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The Danish Lawrin

a comparative analysis with the K 47 manuscript

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Introduction

If we think of the Middle Ages, there is a good chance of thinking about knights, giants, dragons, magic and damsels in distress. Someone will think of wars, poverty, disease and oppression, others will think of literature, art, architecture, discovery. Nobody would be mistaken, because the millennium we often hastily group under the name “Middle Ages” was made of all of these things (not unlike our times, if one thinks well about that). During the medieval times many tales, now known and forgotten as well, were written. We can think of the tales of King Arthur and of his knights, of Charlemagne and the quest for the holy Grail, of Siegfried and the Nibelungs. These and many other stories, even those known only to scholars, influenced modern literary forms (e.g. fantasy novels) and shaped the view of medieval times we have. The origin of these tales is often unknown, and most of the time their plots have been adapted, shortened, lengthened, changed, translated, written in verse or in prose. It is thus quite difficult to affirm that, for example, there was only one King Arthur, or only one King Dietrich. This is one of the main reasons of why Philology exists: not only to determine which version of the story is the most ‘authentic’, not only to determine what changes were made, but also why and how these changes were made. Studying the reasons behind certain alterations we can learn more about why a text was written, what it meant, and even learn more about those who wrote it and those who read or heard it. Often, between the differences, one can find many similarities between the texts, certain common points, called *topoi* (sing. *topos*). These can range from simple sentences (as the well known *once upon a time*, or *they lived happily ever after*) to themes (we can quote *revenge* as a theme still present in modern days). One of these themes is the dwarf, around which the story subject of this thesis revolves.

About dwarfs there is a considerable amount of literature which classifies them basing on the view of the scholar.¹ What is interesting for this study is in particular the study of King Laurin, a known figure in the Italian and Austrian region of Tyrol², where his legend would have originated³. Once again the variability of medieval stories and literature is shown here: as we will see, the tale told in German texts generally see Laurin as an enemy, while local legends (or at least part of them) have Laurin as the protagonist (and victim) of the story.⁴ Of the different versions and adaptations that have been made in the course of centuries, the one that is interesting for this thesis is the Danish *Dværgekongen Lawrin*.

¹ Schäfke (2015)

² The Italian city of Bolzano has roads, restaurants and hotels named after Laurin (Laurino in Italian), and a fountain representing King Dietrich in the act of defeating Laurin in combat

³ Heinzle (1999)

⁴ Heinzle (1999) p. 164

This adaptation bears some interesting peculiarities when compared to the older German counterparts, both in length and in content. These peculiarities will be addressed in chapters 1 and 2. It belongs to the K 47 manuscript, preserved in the Royal Library of Stockholm, which contains tales from different traditions: we will find the famous French knight Ivan of Chrétien de Troyes' Arthurian legends as well as the hypothetically Danish original *Den kyske dronning*,⁵ and all of these tales, though being distinct, appear to have something in common that connects them together. In chapter 3 I will discuss of these differences and connections.

Overall the aims of this study are to expand the rather scarce literature about the subject of *Dvægekongen Lawrin* and to hypothesise a connection between the tales of the K 47 manuscript. I will try to do so starting from *Dvægekongen Lawrin*, analysing the tale in depth and finding its peculiarities in comparison with the German version of the text present in Hartung et. al. (2016) along with the Danish *Lawrin*. Then I will reason on the purpose and main themes behind the writing of the tale and the reasons behind the changes. Afterwards there will be a description and analysis of the tales present in the codex, in order to find points in common and differences with *Lawrin*. The same process of search for main themes and messages will be made. In the final chapter I will attempt to draw conclusions based on what I have gathered during the analysis, trying to connect the tales and to hypothesise the main theme and purpose of the K 47 manuscript.

⁵ See chapter 3

1. The tale's background

The tale of Lawrin is a story belonging to the so-called *Dietrichepik*. This is an assemblage of tales that have King Diderik as their protagonist. This character is inspired by the historical Ostrogoth king Theodoric the Great⁶, who was king of the Ostrogoths, Italy and Visigoths between the year 475 and 526. His success as a legendary character is probably due to his numerous successful campaigns⁷, firstly to gain importance in the Eastern Roman Empire of Zenon I, then as a vassal of the roman Emperor against King Odoacer, who ruled the ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy (the two ruled together for a time, then Theodoric would have personally killed his rival⁸). His reign would have brought stability and relative peace to the otherwise turbulent situation the italian peninsula was in⁹. In particular, considering himself the successor of the Western Roman Emperors, he annexed the territories up to the Danube, granting them to Alamans and Bavarians, also thanks to the help of one of his most prominent generals, Hibba (who would later become Hildebrand)¹⁰. These peoples would then have started to praise Theodoric, composing songs and tales that apparently spread and gained popularity¹¹. Heinzl (1999) affirms that a *Terminus ante quem* (latest date before which the tales must have been already known) would be the 9th-century *Hildebrandslied*, which would presuppose the presence of Diderik in heroic tales¹². He also states that the reason for Dietrich's residence being located in the northern Italian city of Verona (in Old and Middle High German "*Bern*"), and not in Ravenna, the actual capital of the Kingdom of Italy in Theodoric's times, would be the importance this city acquired later, when it became one of the main hubs of the Longobard Kingdom of Italy. The Longobards could have created (or maybe adapted) legends about King Theodoric, moving his capital to a closer place, better known by them¹³. By the 13th century, poets would have used the interest shown by the public for this matter to invent new tales. These tales are called *märchenhafte* or *aventiurehafte Dietrichepik* (lit. "fairytale" or "adventurous Dietrich epic"), where the hero would have fought evil beings such as giants and dwarfs¹⁴.

⁶ Beck et al., 2 (1984)

⁷ Beck et al., 2 (1984)

⁸ Heinzle (1999)

⁹ Heinzle (1999)

¹⁰ Beck et al., 2 (1984)

¹¹ Beck et al., 2 (1984)

¹² "*Den Terminus ante quem liefert das im vierten Jahrzehnt des 9. Jahrhunderts aufgezeichnete althochdeutsche 'Hildebrandslied', das sie voraussetzt*"; The *Terminus ante quem* is given by the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*, written in the fourth decade of the ninth century, Heinzle (1999) p. 5

¹³ Heinzle (1999) p. 5

¹⁴ Beck et al., 2 (1984)

As reported on Beck (1984), the tale regarding King Laurin would have been inspired by the Rose Garden *topos*, mentioned by the roman poet Claudian already in 398. The name of the dwarf king, Laurin, would be a Ladin pre-roman name (*Lawareno*, meaning “king of the rocks”), which would prove the existence of an older Laurin tradition present in Tyrol¹⁵.

The growth in popularity of the tale of Dietrich and Laurin is shown by the substantial number of manuscripts and printed copies that were made, adapted, expanded and translated in the following centuries. In the following chapters we are going through a brief history of such versions.

1.1 Origin and first witnesses

The first manuscript witness of the tale of Lawrin is a *probatio pennae* dated to 1300¹⁶. As already mentioned, the very origin of the story can only be hypothesised to have originated in Tyrol before the 9th century. It is only around the 13th century that it would have gained autonomous recognition also in written texts, thanks to the tale of the *Wartburgkrieg* (end of 13th century), where king Dietrich’s end is connected with his relationship with the dwarf¹⁷. We could even trace the first written witness back to the beginning of the 13th century, when Albrecht von Kemenaten writes, in his *Goldemar*, of an enemy of Dietrich’s brought to Verona “*gevangen und verwunt*”, “imprisoned and wounded”, not unlike how Laurin is brought to the king’s court in later manuscripts.

The first codices explicitly talking about Dietrich, Lawrin and their tale are those that belong to the so-called Older Vulgate. This version is present in 10 manuscripts dating from the 14th to the 16th century¹⁸ and probably also in three fragmentary texts, developed both in High and Middle German¹⁹ and now preserved in libraries in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Poland. Heinzle reports that one of the three fragmentary texts, namely the L₁₇, was lost. It probably was a parchment, with other legends such as the *Nibelungenlied*, of which we have knowledge through a quotation by the Austrian humanist Wolfgang Lazius.²⁰

¹⁵ Beck et al., 2 (1984) p. 439

¹⁶ *Den Terminus ante quem für die Entstehung des ‘Laurin’ liefert die Federprobe von ca. 1300 in der Wiener Handschrift L₁₆*; “The *Terminus ante quem* for the origin of the ‘Laurin’ is provided by the *probatio pennae* present in the Viennese manuscript L₁₆ from ca. 1300.” Heinzle (1999) p. 159

¹⁷ “*Daß er sich gegen Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts einiger Bekanntheit erfreute, zeigt das Gedicht vom ‘Wartburgkrieg’, das Dietrichs Ende mit seiner Beziehung zu Laurin verbindet*”; “The story of the *Wartburgkrieg*, that links Dietrich’s end with his connection with Lawrin, backs the dating of the tale to the end of the 13th century.” Heinzle (1999)

¹⁸ L₃, L₅₋₁₀, L₁₃, L₁₅, L₁₈

¹⁹ L₄, L₁₆, L₁₇

²⁰ Heinzle (1999) p. 148

1.2 The Older Vulgate and other German versions

The development of the Older Vulgate would have started in the 13th century and continued up to the 16th. The story is written in couplets and consists in about 1500 verses, depending on the witness.²¹ This version is generally a basis for all the others, that later expanded, changed, continued and adapted it.

In the story Dietrich von Bern is challenged by sir Hildebrand to live a *getwerge âventiure* (“dwarf adventure”), and is told of the powerful dwarf king Laurin and of his rose garden in Tyrol. He goes on a quest to destroy the magic garden with the faithful knight Witege. After having cut and stomped on the roses, the two heroes are met by King Laurin in combat. Witege is easily defeated, and, just before the two kings start to joust, Hildebrand, sir Wolfhart and sir Dietleib arrive. Hildebrand intervenes and advises the king to fight King Lawrin on foot and deprive him of his magic equipment (a belt of strength and a magic cape). King Dietrich wins the combat, and the dwarf begs Dietleib for help, revealing that he had kidnapped his sister Künhild. Dietlieb frees Lawrin and hides him in a forest. Because of this Dietrich and Dietleib commence a duel, stopped by the other knights. The two heroes and Lawrin reconcile, and the knights are invited in the dwarf king’s mountain. They are well received and greeted by Künhild, who admits to be content with how she has been treated, but that she wants to leave the mountain because Lawrin and his dwarfs are heathens. Lawrin treats his guests with good manners, but plans to deceive them and take his revenge. He tries to bribe Dietleib, and, after his refusal, he locks him in the cellar. Immediately afterwards, due to a sleeping draught, the knights are made unconscious and imprisoned. Through the use of a magic ring Künhild frees her brother, who takes arms and throws his comrades their equipment. Because of the noise, King Lawrin and his dwarfs irrupt in the dungeons, while sir Hildebrand manages to free his companions. There follows a battle, in which five giants partake on the side of the dwarfs. The knights are victorious, and Lawrin is taken prisoner to become a joker at the Bernish court, where the heroes are joyfully received and tell of their adventures.

²¹ Heinzle (1999)

By the 15th century another version, called *Younger Vulgate*, gained more prestige²². Present since 1480, the Younger Vulgate appears in two versions, one, dated around 1480, can be found in the ending of the Bavarian manuscript L, (the rest of the story belongs to the Older Vulgate) and is preserved in the National Austrian Library, in the first four prints of Dieboldt von Hanowe's *Heldenbuch* (literally means "book of heroes", it is a collection of heroic tales present in various versions) and in three separate prints dating from 1479 to 1545; the other version, metrically and stylistically reworked, exists in the last two prints of the *Heldenbuch*, and in two independent prints from 1555 to 1590²³. Both versions are double the length of the Older Vulgate and expand it with a prologue, in which it is explained how Laurin abducted Künhild and how Hildebrand came to know of the Rose Garden, and an epilogue, in which Dietleib and Künhild go back to Styria (their home in Austria).

Generally there are considered to be three more German versions, in the form of manuscripts and prints, of the Laurin. These are:

- The *Walberan* version, which is actually a continuation of the tale. In this version Laurin converts to christianity and defends Bern from the attacks of his relative Walberan, powerful dwarf king of the east. He does so with diplomacy, helped by Hildebrand. It is interesting as the theme of the dwarfs becomes more central, and Laurin somehow becomes the centre of the story. This version is present in a nearly completed manuscript from the 15th century and in a fragment from the 14th century.
- The *Dresden* Laurin, largely corresponding to the Older Vulgate, its peculiarity is its form, since this version is the only one written in *Heunenweise*, a verse form used in other heroic tales found in the *Heldenbuch* of Dresden²⁴. This form presents long lines divided in two short lines ("hemistichs"). Each hemistich rhymes with the corresponding hemistich of the following long line.²⁵ This version is present in the *Heldenbuch* of Dresden, dated 1472.
- The *Bratislava* Laurin. This version appears to be a parody, as Hildebrand's description of King Laurin and the Rose Garden happens during Carnival²⁶. Dietrich's escort to the Rose Garden is composed by Hildebrand, Dietleib, Witege, Wolfhart and even Siegfried, another (famous) important hero of Germanic epic usually not appearing in Dietrich's stories. The tale abruptly

²² Heinzle (1999)

²³ For the locations of these printed copies, see Heinzle (1999) p. 148-152

²⁴ Hartung et al. (2011) p. 2

²⁵ See Heinzle (1999) p. 85, 153 for further explanation

²⁶ Heinzle (1999) p. 158-159

ends before they reach the Rose Garden. This version is present in a breviary found in a monastery in Bratislava, dated 15th century.

1.3 Translated versions

The success of the German editions brought the tale of Laurin abroad, and in the last decades of the 15th century a Czech and a Danish translation were made. A Faroese *kvæði*, a popular song, probably stemmed from the latter.

- The Czech *Lavryn* is found in a manuscript from 1472, but Heinzle affirms that the time of its composition could be dated to the second half of the 14th century, thus around a century before the Danish version²⁷. It consists of 2105 verses, making it longer than the Older Vulgate, on which it is based, and brings new narrative elements to the story, expanding and strengthening some scenes to give them more expressivity, basing on what was present in the German text.²⁸
- The first witness of the Danish version, around which this thesis revolves, dates around the end of the 15th century. It appears with five other tales in the K 47 manuscript, preserved in the Royal Library of Stockholm, all involving knightly quests and courtly love.²⁹ The source of this version is not sure, as it clearly differs from the German versions both in length (884 verses) and, for some aspects, in content (which will be discussed during the analysis). Dahlerup (1998) affirms that it is not possible to trace the Danish *Lawrin* back to one of the known German versions, and quotes Brandt (1870), saying that “it could have been ‘set in rhyme after an oral version’”³⁰. Hartung (2016) reports various theories: Olrik affirms that it could come from the *Heldenbuch* of Strasbourg, but doesn’t exclude the possibility of a Low German intermediary, Sawiki states that the *Heldenbuch* would only loosely have been the source, Dahlberg advocates a Middle German edition as the model, dismissing Olrik’s Low German hypothesis.³¹ This uncertainty about the origin of the translation makes the analysis harder, as we can’t say for sure which change was made by the writer and which was present in a possible source (be it written or oral). This difficulty will be mildened by taking note of the nature of such differences with the German text(s) and comparing them with aspects that are apparently in common with other texts

²⁷ Heinzle (1999) p. 155

²⁸ Jan K. Hon, in Hartung (2016)

²⁹ see chapter 3

³⁰ “*Den danske oversættelse kan ikke føres tilbage til nogen af de kende tyske håndskrifter. Brand antager, at det kan ‘være sat i Rim efter en mundtlig Fortælling’*”

³¹ Hartung (2016) p. 178, see also Dahlberg (1950)

in the manuscript, hypothesising if these aspects may have led to adaptations for better fitting into the context. For example, as we will see, Künhild, is unnamed in the Danish version, and her role is quite different. The lack of name by such an important character will not be thoroughly discussed, what I will focus on will be the roles played by her and her brother, since their behaviour will correspond to certain patterns common in the whole manuscript (see chapter 3 and conclusions).

Even though there is only one extant manuscript, this story apparently had a certain popularity for a long time, as it was printed in 14 editions and reprints from 1588 up to 1808³². Glauser argues that this would show a Danish orientation in that period towards the literary traditions from the 15th century to the Baroque age (in contrast with the idea of a lack of thematic and aesthetic uniqueness in Denmark).³³

- The Faroese version of the tale belongs to a family of popular songs called *kvæði*, in particular to the older branch of such songs, the *kappakvæði* (heroic songs). These dancing songs arose in the 14th century and have been productive since. The source of this text appears to be one of the printed versions of the Danish *Lawrin*, thus dating it after 1588. The text is shortened to only 104 verses and adapted to match the style of the genre.³⁴ As stated by Ulf Timmerman in Hartung (2016), in the eighth volume of the collection of songs *Føroya Kvæði* the melodies of several songs are reported, one of them being the musical sheet of Laurin's song.³⁵

³² Glauser (1986) p. 205

³³ Glauser (1986) p. 205-206

³⁴ Hartung (2016) p. 213-214

³⁵ U. Timmermann, in Hartung (2016), p. 215

2. *Dvægekongen Lawrin*

In the following chapters I will make a synopsis of the events of *Dvægekongen Lawrin*, in order to discuss its themes and study its content. I am dividing the analysis in 8 chapters, describing and commenting the crucial aspects of the elements present in each chapter. I loosely base this division on that made by Jørgensen and Nielsen on the website edited by the Danish Society for Language and Literature (Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab), *tekstnet.dk*, in the pages dedicated to *Dvægekongen Lawrin*, since it corresponds quite well to the macrosections of the tale. Along this digitised version I will use the version present in Hartung et. al. (2016). The translations from Middle Danish are made by me basing on both the original text and the Modern German translation. After the analysis, I will try to hypothesise the underlying messages and purposes of the tale.

