

L'ANALISI LINGUISTICA E LETTERARIA

FACOLTÀ DI SCIENZE LINGUISTICHE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE
UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

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INDICE

The <i>Norwegian Rune Poem</i> in context: structure, style and imagery <i>Veronka Szöke</i>	5
‘Aller + infinitif’ et ‘andare a + infinitif’ : effets de sens ‘illustratif’ et ‘risolutivo’ <i>Alida Silletti</i>	33
Sugli adattamenti italiani del <i>Mauger bleu</i> (1968) e del <i>Mauger rouge</i> (1977) <i>Monica Barsi</i>	53
Teatro sentimentale e propaganda. <i>Les Victimes cloîtrées</i> di Jacques-Marie Boutet <i>Sara Cigada e Caterina Garaffoni</i>	69
Zur Geschichte, Verbreitung und (Nicht-)Rezeption des Begriffes ‘Konfix’ <i>Bernard Haidacher</i>	87
Allgemeine Diskursreferenz in deutschen und italienischen Einleitungen zu wissenschaftlichen Zeitschriftenartikeln <i>Giancarmine Bongo</i>	103
I risultati di un’indagine sull’insegnamento e sulla rappresentazione dei colori nell’ambito dell’italiano L2/LS <i>Elena Ballarin e Paolo Nitti</i>	123
Metapragmatica della cortesia nell’Italia del primo Ottocento. La polemica sulla cortesia tra Melchiorre Gioja e Antonio Rosmini: utilitarismo o principio di carità <i>Francesca Saltamacchia e Andrea Rocci</i>	137
Recensioni e Rassegne	
Recensioni	157
Rassegna di Linguistica generale e di Glottodidattica a cura di Giovanni Gobber	161
Rassegna di Linguistica francese a cura di Enrica Galazzi e Michela Murano	175
Rassegna di Linguistica inglese a cura di Maria Luisa Maggioni e Amanda C. Murphy	183
Rassegna di Linguistica russa a cura di Anna Bonola	191
Rassegna di Linguistica tedesca a cura di Federica Missaglia	195
Indice degli autori	205

THE NORWEGIAN RUNE POEM IN CONTEXT: STRUCTURE, STYLE AND IMAGERY

VERONKA SZŐKE

The *Norwegian Rune Poem* has often been evaluated negatively because of an overall impression of a lack of coherence and cohesion. Analysis of the poem against the background of wisdom tradition has allowed a better understanding of the mechanisms involved in its composition. The article considers the poem in parallel with *Sólarljóð* and *Málsháttakvæði* – two poetic works deriving from the same cultural context – and aims to further analyse the poem's structure and illuminate aspects of its imagery.

Keywords: Norwegian Rune Poem, *Sólarljóð*, *Málsháttakvæði*, runic lore

1. Introduction

The Germanic runic lore is of a composite nature; it consists of short inscriptions by means of runic letters, carved on portable objects made of wood, bone or metal, and of later texts, usually longer in size, and carved on the rune stones which are scattered throughout the Scandinavian countryside. The runic tradition also includes runes handed down in manuscripts, referred to through the comprehensive label of *runica manuscripta*. The latter tradition is preeminently represented by lists of runic alphabets and a small group of so-called 'rune poems', in which poetic circumlocutions inspired by the runes' names are enumerated in a row. This corpus consists of the short and structurally very plain, 9th-century *Abecedarium Nordmannicum*¹, and verses from the Anglo-Saxon and Norse areas, which are more elaborate and informative. The 10th century-*Old English Rune Poem* (*OERP*) deals with the 29 runes of the *futhorc*, the Old English, amplified, version of the runic alphabet²; the *Icelandic* and *Norwegian Rune Poems* (*IRP* and *NRP*, respectively) comment on the

¹ As M. Halsall sums up, the *Abecedarium Nordmannicum* was probably "adapted from a Danish original for use in the school there as part of the ninth century missionary effort directed towards Scandinavia" (*The Old English Rune Poem: a critical edition*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto/ Buffalo/London 1981, pp. 34-35).

² The *Old English Rune Poem* will be cited from Halsall's edition and translation (*ibid.*, pp. 86-93). In the appendix to her work, the scholar also published the editions and translations of the *Norwegian* and *Icelandic Rune Poems* (*ibid.*, 181-186). The quotations in the present article will be from this work. The text of the *OERP* is only known through Hickeys' transcription (1705), since the manuscript originally containing the poem – the Cotton Otho B X fol., dated 10th century – was destroyed by a fire at Ashburnham House (1731). As for the poem's genesis, several scholars claim an early dating, that is the 8th or 9th century (see A. Bauer, *Runengedichte. Texte, Untersuchungen und Kommentare zur gesamten Überlieferung*, Fassbaender, Wien 2003, pp. 92-93).

names of the 16 runes which form the younger, Norse version of the *fupark*³, which, compared with the original alphabet made of 24 runes, lost 8 letters. Within the older *fupark*, the runes have a tripartite organization: they are gathered in three sets of 8 runes, which are called *ættir* (sg. *ætt* [group, family]). These groups are known as *fé-ætt* [wealth-group], *hagall-ætt* [hail-group], and *Týr-ætt* [Týr-group], thus reflecting the name of the initial rune in each set.

As for the runic poems, the *IRP* is attested in several copies, the earliest of which goes back to the 15th century; its stanzas are made up of 3 half-lines, “three groups of periphrases or kennings defining, or alluding to, the rune-name”⁴. The *NRP*, which is the subject of the present analysis, probably goes back to the beginning of the 13th century, but is only known through late, 17th-century copies⁵, and through a print by Ole Worm⁶. It consists of couplets, in which the first line conveys a statement related to the rune’s name, characterised by alliteration and usually devised in the gnomic mode. These first lines of the couplets concern nature, natural elements and their properties, human life, feelings and behaviours in specific circumstances. Thus, the poet evokes, for instance, the sun as provider of light ([*sól*] *er landa ljóme* [(the sun) is the light of the world”], st. 11.21), the coldness of hail ([*hagall*] *er kaldastr korna* [(hail) is the coldest of grains], st. 7.13) and the thick texture of ice ([*ís*] *kollum brú bræiða* [(ice) we call the broad bridge], st. 9.17). Hardship and the transience of human life are also pointed out ([*nauð*] *gerer næppa koste* [(need) leaves little choice], st. 8.15; [*máðr*] *er moldar auki* [(man) is an augmentation of the dust], st. 14.27). These assertions also comprise mythic references, as in the case of the þurs- and Týr-runes: the former is perilous to women ([þurs] *veldr kvenna kvillu* [(the giant) causes illness in women], st. 3.5), while the latter mentions the one-handed god Týr ([Týr] *er einendr ása*, st. 12.23).

A sapiential style features most of the second lines in the *NRP*, which deal with the themes listed above: for instance, they include a gnome on the wolf’s habitat (*föðesk ulfr í skóge* [the wolf lives in the forest], st. 1.2), a truistic generalization about human reaction to negative circumstances (*kátr verðr fár af illu* [few rejoice at bad luck], st. 3.6), or the urge to help someone physically impaired (*blindan þarf at leiða* [the blind man must be led], st. 9.18). Allusions to myths and legends also occur in these metrical units: Reginn, the renowned foster-father of the legendary hero Sigurðr, is defined as the maker of the best of

³ The *Swedish Rune Poem* is also part of the Scandinavian tradition. However, it will not be dealt with because it is late and its text is defective.

⁴ R.I. Page, *The Icelandic Rune Poem*, Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London 1999, pp. 1-37, 1 (first published in *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 42, 1998). At the end of each stanza, there is a Latin synonym of the rune’s name, followed by an Icelandic word for ‘king’ or ‘ruler’.

⁵ The earliest and most authoritative copies are by Árni Magnússon and Jón Eggertsson. Bauer also conducted a survey on several later copies of the poem that to date have not received much scholarly attention. She compared them with the two oldest copies, concluding that they all go back to the same original (*ibid.*, pp. 116-117, 125-132, 161-162). For an overview of the dating of the poem and related issues, see *ibid.*, pp. 131-133.

⁶ The poem was published in his *Runir seu Danica Literatura Antiquissima. Vulgo Gothica dicta*, 1636, pp. 105-107. Worm’s work is partly biased by errors presumably originating from the Danish scholar’s inexperience in Old Norwegian.

the swords (*Reginn sló sverðet bæzta*, st. 5.10); the generosity of the mythical Danish King Fróði is pointed out ([...] *þr var Fróðe*, st. 10.20), and the malicious god Loki is characterised as the one adept in deception (*Loki bar flærðar tíma*, st. 13.26). The second line of the *bagall*-stanza defines Christ as the creator of the world (*Kristr skóp heimenn forna*, 7.14).

The *NRP* has been subject to close scrutiny since the 19th century mainly because, together with the *IRP*, it was envisioned as a quarry from which some of the building blocks of the religious beliefs, rituals and traditions of ancient Germanic communities could be extracted⁷. However, these poems were not held in great esteem as literary products. The main reason for this view, which concerned especially – but not only – the *NRP*, was the difficulty in finding a ratio in the coupling of the lines in the stanzas, which were charged with an overall lack of cohesion⁸. For instance, the definition of the *fé*-rune as *frénda róg*, that is discord among kinsmen, and the following reference to the wolf living in the forest appeared incongruous (st. 1.1-2). The link between the kenning-like reference to the *sól*-rune as *landa ljóme* [the light of the world] and the subsequent note on the act of bowing “before the divine judgement” [*lúti ek helgum dóme*] seemed to be a question of metrical necessity (the end-rhyme *ljóme – dóme*, st. 11.21-22) rather than a logical semantic link. Not less perplexing appeared the association between the blunt reminder of man’s mortality – [*maðr*] *er moldar auki* [(man) is an augmentation of the dust] – and the reference to the remarkable size of the hawk’s talon (*mikil er greip á hauki* [great is the claw of the hawk]) in the *maðr*-couplet (st. 14.27-28). Thus, the conclusion resulting from these considerations was that the purpose of the poem consisted in handing down the runes’ names and in enhancing their memorization through the use of alliteration and end-rhyme, with no pretence of developing a narrative discourse.

This assessment of the poem’s limited value and function was long-lasting and was still maintained by Maureen Halsall, in her 1981 edition of the *OERP*⁹. The contribution by the Norwegian runologist Aslak Liestøl (1948)¹⁰, who addressed the irksome issue from a new perspective, went unnoticed for several decades despite its insightfulness: with regard

⁷ This approach also characterised several 20th-century studies, amongst which Schneider’s *Die germanischen Runennamen* (1956) plays a paradigmatic role. For further references, see M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, pp. 4-6.

⁸ This conclusion was shared by several scholars of great renown such as Jacob Grimm, Eugen Mogk, Finnur Jónsson (see M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, pp. 36-37, and M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems: a comparative study*, “Anglo-Saxon England”, 19, 1990, pp. 23-39, 27).

⁹ M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁰ A. Liestøl, *Det norske runediktet*, “Maal og Minne”, 1948, pp. 65-71. Liestøl’s idea has been taken up again first by B. Neuner and then by J. Louis-Jensen, who applied the ‘pictographic’ principle to explain some further couplets. According to Neuner, for instance, the *is*-rune recalls the shape of a staff, that is, an object of great help to a blind person, who is referred to in the second line. In the *Týr*-dystich, the second line refers to the forging of Mjölhnir, Þórr’s hammer, and the rune could be a pictogram of this hammer; see B. Neuner, *Das Norwegische Runengedicht – was sich hinter den zweiten Zeilen verbirgt*, in *Runes and Their Secrets: Studies in Runology*, M. Stoklund, M. Lerche Nielsen, B. Holmberg, G. Fellows-Jensen eds., Museum Tusulanum Press, Copenhagen 2006, pp. 233-245, esp. pp. 238-240. By applying the pictographic thread, J. Louis-Jensen reinterpreted the *Týr*-couplet and also advanced an explanation for the *fé*-, *úr*- and *bjarkan*-runes; see *The Norwegian Runic Poem as a Mnemonic Device. The pictographic principle*, in the *Seventh International Symposium*

to the *maðr*-, *sól*- and *hagall*-stanzas, the scholar remarked that the key to the relationship between the lines within these couplets lies in the very shape of the runes. The gnome concerning the hawk's talon, for example, would hint at the shape of the *maðr*-rune M (st. 14.27-28). Similarly, the act of worship mentioned in the second line of the *sól*-couplet – *lúti ek helgum dóme* [I bow before the divine judgement] – would have its iconographic equivalent in the shape of the *sól*-rune C, which, if rotated 90 degrees, would remind us of the stylized figure of a kneeling person (st. 11.21-22). The third example, that of *hagall* (st. 7.13-14), is equally telling since the rune h resembles the Christogram, and Christ is the subject of the second line of the dystich (*Kristr skóp hœimenn forna* [Christ created the primaeval world])¹¹.

