

DIRECT SPEECH AND DIALOGUE
IN THREE VERSIONS OF ÓLÁFS SAGA HELGA

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SUMMARY

This paper deals with the use of direct speech (DS) and dialogue in three versions of Óláfs saga helga: in Fagrskinna (FAGR), in the so-called legendary saga (LEG), and in Heimskringla (HKR).

First there are presented some quantitative data (2-4) concerning the amount of DS and its distribution on "speech situations" (SSs). Then the three versions are examined in turn, in order to identify, if possible, features in the dialogue characteristic of each text. The purpose is not so much to evaluate the writers' artistic skill in creating passages in DS, or their use of various rhetoric devices. The interest is focussed instead on the function of the dialogue in the narrative.

The short FAGR (4-11) with its extremely restrictive use of DS, and only 8 SSs, provides a favourable opportunity of studying the principles which control the distribution of the dialogue. The comparison between its SSs and the corresponding passages in LEG and HKR seems to indicate that the FAGR writer has probably not invented any of his SSs, but borrowed them from his source(s).

The most conspicuous trait of the dialogue in LEG (11-18) is, not surprisingly, its "legendary" character. From the very beginning people again and again refer to Óláfr's Christian virtues and his future as a saint. His own first words in the saga, uttered by the five year old boy at his christening, are "Light, light, light". One can also notice a certain verbosity, an inclination to prolong the talking in a way more typical of everyday conversation than of "classical saga style".

In HKR (18-26) Snorri reveals his individuality and genius as historian and writer above all in the many impressive speeches or addresses. They often serve the purpose of looking back upon past events, of developing arguments and plans, of exhorting an audience. In the distribution of these speeches Snorri is also careful to bring contrasting opinions into focus. Typical examples are the speeches at Stiklastaðir, by Óláfr himself on one hand, and by his fierce adversary Bishop Sigurðr on the other hand. The speeches thus provide an insight into historical dialectics, revealing varied aspects of men and actions. They contribute very much to the impression of calm detachment and serene retrospect in Snorri's attitude to his subject. Snorri does not neglect, however, minor SSs and dialogues either. On the contrary, he has carefully rewritten some of them from his sources, and obviously invented many others himself, sometimes enlivening the story with a touch of subtle humour.

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Introduction. To take up on this occasion the topic direct speech and dialogue in the Konungasögur may seem superfluous, since Hallvard Lie has dealt with it thoroughly in his treatise Studier i Heimskringlas stil. Dialogene og talene (Oslo 1937), one of the most brilliant studies of saga style ever written. The subject has many aspects, however, and although Lie has given much more than the title of his treatise indicates, including in his comparisons and analyses not only Heimskringla but a series of other Konungasögur as well, there might be things left for further discussion. By focussing one's interest on a certain saga in its various versions, for instance, it would perhaps be possible to add a few minor features to the picture.

Thus it occurred to me that a comparison of Óláfs saga helga in its so-called legendary version (LEG), and in Fagrskinna (FAGR) and Heimskringla (HKR), might serve such a purpose. 1) My intention here is not so much to study the three writers' different artistic skill in creating passages in direct speech, or their use of various rhetoric devices. I will concentrate instead on the function of the dialogue in the narrative. Are there situations which seem to call for direct speech more than others? Do the dialogues appear at crucial points in the story, dramatizing and sharpening the curve of events? Or do they rather serve as a kind of pause and rest, perhaps with a purpose of characterizing the actors and revealing their feelings and motives? Does the dialogue in the three versions of Óláfs saga helga, which I have chosen for comparison, show approximately the same features, or are there distinct differences in accordance with the general character of each version?

The dialogue, its form and distribution among various episodes of a saga, can no doubt provide an especially convenient point of departure for tracing connections between manuscripts and possible directions of textual influences. This is a complex problem, however, which can be touched upon only incidentally here.

Some quantitative data. First it should be observed that the three versions of Óláfs saga helga are not directly comparable, as they differ widely in size. FAGR is by far the shortest, 4966 words only, LEG 33012 words, and HKR 91319 words. 2)

It is well known that the saga texts as a whole have a great deal of direct speech (DS); it is usually regarded as one of their characteristic features. For the Íslendingasögur we thus have an average amount of some 30 per cent DS; for the Konungasögur the corresponding figure is considerably lower, or some

19 per cent. 3)

Of the three texts under discussion here, the FAGR version makes little use of DS, 392 words only, or 7,9 per cent; that is even less than for FAGR as a whole: 11,3 per cent. In LEG DS amounts to 8593 words, or 26,0 per cent. The HKR version has 22873 words in DS, or 25,0 per cent. By the way, this last figure is considerably higher than for any other single saga text in HKR, with the exception of the short Hákonar saga herðibreiðs (totally 6981 words): 25,9 per cent. The two sagas in HKR coming next in size to Óláfs saga helga are Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar (28029 words) and Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar (22571 words); their share of DS is 10,8 and 15,9 per cent respectively.

Thus the proportion of DS in LEG and the HKR version is very much the same, whereas the FAGR version falls far below their level. That is what was to be expected. It is natural that among chronicles dealing with the same subject matter - for instance the life and reign of Óláfr Haraldsson - the ones most limited in size must restrict their use of dialogue and concentrate on a more economic narration.

As another measure, indicating the distribution and importance of DS, I would like to introduce the concept "speech situation" (SS). Such a SS may consist of only a few words uttered by a single person, or of a real speech; or it may be a dialogue, short or long, between two or more persons. A new configuration of people, or a change in time and place, constitutes a new SS in contrast to an earlier one. It is true that the limits are not always clear-cut, but on the whole I think there will be no problem to agree on the application of my definition.

With this reservation I give the numbers of SSs in the three saga versions: FAGR 8, LEG 162, and HKR 237. This means, among other things, that although the frequency of DS is on quite the same level in LEG and HKR, the former saga is comparatively much richer in SSs. If we look at the figures from a different angle, it appears that FAGR and LEG both have an average of some 50 words (50 and 53 respectively) in each SS, whereas the corresponding figure for HKR is almost twice as high, or 97 words. This depends on the large proportion of real speeches or addresses in HKR, with few or no counterparts in the other versions.

It is perhaps of some interest to notice the protagonist's own share in the DS. Of the 8 SSs in FAGR, Óláfr Haraldsson takes part in 3, his share of the total sum of words in DS being 32,9 per cent. For LEG the corresponding figures are 67 out of 162, and 28,6 per cent; for HKR they are 83 out of 237, and 26,2 per cent.

It seems convenient to put together in tabular form, and rounded off a little, the figures presented above:

	Number of words in DS	Number of SSs	King Óláfr's share in SSs
FAGR (5000 words)	400 = 8,0 %	8	3
LEG (33000 words)	8600 = 26,0 %	162	67
HKR (91000 words)	23000 = 25,0 %	237	83

Fagrskinna. From one point of view FAGR is of special interest in our connection. When DS is used with such an extreme restraint as there, it seems natural to ask for what kind of episodes it is reserved, and what principles govern the use of dialogue. We will examine the 8 SSs in FAGR and take at the same time a glance at the corresponding passages in the other versions.

The first instance is the episode when Óláfr lands at the island Sæla to start his career in Norway. He stumbles in a muddy place and has a few words with his "fosterfather" Hrani on the incident:

Þeir gengu upp í eyna, ok steig konungrinn þörum foeti þar sem leir var, studdi niðr knénu. Þá mælti konungr: "Fell ek nú." Þá svaraði Hrani: "Eigi fellt þú, herra, nú festir þú fót í Nóregi." Konungr hló at ok mælti: "Vera má þat, ef guð vill, at svá sé." (144-45)

This short dialogue is very much the same in both LEG (20) and HKR (36). There is a slightly stronger resemblance with HKR ("Vera má svá, ef guð vill") than with LEG ("Ef guð vill, at gerisk gagn"). To be sure, the three texts must have had a common source, or they have in some way influenced one another. But as already said, the kind of problems which such questions raise, will only occasionally be noticed here.

The incident at the island Sæla has no consequence whatever for the course of events. Nevertheless, it plays at this point an important part in the narrative as a memorable omen. Óláfr's "ef guð vill" - often a rather empty phrase, of course - seems to indicate here his future status as a champion of Christianity.