2.1 Synopsis

At the court of King Diderik (Theodoric the Great) in Verona sir Hillebrand, first counsellor of the king, tells him of a rich and powerful dwarf king called Lawrin, who fought with many knights, always winning their lands and possessions, and of his wonderful rose garden, only enclosed by a silk thread. Diderik at first doesn't believe Hillebrand's story, but in the end is convinced. He and Widrik, one of his knights, ride to see if what Hillebrand said is true. Once reached the rose garden they see it in its magical beauty, full of roses and lilacs. They destroy it, stepping on the flowers with their horses, scattering the blooms to the ground and cutting the silk thread. A bright glimmering in the woods nearby make the two heroes think an angel sent from God has come among them, but it is revealed to be Lawrin's armour, shining in the trees. The dwarf advances, and his figure is revealed. His ride is a magical hybrid between a fox and a lynx, armoured with precious stones and gold; his lance, little longer than one meter, is embellished with a golden band and his sword is such that one couldn't find a better one than his in the nearby fiefs. His armour is hardened with dragon blood and is full of precious stones, almost nothing could cut through it; his helmet is almost indestructible, hard as stone and inlaid with gold, the belt he wears grants him superhuman strength. Despite Lawrin's magical and wondrous equipment, Diderik and Widrik are not afraid of their foe. The dwarf king insults them and demands their left hand and right foot as a compensation for how greatly they dishonoured him. Diderik offers him a payment of gold and silver as a sign of peace, but Lawrin refuses, belittling anything the king could offer, be it goods or lands. Widrik insults the dwarf, who in turn challenges him to a joust. With his lance the dwarf king

grounds Widrik. As he approaches to kill him Diderik begs Lawrin to spare his companion, for the dishonour that would come to him if that happened. The dwarf, apparently merciful, spares Widrik's life, but proceeds to hang him on a linden tree by his arms and legs. Diderik, now infuriated, mounts his horse to meet Lawrin in combat, but, as the two are to charge, Hillebrand and the king's knights arrive. The counsellor advises Diderik to fight the dwarf on foot to have a possibility against him. Diderik, listening to his knight, dismounts and wins the duel. The dwarf, beaten but not dead, jumps up and wears his magic invisibility hat. Unseen, he attacks Diderik wounding him more than thirty times. Hillebrand, seeing his lord wounded and agitated, advises him to stay calm, watch for the grass moved by Lawrin and to immediately break his magical belt once caught. Diderik, listening to the advice, gets hold of the dwarf king and prepares to kill him, to avoid any other future damage to other knights and paladins. The dwarf king, seeing that his prayers for mercy were ignored, tells to Sir Thiellof, another knight of Diderik's court, that he has his sister prisoner in the dwarven castle, and promises the knight to free her and to give him great riches and half of his kingdom, if he would have saved him. Thiellof, desperate to get his sister back, accepts. He and Diderik start to duel when Hillebrand saves both lives once again: he proposes that Diderik accepts a compensation by Lawrin and that the dwarf becomes a vassal of the king, as well as freeing Thiellof's sister. The three gladly accept, and Lawrin invites his new lord and the knights to his court. Once at his castle, they see the splendour of the great hall, full of gold and precious stones like they have never seen before. They sit at the table, made of cristal and with legs of ebony. Sir Thiellof goes to visit his captive sister. Lawrin, who already planned to betray his new lords, locks Thiellof and his unnamed sister in the room, blocking it with an iron bar, and serves his guests a magic sleeping draught. He then ties them in pairs by their hands and feet with iron cords. Sure of his victory, he blows his horn and summons his dukes, counts, knights and serfs, asking them whether he should kill those who destroyed his rose garden and dishonoured him. Everyone agrees that it would be Lawrin's right to do so. As this council takes place, Thiellof's sister understands what the dwarf has planned, and advises her brother to run to the hall to rescue his companions. The door is locked, and the knight starts punching and pushing it, trying to force it open. Eventually he manages to break the iron bar that kept it closed, but he can't see because of the darkness pervading the room. The young woman gives him a magic ring, through which he can see in the dark. Seeing the knights and the king unconscious on the floor, Thiellof thinks that they are dead and calls his sister. She immediately realises that they are, in fact, asleep. Her sudden realisation breaks the spell that kept the paladins sleeping, and, with the help of Thiellof, everyone is set free. The vengeful knights take all the riches they can and go

out of the mountain, where they find Lawrin and all his court. The dwarves, frightened at the sight of the paladins, are slain with ease, and Lawrin is thrown against a rock by King Diderik, which breaks his limbs. Having now made sure that the dwarf king would never harm anyone again, the court heads home, bringing with them all the gold and riches they took from the dwarf's mountain.

2.2. Analysis

2.2.1. The incipit

The narration is introduced in the first 13 lines as something to pass the time:

1 *Jeth lidhet spel acther jech ath skriwe*
 *ther man maa tidhen met for driwe*³⁶

The word *spel*, borrowed from the Middle Low German *spil*, originally meant “dance”³⁷, but, as clarified in the second line, it is here used as “something to pass the time”³⁸, thus making clear to the audience that this is not educational or sacred literature.

There is no reference to an oral origin, as the narrator tells the reader that they are about to write the text (as opposed to many texts from Danish³⁹ and other⁴⁰ translations and traditions where an oral origin is generally mentioned). The setting of the story is, as usual, the past (the “year of our Lord’s birth”), when wonders and great men were present in the world. There is no apparent *Laudatio temporis acti*, as the narrator just seems to use this setting to tell one of the many stories that could be told about said heroes and not to compare past and present.

³⁶ I am about to write a little play, with which one can pass the time

³⁷ <https://ordnet.dk/ddo>, under *spil*

³⁸ [*spel*] ist hier aber weiter zu fassen im Sinn eines Werkes zur Unterhaltung, Hartung (2006), p 183 note 1

³⁹ *eth ewentyr tha begynes heræ, willæ i høræ hwræ thet æræ*; an adventure is about to begin, listen to what it is; vv 1 - 2 Hertug Frederik av Normandie

⁴⁰ e.g. *Lithes and listneth and harkeneth aright, and ye shul here of a doughty knyght*; list and listen and harken closely, and you will hear of a brave knight, vv 1, 2 The tale of Gamelyn; S. Knight, T. Ohlgren (1997)

In almost word by word formulaic repetition⁴¹ of the first two lines on verses 11 and 12, a listening audience is finally mentioned:

11 *dog will jech skriwe jet lidhet spil*
*ee hvem som lyster ath lyde til*⁴²

This audience is once again supposed to enjoy the narration and to pay attention, which is a literary topos that can be found in many other texts, such as *Den kyske dronning*, also in the K 47 manuscript (see also note 8 and 9 for more examples):

2 *vil jech nw tage mæg til hand*
jet rim for eder ath seye
*hwo ther til wil høræ och tye*⁴³

This introduction is in fact an addition to the Middle High German version, that begins with the setting and description of Theodoric⁴⁴ (line 13 in the Danish version), skipping the introduction otherwise present in other translations (the Czech version has a 16 line long prologue not strictly related with the story⁴⁵, while in the first 4 lines of the Faroese version the author asks the audience to *hear* about “Lavrin, rich in good advice”⁴⁶, showing a more orally-driven narration justified by its musical nature, see chapter 1).

2.2.2. The court’s description

Diderik’s castle in Bern (Verona) is the setting of lines 13 to 164, but it is not thoroughly described. The description focuses on the main characters and their personality, and is repeated almost identically four times: the king is fearless and willing to fight (*for han offte stride gerne*⁴⁷), the paladins at his court are

⁴¹ For a thorough study and interpretation of formulae and their significance, see S. Wittig (1978).

⁴² instead I want to write a little play which those who listen can enjoy

⁴³ now I want to start to tell a rhyme for you who will want to listen silently

⁴⁴ *Ez waz zu Pern gesessen ein ritter gar unfermessen*; There was a knight in Bern who was not foolhardy; vv. 1, 2 Hartung (2016)

⁴⁵ Hartung (2016) vv 2-16 and corresponding note, page 105

⁴⁶ Hartung (2016) vv 1 - 4 page 219

⁴⁷ for he would often fight gladly, v 20 Hartung (2016)

not less valorous (*Som stridhæ wilde for frwer æræ*⁴⁸) and Widrik is courageous too (*Han wilde och offte gierne stride*⁴⁹). Hillebrand is described in 10 verses (from 29 to 39), giving him much more space than the knights (and Widrik) and the king himself (who have 7 and 4 line long descriptions, respectively), but his description opens like the others (*Han stridhe och offte met mandoms ære*⁵⁰). This formulaic repetition is probably a way to show how valour and bravery are virtues shared by the whole court, and how magnificent said court is. Hildebrand's characterising feature is not the will to fight, but rather his intelligence and wisdom; nevertheless the author wants to point out that he is not just a wise man (or a mage, or scholar), but also a warrior as everyone else. The remaining 7 lines tell us of how wise and intelligent he is, how he gives advice to both the knights and the king, about honour, courage, valour and battles.

In the first part of the following section the knights begin to tell tales⁵¹, and Diderik is once again described (vv 45 - 52). Particularly, his richly decorated helm is described as a symbol of power:

45 *jen dag konningh dyderik sad ower bord,
 hans kiemper taled ord fuld storæ,
 sielff war han twctige fuld,
 pa hans hielm han førde guld,
 guld och ther til dyræ stiene,*
 50 *som war skieræ och myghet renæ,
 thet førde then heræ met mygel æræ,
 for han mon thieris koning wæræ.*⁵²

Widrik praises the king for being brave and known throughout the land, affirming that it is in fact for these qualities that the paladins acknowledge Diderik as their king:

54 *j werdhen wedh jech jnghen mand,
 ther wor konings lige kann weræ,*

⁴⁸ who wanted to fight for the ladies' honour, v 22 Hartung (2016)

⁴⁹ he would often fight gladly, v 27 Hartung (2016)

⁵⁰ he would often fight with brave honour, v 33 Hartung (2016)

⁵¹ this is a literary topos often found at the beginning of tales as an introduction to the actual story (e.g. *Ivan Løveridder*).

⁵² One day king Diderik sat at the table, his knights told heroic tales, he himself was very courtly, on his helm he wore gold, gold and precious stones. He wore these with great grace, for he was king among them.

och sadan mandom kann giøræ met æræ,
 som han hawer fuld offte giordh
 och widæ ower landhet soprðh,
 thy maa wi hanum wor konning kallæ,
 60 och willæ wi hanum prisæ for allæ⁵³

This tells the reader a lot about the values at the court of Bern, the main ones being glory and fame (see vv 56 and 58). This can be understood either as an actual celebration of Diderik's strength and battle prowess or as a mocking description of some sort of a *brute king*, who is indeed powerful but that, as we will see later on, can achieve little without the counsel of a wise figure such as Hildebrand⁵⁴. This description also contrasts the traditional values of other heroes, like king Arthur, who is, in the romance tradition, depicted more as kind hearted, wise and powerful (representing Christian values) than strong and keen to battle⁵⁵. Since in the German version *herr Dietreych* (Diderik) is praised in the same way by *Wittig* (Widrik), this vision of Diderik as a warrior king could be attributed to a literal translation, but it must be pointed out that in many cases translators in the Middle Ages decided to translate *ad sensum*, modifying the original text to fit it to their culture⁵⁶. If the intent was to associate Diderik with good and noble kings like in romances, the translator could easily have modified the text having, say, Widrik praise King Diderik for his spirit of justice and goodness. Of course, it is still too early to affirm whether this description is essential to the plot, is an actual mocking of an historical hero or even the representation of culturally acceptable and praiseworthy values. Its nature is up to one's interpretation, and is not clear yet. After this analysis some hypotheses will be made, until then, many other aspects ought to be discussed.

⁵³ "In this world I know no man that can be like our king, and that can honourably perform such deeds as he so often did and who is known far beyond the country. Therefore we must call him our king, and we want to praise him above all".

⁵⁴ This *satiric/parodistic* reading of the text follows Hendrikje Hartung's interpretation ("(...) *dass der dänische Text verstärkte satirische und parodistische Elemente aufweist*"; the Danish text presents strong satiric and parodistic elements, Hartung (2016) p. 181)

⁵⁵ *Li boins roys Artus de Bretaine, La qui proeche nous ensengne Que nous soions preus et courtois*; the good king Arthur of Britain, whose prowess teach us that we too should be brave and courteous; *Yvein ou le chevalier au Lion*, Chrétien de Troyes. Arthur is said to represent these values also in the High German version.

⁵⁶ on this respect see D'Agostino's *Traduzione e rifacimento nelle letterature romanze medievali* ("Translation and remaking in medieval romance literatures") and Paolo Chiesa's *Girolamo e oltre. Teorici della traduzione nel medioevo latino*. ("Girolamo and beyond. Translation theorists in medieval latin.") in Cammarota/Molinari (2000)

2.2.3. Hillebrand's tale

In the next part of the section (vv. 61 - 106) Hillebrand tells the tale of Lawrin, saying that many knights challenged the dwarf king and failed, losing honour and possessions and suffering much fear and sorrow. He also tells of the rose garden, the silk thread closing it and how wonderful it is. On verse 90 he says that a golden door hangs on the silk thread⁵⁷. Translating, the writer probably misunderstood the high German word *porte*, meaning “band”, “ribbon” (akin to Germ. *Borte* but showing the effects of the second vowel shift) for the Danish *port*, meaning, again, “door”. Alternatively, this change was deliberate, and the translator wanted to convey the magical essence of the garden to better fit their taste or build up the figure of Lawrin.

Going back to Hillebrand's tale, on verses 97 - 98 we find the first instance of the formula *han maa alt sette hanum wesse pant, høgræ fod och winster hand*, meaning he (who would step in the rose garden) will have to pay a compensation: the right foot and the left hand. This formula is repeated 4 times throughout the text, once by Hillebrand and thrice by King Lawrin, and appears in other variations during the tale.⁵⁸ It almost seems that Hillebrand is at the same time warning the king not to go Lawrin's garden and challenging him to do it, as this description comes right after Widrik's celebration of Diderik as brave and famous:

100 *ee hwilken mand som thet tør wowe*
til then rosens gord ath komme,
thet wordher hanum myeræ til skade en frome,
hanum tymer ther storæ hierte qwale,
heræ, i skullæ ey wontro myn talæ⁵⁹

We can assume that a honour-bound warrior like Diderik⁶⁰ would never have backed off from such an enemy who had dishonoured so many knights.

⁵⁷ *for gylden porte ther henger aa*, Hartung (2016)

⁵⁸ It can be hypothesised that such a compensation would cause a great shame to those who suffer it, as losing a foot and a hand would make being a knight almost impossible.

⁵⁹ “To anyone who dares going into the rose garden, doing so will do him more harm than good, and there his heart will be tormented. My lord, you should not mistrust my story”.

⁶⁰ *J werdhen wedh jech jnghen mand, ther wor konings lige kann weræ, och sadan mandom kann giøræ met æræ*; “I don't know of any man in the world that can be equal to our king and do such deeds with honour”, vv 54 - 56 Hartung (2016)

This scene takes place after other paladins have told tales, thus it could even be just one of such tales, but there are some factors that lead to think otherwise: it is Hillebrand to tell of the garden, and not any knight; the story is the turning point of the narration, introducing the main character to the antagonist; the tale is thoroughly described (as opposed to being just mentioned like the other tales by the knights), with details that we will find later on in the text.

Diderik doesn't immediately believe Hillebrand, so the knight answers, in indignation, that he is not like a servant or a thief, who knows no truth:

127 *Jech ather jckj for eder ath lywæ,
thet pleyer ath giøræ skalke och tywe,
som lidhet sannen hawer wed at hettæ*⁶¹

These words, harsh towards lower classes, appear to be a Danish addition, and seemingly contrast the ironic/parodistic view of the noble class Hartung advocates for (see note 54), as the fact that servants and thieves are put together in the same class tells us that these two groups could easily have been associated one with another, at least for the translator and the intended audience. One could also read the dismissive tone of Diderik towards Hillebrand as a belittling of the wise and proud knight, thus creating a parodistic effect, but we must keep in mind that only the comparison between Hillebrand and the lower classes is a Danish addition, whereas the scene would be overall translated from the German Vulgate, that does not appear to have parodistic intents.

Diderik, on accepting to go to the rose garden to prove if Hillebrand is telling the truth or not, promises that he will destroy the roses and “cut asunder” the silk thread, even if he would die in the adventure:

138 *“hillebrand, thet seyer jech thik,
ath jech skal bryde the roser røde,
140 skulde jech ther om bliwe dødæ,
och hwge synder then silki troo,
och lade sa gange hwræ thet maa!”*⁶².

⁶¹ “I am not trying to lie to you, as servants or thieves do, who can say little truth”

⁶² “Hillebrand, I tell you this, that I shall break the red roses, should I die doing so, and cut asunder the silk thread, and let it be whatever it must be!”

Diderik is again presented as a warrior, a knight eager for quests, honour and battles, more than a wise king. Moreover, as Hartung points out, the use of *hwge synder*, ‘cut asunder’, in relation to a silk thread, shows even more the king’s warrior nature⁶³.

2.2.4. Diderik and Widrik at the rose garden

After having heard Hillebrand’s warnings and best wishes, Diderik heads towards Lawrin’s garden with Sir Widerik, who volunteered. The journey is described in 14 verses:

165 *fra thet hus och til thet bierigh*
ther wdi bode then lidelæ dwerig
then wey war vii mylæ langh
jen lidhen styy och myghet trongh,
thy stygde pa theris hestæ the helled rigæ
170 *och myntæ jnghen kwnde weræ thieris lig,*
thy rede i giømen skowe oc grønee lwnde,
at ingen man them fyllige kwnnæ,
thy funde then wey ganße wel,
ther hellebrand haffdæ them wist met skiel,
175 *thy waræ how modig i thieris sinnæ,*
thy acte them stor æræ ath winne,
haffde thy west hwad foræ them waræ,
*the haffde ey redhet halff sa saræ*⁶⁴

This passage shows some interesting aspects: first of all, in the Danish translation as in the German version, the distance between Bern’s castle and Lawrin’s mountain is said to be 7 miles, roughly corresponding to 53 kilometers (33 miles)⁶⁵. This is probably more a symbolic number than an actual

⁶³ “*Das dänische hwge synder mutet im Zusammenhang mit einem Seidenfaden etwas martialisch an, gibt aber sehr gut Dideriks Einstellung als Krieger wieder*”, note 141 p 187 Hartung (2016)

⁶⁴ From the castle to the mountain where the little dwarf dwelled the way was 7 miles long, on a road small and very narrow, so they spurred their horses, the noble heroes, and wanted nobody to be able to match them. They rode through forests and green woods, so that no one could follow them. They found the way very easily, for Hillebrand showed it to them with certainty. They were skilful, because they thought of gaining great honour. Had they known what they had to expect, they wouldn’t have ridden half as fast.