It was not until Clunies Ross's comparative article on the *Rune Poems* (1990) that a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the *NRP* and of its Old English and Icelandic counterparts was achieved. The scholar sketched the background against which these poems should be considered and pointed out the centrality of wisdom tradition, which was very influential in several works in the Germanic tradition. Clunies Ross pointed out that “the poetic context in which the *Rune Poems* originated was primarily gnomic and encyclopedic”¹². This recognition and a due consideration of the gnomic works' basic features – their agglutinative nature, which usually results in the piling-up of unrelated maxims and gnomic utterances, the rapid changes in subject and perspective and, accordingly, the absence of the kind of consistency modern audience would expect¹³ – made the *NRP* appear far less idiosyncratic than it had been considered to be in the past¹⁴.

Additionally, some peculiarities of the *NRP* have found an explanation in a rhetorical and stylistic technique used in the skaldic poetic diction and which, according to Clunies Ross, was also detectable in the *NRP*. The scholar paralleled the juxtaposition of apparently unrelated images and topics in the *NRP* to the *hjástælt* 'tagged on'-device, which the Icelandic man of letter Snorri Sturluson discusses in the last section of his treatise on Norse

on *Runes and Runic Inscriptions*, Oslo 2010, pp. 1-5, esp. pp. 3-4 <https://www.khm.uio.no/english/research/publications/7th-symposium-preprints>, last accessed April 2, 2017.

¹¹ This association is endorsed by *The Third Grammatical Treatise*, in which the name of the rune is not simply *sól*, but *knésól* “knee-sun”; see M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 26.

¹² *Ibidem*. Also Solari made a comparative analysis between the *OERP* and the Scandinavian *Rune Poems*, in which he came to a different conclusion from that advocated by Clunies Ross. He claimed that the *OERP* diverges from the *NRP* and *IRP* both in terms of content and of structure; R. Solari, *Contenuto e forma nel Poemetto runico anglosassone*, Galeno Editrice, Perugia 1988.

¹³ The bibliography concerning Germanic wisdom poetry and its characteristics is ample; some of the most influential and comprehensive works are by T.A. Shippey, *Poems of Wisdom and Learning*, D.S. Brewer/Rowman and Littlefield, Cambridge/Totowa (NJ) 1977 (first published 1976); C. Larrington, *A Store of Common Sense: Gnomic Theme and Style in Old Icelandic and Old English Wisdom Poetry*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1993; P. Cavill, *Maxims in Old English Poetry*, D.S. Brewer, Cambridge 1999; B.E. Schorn, *How Can His Word Be Trusted?: Speaker and Authority in Old Norse Wisdom Poetry*, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 2012 (Ph.D. Diss.).

¹⁴ M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, pp. 24-27.

myths and skaldic poetry called *Edda*, in *Háttatal* “List of verse forms”¹⁵. The organization and aim governing the stanzas that showcase *hjástælt* are well described by Roberta Frank: “the last five syllables of a half-stanza are divorced in subject matter and syntax from what precedes, yet in their nonsequitur isolation seem to comment on – and demand a coupling with – the previous sentence”¹⁶. The *NRP* only conveys two proper examples of *hjástælt* – in the *óss*- and *lǫgr*-couplets (sts. 4.7-8 and 15.29-30) –, but some of the unusual juxtapositions fashioned in the poem may be associated with this technique which probably aimed at challenging the reader to detect links that were not immediately obvious on the surface¹⁷.

The association of this stylistic feature with the *NRP* and the role of sapiential literature in its context led Clunies Ross, and later Bauer, to pinpoint links that had previously gone unnoticed. These were found within the couplets of the poem and within its larger units, that is the three sections into which it can be split, and seem to parallel the gathering of the runes into three *ættir* in the elder *fupark*¹⁸. The first of the three sections of the poem, corresponding to the *fé-att*, comprises six stanzas; the second, the *hagall-att*, consists of five couplets (sts. 7-11), as does the final *Týr-att* (sts. 12-16).

Starting from these assumptions, it is useful to give a brief survey of the sapiential tradition in Norse literature, which may account for the unfolding of some of the topics and for the associations established therein. This overview also serves to show the connection between the *NRP* and the other two works – *Sólarljóð* [Song of the Sun] and *Málsháttakvæði* [The Proverb Poem] – which are also indebted to wisdom tradition. In the course of the

¹⁵ *Háttatal* 13: *Mannþýrdir fá merðar / met öld, fira geti / lýtr audgiäfa itrum / öll. Stöd sær of fiöllum. / Rjóðvendils gat randa / reki-Njörd at säkia / (hæf ferð var sú harda) / heim. Skaut jörd ör geima. Þetta köllum vér hjástælt. Hér er it fyrsta <visuorð> ok annat ok þriðja sér um mál, ok hefir þó þat mál eina samstöfun með fullu orði af*hinu fjórða visuorði, en þær fimm samstöfur *er eptir*fara lúka heilu máli, ok skal orðtak vera forn minni. “His virtues bring glory to the protector of men, all noble mankind bows to the splendid wealth-giver. *The sea lay over the mountains*. [emphasis mine] I was able to visit at home the Niord [king] who cultivates the reddening rod of shields [sword], that journey was very fitting. *The earth sprang out of the sea* [emphasis mine] This we call *hjástælt* [abuttet]. Here the first, second and third lines belong together in sense, and yet this sentence includes one syllable comprising a complete word from the fourth line, and the five syllables that follow complete a full sentence and the expression has to be proverbial statements”. Snorri’s *Edda* is quoted from A. Faulkes’ editions: *Snorri Sturluson. Edda: “Prologue” and “Gylfaginning”*, Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London 2005² (first edition Oxford University Press, 1982); *Snorri Sturluson. Edda: Skáldskaparmál 1. Introduction, Text and Notes*, Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London 1998; *Snorri Sturluson. Edda: Háttatal*, Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London 2007² (first edition Clarendon Press, 1991). The translation of Snorri’s *Edda* is also by A. Faulkes (*Snorri Sturluson. Edda*, Dent/Tuttle, London/Vermont 2004 [first published 1987]).*

¹⁶ R. Frank, *Old Norse Court Poetry: The Dróttkvætt Stanza*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/ London 1978, p. 107.

¹⁷ M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28, 31-35; the reflections on the tripartite organization of the poem and its features are further developed by Alessia Bauer, who followed Clunies Ross’s leads (*Runengedichte*, pp. 135-137, 162). On the division of the older *fupark* (and its more recent version) into *ættir*, see R. Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta: The English Tradition*, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, Bruges 1954, pp. 89-169.

analysis, references will be made, whenever necessary, to the *Old English and Icelandic Rune Poems*¹⁹.

2. Wisdom tradition in Old Norse poetry

Sapiential topics feature in several mythological and heroic eddic poems, and also in saga literature²⁰. The main purpose of wisdom tradition was to hand down knowledge and old lore in order to help man make sense of the complexities of the world, especially of those aspects that defied human understanding providing guidance in the form of advice and precepts. For instance, wisdom subjects are at the core of the first and longest section of the eddic poem *Hávamál* [Sayings of the High One] (sts. 1-95), where Óðinn – performing both as a seeker of wisdom and as a dispenser of knowledge – conveys sententious generalisations on man's life, the order of the world, the rules of human interactions, the role of friendship in man's life, women's fickle nature and the mutability of life, together with precepts sometimes endorsed by references to the god's own experience. In *Grímnismál* [Grímnir's Sayings] and *Vafþrúðnismál* [Vafþrúðnir's Sayings], the focus is on mythological lore, which is disclosed in a monologue delivered by a captive Óðinn, and in the wisdom contest that juxtaposes the god to the giant Vafþrúðnir, respectively. The acquisition of wisdom, its putting into employment and transmission are also paramount in the heroic poems conveyed in *Poetic Edda* concerning the Volsungic-Nibelungic cycle, particularly those recounting the education of young Sigurðr and his first adventurous deeds²¹.

Gnomic tradition also plays a key role in works dated to the 13th and 14th centuries, in which eddic conventions and pagan imagery and characters surface in the context of the Christian literary environment to which they belong. Two works that showcase these features²², which are of relevance for the present analysis, are “the most Christian eddic poem”²³, *Sólarljóð* [Song of the Sun], dated to the second half of the 13th century²⁴,

¹⁹ On the close relationship between the *Rune Poems* and wisdom tradition, see M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, pp. 38-45 and M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 26.

²⁰ P. Cavill, *Maxims*, p. 25, and B.E. Schorn, ‘How Can His Word’, pp. 19, 155.

²¹ Positive battle-omens and advice on fighting are taught to Sigurðr by Hnikarr, that is, Óðinn in disguise (*Reginismál*); gnomic wisdom and mythological lore are unveiled to him by the dragon Fáfnir at the very moment of its death (*Fáfnismál*); finally, in *Sigrdrífumál* the Valkyrie Sigrdrífa teaches him how to make the best use of runes. Eddic poems are quoted from Gustav Neckel and Hans Kuhn's edition (*Edda. Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern. I Text*, Carl Winter, Heidelberg 1983³ [first published 1914]) and in Carolyne Larrington's translation (*The Poetic Edda*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014² [first published 1996]) if not otherwise indicated.

²² Another important work to mention is *Hugsvinnismál* “Sayings of the Wise-minded One”, the Norse rendition of the popular gnomic collection known as *Disticha Catonis*, dated to the 3rd century, which was adapted to offering “moral instructions for Christian living as well as common sense advice” (B.E. Schorn, ‘How Can His Word’, p. 130).

²³ E.B. Schorn, *Eddic Poetry for a New Era: Tradition and Innovation in Sólarljóð and Hugsvinnismál*, “Viking and Medieval Scandinavia”, 7, 2011, pp. 131-149, 133.

²⁴ The dating of *Sólarljóð* and related issues are concisely summed up in the poem's last edition by C. Larrington and P. Robinson (*Sólarljóð*, in *Poetry on Christian Subjects. Part 1: The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Mar-

and *Málsháttakvæði* [The Proverb Poem], composed in the Orkneys, probably by Bjarni Kolbeinsson, in the 13th century²⁵, which exceptionally combines wisdom content with skaldic form. A few similarities between the *Song of the Sun* and the *NRP* have already been singled out²⁶, but they could be further implemented, as I shall try to show later on, whilst the *The Proverb Poem* has not yet been considered in relationship with the *NRP*. Interestingly, the Orkneyan poem, which consists of thirty stanzas of alliterating and end-rhymed lines, was viewed in early scholarly works in a similar way to the *NRP*: its piling-up of gnomic statements, proverbs and references to Norse heroic and divine figures, and its apparent lack of a structuring principle, led Andreas Heusler to state bluntly: “jedenfalls überwiegt das Gepräge der einer losen Sentenzenreihe”²⁷.

Sólarljóð, written in *ljóðaháttur* [song meter]²⁸, belongs to the popular medieval genre of visionary literature; the poet has a father deliver an account of the Other-World to his son “adapt[ing] the myths of the Eddas and the kennings of the skalds”²⁹ to make the audience ponder over virtuous and sinful behaviour, leading to repentance and, ultimately, salvation. The account is preceded by an extensive gnomic section (sts. 1-32), in which five moral *exempla* are developed: hospitality and the violation of its rules (sts. 1-7), the transience of mundane riches (sts. 8-9), the jeopardy that love may bring about in relationships between friends (sts. 10-14), the pitfalls of pride (sts. 15-18) and the perils entailed in trusting one’s enemies (sts. 19-24). Traditional gnomic utterances may also be applied to promoting Christian moral stances, as in the next section of the poem, that consisting of counsels (sts. 25-32); they underline, for instance, the value of prayer (sts. 25, 27-29), the importance of setting wicked deeds right (st. 26), the pressing necessity of shunning sin (st. 30), also warning against the dangers deriving from duplicity (st. 31).

