end; even if they do,

[454] Brewer, p. 8. See also Felicity Riddy, 'Middle English Romance: Family, Marriage, Intimacy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 235-52, especially pp. 239-41, where, having analysed *Sir Percyvell de Gales*, Riddy discusses the importance of the (male) protagonist leaving their parents and setting up a family of their own.

[455] Hildr's behaviour fits well the profile of the 'lustful stepmother', as discussed by Ralph O'Connor in his thorough study on the stepmother motif in Icelandic sagas in comparison with medieval Irish literature. In particular, O'Connor articulates these women's dangerous propensity to destabilise 'domestic peace' and the importance and urgency of a systematic study of the mother-stepson incest motif, that which is 'frequently associated with problems of honor, royal justice and the right to rule' and which, as with the issue of adulterous queens, speaks to the same fear and anxiety. However, contrary to what O'Connor claims in a footnote, Hildr is Úlfhamr's actual mother, whom the prince naturally finds trustworthy. This complicates the plot and the character's emotional development; it may also explain why, unlike the stepsons analysed by O'Connor, Úlfhamr accepts Hildr's invitation willingly and tries to reconcile with her whenever opportunity arises. Ralph O'Connor, '"Stepmother Sagas": An Irish Analogue for *Hjálmþérs saga ok Ölvérs*', *Scandinavian Studies*, 72/1 (2000), 1-48 (20 and 27). The *Úlfhamr* material is briefly mentioned in footnote 33 (26), where Hildr is taken for granted as a stepmother.

by the time they have socially matured, the disparity between their social age and physical age would be too great, and a younger generation would already have grown up and taken over power. This situation is therefore like the wolfskin; if it is not shed and destroyed, the wearer will suffer and perhaps even perish, just as Vargstakkr did.

However, Hildr's curse spurs Úlfhamr into facing what he has been trying to avoid and forces upon him the necessary *reynsla* (experience, hardship). It has been argued that the mound experience fortifies Úlfhamr mentally, so that he can retrieve and process the painful memory without becoming overwhelmed by it, just as his ship sails safely and firmly, despite the turbulent sea. Another potential benefit is the acquisition of arcane knowledge normally attached to the experience of death. The motif of heroes descending to the underworld (*katabasis*) to acquire knowledge is common enough and is integral to the rite-of-passage ritual.[456] Odysseus, for instance, is sent by Circe to Hades to consult Teiresias before re-embarking on his long, toilsome journey, but in addition to the specific knowledge that he gains concerning his future, Odysseus also converses with the dead – including his mother, historical/mythical figures, and his companions in the Trojan War.[457] The implication is that the dead cannot lie, as Teiresias twice uses the word *νημερτὲς* (truly) when referring to his and the dead's words, suggesting that it is a rare opportunity for the living man to obtain guaranteed truthful information.[458] Thus Odysseus gains insight into the world of the dead, that which normally is not only unknown but unknowable to the living. The idea that death or near-death imparts particular knowledge is also prominent in Old Norse literature, as demonstrated in

[456] For an overview of the literary tradition of *katabasis*, see Fritz Graf, 'Travels to the Beyond: A Guide', in *Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition: Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Gunnel Ekroth and Ingela Nilsson (Leiden, 2018), pp. 11-36.
[457] Homer, *Odyssey, Volume I: Books 1-12*, Book 10, v. 490 – Book 11, v. 640, pp. 392-447. There are doubts about the nature of Odysseus's trip to Hades, since, he remains on 'our' side of the river. It has been argued that his adventure is more of an *anabasis* (i.e. summoning the dead from below) rather than a *katabasis*. Nevertheless, Odysseus does enter the House of Hades and catch a glimpse of Erebus, Book 11, vv. 568-626, pp. 440-45. See also Gunnel Ekroth, 'Hades, Homer and the Hittites: The Cultic-Cultural Context of Odysseus' "Round Trip" to the Underworld', in *Round Trip to Hades*, ed. Ekroth and Nilsson, pp. 37-56 (37-8).
[458] Homer, *Odyssey*, Book 11, v. 95, p. 406-07, and Book 11, v. 148, pp. 410-11.

Davidson's works on the conception of the dead.[459] Óðinn himself hangs from Yggdrasill, pierced by a spear, in order to learn runes, and more than once he consults the dead for knowledge about both the past and the future.[460] Sigurðr too learns mythical knowledge from the dying Fáfnir, deemed part of the necessary education for a young prince.[461] Prophetic power and knowledge of the future after death are not limited to such figures as dead *vǫlur* and transformed dragons, who are already supernatural in life, but is also shared by ordinary people, such as the random dead man whom Harthgrepa forces to speak in order to benefit Hadingus, her foster-son, and Þorsteinn Eiríksson who, uninvited, embarks on foretelling his widow's future.[462] In particular, in Sigurðr's and Hadingus's cases, that their encounters with death or the underworld constitutes a rite of passage is further evidenced by the timing of these events: they all coincide with significant change in the younger hero's identity and social status. Sigurðr is about to become known as Fáfnisbani and to rid himself of Reginn, the pseudo-father figure. Hadingus's experience is more interesting, as he encounters death twice, each at an important transitional point of his life. He hears the dead man's prophecy when he is just growing out of '[h]ic primis adolescentie temporibus' ('his first youth') and sets off to avenge his father and reclaim his patrimony.[463] Moreover, this also coincides with the death of Harthgrepa, Hadingus's foster mother with whom he had his first sexual experience: now independent of the pseudo-parent, the child has become a young man. Hadingus's second

[459] H. R. Ellis Davidson, *The Road to Hel: A Study of the Conception of the Dead in Old Norse Literature* (Cambridge, 1943), especially pp. 151-97, where she examines instances of summoning the dead from their graves or travelling to the space of the dead for information or treasure.
[460] *Hávamál*, sts. 138-39, p. 350; 'Sayings of the High One', p. 32.
[461] Carolyne Larrington, *A Store of Common Sense: Gnomic Theme and Wisdom in Old Icelandic and Old English Wisdom Poetry* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 73-93, especially pp. 81-83.
[462] Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*, I. 6.4-6.6, pp. 46-49. *Eiríks saga rauða*, in *Eyrbyggja saga; Brands þáttr örva; Eiríks saga rauða; Grœnlendinga saga; Grœnlendinga þáttr*, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson, chap. 6, pp. 214-17. For more examples, see Davidson, *The Road to Hel*, pp. 151-69.
[463] Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*, I.6.1-I.6.6, pp. 43-9. The importance of pre-marital sex with a trollwoman is discussed by Matthew Roby, who, focusing on *Qrvar-Odds saga*, *Kjalnesinga saga*, *Hálfdanar saga Brǫnufóstra* and *Ketils saga hængs*, concludes that sexual relationships as such are perceived as 'acceptable and innocuous forms of initiation', and therefore an important part of the hero's maturation. Matthew Roby, 'Troll Sex: Youth, Old Age, and the Erotic in Old Norse Icelandic Narratives of the Supernatural', unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2019, pp. 78-103 (78).

encounter with the dead takes place when Hadingus has won himself a bride, and this time he is forced deeper into the world of the dead. Whereas the first time he only experiences an *anabasis* through necromancy, he now experiences a *katabasis*, initiated by his own curiosity: he is intrigued by the sight of a fresh stalk of hemlock and inquires why the plants can spring up in the winter season. This triggers his journey; accompanied by a Sibyl-like figure, he travels as far as the city wall within which the dead comes back to life, but Hadingus is denied entry, presumably because he is not dead. In this sense, his *katabasis* resembles Odysseus's in that, though he has descended into the underworld, he does not pass the point of no return.[464] Afterwards, Hadingus returns home to remove his rivals for a second time: the young man is now ready to become king.

Úlfhamr's mound-dwelling experience is analogous to the *katabasis*, even though Úlfhamr is not sent after information. In particular, the curse specifies that Úlfhamr should be deprived of sleep in the mound.[465] The notion that sleep is closely related to death is an ancient and strong one. In Greek mythology, they – Hypnos and Thanatos – are brothers, sons of Night (Nyx) (and Darkness (Erebus)); the whole family resides in the Underworld.[466] In the Sumerian epic poem of *Gilgamesh*, unable to cope with his *memento mori* experience (the death of his friend Enkidu and the decomposition of the corpse), Gilgamesh seeks the immortal Utanapishtim to learn the secret of immortality and is required to prove his worthiness by staying awake for six days and seven nights.[467] Two implications can be drawn from

[464] Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*, I.8.14, pp. 64-67.
[465] *Úlfhams rímur*, IV. 17, p. 21.
[466] See, for instance, Hesiod, *Theogony*, in *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most, Loeb Classical Library 57 (Cambridge, MA, 2007), vv. 211-12, pp. 20-21. Parallel English translation on opposite pages. Whereas Hesiod only identifies Nyx as the mother of Hypnos and Thanatos, Cicero identifies their father as Erebus. Cicero, *De natura deorum*, in *On the Nature of the Gods. Academics*, ed. and trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 268 (Cambridge, MA, 1933), III. 17, pp. 328-29.
[467] *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism*, ed. and trans. Benjamin R. Foster (New York, 2001), X, p. 80-83, where Gilgamesh explains to Utanapishtim that he is terrified to see 'a worm fell out of his [Enkidu's] nose' and that he is 'frightened […] grown afraid of death' (p. 81). Utanapishtim imparts to Gilgamesh how he and his wife obtained immortality, 'a closely guarded matter': during the Deluge that returned all humans to clay, Utanapishtim battles the sea for six days and seven nights in an boat, and is granted immortality on the seventh day, promoted to the rank of the gods. In order to be like him, Gilgamesh must also

Gilgamesh's adventure: first, sleep is not only related to death, but it is quasi-death; if someone cannot even conquer sleep, he cannot conquer death. Second, the fear of death lies in its unknowability. An ordinary human only dies once; no one can have any experience of death so that one may be prepared for it. Despite Gilgamesh's failures, his experience nevertheless helps him cope with death. He quits his former life as a Wildman-figure, gives up the impossible quest, returns to Uruk, and allows himself to be cheered by the sight of his country. If Úlfhamr's mound-dwelling experience is read in the same light, then does it not also bring him closer to undeadness? On the one hand, deprived of sleep and rest, Úlfhamr is forced into becoming a quasi-undead creature, a *draugr*-like figure. The previous chapter speculated about what Vǫrn might do to Úlfhamr and Ótta in the mound, mentioning that, in one of the prose versions, she may have turned Ótta into a troll.[468] In addition to turning Úlfhamr into a (metaphorical) wolf, might Vǫrn also turn him into a *draugr*? In that case, Úlfhamr's experience would become comparable to Áli's, whom the trolls twice try to turn into one of them. On the other hand, however, the mound-dwelling experience also brings Úlfhamr very close to conquering death – or at least the terror of it, enabling his success when he faces the mound and Vǫrn again, both mentally and physically.

Section Three: The Disguised Hero as Learner/*Monstratus*, or the Werewolf's Pupil

The following three characters – Pluto, Gibbon, and Sigrgarðr (*inn frækni*) – form a subcategory of the *monstratus* type for two reasons. First, instead of learning from their own werewolf experience, they are the werewolf's pupils, directly learning from the werewolf and / or wolfish characters, who are supporting characters in the saga. The dwarf Asper in *Gibbons*

suffer for an equal length of time – not battling sea storms but sleep, in which Gilgamesh fails spectacularly. Then Utanapishtim imparts to Gilgamesh another secret: the location of a plant that can rejuvenate him. Gilgamesh finds the herb but loses it to a snake. He goes back to Uruk, having now fully realised that he cannot cheat death and made peace with his mortality. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, XI, pp. 84-95. For an interpretation of this passage, see William Moran, 'The Gilgamesh Epic: A Masterpiece from Ancient Mesopotamia', in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, ed. and trans. Foster, pp. 171-83 (180-82).

[468] 'Efned ur Vlfhams Rïmum,' p. 60.

saga belongs to the older variants, for he is a magical shapeshifter who freely adopts the wolf form in order to help the hero in battle.[469] As for *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, although Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir includes the saga in the werewolf corpus solely on the ground of Hlégerðr, the enemy who on one occasion attacks Sigrgarðr in wolf form, the saga also contains two wolfish characters: Hǫgni and Sigmundr, who, as will be demonstrated below, are outlaws and therefore metaphorical wolves; they both act as Sigrgarðr's helpers while in disguise. Second, although neither Pluto, Gibbon, nor Sigrgarðr transform into a wolf, physically or metaphorically, their storylines nevertheless fit the pattern of maturation and learning, which is the theme of this chapter. Moreover, they all undergo a period of transformation – in the form of appearance change or disguise – and only emerges into full adulthood after a loss of social identity. Their experience, therefore, is parallel to that of the werewolf: they travel the same journey by analogy.

In *Gibbons saga*, although the eponymous hero also benefits from his encounter with the wolf character (Asper), it is the supporting character Pluto who is the intended pupil. Gibbon's adventures turn out to be part of Pluto's maturation story; they furnish the necessary *reynsla* to prepare Pluto for reclaiming his kingdom. Pluto is introduced as early as Chapter Four. Just when Gibbon is about to start his adventures, Greca gives him a young servant called Kollr: 'En ydr herra Gibbonn gef ek þenna vnga mann til fyl<g>dar ok þionnostv Nafnn hans ok kynferdi veitt ek eigi En þat hygg ek at hann se kong borinn ok se þo i nokkvrum alogvm' (But to you, Lord Gibbon, I give this young man as [your] companion and servant. I know not his name and lineage, but I believe that he must be born to a king and must be under some spells).[470] In Chapter Fifteen, the *álǫg* (spells) turn out to have been deliberately cast: at Gibbon

[469] See Introduction, p. 4 and pp. 15-16. Gustr in *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands* also belong to this category, but, as he plays a major role in the saga and functions as a narrative thread, connecting the storylines of Sigrgarðr the father and Sigrgarðr the son, he will be discussed in Chapter Six alongside with the other *monstrare* type of werewolves.
[470] *Gibbons saga*, chap. 4, p. 15.

and Greca's wedding, Kollr reveals his true identity as Pluto, prince of Saxland, and throws off his disguise: 'Asper duergr takandi j hond Koll ok vt leidandi rifandi j brott af honum hans klædi ok þa hinnv er la yfir hans anndliti' (Asper the dwarf takes Kollr by the hand, leads him out, and tears away from his body his clothes and that mask that lay over his face).[471] What is then revealed is an account that fits very well the two-generation pattern developed by Sperlich. It starts with the parent generation: here Pluto's father is defeated by Obscura (the Enemy), a magical shapeshifter who mortally wounds the king *j arnar ham* (in an eagle's form/skin). On his deathbed, the king sends the underage Pluto to a dwarf called Asper (the Guardian), who can magically transform himself into a wolf and who will be discussed more detailed in Chapter Six, so that Pluto may acquire support (*lið*). However, instead of granting Pluto what he needs straightaway, Asper allows him an opportunity to earn it through his own merits and service, gaining valuable experience at the same time. By serving Greca incognito, Pluto not only acquires for himself powerful allies (the Friend) who help him defeat the Enemy and re-establish the dynasty, but also acquires a bride who could ensure the continuity of that dynasty.[472]

Thus, Pluto's story also fits the rite-of-passage pattern, with his adventures as Kollr being the liminal or transitional phase. The death of his father and his subsequent exile separate him from his former life on several levels: socially, he is no longer a prince, but a servant

[471]Ibid., chap. 15, p. 82. It is unclear how Pluto is physically changed or what it is that has been put on his face. But he frequently disguises himself as a hideous monk in the saga, and it is understood that Asper possesses the power to change people's appearance (later in the saga he turns Gibbon ugly with a magical ring). When Pluto first appears in the saga, he reveals himself as 'einn vngr madr hardla venn' (a very good-looking young man) but this may not be Pluto's true appearance, since, when Asper leads him back to the hall, Greca inquires 'huerr þessi væni riddari væri' (who this handsome knight might be), as if she does not recognise him. It is unclear whether it is because of his change of appearance or change of clothes that Greca could not recognise him, but in either case Pluto does change his appearance, otherwise there would be no point in unmasking him here. *Gibbons saga*, chap. 4, p. 14-14; chap. 15, p. 83.

[472] Ibid., chaps. 15-18, pp. 83-88. Although it is unmentioned if Pluto has children, this is unlikely to be a hint that Saxland's future may be insecure, as may be the case in *Úlfhams rímur*. After all, the saga is about Gibbon, therefore it is understandable that Pluto should simply drop out of the story once the wedding is over and he returns to rule Saxland with his queen, thus he no longer needs Gibbon's help. Instead, the story turns back to Gibbon and tells about his succession, reign, and children.

(though his royal lineage is suspected); personally, he not only changes his appearance but also his identity. The name Kollr is particularly noteworthy. The primary meaning of *kollr* is 'head', from where it can be extended to meaning 'a person', as in the phrase *koll af kolli* (from head to head, or from one person to the other), and to 'boy' or 'friend, companion'.[473] It is unclear who gives Pluto this name – he is simply *þenna vnga mann* (this young man) when he first appears, but afterwards he is referred to as Kollr without any further explanation. Perhaps this is not intended as a proper name at all, but only a nickname, a descriptive word that the author – and hence every other character in the saga – adopts as a convenient substitute for his true name, so as not to spoil the suspense of his storyline, just as Yvain is temporarily known as *le Chevalier au Lion* (the Knight of the Lion) and Gawain as *miles cum tunica armature* (the Knight with the Surcoat).[474] By becoming Kollr, therefore, Pluto not only becomes identity-less – he is merely *a* boy – but also become status-less; in effect no-one, he is only defined by Gibbon as his 'friend' or 'companion'. However, Pluto's task is completed once Gibbon's affairs are settled; he 'sheds' his disguise and reclaims his name.

Pluto, however, is not the only one who benefits from Asper's help. By acting as Pluto's guardian and a 'split' of his father, Asper also guides Gibbon through his adventures. Marianne Kalinke is correct in dividing Gibbon's story into three movements: Gibbon's encounter with Greca (the imported fairy mistress motif), his adventures with Florentia (the indigenous *meykongr* motif), and his encounter with Florentia's son Eskopart, or the 'aftermath' that serves to unite the previous two parts by clarifying the relationships between Gibbon and the two women.[475] Greca is the driving force behind the plot: to marry her is Gibbon's goal, while his

[473] *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *kollr*, p. 348. See also de Vries, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden, 1961) s.v. *kollr*, p. 325. The ONP, s.v. *kollr*, I.6. The example given by Cleasby and Vigfússon and the ONP is from *Guðmundar saga byskups* (Text B): 'Byskvp m(ælir) þa. Hvi villdir þv kollr miɴ livga at okr Mariv' (The bishop says then, 'why would you, my boy, lie to Mary and me?'). *Guðmundar sögur biskups: Guðmundar saga B. 2*., ed. Stefán Karlsson and Magnús Hauksson, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 7 (København, 2018), chap. 133, p. 209.
[474] *De ortu Waluuanii nepotis Arturi*, in *Latin Arthurian Literature*, ed. and trans. Day, pp. 64-65.
[475] Marianne Kalinke, '*Gibbons saga*', 265-88. See also Marianne Kalinke, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*, Islandica xlvi (Ithaca and London, 1990), pp. 134-35.

wooing (and deflowering) of Florentia is only a means to realise that goal, for the maiden-king storyline provides Gibbon with the *reynsla* that he needs to prove his worth.[476] However, it is not Greca who urges Gibbon to woo Florentia, but rather Asper the dwarf. Although Greca reveals that she is destined to marry Gibbon, she refuses to marry or have sex with him when she spirits him away to Greece – she remains invisible to him for one year and magically removes his sexual desire. When Greca finally reveals herself and has to send him back to Frankland, she provides him with no clue as what he must do to marry her, though, judging by her parting gifts to him, she has foreknowledge of his wooing of Florentia. Gibbon's original plan is to find his way back to her court and ask for Greca's hand directly (i.e. without additional adventures), but Asper enters the story just in time and suggests to Gibbon that he should turn his attention to Florentia, for this is the only way he can have his way with Greca: 'En þat hlægir mig at fyrr en fait hennar meydom mvnv þer koma i þa ravnn' (It makes me laugh that, before you could take her [Greca's] maidenhood, you must go through this trial).[477] Thus Asper is also a determinant of Gibbon's success. Granted, Gibbon succeeds in all his adventures on his own merits as well as with help from various directions, but he would have failed in deflowering Florentia without Asper's magic. His final success seems overly simple compared to all the trouble he has previously gone through: Asper merely changes Gibbon's appearance, opens a door for him, and immobilises Florentia and her companions.[478] It is also noteworthy that Kollr/Pluto (along with Asper) also takes part in what is justly labelled as 'one

[476] Although Gibbon seems to have enjoyed living with Florentia (as his concubine, not wife), Greca is considered as the best reward that Gibbon can expect, without whom his success is simply not complete: 'skaltu fara after med mer til Grekam drotningar til Griklanz er þu att bezst at lavna mattv þat muna at þin framkuemd var litils verd vtan su er af henni leiddi' (you must travel with me [Feritra, Gibbon's sister] to Queen Greca in Greece, where you will be best rewarded. You must remember that your success is of little worth without the one from whom all this resulted). *Gibbons saga*, chap. 15, p. 80.
[477] Ibid., chaps. 5-6, pp. 19-26 (pp. 20-21). Later Gibbon is reminded by Kollr of his vow to woo Florentia, which urges Gibbon into action. *Gibbons saga*, chap. 7, pp. 28-30. It is also noteworthy that Asper appears independently of Pluto and acts as if they did not know each other beforehand. Kollr/Pluto seems to know or have heard of Asper but expresses a rather negative opinion about him, which makes the plot twist more surprising. For Gibbon's passivity, see Kalinke, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*, p. 142.
[478] *Gibbons saga*, chap. 13, pp. 72-77.

of the most appalling episodes in all of Icelandic romance' – while Gibbon rapes Florentia, each of his companions rapes one of the princesses sharing her chamber.[479] That (sexual) violence against women is a means to confirm and solidify a knight's status has been discussed in Chapter Two.[480] However horrifying, the rape scene therefore serves to consolidate both Gibbon's and Pluto's status and marks the completion of their sexual and social maturation. By deflowering Florentia, Gibbon restates his power and superiority over her; the rape, in Bagerius's words, is 'a gendering act' that restores the power balance between male rulers and the maiden king, who hitherto has not only refused men but also habitually kills them.[481] For Pluto, the effect is however different. He is, first of all, no longer a twelve-year old boy, but a sexually mature man;[482] it heralds his marriage to Lady Gira, which forms part of his reincorporation into central society. Although there is no power tension between him and the unfortunate, nameless princess (whose reaction is not described), the reversion of the power balance between man and woman heralds Pluto's readiness to confront Obscura, another dominating female ruler. Moreover, the trio's participation in the rape can also be read as an act of (homo)social bonding and foreshadows the roles that each man will play in the final

[479] Kalinke, '*Gibbons saga*', 278.