⁶⁵ According to 1907 standards. The 15th value for a mile could have been different.

indication⁶⁶, as Tyrol (or South Tyrol), where in the German version the rose garden is located, is much further from Verona (approximately 208 km as the crow flies). Given this data we can affirm that in the German version the distance is indeed symbolic. Tyrol is not mentioned in the Danish version, thus the rose garden could be located anywhere. The symbolicalness of the length of the heroes' journey results even clearer due to the lack of a precise location. Secondly, the two go through forests and woods, to be sure that nobody could follow them. These two natural elements are often symbolic of a change of the setting, for example from a world where temporal and religious rules apply to a world where natural and magic rules apply, or where the hero changes⁶⁷, so the narrator is telling the audience that the two knights are going into the uncanny, distant world where King Lawrin the dwarf lives. Finally, though Diderik and Widrik are going through forests and journeying far, they don't get lost thanks to Hillebrands advice, that already starts to be what always shows the way (here literally) to Diderik. Even though they reach their destination without problems, the lines 177 and 178 foreshadow the struggles and difficulties the heroes will face later in the text, as the translator, commenting on their eagerness to get to the garden, writes that "had they known what was expecting them, they wouldn't have ridden half as fast"⁶⁸.

The rose garden and the field therearound are the settings of the lines from 183 to 714, thus making up the central and main part of the text.

As the two arrive they see that everything is disposed like Hillebrand said, and that the garden is full of wonders they had never seen before:

183 *tha war thet skicket i allæ madhæ
ligæ som hellebrand them sawdæ,
och hallæ kosteligher war thet giord,
en the haffde hørd aff hans ord.
met mange vnderlig tingh
war skycked the roser alt om kring
met dyræ bar stienne och gieweste guld*

190 *war sat met mange vndher fuld,*

⁶⁶ "Die Verwendung mit der Zahl sieben [weist] (...) hin, dass keine tatsächliche Entfernungsangabe intendiert wurde"; "The use of the number seven indicates that no actual indication of distance was intended." Note 167 p 188 Hartung (2016)

⁶⁷ see the introduction of Saunders (1993)

⁶⁸ *Haffde thy west hwad foræ them waræ, the haffde ey redhet halff sa saræ*, Hartung (2016)

*ath alt thet the i werdhen haffde lieth,
 the haffde reth aldrig tølligh sieth
 och vndred the helled storligh,
 thet noghen heræ kwnne wereæ sa righ
 195 ther tøllig for matte ath lade giøre⁶⁹*

This description emphasizes the other-worldly magnificence of the garden through the words *vnderlig* and *vndher*, the latter translated in modern Danish with *mirakel*, miracle⁷⁰. This presents the garden as a place where *common*, temporal rules don't apply, a magic place.

This impression is strengthened by the words *kosteligh* (lit. costly, expensive), *dyræ bar stienne* (precious stones) and *gieweste guld* (pure gold), that show a wealth Diderik and Widerik had never seen in the world they know well and that make them wonder if a king so rich could even exist (last three lines in the extract).

The richness of the garden leads Widerik to waver and question whether destroying it could actually damage Diderik and him instead of benefit them, but Diderik dismisses Widerik's uncertainty and shows to be a proud warrior once again:

197 *widerik begiønde tha ath tale*
 (...)

199 *och twiffledh i sit hierte fast*
ath thet skulde worde them til brast,
om the giorde the roser skadhe

203 *ath thet skullæ wordhæ them til lidhet badæ*
och sawdhæ til sin heræ saa:
 "(...)

206 *jech frycther thet worder os til qwi,*
Giøræ wi then dwerigh nogen last,
Jech tror thet wordher oss sielff til brast"

⁶⁹ Everything was disposed in the way Hildebrand said, and was magnificently made, as they heard from his words. The roses were disposed around with many wonderful things, with precious stones and pure gold. Everything was set among many other wonders. Everything they had seen of the world was nothing like this, and the heroes wondered if there could have been a lord rich enough to have all of this done. Hartung (2016) vv 183 - 192

⁷⁰ *gammeldanskordbog.dk*, under the voice *under*

koning dyderik swared met twct och æræ:

- 210 *“thu matte sa gierne hiemme weræ,
som effter mandom ath ridhe,
effter thu bær i hierthet qwidhe.
jech skal bryde the roser rødhe,
skulde jech ther om bliwe døde,*
- 215 *och huge synder then silky traa,
laad sa gange hwræ thet i maa!”
och met thet samme i gordhen rendhe,
roser och liliær worte ther alle skiende⁷¹*

Widrik is almost made fun of by his king, and can't answer to what Diderik told him, instead he follows his liege without uttering a word. King Diderik, on the other hand, has no doubt and proceeds to destroy the garden. The motivation behind this act of violence is still obscure. Later in the text, when Diderik defeats Lawrin in a duel, he tells the dwarf that he would not be able to harm any other paladin again⁷², thus giving a possible reason behind the hero's actions. But, considering that such reason is yet to be introduced, a first time reader can only suppose why the heroes embarked in such a quest.

The lack of a clear purpose behind Diderik's actions seems to back Hartung's parodistic view, as the hero apparently acts without prior thought, only to run after fame and glory, to achieve what no one else has. Again, this gives an impression of a warrior king more than that of a wise king, but it must also be taken into consideration of the story's probable origin in texts and legends, the *Dietrichepik*, believed to have originated earlier than the french Arthur and Charlemagne, both courtly bastions of wisdom and goodness. His hostile behaviour could then be explained by the adventurous/heroic nature of the stories of which he is protagonist, in earlier as well as in later works .

⁷¹ Widrik began to talk (...) and strongly doubted in his heart that they could be put in danger if they damaged the roses, that they could get little good from it, and said to his lord: (...) “I fear that it will be a disaster for us, if we somehow damage the dwarf, I think it will harm ourselves”. King Diderik answered: “you may as well go back home and run after courage, if you bear fear in your heart. I will break the red roses, should I die trying, and cut asunder the silk thread, and may it be whatever it must be!” Meanwhile they rode in the garden, where roses and lilacs were being destroyed.

⁷² *Ther for skalt thu jckj meyeræ stridh j thete werdhen met noghen giest (...) thu skal ej skatte noghen mand*; “Therefore you will not fight in this world with anybody anymore (...) you shall not ask for tribute to anyone”, vv 630-631, 633 p 203 Hartung (2016), I will treat the duel more in depth in the next chapter.

Nevertheless, these values could also be elements to be ridiculed, as the way Widrik is treated could suggest. The proud paladin, on vv 145-146, said:

145 *“heræ, jech skal eder fyllige i nødh,
Skulde jech ther om bliwe død”*⁷³

Widrik boasts his honour and knighthood in the court, but his resolve and his loyalty to the king immediately falter when he sees the garden, and he is suddenly concerned for his life and well being. So on one hand there is King Diderik, who wants to destroy the garden without a clear reason, and on the other hand there is Widrik, whose pride crumbles as he sees how rich and powerful the dwarf king is. Both of these representations have little to do with the courtly king and knight figures, thus there *are* indeed grounds to back Hartung’s reading. Nevertheless, the heroes’ resolve (and lack thereof) can also be the means for introducing the antagonist of the story, a king so powerful that he makes the proudest paladin hesitate just by displaying one of his possessions. On the other hand we would have Diderik, who doesn’t fear such a king and goes straight to the garden.

The heroes then proceed to destroy the garden. There is little space given to the actual destruction of the roses and lilacs (eleven verses, from 217 to 228), giving the impression that descriptions and dialogues are more important than actions in this text.

2.2.5. Lawrin comes to the Rose Garden

After the destruction of the garden, King Lawrin is presented. His figure is exalted, and seems that of an angel:

229 *om sidher tha wortæ widrik ware
iet blank skien i skowen faræ,
tha tenktæ han met seg jene,
ath thet war guß engel hin rene
och giorde sin heræ ther pa wiss:
“nw kommer sancte mekel aff paretis*
235 *som ær guß engel hin klaræ,*

⁷³ “My lord, I will follow you in the moment of need, should I die therefore”;

for hanum tørff wi jnthe faræ”⁷⁴

The heroes mistake Lawrin for an angel because of the glimmer of the precious stones on the dwarf’s armour, this again conveys the king’s wealth and power. We will see that there is an alternating pattern in Lawrin’s description throughout the text, generally depending on who addresses him. For example his character, as mentioned above, starts off as being mistaken for an angel (v 232), but then, on verse 254, he’s addressed to as “little dwarf”⁷⁵; later, on verse 335 he’s called *then heræ*, “the lord”, by the narrator, but on verse 365 Diderik says to him: *Hør thu thet, thu lidlæ mand*⁷⁶. This pattern of *dignifying external description* (as Lawrin is generally described a noble figure by the narrator) and *vilifying internal description* (as the dwarf is generally denigrated by the characters) goes on until the end of the text almost unchanged. It should not surprise either: as mentioned in the introduction, the many versions of this tale might have been known to the writer of *Dværgekonen Lawrin*, and this sympathy towards the dwarf could be the result thereof.

The narrator also plays with the heroes’ representation: King Diderik, earlier eager to rush into the rose garden, is now cautious, and says:

246 *giord nw hesten, thet will alt wærcæ*
hillebrandz ord will gaa forsande,
*dwerigen kommer och wil oss pannæ*⁷⁷

Whereas Widrik, wanting to battle the dwarf, answers:

254 *hwad kann then lidelæ dwerig giøræ?*
om han wilde æn ful ilde,
*hans dyræ stiene will jech snart spillæ*⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Eventually Widrik noticed a white flickering in the woods, and thought to himself that it was a pure angel of God, and let his Lord know: “here comes St. Michael from paradise, who is a bright angel of God, we should not be afraid of him”

⁷⁵ “*Hwad kann then lidelæ dwerig giøræ?*”, “what can the little dwarf do?” Hartung (2016)

⁷⁶ “Listen, you little man”; Hartung (2016). I must note that, in the verse after, Diderik tells Lawrin: *est thu heræ ower thete land*, “you are lord over this land”, but this is simply a statement, and the dwarf is not being addressed to as “lord” by Diderik, there is no *vocative* intention in what he says.

⁷⁷ “halt the horse, it happens that Hildebrand’s words were true, the dwarf is coming, and wants to set a trap for us”

⁷⁸ “What can the little dwarf do? If he wants to harm us I will ruin his precious stones.”

After another exchange (parallel to the one just written, with Didrik trying to calm Widrik down and the knight wanting to fight the dwarf) Lawrin is finally described. This introduction, comprising the dwarf king, his horse and his equipment, takes up 57 verses (from 273 to 330), almost double what given to Diderik, Widrik, Hillebrand and the Bernish court together (21 verses in the beginning, 8 later), if we don't take into account the description as an angel.

Everything belonging to Lawrin is precious, starting from his magical steed, which is a fox-lynx hybrid:

277 *foræ war han skapt som jen foss*
*och bag som jen dywr man kaller loss*⁷⁹

This kind of hybrid is a Danish addition, as in the High German version the steed is described as “for one half iridescent (a horse), for the other a roe deer”⁸⁰. Both descriptions denote the magical nature of the mount, but the Danish version mentions no iridescence; rather, a stronger link with nature is shown, as the steed is made of two wild animals. The association with these animals is important too, as both fox and lynx are generally considered cunning animals. While foxes are often the subjects of popular tales where they possess human-like intelligence⁸¹, we can hypothesise that the presence of the lynx as the other half of the steed could be associated with the wild and secretive nature of the animal. This could have enhanced the feeling of foreignness and awe about the kingdom of Lawrin.

An explanation of this difference could be stronger traces of Germanic religion, in particular Norse beliefs, still present in Scandinavia and more linked with nature than the long since Christianised Holy Roman Empire.

The rest of the description is abundant with elements that underline the wealth of the dwarf king (the saddle is made of ivory, the sword is the best among the neighbouring lands, everything is embellished with gold and precious stones), and two elements important later in the story are introduced: the magic belt that grants Lawrin superhuman strength and the unbreakable helmet hardened with dragon blood.

⁷⁹ On the front side it was shaped like a fox, and back like an animal that is called lynx. The choice of the low German word *foss* instead of *ræv* would have been made to rhyme it with *loss*, “lynx”, not due to a low German source. Hartung (2016) note 278 p. 192

⁸⁰ *Sein roß waz zu einer seiten vech und zu der andern waz'z alz ein rech*, see Hartung (2016) vv. 165-166 p. 13

⁸¹ Human behaviour in animals has been common, especially in fables, since the times of ancient Greece, but the imagery of foxes in particular being humanely intelligent persists even nowadays, see Beck et. al. vol. 10 p. 160-163.

The first will justify the superiority of the dwarf over the paladins, the second one will emphasize Diderik's strength when he will beat his opponent.

The description ends with the narrator directly talking to the audience, asking who has ever heard of a king as wealthy as the dwarf:

327 *hwem hawer nw hørd seye fra*
jen heræ ther myeræ rigdom aa,
æn thenne dwerig mon met segh føræ,
330 *som jech nw til fornæ rørdæ?*⁸²

These four verses can be read as a device for an oral narrator to take a pause from reciting the text, by making the audience answer the question, or giving them the time to realise the greatness of the dwarf king. This is not the only instance of the narrator being present in the text: as already pointed out, the text is full of adjectives rich in meaning (see the description of the bernish court and that of Lawrin), which change basing on whether they are said by one of the characters or the narrator himself.

It is also noteworthy that Lawrin is not presented as an evil antagonist. On the contrary, he is almost praised and presented as a king even more powerful than Diderik (see vv 327 to 330 above, also cfr. Diderik's equipment, only roughly described, with Lawrin's), bearing supernatural equipment, strength and even being mistaken for an angel (vv 230-236). He seems like an extremization of Diderik, but not his opposite, and this aspect will come back later on, when the dwarf will duel, verbally and physically, with the two heroes.

At verse 333 the author intervenes again on the text, halting the narration:

333 *jech wil nw ladhæ thet sa staa,*
*jen anen rey begiøntis tha*⁸³

⁸² who has ever heard of a lord that had more wealth than that the dwarf carries with him, as I already said?

⁸³ I want to let it stay as it is now, for another dance began then

It seems that the text is divided in two halves, one in which the main characters are presented, one in which the action takes place. The word *rey*, meaning a dance, might thus refer to the duels that are about to happen.

2.2.6. Lawrin duels with Widrik and Diderik

After the cut, Lawrin approaches, thus acting for the first time in the text. He offends the two heroes and belittles the compensation Diderik offers him, asking for more:

340 *i krodhen esel, i seyer thet mægh,
hwem som eder gaff thet radh
ath i hawe mæg sa saræ for smodh
och giord mæg tøllig v æræ?
i skullæ sa gierne hieme weræ,*
345 *i hawe brøt myn rose rødhæ,
thet skal worde eder sielff till møde
(...)*
352 *the skullæ thet ower landhet spøræ,
ath jech skal heffned met myn hand,
Førræ i komme aff thete landh.*
355 *i hawe och strødh eder heste her
med myne roser och lilier meer,
hwilkedh i skullæ dyrth kiøbæ,
i tørff jckj acte i skullæ vndløbe,
i skullæ mæg snarlig sette pant,*
360 *høgræ fod och winster hand*⁸⁴

Lawrin calls a king and a paladin “donkeys”, thus heavily offending them. He has no respect for Diderik’s authority, because he dishonoured him.

⁸⁴ “You miserable donkeys, tell me, who gave you the advice to think so low of me and dishonour me so much? You had better be at home, you destroyed my red roses, that will be a plague to you. (...) It shall be known throughout the land, that I avenged them by my hand, before you leave this place. You have spread my roses on your horses too, which you will pay dearly. You cannot think you can escape, you shall pay me quick, the right foot, the left hand.”

There is no harsh answer by the proud Diderik, who instead responds:

- 361 *ther konning dyderik thete hørdhæ,
ath han sin talæ sa fram fördhæ,
twctelig mwn han hanum swaræ
och sawdhæ sa obenbaræ:*
- 365 *“hør thu thet, thu lidlæ mand,
est thu heræ ower thete land,
thu wend fra os thin wredhe,
thik skal aldiels weræ til redhæ
guld och sylff och rige gawe*
- 370 *aff thet giwestæ wi hawe,
thet giwer wi thik til skade bodh,
om wi hawe thik brøt i modh,
tha wil wi giwe thik met æræ,
thu vnder os met fred ath weræ.”*⁸⁵

Diderik’s tone is deferential towards Lawrin, and the king offers the dwarf a payment to make peace. This might lead to wonder why the hero destroyed the garden in the first place if he would have payed Lawrin a rich compensation right afterwards. A possibility is that he destroyed the rose garden only to display his prowess and for the glory of being the one who managed to tear it down, which again leads to the hypotheses of either a parody of what should be a wise king or a praiseful interest for the heroes of old.

King Lawrin angrily replies with pride:

- 380 *“thet rigdom thu hawer i thit landh
Thet acther jech wedh ien grese straa,*

⁸⁵ When King Diderik heard that, how he (Laurin) made his speech, he told him, respectfully: “listen, you little man, if you are the lord of this land turn your wrath away from us. You will receive a full compensation, gold and silver and rich gifts of the best we can offer, this will we give you as payment. If we have angered you then we will give you that with honour, if you grant us peace”.

mieræ jech myster æn jech faar.
jech wilde for gylle allæ thit land
och sielff beholde thet beste pand,
 385 *waræ allæ thin lande, borig och slotte*
och all then ting thu hawer goth,
ther til bode stok och stienne,
waræ thet alt guld hin rene,
thu kunne mægh jckj giøræ skadhe bodh,
 390 *for thet thu hawer mægh broth i modh”⁸⁶*

Here the view of Lawrin as an extremization of not only King Diderik, but of the idea of the king, arises again. The dwarf’s possessions are bigger and richer than Diderik’s, and, as we will see, Lawrin is also a better knight than the two heroes. He is also prouder and conscious of being on a higher level of regality and power than Diderik. Lawrin’s pride will be broken later on, after the duel with the king, but until then, he seems to have the upper hand materially (for his belongings), rhetorically (heavily offending the paladins) and physically (easily beating Widrik).

After the dwarf’s harsh words towards the king, an exchange between Widrik and Lawrin, which leads up to the upcoming duel, takes place:

391 *ther widrik thesse talæ for stod,*
thet han jckj wilde hawe skade bod
aff guld och sylff hwadh the haffde,
tha han ey lenger tawde:
 395 *“heræ, redys i then lydlæ dwerigh,*
ther kommen ær vd aff thet bierigh,
wel maa i for hanum wighe,
jech wil wæræ hans jaffne lige,
war the oc c fleræ,

⁸⁶ “I consider the kingdom you have in your land as a pile of straw, I would lose more than I would gain. I could gild your whole land and still sustain the great expenses. If all your lands, villages and castles and every goods you have, sticks and stones as well, if all that was made of pure gold, you couldn’t compensat me for what you have done to me.”