This extensive section is followed by the vivid rendering of the father’s falling ill, his death and his soul’s temporary presence in a vaguely defined environment, before he begins the ultramundane journey proper (sts. 33-52) through hell and heaven, which he recounts to his son (sts. 53-80). In Fidjestøl’s view, the organization of the poem reflects a pattern in

garet Clunies Ross ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2007, pp. 287-288), from which the text and its translation will be quoted in this essay.

²⁵ For bibliographical information on the poem and on its dating, see R. Frank (*Sex, Lies and Málsháttakvæði: A Norse Poem from Medieval Orkney*, The Fell-Benedikz Lecture delivered in the University of Nottingham, 22 May 2003, University of Nottingham, Center for the Study of the Viking Age 2004, pp. 3-31, 4), who is responsible for the first English translation of the whole poem is. Frank’s work is based on Finnur Jónsson’s edition, which is also used in the present work (*Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning*, vol. IIB, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1914, pp. 138-145). A new edition of the poem, by R. Frank, is forthcoming (*Poetry from Treatises on Poetics*, K.E. Gade – E. Marold ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2017).

²⁶ See § 4.1.

²⁷ A. Heusler, *Die altgermanische Dichtung*, Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, Berlin/Neuabersberg 1928, p. 72.

²⁸ This meter consists of two metrical units, each formed by two alliterating half-lines, followed by a full line that has its own system of alliteration.

²⁹ F. Amory, *Norse-Christian Syncretism and interpretatio christiana in Sólarljóð*, “Gripla”, 7, 1990, 1, pp. 251-266, 252 (first published in the Papers of the Sixth International Saga Conference. Workshop 6. Christianity and Old Norse Poetry, 1990, pp. 1-25).

which three main sections are developed: life in this world (sts. 1-32), death (sts. 33-52), and life in the hereafter (sts. 53-82)³⁰.

The combined use of pagan imagery and Christian elements detectable in some parts of *Sólarljóð*, and also, though much more concisely, in the *NRP*, is not unusual; it accords well with the typological interpretation of history used in medieval exegesis, in historiography and in literary works. The whole life of the world, from its beginning to its end, “from Adam’s Fall to the Last Judgment”³¹, was interpreted in the light of this hermeneutic pattern, according to which facts that had occurred in the pre-Christian past foreshadowed future events in the history of mankind³².

On the other hand, overt Christian elements are not attested in *Málsháttakvæði*, in which gnomes and proverbs are interspersed with references to the gods and heroes of Norse tradition³³. Its frame features an irreverent poetic voice focused on overcoming the pangs of unreciprocated love and frustrated expectations. The poem reveals several native and foreign influences, and its sapiential aspect partly explains the tenuous cohesion of individual couplets and also of larger sections of stanzas. However, as Frank has noted, an overall structure and meaning are detectable behind the unsettledness that the poem conveys, which is in tune with the frustration of the poetic ‘I’: the poem “seems to plot a progress from youth (the far-off past) through maturity (the present) to old age (the future)”, covering the preeminent phases of man’s and of humankind’s life³⁴. The *NRP*, *Sólarljóð* and *Málsháttakvæði* are different from one another in terms of genre, but they share a common sapiential ground; it is therefore worth considering them in comparative terms and noting the similarities that may concern single motifs and also structural aspects.

3. *The structure of the Norwegian Rune Poem*

3.1 *The fé-att*

In each section of the poem (*fé-att*, *hagall-att* and *Týr-att*), a set of topics is developed by combining gnomes and mythological subjects and by making use of conventions such as *hjástelt*-technique, as Clunies Ross has pointed out. In particular, the scholar has analysed in greater detail the pattern of the *fé-att*, claiming that its core is the obligation to share

³⁰ B. Fidjestøl, *Sólarljóð. Tyding og tolking grunnlag*, Universitetsforlaget, Bergen 1979, pp. 19-29.

³¹ G.W. Weber, *Intellegerer historiam. Typological perspectives of Nordic prehistory* (in Snorri, Saxo, Widukind and others), in *Mythos und Geschichte. Essays zur Geschichtsmythologie Skandinaviens in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*. Mit einer Einleitung von Margaret Clunies Ross, Edizioni Parnaso, Trieste 2001, pp. 99-144, 106.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105, 107. Weber further notes: “It is only natural, then, that typology should be used by national historiographers of the Middle Ages to link the pre-Christian period of their national history [...] with its post-Christian one, i.e. the time after their national conversion to Christianity” (*ibid.*, p. 109). On typology in relationship with the *NRP*, see M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 34.

³³ Several famous heroes such as Bjarki (st. 7.1), Starkaðr (st. 7.) and Ásmundr (st. 8.5) are referred to in the poem, which also conveys a mythological kenning for gold (*Mardallar grátr* “tears of Mardöll” [Freyja], st. 8.3) and pithy references to the giant Þjazi (st. 8.6) and the slanderous Gizurr, that is Óðinn (st. 22.2-3).

³⁴ R. Frank, *Sex, Lies and Málsháttakvæði*, p. 13.

wealth with equanimity. The importance of this norm lies in the function that distributing wealth played a role in strengthening and developing social bonds, which was essential for the survival of small groups and communities. Accordingly, the first couplet, which is on the *fē*-rune [wealth-rune], points out the consequences that result from the breaking of this rule, first and foremost discord within family ([*fē*] *veldr frænda róge* [(wealth) causes trouble among relatives], st. 1.1). The impression of a flimsy connection between this line and the following one, which evokes the wolf living in the wilderness (*fóðesk ulfr i skóge*, st. 1.2), can easily be overcome if one considers that wolf imagery often occurs in Germanic poetry to emphasise exclusion from communal life and the subsequent misery³⁵, and is particularly frequent in gnomic contexts. For instance, the Old English sapiential poem *Maxims I* brings together the friendless man and the wolf and adds that the former often becomes the treacherous predator's victim (*ful oft hine se gefera slited* [very often that companion tears him], 147b)³⁶. In *The Fortunes of Men*, the list of unfortunate deaths that could befall man begins with the prospect of being eaten by a wolf (12b-13a)³⁷.

In considering this imagery, it is worth noting that in the Norse and Old English contexts, the cognates *úlfr* and *wulf* were not restricted to designating the animal, but were also applied to denote criminals, especially outlaws. This double referential pattern is also detectable, both in Old Norse poetry and prose, with regard to the noun *vargr* [wolf]³⁸, a word denoting a 'thief' or an 'outlaw', alongside the predator. The lawbreakers, who were also referred to as *skóggangamenn*, were punished through exile because of the threat they represented to the community³⁹.

³⁵ M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, pp. 28-30. This connection is also resumed by A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 138-139.

³⁶ *The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., Columbia University Press, New York 1961 (ASPR III, first published 1936), p. 161. The translation of *Maxims I* and *Maxims II* is by R.E. Bjork, *Old English Shorter Poems. Volume II. Wisdom and Lyric*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA)/London 2014. The ravenousness of the animal is dealt with in detail in ll. 148-151 (*ibidem*): *gyre sceal for greggum, grefdeadum men. / hungre heofeð, nales þæt heafe bewinded, / ne huru wel weped wulf se græga, / morþorcwealm mæcga, ac hit a mare wille* "there must be terror on account of the gray one, a grave for the dead man; / the gray wolf laments its hunger, not at all circles the grave with a dirge, / indeed does not mourn over the slaughter, / the murder of men, but it always wants more". In *Maxims II*, the relationship between the wolf and its surroundings is resumed in the section of lines that deals with animals and their place in nature (*wulf sceal on bearowe* "the wolf must be in the woods", 18b); the appositional variation *earn anhaga* "a wretched lone dweller" (19a) hints at the desolation of the predator's life.

³⁷ *The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., p. 154.

³⁸ The Old English cognate of *vargr*, *wearg*, only denotes a 'criminal' or a 'monster', not a 'wolf' (B.Ø. Thorvaldsen, *The Níðingr and the Wolf*, "Viking and Medieval Scandinavia", 7, 2011, pp. 171-196, esp. p. 185). A comprehensive work on wolf imagery and its treatment in Norse literary sources is by Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, *The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature*, "The Journal of English and Germanic Philology", 106, 2007, 3, pp. 277-303.

³⁹ B.Ø. Thorvaldsen, *The Níðingr*, p. 185 and Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, *The Werewolf*, p. 283. There is an ancient association between outlawry and the wolf in the Germanic communities, which also has IE parallels. Gerstein claims that behind someone's proclamation as *warg* there was "a magico-legal pronouncement which transformed the criminal into a werewolf worthy of strangulation". The person guilty of crimes that were deemed particularly heinous was considered dangerous for the community's well-being, hence he was excluded

The paradigm thus established in the first couplet – improper use of wealth, the resulting disruption of kinship bonds, and isolation – is the kernel of several mythological and heroic episodes, first and foremost of the Volsungic-Nibelungic story cycle⁴⁰, as Clunies Ross has noted. The gold-kenning *frénda róg* (st. 1.1), referring to strife amongst kinsmen, accords well with the image of the cursed treasure-hoard that is central to the whole legendary cycle; this connection is further strengthened by the fact that in the *IRP* the same definition, *frénda róg* (st. 1.1), is used in association with two circumlocutions – *fleðar viti* [fire of the sea] and *grafseiðs gata* [path of the serpent] (st. 1.2-3) –, which evoke the same legend⁴¹.

Comparing the *Rune Poems*, Clunies Ross also comments on the first stanza of the *OERP* ([*feoh*] *byþ fröfur fira gehwylcum; / sceal ðeah manna gehwylc miclun hyt dælan, / gif hē wile for Drihtne dōmes hlēotan* [Wealth is a benefit to all men; / yet every man must share it freely, / if he wishes to gain glory before the Lord], st. 1.1-3), and observes that the spiritual ramifications of the proper use of worldly wealth are spelt out here through the Christian equation between worldly generosity and final judgement, *dōm*, by God⁴². The virtue of munificence is also reflected upon in the *gyfu*-stanza, which advocates generosity on behalf of the well-to-do, from which the poor and destitute will benefit⁴³. This value also occupies a pivotal position in the mid-section of the *NRP* and is endorsed by means of gnomic statements also involving a mythical king.

Returning to the first ætt in the *NRP*, the Volsungic-Nibelungic story cycle is explicitly evoked through the treacherous smith Reginn⁴⁴, labelled as the maker of the best of swords

and “transformed legally into a wild beast”. M.R. Gerstein, *Germanic Warg: The Outlaw as Werewolf*, in *Myth in the Indo-European Antiquity*, Gerald James Larson ed., University of California Press, Berkley/Los Angeles/London 1974, pp. 131-156, esp. pp. 133-134, 155.

⁴⁰ The cycle is dealt with in the heroic poems in the *Edda*, in Snorri’s *Edda*, in the legendary 13th century-*Völsunga saga* and in *Norna gests þátr*.

⁴¹ The arrival of gold into the world is elliptically referred to in *Völuspá* (st. 21). The gold-discord equation is attested in several kennings, such as *rógmalmr skatna* [discord-metal of men] (*Atlakviða* st. 27.6), *rógmalmr* [discord-metal] (*Skáldskaparmál* 39) and, more specifically, *róg Niflunga* [discord of the Niflungs] (*Bjarkamál* st. 6.4). Furthermore, the dying Fáfnir foretells Sigurðr that his death will be caused by gold (þér verða þeir baugar at bana, *Fáfnismál*, st. 20.6). The warning against gold is common in gnomic poetry (see, for instance, OE *Maxims I*, 69a: *gifre biþ se þam golde onfehð* [greedy is the one who receives the gold]; *The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., p. 159). On this subject, see the thorough analysis by M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, pp. 29-30 and also A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 138-139.

⁴² M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, pp. 30-31.

⁴³ *OERP* st. 7.19-21: [*gyfu*] *gumena byþ gleng and herenys / wraþu and wyrþscype and wrecna gehwām / ār and atwist, ðe byþ öpra léas* [(generosity) is a grace in men of position and deserving of praise, / a prop to their honour, and for all the dispossessed / it is a help and a means of survival, when they have no other]. Both this stanza and the previous one (on *feoh*) bear witness to the way in which the Anglo-Saxon poet transformed the “inherited rune lore into a Christian unity” thus composing a poem “about the temporal world in which he lived and about its relationship to the eternal world in which he hoped and believed”. M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, p. 56.