[480] See Chapter Two, p. 93. See also Henric Bagerius, 'Romance and Violence: Aristocratic Sexuality in Late Medieval Iceland', *Mirator*, 14/2 (2013), 79-96, where Bagerius surveys the growing interest of Icelandic aristocrats in virginity from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, and how that interest manifests in romance literature. For his analysis on the rape scene in *Gibbons saga*, see chaps 17-19, 87-90. Compare Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia, 2003), p. 148, who recounts instances of gang rape in the fifteenth-century Dijon, where sexual violence against women was understood both as a form of social control and as 'a rite of passage to manhood'. Fiona Harris-Stoertz, on the other hand, addresses the issue of sex and youngmanhood from a historical approach and concludes that 'youthful sexual activity proved a young man to be a fully functional male, able to produce offspring'. Harris-Stoertz, 'Sex and the Medieval Adolescent', in *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society 1150-1650*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto, 2002), pp. 225-43 (p. 234).

[481] Bagerius, 88.

[482] It is noteworthy that the age of twelve is generally considered as an endpoint of childhood, after which a boy enters a formative stage until he reaches ca. sixteen, when he will be considered as an adult. This four-year-or-so period, therefore, is a liminal stage during which personhood and manhood are expected to develop, 'a period of "trial run" […] when childhood was to some extent ended, but before finally being judged fully adult, and thus fully answerable, by their peers'. Nic Percivall, 'Teenage Angst: The Structures and Boundaries of Adolescence in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Iceland', in *Youth and Age in the Medieval North*, ed. Shannon Lewis-Simpson (Boston, 2008), pp. 127-50 (p. 137). A short summary of saga heroes embarking on their adventure at the age of twelve can be found in Judith Jesch, '"Youth on the Prow": Three Young Kings in the Late Viking Age', in *Youth in the Middle Ages*, ed. P. J. P. Goldberg and Felicity Riddy (York, 2004), pp. 123-49 (p. 133).

battle against Obscura. Just as Lord Gibbon takes the lead and conquers Florentia, he will take on the task of killing Obscura, whereas Pluto and Asper are his companions and helpers, each engaging one part of the enemy in attack: Pluto fights valiantly among King Margari's troops, cutting down two *blámenn* with one blow; Gibbon breaks King Margari's back in a fury; Asper in wolf form wounds Obscura and pushes her off her tower, so that Gibbon can chop off her head.[483] Asper's function here particularly resonates with that in Florentia's rape: both queens are in a high tower, out of Gibbon's reach, but both are made accessible and vulnerable through Asper's magic.

Battling Obscura and her men also gives Gibbon an opportunity to experience the supernatural, even the 'underworldly'. Whereas Gibbon still operates in 'a comparatively normal world' in his bridal quest, fighting in Saxland brings him into the domain of trolls, giants, and *blámenn*.[484] The invading King Margari is described as 'mykill sem risi en sterkr sem troll' (big as a giant and strong as a troll), and his mother Queen Obscura is a magical shapeshifter who shoots arrows from her fingers: 'hun braz j ymissa kuikenda liki af huerium hennar fingri flo avr' (she appeared in form of different creatures; arrows flew out from each of her fingers) and, again, 'Obscura stendr j hæstum tvrnum borgarinar skiotandi avr af huerium fingri' (Obscura stands in a high tower of the city, shooting arrows from each finger).[485] Although the term *blámaðr*/*blámenn* is frequently used to denote ethnicity and therefore could refer to very real beings, it can also refer to infernal creatures and the supernatural.[486] The

[483] Although Gibbon's other powerful friends (such as the Patriarch Alanus and Florentia's brother) are also present when Pluto requests Gibbon's help, it is this trio who take part in the battle. *Gibbons saga*, chap. 17, pp. 86-87.
[484] Kalinke, '*Gibbons saga*', 268.
[485] *Gibbons saga*, chap. 16, p. 83, and chap. 17, p. 86.
[486] See, for instance, Richard Cole, 'Racial Thinking in Old Norse Literature: The Case of the *Blámaðr*', *Saga-Book*, 40 (2015), 21-40 (esp. 27-32). Simonetta Battista, '*Blámenn, djǫflar* and Other Representations of Evil in Old Norse Translation Literature', in *The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature: Sagas and the British Isle: Reprint Papers of the Thirteenth International Saga Conference, Durham and York, 6th – 12th August, 2006, I*, ed. John McKinnell, David Ashurst, and Donata Kick (Durham, 2006), pp. 113-22 (esp. pp. 117-19). John Lindow, 'Supernatural Others and Ethnic Others: A Millennium of World View', *Scandinavian Studies*, 67/1 (1995), 8-31 (13-17).

underworldly nature of the Saxland episode is further evidenced by the Latin names of the characters: Pluto is the name of the lord of the Underworld, *obscura* means primarily 'dark, obscure, unknown', and *asper*, 'harsh, wild, coarse, rough, fierce, cruel, violet, roused to anger'; these latter two names fit very well the characterisation of these two figures.[487] Again, as in *Úlfhams rímur*, darkness is thematised, personified and localised, so that its defeat by the hero can be portrayed literally. The timing of Pluto's revelation is also comparable to that of Hadingus's *katabasis*, namely both taking place at the ruler-to-be's wedding, an event that not only completes the two men's incorporation rites but also seals their transition from the children to the parent generation. Therefore, Gibbon too experiences a *katabasis*-like journey. By invading Saxland, now ruled by the *blámenn* and Obscura, he ventures into a land of the dead; but by vanquishing them and liberating the kingdom from monstrous rule he returns triumphantly and rises above his former status.

Although Sigrgarðr (*inn frækni*) is more fortunate than Pluto, his journey is in essence comparable to Pluto's in various ways. As the sole heir of King Ríkarðr (who apparently has no enemy), Sigrgarðr has less cause to worry about his heritage, but he needs the required *reynsla* just as much as Pluto does in order to prove his worthiness. As Hall correctly sums up, *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* presents a journey of maturation, a rite of passage for the eponymous hero. Sigrgarðr starts as a womaniser who turns to his father for help every time he fails, but he emerges at the end of the saga as 'a successful and independent ruler in his own right', who has already taken control of the situation when his father arrives with an invading army.[488] In the process, Sigrgarðr goes through a series of adventures and trials; like Pluto, his success relies on two factors: first, loss of identity – materialised through change of appearance – and,

[487] *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. II, *s.v. obscurus, -a, -um*, p. 1343; vol. I, s.v. *asper*, pp. 200-01.
[488] Hall et al., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', 99.

second, magical, wolfish helpers. As will be shown below, the former helps Sigrgarðr separate himself from his former self, and the latter assists in his (re)incorporation.

The adventure of Sigrgarðr is tripartite in structure, a narrative that 'durchläuft erneut drei Mal einen Kreis' (runs three times through a recurring cycle).[489] The closer Sigrgarðr moves to his goal, the further he is separated from his core identity. Before analysing Sigrgarðr's development, however, it is necessary to offer an overview of the story and to establish his relationship with Ingigerðr, his bride-to-be, who is cursed by her trollish stepmother to become a heartless, greedy *meykongr* and whose wooing comprises the bulk of Sigrgarðr's *reynsla*. Ingigerðr is in some respects a mirror image of Sigrgarðr: as a womaniser he commits 'sexuellen Ausschweifungen und die Schändungen der Frauen' (sexual debaucheries and rape of women), while as a *meykongr* she exhibits 'das aggressive Verhalten den Freiern gegenüber' (aggressive behaviour against the suitors).[490] Neither of their stories could be complete without the other. As mentioned earlier, Sigrgarðr faces no obstacles from the previous generation: King Ríkarðr apparently indulges him, giving him a castle and the title of earl so that he can practise rulership. The kingdom is at peace, the power balance is maintained; there is no need for Sigrgarðr to leave home until he attaches himself to Ingigerðr. In contrast, Ingigerðr's storyline exactly fits Sperlich's two-generation pattern. Her feud with her trollish stepmother Hlégerðr can be traced back to the previous generation: the old, weak king marries Hlégerðr and blindly trusts her two brothers.[491] This leads to the king's murder, Ingigerðr's curse and her becoming a notorious *meykongr*, and the two younger princesses' transformations. Despite all her power, Ingigerðr seems unable to break the curse, even though

[489] Jürg Glauser, *Isländische Märchensagas: Studien zur Prosaliteratur im spätmittelalterlichen Island* (Basel and Frankfurt am Main, 1983), p. 210.
[490] Ibid., p. 209.
[491] Hlégerðr presents an interesting variation of the 'lustful stepmother' pattern. Although she fits several motifs listed in O'Connor's Appendix – such as 13 K[ing] marries L[ady] for her beauty, 13 and 14 Reader and P[rince] know she is evil and 24 to 26, where L imposes curses and quests to P – she has no step-son but only step-daughters. Instead, Hlégerðr woos the two younger princesses for her brothers and turns Ingigerðr into an object of bridal-quests. O'Connor, 38-39.

Hlégerðr explicitly reveals the method to her and, judging from the tasks she later assigns to Sigrgarðr/Knútr, Ingigerðr knows all along where Hlégerðr has hidden her life-egg. Rather, Ingigerðr assumes the traditional role of the *meykongr* and waits passively until Sigrgarðr and his foster-brothers come along to defeat the enemy for her. Each of them thus impels one other's maturation first into motion and then into completion. By wooing Ingigerðr, Sigrgarðr becomes involved in her family drama and unwittingly 'inherits' an enemy from the previous generation; otherwise he would have no motivation to leave home. Likewise, without Sigrgarðr, Ingigerðr (and her sisters) would remain under the power of Hlégerðr, a monstrous mother figure. They would be trapped in the middle stage of a rite-of-passage sequence, for the two sisters are separated from their former status through their stalled transformation – that is, they remain in the liminal stage – and Ingigerðr cannot be reincorporated into normative society through marriage ('þú skalt öngvum trú vera, ok hvern þinn biðil forráða, aldrei ei þér svá vel til hans at þú skalt ei æ sitja um hans líf' 'you will be faithful to no-one, you will destroy your every suitor, you will never be so well disposed to them that you will not seek their lives').[492] The curse stands unchallenged for eight years, and the passage of time is marked by Ingigerðr's age: she is fifteen when she is cursed, but is twenty-three when Sigrgarðr enters her storyline. It is intriguing that the author explicitly indicates Ingigerðr's aging, as opposed to other heroines in the primary sources of this thesis who seem ageless. Whereas fifteen is generally considered as a very early stage of *adolescentia* (literally, 'growing-up' and an age of marriageability for girls), twenty-three however is quite close to *iuuentus*, when an individual's (physical) maturation should be complete.[493] Therefore, if no one were to break the curse,

[492] Hall *et al.*, '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 2, 107.

[493] A summary of division of human life in medieval thoughts can be found in Isabelle Cochelin, 'Introduction: Pre-Thirteenth-Century Definitions of the Life Cycle', in *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change*, ed. Isabelle Cochelin and Karen Smyth (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 1-54 (3-7). Fourteen by far is the most agreed on starting point of *adolescentia* (with only one source stating fifteen), and twenty-eight is the most common to start *iuuentus*, which lasts until forty to fifty and is followed by *senectus*. Although age range that qualifies different life stages is hard to define in Old Norse-Icelandic sources, it seems that fifteen/sixteen is generally agreed as a key stage for a child to become an adult. See, for instance, the Frostaþing law which defines 'fifteen winters old' as the age of majority ('[e]very man is a minor till he is fifteen winters old'), the minimum age for

Ingigerðr would have to remain in stasis until the disparity between her physical and social age becomes too great to fill; not only would she face the same situation as Sigmundr does and Úlfhamr might have, her age may also raise anxiety concerning her fertility and therefore her suitability as queen.

However, Ingigerðr is only able to point Sigrgarðr in the right direction once his 'rite of separation' is completed, and when he has been (unknowingly) reunited with Hǫgni and Sigmundr. Sigrgarðr woos Ingigerðr three times; each time he assumes a different identity and appearance. The first time, Sigrgarðr approaches the *meykongr* as himself, flamboyantly displaying his identity by carrying with him his standard on a ninety-ell long pole, furnished with embroidered silk and golden bells.[494] Publicity plays a key role in this episode; Sigrgarðr not only desires to succeed as Sigrgarðr, he also wishes his success to be seen, therefore he readily agrees to Ingigerð's suggestion that he should carry his pomp into the castle: 'en til þess at opinbert verði samþykki okkart, þá skaltu láta bera yðvart merki heim á þann kastala sem vit skulum í nótt í sofa' ('[b]ut so that our agreement is made public, you must have your standard carried home to the castle in which we will sleep tonight').[495] However, Sigrgarðr's egotism leads to a different kind of publicity: by the end, the prince not only loses the three items that

one to assume legal responsibilities. *The Earliest Norwegian Laws: Being the Gulathing and the Frostathing Law*, trans. Lawrence Marcellus Larson (New York, 1935), IV. 34, p. 272. Based on her study on *Grágás*, Percivall argues that, although a clearly defined age of majority is lacking in Icelandic laws, most *Íslendingasögur* heroes assume legal responsibilities at the age around sixteen. It may also be extended to twenty, allowing 'a little leeway' for those slow to develop. Percivall, pp. 137-39 (137). For girls, the situation is slightly different. According to *Grágás*, girls can take their inheritance at the age of sixteen and arrange their household at twenty, but there is no minum age for marriage for women; presumably it coincides with puberty, which starts about from twelve to fourteen. *Grágás: Konungsbók*, I, p. 226. See also Shulamith Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (London, 1990), p. 22, where she states that *adolenscentia* for girls is from the age of twelve or fourteen until adulthood, while Frances Gies and Joseph Gies argue that women's marriageability coincides with their puberty. France Gies and Joseph Gies, *Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1987), p. 50. Although it is unclear where twenty-three stands on the age scale, Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker states that twenty-two to twenty-five is considered 'relatively late' north of the Alps, while, quoting Chaucer's 'The Merchant's Tale' where Januarie specifies that an ideal bride should not be older than twenty, Sue Niebrzydowski points out that the concerns over the bride's age grows out concerns over her fertility. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, 'The Age of Discretion: Women at Forty and Beyond', in *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sue Niebrzydowski (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 15-24 (22), and Sue Niebrzydowski, '"Becoming Bene-Straw": The Middle-Aged Woman in the Middle Ages', in *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Niebrzydowski, pp. 1-14 (1).

[494] Hall *et al.*, '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 4, 109-10.

[495] Ibid., chap. 4, 113.

indicate his identity and social status – the banner, his sword and shield (which Sigrgarðr normally hangs by his banner), and his dragon-ship – but also his reputation as a womaniser, after he has failed three nights in a row to deflower Ingigerðr, thanks to the *meykongr*'s magical bedding. He becomes known as an unmanly man instead, as Ingigerðr openly mocks his lack of virility. That this new reputation has apparently spread widely in Sigrgarðr's world is evidenced by Knútr's *níð*; it is *vorkun* (excusable) that Sigrgarðr should wish to attack him, for 'þó muntu víða þurfa til at drepa áðr skríðr í þat skarð sem meykonungrinn hefr eytt af þér í Tartaría fyrir linleika sakir karlmennsku þinnar, ok er slíkt skömm mikil at opinbera þar skamm sína sem honum má mestr hljóðr at verða' ('yet you will need to kill people far and wide before you get over the indignity which the Maiden King inflicted on you in Tartaría because of the limpness of your manhood. And it is a great dishonour that a man should publicise his shame where it can be most damaging to him').[496]

The second time, Sigrgarðr approaches Ingigerðr as Jónas, a rich merchant. He trades his castle and earldom for Jónas's ship and famous treasures, including a flying carpet; they also exchange appearances.[497] This time, he plays upon Ingigerðr's greed and successfully tricks her into meeting him alone, but Ingigerðr quickly learns how to operate the carpet and sees through his disguise; she flies away with the treasure, humiliating Sigrgarðr yet again. Despite his failure, Sigrgarðr begins to separate himself from his former self. The castle and the title of the earl are objects attached to Sigrgarðr; like the banner and his other possessions, they constitute his identity as Sigrgarðr, son of King Ríkharðr. However, by using the gifts his father grants him, Sigrgarðr at this stage still relies on the power and wealth of the parent generation. In other words, he has not yet grown out of the womb. The third and last time, however, Sigrgarðr's separation is complete. Having killed Knútr in an underwater battle, he

[496] Ibid., chap. 8, 124. See also Glauser, pp. 210-11, where he points out that the publicisation of Sigrgarðr's shame reflects badly not only on him as a man but also as a ruler.
[497] Hall *et al.*, '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', chap. 7, 119-20.

assumes the Viking's appearance without telling anyone (though his foster-brothers and Ingigerðr know who he is), dismisses King Ríkharðr's force, and takes Knútr's ship and crew.[498] He gives himself out to be the killer of Sigrgarðr, and indeed so he is – on the symbolic level. It is only when 'Knútr' approaches Ingigerðr that Ingigerðr tasks him and his companions with killing Hlégerðr and her brothers, which eventually enables the breaking of the curse and the saga's happy ending.

However, although it is Sigrgarðr's initiative to exchange appearances with Knútr, he will not succeed without help. Nor would Pluto and Gibbon, had they not enlisted Asper's help. This leads to the second factor that determines these heroes' success: the magical, wolfish helpers. Likewise, my argument in this chapter cannot be properly concluded without considering the *monstrare* type of werewolves and wolfish characters. They – the foster-brothers alongside with Vargstakkr, Bisclaret/Tíódél, and the magical dwarves – are the subjects of the next chapter, at the end of which I will summarise and evaluate the findings of both chapters. However, it suffices to note here that the discussions in Sections Two and Three evidence that the werewolf transformation can be read as a metaphor for the human experience of growing up and of maturation, both physical and intellectual, thus incorporating the werewolf narratives into a larger literary corpus. In particular, as a transitional section from the *monstratus* type to the *monstrare* type, Section Three also shows how the activities of teaching and learning are an inseparable and overlapping pair, for wherever there is a teacher, there must be a pupil, and vice versa. On the extradiegetical level, the same is applicable to texts: as will be demonstrated by my discussion of *Konungs skuggsjá* in the following chapter: wherever this is a story, there must be an intended audience who are expected to learn and benefit from it.

[498] Ibid., chap. 9, 125-26.

Chapter Six

'Taka minning móti sinni óhlýðni':[499] What the Werewolf Teaches

This chapter continues the investigation into the purpose of the werewolf experience, but, whereas Chapter Five focuses on wolves (and the disguised hero) as learners, the current chapter redirects its focus onto the werewolf's doubly didactic capacity, not only as a character within the narrative, but also as a type of story. Section One considers Vargstakkr, Bisclaret and especially Tíódél, who offers an instructive example to the king; Sigrgarðr's foster-brothers, and the magical dwarves in *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands* and *Gibbons saga*. In Sections Two and Three, I interrogate the werewolf episode in *Konungs skuggsjá* as a case study and offer a close analysis. The reasons why this text is chosen will be fully explained in due course, but here it suffices to say that the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves are transformed in order both to learn and to teach; their case therefore unifies the findings of Section One and Chapter Five. This episode also provides a smooth transfer from the intradiegetic to the extradiegetic implications of the werewolf. Here I contextualise the werewolf episode within *Konungs skuggsjá*, which, itself being a *speculum principum*, is generically didactic, in order to summarise the lessons that the werewolf is expected to learn and those that he teaches.