400 *jech frychter them ey mieraē*
en sa mange kattæ,
heller och andre saa dan wette.”
dwerigen swarede aff mygel wrede:
“jech wed wel, widrik, ath thu est rede
405 *medh allæ men ath stride,*
thu mien jech tørff thik jckj bide,
Storæ ord mon thu fram føræ,
Som thu pleyer ydeligh ath gjøræ,
est thu then man thu ladher thik wæræ,
410 *och wilt thu føræ thin waben met æræ,*
thu skalt mæg fyrst besto,
i hwilke lwnde som thet kan gaa”⁸⁷

The role of Widrik is reestablished as the one of the proud and eager knight, and Lawrin seems to know the paladin’s personality in advance, thus already having a good advantage over his opponent⁸⁸. This knowledge of his enemies also highlights the magical nature of the dwarf king, already presented by the description of his steed and his belt.

The description of Widrik and Lawrin preparing for the duel is longer than the joust itself (vv. 413-424, 11 lines, vs 425-429, 4 lines), once again showing an interest for narration through speech and descriptions rather than for action.

In the duel Widrik doesn’t manage to hit Lawrin, while the dwarf king unhorses the paladin by hitting his shield. The ease with which the dwarf wins the duel shows, as above written, his superiority towards the knight.

⁸⁷ When Widrik heard this speech, that he wouldn’t accept the compensation of the gold and silver they had, he kept silent no longer: “Lord, if you are afraid of this little dwarf, who comes out of the mountain, you must give way to him, I will be his match. Were there one hundred of him, I wouldn’t fear them more than as many cats, or creatures as little.” The dwarf answered out of rage: “I know well, Widrik, that you are ready to fight with every man. You believe that I wouldn’t dare to beat you, you boast as you are used to. If you are the man you say you are, and you want to carry your sword with honour, you shall measure with me first, whatever may happen.”

⁸⁸ Hartung (2016) p. 196 note 404

Right after having unhorsed Widrik, Lawrin dismounts, preparing to deal the final blow. Diderik, as a good king, begs the dwarf to stop, offering again a rich compensation:

- 434 *tha kam diderik met jen ferdh*
och giorde thet aff stor nødh
han sith swerd I mellom bødh:
“thu lidlæ man, thu lad thin wredhe,
widrik, myn swend, skal weræ til rede
thik jen borigen ath sette heræ,
- 440 *om thu wilt hanum fonge met ære,*
han ær myn swend och fulde mæg hid,
giør thu hanum angest och qwid,
thu hwgher aff hanum hand och fod,
thet skal worde mæg saræ i modh,
- 445 *och ær thet mægh jen stor skam,*
hwar jech faar i landhet fram”⁸⁹

What is peculiar here is the fact that Diderik actually gives Lawrin a reason to kill Widrik, as we can imagine that the dwarf, who feels bitter and dishonoured, would enjoy his opponent’s misery.

Widerik, defeated and fearful for his life, begs for mercy too. The choice of words in this passage is quite different from before the duel:

- 447 *widrik satte borigen for seg:*
“edlæ lawrin, thu nadher mæg!”⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Then Diderik came up with a speech, and did that out of great need. He held his sword between the two: “you little man, leave your wrath. Widrik, my follower, will be ready to give you a guarantee, if you will take him as a prisoner. He is my squire and followed me here, if you caused him fear and pain, if you cut off his hand and foot, that would bring great discomfort to me, and would be a great shame, wherever I would go.

⁹⁰ Widrik proposed a bail: “honourable Lawrin, spare me!”

As we can see, Widrik seems to be once again mocked by the narrator, as the knight, who was confident and proud few lines earlier, becomes fearful, lying on the ground and imploring the enemy he just scorned (vv 400-401) to spare his life.

Widrik's humiliation culminates in the following lines:

449 *han bant hanum bode hender och bien
och hende hanum pa linde gren*⁹¹

Lawrin spares his life, but hangs him to a linden tree by his limbs. So not only does the dwarf prove to have power over the paladin's life, but he also chooses to immobilize him, depriving him of having control over his own body. For a knight eager for quests and fights like Widrik, this is obviously a great shame.

After having defeated the paladin, Lawrin tells Diderik that he still wants a payment, thus making clear that he is still not satisfied:

451 *han swarede konning dyderik strax aff wrede:
"jech kan wel tro, thu est och redhe
mod mægh ath stride,
thit liiff til angst och qwide,
455 thik borde ath giøre mæg annen bod,
æn bydhe mæg saa dan howmod
for then skade, thu giorde mægh.
diderik, jech wil seye thik,
jech hawer fast hørd aff the berne,
460 ath the willæ offte stride gierne
sa myghet hawer jech aff eder for nomed,
thet ær mægh lefft, ath thu est kommed,
thu skalt och sette mæg wesse pant,*

⁹¹ He tied both his hands and legs and hung him on a linden tree

høgre fod och winster hand.”⁹²

Lawrin seems to insinuate that he would gladly defeat all the Bernish knights, thus putting them into shame. King Diderik, indignant by the humiliation he and Widerik suffered, angrily answers, but in a way that could be read as rather humorous for its surreal nature:

465 *Tha worte didrik wred i sinnæ:*
“thu lidlæ man, wilt thu mæg bindæ?
thu skalt førræ see thik trøswer til bage,
och ther om skal thin halsbien knage,
førræ æn thu skalt fonge mægh,
470 *wer wesse pa, jech seyer thik.*”⁹³

The writer finds a way to convey both Diderik’s anger towards the dwarf and his pride. The act of turning the head three times and thus breaking oneself’s neck is obviously violent and impossible, and makes clear that the king doesn’t consider his capture a possibility.

In the following lines the two prepare to duel, mount their horses and wear their helmets, but Hillebrand comes before the two charge. The narrator explicitly points out that if Hillebrand didn’t come, his king’s humiliation would have been great, thus anticipating Diderik’s victory:

489 *haffde hillebrand jckj komed ther,*
som hans rette lycke mwn were,
han haffde hanum giord sa mygel wande,
*ath thet haffde spordis ower allæ lande.*⁹⁴

⁹² He answered King Diderik full of anger: “I can think well that you are ready to fight against me, [dedicate] your life to fear and terror. You should better give me a compensation than show me such insolence, for the damage you have done to me. Diderik, I will tell you this, I have just heard from Verona that they would very much like to fight, this have I heard from you. I am glad that you came, you shall give me a right compensation, the right foot and the left hand.”

⁹³ Then King Diderik answered, angry in mood: “you little man, do you want to bind me? You shall look behind you thrice before that, and break your neck thereby, before you shall take me prisoner, be sure about that, I tell you”

⁹⁴ If Hillebrand didn’t come there, which was a great luck [to Diderik], Lawrin would have caused him so much pain that it would have been known throughout the land.

The counsellor advises Diderik to dismount and fight on foot, since Lawrin is a more skilled rider than the king. Without hesitation, Diderik dismounts and prepares to duel, and his armour is described as shiny, precious and honourable, in a way that reminds of Lawrin's description:

507 *konning didrik stigde aff hesten neder,*
hans harnskæ skinde i mod thet weder,
thet mwn wel kostelig weræ,
510 *som jen konning matte føræ met æræ*⁹⁵

The king's armour shines in the air not unlike Lawrin's shone through the woods (with *iet blank skien*, a white shining); and is *kostelig*, precious (lit. expensive, costly), like his enemy's armour (which is full of precious stones). In these lines, Diderik's richness and nobleness is re-established, and the two enemies prepare to fight honourably:

511 *ther war lawrin jckj i mod,*
thet han wilde stride met hanum til fod,
han tog thet wel til take met æræ,
*i hwilke lwnde som thet skulde weræ.*⁹⁶

As we can see in these lines, Lawrin is still described by the narrator as an honourable king (thus confirming once more the view of a *dignifying external description* towards the dwarf), and some sort of respect between the two kings can be perceived. In the following lines the duel begins, and these aspects are made clearer:

515 *lawrin then kiøne mand*
han støtte didrik met glawinde i hand,
thet skiolden neder pa jordhen laa.
han haffde och sielff ner størt appa.
konning didrik wend seg brat:

⁹⁵ King Diderik got off his horse; his armour shone in the air, it was very precious, as one a king should wear with honour.

⁹⁶ on the other hand Lawrin had no idea that he wanted to fight him on foot. He took it well, to begin honourably, whatever the outcome would have been.

520 *“jech tror, ath thu wilt seye mæg set”,
och sawdhe saa æn mieræ:
“fongher jech sa dan kindhest fleræ,
thet worder mægh til angest och mødhe,
jech tror, jech skal thik effter stødhe⁹⁷*

The high consideration of Lawrin is well expressed in the line 515, as, after having been called “little man” throughout the later part of the text, he is called a “valorous man”. Moreover, the word *kiøne* is used both for him and for Widrik⁹⁸, thus putting them on the same level⁹⁹.

Once again, the dwarf proves to be a strong enemy for Diderik, who is almost immediately beaten, but the king’s skill gains him the upper hand against Lawrin:

525 *the waræ bode sted til fode,
han slaa til hanum met swerdz klode,
snart ma dwerigen ther for wige,
han kwnne hanum jckj rage met lige,
slo jen stien jen hwole vdj,
530 jen rom alne dypt och wij.
then lidel dwerig ther ath loo,
ath han kunne hanum skuffe saa.
dydrik slo effter dwerigen i gien
och hytte ret aa the dyræ stien,
535 som owerste pa hielmen sad,
jech winther, han loo ther jntheh adh,
saa at hielmen reffned och hoffdet skalff
han fek til jorden saa vnt jet faldh
och laa ther lengy i dwalæ,*

⁹⁷ Lawrin, the valorous man, he hit Diderik spear in hand, so that the shield fell on the ground. He (Diderik) was also thrown down. King Diderik quickly turned around: “I think that you want to tell me something true”, and continued: “if I receive more of such hits, that would cause me fear and discontent. I think I will hit you back”

⁹⁸ see vv 25, 144, 413

⁹⁹ the frequency with which the two are called *kiøne* is clearly different. However, the fact that Lawrin is called with the same adjective as the aide of King Diderik, combined with the description of the dwarf being quite more powerful than the king, supports the observation that the writer had indeed a certain sympathy for Lawrin.

540 *saa ath han kunde reth inthet tale*
och acte seg aldrig ap at staa.
konning didrik stod och tenkte ther aa:
“jech winter, ath han ær nw død,
han gjør meg aldrig meræ nød.”¹⁰⁰

This passage marks an important change in Lawrin’s character: in the verses preceding the duel he reached the peak of honour and power, but he is now beaten, unconscious and mocked by the same narrator who earlier had spoken so highly of him (see vv. 536-537). The change in the dwarf becomes clear in the following lines, where Lawrin, probably blinded by his pride¹⁰¹, abandons the honourable ways of knights and paladins and resorts to a cunning resembling that of a thief or assassin:

545 *j thet same tha sprang han ap,*
han war ey vden jen liden krop,
han wilde tha ey lengre bidhe,
snarligh tog han til sin side
och satte sin dwerige hat appa
550 *ath didrik hanum jckj saa.*
i thet samme han til hanum lawde
met thet lidhet swerd han haffdæ,
tha fek konning didrik obenbaræ
mieræ æn xxx dybe saaræ.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ they were both on their feet, he [Dyderik] hit him with the pommel of the sword, the dwarf had to retreat immediately, he [Dyderik] could not hit him properly and made a hole in a stone, a cubit large and deep. The little dwarf laughed about him being able to mock him like that. Dyderik attacked the dwarf again and hit right on the precious stones which stood on the helm. I think he [Lawrin] did not laugh about the helmet shattering and his head wobbling. He fell to the ground with a bad fall and laid there for long, unconscious, so that he couldn’t say anything and thought never to be able to stand again. King Diderik stood there and thought: “I think that he is dead now, he doesn’t worry me anymore.”

¹⁰¹ I put forward this supposition basing on how Lawrin has been presented throughout the text. The dwarf king was heavily offended by Diderik and Widrik’s deeds, and was sure to beat them both in duel. We also know that he wasn’t satisfied with Widrik’s defeat and humiliation, as still wanted a payment from Diderik, in order to feel on par with the shame he was put into. Though in the end he is defeated by Diderik, he still wants a compensation for his lost garden, and we can assume he is still in wrath for the king’s actions. He is thus determined to gain said payment by any means necessary.

¹⁰² in that moment he (Lawrin) jumped up, he had a little bump, and didn’t want to linger any longer. He quickly went on his side and wore his dwarven hat, so that Diderik didn’t see him. At the same time he went near him with the little sword he had. Then King Diderik surely received more than thirty deep wounds.

This passage marks another change in the text: from now on Lawrin will not be the powerful and honourable king he has been until his defeat (with one exception towards the end of the narration), on the contrary, he will often recur to his slyness and his magic equipment. The “dwarven hat”, part of said equipment, is a magic cloak in the German original. Hartung argues that, since the Danish audiences were not familiar with the Lawrin tradition, such concept would not have been easily understandable, even though the item’s function would have been explained in the following lines.¹⁰³ As a consequence, the author changed the magic cloak into a dwarven hat, which is transparently linkable to something strictly related to the dwarf’s world.

The following lines seem to be another mockery towards Widrik. The knight ridicules Lawrin, who he called “honourable” (v. 448), but he is still hanging from the linden tree, incapacitated and technically still Lawrin's prisoner:

- 559 *widrik taled i linden tha
til sin heræ och sawde sa:
“jech sa aldrig i myne dage
jeth lidhet barn, ther thet torde wowe,
ath stride met slig en helled rig,
och wilde hanum jnthe wige.”*
- 565 *konning didryk swared snart i gien
til hans och war ey sien:
“thu kaller hanum jet barn ath weræ,
han hawer thik fonghen meg mygel æræ
och hawer thik bwnden bode hender och food*
- 570 *och henger i lindhen thik saræ i mod,
jech tror, thu kant thik jckj røeræ,
føræ han wil nade met thik giøræ.”¹⁰⁴*

¹⁰³ “Der dänisch Begriff dwerige hat wirkt an dieser Stelle seltsam neutral. Tatsächlich wird die Funktion erst im folgenden Vers erklärt. Für ein dänisches Publikum, das bis dato nicht mit der ‘Laurin’-Tradition vertraut war, wäre der Begriff Tarnkappe jedoch nicht unbedingt verständlich”. Hartung (2016), p. 200 note 549

¹⁰⁴ Widrik spoke there on the linden to his lord and said: “never have I seen in my days a little child that dared to fight against such powerful heroes and wouldn’t retreat.” King Diderik quickly answered him back, and did not hold back: “you call him a child, he honourably took you prisoner and has bound both your hands and feet and hanged you on a linden tree, in discomfort. I believe you cannot move until he shows you mercy.”

As we can see, Widrik is again somewhat of a parodistic character, as he repeatedly switches his personality between proud and eager, when not in danger, and cowardly and submissive when some sort of risk comes up. The paladin's role from this point on will be less meaningful, but, basing on what this character has been up to now and the observations made around his descriptions, we can say that Widrik is more a caricature than a proper knight, and was used by the author with parodistic purposes, supporting Hartung's reading regarding the tale¹⁰⁵.

It is interesting how Diderik tells Widrik that Lawrin took him as a prisoner *honourably*, even though he was clearly enraged by the shame his fellow was put into. Hartung argues that the king doesn't refer to the way the dwarf he treated Widrik, which would contrast with what he said earlier, but rather to the fact that he chose not to kill him, as that would have been even worse for Diderik's reputation¹⁰⁶. The narration changes back to the duel between Diderik and Lawrin, with the former still suffering from the wounds the latter inflicted him. It is Hillebrand to give his king the advice that will let him capture the dwarf, thus providing a helpful solution for the second time:

577 *hillebrand ropte aff sorig fuld sinnæ:*
“heræ, jech kan thet aldrig for winnæ,
heræ, wordher i aff dwerigen slawen heræ,
580 *jech kan thet aldrig fullelig kieræ,*
lader eder ey tiden for lange,
om i skullæ nogre how swal fonge,
jech wed, i hanum ey see heller høræ,
i kunne hanum for thy jnthe giøræ,
585 *skulle j met then dwerig til ord,*
somgresed røress vd met then jord,
ther skulle i effter faræ,
tager eder dog sielff til waræ,
thet han ey giøræ eder miere skade,

¹⁰⁵ Hartung argues that both the heroes have some sort of comedic role, but King Diderik is not clearly a parody, since he plays a more serious role than his fellow.

¹⁰⁶ “Mit mygel æræ bezieht sich vermutlich auf den Umstand, dass Lawrin überhaupt bereit war, Widrik gefangenzunehmen statt ihn gleich zu töten. Anderenfalls wären großen Anstand und das schmachvolle Aufhängen am Lindenbaum widersprüchlich”. Hartung (2016) p. 201 note 568

590 *i tørff ey wente eder aff hanum bade,*
kwne i, heræ, then lycke faa,
at i kunne dwerigen finne appa,
ladher eder jckj for tryde,
fuld snarlig i hans belte bryde,
595 *ther met winne i then lidlæ mand,*
som eder hawer kommed then sorig aa hand.”¹⁰⁷

Hillebrand formulaically repeats *heræ*, “lord”, three times at the lines 578-579 and once at line 591, to stress his anguish and anxiety and to have his lord’s full attention. Worried about the well being of his king, he advises him to stay calm and think. Once again, the vision of Diderik as a warrior king is corroborated by his need of the advice of his counsellor to achieve victory, without which he would probably have died.

In the following verses Lawrin is helplessly caught by Diderik, and an instance of alliterative verse clearly emerges at the lines 607-608, probably used to reinforce the rhyme¹⁰⁸:

605 *han greb hanum wed hals och gube*
och mwn hanwm til jorden stwbe,
han skaget hanum bodhe lewer oc longe,
ath hanum skalff bode tand och twnge.

¹⁰⁷ Hildebrand cried, in sorrow: “my lord, I could never get over this, my lord, if you were slain by the dwarf, my lord, I cannot mourn enough. Don’t be impatient, if you want relief. I know that you can neither see nor hear him, so you couldn’t do anything to him if you found the dwarf. Where the grass moves, there you need to go. Be careful, though, that he doesn’t hurt you even more. You cannot expect any profit from him. If you had the luck to find the dwarf, lord, don’t let this annoy you, rather break his belt quick, so that you win against the little man which became a pain to you.”