⁴⁴ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 145-146.

(*Reginn sló sverðet bæzta*, st. 5.10)⁴⁵. According to Snorri's *Edda* (*Skáldskaparmál* [The language of poetry], 40) and *Völsunga saga* [Saga of the Volsungs] (ch. 15)⁴⁶, Reginn forged the sword Gram for his foster-son Sigurðr, who needed it to avenge his father's death. After accomplishing this deed, the young man used the weapon once more to kill the dragon-like Fáfnir, the smith's brother, on Reginn's request. Reginn had prompted Fáfnir's slaying in order to become the sole owner of the treasure-hoard, originally possessed by the dwarf Andvari and obtained by his father Hreiðmarr from the Æsir as compensation for the killing of his son Otr (hence, the kenning for gold *otrgjöld* [Otr's ransom], *Skáldskaparmál* 39⁴⁷). Fáfnir had got hold of the treasure after slaying Hreiðmarr. Thus, Reginn epitomises the dangers connected with covetousness for gold, the refusal to share it and the deadly effects of all this on family relationships.

According to Bauer, the paradigm that surfaces in this ætt may also explain another non-axiomatic connection in the *úr*-stanza, which would probably evoke, albeit somewhat cryptically, another well-known legendary smith, Völundr. In this couplet, the gnome on the origin of slag ([*úr*] *er afillu jarne* [(slag) comes from poor iron], st. 2.3) is followed by a controversial line: *opt løypr reinn á hjarne* (st. 2.4)⁴⁸. On the basis of Old Icelandic *breinn*, the noun *reinn* is usually rendered as 'reindeer' (hence, the translation "often the reindeer runs over the hard-frozen snow"), but Ole Worm favours the interpretation *rani* 'ski' ("the ski often slips on the hard-frozen snow"). This reference, also in the light of the previous allusion to metalworking through Reginn's sword, could aim at bringing forth an association with Völundr's tragic story of revenge, as recounted in the eddic *Völundarkviða* [The poem of Völundr]⁴⁹.

Even though the connection with Völundr is admittedly tenuous, we should consider that a product of metalworking also appears in the *óss*-couplet [river mouth], which hinges on the metonymic relationship between ships and estuaries, on the one hand, and swords and scabbards, on the other: [*óss*] *er flestra færða / fær, en skalpr er sverða* [(river mouth) is the way of most journeys; / but a scabbard is of swords] (st. 4.7-8⁵⁰). In my view, this emphasis and its wide-ranging associations are also endorsed by the fact that the names of the

⁴⁵ In Worm's edition and in some copies probably based thereon, the form *ragn* is handed down, whose meaning is unclear and interpretation uncertain. Some scholars contend that it means 'curse, blame'; thus the line would hint at the feature of sharp words by means of a metaphorical gnome: 'Blaming is a sharp sword'. In Worm's view, *ragn* is the name of a sword, but it is unattested elsewhere (A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 145).

⁴⁶ R.G. Finch, *The Saga of the Volsungs*, Nelson, London 1965, pp. 25-27.

⁴⁷ On this mythic episode, see *Skáldskaparmál* 39-40.

⁴⁸ J. Louis-Jenssen (*The Norwegian Runic Poem*, p. 4) explains the internal connection in 'pictographic' terms: the shape of the *úr*-rune evokes that of a horseshoe, hence the reindeer often slips on the ice since it is not shod. The image of a reindeer and of the unshod horse is also evoked in *Hávamál* (st. 90), in a gnomic reflection on the love of false women: *Svá er friðr kvenna þeirra er flátt hyggja, / sem aki íó óbryddom á ísi hálom, / [...] / eða skylti haltr henda brein í þáftalli* [Such is the love of women, of those with false minds; / it's like driving a horse without spiked shoes over slippery ice, / [...] / or trying to catch when you're lame a reindeer on a thawing hillside].

⁴⁹ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 140.

⁵⁰ This explanation was first put forward by Runólfur Jónsson (*Ibid.*, pp. 143-144).

two runes considered above – úr and óss – are the only ones that differ from their Icelandic counterparts: in the *IRP*, úr means ‘shower’ and óss ‘god’ (i.e. Óðinn).

The overall negative picture that is built up by means of such unusual juxtapositions also continues in the þurs-couplet, in which the traditional statement on þurs – [þurs] vældr kvenna kvillu [(the giant) causes illness in women] (st. 3.5) – is followed by a truism on people’s reactions to misfortune: *kátr væðr fár af illu* [few rejoice at bad luck] (st. 3.6). Thus, the two lines may be seen in terms of a cause and effect nexus. This kind of pattern is arguably detectable in the *kaun*-stanza too, although its interpretation entails several semantic, metrical and syntactic problems. One of the difficulties concerns the reading of the term *beggja* (*báge/bági* [hardship])⁵¹ in the first line ([*kaun*] *er beggia barna*, st. 6.11), and plus the relationship between the final noun *barna* and the following *ból*: the two could form a phrase, *barna ból*, or be independent and belong to two different lines. The most intrusive intervention on the couplet is by Björn Magnús Ólsen, who excised *beggja* and introduced *bólvan* [baleful] ([*kaun*] *er barna bólvan* [ulcer is fatal to children], st. 6.11), thus restoring the otherwise missing end-rhyme (*bólvan* – *fólvan*) between the two lines of the couplet (*ból gørver nán fólvan* [death makes a corpse pale], st. 6.12)⁵². Leaving aside the manifold deadlocks related to the couplet, its topic appears to be illness and death, which is a pervasive theme throughout the ætt.

3.2 The *hagall-ett*

The central *ett* of the *NRP* is enclosed between two couplets that are of overtly Christian nature. This feature sets the *NRP* apart from the *IRP*, in which no Christian references occur, and brings it closer to the doctrine that sustains the *OERP*. In the first couplet (*hagall* [hail]), Christ is mentioned and defined as the Creator of the world (*Kristr skóp heimenn forna*, st. 7.14)⁵³, whilst in the last one (the *sól*-distich), a judgement is evoked (*lúti ek helgum dóme* [I bow before the divine judgement], st. 11.22), possibly the very judgement that marks the completion of salvation history⁵⁴. Between these runic alpha and omega, the moral foundations of the new religion are hinted at and advocated; the truistic *naud*-couplet ([*naud*] *gerer næppa koste; / nòktan kælir í froste* [(need) leaves little choice; / the naked man is chilled by the frost], st. 8.15-16) indicates a condition of poverty represented

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁵² This reading is also adopted in Halsall’s edition (*The Old English Rune Poem*, p. 182). For a summary of the main conundrums that concern the couplet, see A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 146-147.

⁵³ The identification of Christ as the Creator is not unparalleled in medieval texts (*ibid.*, p. 148). This cosmogonic function is also proposed, for instance, in *Skáldskaparmál* 52, where Christ is defined as “the creator of heaven and earth” [*skapara himins ok jarðar*]. According to Runólfur Jónsson and Jón Ólafsson, the linkage between the two lines in the couplet depends on the similarity between the Old Icelandic nouns *hagl* [hail] and *hagleikr* [work of art], which are associated with the “world” mentioned in the second line: the nexus leads to the notion of Creation as the best work of art (A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 149).

⁵⁴ See also *Maxims I*, 117a (*Hean sceal gehnigan* [the humble person must bow]); *The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., p. 160.

through nakedness and the subsequent dangerous effects of cold weather⁵⁵. The nature of the *ís*-rune is more explicitly didactic, since the assertion [*ís*] *köllum brú bræiða* [(ice we call the broad bridge)] (st. 9.17)⁵⁶ is followed by a reference to the need to help someone who is deprived of sight: *blindan þarf at leiða* [the blind man must be led] (st. 9.18). The gist of the statements is the importance of supporting those in need – the poor and the blind⁵⁷.

Generosity is also at the core of the only couplet in this *ætt* unmentioned so far, that is the *ár*-stanza; the traditional periphrasis on the name *ár* ([*ár*] *er gumma góðe* [(harvest) is a boon to men], st. 10.19⁵⁸) is followed by a parenthetic note on the pagan Danish King Fróði's generosity (*get ek at þorr var Fróðe* [I say that Frothi was liberal], st. 10.20), which further highlights the basic ideas alluded to in the *ætt* by means of typological associations⁵⁹. According to Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál* 43, the mythical Fróði established an age of peace and plenty that coincided with the *pax augusta* achieved by the Emperor Augustus, under whose rule Christ was born. This new age meant the end of those evils that were highlighted in the first *ætt*. According to Snorri, Fróði's reign epitomised a social order in which nobody fought against his peers, not even against his own father's or brother's killer, and thieves and robbers no longer existed⁶⁰.

The foregrounding of greed and its consequences in the first *ætt* and the focus on deeds of mercy in the second are in keeping with the implications of the typological view of history; the *typus*, pagan society, is characterised by imperfections in relation to its *anti-typus*, that is the spiritually superior social order⁶¹: as Weber has noted, "essential to typological thinking is the idea of a change in the quality of history brought about by Christ's entrance into world history, a peripeteia that, on the level of national histories, is paralleled by the religious change brought about by the Christianization of these nations"⁶². In accordance with such premises, the poet gives glimpses of the pre-Christian society in the first *ætt*; in

⁵⁵ Providing clothes to those lacking them is often mentioned in traditional gnomic verse; see, for instance, *Hávamál*, st. 49.

⁵⁶ The same image also occurs in OE *Maxims I*, 72b (*is brycgan* [ice forms a bridge]; *The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., p. 156) and *Andreas* 1261-1262a (*ofer eastreamas, is brycgade / blece brimrade*); see *The Vercelli Book*, G.P. Krapp ed., Columbia University Press, New York 1932 (ASPR II), p. 38. The translation of the excerpt from *Andreas* ("the ice formed a bridge over the rivers, the dark surging water") is by M. Clayton, *Old English Poems of Christ and His Saints*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA)/London 2013, p. 267.

⁵⁷ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 137, 149-150.

⁵⁸ See its analogue in the *IRP* (st. 10.28).

⁵⁹ On this episode and its interpretation, cfr. G.W. Weber, *Intellegere historiam*, pp. 112-114.

⁶⁰ *Skáldskaparmál* 43: *Engi maðr grandaði öðrum þótt hann hitti fyrir sér föðurbana eða bróðurbana lausan eða bundinn. Þá var ok engi þjófr eða ránsmaðr, svá at gullhringr einn lá á Jarlangrshæði lengi* [No one harmed anyone else, even if he came upon his father's killer or his brother's killer, whether free or bound. Also at that time there were no thieves or robbers, so that a gold ring lay for a long time on Ialangr heath]. Snorri resumes the same idea further on, in *Skáldskaparmál* 164: *Hér skylti engi öðrum granda, / til böls bua né til bana orka, / né höggva því hvössu sverði / þó at bana bróður bundinn finni* [Here shall no one harm another, plan him evil or work his death, or strike with keen sword, even if he found his brother's slayer bound].

⁶¹ G.W. Weber, *Intellegere historiam*, pp. 111, 116-118.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

this context, the sharing of riches is encouraged, but society is nonetheless under the constant threat of escalating violence, feuds and revenge. These destructive forces may be more effectively restrained in the new kind of community, in which charity and love of one's neighbour are constantly advocated. This central section also introduces the final part of the poem, which deals with the conclusive phase of salvation history through a reference to the last judgement (*lúti ek helgum dóme*, st. 11.22).

3.3 The *Týr-ætt*

While an eschatological reference, in a Christian perspective, creeps into the closing line of the second ætt, allusions to the pagan end of the world, to Ragnarök, are the core of the third ætt⁶³. This end-of-the-world scenario is conjured up by two contiguous mentions of the god Týr and of Loki⁶⁴. Týr's one-handedness, indicated in the definition of the *Týr*-rune, evokes the episode of his sacrifice with its premises and offshoots⁶⁵: the god consented to put his right hand into the cosmic wolf Fenrir's maw⁶⁶ and thus allowed for its fettering⁶⁷ in expectation of Ragnarök⁶⁸. The relevance of this mythic episode is also highlighted by the occurrence of the two definitions "one-handed Áss" (st. 12.34) and *úlfs leifar* [leavings

⁶³ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 147. The final phase of Norse mythology is often recalled in the *Poetic Edda*. In *Völuspá*, Ragnarök is dealt with in great detail (sts. 40-58), and also *Lokasenna* is characterised by many eschatological allusions (sts. 39, 41-42, 49-50, 58). References to single episodes and characters, or generically to the end of time, are found in several other poems (see, for instance, *Vafþrúðnismál* sts. 17-18, 39-40, 52-53; *Grímnismál* st. 4, 23; *Hymiskviða* st. 24; *Helgakviða Hundingsbana II* sts. 40-41; *Fáfnismál* sts. 14-15; *Sigrdrífumál* st. 19; *Atlamál* st. 22).