The second case of DS in FAGR is the situation in Sauðungsund, where Óláfr comes across Earl Hákon Eiríksson. He overturns the Earl's ship by stretching a thick rope under its keel, and gets the young man in his power. This is a real turning point, a decisive step in Óláfr's ascension to the supremacy over Norway. For Hákon, who has claimed that rank for himself, is now forced by Óláfr to swear an oath to leave Norway and never to take part in any warfare against him.

Again we have this SS in all three versions. The passage in

FAGR agrees almost word for word with that of HKR:

FAGR

Þá mælti Óláfr konungr: "Eigi er þat logit", sagði hann, "af yör frændum, hversu fríðir menn þér eruð sjónum, en farnir eru þér nú at hamingju." Þá svaraði jarlinn: "Eigi er þetta óhamingja, er oss hefir hent", sagði hann. "Þat hefir lengi verit, at ýmsir höfðingjar hafa sigrat aðra. Ek em lítt kominn af barnsaldri, ok várum vér nú ekki vel viðbúnir at verja oss, ok eigi vissum vér ván ófriðar. Kann vera, at oss takisk annat sinni betr til en nú."

Þá mælti Óláfr konungr: "Grunar þik eigi nú, jarl, at hér hafi svá til borit, at þú munir heðan í frá hvárki fá sigr né ósigr?" (146)

HKR

Þá mælti Óláfr konungr: "Eigi er þat logit af yör frændum, hversu fríðir menn þér eruð sýnum, en farnir eruð þér nú at hamingju." Þá segir Hákon: "Ekki er þetta óhamingja, er oss hefir hent. Hefir þat lengi verit, at ýmsir hafa sigraðir verit. Svá hefir ok farit með yörum ok várum frændum, at ýmsir hafa betr haft. Ek em enn lítt kominn af barnsaldri. Várum vér nú ok ekki vel við komnir at verja oss, vissum vér nú ekki vánir til ófriðar. Kann vera, at oss takisk annat sinn betr til en nú."

Þá svarar Óláfr konungr: "Grunar þik ekki þat, jarl, at hér hafi svá at borit, at þú mynir hvártki fá heðan í frá sigr né ósigr?" (37-38)

The only notable difference here is that whereas in FAGR Hákon is talking of "ýmsir höfðingjar" in general, we hear in HKR of "yörum ok várum frændum" - a phrase which gives the passage a more personal note.

In this case LEG, although the structure and content of the dialogue is the same, deviates very much from the corresponding passages in FAGR and HKR - especially by its verbosity: 308 words instead of 83 and 87 respectively. The connection between the three versions, however, is indisputable. Thus, for instance, we find one of Óláfr's just quoted replies in the following form: "Grunar þik eigi þat, at nú man svá til hafa borizk, at þú munir heðan í frá hvárki fá sigr né ósigr?" (21-22) Hákon's reference in HKR to "yörum ok várum frændum", lacking in FAGR, appears in LEG thus: "Hefir ok svá farit með oss várum frændum ok yörum, at ýmsir hafa betr haft." (21)

The special affinity here between the passages in FAGR and HKR is also indicated by the circumstance that in both these versions the two SSs now discussed (the "Hrani situation" and the "Hákon situation") follow each other with only a few intermediary sentences. In LEG, on the other hand, there are between them introduced another two SSs, with a farmer and a "Finn"

respectively, announcing Óláfr's encounter with Earl Hákon and his victory over him. The "Finn" claims to have seen "mikla sýn" (20). In HKR these situations are replaced by the simple statement: "Þar spurðu þeir til Hákonar jarls, at hann var suðr í Sogni, ok var hans þá ván norðr, þegar er byr gæfi, ok hafði hann eitt skip." (36) In FAGR the meeting occurs abruptly, without any forewarning.

The constellation, in FAGR and HKR, of the "Hrani situation" and the "Hákon situation" gives us effectively contrasting pictures of Óláfr: on one hand the pious man invoking God for the future, on the other hand the hard-boiled warrior and politician, with his menacing "Grunar þik ekki þat, jarl". In LEG the intervention of two other small SSs between those episodes rather weaken the impression by overloading the story with references to Óláfr's almost supernatural status, typical of this version.

The next two SSs in FAGR, the third and the fourth, are concerned with another king, the Swedish King Óláfr Eiríksson. He has been hunting early in the morning, and his hawks and hounds have killed "five cranes". He proudly shows his bag to his daughter Ingigerðr. The same SS is also to be found in LEG and HKR. Again FAGR and HKR reveal the closest resemblance:

FAGR

"Veiztu nokkurn konung hafa beitt meira á einni morgun-stundu?" En hon svaraði á þessa lund: "Meiri veiðr var sú, er Óláfr Haraldsson tók á einum morgni IX konunga ok eignaðisk allt ríki þeirra." Þá svaraði Óláfr Svíakonungr reiðr mjök: "Of snimma anntu Óláfi digra. Þú hefir enn aldrigi sétt hann, ok virðir þú hann þó meira en mik. Fyrir þetta sama skaltu aldrigi fá Ólaf digra." (156)

HKR

"Hvar veiztu þann konung, er svá mikla veiði hafi fengit á svá lítilli stundu?" Hon svarar: "Góð morginveiðr er þetta, herra, er þér hafið veitt fimm orra, en meira er þat, er Óláfr Nóregskonungr tók á einum morgni fimm konunga ok eignaðisk allt ríki þeira." Ok er hann heyrði þetta, þá hljóp hann af hestinum ok snörisk viðr ok mælti: "Vittu þat, Ingigerðr, at svá mikla ást sem þú hefir lagt við þann inn digra mann, þá skaltu þess aldrigi njóta ok hvártki ykkat annars. Skal ek þik gipta nokkurum þeim höfðingja, er mér sé eigandi vinátta vinátta við, en ek má aldrigi vera vinr þess manns, er ríki mitt hefir tekit at herfangi ok gort mér skaða margan í ránum ok manndrápum." Skilðu þau svá sína roeðu, ok

gekk leið sína hvárt þeira.
(132)

The content of these dialogues is on the whole the same, and the wording at some points almost identical. In HKR the Swedish King is more detailed in his remarks on "þann inn digra mann" and gives some tangible reasons for his dislike of him; he also adds a few words on his alternative plans for marrying Ingigerðr off. Moreover Snorri makes this SS more vivid by his "staging": the King jumps from horseback and turns to his daughter; afterwards father and daughter part and leave the scene in opposite directions. Such features accentuate the feelings involved and gives the episode a more distinct profile. 4)

In spite of some factual differences - in LEG the King has been hunting fowl ("fór á fuglaveiðar", 40), in FAGR cranes, and in HKR black grouse; in LEG the kings overcome by Óláfr Haraldsson are eleven, in FAGR nine, and in HKR five - there is obviously some textual relationship between the three versions of this SS. The real weight of such an episode in the general course of events is slight. The dialogue here has a characterizing function; it expresses the Swedish King's hot temper and his contempt for "the fat man". It is improbable that three texts could have this SS without being in one way or the other dependent upon one another or related to some common source.

Hallvard Lie has observed that Snorri improves upon the other versions of this SS by establishing a correspondence between five "orrrar" and five "konungar" (64). It is a reasonable assumption that this variant - superior as a rhetoric device - is secondary to the other ones. If Snorri's version had been the original one at this point, it seems incredible that any later writer would have been dull enough to destroy such an effect.

Another change in HKR should be noticed in this connection. Snorri's black grouse is a far more realistic alternative as a hunter's bag than the cranes of LEG; a change in the opposite direction - from black grouse to cranes - seems highly improbable.

Next in FAGR we listen to the Swedish King answer messengers from Óláfr Haraldsson, claiming Princess Ingigerðr for marriage, according to a preliminary agreement - before the "hunting incident". Now the King refuses, under the pretext that Ingigerðr is both a king's and a queen's daughter, that is to say she is their legitimate child - of far too noble lineage for a man like "Óláfr digri", we understand. But he has another proposal: "'Ek á', sagði hann, 'aðra dóttur, er heitir Ástriðr. Þá skal hann hafa, ef hann vill, með þvílíku fé ok eignum, sem áðr hafða ek gefit Ingigerði.'" (156)

This SS has no equivalent in the other two versions, as it

implies a different arrangement of facts. In LEG it is the "frilludóttir" Ástriðr herself who visits King Óláfr in Norway and offers to marry him against her father's will ("utan hans vilja né ráða", 41), as a kind of substitute for Ingigerðr; their marriage is celebrated without delay. In HKR too Ástriðr is married to Óláfr without her father assenting to or even knowing it, but with more formal and solemn preparations than in LEG.