¹⁰⁸ “Bei lewer oc longe sowie tand och twnge handelt es sich um Begriffe, die an dieser Stelle hauptsächlich wegen des Stabreims verwendet werden, der die Wirkung des Reimpaares noch verstärkt”; lewer oc lwnge, as well as tand och twnge, are used here to make an alliterative rhyme, which enhances the rhyming couplet. Hartung (2016) p. 202 note 608

The king immediately breaks his belt in two, depriving the dwarf of his superhuman strength. Hillebrand quickly says:

612 *“e hwo mægh wilde giwe M pund,
han skullæ thet belte jckj faa,
förræ skulde jech hanum met jen kamp bestaa.”*¹⁰⁹

The counsellor sees the worth of the belt and bespeaks it. We can assume that, having saved his king from a dishonourable defeat, Hillebrand has all the rights to obtain the precious magical item; but, taking into consideration the promptness with which he claimed the object, we can wonder whether his earlier anguish for his king’s well being was completely genuine or just motivated by personal interest. In this case the four repetitions of *heræ* earlier would not have been honest, but rather would have been used to mask his intentions.

The narrator, probably acknowledging that such a doubt could rise, justifies the hero’s claim repeating that if Hillebrand wouldn’t have come to save the two heroes, they probably would have died, paying Lawrin a dear price.

These verses also work as a summary of what happened earlier in the story:

615 *haffde hillebrand jckj komed ther,
nepelig haffde didrik fonghet then ære,
thet han haffde dwerigen ower wonned.
widrik och han haffde annet befwndhet,
förræ the haffde kommed aff hans land,*
620 *the haffde alt sat hanum weffe pant
hann haffde them hughet aff hand och food,
for de haffde hanum brot i mood,
thet haffde wered them jen stor v æræ,
the matte saa gierne hawe hiemme weræd.*¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ “He who would want to give me a thousand pounds wouldn’t receive the belt before I met him in combat”

¹¹⁰ If Hillebrand wouldn’t have come there, Diderik would hardly have received the honour of overcoming the dwarf. Something else would have befell Widrik and him, before they came to his land, they would have payed him a certain

In the following lines Diderik is about to kill Lawrin, who implores him to spare his life. There is a resemblance with the earlier scene between Lawrin and Widrik when the latter begged the dwarf for his life, but here Diderik is resolute in killing his enemy:

625 *didrik, som war howmod,
han trad dwerigen vnder sin fod
och wilde hanum strax slaa i hiel,
som han matte giøræ wel medh skiel:
“thu hawer mægh giord sorig och qwid,*
630 *ther for skalt thu jckj myeræ stridh
j thette werdhen medh nogen giest
anten til food heller hest,
thu skalt och ey skatte noghen mand
och ey huge aff them food heller hand,*
635 *wil jech ey nw lenger bide,
thine tarme wil jech aff thik slide.”
tha ropte then lidelæ lawrin:
“dydrik, jech ær nw fonge thin,
for thin æræ thu nader mæg,*
640 *guld och sylff jech giwer thik,
om thu wilde nw giwe mægh liiff,
jech er nw armer æn jen wiff.”
dydrik swared aff mygel harm:
“jech wil mæg jckj ower thik for barm,*
645 *for thy thu est thet ickj werdh,
jech skal thik hugge medh myt swerd,
ath thu skalt aldrig mieræ
fonge kiemper flere.”¹¹¹*

compensation, he would have chopped their hand and foot off, because they had gone against him. That would have been a great dishonour to them, they would have better stayed home.

¹¹¹ Didrik, who was wrathful, kept the dwarf under his foot and wanted to kill him, which he surely could have done: “you have caused me suffering and woe, therefore you shall never fight again in this world with anybody and sever their food or hand. I don’t want to linger anymore now, I want to tear your entrails out.” Then cried the little Lawrin: “Diderik, I am now

The way Lawrin begs for mercy resembles what both Diderik and Widrik did earlier in the text, as the former offered gold and silver as the dwarf did (cfr. *guld och sylff och rige gawe*, v. 369, vs *guld och sylff jech giwer thik*, v. 640), while the latter begged for mercy with the same words that Lawrin uses here (cfr. “*edlæ lawrin, thu nadher mæg!*”, v. 448, vs. *for thin æræ thu nader mæg*, v. 639). The situation has changed completely for the dwarf king, and the fact that he acts so similarly to those he earlier scorned accentuates this turn of events.

In this passage Diderik also talks about what could have been the reason for his quest: to stop Lawrin from dishonouring any more knights (*jech skal thik hugge medh myt swerd, ath thu skalt aldrig mieræ fonge kiemper flere*). As already mentioned (p. 24), this explanation comes rather late in the text, so we can only hypothesize whether the king’s motivation was really to save the honour of questing knights or if he destroyed the garden only for his own glory. Being Diderik a king prone to battle, the second options seems more likely. The glory for having cut down the magic roses and lilacs would be enhanced by the defeat of Lawrin and thus the preservation of the honour of paladins who would have come there.

At this point Lawrin recurs once again to his slyness. A new character is introduced, sir Thieloff, and Lawrin reveals that he had caught prisoner his sister. The dwarf proposes to free her and grant him lands and riches in case the knight freed him. By doing so, Lawrin turns Thieloff against King Diderik, in the hope of the death of the latter. In this scene both the paladins are resolute, Diderik in particular being wrathful and stern. Meanwhile Lawrin almost seems to make fun of Thieloff for the easiness with which he caught his sister, still showing pride in such adverse conditions:

649 *ther war jen annen kiempe i blant,*
her thieloff fand steeræ sa hiede han,
dwerigen ropte hanum til:
“thin hielp jech gierne hawe wil!”
saa sawde then lidele lawerin:
“jech hawer i bierighet systen thin,
655 *i goor tog jech henne vden sorig*
nedhen for thin faders borig,

your prisoner, on your honour, spare me. I will give you gold and silver, if you give me life, I am now more helpless than a woman.” Diderik answered out of anger: “I won’t have pity of you, since you are not worth of it. I shall now slash you with my sword, so that you shall never more take any paladin prisoner.”

*kant thu nw vndsette mæg,
sannelig jech wil seye thik
thu skalt hinnæ i frælsæ faa*

660 *och halfft thet rigdom, ther jech aa.”
ther her tiello thete hørde,
tha maa i høræ hwad han giorde:
“kiere konning dydrik, heræ myn,
giwer mæg dwerig lawrin,*

665 *wi wil giwæ edher rige gawe,
hwad som i wil sielff hawæ.”
koning didrik swared aff wrede:
“thu mentæ, at jec skal strax weræ til rede
och giwæ thik then mand,*

670 *ther mæg hawer fòrd slig sorig pa hand,
fòrræ skal jech hanum hoge saa smaa,
jet styky skal jckj jet annet naa.”
her tello worte wred, begynte at riste
och redys, han skulde sin syster mystæ*

675 *“heræ, jech wil thet jckj for drawe,
then lidel dwerig wil jech hawe,
heller jech wower for hanum myt liiff.”
snarlig the helled begynte jen kyff
och hoger hwer andræ angestelige.*

680 *then jene wilde ey for annen wige¹¹²*

¹¹² There was another paladin among them, his name was sir Thieloff from Styria. The dwarf called him: “I would gladly have your help!” So said the little Lawrin: “I have your sister in the mountain, yesterday I caught her without trouble under your father’s village. If you could set me free, I tell you without doubt you would give her back her freedom and receive half the kingdom I possess.”

As sir Thieloff heard that, you should hear what he did: “dear King Diderik, my lord, give me Lawrin the dwarf, We will give you rich gifts, what you yourself want to have.” king Didrik answered out of wrath; “you believe that I will agree immediately and give you the man who caused me so much sorrow? First I shall cut him in pieces so small that one piece couldn’t stay near another.” Sir Thieloff became wrathful and began to shake and to worry that he could lose his sister: “My lord, I will not accept this, I want to have the little dwarf, and risk my life for him.” The heroes immediately began a duel and hurt each other terribly, one would not retreat from the other.

Lawrin sees that he has no possibility of winning now that he is overwhelmed and without his precious magical belt, so he resorts to his last weapon: dividing the paladins and making them change sides.

Sir Thiellof doesn't hesitate to accept Lawrin's proposition. The narrator once again directly addresses the audience and tells them to pay attention to what he did (*ther her tiello thete hørde, tha maa i høræ hwad han giorde*). In such a situation we can assume the narrator wants to emphasise how the knight acts outrageously and betrays his king. At this point of the story we are left to wonder whether Thiellof's betrayal is caused by a genuine worry for his sister or for personal interests (it must be kept in mind that Lawrin is very rich and powerful, more than Diderik, and half his kingdom could be a good reason for such a betrayal). Later on, the paladin will be genuinely worried for her, but this will happen after Lawrin swears fealty to Diderik, thus losing his royal rights on his lands and ceasing to be a pressing menace.

At first Thiellof politely asks his king to hand over the dwarf, but Diderik is resolute to keep him, and clearly angered by the paladin's betrayal. The situation escalates in a duel between the two heroes.

In the Middle High German version this duel is much longer (31 lines, from 619 to 650, vs 3 lines, from 678 to 680), and the strength of the two is conveyed more directly:

631 *Sye huben an den aller grossten streit*

den ye vor noch seyt

gestriten zwen man,

alz von in wart getan.

(...)

639 *ir sleg ungefug und groß*

daz durch den helm to(s)

man hört ir peder swertklank

*wol einer halben meyl lanck*¹¹³

The difference between the two versions backs an observation already pointed out at page 32, regarding an apparent deeper interest by the Danish author towards narration rather than action. Whether this is due to an intermediary between one of the German versions and the Danish, is not certain. We can see this focus in the Danish version comparing the length of the battle scenes with that of dialogues and

¹¹³ They raised the biggest fight two men have ever fought before. (...) Their hits sounded through the helmets, one could hear the sound of their swords well over half a mile.

descriptions, the former being generally shorter than the latter. The duel between Lawrin and Diderik is the only instance of an extended battle scene, as it is pivotal to the plot and marks an important change in Lawrin and in the story. As will be addressed later on, there is no other extended action sequence throughout the story, so we can safely assume that the Danish author wanted to focus not on what the characters *do*, but rather on *who* they are and *how* they act. In this text, what transpires from the duel is that both the warriors are honourable heroes (*helled*, v. 678), as they wouldn't retreat from each other even though heavily wounded. This is apparently what the author wanted to convey the most, more than describing the epic battle between the two, but what is most important in these scenes is Lawin and Hillebrand's intelligence.

The dwarf's cunning has the better hand on both Thiellof and Diderik, as none of them notices that they are falling victim of their enemy's plans to gain freedom back. Yet, as earlier, Hillebrand does not comply with Lawin's scheme and proposes a solution that will turn the situation for the better for the paladins and him. We can notice how once again the counsellor acts as wisely and with intelligent, while Diderik is still focused on the battle:

681 *hillebrand kam tha met jen ferd*
och stak i mellom sit gode swerd:
“j mowe eder skamme bode til lige,
ath i willæ saa hin annen swige,
685 *och ey for stor eder bode*
ath giøræ hwer anne tøllig skade.
wil i lyde myt rad pa nyy,
jech wil thet halffwe bedræ fly,
i skullæ bode wenne weræ,
690 *dwerigen skal giwe seg fongen met æræ*
och giwe eder, heræ, orlig skat,
her thelloffs syster aff bierighet lat,
och widrik skal løses aff fengzel heræ,
thet tøker mæg hælwe bedre weræ,
695 *end i hwgge hwer anne sa skammelige*
then jenn wil ey for annen wige.”

the worte ha sa til radæ
didrik och her thellof bodhe,
at the wilde lyde hillebrandh,
 700 *han war jen myghet ærlig mand*
bode i rad och sa i snillæ.
the hanum ey for tørne willæ,
han war jen mand bode wiss oc klog,
ther til war han fornwmstig nog.
 705 *haffde han jckj til dydrik kommed,*
*han haffde aff dwerigen annet for nommeth.*¹¹⁴

We notice how Hillebrand has the authority to tell both a comrade and his king to be ashamed for acting like they are. The two don't want to provoke the counsellor and thus listen to him, and the narrator suggests that Hillebrand's intervention is also useful to Lawrin, who would have had much more taken from him if the paladin didn't come (*haffde han jckj til dydrik kommed, han haffde aff dwerigen annet for nommeth*). There is here another instance of good counsel being pivotal in the narration. Earlier on, Diderik won against Lawrin only because he fought on foot under Hillebrand's advice; then the king could seize the dwarf, who turned invisible, thanks to his counsellor's idea; lastly, had the paladin not stopped Diderik and Thiellof, the two could probably have killed each other. So we can see how Diderik either needs to be kept from hurting himself or be advised on what to do: as we have already observed, he often rushes to battle (be it against the roses, Lawrin or Thiellof) or is helpless (when Widrik is hanged and bound to the tree and after being wounded by the dwarf), with only few exceptions such as him stopping Widrik from charging Lawrin at line 246 (*giord nw hesten*; "halt the horse now") or offering a compensation for the damage done to the garden instead of immediately fighting for his honour. This picture is far from the noble and proud King Diderik is presented as in the first lines of the text, and grounds to affirm that the king's figure is somehow belittled are thus indeed present. Whether

¹¹⁴ Hillebrand came then rapidly and put his trusted sword between them: "you should both be equally ashamed of yourselves, for betraying one another and not recognising your profit, for inflicting such damage to each other. Will you listen to my advice once again, I will explain much better. You should both be friends, the dwarf shall give himself prisoner with honour and give you, sir, an yearly tribute, set sir Thiellof's sister free and release Widrik from his imprisonment. This seems to me much better rather better than to slay each other so shamefully." Then they agreed, both Diderik and sir Thiellof, that they would listen to Hillebrand. He was a very honourable man, both in counsel as in intelligence. They didn't want to anger him, he was a man both wise and intelligent, therefore he was reasonable enough. If he didn't come to Diderik, the king would have taken something else from the dwarf.

the underlying intent is to parody his character, or to give importance to Hillebrand as a counsellor, or both, is not sure. Taking into consideration the importance Thiellof's sister's advice will have later in the text besides Hillebrand's guidance, a focus on good counsel and wisdom is not to be ruled out. A further look on this point will be made in chapter 2.3.

After Hillebrand's proposition the situation changes again: King Lawrin becomes a vassal of Diderik, thus losing his authority (which is a big change comparing who he was when he first appeared); Diderik is no longer eager to slay his enemy and dedicates to the courtly banquet the dwarf offers them; Widrik and the paladins no longer have a central and active role, they rather act as a background for the events, the only paladin still active being Thiellof, but only because helped by his sister. Let's analyse this last section in detail.

2.2.7. The knights in Lawrin's mountain

After having sworn fealty to Diderik, Lawrin greets his new lords in his home with honour and friendliness, but his pride is far from tamed:

712 *han bød them allæ i bieriget jne,*
han lowet them pa tro och æræ,
thet skulde them vdhen skadhe wæræ,
715 *the for lod them ther aa*
och fulde hanum, the giorde saa.
tha the kam i bierighet theræ,
han hielsed them met mygel æræ
och vndfæk them blidelig,
720 *han haffdæ dog i hierthet swig*
och actæ them jckj myghet got,
*æn dog han haffde them wel vndfot.*¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ He invited them all in the mountain, swearing on trust and honour that they would have remained unscathed. So they trusted him and followed him, that is what they did. When they went into the mountain he greeted them with much honour and welcomed them friendly. But he had treason in his heart, and did not want any good for them, even though he received them well.

Lawrin's pride is still not defeated by Diderik and his knights. We can observe that, even though the ways of the dwarf king for having the better hand over his enemies change, his final aim doesn't: he still wants a compensation for the shame of losing his precious rose garden. As opposite of Diderik, who more than once changes his attitude towards the dwarf¹¹⁶, Lawrin proves to be unidimensional: whatever may happen (may it be losing a duel), whatever the costs (may it be resorting to dishonourable actions), he wants his revenge against his enemies, his pride being greater than his honour. This can suggest that the dwarf king, as the enemy of the hero, is inherently determined to defeat Diderik because of his evil nature, or it could suggest an excessive attachment to his honour, that eventually leads to his dismay. Confronting this version of King Lawrin with the aforementioned *Walberan* version (see chapter 1.2), we can see that the fate of 'Walberan's Laurin', who becomes a faithful and resourceful retainer at Dietrich's court, is much more positive than that of the 'Danish Lawrin', who remains true to his honour until his very end.

On verse 716 the phrase *the giorde saa*, "that is what they did", appears to highlight the trust that the knights are putting in Lawrin. Seeing the interventions the author did earlier in the text, this sentence is unlikely to have been used only to build the rhyme. The emphasis on the heroes' trust in the dwarf seems excessively assuring, and wouldn't be necessary if Lawrin's intentions would not go against such trust. It is rather more probable that the narrator wanted to warn the audience of the dwarf king's intentions.

In the following lines Lawrin honourably welcomes his guests into his home. The knowledge the reader has about the dwarf's real intentions creates suspense in the scene and changes what would seem to be the rather normal outcome of the oath of loyalty Lawrin just swore. There is also a callback to the dwarf's first description, as his court is described as marvellous and extremely rich:

723 *han satte them til bord allæ*
koning didrik mon han sin heræ kallæ,
725 *han stod for hanum och tientte ther*
och skybede the aad och dryg met ære.
thet bord war aff cristalle stien

¹¹⁶ There are two main instances of Diderik changing from belligerent to either proposing a peaceful solution or accepting one: vv. 314-316 vs 368-370 (Diderik eager to destroy the rose garden vs. Diderik offering a compensation to Lawrin) and vv. 668 to 672 vs. 697-698 (Diderik firm in wanting to kill the dwarf vs. Diderik accepting Hillebrand proposition).

*och fœdern war aff fylsbien,
 the sade och vndret ther appa
 730 then storæ rigdom ther the saa,
 the haffde reth aldrig tøllig siet,
 alt thet the haffde i werdhen liet,
 the saa och mange vnderling ting
 vdh met wegixen alt om kring.
 735 hwad kan jech ther mieræ seye fra,
 men alle the tingh, ther the saa,
 war giord af gieweste guld hin rene
 och war besat met dyræ stienæ.¹¹⁷*

Lawrin treats his guests and lords honourably, and seems genuine in his intentions. The knights thus don't worry about him and are instead awestruck by the wonders of the dwarf's palace. We can notice how Lawrin's possessions are described rather similarly both in the first and the last part of the text. Referring to the rose garden, the narrator tells that Diderik and Widerik *haffde reth aldrig tøllig siet*, "had never seen anything similar" (v 192); at verse 731 the exact same line is repeated referring to the dwarf's hall. In the same way in the garden there is *dyræ bar stienne och gieweste guld* "precious stones and pure gold" (v. 189), likewise in the hall gold and precious stones are present ((...) *gieweste guld hin rene och war besat met dyræ stienæ*, "pure fine gold and inlaid with precious stones, v 737-738). Overall the awe of the men when seeing both the garden and the palace is perceivable, and underlines the otherworldly nature of the dwarf and his kingdom. This is rather similar to what is perceived in tales such as *Ivan Løveridder* (see chapter 3.1.), in the magic fountain of the queen Ivan falls in love with, or in the Middle English *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*, when describing the Green knight and his mysterious nature. Magic is in both cases used by the author to convey a sense of awe by the protagonists and to create an aura of mystery and reverence around certain elements of the story.