⁶⁴ M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 34.

⁶⁵ The only other myth in which Týr seems to play an important role is that alluded to in *Hymiskviða*, in which the god accompanies Þórr in the adventurous quest of a great kettle owned by the giant Hymir, which the giant Ægir, who is asked by the gods to organise a feast for them, claims to need in order to brew the beer for the huge drinking party.

⁶⁶ This episode is dealt with by Snorri in *Gylfaginning* 25 and in even greater detail in the account of Loki's monstrous offspring, which also recounts the subsequent binding of the wolf Fenrir (*Gylfaginning* 33-34). Furthermore, the episode of Týr's losing his hand to the wolf is also recalled in the introductory prose of *Lokasenna* that lists the guests at Ægir's party and in stanzas 39-38 of the poem. In *Skáldskaparmál* 9, the *heiti einhenda Áss* is mentioned. The name Fenrir appears in the þula on wolf's names (*Skáldskaparmál* v. 514). Also, the wolf is referred to in two kennings, one concerning Viðarr (*bani Fenrisúlfs* [the slayer of Fenriswolf], *Skáldskaparmál* 11) and the other Loki, called *føður Vánargands* (pat er Fenris úlftr) [father of Vanargand, i.e. Fenriswolf] (*Skáldskaparmál* 16).

⁶⁷ According to *Gylfaginning* 34, after having bound Fenrir, the Æsir also put a sword into the wolf's mouth that touched its upper and lower jaws thus preventing it from biting the gods. Hence, the sword-kennung *góm-sparri* [gum-prop]. A sword is referred to through the kenning *sparri varra Fenris* [the prop of the lips of Fenrir] in Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson's *lausavísa* 6 (R. Poole ed., *Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson. Lausavísur, in Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, Diana Whaley ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2012, pp. 213-235, esp. p. 223). Another occurrence of the kenning is in Einarr Skúlason's *Geisli* st. 48.8 (M. Chase ed., *Einarr Skúlason. Geisli 'Light-beam'*, in *Poetry on Christian Subjects. Part 1: The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Margaret Clunies Ross ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2007, pp. 5-65, 46).

⁶⁸ Fenrir's fight against Óðinn will end at Ragnarök with the swallowing of the god. This episode and the ensuing revenge enacted by his son Viðarr are referred to in several poems (*Völuspá* sts. 53-55; *Vafþrúðnismál* sts. 52-53; *Grímnismál* st. 17; *Lokasenna* st. 58), and in Snorri's *Edda* (*Gylfaginning* 51).

of the wolf] (st. 12.35)⁶⁹ in the *IRP*. Such condensed circumlocutions possibly echo the mythic episode in its entirety, as Marold has remarked in pointing out the two main ways in which myth is dealt with in skaldic poetry: it may refer to “entweder als *erzählende* oder auf einzelene Szenen begrenzte *Darstellung* eines Mythos oder als *Allusion* auf einen Mythos in einer Kenning, einer für die Skaldendichtung typischen Umschreibung”⁷⁰.

Furthermore, Loki’s greatest crime, the killing of the god Baldr, also seems to be evoked in the second couplet of this section, on the *bjarkan*-rune [birch-tree/branch of birch], which is defined as *laufgrónstr líma* [the greenest-leaved of branches] (st. 13.25). This event triggered the conclusive phase of the world and its subsequent destruction at Ragnarök according to the pagan mythological view. The meaning of the second line in the couplet – *Loki bar flérðar tíma* (st. 13.26), translated by Wimmer as “Loke brachte falschheits-glück”⁷¹ – is not univocal. According to Dickins’s emendation and reading (*Loki bar flerða tíma* [Loki was fortunate in his deceit])⁷², it could refer to Loki’s role in Baldr’s killing, and the greenest *bjarkan* may be a reference to the ever-green mistletoe, which was instrumental in the crime⁷³.

The rationale behind the connection between Týr’s impairment (*Týr er æinendr áss*) and the statement regarding the smith (*opt værðr smiðr at blása*, st. 12.24) is less evident. In my view, this remark on one of the main skills of a good smith, the ability to regulate heat whilst forging a tool⁷⁴, could be interpreted as a cross reference to the initial ætt and its set of associations: gold, hostility among family members, the legendary smith Reginn, death

⁶⁹ This kind of kenning is also used in relationship to what is left of Sigurðr’s body (*varga leifar*) after he was killed by his brothers-in-law and the exposure of his corpse to the ravenous beasts of the forest (*Gudrúnarkviða II* st. 11.4).

⁷⁰ E. Marold, *Die Skaldendichtung als Quelle der Religionsgeschichte*, in *Germanische Religionsgeschichte. Quellen und Quellenprobleme*. Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde, H. Beck – D. Ellmers – K. ed., B. 5, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 1992, pp. 685-719, 690. Author’s emphasis.

⁷¹ L.F.A. Wimmer, *Die Runenschrift*, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin 1887, p. 279.

⁷² B. Dickins claims that *bar tíma* could be interpreted in the sense of *bera gefu til*, that is ‘to be fortunate in’ (*Runic and heroic poems of the old Teutonic peoples*, University Press, Cambridge 1915, pp. 26-27). This reading is also followed by M. Halsall (*The Old English Rune Poem*, p. 183), M. Clunies Ross (*The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 34) and A. Bauer (*Runengedichte*, p. 155).

⁷³ According to M. Olsen (*Bemerkninger til det norske runedikt*, “Maal og Minne”, 1948, pp. 72-75, 72), the link between Loki and the nature gnome may depend on an etymological link between the phrase *lima laufgrónstr* and Loki’s identification as the son of Laufey in *Skáldskaparmál* 16. The name Laufey is translated by F.R. Schröder as “Laubreiche”, i.e. ‘rich in leaves’ (*Germanische Urmythen*, “Archiv für Religionswissenschaft”, 35, 1938, pp. 201-236, 213). For a detailed analysis of the couplet, see A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 154. The corresponding stanza in the *OERP* (st. 18) also entails several difficulties of interpretation as regards the identification of the tree that is referred to. The phrase *geloden leafum* [grown tall and leafy] (in Halsall’s translation, *The Old English Rune Poem*, p. 139) is problematic; according to Dickins, the expression is to be read “for it is generated from its leaves” and denotes a poplar (*Runic and heroic poems*, p. 19), whilst Schneider advances the emendation of *geloden* to *gebloden*, hence “laden with leaves” (see M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, p. 139).

⁷⁴ C. Roy, *Practical Fastenings of the Supernatural*, “Viking and Medieval Scandinavia”, 5, 2009, pp. 177-212, esp. pp. 181-182.

and destruction⁷⁵. In the *Týr*-section, these themes seem to be developed to a cosmic level that also involves the gods' world. According to *Völuspá*, the onset of Ragnarök – the *var-göld* [wolf-age] (st. 45.9) – is characterised by brothers fighting each other, thus epitomising the destruction of kinship bonds (*Bræðr muno beriaz ok at bönom verðaz* [brothers will fight brother and be his slayer], st. 45.1-2)⁷⁶. The topic of intrafamilial crimes is implicitly present in the reference to Loki's deceit in the *NRP*⁷⁷; his scheme is carried out through the blind god Höðr⁷⁸, Baldr's brother, who unwillingly becomes instrumental in his brother's murder. Also, as Bauer has noted, in the last couplet of the poem, that on the *ýr*-rune [yew-tree], a further reference to the end of times could probably be detected: the “greenest of trees in winter” that “when it burns, it sputters” (st. 16.31-32) could allude to the cosmic tree which shall be destroyed by fire at the final conflagration⁷⁹.

In Bauer's view, a further hint at the Nibelungic legendary subjects – evoked in the first ætt through the character of Reginn and the theme of covetousness for gold – is provided by means of the *lǫgr*-couplet [water], which is the second example of *hjástelt* in the poem⁸⁰. The definition of the rune – [*lǫgr*] *er, er fællr ór fjalle / foss* [(water) is where a cascade falls from a mountain-side] – and the tagged-on remark on ornaments that are made of gold (*gull ero nosser*, st.15.29-30)⁸¹ were probably meant to evoke the much-disputed gold hid-

⁷⁵ According to Jón Ólafsson, the linkage between the two lines may be the similarity between the proper noun *Týr* and the adjective *tjvaskr* [keen, intent], which would apply to the smith (A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 154).

⁷⁶ D. Clark claims that the topic of kin-slaying and its destructive impact on the social fabric are so pervasive in the *Poetic Edda* that they could have been the leading idea behind the compiler's anthologising work, in which wolf and tree imageries frequently recur in association with these subjects (*Kin-Slaying in the Poetic Edda: The End of the World?*, “Viking and Medieval Scandinavia”, 3, 2007, pp. 21-41).

⁷⁷ This episode is dealt with at length in *Gylfaginning* 49-50, where Snorri also recounts Loki's punishment. After Baldr's death, he is captured by the Æsir who bind him using the guts of his son Nari/Narfi, who had been torn apart by his brother Váli, after having been transformed into a wolf by the gods. Skaði then places a poisonous snake over Loki's head, so that its poison falls into Loki's face causing him great pain and suffering. The latter part of the punishment is also hinted at in *Völuspá* (st. 35) and *Lokasenna* (sts. 49-50).

⁷⁸ For other *heiti* denoting Höðr, see *Skáldskaparmál* 13 (*blinda Ás* and *Baldrs bana*). In *Hyndluljóð* (st. 29.8), he is defined as *handbani* “hand-killer”.

⁷⁹ In literary sources, the world tree is an ash-tree, but there are also hints at the cultic value that the yew-tree acquired because of its evergreen nature. This property is also stressed in the *NRP* through the superlative *vetrgrónstr víða* “the greenest of trees in winter” (st. 16.31). For bibliographical indications on the subject, see A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 159-161.

⁸⁰ See § 1.

⁸¹ The connection between gold and water is also evoked in *Atlakviða* st. 27.5-12 (*Rín skal ráða rógmálmi skatna, / sú in áskunna, arfi Niflunga, / i veltanda vatni ljásaz valbaugar, / heldr enn á höndom gull skini Húna bornom* “The swift Rhine shall rule over men's strife-metal, / the Æsir-given inheritance of the Niflungs, / the splendid rings will gleam in running water, / rather than gold shine on Hun-children's hands”).

den in the waters of the Rhine⁸²; the link between the two lines would be the dwarf Andvari, the very first owner of the treasure, who lived in Andvarafoss “Andvari’s fall”⁸³.

However, the landscape described in the first line of the *lǫgr*-couplet may also take on a symbolic value and be related to the transition to the Other-World, as seems to be confirmed by a parallel passage in *Sólarljóð*, to be discussed later on⁸⁴. This thread of associations is supported by the stanza that precedes the *lǫgr*-couplet (st. 15) – the one dealing with *maðr* (st. 14) – in which the traditional maxim [*maðr*] *er moldar auki* [(man) is an augmentation of the dust] (st. 14.27)⁸⁵ is followed by the gnome concerning the remarkable size of the hawk’s talon (*mikil er græip á hauki*, st. 14.28). According to Bauer, the bird probably evokes the beasts of battle, hence death (st. 14.28)⁸⁶. Similarly, images of death, which sweeps away all that mattered during worldly life, also pervade the last and longest stanza of the *OERP*, on the *ear*-rune, understood as ‘earth’⁸⁷ or ‘grave’⁸⁸: *ēar byþ egle eorla gehwylcun, / ðonn festlice flæsc onginneþ / hrāw cōlian, hrūsan cēosan / blāc tō gebeddan* [earth is loathsome to every man, / when irresistibly the flesh, / the dead body begins to grow cold, / the livid one to choose earth as its bedfellow] (st. 29.90-93a). The concluding half-lines *blēða gedrēosaþ, / wynna gewiþaþ, wēra geswiþaþ* [fruits fail, joys vanish, man-made covenants are broken] (st. 29.93b-94) strengthen this warning, which parallels some frequently quoted lines from *Hávamál*: *Deyr fé, deyja frændr, / deyr siálftr it sama* [Cattle die, kinsmen die, / the self must also die] (sts. 76.1-3 and 77.1-3)⁸⁹.