Section One: Wolf as Teacher/*Monstrare*

Hálfdan/Vargstakkr is a teacher by example, in the sense that his story – in particular, his death – shows what could have happened in the case of failure, so that the children generation may avoid it. In other words, Vargstakkr is like Gorlagon; he himself is the story.

As pointed out above, *Úlfhams rímur* fits the two-generation model very well. As the father of the previous generation, Vargstakkr as a king is at first sight exemplary:

[499] To take [as] a reminder of their disobedience. *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 25.

Fyr*er* Gautl*an*di gaufug*ur* red.	(Over Gautland ruled a noble king,
gr*a*m*ur* sa Hald*an* heit*er*	he is called Hálfdan.
m*ar*gr*a* u*ar* h*onu*m m*en*ta led.	He was endowed with great accomplishments,
m*eckt er* gorp*um* ueit*er*.	grants power to many men.)[500]

However, he is flawed, and the seemingly harmonious reign and stable family life become unsettled at the first appearance of a crisis. His inability to thoroughly vanquish Vǫrn both reveals and amplifies the shortcomings of his reign. Vargstakkr is apparently unable to defend the kingdom – he fails to protect it against Vǫrn; as a result, he cannot protect it from anyone, since both he and his men are forced to leave it every half year.[501] This leads to two further revelations. First, like Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél and Gorlagon, Vargstakkr is not very wise in choosing a wife. Hildr may be an excellent queen during peaceful times and might have continued so, had Vargstakkr managed to defend the kingdom well. Yet her unreliability is revealed as soon as their relationship is tested. Second, the curse also calls into question Vargstakkr's relationship with the jarl, who, according to the poet, is a powerful and wise advisor to the king. It is noteworthy that Vǫrn's curse seems to extend to Vargstakkr's entire army: 'W*er*e þi*er* ut m*ed* v*ar*ga sveit' (You shall be out in the company of wolves) and, again, 'ko*m*e at sum*ri* se□*er* heim / sinu*m* rikiu*m* hlifa' (Men shall go home in summer, / to protect their kingdom).[502] This clearly does not apply to the jarl and his men. The only explanation would be that he did not take part in that particular battle, though he seems to be very familiar with what happened in it, since it is his men who fell trees to trap Hildr, as Vargstakkr's men did to Vǫrn in the earlier battle. Moreover, according to prose version B, the jarl acts as regent

[500] *Úlfhams rímur*, I. 2, p. 3.
[501] Ibid., I. 14, p. 4; III. 39-40, p. 18.
[502] Ibid., III. 40-41, p. 18. Note the plural forms of *þér* and *seggir*. See also Pluskowski, p. 181, where he compares Vargstakkr and his men to a pack of wolves.

during Vargstakkr's absence: 'han*n* hefde vargs ham hvern | Vetur; Og vard þá at hallda sig frá Rijkenu, á Mőrkum og Skoggum; Enn um*m* þan*n* tijma gjætte Iarlen*n* Rijkesens' (he [i.e. Vargstakkr] wore a wolfskin every winter, and then stayed away from the kingdom, in the forest and woods; and during that time the jarl took care of the kingdom).[503] This may give Hildr another reason to kill the king, so as to secure power for herself and her son before it could be transferred to another family. The authoritative jarl, however loyal, is a potential threat and contender for power.

Úlfhamr, however, has no need to worry about his wife nor his subject(s). Although, as Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir points out, Ótta and her family may have trollish origins and, therefore, the stability of the new dynasty may yet be disrupted, Úlfhamr and Ótta's premarital relationship is not as untried as that of his parents. Ótta has shown willingness to sacrifice herself and suffer for Úlfhamr's sake without being asked; she has already proved herself steadfast. There is thus a greater chance that she would be more reliable than Hildr, should any misfortune befall Úlfhamr and the kingdom in the future. Likewise, Úlfhamr's relationship with the jarl's family is stronger than in the previous generation. Any estrangement that may have occurred between Vargstakkr and the jarl is mended not only by the young men's foster-brotherhood but also with their shared suffering. On account of the strong relationship between Skjǫldr, Hermann and Úlfhamr, the jarl offers the prince military support and saves him from Hildr, something he did not do for Vargstakkr.[504] The favour is returned when Úlfhamr rescues the brothers from Snækollr and Bǫlsóti and, even more so when he breaks the crane maidens' curse, thus uniting the brothers with the women they desire to marry. Whereas in the parent

[503] 'Hjer býrjar Søgu af Wlf-ham', in *Úlfhams saga*, ed. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, p. 40.
[504] *Úlfhams rímur*, II. 12, p. 9: 'bad*er* rida bræd*ur* ut / blid*an* /*jar*ll\ at hitta' (both brothers ride out / to meet the good earl).

generation each individual operates independently of the others, the members of the children generation are bound to each other through shared adventures and mutual support.

Vargstakkr also provides Úlfhamr with his first experience of death, if only indirectly. This indirectness accords with the progressional nature of Úlfhamr's development, hardening the young man for future *reynsla*. It has been argued in Chapter Four that Úlfhamr's mental development is progressive, as revealed by his reactions: he turns first to escape, rather than actively facing and solving the problems caused by Hildr. Only gradually is he spurred into action by Hildr's aggression. His days in the forest prepare him to face more aggressive moves on Hildr's part; this eventually builds up to and climaxes in the horror of the *draugr*'s mound. To expand this train of thought, if the mound-dwelling experience is likened to a *katabasis* and therefore the closest Úlfhamr can come to death, Vargstakkr's death – heard, felt, but unwitnessed – is the milder, preparatory blow. Úlfhamr therefore is coached through both learning models: by hearing of Vargstakkr's death, Úlfhamr learns second-hand by listening to a story; by living in the mound with the *draugr*, he learns by experience.

Bisclaret and Tíódél, on the other hand, only operate within a single-generation frame; they do not teach their children's generation (since they do not have them), but rather the other characters in the story and, on the extradiegetic level, the audience/readers. They therefore fall into the same category as Gorlagon and, as in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, the foremost learner or *monstratus* is the king. In *Bisclaretz ljóð*, as discussed in Chapter Two, the king and the werewolf are firmly on the same side, and the werewolf confirms and enhances the king's status.[505] Whereas the wife acts immediately, having instantly 'stereotyped' Bisclaret as a *vargúlfr*, the king shows a degree of trust. Initially, when he sees the wolf beg for mercy, he fears the beast but only for a fleeting moment; then he decides to take the risk by granting the

[505] That the werewolf's violence against the woman is sanctioned and confirmed by the king is discussed in Chapter Two, p. 74.

beast *grið ok frið* (peace and protection). In other words, he gives Bisclaret a chance to prove himself, not as a stereotype, but rather as an antitype of the *vargúlfr*, in which Bisclaret succeeds. This trust-building progress is essential to the moment of revelation and highlights the king's justice and wisdom: when this antitypical wolf suddenly does behave like a stereotypical one, the king takes no action – and he certainly shows no hostility – towards the wolf, but rather draws on his previous experience with the beast to form a judgement. His reluctance to punish the wolf at this stage finds its parallel in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, where the king spends some time weighing up the case based on his knowledge, thus giving the wolf an opportunity to exculpate himself.[506] The seeming hesitancy in order to consider the case and form a correct judgement is also emphasised in *Konungs skuggsjá* as a quality of an effective king. There it takes the form of a parable against rashness in decision-making.[507] The story of Bisclaret, therefore, is one about wisdom and knowledge. Although it is made clear that Bisclaret, as a dear friend, does know the king personally at the beginning, the audience are given no information regarding the king's qualities. It is his actions and decisions that confirm the king's worthiness of his office and his capacity for maintaining justice; for, in Bynum's words, the king learns but the wife does not.[508]

The didactic message is more strongly expressed in *Tiodielis saga*. Although the werewolf still sides with the sovereign, the king's ability and efficiency as a ruler are however called into question. Unlike Gorgol, and Bisclaret's king, who both take their time in passing judgement, Tíódél's king is rash and impatient. He immediately orders the wolf/bear's execution, when Tíódél attacks the lady; then he threatens to kill both the beast and the poor

[506] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, Day, pp. 224-27. The process of trust-building is also shown in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, where it is related that the wolf decides to turn to the king for help because he 'heard of' the king's fame in justice (despite the later revelation that the king is really Gorlagon's brother). The king's (in)action at this stage conforms to his reputation.
[507] *Konungs skuggsjá*, pp. 101-02; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 57, pp. 305-07.
[508] Bynum, pp. 172-73. See also Salisbury, p. 145, where Salisbury identifies the king as a figure of wisdom and of higher spirituality, as opposed to the wife whose understanding does not go beyond appearance.

knight, when the wolf/bear refuses to take the clothes.[509] It is also noteworthy that, whereas in *Bisclaretz ljóð* the advisor is the king's *hovuð raðgiafe* (chief counsellor), he is only a *fatækvr riddare* (poor knight) in *Tiodielis saga*.[510] Why is he *fátækr*, if he is the only person who can give sound advice and stand his ground in the entire court? The explanation seems to be that he is simply not valued by the sovereign – that the king has surrounded himself with the wrong people.[511] Fortunately, his encounter with the were-wolf/bear rectifies the situation: once restored to human form, Tíódél makes sure the poor knight is treated according to his merits ('En*n* fra Tio(diel) r(iddara) e*r* þ*ad* ad seig*ia og* h*a*ns vi*n og* visinda m*anni* ad þ*e*ir v*o*ru m*ed* k*on*gi alla sijna æfi m*ed* heid*ur og* alla heimsins virdingu *se*m þ*e*ir uilldu s*ig* hellst m*ed* plaga [*sic*]' (As for Tíódél and his friend the wise man, it is said that they remained with the king all his life, with honour and all worldly respect as they wished for themselves most).[512]

On the extradiegetic level, by teaching the king, Bisclaret and Tíódél also demonstrate to their courtly audience/readers the expectations for a good and just ruler – they themselves function as *specula principum* against which one may measure oneself. This will be discussed further in relation to *Konungs skuggsjá*; now it suffices to point out that, on the personal and familial level, Bisclaret and Tíódél's were-wolf/bear experience gives them (and thus the audience) a lesson about trust. In *Tiodielis saga* in particular, Tíódél is presented as a flawless

[509] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 38: 'verdvr kongvr miog reydvr og bidvr syna menn ad drepa dyrid' (the king becomes very angry and orders his men to kill the beast), and, again, pp. 54-56: 'þæ v*ar*d k*ongur* akafl*i*ga reijd*ur o*g bad t*aka* þ*en*na en*n* diarfa dara s*e*m fær*i* m*ed* suo ordin vnd*ur og* fa heyrd odæme s*e*m eingi*n* hef*ur* f*yr* heyrtt ad n*ock*ur m*adur* mu*n*di v*er*a suo lei*n*gi j dyrs ham eda hafa suo ordna nat*u*ru | m*ed* si*er*' (The king became extremely angry and ordered this audacious rascal to be seized, who proposed such false wonders and unheard-of nonsense, since no one had heard before that anyone could be in a beast's form for so long, or had such power as to alter his own nature). It is also noteworthy that, though the king is shown to have but little faith in the advisor, he does not hesitate in torturing the lady; he simply seems incapable of making judgement on his own.

[510] *Bisclaretz ljóð*, pp. 96-97. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 40.

[511] The danger of lacking wise advisors is discussed in *Konungs skuggsjá*, where the Father, using the metaphor of dearth, expounds the dire consequences befalling the kingdom if there is a 'dearth' of wise, just men. *Konungs skuggsjá*, pp. 50-55; *The King's Mirror*, chaps. 35-36, pp. 193-203.

[512] *Tiodielis saga*, p. 74. I have not been able to find a satisfactory solution to standardise and translate *med plaga*; I do not rule out the possibility of *plaga* being an error on the scribe or the editor's part, but have not been able to check the original manuscript due to the temporary closure of Háskóli Íslands.

knight, yet one cannot help but wonder why he marries a woman who is ‘allra kvenna hard lindvst, grimm og g lavs til godra hlvta og af of bellde og elskande allt hid lasta fvlla veralldar lyf, enn fyrerlatande annars heims eilyfa dyrd og da semd’ (of all women the most hard-tempered, grim and unmindful of good works. She was overbearing, fond of a sinful, worldly life, but gave up the glory and honour of the everlasting life of the other world).[513] Bisclaret/Tíódél’s poor judgement of character is further emphasised in *Bisclarel*, in the opening verses of which the author warns those who marry a fickle woman, that ‘[e]t lui leurs cuers bien conneüst, / Ja an telz periz ne feüst’ (‘[a]nd he who understood women’s hearts well, would never be in such peril’).[514] However, like Gorlagon, these men have learned the hard way and have now become teachers in return.

Likewise, in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, the future king cannot succeed without the help of the two wolfish characters, namely his foster-brothers, Hǫgni and Sigmundr. As mentioned above, they are the second determinant of Sigrgarðr’s success. They are indeed wolfish as they are explicitly sentenced to outlawry by Sigrgarðr’s father: ‘lét konungr gjöra þá útlæga, dræpa ok tiltæka, hvar sem þeir yrði fundnir’ (‘the king proclaimed them outlaws, to be seized or killed wherever they might be discovered’).[515] Moreover, both re-enter the story disguised as not-so-human creatures: Hǫgni/Hǫrðr, wearing a magic jerkin made by a dwarf, appears ‘mikill vexti ok undarliga skaptr. Hann hafði kring mikinn ok var í gráum veipustakki. Þat bar þó meir við hversu þjóabrattr er hann var’ (‘large, but weird shaped. He had a huge hump and was wearing a coat of grey cloth which hung straight down below his buttocks’); Sigmundr/Stígandi instead wears a *vargskins stakki* (wolfskin coat); it goes without saying that both have ugly faces.[516] Moreover, the colour of Hǫgni’s cloak is grey – a wolfish connection that was

[513] Ibid., p. 4.
[514] *Bisclarel*, vv. 7-8, pp. 84-85.
[515] Hall *et al*., ‘*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*’, chap. 1, 105.
[516] Ibid., chap. 8, 122-23.

discussed in Chapter One.[517] That Sigmundr should wear a wolfskin is also significant, for it brings the character close to his namesake Sigmundr the Vǫlsung, whose wolfskin physically transforms him into a wolf; in addition the Sigmundr in this saga is also paired with a woman called Signý.[518] Hall also compares the foster-brothers' undesirable disguises with their future brides' initial suitors, who are trolls disguised as men; the saga author thus plays with 'mirroring and inversion' of characters.[519]

Within the generational framework, the foster-brothers function primarily as companions to the hero, yet they also assume the role of the guardian. The switch between their two roles corresponds to their change of appearance and depends on the presence of the guardians proper, namely Gustólfr (gust-wolf) and Gerðr. As parents to the foster-brothers, Gustólfr and Gerðr belong to King Ríkarðr's generation, yet they clearly have no place in the court. The king relies on another counsellor who is (curiously enough) named Úlfr (wolf) and whose trickery (albeit backfiring) results in the foster-brothers' outlawry. However, Gustólfr and Gerðr's advice proves to be more constructive than the king's: when Sigrgarðr turns to his father for help after his first failure, the king simply tells the young man to use his brains ('hitt ráðligra at vinna með djúpsettum ráðum', 'it would make more sense to rely on careful strategising'), yet he himself is prepared to conquer Ingigerðr by force: therefore to make the same mistake that Sigrgarðr made.[520] After his second failure, Sigrgarðr, having apparently not learned anything, acquires an army from Ríkarðr; he would have failed and been humiliated again, had he not decided to consult Gustólfr and Gerðr first. Like the supernatural dwarves, Gustólfr apparently has access to dwarf-crafted artefacts, while Gerðr gives Sigrgarðr a magical

[517] See Chapter One, pp. 35-38.
[518] That the Vǫlsung material provides later sagas a mine of names is discussed in Elizabeth Ashman Rowe, '*Fornaldarsögur* and Heroic Legends of the Edda', in *Revisiting the Poetic Edda*, ed. Acker and Larrington, pp. 202-18, where she argues that, more often than not, characters of the later texts are named after *Vǫlsunga saga* or Eddic heroes to invoke the Vǫlsung legend, and the connotation of these names must be considered in analysing the text in question.
[519] Hall *et al*., '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*', 92.
[520] Ibid., chap. 7, 119 and chap. 16, 146.

bag and teaches him how to use its unspecified contents. This bag ensures Sigrgarðr's success at every turn: it keeps him alive during his underwater struggle with Knútr and enables the mysterious appearance-exchange; its contents tame the animals that Sigrgarðr and the foster-brothers are required to bring back unharmed; it puts the crow (Hlégerðr) to sleep so that Sigrgarðr can kill her, weakens the dragon that dwells under Hlégerðr's *dyngja* (bower), and keeps the *fjǫregg* (life-egg) safe for the return journey.[521] It is also Gerðr who advises Sigrgarðr to take on the two peculiar men he would encounter during his journey as his advisers.[522]

These two peculiar men, of course, are Gerðr's two sons; they take over their parents' role as guardians in disguise. Sigrgarðr at this stage is in the same position as Gibbon when he intends to ask Greca for marriage without first undergoing any trials. Whereas in *Gibbons saga,* Asper first redirects Gibbon to Florentia and then Pluto reminds him of his vow, in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* the task falls on Gerðr and Hǫgni/Hǫrðr. First, Gerðr advises Sigrgarðr against invading Ingigerðr's kingdom, '[þ]víat þar er margt folk ok grimmt, ok er illt at spilla góðum drengjum, ef þó væri ei sinn ávinningrinn' ('because there are many fierce people there, and it is bad to kill good men if there is no gain from it').[523] Criticism can be discerned in Gerðr's advice: the 'good men' here refer to Sigrgarðr's newly acquired army, which his father had indulgently granted him. These soldiers would have died on account of Sigrgarðr's egotism and lack of strategy, had Sigrgarðr invaded Ingigerðr's kingdom. Sigrgarðr clearly is not mindful of his followers' wellbeing, but rather only focuses on his own shame. Yet, at the same time, Gerðr also provides him with a solution: he needs to acquire more *reynsla,* and so he might as well put his force to a better purpose. Later this advice will be reinforced by Hǫgni/Hǫrðr, who directs Sigrgarðr to Knútr. But the initiative is taken by Sigrgarðr himself,

[521] Ibid., chap. 9, 126; chap. 12, 135; chap. 13, 136; chap 14, 138; chap. 14, 141.
[522] Ibid., chap. 8, 122. Note that Gustólfr also has a long conversation with Sigrgarðr before his departure; although the details are not revealed, Gustólfr is likely to have offered Sigrgarðr further counsel, so that the young prince would willingly follow their and the foster-brothers' strategies in the following adventures.
[523] Ibid., chap. 8, 122.

who asks Hǫgni/Hǫrðr 'hvar hann vissi víking þann at mestr frami væri at berjast við' ('where they can find that Viking the fighting of whom would yield the greatest of fame'); only then does Hǫgni/Hǫrðr mention Knútr's name.[524] Sigrgarðr apparently has taken Gerðr's advice to heart; subsequently he sends his father's army back with the news that Sigrgarðr is dead, and assumes the identity and appearance of the alleged killer. Indeed, he is both the killed and the killer – having 'killed' the old Sigrgarðr (i.e. a rite of separation), he now enters the liminal stage of identitylessness, which is a necessary precursor for reincorporation. Although as she did before, Ingigerðr sees straight through Sigrgarðr/Knútr's disguise (as she later reveals), this time then she sends Sigrgarðr onto the right track.

In addition to helping him in completing all the tasks, the foster-brothers also play an important role in checking Sigrgarðr's temper, lest the prince make some hasty decision that he might regret later. When Ingigerðr – now freed from the curse – 'skreið […] at fótum Knúts' ('crawled to Knútr's feet') in a gesture of humility, Sigrgarðr would have stamped on her had Hǫgni/Hǫrðr not intervened, and he might have burned down the castle, had Sigmundr/Stígandi not put him to sleep with a magical potion.[525] Without the foster-brothers' restraining influence, so it seems, Sigrgarðr is prone to act violently when angry, rather than acting reasonably. Thus he risks making the same mistake as Tíódél's king; he is ready to punish Ingigerðr without considering her side of the story. Yet when he wakes up the next morning, when 'var honum þá runnin reiðin in mesta' ('the worst of the anger has drained from him'), he is able to not only listen to Ingigerðr's story patiently, but also intercede for her with his father, who plans to attack the *meykongr* by force.[526] It is this last gesture of mercy that seals the peace between the two kingdoms and makes possible Sigrgarðr's marriage to Ingigerðr (i.e. his initial goal). It also signals the completion of Sigrgarðr's maturation: whereas earlier he does not mind

[524] Ibid., chap. 8, 123.
[525] Ibid., chap. 15, 144.
[526] Ibid., chap. 16, 146.

letting his soldiers die for the sake of his ego, he now advises against unnecessary bloodshed. Whereas earlier he is the one who needs to be pacified, he now becomes the pacifier and checks the king's temper. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that this is the second time in the saga that Sigrgarðr has interceded for someone. The first time he stands up for the brothers, though in vain: when the king is informed of what has happened, he exiles Hǫgni and Sigmundr, despite their friendship with the prince and the mistreatment they received from the king's men. When Sigrgarðr intercedes for Ingigerðr, however, the king listens and obeys, even though he is *þó inn reiðasti* ('still very angry').[527] In the two-generational frame, these two intercessions can be read as two clashes between the parent and children generations, in which the children generation emerges not only triumphant, but also superior. Granted, the king is said to be *ríkr ok mikill* ('great and powerful'), but his reign is not unproblematic: his temper and hasty decisions aside, he is inclined to rely more on Úlfr for advice, the man who treats the foster-brothers unjustly, than on Gerðr and Gestólfr, who turn out to be both helpful and even somewhat supernatural. Sigrgarðr's reign might have been problematic too, yet, unlike his father, he is apparently good at choosing advisors and companions, and he has learned from the metaphorical wolves he encounters during his journey. Although the king, as the chief representative of the parent generation, still wears the crown and never explicitly passes the throne to Sigrgarðr, that he yields to his son despite his anger signals the transition of the power from the parent to the children generation.[528]

In *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands* and *Gibbons saga*, this transition of power is precipitated by the two dwarfs, both of whom turn into black wolves in the sagas' final battles.