¹¹⁷ He sat them all to the table, even calling King Diderik his lord, he stood between them and honourably took care of them with food and beverages. The table was made of crystal, and the legs of ivory. They sat and wondered at the great wealth they were seeing there. They had never seen anything similar in all they saw of the world. They saw many other wonders in the walls around them. What can I say more but that everything they looked upon was made of pure fine gold and inlaid with precious stones.

It is interesting to notice that in the Vulgate versions the paladins are greeted by Thiellof's sister, Künhild, whereas in the Danish version she is sitting in her chambers, and won't be given a name even though she will play a central role later. She is presented as courtly and noble:

739 *then jomfrv rig met twct och sinnæ*
hwn sad alt lwt i fadbwr innæ.
hinnes broder, ther jech saffde fra,
dwerigen bad hanum jnd til hinnæ gaa
och snackæ met hinnæ thæræ,
*hwad them kwnne bode til glede were.*¹¹⁸

Behind these reassuring words Lawrin is actually imprisoning Thiellof with his sister. The knight doesn't see through the dwarf's intentions and involuntarily follows his plan, again showing a certain ingenuity opposite to that of his sister, who will understand Lawrin's aim almost immediately.

Back in the hall Lawrin offers his guests a sleeping draught and locks the cell door, blocking it with a iron bar. After doing so he ties the paladins in pairs with iron cords and says:

762 *“j skulle ret ey skade mægh,*
och ey myn roser nedher at trede,
jech skal nw faa edher anned ath wede,
765 *førræ æn wi skyllles at*
*i skulle en hawe jeth anned bad.”*¹¹⁹

Lawrin feels dishonoured by the Bernish court not for the lost duel, nor for the forced vassalage, but for the rose garden. The focus of the story is still on the magic garden, and lets the audience know how important it must have been if the dwarf cares more about it than of his rich possessions.

¹¹⁸ The maiden, rich in decency and dignity, sat locked in the vault. The dwarf invited her brother, of whom I spoke earlier, to go to her and speak with her there, so that they could both be happy.

¹¹⁹ “You shall not harm me anymore, nor trample my roses. I will let you know something else before we part ways, you will have to face another battle.”

Though Lawrin apparently lost his royal rights, he calls on his subjects to come to his presence:

767 *siden tog han sin gylte lwd,
saa gik han aff bierghet vd,
han bleste saa høfft ower alle hans lande,*
770 *snarlig tha kam hanum til hande
hertuger, grewer, ridder och swene,
alle the som hanum skulle tiene,
the kam til then heræ brat
och sporde hanum snarlig at,*
775 *hwad som hanum war kommen til mien*¹²⁰

The horn Lawrin blows is golden like many of his possessions, and can be heard throughout the dwarven lands. The magic properties of the dwarf and his items are still evident and functional, even though Lawrin has been defeated and humiliated. His subjects answer to his call, unaware of the earlier happenings, and still call him *heræ*, lord. Lawrin has lost his authority as a king in the human world, represented by Diderik and his paladins, but not in the magic world, represented by himself and his court.

The dwarf king summarises the events at the rose garden and in his halls, asking for advice on what to do next:

793 *hwad rad i wil mæg giwe
aldiels wil jech ther wed bliwe.*¹²¹

Even when full with vengeance and hatred towards his enemies (see p. 49 to 52) Lawrin doesn't act before having consulted his court. Hartung (2016) argues that this brings more evidence to the certain liking the author has towards the dwarf, as the respect towards his subjects indicates that Lawrin is a just

¹²⁰ Then he took his golden horn and went out of the mountain. He blew so loud all over his lands that dukes, counts, knights and servants immediately came to him. All those who owed him service came quickly to the lord and asked him what had happened.

¹²¹ "any advice you want to give me, I will follow it in any case."

ruler¹²², even though the court will not have much impact on their lord's decision, simply answering him that they would follow him and not giving any real advice:

795 *the swarede thieris heræ snarligh theræ,
ath the wilde fyllyge hanum met æræ,
met hanum bode gaa och staa,
ee hwad som han wilde slaa appa:
“i skullæ heræ allæ hos mæg bide,*

800 *jech ather ath giøræ them sorig och qwide,
och wil jech them pine saa saræ,
thet i skullæ see obenbaræ,
ath jech skal twinge them til døde,
for de brød myne roser røde,*

805 *jech skal giøræ them saa dan wande,
ath thet skal spøres ower allæ lande.”
dwerige swared hanum allæ wel:
“heræ, i maa thet giøræ met ful got skiel,
for then vskiel the eder giord,*

810 *som wy hawe nw allæ hørd.”*¹²³

In comparison, Diderik's decision to go to the rose garden was made by the king independently from Hillebrand's advice, so again the esteem towards Diderik as a king can be questioned.

¹²² “Die nuancierte Darstellung des Lawrin im dänischen Text zeigt sich auch an dieser Stelle, denn als gerechter Herrscher bestimmt er nicht nur, sondern fragt seine Vasallen um Rat”; The nuanced representation of Lawrin in the Danish text comes up also at this point, since as a just Ruler he doesn't just decide, but he rather ask his vassals for counsel. Hartung (2016) note 794 p. 208.

¹²³ They promptly answered their lord that they would have followed him with honour, both journeying and standing still, whatever he might have suggested: “you all shall wait by me, I am about to cause them pain and fear, and I will hurt them so bad that they will clearly see that I will bring them to death, because they destroyed my red roses. I shall damage them so awfully, that it will sound over all lands.” The dwarfs answered him: “Lord, you could rightfully do that, for the wrong they have done you we all heard about now.”

The following verses open the last part of the text: after another intervention by the narrator, Thiellof's sister plans to free her brother and Diderik's court, having understood Lawrin's plan and thus showing her cleverness:

- 811 *then stwnd han mon thesse talæ røæ,
hwad mon the i bierghet giøræ?
then jomfrv kwnne wel for staane,
hwad then dwerig tog til hannæ:*
- 815 *“høræ i thet, myn brodher kieræ,
i skulle jckj lenger siddæ heræ,
fuld raskelig skullæ i ap staa
och jnd til edher stalbrøder gaa,
jech seyer eder wesselig pa myne tro,*
- 820 *kan han thet noger lwnde skibe saa,
han skal alt giøre them nød
och pine them til thieris død.”¹²⁴*

As above mentioned, the nameless woman understands what Lawrin was doing and proves to be more clever than her brother, who doesn't notice what had just happened. In the following lines all that Thiellof can do is use brute force to escape the room. After managing to destroy the iron rod keeping the door shut he is helpless and troubled seeing that the hall is completely dark. It's once again his sister that unlocks the situation, giving him a golden ring that makes things visible¹²⁵:

- 827 *“mon ther jngen rad til weræ,
hæræ ær sa mørt, jech kan jckj see,*
- 830 *thet giør meg i myt hierte wee.”
hwn gaff hanum jen gwldering:*

¹²⁴ In the moment he was giving this speech what were those in the mountain doing? The virgin could well understand what the dwarf planned: “listen, my dear brother, you shouldn't sit here any longer; hastily should you stand up and go to your brothers in arms. I indeed tell you in good faith, could he prepare himself somehow, he would hurt them and torture them to their death.”

¹²⁵ Hartung (2016) affirms that the exact technique with which the ring can reveal things is a Danish addition. (“*Eine weitere Neuerung der dänischen Fassung stellt die genaue Nennung jener Technik dar, mittels derer der Ring Dinge erhellen kann*”; p. 209 note 832)

*“nar i wende then stien om kring,
tha maa i giørlig kienne,
hwræ thet ær skibed ther jnne.”¹²⁶*

Thiellof is often helpless and falls victim of Lawin’s plans twice, and twice is he saved by characters characterised by their intelligence. Thinking of the fact it is Thiellof who supposedly went in the mountain to save his sister, the parodistic reading of the text is strengthened even more.

The following lines are somewhat similar to the previous ones: Thiellof is presented with a problem and panics, whereas his sister sees the cause and solves it.

835 *ther han kam i stowen ind,
tha matte han see i same sind,
hwræ the laa ther bwnden samem,
thet gik al hanum vden gamen,
och fryctede saaræ, ath the war døde*
840 *han fæk i hierthet sa mygel mødhe,
ath sin syster mwn han kallæ,
hwn kam til hanum snart met allæ
then jomfrv hwn och fuld wel westæ,
snarlig hwn thet giorde met listæ,*
845 *ath the worte allæ qweg i gien
aff then falskæ sigh och mien,
ther dwerigen them giorde,
som i til forne hørde.¹²⁷*

¹²⁶ “There is no way, , here it’s so dark I can’t see.” She gave him a golden ring: “when you turn this stone around, then you’ll clearly know how it is in there.”

¹²⁷ As he came in the hall he could suddenly see how they were tied together. That gave him no pleasure, and he was very afraid that they were dead. His heart ached so much that he had to call his sister. She immediately came, the virgin knew well she understood so rapidly that they all came back lively from the false betrayal and meanness the dwarf inflicted to them of which we already spoke.

Thiellof's sister awakens the paladins in what appears to be a magic use of cleverness: her understanding of the situation is so rapid that the effect of the sleeping draught vanishes. If we compare her with the heroes that supposedly had to save her, we can see that expectations are indeed reversed, and we could affirm that the true heroes are not Diderik and Widrik but rather Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister, who are the only ones who turn the situation in favour of the main characters, or at least who clear the way to their victory. Diderik, Widrik and Thiellof would then be only men of action, whereas the intelligent characters, interestingly one of them being a woman, would be those who take decisions. This is even more evidence in favour of the parodistic theory.

2.2.8. Conclusion

After having been awakened the paladins decide to take whatever they can and slay Lawrin. In these last verses the dwarves have no role, and the once proud and powerful dwarf king is humiliatingly left to die. Of the heroes, only Diderik has speaking role after the liberation.

852 *han taled til them och sawde:*
“alle then skade, wy kwnne hanum gjøre,
thet skal then dwerig bode see och høræ.”

855 *snarlig the worte til rade saa,*
ath allæ thebeste klenodia
som the kwnne ther aa finnæ
them wilde the hawe i samme sinnæ,
ther til guld och dyræ stien,

860 *the wilde ret jnthe lade i gien.*¹²⁸

Gold, already mentioned as a compensation both by Diderik and Lawrin¹²⁹, and precious stones, which are part of many of Lawrin's possessions, are the final loot of the heroes' adventure, along with the many precious things that were previously mentioned. What was offered by (and to) the dwarf king is now taken from the dwarf king, once again disrespecting him.

¹²⁸ he spoke to them and said: “all the harm we could inflict him, the dwarf will both see and hear.” They rapidly agreed that all the best treasures they could find they would have taken, along with gold and precious stones, they wouldn't leave anything behind.

¹²⁹ Diderik and Lawrin offer gold at verse 369 and 649, respectively

The lack of importance of the dwarf court is shown in the way it is described in the following lines:

861 *sa brød the aff bierighet vd,
som han stwdh met gylde lwd,
ther the dwerige thete saa,
the kwnne ret jnthe til rade faa,*
865 *the haffde fuld liden weræ,
ath staa i modh the kiemper theræ.
Dwerighen sloo the allæ i hiel,
hwilked the matte wel giøre met fuld got skiel¹³⁰*

The dwarven court is frozen with fear and are killed with ease. With only one line (867) describing the events the narrator conveys a lack of importance this court has if compared with Diderik's. On the other hand, the latter plays more the role of a marauding band than that of a group of paladins, as the dwarves posed no threat to them nor were the heroes attacked by them in the first place. It is also noteworthy that in the German versions this slaughter is a long battle between dwarves and knights, with giants siding with King Lawrin and the heroes carrying out valorous feats. This fight is described in 240 verses, from 1186 to 1426. The difference between the two version is significant, and heavily suggests a difference of intents (and a probable intermediary source) between the Danish and German author(s). Once again the former proves to be more interested in descriptions and narration rather than in action sequences. This almost non-extant description of the massacre at the mountain, which seems rather uncaring of the dwarf king's fate, also contrasts with the consideration the author seemed to have towards Lawrin, who had the role either of honourable king or of cunning and powerful enemy throughout the text.

Unlike what happens in the High German version (Vulgates and Walberan), Lawrin's last defeat doesn't result in his captivity and humiliation back at the Bernish court, but rather in a physical and moral defeat:

¹³⁰ So the broke out of the mountain where he [Lawrin] stood with the golden horn. As the dwarfs saw that they couldn't know what to do, they stood very little chance again the paladins there. These slayed the dwarfs, which they could skilfully do.

869 *lawrin then lidle man*
konning didrik tog hanum met sin hand,
och slo hanum mod jen stien,
at synder gik bodel axel och bien:
“thu skalt och aldrig met thin snillæ
heræ efter fleræ kiemper spillæ!”¹³¹

Diderik once again gives a possible explanation for his whole quest (as he already did at verses 645-648), but, as already mentioned (p. 24), these reasons are put forward rather late in the text, and the true interests of King Diderik are not clear. He could have done everything for his honour, or even for Lawrin's riches: after having won at the mountain the knights and the young woman go back to Bern with the loot they have taken, which are *the wenneste klenodia man kunne spøræ*, “the best treasures that one could fathom”.

The way Lawrin is defeated is quite the opposite of what one could have expected after having read of his greatness. Not only does he play no part in this last section, but the ease with which Diderik slays him resembles that the king would have had with a kid or a small animal. This could also be a parody of the once grand nobility of Lawrin and of Diderik's lack of honourable manners.

The very last lines are the only instance of religious references in the whole text along with line five and the reference on vv. 234-235. The narrator takes the reader back to reality and concludes the story with a short prayer:

hwad the siden mwn slaa appa,
880 *ther wil jech jnthe seye fra,*
pa thenne tid lade thet saa weræ.
gud vnse os saa ath lewe heræ,
thet wi matte hemerigy faa allæ samen,
ther til seye wi allæ amen!¹³²

¹³¹ Lawrin the little man, King Diderik took him with his hand and struck him against a stone, so that he broke both his shoulders and legs: “Never more shall you, with your slyness, ruin other knights”

¹³² Of what happened afterwards I don't want to talk about, let things be how they were this time. May God bless us with our life here and with being able to access the heavenly kingdom, for that let us all say amen!

The author makes the opposite of a *laudatio temporis acti* and tells the audience to be glad of the time and place they live in, being it a gift from God, and to refrain from wishing to live in another time (wishing so would mean to go against God's gift). The events of the past are not frozen, they occurred and changed, but in their time and place, not unlike the present. This association gives life to the characters of yore, and makes the reader relate to them. This may help the audience keeping in what they read or heard in the story.

It is noteworthy that this conclusion is another topos the author uses, as we can affirm by confronting it with the ending of the other tales present in the K 47 manuscript. In the conclusion of every story (except one) the wish for the access to paradise and for the grace of God is present. Many also share the same last line:

Ivan Løveridder:

*nw ær thenne bog til ændhæ
gudh han os sin nodhæ sende
och giømæ hanum ther hinnæ giorde
och allæ the ther bogen hørdhæ
hemerigis gledhæ for thieræ mødhæ
och frælsæ os allæ fra hilwidis nøde
amen¹³³*

Den kyske dronning:

*gud han os sin nadæ scændhæ
och vnde os hær ath lewe saa
thet wi maa frygd i **hemmerigi** faa
(...)
gud vnde os then gledhe allæ sammen
ther til seye wi allæ amen¹³⁴*

¹³³ Now this book comes to an end, may God send us his grace and grant to him who made it, and to all who heard this book, the happiness of the kingdom of heaven for their struggles and deliver us all from the temptation of hell. Amen

¹³⁴ May God himself send us his grace and let us live here so that we may happily access the heavenly kingdom. (...) May God grant us happiness all together, for this let us all say amen.

Hertug Frederik af Normandi:

*jech wil nw bogen ænde
gud oss sin nadhæ sendhæ
gud gywæ them allæ som bogen hørde
och sa then ther hinde giordhe
glede for vdhen all ændhæ
then tid som os skal døden hende
then henne skreff hwn saffde och saa
och ther til seye wi allæ jaa amen¹³⁵*

Flores og Blanseflor:

*nw hawer thennæ dickt jen ændæ
gud han os sin nadæ sændæ
(...)
thet ladæ os gud i **hemerig** hændæ
ther lewer och styrær for vdhen ænde
then hinnæ skreff hwn maa och saa
ther til seye wi allæ jaa amen¹³⁶*

Persenober og Konstantianobis:

*thenne bogh worte dikt i rym
aar effter gusz fødsels tim
thet wil jech seye obenbaræ
twsind oc iiii hwndret aar
firæ sindis tywe paa thet fierde **amen**¹³⁷*

¹³⁵ Now I want to end this book. May God send us his grace. May God give to all who heard the book, as well to who did it, happiness without end. She who wrote said and saw the time when death will happen to us all, for this let us all say amen.

¹³⁶ Now this poem comes to an end, may God send us his grace. (...) May God let us be in the heavenly kingdom that lives and reigns without end. That she who wrote this knew and saw, for that let us all say amen.

¹³⁷ This book was set in rhyme years after God's birth, I will openly say that: one thousand and four hundred and eighty plus four years, amen.

As we can see, prayers, references to God and the liturgical expression *amen* are present in all the endings to different extents. Prayers to God for the well of the soul strongly appear to be present to follow a convention more than for religious purposes. The final verses of *Persenober og Konstantianobis*, which represent an exception among the tales, support this reading, as the main focus of the author is not the wish for the access to heaven, but to mark the date of the making of their work¹³⁸. The only word related to sacrality is *amen*, which again was probably used to mark the end of the tale (not much unlike the word *fin* was used as an ending in early silent films). We can thus hypothesize that the function of the ending of *Dværgekongen Lawrin* is formulaic and not religious, that is, it is used to conclude the story and not to give religious teachings to the audience.