⁸² This association could also be supported by considering the stylistic and thematic parallels between the *lǫgr*- and *óss*-couplets, the only instances of the *hjástælt*-device; as in the *lǫgr*-couplet, also in the *óss*-stanza the reference to water – through the name of the rune, which is “mouth river” – is also followed by a tagged-on remark on swords, which are produced from metalworking, like the ornaments made of gold referred to in the second line of the *lǫgr*-couplet.

⁸³ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, p. 158. This episode is dealt with in *Skáldskaparmál* 39, *Reginmál* (sts. 1-5) and *Völsunga saga* ch. 14 (R.G. Finch, *The Saga of the Volsungs*, pp. 24-26).

⁸⁴ See § 4.4.

⁸⁵ See also the *IRP*, st. 14.41, and the *man*-verse in the *OERP*: [...] *Dryhten wyle dōme sīne / þæt earme flæsc eorþan betācan* “[...] the Lord purposes by his decree / to commit the wretched human body to the earth” (st. 20.61-62). The gnomes echo *Genesis* 3.19: *quia pulvis es et in pulverem reverteris*.

⁸⁶ A. Bauer, *Runengedichte*, pp. 156-157.

⁸⁷ On this problematic rune-name, see M. Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem*, pp. 59, 160-162.

⁸⁸ B. Dickins, *Runic and heroic poems*, p. 23.

⁸⁹ The reference returns, with some adaptations, in *Hákonarmál* (st. 21), by Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson, on Hákon inn góði Haraldsson’s death; this event causes the impoverishment of the land and the loss of people’s freedom: *Deyr fé, deyja frændr, / eyðisk land ok lād, / síz Hökun fór með heiðin goð; / mörg es þjóð of þéud* “Livestock are dying, kinsfolk are dying, land and realm become deserted, since Hákon went with the heathen gods: many a nation is enslaved”, *Hákonarmál*, R.D. Fulk ed., in *Poetry from the Kings’ Sagas 1. Part 1*, D. Whaley ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2012, pp. 171-195, 193.

4. *The Norwegian Rune Poem, Sólarljóð and Málsháttakvæði: parallel motifs and images*

4.1 The sun imagery

Further insight into some of the *NRP*'s themes referred to above may be gained from a comparison with *Sólarljóð* and *Málsháttakvæði*, which are also indebted to the age-old sapiential tradition. The former poem is entirely Christian in its doctrine and message, even though it makes use of highly allusive and enigmatic images drawn from or inspired by the pagan tradition⁹⁰.

In his influential study on *Sólarljóð*, Bjarne Fidjestøl (1979) noted the similarity between the *sól*-stanza in the *NRP* – where the definition of the star as “the light of the world” is coupled with a reference to the act of bowing – and stanza 41 in the *Song of the Sun*, which occurs in the central part of the poem (sts. 33-52) that deals with the father's death and transition from this world to the Other-World⁹¹. The core of this section is a group of seven stanzas (sts. 39-45) – all introduced by the anaphoric half-line *Sól ek sá...* [I saw the sun] – which focuses on the father's last day on earth and draws a parallel between his dying and the setting sun. The climax in this unit is reached when the poetic ‘I’, the father, identifies the sun with God, to Whom he bows for the last time: *Sól ek sá; svá þótti mér, / sem ek sæja á göfgan guð; / henni ek laut hinzta sinni / aldabeimi t* (st. 41) [I saw the sun; it seemed to me as if I were looking at worshipful God; I bowed to it for the last time in the world of men]. This act of worship is also performed in the initial part of the section⁹², and has a heavenly counterpart in the description of the paradisaical visions (sts. 69-72, 74): unexpectedly and in accordance with the new order that dominates in the celestial reign, angels bow to pay their homage to holy men who during their lifetime had practised fasting: *englar guðs lutu öllum þeim; / þat er it æzta unað* [God's angels bowed to them all; that is the highest delight] (st. 71.4-6).

Thorough scholarly attention has been paid to the sun-imagery in *Sólarljóð* over time, and the vivid rendering of the celestial body's movement at sunset has been looked at from several different perspectives. These range from Ólsen's assumption that the representation focuses on the sun setting as a natural phenomenon⁹³ to Falk's reading of the description in entirely symbolic terms⁹⁴. However, according to the prevailing view both aspects – the naturalistic and the metaphorical – are present in the stanza⁹⁵. There is a longstanding ex-

⁹⁰ According to F. Amory, in *Sólarljóð* “Christian mysticism and Scandinavian mythology seem in idea to embrace each other”; Id., *Norse-Christian Syncretism*, p. 251. On this interaction, *ibid.*, pp. 252-253, and C. Larrington – P. Robinson eds., *Sólarljóð*, pp. 289-290.

⁹¹ B. Fidjestøl ed., *Sólarljóð*, p. 65. The parallel is also mentioned by M. Clunies Ross, *The Anglo-Saxon and Norse Rune Poems*, p. 32.

⁹² *Sólarljóð* st. 36.1-2: *lútr ek sat; lengi ek hölluðumz* [I sat bowed; I was leaning over for a long time].

⁹³ M.B. Ólsen ed., *Sólarljóð*, Gutenberg, Reikjavík 1915, p. 42.

⁹⁴ H. Falk ed., *Sólarljóð*, Jacob Dybwad, Kristiania 1914, pp. 22-23, 34-35.

⁹⁵ F. Paasche (*Kristendom og kvad. En studie i norrøn middelalder*, H. Aschehoug & Co. [W. Nygaard], Kristiania 1914, p. 145) has also been followed by B. Fidjestøl (*Sólarljóð*, pp. 46, 49-50) and F. Amory (*Norse-Christian Syncretism*, p. 254).

egetic tradition concerning the association between Christ and the sun⁹⁶, which in typological terms goes back to biblical *loci* that were interpreted as prefiguration of Christ's advent, such as the *fiat lux* in *Genesis* (1.3) and the *sol iustitiae* in *Malachi* 4.2⁹⁷. In the New Testament, the metaphor occurs in *John* 9.5, in the account of the healing of a blind man by Christ, who says of Himself *quamdiu in mundo sum lux sum mundi*⁹⁸, and in *Revelation* 22.16 (*ego sum [...] stella splendida et matutina*). This powerful imagery is also resumed in the Norse tradition where *sólkonungr* [the king of the sun]⁹⁹ and *skapara sólar* [creator of the sun]¹⁰⁰ appear in *Skáldskaparmál*, in a list of heiti referring to Christ¹⁰¹. Having pointed out all these aspects, the structure of the central ætt the *NRP*, enclosed between a reference to Christ as the Creator and an allusion to judgment, is to be considered an important clue for the poem's overall interpretation, also in the light of the role played by the sun imagery in *Sólarljóð*.

4.2 On the dangers of misplaced trust and a related metaphor

In my view, other similarities may be detected between the *NRP* and *Sólarljóð*, some of which are also shared by *Málsháttakvæði*. As already pointed out, stanzas 1-24 in *Sólarljóð* posit maxims and moral precepts, which are followed by a group of seven counsels (sts. 25-32). As in the first section of stanzas in the *NRP*, wolf imagery is used in this sapiential part of *Sólarljóð*; a simile is developed between wolves and Unnarr and Sævaldi, the two characters who put their trust in transient, wordly things – wealth and health – and then experienced a reversal of fortune, epitomised by their nakedness (*nøktir [...] urðu*, st.

⁹⁶ The literature on the subject is copious. W. Lange identifies traces of the sun-cult among the Germanic communities in rock carvings; see *Studien zur christlichen Dichtung der Nordgermanen 1000-1200*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1958, pp. 188-189, 243-245. A possible record of this practice, as Amory notes (*Norse-Christian Syncretism*, p. 255), is preserved in the episode concerning the *lögögumaðr* Þorkell máni, who, according to the *Landnámabók*, *lét bera sik í sólargeisla í helsótt sinni ok fál sik á hendi þeim guði, er sólna hefði skapat; hann hafði of lifat svá hreinliga sem þeir kristnir menn, er beztr eru síðaðir* (Jakob Benediktsson ed., *Íslendingabók*. *Landnámabók*, Fyrri hluti [Íslenzk fornrit I, I. Bindi], Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, Reykjavík 1986, p. 47) “When he was lying on his death-bed, Thorkel Moon had himself carried out to a shaft of sunlight, and gave himself to the god who created the sun. He had led a life as blameless as the best of Christians” (Hermann Pálsson – P. Edwards transl., *The Book of Settlements*. *Landnámabók*, University of Manitoba Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba 2006 [first published in 1972], p. 22). The comfort deriving from the sight of the sun, along with fire, is also mentioned in *Hávamál* (*eldr er beztr með ýta sonom / ok sólar sýn* [fire is best for the sons of men, / and the sight of the sun], st. 68.1-3).

⁹⁷ Amory (*Norse-Christian Syncretism*, p. 255) notes that this phrase was translated for the first time into Old Icelandic, in the *Stockholm Homily Book*, as *réttletis sól* or *sunna*.

⁹⁸ See also *John* 8.12: *Ego sum lux mundi qui sequitur me non ambulabit in tenebris sed habebit lucem vitae*.

⁹⁹ *Skáldskaparmál* v. 271.4.

¹⁰⁰ *Skáldskaparmál* 52.

¹⁰¹ Several similar metaphors occur in skaldic poetry. For instance, in his *Geisli* “Light-beam”, Einarr Skúlason introduces the kenning *gramr sólar* [king of the sun] to denote God (sts. 18.8; 21.8) and uses the traditional *réttletis sunnu* [sun of righteousness] to indicate Christ (st. 4.); see M. Chase ed., *Einarr Skúlason. Geisli*, pp. 10, 21, 24. See also the metaphors deployed in *Harmsól* [Sun of Sorrow] (sts. 23, 52, 65). Several further sun-kennings whose referent is God or Christ are listed by R. Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden. Ein Beitrag zur skaldischen Poetik*, Kurt Schroeder, Bonn/Leipzig 1921, pp. 381-382.

9.4) and their exile into the wilderness (*runnu sem vargar til víðar* [ran like wolves to the woods], st. 9.6). In the final part of the section, advice consists of a warning against men with fickle minds, who are compared to wolves (*Úlfum líkir þykkja allir þeir, / sem eiga hverfan hug* [All those who have a changeable heart seem like wolves], st. 31.1-3). Here the poet explicitly notes that duplicity has grim consequences and leads to damnation, which is evoked through the image of the *gleddu götur* [hot paths] (st. 31.6); this image also returns in the description of the horrors of hell: *Margan mann sá ek meiddan fara / á þeim gleddum götum* [I saw many a maimed man journey on the glowing paths] (st. 59.1-3).

A third example of wolf imagery is provided by the last, lengthily developed moral *exemplum* in *Sólarljóð* (sts. 19-24), which is centred upon the dangers of trusting one's enemies. Here the connection with the wolf is onomastic; a character called Sörli was badly repaid for having trusted the man who had killed his brother and who then also killed him. The traitor's name is Vígolfr [Battle-wolf] (st. 20.3), a proper name unattested elsewhere, and which has an allegorical value¹⁰². The warning is also conveyed in the context of eddic poetry. One piece of advice given to Sigurðr by the Valkyrie Sigrdrífa in *Sigrdrífumál* is to be wary of male relatives (brothers and sons) of those whom he may happen to kill since *úlfr er í ungom syni* [the wolf is in the young son] (st. 35.6)¹⁰³. Enmity ensuing from kin-slaying and expressed through wolfish imagery is also present in the poems dealing with the tragic downfall of the dynasty of the Ylfingar [Wolfings]. In the Helgi cycle, the Ylfingr Sinfjötli, who killed his brother (*Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*, sts. 36.7-8, 41.7-8), is referred to as one who lived in the forest, accustomed to the howling of the wolves (st. 41.3-4)¹⁰⁴.