The SSs with the Swedish King and his daughter seem to be of minor importance, mere anecdotes, in the saga as a whole. Their presence in FAGR with its extremely infrequent use of DS, strongly indicates that the writer of this version has picked them up from some written source, rather accidentally.

The fifth and sixth SSs in FAGR occur in the episode when Óláfr Haraldsson with his fleet south in the Baltic prefers to turn back to Norway by land over Sweden rather than to risk an encounter with King Knútr of Denmark somewhere in the Sound. But one of his chieftains, the aged Hárekr ór Þjóttu, chooses to sail back home on his ship. He tries to disguise it in order to make it look like a merchant vessel. His trick is successful, and no sooner is he past King Knútr's fleet than he shows his warship equipment again. We listen to a dialogue between two of the King's men, when Hárekr is passing, and afterwards to a comment by the King himself. In LEG and FAGR these SSs run thus:

LEG

Þá mæltu varðmenn, er skipit fór í sundit. Þá mælti annarr: "Þat er fornt skip nokkut, sé hversu grátt er ok skammt. Þat man vera síldaferja nokkur. Nú er skipit sett ok fáir menn á."

Nú er sagt konungi, at Óláfr konungr hefir um siglt, "fyrir því at þetta skip er harðla vel búit". Konungr segir, at þat man vera af liði Óláfs konungs en eigi hann sjálfr. "Kann vera", segir konungrinn, "at hafi siglt sá hinn sami karl, er siglði um oss í Beltissundi, er vér þóttumk þá hafa tekit." Nú siglði Hárekr norðr með landi. (62)

FAGR

Þá mæltu varðmenn: "Skip ferr hér í sundit." Þá svaraði maðr einn: "Þat er fornt skip, sé hversu grátt er ok skinit. Þat man vera síldaferja nokkur. Skipit er sett mjök ok fáir menn á."

Þá var sagt Knúti konungi, at þar myndi Óláfr konungr hafa siglt í gegnum sundit, er svá vel var búit /skipit/. Knútr konungr segir: "Þetta man vera af liði Óláfs konungs en eigi hann sjálfr. Kann vera, at þar hafi siglt Hárekr ór Þjóttu, sá hinn sami karl siglði enn um oss í Beltissundi, er vér þóttumk tekit hafa." Hárekr siglði norðr með landi. (168)

Again there is such a close resemblance between the two pass-

ages that there can be no doubt about some textual connection, directly or indirectly. No two authors would independently have got the idea of rendering such an unimportant episode in quite the same way.

In this case Snorri has for some reason chosen to tell the episode in oblique narration. But his text may well have been reworked from a dialogue very much alike the one in LEG and FAGR:

Ok sá varðmenn Knúts konungs skipit ok roeddu um sín í milli, hvat skipa þat myndi vera, ok gátu þess, at vera myndi flutt salt eða síld, er þeir sá fá mennina, en lítinn róðrinn, en skipit sýndisk þeim grátt ok bráðlaust ok sem skipit myndi skinit af sólu, ok sá þeir, at skipit var sett mjök.

Þá sá menn Knúts konungs ok segja konungi, at meiri ván, at Óláfr konungr hefði þar um siglt. En Knútr konungr segir svá, at Óláfr konungr væri svá vitr maðr, at hann hefði eigi farit einskipa í gögnum her Knúts konungs, ok lézk líkligra þykkja, at þar myndi verit hafa Hárekr ór Þjóttu eða hans maki. (290)

The last two SSs in FAGR, the seventh and the eighth, both deal with the dramatic last confrontation at sea between Óláfr Haraldsson and one of his most powerful opponents in Norway, the chieftain Erlingr Skjálgsson. When they are drawing near to each other, they make some preliminary manoeuvres with their sails, and Erlingr comments on them:

FAGR

Þá mælti Erlingr: "Nú lægjask segl þeirra, ok draga þeir nú undan oss. Sláum við öllu segli á skeiðinni." (174)

HKR

"Sé þér", segir hann, at nú lægir seglin þeira, ok draga þeir undan oss." Lét hann þá hleypa ór heflunum segli á skeiðinni. (313)

The King and his men succeed in boarding Erling's ship, and at last Erling's whole crew is killed; he is alone standing upright, fighting bravely:

Þá mælti konungrinn: "Við horfir þú mjök í dag, Erlingr." "Já, herra", sagði hann. "Öndverðir skulu ernir klóask. Vilit þér gefa mér grið, herra?" Konungrinn svaraði: "Á öndverðum man þér þat sjá, áðr en vit skiljumk." Þá kastaði Erlingr vápnum, gekk ofan í fyrirrúmit. Óláfr konungr hafði öxi litla í hendi

Konungr orti þá orða á hann ok mælti svá: "Öndurðr horfir þú við í dag, Erlingr." Hann svarar: "Öndurðr skulu ernir klóask." /---/ Þá mælti konungr: "Viltu á hönd ganga, Erlingr?" "Þat vil ek", segir hann. Þá tók hann hjálminn af höfði sér ok lagði niðr sverðit ok skjöldinn ok gekk fram í

sér. Erlingr kastaði skildinum ok tók hjálm af höfði sér.

Óláfr konungr stakk øxarhyrnunni á kinn honum ok mælti: "Merkja skal dróttinssvikarann hvern at nøkkuru."

Þá hljóp fram Áslákr Fitjaskalli, hoggv tveim höndum í höfuð Erlingi, svá at fell þegar dauðr á þiljurnar.

Þá mælti Óláfr konungr til Ásláks: "Hogg allra manna armastr. Nú hjótt þú Nóreg ór hendi mér."

Áslákr svaraði: "Þat er þá illa orðit, herra. Ek hugða, at ek hoggva nú Nóreg í hönd þér. Engi hefir jafnríkr fjándmaðr þinn verit í Nóregi sem þessi." Þá gekk konungr á skip sitt /.../. (175-76)

fyrirrrúmit.

Konungr stakk við honum øxarhyrnunni í kinn honum ok mælti: "Merkja skal dróttinsvikann."

Þá hljóp at Áslákr Fitjaskalli ok hjó með øxi í höfuð Erlingi, svá at stóð í heila niðri. Var þat þegar banasár. Lét Erlingr þar líf sitt.

Þá mælti Óláfr konungr við Áslák: "Hogg þú allra manna armastr. Nú hjóttu Nóreg ór hendi mér."

Áslákr segir: "Illa er þá, konungr, ef þér er mein at þessu hoggvi. Ek þóttumk nú Nóreg í í hönd þér hoggva. En ef ek hefi þér mein gort, konungr, ok kanntu mér óþökk fyrir þetta verk, þá mun mér kostlaust vera, því at hafa mun ek svá margra manna óþökk ok fjándskap fyrir þetta verk, at ek mynda heldr þurfa at hafa yðart traust ok vináttu." Konungr segir, at svá skyldi vera. (316-17)

The LEG version shows in this case a closer affinity to FAGR than to HKR. One can notice phrases as: "Við horfir þú nú í dag, Erlingr"; "Merkja skal nú dróttinssvikarann hvern at nøkkuru" (65); "Engi hefir jafnmikill ok jafnríkr verit þinn fjándi sem þessi" (66). A kind of "legendary" touch appears in the King's words: "'Sér þú nú', kvað hann, 'at guð hefir þik felldan í hendr mér.'" (66) The verbosity of this version is evident in the explanatory sentences added to the climax "Nú hjóttu Nóreg ór hendi mér": "'Fyrir því', sagði hann, 'at eigi myndi Erlingr þriðja sinni véla mik. Ok eigi myndi ek þurfa flýja ríki mitt, ef hann vildi vera mér trúr.'" (66)

As to the HKR version, Hallvard Lie has observed, among other things, that "Snorre forandrer 'við horfir' /both LEG and FAGR/ i kongens replikk til 'öndurðr horfir' og legger derved bokstavelig talt ordsproget i munnen på Erling", "et klassisk eksempel på 'responsjon', et dialogisk bindemiddel som Snorre i utstrakt grad gjør bruk af" (64).