2.3. The purpose of the tale

If the function of the ending is fairly easily recognisable, the message behind the whole story is debatable. There are several possible interpretations, discussed in this chapter:

- First of all, we cannot rule out the absence of a defined purpose behind the tale without analysing this approach. *Lawrin* would be a work made solely for entertainment, without any edifying aim. This reading would be supported by the first lines (*Jeth lidhet spel acher jech ath skriwe/ther man maa tidhen met for driwe*), in which the author openly says that what they are about to write is “a little work of entertainment with which one can pass the time”. The ending could also corroborate the *work-of-entertainment* interpretation, considering that, as mentioned just above, it would lack a theological purpose and would have been used only to mark the end of the story. However, both the beginning and the end of the tale are literary *topoi*, so the author could have written about making a work of entertainment only to begin the story, in a way similar to the conclusion. Furthermore, during the analysis of *Lawrin* we have met numerous instances of exemplary counsel and seemingly parodistic lines, two aspects too important (as the many times they have been discussed show) to be ignored. Thinking of how much exemplary counsel and parody have been discussed throughout this analysis, the *work-of-entertainment* interpretation seems to be quite reductive.

¹³⁸ I don't specify the gender of the author because it is not clear from the text. Since the ending of *Flores* and *Hertug Frederik* use the feminine pronoun *hwn* when referring to the author, the gender of *Persenober's* writer is not clearly definable. I further address this issue in chapter 3.

- The parodistic reading¹³⁹ appears reasonable, and many times during this analysis we have met points to back it up. The heroes, and, to a lesser extent, the author, often call Lawrin “little baby” (*lidhet barn*), “little man” (*lidle man*) or “little dwarf” (*lidelæ dwerig*), in a process I referred to as *vilifying internal description* in chapter five (I use *internal* because it is mainly done by characters active *in* the tale). Even so, this denigration of the antagonist is not the main reason for advocating a parodistic interpretation. On the contrary, it creates irony: the fact that their antagonist is likened with a baby, or vilified in the ways mentioned, contrasts with the superiority King Lawrin shows for almost half of the tale, both as a king as well as a warrior. Even more taking into consideration that King Diderik is firstly described as a honourable, powerful king who victoriously performed many heroic acts (vv 54-60). Nevertheless Lawrin’s wealth is much greater than that of Diderik’s, and he is a much more skilled knight than Widrik. The hanging of the latter to a linden tree by the hands of the dwarf in the lines 449-450 is far from a noble depiction typical of such an important knight. In addition, the sometimes mindless behaviour of King Diderik also clashes with the idea of the courtly and wise king. Thus the main characters, supposedly strong and honourable, often fail to meet the expectations due either to the comparison with their opponent or for their own conduct, and this sort of anticlimax is strengthened even more by the irony created by the way they treat Lawrin. Lawrin himself is not immune from this, as after his defeat against Diderik he resorts to dishonourable means and apparently loses his authority. Just before the final lines he proves to still be a king to his people, but then again his miserable end proves his fall complete. Therefore the main active characters (and Thiellof) are not immune from the irony created by the contrast between their words and their actions and the results of such actions, that often end differently than expected (e.g. Widrik immediately loses his duel against Lawrin, Thiellof goes to free his sister only to be helpless without her, Lawrin loses against Diderik and has his people effortlessly killed by his enemies, Diderik meets a king richer and stronger than him after having rushed to destroy Lawrin’s rose garden). Irony is thus strongly present in the tale, and, since it applies to kings and knights that are supposed to be among the strongest and most honourable, it leads towards a parodistic interpretation.
- The second main interpretation that has been discussed throughout the analysis is the *praise-of-good-counsel* reading. Advice and wisdom play a major part in the story since its

¹³⁹ As already mentioned, this is the interpretation also put forward by Hartung (2016).

beginning: during the ceremony of telling heroic tales Hillebrand, presented as *wiis og klog* (wise and intelligent, v 33), tells Diderik of the existence of King Lawrin and of his rose garden, thus creating the basis for his king's quest; thanks to Hillebrand's advice Diderik and Widrik reach their destination with ease (vv 173-174); later on, when Diderik and Lawrin are about to joust, Hillebrand's advice Diderik to fight on foot, saving his life (this is thrice addressed, once on verses 489 to 492, once from 615 to 624, once on vv 705-706); to the same extent the counsellor's advice is essential to stop the king's duel with Thiellof (vv 681-695). The latter is the last instance of Hillebrand counseling Diderik, but it is also the one where his authority is marked the most. His king and sir Thiellof seem afraid of him (vv 697 to 706), and more importantly he *decides* (not proposes) what to do about Lawrin and Thiellof's sister. So it is Hillebrand who sends King Diderik and Widrik to their quest and it is him who partly causes the expedition's victorious outcome. The other character behind the success of the endeavour is Thiellof's sister. Even though unnamed, she plays a pivotal role in the last part of the tale, as she immediately understands Lawrin's plans of betrayal as the dwarf is setting them into motion (vv 813-814). Later on, she nullifies the effect of the dwarf's sleeping draught just by realising what happened (vv 844-846). By comparison, Thiellof is initially hopeless after having opened the door that kept them in the chamber, as he couldn't see anything (vv 828-829). It is his sister to give him a magic ring that gives the wearer the ability to see in the dark. In the same way later on he despairs when seeing his comrades seemingly dead (vv 838-841), meanwhile his sister easily breaks the spell, permitting to Diderik and his knights to conclusively win against Lawrin and his court. As we can see from these examples, good counsel, intelligence and wisdom are crucial to the characters, the story and its development. Moreover, it is possible that the importance of a female counsellor could hint a woman as the commissioner of the manuscript and/or a female intended audience as well. This aspect, already mentioned in the analysis, will be addressed in the next chapter when comparing the tales of the K 47 manuscript.

- A religious reading is hardly plausible and already ruled out in the previous chapter, as christian rhetoric and imagery are almost absent (in comparison, the High German version shows more interest in religious themes, as God, the heroes' christianity and the dwarfs' heathenry are often mentioned). Religion is present in three instances: in the beginning and final verses (discussed upon above) and when Lawrin first appears. The latter in particular brings a point against a *religious text* interpretation, as the one who is compared to an angel is the subhuman, sly and

dangerous enemy, not very much unlike what Satan would often do to appear as a friend to mortals¹⁴⁰. This paragon with the Devil is however never mentioned in the story, and Lawrin is described either as a little baby/man/dwarf or even as a honourable lord, which could not happen if he were the representation of Satan. According to the points just presented we can conclude that a theological reading of the tale doesn't seem reasonable, but it has to be noted that for a text to be edifying in a christian way it doesn't need to be hagiographic or explicitly religious. Naturally, it depends on the context the text is in. However, taking again into consideration the lower number of religious references present in the Danish version against the higher importance of religion in the German texts (e.g. the contrast between the heathen Lawrin and the christian Diderik, present in the German versions, is absent), and considering that there is no hint of christian values or virtues in the text, this reading is at least less viable than the two interpretations above.

Of these different interpretations, the most reasonable are the *parody* and the *praise of good counsel* readings. These two are not in conflict with each other, considering that the two counsellors' intelligence is instead only highlighted by the frequent helplessness of King Diderik and his knights (and vice versa). The author seems to praise those that put their cleverness at the service of their liege, and to point out that even though the power is officially not in their hands, they can have a lot of *positive* (as opposed to controlling) influence on their lords. On the other hand, the nobility pridefully values honour above all, but in the end their pride is inappropriate, as both kings and knights need counsellors to be able to achieve what they want. Lawrin, probably the proudest of the characters (as shown by his consideration of his enemies and by how much he feels dishonoured about the destruction of the rose garden), is almost supported by the narrator during the text, until his pride makes him act dishonourably (vv 545-554). These dishonourable manners are what in the end will cause the fall of his court and himself. Honour is indeed central in the story: Diderik wants to avenge the honour of Widrik and of all the knights who succumbed to Lawrin, and the dwarf king himself wants to win back his honour after the shame of having lost his rose garden. But honour by itself is not enough, as shown by Diderik, Widrik and Thiellof. The three are honourable heroes but lack in wisdom (the only exception being Diderik in the verses preceding Widrik's duel with Lawrin), and because of this they need who is both honourable (or courtly) and wise: the two counsellors Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister.

¹⁴⁰ 2 Corinthians 11:14

3. The tale and its manuscript

Dværgkongen Lawrin is part of the K 47 manuscript, which is found in the Royal Library of Stockholm (Kungliga Biblioteket). This book is generally dated around 1500, more precisely after 1484, year indicated in one of the tales (*Den kyske dronning*) as the year of its writing. The language it was written in was identified as Jutish¹⁴¹, but the identity of the author (or authors) is not completely sure and will be addressed later. In the K 47 there are 6 stories, which will be commented upon in this chapter and that appear in this order:

- *Ivan Løveridder*
- *Hertug Frederik af Normandi*
- *Dværgkongen Lawrin*
- *Persenober og Konstantianobis*
- *Den kyske dronning*
- *Flores og Blanseflor*¹⁴²

The first three tales are chivalric tales, they revolve around the adventures of a particular knight or group of knights (as is the case in *Lawrin*). They all contain magic elements which play roles of varying importance, but that serve the story nevertheless (in *Ivan Løveridder* there is a magic fountain the protagonist swears to defend, in *Hertug Frederik* the hero makes an extensive use of his invisibility ring to do his exploits, in *Lawrin* many of the dwarf king's possessions and the Rose Garden are magic). Their similarities will be discussed in the closing chapter.

Perseneber og Konstantianobis, *Den kyske Dronning* and *Flores og Blanseflor* are all courtly romances, with focus on courtly love. They are the tales of two (noble) lovers whose relations is either hindered by one or more antagonists (*Perseneber* and *Flores*) or expressed only in the final part of the story (*Den kyske Dronning*). The first of the three is the one most resemblant of a chivalric tale, as the male protagonist, *Perseneber*, undergoes many trials, both physical and moral. In particular it has some

¹⁴¹ “*Sprogformen har været tolket som gennemgående jysk og er derfor muligvis at henføre til skriverne*”; “The language form has been interpreted as generally Jutish and is thus possibly attributable to the writer.” Petersen (1999)

¹⁴² *Ivan Løveridder*, *Hertug Frederik af Normandi* and *Flores og Blanseflor* are all part of the Danish translation of the Swedish *Eufemiavisor*

elements in common with *Ivan Løveridder*, namely the breaking by the male protagonist of a vow made to his beloved and his subsequent descent into madness.

According to Glauser (1986), these are all texts belonging to an older continental European tradition (as already stated in chapter 1.3). The use of older narrative material would have been a response to an increase (or rather a revival) in the power of nobles and knights after the agrarian crisis of the 14th century. Tales of tournaments, courts, journeys and knightly orders would have been in line with the policy adopted by the Renaissance king Christian I (who ruled 1448-81) to legitimize his rule to the outside world.¹⁴³

As there is a solid amount of literature about the *Eufemiavisor*¹⁴⁴, I am going to focus on *Den kyske dronning* and *Persenober og Konstantianobis*, but an analysis of the tales, or rather, of the ideals that can be connected with *Lawrin*, ought to be made.

3.1. The *Eufemiavisor* translation

The *Eufemiavisor* (lit. Eufemia tales) are three Swedish translations of famous tales, made from 1303 to 1312 by commission of the german-born queen of Norway Eufemia von Lübeck, who would have gifted them to her infant daughter Ingeborg and the swedish duke Erik Magnusson to celebrate the arrangement of their wedding.¹⁴⁵ The tales are *Ivan Løveridder*, *Hertug Frederik af Normandi* and *Flores og Blanzeflor* (Danish titles), all originally written in French. These translations are generally considered to be one of the most important literary works in the history of Swedish literature, and one of the main helping hands in conforming the then young swedish nobility to its older continental counterparts by advocating ideal courtly values and creating a cultural common ground¹⁴⁶. If early 14th century Swedish nobility was young and needed every help possible to grow up as an european power, by the time the manuscript was written (early 16th century, roughly 200 years later) the danish nobility had little need of a didactic literature that would have built their customs.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the degree of mutual intelligibility between Danish and Swedish was fairly higher than now (as we will see later), so one is left to wonder what the role of a translation of three well-known texts between two similar languages really was. A solution could be that the entertainment value of the tales was higher in the

¹⁴³ Glauser (1986) p. 203

¹⁴⁴ As stated by Bampi in *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 4 (2008)

¹⁴⁵ Småberg (2011) p. 201-202

¹⁴⁶ Småberg (2011) p. 203-204

¹⁴⁷ Vikør (2001) p. 25-26, Dahlerup (1998), p. 238. Danish nobility united especially with the already established northern German nobility already during the 14th century.

mother tongue of the intended audience (thus it could have been more successful), or that a certain degree of adaptation was applied to meet the needs of said audience. The latter is more probable if we take the differences between the Swedish and Danish versions of *Ivan Løveridder* as an example, where there is a reduction of a passage of the Swedish tale:

Swedish version:

- 1040 *Iak veet thet väl for vtan swik*
hon saghe mik hälder dödh än qwik
The hafuer iak hört sighia een visan man
thet han ij bokom skrifvith fan:
hwa ther stadhlika hauer akt op a
1045 ***man qwvinno hwgh skö vända ma***
thy at man finer thet opta swa
the sighiä thet ney the wilia ia
Iak thorff ey tala swa vnderlik
hwa weet hwath gudh vil göre medh mik?
1050 *han ma väl hänna hiärta vända*
*ok hona mik til glädi at sända*¹⁴⁸

Danish version:

- 1030 *Iech wedh thet wel for wten suegh*
hwn saa megh heller döth æn kuegh
jech törff ey tale saa vderligh
hwem vedh huad gudh vil giøre met megh
ath han maa vel henne hierte om wende
1035 *henne megh til gleden at sende.*¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ I know that for sure, she would rather see me dead than alive, **I have heard a wise man, who found this in books: if one pays attention to what happens, one could see how quickly women change, then he will often find that when they say no they mean yes.** I shouldn't push myself so far, who knows what God wants to do with me? He could change his heart as well and send her to me to make me happy.

¹⁴⁹ I know that without doubt, she would rather see me dead than alive. I shouldn't push myself so far, who knows what God wants to do with me, he could change his heart as well and send her to me to make me happy.

We can see that the two versions are corresponding and that there is a high degree of intelligibility between them (the main difference being diacritical signs). As already pointed out, a translation might not have been completely necessary for the Danish nobility to *understand* the Swedish *Herr Ivan*, so there might have been other reasons for such translation. In the Danish version the verses from 1042 to 1048 are completely missing. This is also not the only instance of reduction regarding the translation of *Herr Ivan* from Swedish to Danish: in the *Codex Holmens K4* (dated 1470-1480¹⁵⁰), in which the tale of *Herr Ivan* is present, these verses are left out as well. These lines are highly critical of women, affirming that they often change their mind and that they don't mean what they say. If the manuscript was destined to a female audience, if there simply were ideological differences between the Swedish and the Danish writer or if it was copied by a female copist, as Glauser (1986) and Petersen (1999) hypothesize, this change could easily have been made.

Naturally, Glauser's and Petersen's assertions are not mere hypotheses, considering that at the end of *Hertug Frederik af Normandi* and *Flores og Blanseflor* the pronoun *hwn*, "she", is used to refer to the author:

Hertug Frederik

2419 *then henne skreff hwn saffde och saa,*
*och ther til seye wi allæ jaa!*¹⁵¹

Flores

2200 *then hinnæ skreff, hwn maa och saa*
*ther til seye wi allæ jaa!*¹⁵²

These two endings are almost completely equal, pointing towards a formulaic expression that could nevertheless be modified depending on the context.

¹⁵⁰ Petersen (1999)

¹⁵¹ they who wrote this [book], **she** said and saw, and therefore let us all say yes!

¹⁵² they who wrote this [book], **she** was able and saw, and therefore let us all say yes

By comparison, according to Glauser (1986), in the Swedish *Herr Ivan* the author is referred to as a male, while there is no correspondence in *Hertig Fredrik*'s ending:

*then hona skreff fangæ och swa*¹⁵³

Where *fangæ* would indicate a masculine 3rd person past verb.

It must be pointed out that the end of *Herr Ivan* a male writer is suggested, as per lines 6404-6406:

*Nw ær thenne bogh til ændhæ
Gudh han os sin nodhæ sende,
och giømæ hanum, ther hinnæ giorde*¹⁵⁴

A change of author between texts is possible, as well as a deeper faithfulness towards the source, but considering that such diversity in the translations of different texts in a single manuscript would be arguable, together with the fact that at the end of *Den kyske dronning* the male copist Jep Jensen is mentioned as the writer, the former is more plausible. Petersen (1999) points out that the change of pronouns “could also be due to women copying texts, possibly also the K 47, at some point of the Danish tradition”¹⁵⁵. Thus rather than a female translator there would have been a female copyist.

Either way, the adaptations were probably made for an audience to a certain extent composed by females, and this is reflected in the role Thieloff's sister has in *Lawrin*, even if unnamed. As already pointed out, it is her that shows to be the main helping hand in the rescue of Diderik's court, and it is for her that the knights go to Lawrin's mountain, thus getting access to all the riches they will bring home later on. Her role in the story is a central one in the tale's ending, and this is in line with the adjustments aforementioned. The very choice of *Lawrin* as one of the tales to copy in the manuscript could have been made for the presence of such an important female helper.

In a similar way, in *Ivan*, the eponymous hero falls in love with the lady of the castle (which in the Danish version remains unnamed, while in the French version is called Laudine), whose husband he

¹⁵³ they who wrote this [book], [he] set about and saw

¹⁵⁴ Now this book comes to an end, may God himself send us his mercy and protect **he** who made it.

¹⁵⁵ “*Det kan godt bare betyde, at kvinder har afskrevet teksterne på ét eller andet trin af den danske overlevering, evt. i selve K 47*”.

killed to avenge the honour of his comrade Karlgrevars. This reminds of Diderik's eagerness for revenging the honour of the knights defeated by Lawrin, but of more importance is the centrality of the lady's maiden, Luneta. After being previously helped by Ivan, Luneta gives Ivan an invisibility ring that lets him see the noblewoman, and later convinces her lady that a younger, stronger husband would be better for her, thus leading to a wedding between the two nobles. We can already see the importance of her advice, considering that it brings a new lord to the castle and overall makes the story advance. Luneta has some sort of control over her lady, but, as Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister, doesn't use it for her own good. Rather, with a different *nuance*, she exerts her (respectful) authority for the good of her lady *through* helping another person. In other words, in order to help Sir Ivan, she advises her lady about the advantages of remarrying, thus aiding the two nobles at the same time. Naturally, compared to the advices given in *Lawrin*, this counsel is somewhat trivial, as it doesn't regard matters of life and death as in the other tale, but it shows the importance Luneta and her guidance have.