A gnome conveyed in *Málsháttakvæði* also seems to spring from this same set of imagery; it posits that one should not invest much in loving another's child since *annars barn er sem úlf at frjá* [to love another's child is to cherish a wolf] (st. 5.3). This advice, odd as it may seem to a modern reader, is very much in keeping with the characteristics of life in antiquity and in the middle ages: a shorter life expectancy and the relatively long and burdensome process of child-raising implied that attention was primarily focused on one's own offspring.

4.3 On impairment, poverty and moral responses to these

Another common concern that occurs in the three poems – *NRP*, *Sólarljóð* and *Málsháttakvæði* – is what behaviour should be adopted to help people in need or suffering from

¹⁰² *Hávamál* (st. 89) also conveys a warning against the close relatives of a person one has killed, although here the comparison with the wolf is absent.

¹⁰³ In the poem, the term *vargr* is also used in relationship with an oath-breaker (st. 23.6). In *Sigurðarkviða in skamma*, this admonition probably explains Brynhildr's reference to Sigurðr's young son as a wolf, who just like his father should be killed (*Sigurðarkviða in skamma* st. 12.1-4: *Látom son fara feðr í sinni! / skalat úlf ala ungan lengi* [Let's send the son the same way as the father! / Don't nurture for long the young wolf]).

¹⁰⁴ Helgi's wife Sigrún curses her brother Dagr, guilty of having slain her husband, by stating that revenge will only be fully accomplished when he becomes a lawless exile: *vargr á víðom úti* [a wolf out in the forest] (*Helgakviða Hundingsbana II*, st. 33.7-8).

physical impairments. In the second ætt of the *NRP*, hardships are depicted in the *naud-* and *ís-*couplets, which, as already noted¹⁰⁵, advocate generous demeanor, also highlighted by mentioning the liberal King Fróði (*ár-rune*)¹⁰⁶. Nakedness, which epitomises a condition of privation and as such is evoked in wisdom contexts, also occurs in *Sólarljóð*, in the *exemplum* concerning Unnarr and Sævaldi, the characters banished to the forest¹⁰⁷. It is equally telling that, in the beatific visions of Paradise referred to in the *Song of the Sun*, the first people to be mentioned are those who accomplished charitable deeds during their lifetime, and specific references are made to those who helped the poor¹⁰⁸ and fed their own mothers¹⁰⁹. Not only does the poet dwell on images of heavenly reward, but, just like the *NRP*'s author, he also insists on the perniciousness of greed: the binomial that opens the poem is *fé ok fjörvi* (st. 1.1), which also returns in the description of the punishment meted out to those who had robbed and killed in their lifetime: *Menn sá ek þá, er margan höfðu / fé ok fjörvi rent; / brjóst í gegnum rendu brögnum þeim / öflugir eitrdrekar* [I saw men then who had robbed many a one of property and life; mighty poisonous dragons ran through the breasts of those men] (st. 64)¹¹⁰.

Impairments and maiming are far from unusual topics in wisdom literature. In the *NRP*, blindness is referred to in the *ís-rune*¹¹¹, and it also surfaces physically and metaphorically in *Málsháttakvæði*¹¹²: the truism about the blind person's self-evident wish to see (*óðfúss myndi blindr at sjá* [desperately would the blind wish to see], st. 5.4) is coupled and end-rhymed with the gnome warning against loving another's child (*annars barn er*

¹⁰⁵ See § 3.2.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁷ See § 4.2.

¹⁰⁸ *Sólarljóð* st. 70: *Menn sá ek þá, er af miklum hug / veittu fátækum frama; / lásu englar helgar bæk / ok himna skript yfir höfði þeim* [I saw men then who from a generous spirit offered support to the poor; angels read holy books and heavenly writing over their heads].

¹⁰⁹ *Sólarljóð* st. 72: *Menn sá ek þá, er möður höfðu / látit mat í munn; / hvíkur þeira váru á himingeislum / hafðar hafluga* [I saw men then who had placed food in the mouth of their mothers; their resting-places were comfortably appointed on heavenly rays].

¹¹⁰ The harsh consequences of covetousness also appear in the opening of the central part of the poem: *Vil ok dul telir virða sonu, / þá er fíkjaz á fé; / ljósir aurar verða at löngum trega; / margan heft auðr apat* [Desire and delusion trap the sons of men, those who are greedy for wealth; shining pieces of silver turn to grief in the long run; riches have made a monkey of many a man] (st. 34).

¹¹¹ In the Old English *Maxims I*, the truistic statement *blind sceal his eagna þolian* [the blind must lose their eyes] (39b) is amplified by insisting on the consequences of this condition, which is seen as a punishment that can only be ended by God's intervention (*The Exeter Book*, G.P. Krapp – E. van Kirk Dobbie ed., p. 158, ll. 40–44): *oftigen biþ him torhtre gesihþe. Ne magon hi tunglu bewitian, / swegltorht sunnan ne monan; þæt him biþ sar in his mode, / onge þonne he bit ana wat, ne weneð þæt him þæs edhwyrft cyme. / Waldend him þæt wite teode, se him mæg wyrpe syllan, / hæl of heofodgimme, gif he wat heortan clene* [clear sight is taken from them; they cannot observe the stars, / the heavenly bright sun and moon. For him that is painful in his mind, / oppressive when he alone knows it and does not expect that a change will come. / The ruler set that punishment for him, he who may give a cure, / health for the jewel in the head, if he knows his heart is pure]. The poet of *Hávamál* bluntly, though somewhat more optimistically, notes that *blindr er betri, enn brandr sé* [to be blind is better than to be burnt] (st. 71.4–5), in a stanza that lists several impairments.

¹¹² R. Frank, *Sex, Lies and Málsháttakvæði*, p. 7.

sem úlf at frjá, st. 5.3). The hardship involved in sightlessness is also dealt with by the poet in stanza 17 (*varla sýnisk all sem er / ýtum þeim, er þægir drer* [all seems hardly as it is / to those men afflicted by eye-disease], 17.1-2), in the central part of the poem, dominated by “uncertainty, human limitations, sorrow, transiency”¹¹³. In the conclusive stanza of this section, the poet muses on the conventional topic of metaphorical blindness occasioned by love (*ástblindir ‘ro seggir svá / sumir, at þykkja mjök fás gá* [some men are so blinded by love / that they seem to heed very little], st. 20.1-2), which is also in keeping with the poetic persona’s sentimental frustration. Eventually, the subject is resumed in the last part of the poem (comprising stanzas 21-30), in which the focus is on the final phase of human life at large¹¹⁴. In this context, the misery and uncertainty that blindness entails are evoked again in gnomic style: *misjafnir ‘ro blinds manns bitar* [unequal are the mouthfuls of a blind man] (st. 26.3).

4.4 Final matters

Two further analogies between the *NRP* and *Sólarljóð* are of special interest also in view of the context in which they are conveyed. As already pointed out in previous scholarly works, the *maðr*-maxim on the ultimate fate of man – *maðr er moldar auki* [man is an augmentation of the dust] (*NRP*, st. 14.27)¹¹⁵ – also appears in *Sólarljóð* (þat merkir þat er guð mælti / at maðr er moldu samr “that demonstrates what God has spoken, that man is the same as earth” st. 47.4-6). It should be noted that an analogous statement is anticipated in stanza 33, which marks the transition from the wisdom part to that on the father’s dying (*ýta synir / verða nauðgir at náum* [the sons of men are forced to become corpses], st. 33.5-6); this feature also reflects the poet’s penchant for internal parallelisms to shed light upon and emphasise the major points of his discourse. This correspondence could easily be dismissed as commonplace, but its context of use makes it significant. In the *NRP*, the *maðr*-truism (st. 14) is followed by a naturalistic image in the *lǫgr*-stanza (15), which, however, also seems to take on a metaphorical role, as noted before¹¹⁶. The image described in this couplet – [*lǫgr*] *er, er fællr ór fjalle / foss* [(water is) where a cascade falls from a mountain-side], a landscape characterised by water and a mountain – has a parallel in one of the stanzas associated with the father’s death in *Sólarljóð*: *Sól ek sá síðan aldri / eptir þann dappra dag, / þvít fjalla vötn lukðuz fyrir mér saman, / en ek hvarf kaldr frá kvölum* [I saw the sun never again after that gloomy day, for the waters of the mountains closed together in front of me, and I turned away cold from the torments] (st. 45). The phrase *vötn fjalla* has been explained as a kenning for ‘eyes’ or ‘sky’¹¹⁷, but its literal interpretation as ‘the waters

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁵ *Sólarljóð*, C. Larrington – P. Robinson ed., p. 328.

¹¹⁶ See § 3.3.

¹¹⁷ For some interpretations of the phrase as a kenning, see S. Egilsson, *Lexicon poeticum antiquae linguae septentrionalis*, J.D. Qvist, Hafniae 1860, p. 174 (s.v. *fjall*).

of the mountains' has prevailed¹¹⁸. Falk's view is original, since he associates this image with the entrance to the Other-World, and he supports his interpretation by means of stanza 42 (also in the section on the father's death), in which the phrase *gylfar straumar* is used: *Sól ek sá; svá hon geislaði, / at ek þóttumz vætki vita; / en gylfar straumar grenjuðu annan veg / blandnir mjök við blóð* [I saw the sun; it dazzled so much that I seemed to know nothing; but the currents of the sea roared in the other direction, greatly mingled with blood].

The meaning of the hapax *gylfar* is still debated, but 'currents of the sea' has become its common translation¹¹⁹. Falk's reading differs from the common one since he relates the nominative *gylfr* to the Norwegian noun *gyl* "mountain-cleft", thus obtaining a parallel image to *vörn fjalla* (st. 45)¹²⁰. The scholar also points out that this type of landscape also surfaces in Fáfñir's ominous prophecies on Sigurðr's fate, thus associated again with death: *Norna dóm þú munt fyr nesiom hafa / ok ósvinnz apa; / í vatni þú druknar, ef í vindi rcer; / alt er feigs forað* [The norms' decree you'll get at the nesses: / that of a foolish blockhead; / you'll drown in the water, if you row in the wind; / all's a danger to the doomed] (*Fáfñismál* st. 11)¹²¹.

Falk adds some more parallels to these examples, which he derives from Old English poetry and prose¹²² and which are interesting in the light of the present analysis. As already noted, close to the final passage of the *XVI Blickling Homily* (on the Feast of St. Michael) is the description of the eerie mere into which Beowulf dives to face Grendel's monstrous mother, and its surroundings, where Æschere's head has been recovered (*fyr genbēamas / ofer hārne stān hleonian funde, / wynlēasne wudu; wæter under stōd / drēorig ond gedrēfed*¹²³

¹¹⁸ Sveinbjörn Egilsson's definition "aquae montium, flumina ex montibus delabentia" (*ibidem*) is shared by Gudbrand Vigfusson and F. York Powell (*Corpus Poeticum Boreale: The Poetry of the Old Northern Tongue from the Earliest Times to the Thirteenth Century*. Vol. I, *Eddic Poetry*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1883, pp. 205-206), F. Paasche (*Kristendom og kvad*, p. 146), B. Fidjestøl (*Sólarljóð*, p. 66), and it was also adopted in the latest edition of the poem by C. Larrington and P. Robinson (*Sólarljóð*, p. 326).

¹¹⁹ According to S. Bugge, *gylfar* is the genitive of an unattested name **Gylfr* [body of water]; see *Norræn fornkvæði. Islandsk samling af folkelige oldtidsdigte om nordens guder og heroer, almindelig kaldet Saemundar Edda hins fróða*, Malling, Christiania 1867, p. 364. M.B. Olsen posits that *Gylfa straumar* [streams of Gylfi] is a kenning for 'sea' (*Sólarljóð*, p. 43).

¹²⁰ H. Falk ed., *Sólarljóð*, pp. 26-27. The translation of the stanza is by A. Orchard, *The Elder Edda: A Book of Viking Lore*, Penguin Books, London 2011, p. 162. In C. Larrington's rendering (*The Poetic Edda*, p. 155), the reference to the 'nesses' is lost ("The norms' judgement yo«ll get in sight of land, / and the fate of a fool; / you'll drown in the water even if you row in a breeze; / all is dangerous for the doomed man").