One should also notice in HKR Áslákr's appeal to the King,

failing in the other versions: "En ef ek hefi þér mein gort" etc., and the King's reply in oblique narration. These words reveal an understanding of Áslákr's precarious situation after his deed. They round off the episode psychologically, in contrast to the rather abrupt "Nú gengr konungr á skip sitt" (66) and "Þá gekk konungr á skip sitt" (176) in LEG and FAGR respectively.

Also in this case all three versions seem to be closely related to one another. Snorri's version, for instance, could well be rewritten from a SS very like the one in LEG. His phrase "ondurör horfir" instead of "við horfir" in LEG and FAGR is a definite improvement. A change in the opposite direction is hardly imaginable. Probably no writer, however clumsy, would drop the phrase "ondurör horfir", appearing in his source, in favour of the much weaker "við horfir".

Summing up the use of dialogue in FAGR, one must once more underline its extreme scantiness. It is striking, for instance, that there is no DS at all in the latter part of the saga, in the epilogue with the events leading up to Óláfr's death at Stiklastaðir. The few SSs turn up more or less at random in the narrative. They form no clear pattern, and do not reveal any individual features. As the FAGR version of Óláfs saga helga looks like an abstract from a more exhaustive relation, the conclusion seems to be close at hand that its writer has invented none of its SSs, and that they are all a kind of relics from his source(s).

The legendary saga. This "Helgisaga" has got its name with reason. Unlike the other versions there are from the beginning frequent references to Óláfr's special relations with God, anticipating his future holiness. He is even named "hinn helgi" once in his early period as a viking leader abroad: "Þenna flokk orti Óláfr hinn helgi, þá er hann var með Knúti konungi." (12) In FAGR, on the other hand, this epithet is aptly reserved for Óláfr's death at Stiklastaðir: "Þar fell Óláfr hinn helgi konungr" (182).

It is interesting to observe how the three versions refer to God outside the dialogue. In LEG the writer very often comments emphatically on his hero in the following way: "Ok siglði Óláfr Haraldsson þar þrim skipum í gegnum nesit ok út til hafs með mikilli frægðarferð, sem öllum þeim er guð styrkir" (16); "fyrir því at hann treystisk meir guðs miskunnar efling en manna" (19); "En boendr urðu svá hræddir við þenna atburð allan saman, með því at guð vildi at svá væri" (34); "En þá er Óláfr konungr var fallinn, þá lauk guð upp augu Þóris hunds, ok sá hann hvar englar guðs fóru með sálu hans upp til himna" (85).

The FAGR writer only once refers to God in this way: "Þessi orrosta varð löng ok sleizk með því sem guðs forsjó var, at

Óláfr konungr hafði sigr" (151) - a reminiscence, perhaps, of Óláfr's pious behaviour on this occasion in LEG. In the sentence "/Óláfr/ fekk þar vitrun, at guð vildi, at hann koemi eigi sunnar" (143), the reference to God is to be regarded as rendering Óláfr's own experience, not as a comment by the writer himself.

In the 7 cases where Snorri mentions God outside the dialogue, it is always in a kind of oblique narration related to Óláfr, as in the example just quoted from FAGR:

"en engi lét hann óhegndan, þann er eigi vildi guði þjóna" (101); "En konungr var þá nótt alla á boenum ok bað guð þess, at" (188); "Þakkar konungr guði sending sína" (325; corresponds to DS in LEG: "Þökkum guði sending sína", 69); "lagði hann /Óláfr/ allan hug á at gera guðs þjónustu" (328); "skaut /Óláfr/ til guðs sínu máli" (340); "bað /Óláfr/ til guðs fyrir sér ok liði sínu" (361); "/Óláfr/ kastaði sverðinu ok bað sér guð hjálpa" (385).

In LEG one has special reason to observe the function of DS and dialogue as a means of enhancing Christian and miraculous aspects of the story. Especially Óláfr Haraldsson's own words are of interest in this connection.

Óláfr's first utterance is characteristic of the atmosphere in LEG. We are told of the boy's christening, with Óláfr Tryggvason himself taking active part in the ritual. The boy's "foster-father" Hrani "réð nafni. Kerti var honum í hendr selt. Þá mælti sveinninn: 'Ljós, ljós, ljós.' Þá var hann V vetra gamall." (5-6) The repeated word, utterly unrealistic in the five year old boy's mouth, of course refers to the heavenly light, to his future as a saint.

People who have met Óláfr, clerics and laymen, testify to his Christian virtues, his miraculous gifts. When he is dwelling with King Knútr in England, the Bishop there once comments on the two Kings as church-goers. One morning Óláfr has come as usual to attend the mass with his men. But Knútr has not appeared; he "var vanr at hvíla lengi ok varð opt seinn til tíðanna":

En er Knútr konungr kom seint út, þá spurði byskup, hvárt Knútr væri út kominn. En klerkar kváðu hann eigi út kominn. Byskup leit utar í kirkjuna ok sá, hvar Óláfr stóð, ok mælti síðan: "Nú er konungr út kominn." Þeir sögðu, at hann var eigi út kominn. "Jaur", sagði byskup, "sjá er sannr konungr, er nú er út kominn, fyrir því at hann vill heldr þjóna lofi en guðs lög þjóni honum." Ok söng síðan "Domine, labia mea aperies". (12)

Thus the picture of Óláfr as "sannr konungr", in accordance with the ideals of the Church, is authoritatively brought into focus in this SS.

On one occasion, when raiding a coast, Óláfr disappears, and his men search for him fearing for his life. But suddenly they discover him riding, not alone but pushing a crowd of men in front of him, with burdens of booty on their backs, down to the ships. Quite amazed Óláfr's men ask the prisoners, how one man could capture so many people:

En þeir sögðu, at hann var eigi einn at þeim, "heldr var þar mikill fjölði riddara í fœr með honum. Ok tóku þeir oss ok bundu ok lögðu þessar byrðar á bak oss, er vér höfum. Síðan rak hann oss með honum, til þess er vér sáum lið yðart. En síðan urðu þeir allir á brautu ok horfnuðu". (14)

No reader should miss the meaning of this episode, as the author makes the comment: "Ok ætla menn, at þetta hafi eigi jarðneskir menn verit, er með Óláfi váru, heldr guðs riddarar." Neither of the last two SSS, with the Bishop and the prisoners, is to be found in HKR.

In a difficult situation off the coast of Ireland Óláfr's ships have got stuck in the bottom mud, and "óvígr herr" of enemies is waiting on the shore. In this dilemma Óláfr's men apply to him for advice:

En hann mælti: "Ef þér vilit mitt ráð hafa, þá heitum nú allir á almáttkan guð. Ok látum af hernaði ok ránum. Ok hverfi hverr nú heðan í frá til þess er guð hefir hann látit til berask. Ok leiti nú hverr við at varðveita sína herferð með réttindum." (17)

The pious advice is followed, and the ships get afloat.