[527] Ibid., chap. 1, pp. 104-05, and chap. 16, 147.
[528] It is rather unconventional (and therefore interesting) that, at the end of the saga, Sigrgarðr becomes the king of Tartaría i.e. Ingigerðr's kingdom and 'réð þar fyrir til elli' ('ruled there until his old age'). It is never specified whether his father dies and passes the crown of Garðar onto him at any point of his life. This lack of information may be due to the saga author's neglect, but it may also be possible that Sigrgarðr simply sets up his court somewhere else, cutting off his ties to the old regime. If so, it would be an interesting variation of Sperlich's two-generation model. In that case, Sigrgarðr's fate would be closer to Tíódél's, who settles with the advisor in a distant kingdom after the king's death. Ibid., chap. 16, 149.

They are discussed here at the end of this section because they do not exactly qualify as werewolves – rather, they are supernatural shapeshifters who are in control of their bodies and take up different physical forms according to their needs. Nevertheless, both dwarfs are not only important instructors to the (future) sovereign, they also play the roles of guardian and surrogate father. Since Asper's function has already been detailed above in the analysis of Gibbon and Pluto's maturation, here I focus on Gustr and his role in the lives of the two Sigrgarðrs.

The first Sigrgarðr's story is atypical in the sense that, unlike the other heroes of the children generation, Sigrgarðr is killed as soon as he has achieved a happy ending (i.e. marrying Florida, a somewhat mitigated *meykongr*-figure).[529] However, the continuity of his line as well as his storyline is ensured by Gustr, a dwarf whom Sigrgarðr threatens in order to make him swear allegiance both to him and his descendants: 'gófugaste herra gief mier lyf, þvi eg skal þier og ollum monnum þijum og nidjum til gőda vera' (most noble lord, grant me life, for I shall serve you, all your men and descendants).[530] Gustr apparently possesses occult knowledge and can foretell the future. It is his foreknowledge then that drives the plot, first by making Sigrgarðr desire the magical harp and, then, by extracting from him a vow to give the dwarf his firstborn in exchange, a promise that Sigrgarðr immediately regrets and dares not reveal to his foster-father.[531] As the plot unfolds, however, this exchange proves to be vital: the magic harp helps Sigrgarðr win Florida, and the promise preserves his heir, also named Sigrgarðr, ensuring the continuation of the dynasty and bringing about the story's transition from father to son.

[529] For the uniqueness of *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, see Kalinke, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*, p. 32. Although, as Kalinke points out, Florida fits the profile of the 'cruel princess', she is nevertheless willing to marry Sigrgarðr as long as he fulfils her conditions. Nor is the cruelty entirely attributed to her. Rather, it is shifted onto Valbrandr, the suitor-champion who is refused by Florida and who, therefore, makes sure all her other suitors are killed. *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, chap. 6, p. 131.
[530] *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, chap. 5, p. 125.
[531] Ibid., chap. 5, pp. 128-29.

It is in Sigrgarðr the younger's story that Gustr's role is fully developed. The second part of the saga can be divided into three stages, paralleling Sigrgarðr's maturation: his childhood, his revenge on Valbrandr, and his effortless bridal-quest and succession which confirms the completion of the cycle. During the first stage, Gustr acts as the underage heir's guardian, tutor, and surrogate father. Like Merlin and, more relevantly to this thesis, like Alfonse, he separates the heir from the central, human world (hence from his enemy), protects and nurtures him, then reincorporates him by revealing his identity to his grandfather and foster-grandfather, who are in a position to be able to provide him with political and military power. In other words, Gustr helps Sigrgarðr initiate the rite-of-passage cycle. During the second stage, Gustr becomes the supernatural helper, a role that brings him closer to Asper. During the final battle in both sagas, both dwarfs turn into a black wolf to combat a supernatural enemy, one who transforms into a flying dragon and is literally beyond the hero's reach. Both villains would have triumphed, had not the dwarf-wolves forced them to fall so that they can be killed by the human hero. That in both sagas the wolf-form should be employed in the dragon-fight speaks to the wolf's ferocity and efficiency as a beast of battle. It also speaks to the special relationship between wolf and sovereign, and to the role the beast plays in the king's life, as was demonstrated in the cases of Bisclaret and Tíódél and will be discussed in more detail in the *Konungs skuggsjá* section below. As in *Gibbons saga*, the importance of Sigrgarðr's encounter with and triumph over Valbrandr lies in the fact that it is the young man's first experience of the otherworldly, though Valbrandr's army is not as explicitly figured as associated with the underworld as are Obscura and Margari's *blámenn*.[532] Defeating Valbrandr

[532] Although Valbrandr's army is confined within the human world (with champions from Serkland), his warriors-in-chief are described as like trolls and giants: one duke is 'lijkare tróllum enn monnum ad afle og hardfeinge' (more like trolls than men in strength and ferocity), and another 'stőr sem troll sterkur sem rise' (big as a troll and strong as a giant). *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, chap. 21, p. 176 and p. 177. Etymologically, though Cleasby and Vígfusson give the *val-* prefix in Valbrandr's name as from OE *wealh-*, therefore 'foreign, Welsh', to the audience the name may still hold the connotation associated with *val-* as in *valfǫðr*, in which it means 'the slain', *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.v. *val-*, p. 674.

proves Sigrgarðr's worthiness of his lineage on both personal and political levels – first, he has avenged his father and maternal grandfather's murder, and second, he has retaken his mother's kingdom which should have been passed on to his father. But the young prince's deeper involvement with the supernatural and the actual victory can also be read as a response to his father's failure. However outstanding Sigrgarðr the elder is in the human world, he apparently does not recognise nor seems to know how to negotiate with the supernatural. Nor, on seeing the mound-dwelling dwarf, does he seem to realise that he is now operating in a different world. Extradiegetically then, he does not recognise the romance genre that he is in, unlike Jón leikari who is prepared for what will happen at every turn. Even after Gustr's explanation, Sigrgarðr dismisses the dwarf's magical power as a mere *mis-sýning* (optical trick, illusion), a trick that is meant to mock him.[533] Perhaps it is this insensibility to the supernatural that leads to Sigrgarðr's death: he is simply not able to deal with it. However, this is emphatically not the case with Sigrgarðr the son. Fostered by the shapeshifting dwarf, the young man is familiar with and has already solicited supernatural help from the very beginning of his adventure. Although he is in no position to fight against the supernatural – that is, he cannot defeat Valbrandr in dragon-form, for only a shapeshifter can combat a shapeshifter – his lack of magical power is supplemented and augmented by his wolf-ally. In this sense, the wolf serves as a bridge, connecting the two worlds, as if the fluidity of the shapeshifter's body and its controllability enables his mobility across boundaries.

But what about Sigrgarðr the father? How can one understand his untimely death, unusual in the *riddarasögur* genre, and how can one position him within the generational framework? One way to understand his narrative function is to place him in the parent

[533] *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, chap. 5, p. 125. A search in the ONP renders fourteen hits additional to *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*. The majority of occurrences are found in saints' sagas, in which the word is used by heathens to describe Christian miracles, indicating disbelief and denial. *Missýning* also occurs in *Gibbons saga*, when, upon waking up, Gibbon discovers that Asper's castle has vanished. ONP, s.v. *missýning*.

generation. In that case, the two Sigrgarðrs form a two-generational cycle, with the son recuperating the wrongs left over from the previous generation and therefore surpassing the father. But another way to read Sigrgarðr's fate is to treat the father and son as 'splits' of the same character. Whereas the heroes of other texts discussed in this chapter experience death and rebirth on a symbolic level, Sigrgarðr does so literally. It is as if the saga author is conducting a literary experiment with the same character by assigning to each 'split' a different fate. In addition to Sigrgarðr the father, Sigrgarðr the son also finds another double in his unnamed twin-brother, who is killed almost as soon as he is born.[534] His death seems natural enough at first sight, since only the first-born is promised to Gustr. But the text would still make perfect sense if Florida were only to give birth to one son. What, then, is the significance of the creation of this character and his death? If the twins are read as 'splits' of the same character, then one boy's literal death signifies the other boy's symbolic death, so that he can experience death without actually dying. With the death of the 'split' comes Sigrgarðr's temporary loss of identity; it heralds his entering of the liminal stage. As far as the outside world is concerned, he is as good as dead.[535]

In summary, the above-analysed texts share several common features. First of all, they are in essence stories of maturation – of personal development from inexperienced children to men and women with social responsibility, a transition from the children to the parent generation. To complete the process, the protagonist must go through the three stages of the rite of passage: separation, liminality, and incorporation, with the middle stage being the most important, as it provides the initiand with the necessary *reynsla*. More often than not, however, this stage is triggered by a symbolic, and often social, death, an identity loss so that the initiand

[534] *Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands*, chap. 16, pp. 161-63.
[535] Note that Sigrgarðr has never revealed to anyone his promise to Gustr, and everyone – including Florida and King Valdimar – is convinced that the first boy must be killed by the crow. Sigrgarðr the son consequently enters the court as a *bel inconnu* figure, whose identity is not revealed until later. Ibid., chaps. 16-17, pp. 162-63; chap. 21, p. 173.

can emerge with a new, often improved ego – in one word, initiated. In the 'to be taught' (*monstratus*) type of characters discussed in Chapter Five, the (were)wolfish experience functions conveniently as just such a trigger, for becoming a wolf inevitably brings about the (temporary) disappearance of the human body; it is not only a social death but also a corporeal one. In these cases, becoming the werewolf is itself the *reynsla*, without which the initiand cannot complete the rite and therefore the story cannot progress. In other words, the initiand learns *as* a wolf. In the 'to teach' (*monstrare*) group, the protagonist is subjected to other testing situations instigated, but also facilitated, by the wolfish character, who acts as guardian or helper. In these cases, the initiand learns *from* a wolf. Second, these stories tend to be set within a family – both biological and foster – so that individual maturation is extended to include a whole generation: not only the initiand but also their generation emerges recuperated. In other words, the generation itself completes the rite of passage with the protagonist. Last but not least, as all the above-analysed characters are either kings(-to-be) or at least kingly, it is natural that their personal and generational development should directly affect their kingdom and subjects.[536] As they strive for individual and social excellence, they simultaneously become better sovereigns.

All these three aspects – personal, generational, and dynastic – are epitomised in the werewolf episode of *Konungs skuggsjá*, itself a didactic work written in the form of a conversation between two generations: a highly regarded king's man and his son, a young man who aspires to live up to the parent generation. As will be expounded in the next section, the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves are intended both as figures that are expected to learn: *monstrare* and to be taught: *monstratus*. Intradiegetically, having been turned into wolves, they

[536] Bisclaret and Tíódél are both styled as *riddari* (knight) and apparently are part of the king's retinue, but they reside in their own regions, semi-independent of the king. In particular, in *Tiodielis saga* text A^1, the lady is addressed as *dróttning* (queen) and, in text B^1, Tíódél is referred to as *kongur [Tio]diel* (King Tíódél) at the very end. *Tiodielis saga*, p. 71.

are taught a lesson; extradiegetically however, their story serves as a parable so that the future generation, the son, and the audience/readers of *Konungs skuggsjá* can learn from the wolf.

Section Two: The *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves: The Foundations

The *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolf episode is included in the what is conventionally dubbed as 'the Merchant's Part', which encompasses practical knowledge about the world.[537] The werewolf tale is introduced as one of the Irish marvels; these are presented as colourful stories inserted *til gamannsamligrar rœdu* ('for entertainment') in the middle of the Merchant's Part, so that the son can be allowed a respite from the intense geographical and astronomical knowledge necessary for a young man wishing to gain worldly experience before entering the king's service.[538] Yet these 'entertaining digressions' are just as relevant to the whole work as the more 'serious' information on the king and his court, for they too mirror the teachings of the father, which are compounded of the importance of knowledge acquisition and how to apply that knowledge to bettering oneself.

Before embarking on the werewolf tale, however, it is necessary to recapitulate the purpose and the main themes of *Konungs skuggsjá*, so as to contextualise the episode. The purpose of the work is set forth in the Prologue, where, having witnessed many people's struggle to walk the highways of virtue and their failure, the author decides to seek counsel from his father, who is renowned for his wisdom.[539] In response, the father promises to explain:

---

[537] Traditionally, the main text of *Konungs skuggsjá* is divided into the Merchant's Part, the *Hirðmaðr*'s Part, and the King's Part. This tripartite structure has only recently been challenged by Karl G. Johansson and Elise Kleivane, who suggest that the latter two parts should be merged and treated as one, for the text 'does not mark a transition from the *hirð* to the king as clearly as between the merchant and the *hirð*'. Whether they should be grouped together or not is not this thesis's concern, for, either way, there is little dispute that the *hirðmaðr* and the king are closely tied together – indeed, it is only natural that, having inquired about kings' councillors and courtiers, the author should wish to move up along the ladder of hierarchy and lay out the necessary qualities of a good ruler. Here I attend to the Prologue and the Merchant's Part. Karl G. Johansson and Elise Kleivane, p. 14.

[538] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 13; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 8, p. 100.

[539] The Prologue's authenticity was subject to dispute on the grounds that, first, it is only preserved in later Icelandic manuscripts; second, in the Prologue the author claims to have also inquired 'l*en*dra m*anna* iþrott o*g* þ*ei*ra sidu' ('the doings of the clergy and their mode of life') and 'jþrott*ir* bænda o*g* fiolm*enn*is' ('the activities of the peasants and husbandmen'), elements which however are not found in the main text. *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 1; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 1, p. 73. This view, however, is largely refuted by more recent scholarship, which

‘sida athæfi e*dur* athǫf*n* e*dur* grei*n* j hu*err*e jþrott’ (‘the practices of the various crafts, and how they differed’); ‘t*il* vidsia þá villu stijga e*r* flestir byria m*ed* vp*p*hafi þ*ei*r e*r* snuast f*rá* sidligu*m* þiodgotu*m*’ (‘as a warning, the paths of error which most men enter upon when they leave the highways of virtue’); ‘ge*n*giligu gag*n*stigu þ*ei*m e*r* apt*ur* vilia huerfa af villu gotu*m* t*il* þioduega’ (‘the by-paths that those may take who wish to return from wrong roads to the highway’).[540] Then the author claims that he has written down the conversations from memory so as to preserve them and to benefit a wider readership. *Konungs skuggsjá*, therefore, is essentially an ‘everybody book’— as Andrew Hamer correctly states, 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.’[541]

However, not everyone is of equal consequence. While it is of paramount importance that each person, regardless of status, lives morally so as to avoid punishment in the afterlife, what lies at the centre of *Konungs skuggsjá* and its society is the king and his court; they are the people who matter, for their decisions and conduct obviously have a more substantial impact, causing kingdoms to thrive or perish; thus they are expected to be exemplary. This leads to the first central theme of *Konungs skuggsjá*, namely, the king’s duty and ability as a judge.[542] Naturally, this topic is fully developed in the King’s Part, which provides the audience

instead argues for single-authorship and for *Konungs skuggsjá*’s integrity. Most recently, Johansson and Kleivane convincingly point out that the Prologue is not meant to be read as a table of contents, as it clearly is (or pretends to be) written in retrospect: the (imagined) conversations between father and son took place some time ago; only now has the author decided to write them down so as to benefit a wider audience. What the text preserves, therefore, is an edited and revised version rather than the ‘actual’ conversations, and the Prologue is only intended as a summary rather than a list of items corresponding to the following chapters. Besides, as Johansson and Kleivane point out, the ‘omitted’ subjects are in fact dealt with along the way, simply not as individual chapters or parts. Johansson and Kleivane, pp. 15-16. For arguments against the authenticity of the prologue, see, for instance, 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, 1981), pp. 223-41 (specially pp. 224-25). See also William Sayers, ‘*Konungs skuggsjá*: Irish Marvels and the King’s Justice’, *Scandinavian Studies*, 57/2 (1985), 147-61 (147-48).

[540] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 1; *The King’s Mirror*, chap. 1, p. 73.

[541] 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, 2000), pp. 47-62 (49).

[542] That the king’s justice is a central theme of *Konungs skuggsjá* is thoroughly argued for and analysed in Sverre Bagge, *The Political Thought of* The King’s Mirror (Odense, 1987). One of his focal points is the king’s

with accounts of God's own judgement upon the cases of Adam and Eve and Lucifer (as a model) and of the punishments of unjust biblical kings (as a warning). In this part, the king is presented as an earthly parallel to God, the ultimate judge who passes sentences on everyone. The king, with his authority directly derived from God, must learn how to ponder, to decide, to show mercy, or to punish; in the end, he himself will give an account in front of God and be judged according to his own justness.

The importance of the king's ability to make sound, just decisions is also reflected in the previous two parts, though not as explicitly or as highly developed. In the *Hirðmaðr*'s Part, the author expounds the danger of lack of wise counsellors, famously using the metaphor of dearth: just as there can be a shortage of good crops, so there can be a shortage of good men, and one of the causes of such a shortage is the ruler's poor judgement of character.[543] This dearth image also provides a key to reading the chapters on nature and the marvels in the Merchant's Part in relation to the King's Part. On this topic two works are particularly important to this thesis: one is William Sayers's article on the Irish wonders and the other is Sverre Bagge's more general treatment of the parallel between nature and society in *Konungs skuggsjá*.[544] Reading the Irish wonders in the context of mid-thirteenth-century Norwegian politics, Sayers focuses on the episode of the fall of Tara (*Them* in Old Norse), the only marvel that resurfaces twice in the King's Part, and concludes that the author supports 'a strong and effective (royal) justiciary'.[545] Albeit possible borrowing from the legends of Cormac mac Airt

role as a judge and the notion of royal justice, a point that has not been expounded before, yet it 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. Then, Bagge reads this theme into thirteenth-century Norwegian politics and reads *Konungs skuggsjá* as political propaganda to promote a centralised legal system. See also Rudolf Simek, 'The Political Thought of the King's Mirror: A Supplement', in *Sagnaþing helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni. Sjötugum 10. Apríl 1994 (Síðari hluti)*, ed. Gísli Sigurðsson, Guðrún Kvaran, and Sigurgeir Steingrímsson (Reykjavík, 1994), pp. 723-34.

[543] *Konungs skuggsjá*, pp. 50-55; The King's Mirror, chaps. 35 and 36, pp. 193-203.

[544] William Sayers, '*Konungs skuggsjá*', 147-161. Sverre Bagge, 'Nature and Society in *The King's Mirror*', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi*, 109 (1994), 5-42.

[545] Sayers, '*Konungs skuggsjá*', 151. See also Etchingham et al, pp. 85-88, where they, having analysed in detail each occurrence of the Tara story, reached two conclusions: first, the inclusion, repetition, and modification of the Tara material in *Konungs skuggsjá* evidences the compiler's editorial selectivity of his sources and emphasis

and Diarmait mac Cerbail, the *Konungs skuggsjá* author attributes the destruction of Tara to God's wrath at an unjust king and with a people who blindly believes in him.[546] It is therefore both a punishment and a wake-up call for those who are involved, and a reminder and a warning for the future generation, so that they may avoid the same mistake.[547] Furthermore, Sayers links the dearth metaphor with the myth of the Sovereignty Goddess, thus directly linking the kingdom's prosperity to the king's individual quality.

In Bagge's article, the causal relationship between nature and the king's justice is analysed on a much larger scale. Two points are particularly important. First, both nature and society in *Konungs skuggsjá* are understood as 'partly autonomous', in that they both follow a certain chain of causality.[548] God is the ultimate cause behind all of His creation, but what He provides is only an initial force to set the world in motion; the rest is causal effect, like a game of dominoes. As demonstration, Bagge analyses a sun-wind allegory in the Merchant's Part, where the author applies political language to describing natural phenomena, whereas in the dearth metaphor he applies the language of nature to describing society: the sailing condition of the sea depends on peace or discord between the eight winds, described as eight *hǫfðingjar* (chieftains).[549] A parallel between society and nature is thus established and foregrounded, but so too is their difference.[550] First of all, compared to plants and beasts and natural phenomena, humans have agency; they make choices that lead them onto different paths – this is how, as the author observes in the Prologue, some people stray from the highways of virtue and may or may not find their way back. In other words, humans are more active, and therefore they

on the importance of royal justice. Second, that the retelling of the Tara story in the King's Part is by no means random; instead, it ties 'the encyclopaedic and the moral sections of the work together', therefore evidencing the integrity of *Konungs skuggsjá*.