¹²¹ Falk (*Sólarljóð*, p. 26) also quotes the final stanza of *Sonatorrek*: *Nú er mér torvelt, Tveggja bága / njarvanipt á nesi stendr; / skal ek þó glaðr með góðan vilja / ok óhryggr heljar biða* (*Egils saga*, B. Einarsson ed., Viking Society for Northern Research, University College London 2003, p. 154) "Now I am in trouble, sister of the enemy to two [Hel] stands on the headland; however, I shall wait for death glad and unconcerned and with good-will" (st. 25). On the interpretation of the stanza, see also K. von See *et al*, *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*. Bd. 5: *Heldenlieder* ("Frá dauða Sinfjötla", "Grípisspá", "Reginsmál", "Fáfñismál", "Sigdrífumál"), Winter, Heidelberg 2006, pp. 427-428.

¹²² H. Falk, *Sólarljóð*, p. 27.

¹²³ F. Klaeber, *Beowulf and The Fight at Finnsburg*, R.D. Fulk – R.E. Bjork – J.D. Niles ed., with a forward by H. Damico, University of Toronto Press, Toronto/Buffalo/London 2008⁴, ll. 1414b-1417a, p. 49; the image of the bloody waters and dreadful nesses is resumed a couple of lines on (ll. 1422-1427).

[until he [Beowulf] suddenly found mountain trees leaning over gray stones, a joyless wood. The water stood below, bloody and turbid]]¹²⁴. By resorting to *St. Paul's Vision*, the homilist points out the following elements associated with the entrance to hell: *ealle wætere niðergewitað, ond [...] ofer ðæm wætere sumne hærne stan, ond wæron norð of ðæm stane awexene swiðe hrimige bearwas [...] Ðæt wæter wæs sweart under þæm clife neodan* [all waters pass down, [...] above the water a hoary stone, and north of the stone the woods had grown very frosty [...] The water under the cliff beneath was black]. And black souls, hanging on the cliff *on ðæm isigean bearwum* [of these icy woods], are being seized by demons compared to greedy wolves (*swa swa grædig wulf*)¹²⁵. Clemoes maintains that both depictions probably stem from a “vernacular, ‘literary’, scenic description of hell, which belonged to a quasi-Latin, quasi-vernacular tradition”¹²⁶.

These parallels seem to confirm that the landscape sketched in the *lǫgr*-stanza in the *NRP* is associated with transition to the Other-World¹²⁷, which is in agreement with the strong eschatological overtones of the third ætt. Keeping in mind this aspect and focusing attention on the correspondences between the *NRP* and *Málsháttakvæði*, it is worth noting that the only stanza in the latter that is devoted in its entirety to a mythic event concerns Baldr's death and the failed attempt to rescue him from Hel (st. 9), an episode belonging to the tragic mythological cycle evoked through the mention of Týr and Loki in the *NRP*:

Friggjar þótti svipr at syni, / sá var taldr ór miklu kyni, / Hermóðr vildi auka aldr, / Éljúðnir vann sólginn Baldr, / öll grétu þau eptir hann, / aukit var þeim hláltrar bann, / heyrinkunn er frá þonum saga, / hvat þarf ek of slíkt at jaga

[That was a shock about Frigg's son. / He was reckoned from a great family. / Hermóðr wanted to extend his life. / Éljúðnir had swallowed up Baldr. / They all wept for him. / Their laughter-ban [=grief] grew. / The story about him is very well known. / No need for me to harp on it]¹²⁸.

The stanza occurs in the first section of *Málsháttakvæði* (sts. 1-10), which touches upon “spring, anger, glory, brave kings, ancient heroes and battles, feuds, ships, and gold”¹²⁹, and which is functional to preparing the transition to the poem's central part (sts. 11-20), where the frailty of the human condition and its limitations are thematised.

¹²⁴ C. Hieatt, *Beowulf and other Old English poems*, with an introduction by A. Kent Hieatt, Bantam Dell, New York 2008 (first published 1983), p. 40.

¹²⁵ R.J. Kelly, *The Blickling Homilies*, Continuum, London/New York 2003, pp. 144-145.

¹²⁶ P. Clemoes, *Interactions of Thought and Language in Old English Poetry*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995, p. 25.

¹²⁷ Njörður Njarðvík identifies an analogue in the landscape outlined in *Isaia* 30.25: *et erunt super omnem montem excelsum et super omnem collem elevatum rivi currentium aquarum in die interfectionis multorum cum ceciderint turres* [On every lofty mountain and on every hill there will be streams running with water on the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall]. *Sólarljóð*, C. Larrington – P. Robinson ed., p. 327.

¹²⁸ The poet's source for this episode was most probably Snorri's account, in his *Edda* (C. Abram, *Myths of the Pagan North. The Gods of the Norsemen*, Continuum, London/New York 2011, p. 218).

¹²⁹ R. Frank, *Sex, Lies and Málsháttakvæði*, p. 13.

This connection between Baldr's death and Ragnarök is strengthened by the evidence of eddic poems, Snorri's *Edda*¹³⁰ and skaldic poetry, although mythic motifs are sparse and mostly limited to apologetic contexts in the latter works¹³¹. But the evidence of some skaldic poems, which are dated with considerable certainty as early, may become significant: in the anonymous eulogy of the Norwegian King Eiríkr blóðøx Haraldsson, *Eiríksmál*, dated to the 10th century, Eiríkr's valour is celebrated by featuring Óðinn waiting for the King in Valhöll, whose help is welcome in the final battle at Ragnarök¹³². In this context, the Norse Armageddon is referred to as the coming of the grey wolf (*Því at óvíst es at vita, nær ulfr inn hösvi / sækir á sjöt goða* [Because it cannot be known for certain when the grey wolf will attack the home of the gods], st. 7.3-5)¹³³, that is Fenrir, the same wolf that also lurks in the background of the third part of the *NRP* (through the Týr-episode). A similar situation is conveyed in Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson's *Hákonarmál*, composed after King Hákon's death in 950; Hákon's excellence is highlighted by the poet's claim (st. 20) that no better king than he will enter Valhöll before the end of the world, when Fenrir will break free¹³⁴.

Eschatological motifs are also evoked in the final part of *Málsháttakvæði*, where "the skald's imagery shifts to [...] last things (the wolf Fenrir), the course of human life, death, the world laid waste"¹³⁵. In the first stanza of this section (st. 21), the list of gnomes concerning life and human nature is concluded by a pithy reference to the fettering of Fenrir and by a note on the strength of the rope used to this end (*fasthaldr varð á Fenri lagðr / fíkjum var mér ramligr sagðr* [A fetter was laid on Fenrir. / I was told it was hugely strong], st. 21.7-8). Apart from this allusion, transience and death also loom large in this section through gnomic references to people's fading memories of the dead (*andaðs drúpa minjar mest* [memories of the dead fade fast], st. 21.3), to death in battle (*röskvir menn gefa örnum bröð* [valiant men give raw meat to eagles], st. 23.2), and to the inevitability of one's fate (*engi kœmsk of skadægr framm* [no one goes beyond his fated day], st. 23.8, and *sjaldan hittisk feigs vök frørin* [seldom is a doomed man's ice-hole found frozen], st. 25.1).

As Franks notes, the gloom that these references and the very topic of death cast on the section is preceded by and contrasted with "a final vision of humanity as a strange

¹³⁰ The connection between Baldr's death and Ragnarök is referred to in *Völuspá* (sts. 31-33). The episode is briefly recounted in *Gylfaginning* 15 and 22, and dealt with in detail in *Gylfaginning* 49-50, which also includes Frigg's attempt to take every possible precaution to avoid the death of her son.

¹³¹ As E. Marold points out, the mythic theme that most frequently occurs in skaldic poetry is that of Þórr's fights against the giants, which is very much in keeping with the apologetic nature of court poetry (*Die Skaldendichtung*, pp. 693-694).

¹³² Baldr's funeral is also referred to in the 10th-century-*Húsdrápa* by Úlfr Uggason, probably used by Snorri for his account of Baldr's life (C. Abram, *Myths of the Pagan North*, pp. 185-186).

¹³³ *Eiríksmál*, R.D. Fulk ed., in *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1. The Corpus. Part 2*, D. Whaley ed., Brepols, Turnhout 2012, pp. 1003-1013, 1011. In stanza 3, the clamour ensuing from the arrangements for the King's arrival are compared with those associated with Baldr's entrance into Valhöll.

¹³⁴ *Mun óbundinn á ýta sjöt / Fenrisulfr fara, / áðr jafngóðr á auða tröð / konungmaðr komi* [The wolf Fenrir, unbound, will enter the abode of men before so good a royal person comes onto the vacant path]. *Hákonarmál*, R.D. Fulk ed., pp. 192-193.

¹³⁵ R. Frank, *Sex, Lies and Málsháttakvæði*, p. 13.

luminescence that grows more intense as darkness approaches”¹³⁶, as the clustering of light-images (“the bright sun in the cloudless sky and, wondrously transparent glass”¹³⁷) shows. The association of light and darkness also characterises the *NRP*, where the dim world of the past is lit up by the brightness of the new religion, referred to through the sun metaphor. *Sólarljóð* epitomises the relevance of this image in its central section: the setting sun which parallels the fading of life from the father’s eyes is also a reminder of the Christian belief that the sun will also set on the world’s life, when the *sol iustitiae* will issue the final judgment on mankind.

5. Conclusion

In composing the *NRP*, the versifier’s itinerary was set in advance to a considerable extent: the order of the stanzas was bound to follow the sequence of runes in the *fubark*, and the wording was also partly determined by the traditional word-hoard associated with the definitions of the runes’ names. Moreover, the need to facilitate memorisation entailed a sharpened attention to metrical features, which probably accounts for the adoption of end-rhyme within the couplets. Nevertheless, a close analysis of the text unveils certain original mechanisms used by the versifier to combine his own vision and conceptual horizon with runic lore, pre-Christian mythic and legendary heritage and wisdom tradition. For instance, he makes good use of the pre-existing tripartite grouping of the runes into three *ættir*, and turns this predefined frame into three thematic blocks; he also resorts to the *hjástælt*-technique to link apparently unrelated images and statements thereby setting associations in motion. A clear Christological reference is inserted into a traditional background and is conspicuous both in the close context of the couplet where it occurs and in the larger structure of the poem: in the *hagall*-couplet, the definition of hail as the [coldest of grains] alludes to its great destructive force, especially in an agricultural society. The poet juxtaposes this with the gnome on Christ and defines Him as the Creator. The following couplets, with their implicit reference to acts of mercy, signify a new attitude towards one’s neighbours, in line with the pivotal commandment of Christian religion (*Matthew* 22.39). It is not far-fetched to think that the poet aimed at outlining the three stages of salvation history and the revolutionary impact of Christ’s advent: the pagan world with its shortcomings and dangers, Christ’s advent into history and the moral change it purported and history’s concluding phase, that is the destruction of the world and the last judgment.

The correspondences detected between the *NRP*, the Christian *Sólarljóð* composed in eddic style and the skaldic *Málsháttakvæði* are compelling for manifold reasons; they confirm the persisting popularity of native wisdom tradition and the fruitful ways in which it could be used to convey both mundane and spiritual meanings. The analogies between the poems foreground several shared metaphors and motifs – many of which are of pagan origin – that are often telling in their conciseness, and lead to a better understanding of both

¹³⁶ *Ibidem.*

¹³⁷ *Ibidem.*

some obscure textual *loci* in the single poems and of the overall structure of the *NRP*. The cross references between pagan and Christian imagery reveal that the legacy of the past is successfully used for the needs of the present.

The *Norwegian Rune Poem* – produced in a Christian literate culture and devised in gnomic mode and by means of skaldic conventions – adumbrates a reflection on history from a post-conversion point of view. The old world and its values are discarded by higher moral demands, but also by a radically new perspective on death and judgment. The poem's implicit message finds an analogy with Christ's teaching about judgement in *John* (3.19,21): *hoc est autem iudicium quia lux venit in mundum et dilexerunt homines magis tenebras quam lucem erant enim eorum mala opera* [This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil]. However, a promise for the righteous one concludes the metaphor: *qui autem facit veritatem venit ad lucem ut manifestentur eius opera quia in Deo sunt facta* [he who practises the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God]¹³⁸.

¹³⁸ I should like to thank Professor Maria Elena Ruggerini for reading earlier drafts of this article and for her help with many valuable comments. The manuscript has also been improved by the anonymous readers' insightful suggestions.



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