When Óláfr is dwelling in Nørvasund (Gibraltar), with a purpose of going farther to the south, he has "þá vitran, at guð vildi eigi, at hann koemi sunnar ok foeri heldr norðr ok soekti óðal sín" (17). Later he meets a hermit and asks him about his future:

Einsetumaðrinn svarar: "Þat kann ek þér at segja, at þú mant konungr verða at Nóregi ok yfir þeirri soemð allri, er þínir frændr hafa mesta hafða. Ok eigi at eins mantu stundligr konungr vera, heldr mantu eilífliga konungr vera. Eptir þessa spá einsetumannsins fór Óláfr braut í frá honum ok spurði einskis fleira. (19)

The difference here between LEG and HKR is significant. The revelation ("vitran") and the SS with the hermit are concentrated in HKR into a dream:

þá dreymsi hann merkiligan draum, at til hans kom merkiligr maðr ok þekkiligr ok þó ógurliogr ok mælti við hann, bað hann hætta ætlan þeirri, at fara út í lönd - "far aptr til óðala pinna, því at þú munt vera konungr yfir Nóregi at eilífu." (25)

In LEG the word eilífliða clearly refers to Óláfr's future holiness, as it is opposed to stundliðr, a typically homiletic antithesis. In his characteristic manner Snorri tones down the religious pathos, by giving in a comment on the dream the phrase at eilífu a quite secular meaning: "Hann skilði þann draum til þess, at hann myndi konungr vera yfir landi ok hans attmenn langa ævi." (25)

Before a confrontation with Earl Sveinn Hákonarson Óláfr proposes that they should not fight on Palm Sunday, but wait for Monday. The Earl, however, refutes the proposal as a stratagem by Óláfr. When his messengers return with this negative answer Óláfr remarks: "Sá er eigi vill grið á helgum degi, á þeim sama degi man hann eigi sigr hljóta." (24) As the fight on Palm Sunday cannot be avoided, Óláfr arranges a mass for himself and his men. The Earl declines to do the same although one of his chieftains asks for it. Óláfr is victorious, of course.

The relation of this episode in HKR has nothing to say of Óláfr's reluctance to fight on a holy-day. There he engages unhesitatingly in a naval battle on Palm Sunday, addressing his men in a speech on tactics, without any reference to the sacredness of that day. (59)

FAGR has no SS on this occasion, but observes that the fight took place on Palm Sunday, and that it ended "með því sem guðs forsjó var, at Óláfr konungr hafði sigr" (151; cf. pp. 11-12 above).

After Óláfr's decisive victory over Earl Sveinn there is in LEG a dialogue between Óláfr and his stepfather Sigurðr sýr. Sigurðr gives him the advice to kill "nú allir lendir menn /.../, er hér taka flótta undan í dag, ok hvert mannsbarn með þeim":

Óláfr svarar: "Þigi vil ek launa svá guði þann fagra sigr, er hann hefir mér gefit, at drepa nú margan góðan dreng hér í dag." "Víst er þat guðréttligt", sagði Sigurðr. "Ok eigi mæli ek þetta fyrir því, at mik skipti. Svá man ek míns ráðs fá gætt, at ek man lítt þessa heims þín purfa. En þat man ek þér segja, at þér man andstreymt þitt ríki vera, meðan þú ert ok þessir lendir menn eru uppi, er nú lætr þú hér undan ganga í dag. Þegar er þeir fá sér nokkura höfuðbendu, þá munu þeir eflask í móti þér, ok munu þeir þik ór þínu ríki hafa. En fyrir þann storm, er í móti þér stendr, meðan þú ert yfir þínu ríki, af þínum óvinum, þá er þú ferr heðan ór heimi, þá mantu hinn helgasti maðr vera. Ok munu vér þá mjök þín purfa." En þó at Sigurðr mælti þetta, þá varð Óláfr at ráða. (26)

There is in Sigurðr's words a rather strange contrast between his cool strategic argument and his reference to Óláfr's future

as "hinn helgasti maðr" through his death ("þá er þú ferr heðan ór heimi"). How could Sigurðr know about the saint to be at this point of the story; obviously the author is speaking on his behalf. In the situation in HKR, roughly corresponding to the one in LEG, there is no talking of God or sacredness. Sigurðr appears as the prudent and realistic peasant king who he is throughout in Snorri's version, and restricts himself to a plain and secular prediction of Óláfr's future difficulties with his adversaries:

"en þat er mitt hugboð", segir hann, "við skaplyndi þitt ok ráðgirni, at seint tryggvir þú þá stórbukkana, svá sem þeir eru vanir áðr at halda fullu til móts við hefðingja" (68).

When King Óláfr has returned from his exile in Garðaríki and is crossing the boundary between northern Sweden and Norway riding downhill from the mountains, he has a grandiose vision of his land widening until he sees over the whole world. He relates the vision to the Bishop at his side. The same vision is also told in HKR, but in a much more pregnant form, excellently analyzed by Hallvard Lie (19,53). The Bishop's comment is rendered there in oblique narration: "Byskup segir, at sú sýn var heilaglig ok stórmerkilig." (351). In LEG the Bishop's reaction is exaggerated, he behaves and speaks as if Óláfr were already to be revered as a saint. He dismounts from his horse, seizes the King's foot, bows to him and says: "Helgum manni fylgjum vér." (75)

Near Stiklastaðir Óláfr once pauses and asks his servant for some water. It is brought to him in a chalice, and the King blesses it. He tastes and makes the comment: "Eigi vil ek mungát drekka." The servant is perplexed but brings him new water. Now to the King it seems to be "mjöðr". The third time it has become "vín". Then the Bishop says: "Drekkið, herra, heimilt á sá, er gefr yðr ok þessum drykk hefir snúit. Ok eru slíkt ágætlig tákn ok fagrleg." (77) The miracles have already begun, and a bishop is at hand to testify to them. Nothing like that is to be found in HKR, during the King's lifetime.

Some time later the sleeping Óláfr is waked up by Finnir Árnason. The King has had a dream and relates it to Finnir in these words: "Ek sá stiga standa til himna ok himna upp lúkask. Ok var ek kominn á efsta stigit, er þú vaktir mik." (80) In HKR we have the same SS, but it is expanded there into a real dialogue between the King and Finnir. Óláfr blames Finnir for having waked him up and not let him dream his dream to end. But Finnir objects that no dream could now be more urgent than the duty to keep awake and prepare for the battle with the approaching peasant army: "Eða sér þú eigi, hvar nú er kominn bóndamúgrinn?" He asks the King to tell him, what kind of dream could seem so

precious to him that he did not care to wake up. Then the first part of Óláfr's answer is rendered in oblique narration, ending with the King's own words in DS, very much as in LEG: "'Var ek þá', segir hann, 'kominn í öfsta stig, er þú vakðir mik.'" (368)

This episode is much more skilfully introduced in HKR, and Finnur's comment on the King's dream has a realistic touch lacking in LEG. The difference stands out still clearer in the way the situation is rounded off. In LEG Óláfr's relation of his dream is followed up by an unctuous commentary by the writer:

Ok var þat auðsýnt, sagði sá, er ritaði söguna af þessi vitran, at sjá hinn helgi guðs dýrlingr hefir áðr lengi verit á þeirri himinríkis götu, er þá var at enda komit. (80)

In HKR we have instead two concluding sentences by Finnur Árnason, expressing quite another view of "þessi vitran", in crass contrast to the pious interpretation in LEG. To the King's last words Finnur replies:

"Ekki þykki mér draumur sjá svá góðr sem þér mun þykkja. Ætla ek þetta munu vera fyrir feigð þinni, ef þat er nokkut annat en svefnórar einar, er fyrir þik bar." (368)

The rationalistic and sceptical svefnórar 'insignificant and worthless dreams' against vitran 'vision, revelation' - one could almost suspect a polemic point in Snorri's radical re-working of the episode.

Some of King Óláfr's last words in LEG are directed to his adversary Erlendr ór Gerði:

"Ek gerða þik lífinn at miklum. En nú dregr þú flokk í móti mér ok villt drepa mik í dag. En ek kann þér þat segja at sonnu, at þú mant hér falla, ok sál þín man fyrr vera í helvíti en blóð þitt sé kalt á jörðunni." (82)

Such a fierce rebuke reveals the negative side of Óláfr's religious zeal so to speak. It contrasts sharply with his restrained and dignified comments on his enemies in HKR.