[546] For the possible source of this episode, see Meyer, 309-10; Sayers, '*Konungs skuggsjá*', 149-50.

[547] The destruction of Tara is not a one-off event but has an everlasting effect. With the collapse of the palace, the nature of the land is also altered; whenever the people try to erect a building, it sinks. The ruined land itself becomes a marker of the initial offence and a reminder.

[548] Bagge, 'Nature and Society', 7-18.

[549] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 36 and p. 37; *The King's Mirror*, pp. 158-62.

[550] Bagge, 'Nature and Society', 20-21.

assume more responsibility for their conduct. Second, because of this agency, society requires more regulation and supervision than nature does and, when it moves towards the path of vice, it needs to be warned and corrected. Society is therefore less autonomous than nature and involves more of God's work. Punishments must be meted out according to the conduct of society's individual members, and warnings are issued so that they can learn.

The second point of Bagge's article regards mentality. Arguing for the thematic integrity of *Konungs skuggsjá*, Bagge identifies the text's composition method as 'interlacement' and, lying behind it, the 'analogous or typological' way of thinking in the Middle Ages; together, they 'allowed the medieval author to show inner similarities between events apparently without connection in time, space or cause in the modern sense, according to the principle of analogy'.[551] In this sense, the composition of *Konungs skuggsjá* itself is a contest between appearance and essence; like the werewolf, the stories too wear a skin.

However, to see through appearance requires knowledge and, more importantly, the wisdom to use that knowledge.[552] This leads to the second main theme of *Konungs skuggsjá*, namely, the book is at the same time a collection of knowledge and a guide to its interpretation and application. Reading *Konungs skuggsjá* side-by-side with *Piers Plowman*, Hamer points out that the son is in fact facing the spiritual danger of intellectual pride or *curiositas* (curiosity). Knowing this only too well, the father sets as the foundation of the book the Scriptural quotation '[ð]at er uphaf spæki at ræðaz almatkan guð' ('to fear Almighty God, this is the beginning of wisdom').[553] To be mindful of God (as well as His punishment) is the precondition for doing anything rightly: '[e]n sa er þætta næmr oc get*ir*. þa misser sa æigi san*n*rar spæcðar oc allrar gœzko' ('whoever learns this and observes it shall not be wanting in

[551] Ibid., 25-29 (27).
[552] 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*). Augustine of Hippo, *On the Trinity, Books 8-15*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans. Stephen McKena (Cambridge, 2002), 12.5, pp. 85-86.
[553] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 3; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 2, p. 77.

true knowledge or in any form of goodness').[554] As will be demonstrated below, this is also the lesson the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves are also expected to learn.

This idea is further developed by Stefka G. Eriksen, who argues that *Konungs skuggsjá* reflects a systematic and academic approach towards knowledge.[555] The text's own structure reflects this: in telling the anecdotes drawn from nature, society, and (biblical) history, the father shows where knowledge can be found; by expounding these anecdotes, he implicitly shows the son (intradiegetically) and the audience (extradiegetically) how to make observations and how to approach knowledge properly and in accordance with the learner's social status. Human agency is central here, too, as the Father only answers when the son asks, accentuating 'the individual's responsibility in the learning process'.[556] But this individual responsibility is hierarchical, with the king and his court at the top. These are the ones upon whom God bestows the greatest cognitive power, and how well they have utilised it is reflected in their conduct and judgement.

Therefore, Eriksen reaches the same conclusion as Bagge: that *Konungs skuggsjá* is a work of thematic and structural integrity, but she follows a different path. Whereas Bagge approaches the text from a socio-political standpoint and emphasises the king's justice, Eriksen reads it as a didactic text about knowledge acquisition and wisdom. The two themes are supplementary to one other, for a large repertoire of knowledge and the wisdom to use it are both indispensable for making just decisions. Reading the stories in the Merchant's Part within this context, one may conclude that these are intended not only as a natural source of knowledge but also as tests: the knowledge is out there but hidden, as if wrought into a riddle. Only through careful observation, meditation and interpretation can it be found – 't*il* m*ar*gfalldr*ar* nytsemd*ar* ollu*m* þ*ei*m e*r* m*ed* riettu*m* athuga ne*m*a þessa bok o*g* fylgia þu*i* ollu / ve*l* e*r* byd*ur* j bokin*n*i'

[554] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 3; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 2, p. 78.
[555] Stefka G. Eriksen, 'Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King's Mirror*', *Viator*, 45/3 (2014), 143-68.
[556] Ibid., 150.

('the book will offer [help] in many ways to all who read it with proper attention and observe carefully everything that it prescribes').[557]

Section Three: The *Konungs skuggsjá* Werewolves: Teaching (of) the Wolf

Bearing these themes in mind, I now turn to the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves. Included as one of the seven Irish *miracula*, this episode recounts the origin of a werewolf curse suffered by an Irish clan: refusing to listen to St. Patrick's preaching, the clansmen howl at the saint, *sʏa sem ʏargar* ('like wolves'); enraged, St. Patrick prays to God to send down some punishment befitting the clansmen's offence. As a result, some of them suffer the transformation every seventh year for as long as they live, while they remain human in the intervening years; others live as wolves continuously for seven winters or never transform again in their life. In either case, however, the punishment is meant to be hereditary – 'er þær kun qvislir mætti iamnan siðan taca min*n*ing moti sin□i ulyðni' ('to be shared by their posterity as a constant reminder of their disobedience').[558]

This episode is essentially a story of misjudgement on the part of a ruling class and its consequences. Although the *Konung skuggsjá* author gives no geographical detail, the clan has been identified as affined to the werewolves of Osraige, or Ossory. The best-known account of the Ossory werewolves probably is the episode given by Gerald of Wales in his *Topographia Hibernica*. It relates a priest's encounter with two werewolves, who claim that their ancestors have been cursed by St. Natalis, a local saint of Ossory, to select a couple to live as wolves

[557] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 2; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 1, p. 74.
[558] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 25; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 11, pp. 115-16 (115). The author seems rather uncertain about the length and alternation of the clansmen's punishment, not least evidence by the fact that he carefully begins the sentence with '[e]n sʏa er sagt at' ('it is reported that'). In both *Topographia Hiberniae* and *De civitate Dei*, the wolves suffer continuously for a certain number of years (seven and nine, respectively) and are then restored to human form for good; in the former, another pair from the same clan would take on wolf form, ensuring that the punishment continues. Carey reports an account by William Camden, writing in the sixteenth century, that certain men from County Tipperary turn into wolves *yeerly*. Although Carey describes Camden's account as perhaps 'no more than an echo of Gerald's *Topographia*', the deviation may point to a different tradition, one in which the accursed men (and women) suffer the wolf curse regularly (like Biscla(v)ret). In that case, the *Konungs skuggsjá* account may be a blending of two traditions. Carey, 58.

every seven years, and the curse is to be passed on through the generations.[559] The similarity between this and the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode is easily recognisable, but the two seem to operate on different timelines: whereas Gerald's priest *nostris […] temporibus* ('in our time') chances upon two of the descendants, the *Konungs skuggsjá* author gives an elaborated origin story, a prequel to Gerald's. In his authoritative study on werewolves in medieval Irish sources, John Carey compares both texts side by side with two older texts, namely *De Ingantaib Érenn* (On the Wonders of Ireland) and *De mirabilibus Hiberniae*, and proposes that the four derivatives are closely related and all derive from a tradition that locates the werewolves in Ossory.[560] From there, Carey traces the tradition further back to the legend of Laigne Faelad, brother to King Feradach mac Duach (d. 583 or 584) and ancestor of Ossory's later kings.[561] Therefore, the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves may well have belonged to the royal house of that region. Furthermore, through Gerald of Wales, the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves are also brought into affinity with the Arcadians, whose transformation is recounted in *De civitate Dei*, and thus to King Lycaon of Arcadia.[562]

That the clansmen were having *þing sin* (their assembly) is also worth noting. Three types of political assemblies are found in medieval Ireland: *oénach*, *dál*, and *airecht*; all mean 'assembly', and at least the last two also refer to a law court.[563] Granted, it is impossible to determine what kind of *þing* the Norse author had in mind or had heard of when composing

[559] Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hiberniae*, II.19, pp. 101-07; Geraldus of Wales, *The First Version of* The Topography of Ireland *by Geraldus Cambrensis*, trans. John J. O'Meara (Dundalk, 1951), pp. 53-56.
[560] Carey, 48-57. He further argues that the Norwegian author, mostly likely working with an oral source, omits the geographical detail because it is not relevant to his Norse audience. It also makes sense to have changed St. Natalis to St. Patrick, who apparently enjoys greater international fame. See also Bernhardt-House, *Werewolves, Magical Hounds, and Dog-Headed Men*, pp. 228, where he, too, traces both Gerald of Wales's and the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolf stories to the lycanthropic tradition of Ossory; the addition of the saint's curse (which is lacking in the older texts) reflects an increasing tendency of Christianisation.
[561] Carey, 58.
[562] Bernhardt-House, *Werewolves, Magical Hounds, and Dog-Headed Men*, p. 230.
[563] Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 60-62. Ó Cróinín also briefly mentions that the king is sometimes addressed as *flaith airechta* (lord of judgement, lord of assembly). Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200*, 2nd edn (London, 2017), p. 78.

the passage, but it does seem a common practice in early medieval Ireland that important political decisions were made in assemblies constituted by an upper warrior class; one of these assemblies, *airecht*, is derived from *aire*, a word that, though it could refer to 'man' in a general sense, tends to be used in a more restricted sense in literature, denoting 'nobleman, chief'.[564] Further, Etchingham et al. also argue that the compiler/author of *Konungs skuggsjá* 'presumably envisaged a context of conversion by formal consensus',[565] therefore highlighting the comparability between this scene, albeit not necessarily historically accurate, and the conversion of Iceland, and thence that between the clansmen's *þing* and the Icelandic *Alþingi*.

Thus, it is possible that the clansmen, if not belonging to the Ossory ruling house themselves, are at least local decision-makers, and that the case against St. Patrick is discussed in a political gathering or even a law court. However, out of ignorance and wickedness, they pronounce and impose on St. Patrick a rather unjust sentence. The logic behind their howling is clearly that, considering St. Patrick's preaching as not making any (human) sense and the preacher himself a mere beast, they treat him accordingly, metaphorically turning St. Patrick into a wolf. This unjust act triggers another, albeit implicit, judgement, namely that God (via St. Patrick's prayer) considers the matter and issues a sentence according to His judgement. This may also take place in a quasilegal setting and the decision is collective in nature. As the author reveals in the King's Part, God never makes His decisions alone but rather he always holds an assembly with the Four Daughters of God – *sannendi* (Truth), *friðsemi* (Peace), *réttvísi* (Justice), and *miskunn* (Mercy).[566] God would ask each to give her own *dœma* (judgement) and

[564] eDIL (Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language) s.v. 3 *aire*.
[565] Etchingham et al, p. 91.
[566] The 'four Daughters of God' motif in *Konungs skuggsjá* is discussed by Mattias Tveitane in Mattias Tveitane, 'The "Four Daughters of God" in the Old Norse *King's Mirror*', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 74/4 (1972), 795-804, and 'The Four Daughters of God: A Supplement', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 81/4 (1980), 409-415. In these two articles, Tveitane traces the history and development of the motif and how the *Konungs skuggsjá* author might be influenced by a tradition traced back to Bernard of Clairvaux. However, he also points out the uniqueness with which the motif is applied to and woven into the narratives of *Konungs skuggsjá*, that the Sisters play a more active and prominent role in the text; not only they 'directly partake in the judging of Adam after the Fall' but they also feature in other Biblical examples that the author quotes. Tveitane, 'The "Four Daughters of God"', 803.

would pass no sentence without the four in agreement.[567] The werewolf episode, therefore, juxtaposes two judgements, one unjust and the other just. These follow the same chain of causality as in both nature and society: it is the clansmen's unwise decision and conduct that brings about the second judgement, pronounced and executed in the form of punishment.

The consequence is that the clansmen are transformed into the very animal they mimicked, either in a one-off fashion (continuously for seven years) or periodically (every seven years). On the personal level, the punishment is certainly unpleasant, as the punished will be forced into wolf form and live in the wilderness, their human life suspended. It is noteworthy that this punishment also affects the clansmen's descendants. We may assume, therefore, that it engenders a race of congenital werewolves who, like Biscla(v)ret, may be quite innocent and even virtuous but who may still be stereotyped, victimised, and admitted to society only on certain conditions (such as being 'neutered', as discussed in Chapter Two).[568] However, the damage caused by the curse may be just as keenly felt on a social level. First of all, if these clansmen are local rulers, then the region will be leaderless and defenceless, which easily leads to political unrest, as in the cases of Gorlagon and Vargstakkr. Second, these Irish werewolves are said to be particularly dangerous and wicked because of their human wit: 'þeir hafa man*n*z ᵹit til allra ᵹela sin*n*a' ('but they are worse than wolves, for in all their wiles they have the wit of men') and, again, 'slica agirnd oc graða til man*n*a sæm til an*n*aʀ*r*a kyckᵹæn*n*da' ('as eager to devour men as to destroy other creatures').[569] Since they roam widely within the same region rather than, as the Arcadian wolves, being confined in an isolated place, it is likely that the harm they cause would befall their own country and countrymen, as in the case of Áli flekkr, who is forced by the curse to wreak havoc in both his father and his bride's kingdoms. That the kingdom should suffer on account of the ruling class's failure in maintaining justice

[567] *Konungs skuggsjá*, pp. 75-77; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 45, pp. 251-57.
[568] Chapter Two, p. 101.
[569] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 25; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 11, p. 115.

echoes and reinforces the moral of the Tara episode which precedes the werewolf tale. It also points to the dearth metaphor, for the two chapters carry the same condensed message: a king's misconduct brings divine punishment down upon himself, and the kingdom suffers unrest as a result.

One of the focal points of the clansmen's offence and punishment concerns the (human) voice – or rather, the loss of it, which is a common feature to werewolves.[570] Indeed, if Áli flekkr, Biscla(v)ret, Tíódél, Alfonse and Gorlagon could simply tell the king who they really are, just as Gerald of Wales's wolf does to the priest, the story would be much less dramatic. The Latin word for not being able to speak is *infantia*, from which the term *infancy* derives.[571] The logic behind the connection is obvious: infants cannot speak – they make sounds, but not comprehensibly. It suggests a further layer to the meaning of *infantia*, that it not only refers to the physical, audible quality of voice/sound, but also to its rational, spiritual, and intellectual quality. The question, therefore, is whether or not a voice – or the idea it expresses – makes 'sense', and the standard of assessment varies depending on the community. In adopting a *vargsrǫdd* (wolf-voice), the clansmen in fact make audible their spiritual flaw – that they are stubbornly ignorant to the point of resisting the opportunity of rectification. That their lack of spiritual qualities is immediately made material and visual by the werewolf transformation recalls and accentuates the importance of agency: it must be remembered that, unlike the other

[570] The only exception is the wolves in Gerald of Wales's *Topographia*, when the he-wolf approaches the priest, begs him to perform the last rites on his companion, and answers the priest's questions 'catholically' ('catholicum in omnibus responsum præbens'), and the she-wolf gives thanks to the priest. The urgency of the circumstance, however, gives the impression that he would not normally do so. Nor will he 'unzip' the wolfskin: it is noteworthy that, despite the priest's doubt and fear, the wolf does not reveal his own human body to convince the priest, but only 'draws back' his companion's wolfskin with his paws as if with hands ('pede quasi pro manu fungens, pellem totam a capite lupæ retrabens'), revealing the old woman underneath. Why, one may ask, does not the wolf reveal himself in this manner? There, as suggested by Bernhardt-House, may be a sense of shame in doing so, for the pairing of male and female suggests a sexual undertone, which would point to not only animality, but also bestiality. Bernhardt-House, *Werewolves, Magical Hounds, and Dog-Headed Men*, p. 231. Moreover, it is possible that the priest himself still finds the moral and/or spiritual status of the werewolf couple questionable, despite the werewolf's active efforts and persistence; for the audience are told that he obliges the wolves, 'terrore tamen magis quam ratione compulsus' (compelled more by terror than reason). Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, II. 19, p. 103; *The Topography of Ireland*, p. 55.

[571] *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. I, s.v. *infans*, pp. 982-83, and *infantia*, p. 983.

werewolves examined in this thesis who suffer this fate unwillingly or undeservingly, the clansmen adopt the wolf-voice deliberately, as a collective decision. The sequence of events is also reversed here: while the other werewolves have to resort to employing a wolf-voice because of their wolf-form, the clansmen assume the voice (albeit in mimicry) prior to gaining the wolf-body. In other words, it is their decision and conduct that causes their transformation into wolves; the divine punishment merely makes their folly manifest to themselves, to their posterity, to the listening son within the text, and to *Konungs skuggsjá*'s audience, revealing multiple layers of both *monstrare* and *monstratus*.

The werewolf transformation, therefore, reduces the clansmen to a symbolic infancy, a punishment that acts to mirror the root of their offence. However, infancy is also the beginning of growing-up. That punishment in this life is meant to instruct and benefit the offender is already implied in the Tara episode. If Tara were not stricken down, the people of Tara would continue believing that the king could not make unjust decisions and would therefore blindly follow the wrong path. If future generations could still build upon and use the land where Tara stood, they might soon forget their ancestors' mistake and err again; but the king's and people's folly is now inscribed on the landscape. Moreover, punishment is also an exhibition of power – of God and of (just) kings, who are His earthly executors; it allows a brief glimpse into the eternal suffering of the soul in the afterlife through immediate physical suffering imposed on the body. The experience of pain presents an opportunity for atonement, for it may induce fear and repentance – after all, God will not let those who burn in this world burn in the next, as Njáll states before his death.[572] The memory of pain on the other hand serves as a reminder, like a scar on the skin, the sight of which may deter one from making the same mistake in the future. This positive side of punishment is revealed towards the end of the King's Part, when the father explains to the son the necessity of capital punishment:

[572] *Brennu-Njáls saga*, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Íslenzk fornrit 12 (Reykjavík, 1954), chap. 129, p. 329.

> En hin*n* er þolir ræfsingar dom þa gengr h*ann* til skripta *oc* iðraz h*ann* þa misgerninga sinna er h*ann* mun*n*de ænga iðran taka æf h*ann* sæ æigi þar braðan dauða ser buin*n* ƴæra *oc* ƴærðr h*ann* holpin*n* af iðran *oc* kƴol er h*ann* þolir idauða sinu*m* oc er hanu*m* bætra her at taka skiotar hæfnder en kƴol oc pinsl utan ænn*n*a þƴi at æigi hæfnir guð tysƴar hins sama […] Sƴa er oc þ*at* marcan*n*de at ræfsing er gott ƴærc æf hon er gor æpter rettdœmi.
>
> (But one who is to suffer punishment will confess his sins and repent of his misdeed; 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 sin twice. […] We may, therefore, conclude that punishment is a good deed, if it is exacted according to a righteous verdict.)[573]

Likewise, the clansmen's punishment is potentially a warning for them and therefore presents them and/or their descendants with a second chance. How can they behave rightly towards St. Patrick when they are minded to resist his preaching through their folly? The punishment, a manifestation of God's power, proves the truth in the saint's preaching; it is meant to teach them to fear God, which, according to the father, is the beginning of all wisdom. We may assume that, like the werewolf(-ish) characters discussed above, the wolf experience for the clansmen is meant to be a test, a liminal stage from which they emerge either having failed – through physical and/or spiritual death – or triumphant, if they learn the lessons and adopt a righteous way of life after restoration. Yet unlike the werewolf saga heroes whose recuperation is guaranteed and therefore may be taken for granted by the audience, the clansmen's story is open-ended. The audience are simply not told how the clansmen understand

[573] *Konungs skuggsjá*, p. 107; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 41, p. 319.

their punishment and if they repent and will (or can) conduct themselves more virtuously in future. As in the case of the Arcadians, the werewolf experience is a transitional stage, and the clansmen, stuck between humanity and animality, could journey either way. Given the Christian framework that the father and son establish in *Konungs skuggsjá*, it is possible that the readers/audience may read the clansmen's fate as inviting atonement, or they may read it as eternal punishment, but the text does not give sufficient information. This open-ended nature of the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolf episode foregrounds the danger of failure and thus the urgency of action.