When King Óláfr's fall is nearing, the leader of the peasant army, Kálfr Árnason, has a vision which he reports to his men in DS:

"Þá sýn sá ek, er vel mættim vér án", sagði hann. "Vígroði lýstr á skýin fyrr en blóð kemr á jörðina. Ok ógnir eru miklar, ok eigi nær sól at skína. Landskjálftar eru miklir ok ógnir oss komnar." (83)

It is a special point, of course, that this vision should be attributed to Óláfr's leading opponent in the battle. The sinister changes in the nature are referred to again, now by the writer himself, in connection with the King's fall, and this

time there is an explicit parallel with Jesus Christ:

Nú lét Óláfr konungr þar líf sitt. Þá varð svá mikil ógn, at sólin fal geisla sinn ok gerði myrkt. En áðr var fagrt veðr, eptir því sem þá var, er sjalfr skaparinn fór af veröldinni. (85)

There is something left of these passages in HKR, but with alterations characteristic of Snorri's art of rewriting his sources. In the beginning of the battle there is a change in the air:

Veðr var fagrt, ok skein sól í heiði. En er orrosta hófsk, þá laust roða á himininn ok svá á sólna, ok áðr en létti, gerði myrkt sem um nótt. (378)

The direct reference to Christ is thus omitted, though it might still be implicit in the description. Nothing is said about earthquakes, possibly because Snorri, used to them from his native country, knew that they were rather unexpected in Norway. Last but not least, it has not occurred to Snorri to let Kálfr Árnason relate to his men a vision that they "could well go without". It is a strangely unrealistic idea that a military leader would depress his army's fighting spirit by such a disheartening comment.

Thus the strongly ecclesiastical and apologetic character of LEG is not limited to the author's own narration; it has also invaded its DS and dialogues.

Another trait of the dialogue in LEG is a certain stylistic awkwardness and lack of concentration, especially striking in comparison with HKR. A case in point is the SS with Óláfr and Earl Hákon Eiríksson already quoted (pp. 4-5 above) from FAGR and HKR. Óláfr's menacing question "Grunar þik eigi nú, jarl" etc., practically identical in all three versions, is in LEG followed by some fifty more words, adding very little to the real content of the SS:

"Nú er þú kominn í hendr mér, ok á ek nú kost at gera af þér slíkt sem ek vil, hvárt sem ek vil, at þú lifir eða deyir. Kjós nú, hvárt er þú vilt lifa eða deyja. Ef þú vilt lifa, þá skaltu vera jarl minn ok fylgja mér jafnan." (22)

The Earl's question, what Óláfr wants him to do in order to spare his life, is answered in all three versions in a sentence quoted here from HKR: "Enskis annars en þú farir ór landi og gefir svá upp ríki yðart ok sverir þess eiða, at þér haldit eigi orrostu heðan í frá í gegn mér." (38) But whereas in FAGR and HKR the answer stops there, in LEG Óláfr goes on expounding its meaning:

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"Nú ef þú vilt fara ór landi, sem ek beiðumk, ok sverir mér þess eið, at þú komir aldrgin í Nóreg, meðan ek em uppi. En ef þú efnir þat eigi, þá falla á þik eiðar. Ok hvar sem þú hittir mína menn fyrir, þá skaltu hvárki skjóta oru né spjóti í móti þeim. Þess skaltu ok sverja, ef þú verðr varr við þá menn, er land vilja ráða undan mér, hvat manna sem þeir eru, eða á nokkurum vélum eru við mik, þá skaltu gera mik varan við." (22)

This more diffuse, loquacious dialogue in LEG probably comes closer to colloquial "realism" than the terse, stylized sentences in HKR (and FAGR), which we see as characteristic of "classical saga style". Hallvard Lie appropriately speaks of the "erke-hverdagslighet" which Snorri "omsorgsfullt plukket ut av sine dialoger" (49, footnote).

Heimskringla. The most remarkable feature of Snorri's version of Óláfs saga helga are ist many speeches, longer than the contributions to a dialogue in general. They serve the purpose of looking back upon past events, of developing arguments and plans, of exhorting an audience, and so on. They thus play an important part in structuring the story and giving it a wider perspective. Such speeches and addresses are of course usually delivered by the leading characters, especially by Óláfr himself. A short survey of a series of these speeches may give an idea of how they can reveal new dimensions of the saga.

The longest speech (470 words) by Óláfr is also the first one. It appears at a crucial point in his career, when he has returned from abroad and meets his stepfather Sigurðr sýr. Óláfr lays claim to supremacy over Norway, referring again and again to Haraldr hárfagri and Óláfr Tryggvason as his forerunners and kinsmen. He is firmly resolved to "eignask ríki þat allt til forráða", or else "falla á frændleifð minni". And now he asks for assistance from Sigurðr in order to defeat possible opponents and attain his goal. (43-45) This is an able piece of rhetoric, with no counterpart whatsoever in LEG.

In his reply (300 words) Sigurðr emphasizes the difference in character between himself and Óláfr. To him Óláfr's design reveals "meirr af kappi en forsjá"; there is a gulf between "lítilmennsku minnar ok áhuga þess ins mikla, er þú munt hafa". As he well knows that it will not be possible to restrain his stepson from his undertaking, he does not bluntly refuse to assist him, however. But as a cautious tactician he denies to promise anything until he knows "ætlan ok tiltekju annarra konunga", and has made sure of support from influential men in the country. For Óláfr will have to confront terrific opponents from abroad: King Óláfr of Sweden and King Knútr of Denmark and England. Sigurðr concludes his speech by making a somewhat ambiguous remark. People are fond of innovations, he says, and

refers to Óláfr Tryggvason's initial success - "ok naut hann þó eigi lengi konungdómsins". These last words look like a warning to his stepson.

The meeting is rounded off by a comment from Óláfr's mother Ásta, revealing her ambition. She picks up her husband's remark just quoted, but gives it a new turn. She assures her son that she would prefer to see him as "yfirkonungr í Nóregi, þótt þú lifðir eigi lengr í konungdóminum en Óláfr Tryggvason, heldr en hitt, at þú varir eigi meiri konungr en Sigúrðr sýr ok yrðir ellidauðr". (45-46)

With this magnificent SS Snorri not only gives clear-cut portraits of the characters involved, not without a touch of humour. He also sketches out a historical and political background and sets the stage for the events to come.

Immediately after this episode the author effectively brings into focus the opposition which Óláfr will have to deal with in Norway. At a meeting with "margir Upplendingakonungar, þeir er fyrir fylkjum réðu" (46), we listen to the brothers Hroerekr and Hringr explain how they look upon Óláfr's claim to supremacy. In his speech (354 words) Hroerekr represents a conservative and suspicious attitude. In a historical retrospect he reminds his audience of former native rulers in Norway, from Haraldr hárfagri and onwards. Some of them were welcomed with enthusiasm, but after some time they became oppressive. Thus, for instance, Óláfr Tryggvason, when he "þóttisk fullkominn í ríki, þá var fyrir honum engi maðr sjálfráði. Gekk hann við freku at við oss smákonunga at heimta undir sik þær skyldir allar, er Haraldr inn hárfagri hafði hér tekit, ok enn sumt frekar". He even would decree, "á hvern guð trúa skyldi". To Hroerekr it seems safer to have foreign rulers, as the Danish kings, because they dwell far away and are less inclined to interfere with domestic customs in Norway; under them the Norwegian "smákonungar", Hroerekr and his equals, enjoy "sjálfráði ok hóglífi innan lands ok ekki ofríki".

Hringr, on the other hand, has a more national outlook. In his address (188 words) he prefers that his kinsman (Óláfr is their "frændi") "sé konungr yfir Nóregi heldr en útlendir höfðingjar". He has the presentiment about Óláfr that "auðna hans ok hamingja myni ráða, hvárt hann skal ríki fá eða eigi". He recommends his audience "at unna honum innar oeztu tígnar hér í landi ok fylgja þar at með öllum várum styrk" and "binda við hann vináttu". (47-48)

By letting Óláfr's opponents in Norway introduce themselves in such a detached manner, Snorri breaks with the short-sighted and one-dimensional way of telling Óláfs saga hins helga in LEG and reveals his insight into political oppositions and dialectics. One should observe in Hroerekr's address the retrospective and historical dimension, which Hallvard Lie has pointed to (24-25, 31, 101) as especially characteristic of the speeches in

Hkr.

Next time we meet Óláfr in a SS, he is addressing the people in Brándheimr. He refers to his victory over Earl Hákon Eiríksson and the Earl's refraining from his "ríki" (Óláfr is accompanied, he observes, by witnesses to that agreement), and offers his audience law and peace, "eptir því sem fyrir mér bauð Óláfr konungr Tryggvason" (51). He is thus careful to emphasize his legitimacy and evoke the memory of his great namesake and predecessor.