This is further reflected in the episode's textual position, in that it is placed between the Fall of Tara and the story of the *gelts*. The Fall of Tara, as mentioned above, is a story of the king's misjudgement and its consequences; the werewolf episode essentially follows in the same vein. The *gelts* episode comes immediately after the werewolves. It also involves a ruler, as it can be traced back to King Suibne Geilt who flees from battle into the woods and becomes a wild, feathered creature.[574] The fate of the *gelts* shows a further degradation of human status; they are one stage deeper into bestiality than the werewolves. The *gelts* are also deprived of their ability to speak and live in the wilderness, yet they retain no wits at all; when they have spent enough time in the wild, they become permanently animalistic.[575] The non-recoverability of the *gelts*' degradation suggests the danger faced by the clansmen: if they remain too long within the same mindset that caused their transformation in the first place, they would become wolves permanently on the spiritual level, even though they might be physically restored to human form; they would thus become wolves in human skin. However, all is not lost, and it is reasonable to assume that at least some of the clansmen are able to rise above their former selves and learn to fear and love God, especially if the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode is read side

[574] Chapter Two, p. 84.
[575] *Konungs skuggsjá*, pp. 25-26; *The King's Mirror*, chap. 51, p. 116.

by side with Gerald of Wales's account and if Gerald's wolves are treated as descendants of (some of) the clansmen. Despite the priest's doubt and fear, the werewolf couple whom he encounters in the woods are obviously very well disposed towards Christianity: the male wolf 'catholicum in omnibus responsum præbens' ('showed a Catholic spirit in all things') while the female fears death without the last rites.[576] In that case, then the Ossory clan's story develops from a tale of crime and punishment to one of sympathy and redemption, and, as Franklin-Brown concludes in her chapter, 'in most of these examples [i.e. the Irish marvels in *Konungs skuggsjá*] the lesson is learned, and the time of evil lies in the past of an Irish people now distinguished by their holiness.'[577]

Therefore, as Chapters Five and Six present the convergence of the arguments of the previous four chapters, the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode serves as a fitting concluding point for my discussion of Old Norse-Icelandic werewolves. The reasons are twofold: first, these werewolves belong to both *monstratus* and *monstrare* types, and their story involves both the direct and indirect types of learning. Second, instead of a straightforward teacher-learner or intradiegetical-extradiegetical binary, the episode shows multiple layers of knowledge transmission. In the previous sections of these two final chapters, I have re-categorised the werewolves or wolf-related characters into *monstratus*-types and *monstrare*-types and traced the role of each in a journey of personal development and self-discovery. The path that the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves tread encompasses both: the werewolf transformation comes upon them not only as punishment for, but also as revelation of, their follies; if any of them can take the opportunity and the message, they might improve their spiritual life once their human life is restored. In this sense, the werewolves are or at least expected to be learners. Since the punishment is hereditary in nature, the clansmen's descendants, too, will inherit the *monstrare*

[576] Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, II.19, p. 101; *The Topography of Ireland*, p. 54.
[577] Mary Franklin-Brown, 'Wonders at the End of the World: The Time of Marvels in Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica*', in *Speculum septentrionale*, ed. Johansson and Kleivane, pp. 35-58 (57).

status, but, unlike their forefathers, they can learn both directly – that is, by living their story – and indirectly by listening to the origin of the werewolf curse. As a social group, the clan and their descendants are made an example of, so as to serve as a reminder and admonishment to the other clans in the story; as a story, the tale within *Konungs skuggsjá* first reaches the father (*monstrare*) who, once a learner himself, imparts it to his son (*monstratus*). Finally, by rendering this 'conversation' in book form, the son-author (*monstrare*) gives his audience a chance to learn something from the werewolves, if they take heed, and to continue the cycle of teaching and learning, should they take initiative to do so

The *Konungs skuggsjá* episode supplements the rest of my core primary texts by adding a sense of contingency. As mentioned above, in the other narrtives, no matter how hard the hero's rite of passage is, the readers can be assured that he will survive the necessary *reynsla* and re-establish not only his own identity but also his dynasty, due to the nature of the genre. However, the werewolf story in *Konungs skuggsjá* is open ended and the werewolves are certainly not romance heroes. Although we may speculate, from comparison with Gerald of Wales's account, that at least some of the clan do become a recuperated version of their ancestors, the episode nevertheless opens up a series of 'what-if' questions: What if the clansmen could not penetrate the meaning and purpose of their punishment? What if they readily embraced the wolf life, now much enhanced and made particularly dangerous by their human intelligence? After all, as Carey's research shows, descendants of Laigne Faelad in Ossory are believed to take on wolf shape 'when it pleases them' and hunt livestock.[578] If this were the case, what then would ultimately become of them?

In other words, while the other werewolf stories end with the hero's completion of his rite-of-passage journey and success, the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode invites its readers to ponder his failure and the possible consequences. By opening up these questions, it also invites

[578] Carey, 54.

meditations on the ethnic dimension of human nature. As this thesis shows, the definition of human is by no means binary, as demonstrated by Áli flekkr and Bisclav(r)et/Tíódél's wife; nor is the definition of monstrosity. Now, the uncertain fate of the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolves brings this the discussion closer to its final question: what is human?

Conclusion: What Can We Learn from the Wolf?

At the heart of any story of metamorphosis lies the issue of identity, and the tales of the man-wolf are just as much about wolf as about man. Yet, as the last two chapters demonstrate, this statement can be understood in two ways: intradiegetically and extradiegetically. On the intradiegetic level, such narratives are about the hero finding his own identity and place in the story-world: he goes through a liminal stage where his social death is brought about and made visual by the loss of his human body, only to emerge on the other side more secure and more firmly grounded in the central, human society. But the fictional characters are not the only ones who are expected to learn and to mature: on the extradiegetic level, by listening to/reading these stories, we as audience/readers also partake in these journeys of maturation and self-discovery. While the werewolf strives to prove his humanity, we too are invited to reflect and to ponder: what does it mean to be human?

This human dimension is at the centre not only of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives, but also of this study: we might even say it is the very essence of both. Like Arthur in *Arthur and Gorlagon*, I too have taken upon myself to seek knowledge from stories of the werewolf. Here I present my findings by way of summarising this thesis.

If only one keyword were allowed to describe this study, that word would be 'transformation'. Indeed, as a study on the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf literature, it deals with – first and foremost – the transformation of human to wolf. As explained in the Introduction, this thesis adopts a 'four plus two' structure. In the first four chapters, I

investigated four topics that are not only common across all the werewolf narratives in question, but also important constituents of humanity: skin, clothes, food, landscape (or habitation). In each chapter, one element is taken away from the werewolf and changed into something else to test its role and significance in defining the condition of humanity, as if the process were an experiment. Together these chapters presented a bidirectional and progressive journey, moving gradually away from the werewolf's body but at the same time each revealed one key aspect of the werewolf's mental state. Focusing on the *úlfhamr*, and borrowing the concept of Skin-Ego and Small's models, Chapter One established and juxtaposed the human ego and the wolf ego, as corresponding to the human skin and the *úlfhamr*. The transformation from man to wolf is thus rendered legible, as if written on vellum. Chapter Two extended this legibility to clothes, the 'mimic' skin that is a surrogate for the body when the skin is inaccessible and unseen. Aided by the expanded definition of dress, which extends – inwardly – to the body and – outwardly – to what is attached to the individual, I too broadened the discussion of the werewolf's clothes to consider the werewolf as dress, and approached the human and wolf ego through the concept of human and wolf dress. In Chapter Three I identified different types of food that the werewolves eat or might eat when they are in the woods and each type's possible implications. Here the struggle and possibility of negation between the human and the wolf ego are manifested through the careful calibration of the wolfish diet. Consequently, whereas in the first two chapters the discussion developed around a set of oppositions (human/wolf, clothed / naked), in this chapter we saw instead a spectrum. On the one hand, compelled by circumstances, the werewolf is denied access to a decent, proper human life; he has to live on food that would otherwise compromise his identity as a human and an aristocrat. To grant the werewolf a certain degree of leeway is simply a matter of practicality for both the werewolf and the author of the narrative, for the story cannot continue without the werewolf's survival. However, on the other hand, the author must minimise the negative effect of such a diet on the

werewolf – that is, if he intends the werewolf to be the hero of the story. Therefore, by showing or concealing what the werewolf may eat, not only can the author calibrate the werewolf's position on the spectrum of humanity, but can also negotiate the werewolf's place in the narrative. The absolute taboo is eating human (and horse) flesh, a point beyond which the werewolf would forfeit the human ego. After all, the act of cannibalism is an act of othering, for it makes 'us' into 'other' through self-eating. Likewise, should the werewolf consume the *were*, what would be left behind except only the *wolf*? Whereas Chapter Three pondered what would happen to the werewolf if he ate too much of the wolfish food, Chapter Four added a sense of temporality: if the wolf ego remained dominant for too long, would it damage the human ego? Here the human and wolf ego were read through landscape, and the alternation between the two egos through that alternation between summer and winter, or daylight and darkness. With the theory of psycho-geography, this wild landscape within which the wolf finds himself was read as a manifestation of a wolfish mentality, a mental wilderness; the werewolf state thus becomes a metaphor of emotional disturbance and mental disease.

The metaphorical capacity of the werewolf is explored further in Chapters Five and Six, where I found parallels between the werewolf metamorphosis and yet another type of transformation: the transformation from child to parent, from the inexperienced to the experienced, and from learner to teacher. Read alongside heroes who mature through a symbolic social death, the werewolf experience was interpreted as a rite of passage, a liminal stage in which the hero must survive, gain experience and knowledge, and finally triumph in order to mature. The werewolf is, therefore, in essence a metaphor for the human experience of growing up and of maturation, both physical and intellectual.

However, improvement and recuperation are not the only directions of transformation; alongside maturation and growing-up, this thesis has also discussed degradation, in which one type of human transforms into another lesser type. In the process, it brought the werewolf into

comparison with other supernatural and non-normative creatures, thus opening up new directions for the understanding of the werewolf. Focusing on *Ála flekks saga* as a case study, Chapter One identified two 'sub-human' possibilities. The first is that of the troll-husband who, though human in origin, becomes trollish by sleeping with a troll-woman and eating human and horse flesh. The second is the leper, whose stinking, rotten skin speaks to his depraved morality and who is excluded and shunned as monstrous and unclean. Here a parallel is established between the stinking, shaggy *úlfhamr* and the leper's cancerous skin, and thence between the wolf ego and the leper ego. The werewolf, therefore, can be understood in a model of skin disease, with the sloughing-off of the *úlfhamr* and its destruction symbolising his recovery. In Chapter Two, the stories of Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél are read and interpreted as a power struggle between the two genders, at the end of which the congenital werewolf – a creature whose otherness is rooted in the supernatural and the unknown – is replaced by the metaphorical she-wolf, a mitigated type of monster, whose otherness is both self- and man-made. Chapter Two also pondered and expounded the figure of the Wild Man, a topic that also extended into Chapter Three. Both the werewolf and the Wild Man (on a temporary basis) are literary experiments on pushing towards the boundary beyond which there is no return. Both put humanity to the test, but from different angles: whereas the werewolf loses his human body but not the mind, the Wild Man loses his mind and reason but retains his body and appearance. Chapter Three also sees a list of fictional characters who, though not necessarily wolfish, become 'othered' to various degrees by consuming questionable food: some, like Folki and Bǫðvarr, drink their own and their kin's blood and acquire additional energy and strength, but others, like Guðrún and Hjalti, drink and eat the blood and flesh of an absolute 'other' and alter their nature markedly. In Chapter Four, the parallel between Úlfhamr and Vargstakkr allows comparison between the werewolf and the *draugr*'s companion, a living person who is trapped in the world of the dead. It also opens up the possiblity of a comparative reading between the

werewolf and patients suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Introducing outlaws, disguised heroes, and those tales belonging to the *bel inconnu* type, Chapters Five and Six situate the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives in a wider literary tradition: the hero's maturation and rite-of-passage journey, a story-type that transcends genre, time, and space.

These three types of transformations indicate that to be human as it is conceptualised in Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives is understood and presented as a spectrum, where humanness is measured and defined by gradations. At one end lies an ideal human type, a status quo: in the core sources of this thesis, this type tends to be a ruler who is firmly grounded in the central, human world, who has already vanquished the enemy who might undermine his power and position, and is in firm control of his own body and mind. At the other end of the spectrum lies the absolute 'other', which, within the scope of this thesis, would be Nótt the troll-woman's human husband and Vǫrn the *draugr* who, though once human, turn upon their own kind and become man-eating, blood-drinking monsters. The goal of a typical hero is to become – or at least to approach as closely as possible to – the ideal: or, in the language of change and essence as proposed by Bynum, such is the hero's essence, a 'pre-programmed' core that he must strive to unfold. In order to achieve this goal, the hero however must journey in the opposite direction and try his strength – both mental and physical – by first becoming and then vanquishing the other. However, as the open ending of the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolf episode warns us, success is not always guaranteed: the clansmen may take heed of the significance of their punishment and redeem themselves, or they may readily embrace the wolfish nature and be lost for eternity. Therefore, whether to be a human or a monster also depends on individual action and decision. Human status simply cannot to be taken for granted. Nor is it secure. Anyone can become wolfish through wolfish deeds, as evidenced by Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's wife.

Where is the werewolf's position on this spectrum, then? To answer this question, I revert to the pit-metaphor with which I described the journeys of Áli flekkr and Úlfhamr. In both cases, the werewolf or quasi-werewolf experience signifies the lowest point of the metaphorical pit. To (temporarily) become a wolf or wolfish, so it seems, is to be as least human as a hero can become – that is, if he wishes to make the return journey successfully. This means that, first, the werewolf is still on 'our' side. To be trapped in the *úlfhamr* does not necessarily compromise the werewolf's humanness; there is still hope for his restoration and final triumph. Second, the werewolf experience comes dangerously near the point beyond which the human would simply cease to be. Having been turned into a wolf, the hero is on the brink of losing his human identity, for circumstance demands him to adopt at least some elements of the animalistic life in order to survive. The werewolf's position and mobility on the spectrum make the metamorphosis an excellent choice for the hero's adventure. For it is on the one hand a struggle in which, should the hero lose, he would lose all, but on the other, a test that he can and in most cases does pass. The werewolf experience provides an ideal arena where human and nonhuman confront each other, all embodied in the transformed man. This perhaps also accounts for the fascination with the werewolf not only as an imaginative creature but also as a literary and creative motif: after all, the higher the stake, the more dramatic and exciting the story.

Furthermore, the werewolf's position and mobility on the spectrum make it possible to identify a set of factors that define what can be accepted as properly human and what absolutely cannot, by assessing what the werewolves do and not do and the respective consequences. For instance, the *Bisclavret* group shows us that it is human to feel ashamed of exposing one's naked body in public, for non-nakedness forms part of the dress of a human in his / her right mind. It is human to judge and act according to reason: Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél proves his humanness by administering the *vargúlfr* violence justly and reasonably and by recognising

and obeying a higher authority. The stories of Úlfhamr, Sigmundr and Sinfjǫtli, and Yvain teach us the importance of being in control of one's mind and emotion, by showing us what may happen to a human when he succumbs to excessive grief, anger, or depression. To desire to know the unknown and unknowable – such as death – is also human. The absolute, non-negotiable taboo is, of course, open consumption of human (and horse) flesh; it is human to strive to avoid such taboos. Finally, the *Konungs skuggsjá* episode teaches us that it is human to reflect, to learn, to mature, and to teach. To create, transmit, and enjoy the stories of growing-up is in itself an exclusively human activity.

Apart from the nature of the werewolf and the human, what else do the werewolf narratives impart to us? Having investigated the transformations of man, this thesis also addresses the transformation and transmission of texts. This thematic approach to the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives not only allows comparison between the texts in question, but also between them and texts that directly or indirectly influenced them and/or employ similar motifs. The benefit is mutual, for the authors, translators or redactors are first of all readers; they draw inspiration from the texts they read, but at the same time weave their understanding, interpretation, and their personal and social experience into the texts they create. This thesis has demonstrated the fruitfulness of such an approach. Reading the *Konungs skuggsjá* werewolf episode and Gerald of Wales's account as the same story but as operating on different timelines allows us to gain insight not only into the nature of the initial offence committed by Gerald's Ossory clan, but also into the meaning and purpose of punishment as explored in *Konungs skuggsjá*: to teach a lesson to the offending party, so that they may reflect and recuperate their behaviour. The 'catholicness' of Gerald's wolf confirms this and gives us hope that at least some of these werewolves (and descendants) do indeed take heed. The addition of the *vápnhestr* and the *gangari* detail in *Ívens saga* evidences not only the translator's understanding of the progressive nature of Yvain's recovery, but also that he

understood the role of the horse as part of Yvain/Íven's dress and identity. But the most conclusive example would be the comparative reading of *Le lai du Bisclavret, Bisclaretz ljóð*, and *Tiodielis saga*. As Chapter Two has demonstrated, the addition of the damage of the lady's clothes by the Norse author/redactor points to the significance of clothes / dress and its interchangeable relationship with the human skin. It also renders the plot more symmetrical, and with the increasing severity of the lady's punishment and the negativity of her characterisation it speaks to her wolfishness and monstrosity. Thus it not only foregrounds the parallelism between Biscla(v)ret/Tíódél's and the lady's storylines but also bridges the three types of transformations mentioned above: one from human to wolf (and back), and two into different types of human: better and worse.

That the Norse translators/redactors of these texts not only retain but also embellish such details suggests that they recognise their symbolic meaning and share the values of the authors of the original texts. This brings about the fourth type of transformation that this thesis reveals and discusses: the transformation (and transmission) of motifs, thoughts, and ideas. The characterisation of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf itself is born out of the clash of different ideas. As Aðalheiður Guðsmundsdóttir has pointed out, these werewolves can be divided into the older and the more recent variants, depending on whether they reveal themselves as influenced chiefly by indigenous or foreign conceptualisations. However, in most of these texts we see a merging of the two types: although werewolves such as Áli flekkr, Vargstakkr, Sigurðr are transformed by a curse and therefore should belong to the more recent variants, an *úlfhamr* – the identifier of the older type – is nevertheless added to the narrative. In contrast, although magical shapeshifters such as Asper, Gustr and Hléðgerðr belong to the older type and willingly adopt the wolf form to explore the beast's ferocity, they are enlisted in chivalric sagas as supernatural helper or enemy to the knight-errant hero. But even in the absence of identifiable sources of influence, my examination of the werewolf texts still indicates that intellectual

movement and exchange freely took place between medieval Scandinavia and other regions. For instance, in analysing Áli's third plight, Chapter One also reveals the similarity between the Old Norse-Icelandic exploration of the leprous body and its implications and those found in literary works from other regions. Moreover, although the cures given in Icelandic and continental treatises are different, the underlying logic of both is that 'like' cures 'like': a disease causing and characterised by blemished skin can be cured by something with a spotted, scaly skin. The plant's affinity to the snake both in appearance and in name suggests a shared understanding of the parallelism between the healing of the leprous skin and the snake's sloughing-off of the old skin.

Last but not least, by adopting and adapting to the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives a wide range of methodologies and theories employed to analyse relevant texts from other regions and time periods, this thesis also achieves the transmission and transformation of scholarship from one field to another. In Chapter One, the concept of the Skin-Ego as developed by Didier Anzieu and Small's 'overlay' and 'fusion model' of reading the werewolf skin allow me to expound the appearance of the post-restoration *úlfhamr*, the subsequent destruction of which symbolises the hero's casting-off of the wolfish (and therefore questionable) ego. Thus, the analysis offers a third model, one that combines the 'overlay model' and the 'fusion'. This further enables a dialogue between the concepts of the werewolf and the leper, where the cancerous skin points to a leprous ego. In Chapter Two I introduced the expanded concept of dress, reading both the werewolf metamorphosis and the lady's disfigurement in terms of dress change, thus paralleling the two characters' storylines. Moreover, by treating the werewolf as part of the sovereign's dress, I also pondered on the relationship between the wolf and the king: by attaching himself to the king, the wolf confirms and enhances the king's position as sovereign and judge, a point returned to in Chapter Six. Himmelman's anthropological approach to cannibalism and his emphasis on the medicinal

property of food proved to be foundational to Chapter Three: in describing the werewolf's food, the author/translator/redactor too followed the same principle that the unseen is morally acceptable. In Chapter Four I applied to the werewolf texts Debord's theory of psycho-geography and its further development by Langeslag, resulting in not only an in-depth analysis of *Úlfhams rímur*, but also a fifth way to infer emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic literature: literary landscape and scenery. Therefore, by studying the werewolf's changes of habitation, the emotional scars on the werewolf's ego, caused by and hidden under the wolfskin, can be revealed. In the process, I also re-evaluated Greimas's semiotic square and demonstrated that, despite its limitations and the risk of reducing the given narrative to a skeleton it nevertheless proved to be an effective, graphical tool; its fluidity and potential should not be dismissed. In Chapters Five and Six, as mentioned above, I analysed the werewolf experience as rite of separation, thus broadening the scope of the discussion to include characters who undergo any kind of radical appearance change. In particular, the application of Mannheim's generational theory and Sperlich's work on the four ancestral Middle English romances opens up the possibility of reading the werewolf experience as the maturation of a younger generation, an analogic process to the transmission of knowledge from father to son in *Konungs skuggsjá*.