Among Óláfr's other short speeches to his countrymen one could mention a couple of addresses delivered at the meeting with the heathen chieftain Dala-Guðbrandr and his supporters. Here Óláfr appears as the missionary King, depreciating and condemning the pagan god - or rather the image of that god, the idol, "er blint er ok dauft". He ends by offering his adversaries either to become Christian or to engage in a battle with him that very day, "ok beri þeir sigr af þöllum í dag, er sá guð vill, er vér trúum á" (189-90). In this case the addresses are to be found almost word for word also in LEG. Apparently Snorri has transferred them more or less verbatim from his source. It is significant that the longest speech (131 words) by Óláfr in LEG (34) should present him as the aggressive confessor of the Christian faith.

As an Icelandic chieftain Snorri takes a remarkably great interest in King Óláfr's policy towards the Scandinavian outposts in the west: the Orkney Islands, the Faroe Islands and Iceland. Practically nothing of this matter is to be found in LEG or FAGR.

When Earl Brúsi Sigurðarson of the Orkney Islands has come to Norway in order to get King Óláfr's support against his own brother, the King's answer (110 words) in a short retrospect emphasizes the claim of the Norwegian Kings to the Islands. Beginning with Haraldr hárfagri, he also refers to Eiríkr blóðøx and his sons, and last but not least to his immediate predecessor, Óláfr Tryggvason, "frændi minn". All of them had been lords of the Orkney Islands, with an Earl as their representative there. Óláfr concludes his speech by offering Brúsi to be his Earl in the Islands - otherwise he is ready to vindicate his legitimate rights, "er várir frændr ok forellrar hafa átt vestr þannug" (167-68).

There is a warning in these words, a threat which becomes considerably stronger, when Brúsi's brother Þorfinnr visits in his turn King Óláfr to ask for his support (169). At last the King summons the brothers and Earls to an official session ("lét hann blása til fjölmennrar stefnu"), where in another speech (129 words) he announces his agreement with them (170-71). Together these three SSs give a clear picture of Óláfr's policy towards the Orkney Islands and its background.

The relations between Óláfr Haraldsson and Iceland have given rise to a speech, which Hallvard Lie rightly labels as "den kanskje merkeligste tale" (103) in Heimskringla. This speech (252 words) is delivered by an Icelfander, Einarr (Þvervingr) Eyjólfsson, at the Althing as a reply to King Óláfr's message - mediated by another Icelfander, Þórarinn Nefjólfsson - that he would like to have the island Grímsey off the north coast of Iceland as a gift from the Icelfanders, and give them instead what they could wish from his own country. Einarr refutes the request respectfully but distinctly. He describes to his fellow-countrymen what dangers it would imply for them to become subjects of a foreign ruler and liable to pay taxes to him - to say nothing of Grímsey as a possible base for his fleet and military forces. Moreover, such a concession would not be their own affair only, but a lasting yoke on their sons, on generations to come: "ok mun ánauð sú aldrigi ganga eða hverfa af þessu landi" (216). After this declaration Óláfr's proposal is unanimously rejected.

With its concrete argumentation, its penetrating logic, and its pathos, Einarr's speech has become a classic expression of Icelandic national feeling and independence - often referred to even in this century. It is a reasonable assumption that this compact speech, obviously invented by Snorri himself, reveals something of his own attitude and feelings as an Icelfander of the 13th century. Quite apart from a possible biographical aspect, within the saga text itself Einarr's declaration opens a political and historical perspective. As an imaginative reconstruction of the past it might well tell us something true of 11th century Iceland. In any case it has us look upon King Óláfr's political activities "from the other side" too.

Einarr Eyjólfsson is not even mentioned in LEG or FAGR, nor is the Swedish lawspeaker Þorgnýr Þorgnýsson. Þorgnýr appears in Snorri's vivid presentation of the strained relations between Óláfr Haraldsson and his Swedish namesake and colleague, King Óláfr Eiríksson. At the Uppsala thing the old lawspeaker delivers the third longest speech (318 words) in Óláfs saga helga. It is an outspoken and energetic attack on the King's politics, especially towards Norway and Óláfr Haraldsson. Þorgnýr refers to several former Swedish kings, a historical evocation characteristic of Snorri. They were willing to take advice from their subjects, unlike "konungr þessi, er nú er", who only listens to what he wants to hear. Þorgnýr concludes his sermon by hinting, very expressly, at the possibility that people will attack the King and kill him - such things had happened before in Sweden. (115-16) After that the King has only one choice: to yield, at least for the time being.

This speech too has become classic, especially to the Swedes of course, as a symbol of ancient Swedish peasant democracy and

independence. It is hardly imaginable as "history", though it may reveal a good deal of Snorri's own ideal. On the other hand it has an important function within the narrative. It presents new aspects of the Swedish society, domestic tensions which also shed some light on Sweden's relations to Norway. We have a kind of counterpart here to Óláfr Haraldsson's troubles with some of the Norwegian chieftains. "Óláfr digri", however, is never placed in such a humiliating situation as is his Swedish colleague in Þorgnýr's speech. He is after all the hero of the saga.

The end of the saga, the relation of the decisive battle at Stiklastaðir and Óláfr's death, is accompanied with a concentration of speeches. Three of them are delivered by the King. But typically enough Snorri is also anxious to have the other side properly represented in this connection too. These speeches, five in all, contribute very much to the clarity and logic of the relation, unlike LEG with its rather confuse account of the battle. Thanks to the speeches the reader has opportunities of pausing and taking in the situation.

When Óláfr has reviewed his forces before the battle - they turn out to be more than 3600 men - he addresses them (262 words), giving careful and expert instructions for the arrangement of the fighting units, and announcing their common watchword: "Fram, fram, Kristsmenn, krossmenn, konungsmenn." (354-55) This watchword is not to be found neither in FAGR nor in LEG, where it was certainly to be expected, if it had come down through tradition. Perhaps Snorri has invented it. In any case it connects the King with Christian pathos in an authoritative and official way so to speak.

The last two speeches by Óláfr, both among his five longest ones (316 and 248 words respectively), are concerned with the impending encounter, but also with his own status as a Christian ruler.

In HKR as well as in LEG he asks his men, what kind of action should now be taken. In LEG the question is directed to Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld alone, who answers with a stanza. In HKR Finnur Árnason recommends to "brenna svá vendiliga byggð alla, at aldri stoeði kot eptir, gjalda svá bóndum dróttinsvikin" (355); that would frighten and disintegrate the peasant army. Þormóðr adds a stanza, the same as in LEG, supporting Finnur's advice. In LEG the King answers Þormóðr with a few words: "'Já', segir konunggrinn, 'trúa má þér til þess, Þormóðr', segir konunggrinn, 'þú segir þat, sem þér býr í brjósti. Önnur ráð munu vér nú verða taka heldr en brenna lönd sjálfra várara.'" (81) In HKR, on the other hand, the King's refusal widens into a declaration of principles. Óláfr admits that he has earlier had his own subjects' farms burnt down. But that was because people had given up their

Christian faith and begun to sacrifice to heathen gods again. The heavy punishment thus was on God's behalf: "Áttu vér þá guðs réttar at reka." Now Óláfr has to do with treachery against himself only, bad enough to be sure, but possible to excuse ("at veita nokkura frían") (A similar argument is to be found at another place in LEG, 71, but somewhat confused.) Therefore the King states as his will that "menn fari spakliga ok geri engi hervirki". If he and his men are to die in the battle, it will be better "at fara þangat eigi með ránfé". Whereas, if they will be victorious, it will be better not to have done any damage to the farms, as these will be the property of the victors. In spite of his rather conciliatory attitude, Óláfr does not forget to order that spies should be killed on the spot, if they were caught. (356-57)

In his last, urgent address to his men the King speaks both as the competent military leader and as the Christian monarch, thinking of his destiny in another life. He has a tough armed force, he remarks. Although the peasant army is somewhat bigger and thus can hold more men in reserve, letting them fight alternately, that advantage might well be neutralized by attacking them resolutely. As for himself, he assures that he will not flee but "annathvært sigrask á bóndum eða falla í orrostu". Once more he promises to reward his men, if they will be victorious, according to the merits they display in the battlefield. He asks God to let him have the destiny that will be the best for him, and he hopes that he and his men fight for a more righteous cause than their adversaries. God will save their properties ("eigur várar"), or else he will for their loss here offer them a far better reward than they could wish for. (365-66)

Thus in his last speeches Óláfr more and more turns his thoughts towards God and the possibility of his own death. The contours of the saint begin to emerge. It is interesting to notice, therefore, that his very last few words imply nothing like a climax or memorable remark, but a rather trivial pun. The King strikes at a certain Þórir hundr with his sword. It does not cut, however, as Þórir is protected by a reindeer skin. Then the King exhorts his marshal Björn stallari: "Ber þú hundinn, er eigi bíta járn." (384) A few moments later Óláfr is killed. In this case HKR agrees with LEG, where the King makes his last remark in the same episode, although the wording is a little different. (85) In LEG Óláfr's concluding words "Beri þér þá hundana" are in rather strange contrast with the five year old boy's "Ljós, ljós, ljós" at his christening (cf. p. 12 above).