Overall, this study has served a twofold purpose. First, it has been a journey – a quest for the meaning of the werewolf – both as a supernatural creature and a literary motif – and thence for the Old Norse-Icelandic understanding of the human. What are the constituents of the human in general? What symbolic significance does each of these constituents hold? How do they differ for different types of human? How would it affect the individual if one or more of these constituents were taken away? In answering these questions, this thesis has presented a thorough and systematic study of the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives, in which each text or episode is not only analysed independently, but also in relation to the others, revealing the intricate connections between a group of narratives produced or originating in Iceland and

Norway from the thirteenth to roughly the fifteenth century. Moreover, these narratives have also been discussed alongside texts from outside these geographical, temporal and generic parameters, situating the Old Norse-Icelandic werewolf narratives within a larger intellectual and historical context and a wider, more mature field of scholarship. This leads to the second outcome of this study: it opens up new dialogues and points to new directions. What it offers is not merely a building, but a foundation to be built on further. Hitherto the focus has been on the werewolf and wolfish characters, but what about their parents, guardians, love-interests, and friends? Take for instance Ingigerðr in *Sigrgarðs saga frækna*, whose storyline – as indicated in Chapter Five – not only parallels Sigrgarðr's but also fits better the two-generational pattern and the step-mother motif. What if the saga were read and analysed from the perspective of her storyline? Or, what would one uncover if psycho-geography and the landscape-mindscape dynamic in Chapter Four were applied to other character-types and narratives of other genres? Even within the subject of the werewolf, the methodologies and findings of this study can be applied to post-medieval werewolf narratives or those in different media, so as to enhance our understanding of the werewolf as a phenomenon of popular culture that reflects our own contemporary world. Therefore, the ending of one journey is in fact the beginning of many others.

On a final note, although this study focuses on the werewolves, it is in essence about different aspects of the human world. Although it develops around a group of medieval texts of the legendary and chivalric genre, it incorporates them into a wider intellectual world and a discourse that extends beyond medieval Scandinavia. In this sense, this thesis in itself is an example of the appearance-essence dynamic and, by analysing the werewolf narratives, it reveals that stories, like the transformed bodies of the fictional heroes, wear a skin. They too are an arena where appearance and essence engage and interact with each other, where we must look through narrative details and plot variations in order to discover the cultural group that

creates, transmits, and enjoys these stories. Such stories may wear a skin of the fantastic and the supernatural but – with close reading and careful analysis – they have the potential for revealing the normative and the real, just as the shaggy *úlfhamr* always falls off to reveal a human body and the *mannz vit* (human reason) shines through the fearsome, glowing eyes. In the Introduction, I opened my discussion by pondering the meaning of *were-wolf* and significance of the linking hyphen. Now I conclude it with yet another layer of meaning: namely, we can learn about the man from the wolf – from *the stories of* the wolf, so that we may, as Gorlagon advises Arthur at the end of the werewolf's tale, take care and become wiser for it.

Bibliography

Icelanders are listed alphabetically by given name.

Primary

(a) Primary Texts (Old Norse-Icelandic)

Arngrímur Jónsson, *Arngrimi Jonae opera latine conscripta 1*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 9 (Hafniæ, 1950)

Ála flekks saga, in Bjarni Vilhjálmsson ed. *Riddarasögur*, V (Reykjavík, 1951), pp. 123-160

Bisclaretz ljóð, in Cook and Tveitane eds. *Strengleikar: An Old Norse Translation of Twenty-one Old French Lais. Edited from the Manuscript Uppsala De la Gardie 4-7 – AM 666 b, 4°* (Oslo, 1979), pp. 86-99

Brennu-Njáls saga, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Íslenzk fornrit 12 (Reykjavík, 1954)

Drei Lygisǫgur: Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana, Ála flekks saga, Flóres saga konungs ok sona hans, ed. Åke Lagerholm (Halle, 1927)

Eddukvæði I: Goðakvæði, ed. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason, Íslenzk fornrit (Reykjavík, 2014)

Eddukvæði II: Hetjukvæði, ed. Jónas Kristjánsson and Vésteinn Ólason, Íslenzk fornrit (Reykjavík, 2014)

Egils saga, ed. Bjarni Einarsson, (London, 2003)

Eyrbyggja saga; Brands þáttr örva; Eiríks saga rauða; Grænlendinga saga; Grænlendinga þáttr, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson, Íslenzk fornrit 4 (Reykjavík, 1935)

Færeyinga saga = Føroyingasøga, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson, Íslenzk fornrit 25 (Reykjavík, 2006)

Gibbons saga, ed. R. I. Page, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 2 (København, 1960)

Grágás. Konungsbók: islændernes lovbog i fristatens tid, 2 vols ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (København, 1852; repr. Odense, 1974)

Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar. Bandamanna saga. Odds þáttr Ófeigssonar, ed. Guðni Jónsson, Íslenzk fornrit 7 (Reykjavík, 1936; repr. 2001)

Guðmundar sögur biskups: Guðmundar saga B. 2., ed. Stefán Karlsson and Magnús Hauksson, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 7 (København, 2018)

Hall, Alaric, Steven Richardson and Haukur Þorgeirsson, '*Sigrgarðs saga frækna*: A Normalised Text, Translation, and Introduction', *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada*, 21 (2012-2013), 80-155

Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra, in Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds. *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*, III (Reykjavík, 1944), pp. 349-60

Hrólfs saga kraka ok kappa hans, in Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds. *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*, II (Reykjavík, 1944), pp. 1-93

Hui, Jonathan YH, Caitlin Ellis, James McIntosh, Katherine Olley, William Norman, and Kimberly Anderson, '*Ála flekks saga*: An Introduction, Text, and Translation', *Leeds Studies in English*, New Series 49 (2018), 1-43

Ívens saga, in Kalinke ed. and trans. *Norse Romance II: The Knights of the Round Table* (Cambridge, 1999; repr. 2012), pp. 33-102

Ketils saga hængs, in Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds. *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*, I (Reykjavík, 1943), pp. 243-66

Konungs skuggsjá, ed. Ludvig Holm-Olsen (Oslo, 1945)

Kölbing, Eugen, ‘Bruchstück einer Amícus ok Amilíus saga’, *Germania*, 19, NS 7 (1874), 184-89

Landnámabók. Fyrri hluti, ed. Jakob Benediktsson, Íslenzk fornrit 1 (Reykjavík, 1967)

Laws of Early Iceland: Grágás: The Codex Regius of Grágás with Material from Other Manuscripts, I, ed. and trans. Andrew Dennis, Peter Foote, and Richard Perkins (Winniped, 1980)

Mírmans saga, ed. Desmond Slay, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series A, vol. 17 (København, 1997)

Mǫttuls saga. With an Edition of Le lais du cort mantel *by Philip E. Bennett*, ed. and trans. Marianne E. Kalinke, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 30 (København, 1987)

An Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany; Ms. Royal Irish Academy 23 D 43 with Supplement from Trinity College (Dublin) L-2-24 , ed. and trans. Henning Larsen (Oslo, 1931)

The Old Norse Elucidarius*: Original Text and English Translation*, ed. and trans. Evelyn Sherabon Firchow (Columbia, 1992)

Ragnars saga loðbrókar ok sona hans, in Guðni Jónsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson eds. *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*, I (Reykjavík, 1943), pp. 93-148

Rómverja saga, 2 vols, ed. Þorbjörg Helgadóttir (Reykjavík, 2010)

Sigrgarðs saga ok Valbrands, in Loth ed. *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances V*, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ Series B, vol. 24 (København, 1965), pp. 109-94

Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar, in Kalinke ed. and trans. *Norse Romance I: The Tristan Legend* (Cambridge, 1999; repr. 2012), pp. 23-226

Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. Anthony Faulkes, 2nd edn (London, 2005)

———, *Skáldskaparmál I. Introduction, Text, and Notes*, ed. Anthony Faulkes (London, 1998)

Soderback, Martin, *Jóns saga leikara* (Unpublished PhD thesis, 1949)

Úlfhams saga, ed. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir (Reykjavík, 2001)

Vǫlsunga saga – The Saga of the Volsungs, ed. R. G. Finch (Edinburgh, 1965)

(b) Primary Texts (Other)

Arthur and Gorlagon, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston, 1903)

Augustine of Hippo, *On the Trinity. Books 8-15*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans. Stephen Mckenna (Cambridge, 2002)

———, *City of God, Volume IV: Books 12-15*, ed. and trans. Philip Levine, Loeb Classical Library 414, (Cambridge, MA, 1966)

———, *City of God, Volume V: Books 16-18.35*, ed. and trans. Eva M. Sanford and William M. Green, Loeb Classical Library 415 (Cambridge, MA, 1965)

Beowulf: A Dual-Language Edition, ed. and trans. Howell D. Chickering, Jr. (New York, 1977; repr. 2006)

Béroul, *Tristan et Yseut: Les* Tristan *en vers*, ed. Jean-Charles Payen (Paris, 1974)

Bocellin, Pierre, *La practique de maistre Pierre Bocellin, chyrurgien, & citoyen de la noble cite de Belleys en Sauoye, sur la matière de la contagieuse & infective maladie de lepre* (Lyon, 1540)

Chaucer, Geoffrey, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Dean Benson and F.N. Robinson, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1988)

de Chauliac, Guy, *Cyrurgie of Guy de Chauliac*, ed. Margrate S. Ogden, Early English Society Text Series no. 265 (London, 1971)

Chrétien de Troyes, *Les romans de Chrétien de Troyes IV: Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)* (Ancien français), ed. Mario Roques (Paris, 1960)

Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods. Academics*, ed. and trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 268 (Cambridge, MA, 1933)

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

Geoffrey the Grammarian, *Promptorium parvulorum sive clericorum dictionarius Anglo-Latinus princeps*, ed. Albert Way (London, 1865)

Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, in Dimock ed. *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera V* (London, 1861), pp. 3-204

Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreations for an Emperor*, ed. and trans. S.W. Bank and J.W. Binns (Oxford, 2002)

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le roman de la rose*, ed. Armand Strubel (Paris, 1992)

Guillaume de Palerne: roman du XIII^e^ siècle, ed. Alexandre Micha (Genève, 1990)

Havelok, ed. G. V. Smithers (Oxford, 1987)

Henryson, Robert, *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, ed. Robert L. Kindrick, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo, 1997)
https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/kindrick-the-poems-of-robert-henryson

Hesiod, *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most, Loeb Classical Library 57 (Cambridge, MA, 2007)

Homer, *Iliad, Volume I: Books 1-12*, trans. A.T. Murray, rev. William F. Wyatt, Loeb Classical Library 170 (Cambridge, MA, 1924)

———, *Odyssey, Volume I: Books 1-12*, trans. A.T. Murray, rev. George E. Dimock, Loeb Classical Library 104 (Cambridge, MA, 1919)

Horne, Andrew, *The Mirror of Justices*, ed. and trans. William Joseph Wittaker (London, 1895)

Isidore Hispalensis, *Etymologiarvm sive originvm, vol. 2: Libros XI-XX*, ed. Wallace Martin Lindsay (Oxford, 1911; Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2016)

The King of Tars, ed. Judith Perryman (Heidelberg, 1980)

Lanfranc, *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie"*, ed. Robert von Fleischhacker, Early English Text Society Series no. 102 (London, 1894)

Latin Arthurian Literature, ed. and trans. Mildred Leake Day (Cambridge, 2005)

Malory, Thomas, *Le Morte Dartur: The Winchester Manuscript*, ed. Helen Cooper (Oxford, 2008)

Marie de France, *Lais de Marie de France*, ed. and trans. Alexandre Micha (Paris, 1994)

Melion *and* Biclarel: *Two Old French Werewolf Lays*, ed. and trans. Amanda Hopkins, Liverpool Online Series: Critical Editions of French Texts 10 (Liverpool, 2005)

The Old English Riddles of 'Exeter Book', ed. Craig Williamson (Chapel Hill, 1977)

On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' De proprietatibus rerum: A Critical Text, 2 vols, ed. M. C. Seymour and Gabriel M. Liegey (Oxford, 1975)

Ovid, *Metamorphosis, Volume I: Books 1-8*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G.P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 42 (Cambridge, MA, 1921)

Petronius, Seneca, *Satyricon. Apocolocyntosis*, trans. Michael Heseltine, W.H.D. Rouse, rev. E.H. Warmington, Loeb Classical Library 15 (Cambridge, MA, 1913)

Robert de Boron, *Merlin: roman du XIII^{e} Siècle*, ed. Alexandre Micha (Paris, 1994)

Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum: The History of the Danes*, vol. 1, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, trans. Peter Fisher (Oxford, 2015)

Ywain and Gawain, ed. Albert B. Friedman and Norman T. Harrington, Early English Text Society Serial no. 254 (Oxford, 1964)

(c) Primary Texts in Translation

Byock, Jesse, trans. *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki* (London, 1998)

Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, ed. and trans., William W. Kibler and Carleton W. Carroll (New York, 1991)

Foster, Benjamin R., *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism* (New York, 2001)

Gantz, Jeffrey, trans., *The Mabinogion* (London, 1976)

Gerald of Wales, The First Version of The Topography of Ireland *by Geraldus Cambrensis*, trans. John J. O'Meara (Dundalk, 1951)

Hall, Alaric, Védís Ragnheiðardóttir, Valentina Bonelli, Maclean S. Brasch, Sarah K. Clouston, Alessia Dalla Costa, Marta Doncato, Jessica H. Element, Karen R. Fox, Conor C. Hannon-Healy, Rhona W. Michie, Lauren L. Miller, Samuel Millne-Ellison, Enrica Petta, Xa E. Rodger, Alice N. Savage, Ian Simpson, Catherine S. Smith, Johanna E. Strebl, Abigail H. Vallis, '*Tíodels saga*: A Modernised Text and Translation' (2018) file:///C:/Users/Adria/Downloads/Tiodels_saga_A_Modernised_Text_and_Trans.pdf

Isidore Hispalensis, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. Stephen A. Barney (Cambridge, 2005)

Larrington, Carolyne, trans., *The Poetic Edda*, 2nd rev. edn (Oxford, 2014)

Larson, Laurence Marcellus, ed. and trans., *The King's Mirror (Speculum Regale – Konungs skuggsjá)* (New York, 1917)

———, ed. and trans., *The Earliest Norwegian Laws: Being the Gulathing and the Frostathing Law* (New York, 1935)

Lassen, Anette, ed., *Hrafnagaldur Óðins (Forspjallsljóð)*, Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series XX (London, 2011)

Milne, F.A., and A. Nutt, 'Arthur and Gorlagon', *Folklore*, 15/1 (1904), 40-67

Robert de Boron, *Merlin and the Grail: Joseph of Arimathea, Merlin, Percival: The Trilogy of Prose Romances Attributed to Robert de Boron*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Cambridge, 2001)

Sconduto, Leslie A., ed. and trans., *Guillaume de Palerne: An English Translation of 12th Century French Verse Romance* (Jefferson, 2004)

Scudder, Bernard, trans., and Örnólfur Thorsson ed., *The Saga of Grettir the Strong* (London, 2005)

Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, ed. and trans. Anthony Faulkes (London, 2008)

Secondary

Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'Tales of Generations: A Comparison Between Some Icelandic and Geatish Narrative Motifs', *Scripta Islandica. Isländska Sällskapets Årsbok*, 67 (2016), 5-36

———, 'Winter Darkness in Icelandic Fairy Tales', presented at 'The Dynamics of Darkness in the North Conference' (February 26-28, 2015)

———, 'The Origin and Development of the *Fornaldarsögur* as Illustrated by *Völsunga saga*', in Lassen et al. ed. *The Legendary Sagas: The Origins and Development* (Reykjavík, 2012), pp. 59-81

———, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 106/3 (2007), 277-303

Agamben, Giorgio, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, 1998)

Anzieu, Didier, *The Skin-Ego*, trans. Naomi Segal (London, 2016)

Arnold, Martin, '*Hvat er troll nema þat*?: The Cultural History of the Troll', in Shippey ed. *The Shadow-Walker: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous* (Arizona, 2005), pp. 111-55

Ármann Jakobsson, *The Troll Inside You: Paranormal Activity in the Medieval North* (Santa Barbara, 2017)

———, 'The Specter of Old Age: Nasty Old Men in the Sagas of Icelanders', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 104/3 (2005), 197-325

———, 'The Fearless Vampire Killer: A Note about the Icelandic *Draugr* and Demonic Contamination in *Grettis saga*', *Folklore*, 120/3 (2009), 307-16

———, '*Egils saga* and Empathy: Emotions and Moral Issues in a Dysfunctional Saga Family', *Scandinavian Studies*, 80/1 (2008), 1-18

Badir, Sémir, 'How the Semiotie Square Came', in Beziau and Payette eds. *The Square of Opposition. A General Framework for Cognition* (Bern, 2012), pp. 427-39

Bagerius, Henric, 'Romance and Violence: Aristocratic Sexuality in Late Medieval Iceland', *Mirator*, 14/2 (2013), 79-96

Bagge, Sverre, 'Nature and Society in *The King's Mirror*', *Arkiv för Nordisk filologi*, 109 (1994), 5-42

———, *The Political Thought of* The King's Mirror (Odense, 1987)

Barnes, Geraldine, 'The Tristan Legend', in Kalinke ed. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus' Realms* (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 60-76

Battista, Simonetta, '*Blámenn, djǫflar* and Other Representations of Evil in Old Norse Translation Literature, in McKinnell et al. eds *The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature: Sagas and the British Isle: Reprint Papers of the Thirteenth International Saga Conference, Durham and York, 6th – 12th August, 2006, I* (Durham, 2006), pp. 113-22

Benskin, Michael, 'The Literary Structure of Ælfric's Life of King Edmund', in Houwen and MacDonald eds. *Loyal Letters: Studies on Mediaeval Alliterative Poetry & Prose* (Groningen, 1994), pp. 1-27

Berhandt-House, Philip, *Werewolves, Magical Hounds, and Dog-Headed Men in Celtic Literature: A Typological Study of Shape-Shafting* (Lewiston, 2010)

———, 'The Werewolf as Queer, the Queer as Wolves, and Queer Werewolves', in Hird and Giffney eds. *Queering the Non/Human* (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 159-83

Bildhauer, Bettina, *Medieval Blood* (Cardiff, 2006)

Blud, Victoria, *The Unspeakable, Gender and Sexuality in Medieval Literature 1000-1400* (Cambridge, 2017)

Blurton, Heather, *Cannibalism in High Middle English Literature* (New York, 2007)

Bornholdt, Claudia, 'The Old Norse-Icelandic Transmission of Chrétien de Troyes's Romances: *Ívens saga, Erex saga, Parceval saga* with *Valvens þáttr*', in Kalinke ed. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus' Realms* (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 98-122

Bourns, Timothy, 'Meat and Taboo in Medieval Scandinavian Law and Literature', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavian,* 14 (2018), 61-80

Brady, Lindy, 'Feminine Desire and Conditional Misogyny in *Arthur and Gorlagon*', *Arthuriana,* 24/3 (2014), 23-44

Brewer, Derek, *Symbolic Stories: Traditional Narratives of the Family Drama in English Literature* (London, 1988)

Brody, Saul Nathaniel, 'Reflections of Yvain's Inner Life', *Romance Philology,* 54/2 (2001), 277-98

———, *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, 1974)

Bruckner, Matilda Tomaryn, 'The Lady and the Dragon in Chrétien de Troyes's *Chevalier au Lion*', in Burns and McCracken eds. *From Beasts to Souls: Gender and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Notre Dame, 2013), pp. 65-86

Budal, Ingvil Brügger 'Ei historie om naselause kvinner og varulvklede', in Johansson and Flaten eds. *Francia et Germania: Studies in* Strengleikar *and* Þiðreks Saga of Bern (Oslo, 2012), pp. 203-29

Burns, E. Jane, *Courtly Love Undressed: Reading Through Clothes in Medieval French Culture* (Philadelphia, 2002)

Burch, Sally L., 'Leprosy and Law in Béroul's *Roman de Tristan*', *Viator,* 38/1 (2007), 141-54

Byland, Ann, *The Medieval Warhorse from Byzantium to the Crusades* (Stroud, 1994)

Bynum, Caroline Walker, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York, 2005)

Byrne, Aisling, 'Arthur's Refusal to Eat: Ritual and Control in the Romance Feast', *Journal of Medieval History,* 37/1 (2012), 62-74

Campbell, Emma, 'Political Animals: Human/Animal Life in *Bisclavret* and *Yonec*', *Exemplaria,* 25/2 (2013), 95-109

Carey, John, 'Werewolves in Medieval Ireland', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies,* 44 (2002), 37-72

Carsten, Janet, *Blood Will Out: Essays on Liquid Transfers and Flows* (Chichester, 2013)

Cheyette, Fredric L., and Howell Chickering, 'Love, Anger, and Peace: Social Practice and Poetic Play in the Ending of *Yvain*', Speculum, 80/1 (2005), 75-117

Clark, Willene B., *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Secondary-family of Bestiary: Commentary, Art, Text and Translation* (Woodbridge, 2006)

Clayton, Mary, 'Ælfric's Letter to Brother Edward', in Trehaine and Rosser eds. *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg* (Tempe, 2002), pp. 264-83