One of the two speeches by Óláfr's adversaries at Stiklastaðir is delivered by Kálfr Árnason, who has been chosen leader of the peasant army. His address to the chieftains ("lendir menn") is remarkable for its timidity and lack of confidence: "En ef vér

erum nú nokkut skelfir"; "munu vér þó koma í þá raun, /.../, at oss er ósigrinn viss, nema vér sém skeleggir"; "En ef eigi verður svá, þá er oss betra at hætta eigi til bardaga". In fact Kálfr seems to be more positive about the King and his army: "er þar öruggur oddvitinn, ok mun allt lið hans vera honum tryggt til fylgðar". But of course he concludes by exhorting the chieftains to be "snarpir ok skeleggir" and egg their men on. (373-74)

There is a sharp contrast between Kálfr's balanced and rather timid speech and the fierce attack on Óláfr delivered by Sigurðr, Earl Hákon Eiríksson's "hirðbyskup". The Bishop is introduced as "ákafamaðr í skapi ok sundrgörðamaðr í orðum sínum" (370). His speech on this occasion ("at einu húspingi, þar sem þá var mikit fjölmenni") confirms that characterization. In his address this representative of the Church never mentions God, unlike Óláfr. He refers to the King contemptuously as "Óláfr þessi" and showers invectives upon his men: "markamenn ok stigamenn eða aðrir ránsmenn"; "óaldarflokkar"; "illþýði"; "víkingar ok illgörðamenn". He ends spitefully by forbidding men to take fallen enemies to a church, but "heldr draga hræ þeira í holt ok hreysi".

In a way, typical of Snorri, the speech gives a retrospect of Óláfr's career, this time in an extremely negative key, where the King appears as a kind of criminal, who has been used to "þegar á unga aldri at ræna ok drepa menn". (371-72)

It is a triumph of Snorri's psychological insight that this furious rhetoric seems natural in the Bishop's mouth, and that the reader must admit that there is something true in this scornful description of the future saint.

The many speeches in Snorri's Óláfs saga helga contribute substantially to the vividness and freshness of the presentation. The skilful staging plays its part by bringing them into relief. Einarr Eyjólfsson's speech (cf. p. 21 above), for instance, is not given until the affair seems to be more or less settled in the King's favour. Einarr's brother, the influential chieftain Guðmundr, is positive to the King's request, "ok snøru margir aðrir eptir því" (216). Only then, as if by chance, people ask Einarr why he has had nothing to say - and he delivers his decisive address.

When the lawspeaker Þorgnýr appears with his impressive speech at the Uppsala thing, we have already met him sitting in his high settle at home: an old and very tall man, with a beard covering his breast and reaching his knees. The reader is eager to know what this venerable man will say before his King.

The main speeches in HKR are admirable as individual rhetoric achievements, as art in a more narrow sense of that word. But they are still more important for what they tell us, and for how they organize the narrative. They usually appear at turning-

-points in the course of events. They give us a look backwards and forwards, and thus create a kind of historical space, very different from the sometimes rather chaotic crowding of episodes, slight and important indiscriminately, in a text like LEG. They also provide an insight into historical dialectics, revealing varied aspects of men and actions.

Snorri distributes these speeches with a kind of calm detachment and objectivity, which seems to be one of his characteristic qualities as historian. Probably no Danish, no Norwegian, no Swedish contemporary writer would have been able to relate the story of Óláfr Haraldsson in such a varied perspective, in that spirit of serene retrospect. As an Icelandic magnate and patriot Snorri had quite special qualifications for looking at his Scandinavian neighbours from without.

Snorri's sense of order and logic, beautifully displayed in the major speeches, does not prevent him, however, from giving much care to minor SSs and dialogues also. We have already had some examples of his rewriting of his sources, and improvement on them, in such cases.

Among the petty Norwegian "kings", whom Óláfr makes away with, one is named Hroerekr Dagsson. He is not even mentioned in FAGR; in LEG we have this laconic remark: "Þat er sagt, at þann lét hann einn blinda, er Hroerekr hét, ok sendi hann til Íslands út Guðmundi ríka, ok dó hann þar." (23) In HKR, on the other hand, Hroerekr has become one of Óláfr's main opponents in the beginning of his career, warning his colleagues not to accept their young "frændi" as absolute ruler. When Óláfr has had Hroerekr captured and blinded, he keeps him permanently in his company in order to control him. There Hroerekr dwells for a long time, and Snorri tells us in great detail and with abundant dialogue of his behaviour and various plots to kill Óláfr. When the King at last decides to get rid of him, we have the comic conversation between Óláfr and the Iclander Þórarinn Nefjólfs-son about Þórarinn's ugly feet, ending in a bet, which the King wins - by a surprising and rather sophistic argument. Then Þórarinn, the loser, has to take Hroerekr to Iceland. Perhaps Snorri had taken such an interest in that unhappy "king", because it had been said, "at sá einn konungr hvílir á Íslandi". (126-28)

The extensive "Hroerekr section" is, among other things, an excellent example of Snorri's humour - a quality almost completely lacking in the FAGR and LEG versions of the saga. As another humorous SS one could mention the conversation between the Swedish King Óláfr and three of his advisers, the brothers Arnviðr blindi, Þorviðr stami and Freyviðr dauði. They are called upon to interpret to the King a couple of stories by a certain lawspeaker Emundr. (152-54) This episode, dwelt on in detail, clearly bears the stamp of folk-tale. But the stories told by

Emundr, and the by and by unfolding interpretations by the three brothers, are brilliantly adapted for a somewhat devious critic of the King's behaviour. The dialogue here may be looked upon as a comic counterpart to the lawspeaker Þorgnýr's heavy frontal attack on the King some time earlier. (Cf. pp. 21-22 above.)

DS and dialogue are not, of course, the only features of HKR which reveal the author's special qualities as historian and writer. His talent for structuring the narrative by presenting appropriate background information, a talent often displayed in the speeches, is also apparent, for instance, in the instructive chapter (109-10) introducing the important section on Sweden, with the lawspeaker Þorgnýr's speech at the Uppsala thing as a dramatic climax.

However, Snorri's DS and dialogue probably witness his genius as a writer more than anything else. There we find combined his outstanding qualities as historian, judge of characters, and artist.

NOTES

- 1) The editions used are: for LEG Olafs saga hins helga (Kristiania 1922), edited by Oscar Albert Johnsen; for FAGR Fagrskinna (København 1902-03), edited by Finnur Jónsson; for HKR Óláfs saga helga, edited by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson in Íslenzk fornrit. XXVII. bindi. Heimskringla II (Reykjavík 1945). The orthography in quotations from the two former editions has been "normalized" according to the standard applied in the Íslenzk fornrit series.
- 2) In the Fagrskinna edition Óláfs saga helga covers the chapters 25-28 (inclusive), pp. 140-83. In the legendary version I have dropped the last chapters 90-107, pp. 92-108, relating miracles which are, some of them, to be found in HKR elsewhere than in Óláfs saga helga. Poetry is not included in my figures.
- 3) For a fuller account of the share of DS in various saga texts, see my book Stilsignalement och författarskap i norrön sagalitteratur (Göteborg 1968), Table 9, pp. 214-16.
- 4) Cf. Hallvard Lie on "Scenebeskrivelse og scenearrangement" (13-24).