Cleasby, Richard, and Guðbrandur Vigfússon, eds., *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2006)

Clover, Carol J., '*Vǫlsunga saga* and the Missing *Lais* of Marie de France', in Simek et al. eds. *Sagnaskemmtum: Studies in Honour of Hermann Pálsson on His 65th Birthday, 26th May 1986* (Wien, 1986), pp. 79-84

Cochelin, Isabelle, 'Introduction: Pre-Thirteenth-Century Definitions of the Life Cycle', in Cochelin and Smyth eds. *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change* (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 1-54

Cole, Richard, 'Racial Thinking in Old Norse Literature: The Case of the *Blámaðr*', *Saga-Book*, 40 (2015), 21-40

Davidson, H. R. Ellis, 'Shape-changing in the Old Norse Sagas', in Otten ed. *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture* (Syracuse, 1986), pp. 126-42

———, *The Road to Hel: A Study of the Conception of the Dead in Old Norse Literature* (Cambridge, 1943)

Debord, Guy, 'Introduction à une critique de la géographie urbaine', Les lèvres nues, 6 (1955), 11-15

Degnbol, Helle, and James E. Knirk et al., ed., *Ordbog over det Norrøne Prosasprog* (*ONP*) https://onp.ku.dk/onp/onp.php

Demaitre, Luke E., *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body* (Baltimore, 2007)

Doob, Penelope B. R., *Nebuchadnezzar's Children: Nebuchadnezzar and the Conventions of Madness in Middle English Literature* (New Haven, 1974)

eDIL (Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language) http://dil.ie/search

Eicher, Joanne B., and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, 'Definition and Classification of Dress: Implications for Analysis of Gender Roles', in Barnes and Eicher eds. *Dress and Gender: Making and Meaning in Cultural Contexts* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 8-28

Eicher, Joanne B., and Ruth Barns, 'Introduction', in Barnes and Eicher eds. *Dress and Gender: Making and Meaning in Cultural Contexts* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 1-7

Eicher, Joanne B., and Sandra Lee Evenson, *The Visible Self: Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture, and Society*, 4th edn (New York, 2015)

Einar Ól. Sveinsson, 'Keltnesk áhrif á íslenzkar ýkjusögur', *Skrírnir*, 106 (1932), 100-23

Ekroth, Gunnel, 'Hades, Homer and the Hittites: The Cultic-Cultural Context of Odysseus' "Round Trip" to the Underworld', in Ekroth and Nilsson eds. *Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition: Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 37-56

Eriksen, Stefka G., ‘Pedagogy and Attitudes towards Knowledge in *The King’s Mirror*’, *Viator*, 45/3 (2014), 143-68

Etchingham, Colmán, Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, and Elizabeth Ashman Rowe, *Norse-Gaelic Contacts in a Viking World* (Turnhout, 2019)

Evans, David, ed., *Hávámál: Glossary and Index* (London, 1987)

Evans, Gareth Lloyd, *Men and Masculinities in the Sagas of Icelanders* (Oxford, 2019)

Farrier, Susan E., ‘Hungry Heroes in Medieval Literature’, in Adamson ed. *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays* (New York, 1995), pp. 145-59

Franklin-Brown, Mary, ‘Wonders at the End of the World: The Time of Marvels in Gerald of Wales’s *Topographia Hibernica*’, in Johansson and Kleivane eds. *Speculum septentrionale:* Konungs skuggsjá *and the European Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (Oslo, 2018), pp. 35-58

Friesen, William, ‘Family Resemblances: Textual Sources of Animal *Fylgjur* in Icelandic Saga’, *Scandinavian Studies*, 87/2 (2015), 255-80

van Gennep, Arnold, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabielle L. Caffee (London, 1960; repr. 2004)

Giers, Frances, and Joseph Giers, *Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1987)

Glare, P.G. et al., ed., *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Oxford, 2012)

Glauser, Jürg, *Isländische Märchensagas: Studien zur Prosaliteratur im spätmittelalterlichen Island* (Basel and Frankfurt am Main, 1983)

Graf, Fritz, ‘Travels to the Beyond: A Guide’, in Ekroth and Nilsson eds. *Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition: Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 11-36

Green, Monica H., ‘Bodily Essence: Bodies as Categories of Difference’, in Kalof ed. *A Cultural History of the Human Body in the Medieval Age* (Bloomsbury, 2014)

Greimas, A. J., and François Rastier, ‘The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints’, *Yale French Studies*, 41 (1968), 86-105

Greimas, A. J., and Joseph Courtés, *Sémiotique: dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage I* (Paris, 1979)

Grudzen, Gerald J., *Medical Theory about the Body and the Soul in the Middle Ages: The First Western Medical Curriculum at Monte Cassino* (Lewiston, 2007)

Guynn, Noah D., ‘Hybridity, Ethics, and Gender in Two Old French Werewolf Tales’, in Burns and McCracken eds. *From Beasts to Souls: Gender and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Notre Dame, 2013), pp. 157-84

Hamer, Andrew, Searching for Wisdom: *The King's Mirror*', in Schnall and Simek eds. *Speculum regale: Der Altnorwegische königsspiegel (Konungs skuggsjá) in der Europäischen Tradition* (Wien, 2000), pp. 47-62

———, 'Translation and Adaptation in *Amícus ok Amilíus saga*', *Leeds Studies in English*, 16 (1985), 246-58

Hanawalt, Barbara, 'The Female Felon in Fourteenth-Century England', *Viator*, 5 (1974), 253-68

Harris-Stoertz, Fiona, 'Sex and the Medieval Adolescent', in Eisenbichler ed. *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society 1150-1650* (Toronto, 2002), pp. 225-43

Hennish, Bridget Ann, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (University Park, PA, 1978)

Hill, Thomas D., 'Beer, Vomit, Blood, and Poetry: *Egils saga*, Chapters 44-45', in Truco ed. *New Norse Studies: Essays on the Literature and Culture of Medieval Scandinavia*, Islandica LVIII (Ithaca, 2015), pp. 244-54

Himmelman, P. Kenneth, 'The Medicinal Body: An Analysis of Medicinal Cannibalism in Europe, 1300-1700', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 22/2 (1997), 183-203

Hoffmann-Krayer, E., and Hanns Bächtold-Stäubli, ed., *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens* (Berlin, 1938-1941)

Holm-Olsen, Ludvig, 'The Prologue to *The King's Mirror*: Did the Author of the Work Write it?', in Dronke et al. eds. *Specvlvm Norroenvm: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre* (Odense, 1981), pp. 223-42

Hopkins, Amanda, 'Why Arthur at all? The Dubious Arthuricity of *Arthur and Gorlagon*', *Arthurian Literature*, 26 (2009), 77-95

Huot, Sylvia, *Madness in Medieval French Literature: Identities Found and Lost* (Oxford, 2003)

Jesch, Judith, '"Youth on the Prow": Three Young Kings in the Late Viking Age', in Goldberg and Riddy eds. *Youth in the Middle Ages* (York, 2004), pp. 123-49

Jón Árnason, ed., *Íslenzkar þjóðsögur og æfintýri* (Leipzig, 1862-64)

Johansson, Karl G., '*Konungs skuggsjá* and the Earliest Fragments – A Key to New Insights into Norwegian Literature Climate', in Johansson and Kleivane eds. *Speculum septentrionale:* Konungs skuggsjá *and the European Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (Oslo, 2018), pp. 93-113

Johansson, Karl G., and Elise Kleivane, '*Konungs skuggsjá* and the Interplay between Universal and Particular', in Johansson and Kleivane eds. *Speculum septentrionale:* Konungs skuggsjá *and the European Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (Oslo, 2018), pp. 9-33

Josephus, Flavius, *The Jewish Wars, Volume III: Books 5-7*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library 210 (Cambridge, MA, 1928)

Jouanna, Jacques, ‘The Legacy of the Hippocratic Treatise *The Nature of Man*: The Theory of the Four Humours’, in van der Eijk ed. *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen* (Leiden, 2012), pp. 335-59

Kalinke, Marianne E., ‘*Gibbons saga*, An Exemplary Frame-Tale Narrative’, Scandinavian Studies, 90/2 (2018), 265-88

———, *Stories Set Forth with Fair Words: The Evolution of Medieval Romance in Iceland* (Cardiff, 2017)

———, ‘Introduction’, in Kalinke ed. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus’ Realms* (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 1-4

———, ‘Source, Translations, Redactions, Manuscript Transmission’, in Kalinke ed. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus’ Realms* (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 22-47

———, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*, Islandica xlvi (Ithaca and London, 1990)

———, ‘A Werewolf in Bear’s Clothing’, *Maal og Minne*, 3-4 (1981), 137-44

Karras, Ruth Mazo, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia, 2003)

Kilgour, Maggie, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton, 1990)

King, Peter, ‘Emotions in Medieval Thought’, in Goldie ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 167-87

Kinoshita, Sharon, and Peggy McCracken, *Marie de France: A Critical Companion* (Cambridge, 2012; repr. 2014)

Kirmayer, Laurence J., ‘Landscapes of Memory: Trauma, Narrative, and Dissociation’, in Antze and Lambek eds. *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (London, 1996), pp. 173-98

Kisor, Yvette, ‘“*Naked as a nedyll*”: The Eroticism of Malory’s *Elaine*’, in Hopkins et al. eds. *Sexual Culture in the Literature and Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 55-67

Langeslag, P. S., *Seasons in the Literatures of the Medieval North* (Cambridge, 2015)

Larrington, Carolyne, ‘The Translated *Lais*’, in Kalinke ed. *The Arthur of the North: The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus’ Realms* (Cardiff, 2015), pp. 77-97

———, ‘“I Have Long Desired to Cure You of Old Age”: Sibling Drama in the Later Heroic Poems of the Edda’, in Acker and Larrington eds. *Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend* (London, 2015), pp. 140-56

———, ‘Diet, Defecation and the Devil: Disgust and the Pagan Past’, in McDonald ed. *Medieval Obscenities* (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 138-55

———, ‘A Viking in Shining Armour? Vikings and Chivalry in the *Fornaldarsögur*’, *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 4 (2008), 269-88

———, ‘The Psychology of Emotion and Study of the Medieval Period’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 10/2 (2001), 251-56

———, *A Store of Common Sense: Gnomic Theme and Wisdom in Old Icelandic and Old English Wisdom Poetry* (Oxford, 1993)

Leach, Henry Goddard, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Cambridge, MA, 1921)

Leitch, Megan G., ‘Enter the Bedroom: Managing Space for the Erotic in Middle English Romance’, in Hopkins et al. eds. *Sexual Culture in the Literature of Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 41-53

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, ‘The Culinary Triangle’, in Counihan and van Esterik eds. *Food and Culture: A Reader*, 3rd edn (London, 2013), pp. 41-47

———, *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology* (London, 1994)

Lewis, Charlton T., and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary. Founded on Andrews’ Edition of Freud’s Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1879)

Liberman, Anatoly, ‘Berserkir in History and Legend’, *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 32/3-4 (2005), 401-09

Lindow, John, ‘Supernatural Others and Ethnic Others: A Millennium of World View’, *Scandinavian Studies*, 67/1 (1995), 8-31

Magennis, Hugh, *Anglo-Saxon Appetites: Food and Drink and Their Consumption in Old English and Related Literature* (Dublin, 1999)

Mallavarapu, Ravi K., and Edwin W. Grimsley, ‘The History of Lupus Erythematosus’, *Southern Medical Journal*, 100/9, 896-98

Mannheim, Karl, ‘The Problem of Generations’, in Kecskemeti ed. *Karl Mannheim: Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (London, 1997), pp. 286-322

McCracken, Peggy, ‘Skin and Sovereignty in *Guillaume de Palerne*’, *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes/Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, 24 (2012), 361-75

———, ‘The Queen’s Secret: Adultery and Political Structure in the Feudal Court of Old French Romance’, *Romantic Review*, 86/2 (2004), 289-306

———, *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Pennsylvania, 1998).

Mech, L. David, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (Garden City, NY, 1970)

Meisner, Rudolf, *Die Kenningar der Skalden: Ein Beitrag zur Skaldischen Poetik* (Bonn und Leipzig, 1921)

Meyer, Kuno, ‘The Irish Mirabilia in the Norse ‘Speculum Regale’’, *Folklore*, 5/4 (1894), 299-31

Middle English Dictionary (*MED*), https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary

Miller, Hartley R., '"Hey, you look like a prince!" Ideology and Recognition in *Guillaume de Palerne*', *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes/Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, 24 (2012), 347-60

Miller, William Ian, *Humiliation and Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Ithaca and London, 1993)

Mitchell, Bruce, and Fred C. Robinson, eds., *A Guide to Old English*, 8th edn (Chichester, 2012)

Molle, José Vincenzo, 'La nudité et les habits du « garulf » dans *Bisclavret* (et dans d'autres récits de loups et de louves)', in Connochie-Bourgne ed. *Le nu et le vêtu au moyen âge: XIIe – XIIIe siècles* (Aix-en-Provence, 2001), pp. 255-69

Moran, William, 'The Gilgamesh Epic: A Masterpiece from Ancient Mesopotamia', in Foster ed. *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism* (New York, 2001), pp. 171-83

Morford, Mark P.O., Robert J. Lenardon, and Micheal Sham, *Classical Mythology*, International 10th edn (Oxford, 2015)

Morgan, Hubert E., '*William of Palerne* and *Álaflekks saga*', *Florilegium*, 6 (1984), 137-58

Mulder-Bakker, Anneke B., 'The Age of Discretion: Women at Forty and Beyond', in Niebrzydowski ed. *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 15-24

Niebrzydowski, Sue, '"Becoming Bene-Straw": The Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages', in Niebrzydowski ed. *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 1-14

O'Connor, Ralph, '"Stepmother Sagas": An Irish Analogue for *Hjálmþérs saga ok Ölvérs*', *Scandinavian Studies*, 72/1 (2000), 1-48

Ó Cróinín, Dáibhí, *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200*, 2nd edn (London, 2017)

Orchard, Andy, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscripts* (Toronto, 2003)

Orlemanski, Julie, 'Desire and Defacement in *The Testament of Cresseid*', in Walter ed. *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture* (New York, 2013), pp. 161-81

The Oxford English Dictionary: OED Online. March 2020. Oxford University Press. https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2360/ [accessed May 30, 2020]

Parr, Jonstone, 'Cresseid's Leprosy Again', *Modern Language Notes*, 60/7 (1945), 487-91

Parsons, John Carmi, 'Introduction: Family, Sex, and Power: The Rhythms of Medieval Queenship', in Parsons ed. *Medieval Queenship* (Stroud, 1998), pp. 1-13

Payne, Ann, *Medieval Beasts* (London, 1990)

Pearman, Tory Vanderventer, *Women and Disability in Medieval Literature* (New York, 2010)

Percivall, Nic, 'Teenage Angst: The Structures and Boundaries of Adolescence in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Iceland', in Lewis-Simpson ed. *Youth and Age in the Medieval North* (Boston, 2008), pp. 127-50

Price, Matthew Burroughs, 'Old Formalisms: Characters, Structure, Action', *New Literary History*, 50/2 (2019), 245-69

Price, Merrall L., *Consuming Passions: The Uses of Cannibalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 2003)

Prioreschi, Plinio, *A History of Medicine II: Greek Medicine*, 2nd edn (Omaha, 1996)

Pluskowski, Aleksander, *Wolves and the Wilderness in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006)

Rawcliffe, Carole, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2009)

'Report from the Section of the History of Medicine during the British Medical Association Annual Meeting at Edinburgh' (1972), *The Lancet*, 210/5431 (1927), 708-11

Richards, Peter, *The Medieval Leper and His Northern Heirs* (Cambridge, 1977)

Riddy, Felicity, 'Middle English Romance: Family, Marriage, Intimacy', in Krueger ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 235-52

Roby, Matthew, 'Troll Sex: Youth, Old Age, and the Erotic in Old Norse Icelandic Narratives of the Supernatural', unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2019

Rogers, Paul H., 'Rediscovering the Horse in Medieval French Literature', *Neophilologus*, 97 (2013), 627-39

Rosenwein, Barbara H., 'Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions', *History Compass*, 8/8 (2010), 828-42

———, 'Emotion Words', in Nagy and Boquet eds. *Le sujet des émotions au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2008), pp. 93-106

———, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006)

Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman, '*Fornaldarsögur* and Heroic Legends of the Saga', in Acker and Larrington eds. *Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend* (London, 2015), pp. 202-18

Salisbury, Joyce E., *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994)

Samson, Vincent, *Les Berserkir: les guerriers-fauves dans la Scandinavie ancienne, de l'âge de Vendel aux Vikings (VI^e^-XI^e^ siècle)* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011)

Saunders, Corinne, 'Mind, Body and Affect in English Arthurian Romance', in Brandsma et al. eds. *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Body, Mind, Voice* (Cambridge, 2012; repr. 2015), pp. 31-46

Sayers, William, '*Bisclavret* in Marie de France: A Reply', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 4 (1987), 77-82

———, '*Konungs skuggsjá*: Irish Marvels and the King's Justice', *Scandinavian Studies*, 57/2 (1985), 5-42

Scully, Terence, 'Tempering Medieval Food', in Adamson ed. *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays* (New York, 1995), pp. 3-21

Shahar, Shulamith, *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (London, 1990)

Shippey, T. A., 'Breton *Lais* and Modern Fantasies', in Brewer ed. *Studies in Medieval English Romances: Some New Approaches* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 69-91

Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts* (Cambridge, 2017)

———, 'Translating Emotion: Vocalisation and Embodiment in *Yvain* and *Ívens saga*', in in Brandsma et al. eds. *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Body, Mind, Voice* (Cambridge, 2012; repr. 2015), pp. 161-79

Simek, Rudolf, 'The Political Thought of *The King's Mirror*: A Supplement', in Kvaran et al. eds. *Sagnaþing helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni. Sjötugum 10. Apríl 1994 (Síðari hluti)* (Reykjavík, 1994), pp. 723-34

Simms, Katharine, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1987)

Sinka, Margit M., 'Wound Imagery in Gottfried von Strassburg's "Tristan"', *South Atlantic Bulletin*, 42/2 (1977), 3-10

Small, Susan, 'The Medieval Werewolf Model of Reading Skin', in Walter ed. *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture* (New York, 2013), pp. 81-97

Speed, Diane, 'The Construction of the Nation in Medieval English Literature', in Meale ed. *Readings in Medieval English Romance* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 135-57

Sperlich, Annick, *Family and Friends: Generation in Medieval Romance* (Heidelberg, 2014)

Su, Minjie, 'Taming the Wolf: Reading *Bisclaret* in Light of Old Norse Kennings', in Merkelbach and Knight, eds. *Margins, Monsters, Deviants. Alterities in Old Norse Literature and Culture*, The North Atlantic World 3 (Turnhout, 2020), pp. 45-67

Sveinbjörn Egilsson, ed., *Lexicon Poeticum Antiquæ Septentrionalis (Ordbog over det Norsk-Islandske Skjaldesprog)* (København, 1931)

Swinburne, Layinka M., 'Milky Medicine and Magic', in Walker ed. *Milk: Beyond the Dairy: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1999* (Totnes, 2000), pp. 377-44

Topsfield, L.T., *Chrétien de Troyes: A Study of the Arthurian Romances* (Cambridge, 1981)

Torfi H. Tulinius, *The Matter of the North: The Rise of Literary Fiction in Thirteenth-Century Iceland*, trans. Randi C. Eldevik (Odense, 2002)

———, ‘The Matter of the North. Fiction and Uncertain Identities in Thirteenth-Century Iceland’, in Rose ed. *Old Icelandic Literature and Society* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 242-65

Turner, Victor, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York, 1995)

Tveitane, Mattias, ‘The Four Daughters of God: A Supplement’, *Neophilologische Mittelungen*, 81/4 (1980), 409-415

———, ‘The “Four Daughters of God” in the Old Norse *King’s Mirror*’, *Neophilologische Mittelungen*, 74/4 (1972), 795-804

de Vaan, Michel, *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the Other Italic Languages* (Leiden, 2008)

Vines, Amy N., ‘Invisible Woman: Rape as a Chivalric Necessity in Medieval Romance’, in Hopkins et al. eds. *Sexual Culture in the Literature and Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 161-80

de Vries, Jan, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden, 1961)

Walter, Katie L., ‘The Form of the Formless: Medieval Taxonomies of Skin, Flesh, and the Human’, in Walter ed. *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture* (New York, 2013), pp. 119-39

Wolf, Kirstin, ‘The Color Grey in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature’, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 108/2 (2009), 222-38

Wolf-Bovin, Romaine, ‘Un vêtement sans l’être: la chemise’, in Connochie-Bourgne ed. *Le nu et le vêtu au moyen âge: XII^e – XIII^e siècles* (Aix-en-Provence, 2001), pp. 383-94

Young, Jean, ‘Two of the Irish “Mirabilia” in the “King’s Mirror”’, *Études celtiques*, 3 (1938), 21-26

Zimen, Eric, *The Wolf: His Place in the Natural World*, trans. Eric Mosbacher (London, 1981)