3.2. *Den kyske dronning*

This tale is the represents a kind of exception in the K 47 manuscript, as it is the only one to have, in its final verses, information about both the author and the date:

1221 *thenne bog worte dickt oc giord for snyme*
oor effter gusz fødelsæ tymæ
twsind firæ hwndret och firæ sindis tywe
***pa thet tridicæ** jech wil ey lywe*

1225 *tha worte hwn fyrst skrewet och giord*
som i allæ hawer seet och hørdh
hwo hans naffn wil wede
***jep jensen** mon han hiedhæ*
then som bogen satte i ryme¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ This book was put in rhyme and made now, years after the time of God's birth, **one thousand four hundred and eighty plus three**, I won't lie. Then it was first written and made, as you all have seen and heard. Those who want to know his name **Jep Jensen** he can be called, he who set the book in rhyme.

The year 1483 is explicitly stated as the year of the making of *Den kyske dronning* (vv 1223-1224), setting it one year before *Persenober og Konstantianobis* (see note 107). Moreover, the author also writes his name, Jep Jensen. We can assume that he didn't write all of the tales in the K 47 manuscript, since, as already stated, a female author is suggested two of the six texts. Regarding Jensen not much is known. Dahlerup (1998) affirms that Jensen was a monk in the double monastery in Mariager, a town in northern Jutland¹⁵⁷. This is not a secondary aspect, as it gives credit to the hypothesis of the involvement of a female translator (or copyist) in the making of part of the manuscript, as double monasteries combine communities of monks and nuns.

Glauser (1986), following a metric analysis made by Mortensen (1901), argues that Jep Jensen could have been the translator of *Persenober* and *Lawrin* too.¹⁵⁸ *Den kyske dronning*, on the other hand, could be an original Danish work, and not a translation, but there are divergent opinions about this hypothesis. To quote Glauser (1986) "The question whether *Den kyske dronning* is an original creation or a transmitted text is by no means clear. While older descriptions point to a lost presumably German source and to Jep Jensen only as the editor the story is nowadays considered a probable Danish work"¹⁵⁹. Along the same lines, Dahlerup (1998) argues that "No model was found for this courtly romance. In theory it could be an original Danish work, but it was probably translated from a now lost source, or set in rhyme after an oral tale"¹⁶⁰.

No other text in the K 47 is (or is hypothesized to be) an original Danish work, and information about *both* author and year can be found only in this story, thus *Den kyske dronning* is rather peculiar in this manuscript.

The theme of this story (unjust accusation of the innocent), however, is quite a common one¹⁶¹, and the plot is not far from the ideals discussed above. The name of the tale itself hints it, as the *Den kyske dronning* means "the chaste queen".

¹⁵⁷ Dahlerup (1998) p. 272

¹⁵⁸ Mortesen (1901) p. 123

¹⁵⁹ "Die Frage, ob in *Den kyske dronning* eine Original schöpfung oder eine Übertragung vorliegt, ist keineswegs geklärt. Während ältere Darstellungen eine verschwundenen vermutlich deutsche Quelle ansetzten und Jep Jensen lediglich als deren Bearbeiter sahen, wird die Erzählung heute meist als wohl dänisches Werk bezeichnet"

¹⁶⁰ "Til denne ridderroman har man ikke kunnet påvise noget forbillede. I princippet kan den da være originalt dansk. Men sandsynligvis er den oversat efter en nu tabt kilde eller sat i rim efter en mundtlig fortælling";

¹⁶¹ Dahlerup (1998), Glauser (1986)

Here are the events in summary¹⁶²:

The king and queen of Poland are childless, so they are gifted by the king of Bohemia with one of his seven children, who gains the queen's affection. After some time all the brothers of the adopted prince die, so he returns home to become king. The king of Poland goes on a pilgrimage, leaving his kingdom to the care of a knight called Scares, making him vow to serve the will of the queen. The knight soon reveals to be craving for the throne, and therefore tries to seduce the queen. She refuses him, so he starts plotting his revenge. He has a servant hide naked under the bed of the queen, and, the following morning, storms in her chamber and kills him. Scares accuses her of having betrayed her lord, for which she would be burnt at the stake. He then renews his accusations in front of the royal council, but the knights decide to wait until they have more information on the facts. The king is returning, and Scares rides towards him. He repeats his lie and proposes again the queen's death by fire. The king repudiates his wife, who in turn escapes the court, exchanges clothes with a female pilgrim and hides in a small town. The queen writes her story in a letter to the king of Bohemia. He wants to know the truth, so he disguises himself as a papal legate and visits the Polish king, who hasn't yet forgiven the supposed adulteress. He then journeys further to the queen, who confesses to the fake clergyman and convinces him of her innocence. Afterwards he advises the heirless Polish king to burn her at the stake in order not to lose his husband's honour. The king wishes to send her to the pyre already on the following day. Scares captures the queen and she is condemned to be burned at the stake. Once more she advocates her innocence. The Bohemian king secretly wears his armour, and, disguised, challenges Scares to a duel for the honour of the lady. The king is wounded to an arm but later defeats the knight. Seeing his death approaching, Scares admits his guilt and asks to be burned in order to gain God's grace. His wish is granted and the queen is freed. The Polish lord repents, and the trustful woman forgives him. She asks the unknown knight for his name, but he doesn't tell her. The only thing he asks for as a reward is the queen's silk shirt to mend his wound, then he rides home. Short after these events the king of Poland dies, and the queen decides to take the best knight as her new husband. A courtly fest is thus held, and all the most outstanding men come. One of these is the king of Bohemia, towards whom the queen is resentful for not having answered to her call for help. Before the tournament he shows her the

¹⁶² I base the summary on the one given by Glauser 1986, p. 196

silk shirt, and she recognises him as her saviour. The queen thanks him and asks him to marry her. The marriage immediately takes place, with the consequence that the Lord of Bohemia rules now also over Poland. The couple lives happily ever after.

Following the approach found in Wittig (1978)¹⁶³, the story can be divided in two large structural units, linked by what she calls *type-episode patterns*, in which various events, grouped in smaller units called *type-scenes*, take place. Even though the focus of Wittig's study is on Middle English noncyclic verse romances (e.g. *King Horn*, *Sir Eglamour of Artois*, *Amis and Amiloun*, as well as *Flores and Blancheflur* and many others), we can of course see recurring patterns in other traditions as well. I have many times pointed out the presence of *formulae* and *topoi* in the K 47 manuscript, and we will now be confronting *Den kyske dronning* with *Dværgekongen Lawrin*, both in structure and in content.

The two large units that can describe *Den kyske dronning* are the *separation* and the *restoration* units. The typical pattern¹⁶⁴ is the succession of *separation*, *adoption*, *recognition* and *restoration* episodes, but here the first two appear to be inverted: at the beginning of the story the Polish monarchs *adopt* the prince of Bohemia, but are later *separated* from him (which is necessary early on for the later wedding, which would have otherwise been between an adoptive mother and her son). There is a further *separation* later, when the king repudiates the queen and queen flees to a nearby town. The duel between the king of Bohemia and Scares is seemingly a *rescue* episode, while the ending follows the *recognition* (of the hero by the queen)/*restoration* (of the queen's status) pattern. The sequence in *Den kyske dronning* would then be the following: *adoption*, *separation*, *rescue*, *recognition*, *restoration*, comprised in the *separation restoration* pattern. Glauser (1986), about this sequence, affirms that "the *absence of the lord*, *rejection of the regent by the trustful lady*, *slandering and punishment upon the return of the*

¹⁶³ Wittig applies Pike's tagmemic approach to literary analysis, combining it with other various studies, to individuate "the basic and minimal [structural] unit which is defined as being functionally necessary to the existence of the object" (not unlike what phonemes, morphemes or tagmemes can be in a sentence, or even atoms or cells in living and non-living things, depending on the focus and the field of study). She then studies the relations between smaller and bigger literary units, as well as their nature, thus confronting and studying sentences, stanzas, scenes, entire works and even groups of works. She also highlights the similarities between units, grouping them together basing on their nature (e.g. quarrels and combats are grouped under the *battle-scene*) and to study larger units (e.g. the *arming of the knights* is often part of the *single combat*, the latter being a *type-scene* unit and the former being a *motifeme* unit, i.e., as Wittig puts it, "a form-content composite, an element which is manifested through the choice and substitution of individual variants into an unvarying pattern. [It is] an abstract unit, the sum of all of its possible variants simultaneously occurring").

In this analysis I will also use Wittig's approach to compare some of the scenes and episodes of *Den kyske dronning* with those of *Lawrin*, as well as their themes.

¹⁶⁴ Wittig (1978) p. 176

husband, defeat of the traitor by a voluntary knight and reacceptance of the slandered progression” is typical of a genre of scandinavian popular tales called *Folkeviser*¹⁶⁵.

3.2.1. Differences with *Dværgekongen Lawrin*

We can immediately see a difference between this tale and *Lawrin*, as in the latter there is no queen, no slandering and false accusation of an innocent and no rescue of the protagonist. Even more generally, the pattern of *Lawrin* differs from that of *Den kyske dronning*, as it doesn't follow structural classifications typical of this genre of romances (hence its belonging to the *Dietrichepik* rather than the courtly romances). The pattern *separation/restoration* isn't present. The main *separation* (the destruction of the rose garden), that also resembles a slandering, is made *by* the heroes, not *against* them, so its nature is rather different, whereas the *restoration* doesn't happen exactly because no separation happened (Diderik didn't lose his kingdom or his honour, nor does Lawrin gain back his rose garden or his realm).

As Dahlerup (1998) points out, a difference between *Den kyske dronning* and *Lawrin* (as well as the other tales present in the K 47 manuscript), is the absence of magic¹⁶⁶, which on the other hand plays a major role in the second. In *Den kyske dronning* the moving factors are human, temporal evil (represented by the treacherous Scares) and good (represented by the just and heroic king of Bohemia), whereas in *Lawrin*, where such concepts are not clearly defined or at least the focus of the story, it is the human world (represented by King Diderik and his court) to clash with the magic world (represented by King Lawrin and his possessions). We can thus hypothesize different focuses in the two texts, which could correspond to a need for variety in the making of the manuscript. Some common theme, which we can theorise was needed for the composition of the K 47 as well, is present.

3.2.2. Similarities with *Dværgekongen Lawrin*

Even though not being a theme, it is worth mentioning that, despite the higher amount of religious references in *Den kyske dronning*, religion is marginal in both texts, and is used not as the very reason for the characters to act, but as a means for the author to make the story advance (the only exception being Scares' repentance). Moreover, the chastity the title refers to is not that of a minister of God, but

¹⁶⁵ “Die Motivreihe ‘Abwesenheit des Herrschers, Abweisung des Statthalters durch die treue Frau, Verleumdung und Bestrafung nach Rückkehr des Gatten, Überwindung des Verräters durch einen freiwilligen Ritter und Wiederaufnahme der Verleumdeten’ stellt die Folkeviser gattungstypisch szenisch dar”, Glauser (1986) p. 201

¹⁶⁶ Dahlerup argues that “Dette og kirkeelementerne kan bestyrke hypotesen om, at forfatteren (oversætter) er munk”; This, with religious elements, would strengthen the hypothesis of the author (translator) being a monk, Dahlerup (1998) p. 273

that of the trustful and faithful wife.¹⁶⁷ This similarity between the texts is important, since it appears to prove the lack of a theological aim behind not only *Dvægekongen Lawrin*, but also the making of the manuscript itself.

One recurring theme is that of the rescue of the lady. As Glauser (1986) affirms, and as the very presence of a *rescue* type-scene in Wittig (1978) hints, this theme was a really common one, which lives on even today in many literary or filmic products¹⁶⁸. In *Den kyske dronning* the rescue is a central part of the plot, as it regards the protagonist and foils her death to the pyre, which is a menace present throughout the tale. In *Dvægekongen Lawrin* the rescue is that of Thiellof's sister, which becomes central only briefly, and only in the last part of the story. Even though these two varieties of *rescue* type scene are apparently quite different, they seem to converge in the centrality of the role of the two rescued: the queen is the protagonist of one story, the young lady is, as we have already seen, pivotal to the plot of the other. Nevertheless, the two ladies' rescues are quite different. If we take into consideration the role of the queen in *Den kyske dronning*, we see that she is more of a passive protagonist, whose best merit is her fortitude, which allows her to resist Scare's proposal and reject every accusation without ever being defeated. She is only active when calling for the Bohemian king's help. Thiellof's sister, on the other hand, is quite active: she informs her brother of Lawrin's plans, she gives him the magic ring that lets him see in the dark and, maybe most importantly, she cures all of Diderik valorous knights just by understanding the situation. Following the irony present throughout the tale (see chapter 2.3), it is Thiellof's sister to end up rescuing the knights, and not vice versa. As we can see, the two women are similar in that they are virtuous, but they are extremely different in their nature.

Another important recurring theme is the central role of the counsellor. Scares, who acts as the advisor of the king of Poland, is quite the opposite of Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister. He craves his lord's status, and uses his intelligence for his own good, not for his lord. He betrays his king trying to usurp his throne; when he fails, he remains faithful to his plan and convinces him to sentence the queen, the only witness of his actions, to death, thus assuming control over his liege. In the end, Scares repents and not only accepts, but proposes his own punishment by taking the sentence to death by fire on himself. In *Lawrin*, both Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister act for the well of their lords. When Hillebrand reserves

¹⁶⁷ I must address that the story could be seen as a metaphor for nuns having the duty to reject the advances of the Devil to give in to lust while already "married" to God. This interpretation is valid, but in the context of the manuscript, the least probable of the two.

¹⁶⁸ These can range from superhero comic books and movies to gothic novels such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (also revisited in numerous movies) or Horace Walpole's *The castle of Otranto*. The popularity of the rescue theme shows how vivid it still is.

Lawrin's belt for himself (vv. 612-614) he does so because of his merit. He saved King Diderik's life (vv 615-624), and gained a proper prize, not undermining his lord's power, but rather helping him. In the end he is rewarded by taking part to the sack of Lawrin's mountain and bringing the prize home to Verona (vv 875-878). His intelligence doesn't have a negative development, and sometimes he gains authority even over his king (vv 681-695), without ever usurping him of (or wanting to usurp) his title. Thiellof's sister is similar to Hillebrand but slightly different in how she gives her advice. Of course, this is easily attributable to the different relation she has with her brother (as opposed as a knight with his king), but it is interesting to address a certain apparent condescension in the way Thiellof is talked to, perceivable more by how the knight calls for her help when encountering an obstacle than for the words she utters (vv. 829-830, 839-841). Both counsellors still respect the authority of those they help, and in the end they are rewarded (Hillebrand with glory, riches and presumably Lawrin's magic belt; Thiellof's sister with her freedom). Scares, on the other hand, is an equally powerful counsellor, but he uses his intelligence for his own good, uncaring of the authority of those he serves and breaking social rules (i.e. his vow to serve the queen). The only hope given to the evil advisor is that his own repentance may grant him peace.

Den kyske dronning and *Dværgekongen Lawrin*, though being profoundly different in some aspects, thus find in the importance of counsel a common ground, the former warning lords and advisors as well of the dangers of egotistical counsel, the latter showing the benefits of intelligence in favour of social rules. Even if *Den kyske dronning*, be it a work by Jensen, be it a translation, is not very original in content, it shows an interest still alive in the late 15th century Denmark towards a tradition of older, already outdated, courtly tales¹⁶⁹. This further connects it with the other stories in the K 47 manuscript, as they all are translations of texts belonging to an older tradition. Nevertheless, the stimulating aspects and hypotheses that could be found in this analysis are manifold, and talk to us about the interests and needs of those who commissioned (and of those who made) the codex.

3.3. *Persenober og Konstantianobis*

Not much has been written about this tale. From its ending we know it was made in 1494 (see note 107), which helps to define the time of the making of the Codex around the last decade of the 15th century. Glauser (1984) affirms that its dating makes the tale the youngest medieval work regarding this matter, and states that it could be a translation of a Norwegian adaptation of the 12th century-French romance

¹⁶⁹ Glauser (1986) p. 204

*Partenopeus de Blois*¹⁷⁰. Dahlerup (1998) doesn't mention the source text, which she dates to the 13th century, but argues that such text would have been translated to Spanish, German, Low German, Dutch and also transposed into an Icelandic saga¹⁷¹, which would correspond to Glauser's hypothesis. Since no precise source could be clearly found, the text could have been adapted from an oral version, which would also explain the peculiarity of the characters' names (the helping woman *Fraga* is normally called *Uraka*, and Konstantianobis herself, the heroine of the tale, is called *Meliur* in the French version).

Dahlerup associates *Persenober* to two other tales that would have been the main inspiration: the Greek myth *Cupid and Psyche* and *Ivan Løveridder*. The reasons are to be found in the story. As we will see, Konstantianobis, not unlike Psyche, will be prohibited from seeing her beloved and will break the connection between him and herself; on the other hand Ivan, like *Persenober*, violates an agreement, is deposed, becomes crazy, is cured and reconciles with his lady by the intervention of a good woman¹⁷².

Let's summarise the story of *Persenober og Konstantianobis* to identify these aspects and, more importantly, let's compare it to *Dværgekongen Lawrin* and the K 47 manuscript.

The king of Constantinople is childless, so his daughter, Konstantianobis, is appointed queen. She is intelligent and beautiful and has knowledge about witchcraft. In need for a king, Konstantianobis sends 12 knights to search for a man suitable for her. The twelfth candidate happens to be the one who the queen chooses. His name is *Persenober* and is the nephew of the king of France. With the use of magic she brings him to her castle and tells him that, if he will sleep with her for half a year in chastity and without being able to see her, she will become his wife and he will become king. This pact is broken twice: the first time France is attacked by pagans and *Persenober* needs to return home to fight for his country. With the help of his beloved, the heathens are fended off and their nights of trial can continue; the second time *Persenober's* mother gives him a magic ring with which he can see Konstantianobis. She is enraged, and condemns him to death for the deception he committed. Her sister *Frago* smuggles him out of the country. For seven years he lives a madman in the forest, while Konstantianobis mourns him. Meanwhile a pagan king craves her hand, and threatens her to destroy her country

¹⁷⁰ Glauser (1984) p. 193. The same information is reported on *tekstnet.dk*, On the tale's description present on the website the link is more precisely identified with the Icelandic prose *Partalopa saga*

¹⁷¹ Dahlerup (1998) p. 270

¹⁷² "(...) den græske myte *Amor og Psyke* (hvor det er kvinden, som ikke må se manden og bryder forbundet) og *Ivan Løveridder* (hvor helten overtræder en aftale, forskydes, bliver vanvittig, helbredes og forsones med sin frue ved en god kvindes mellemkomst)" Dahlerup (1998) p. 269

in the case she refuses him. Bound by this menace to accept the marriage, she sends Frago to the king in order to arrange the marriage. During her journey Frago meets Persenober. She cures him and convinces Konstantianobis to forgive him, but before the two lovers meet, he is captured by the heathens, and the weddings preparations are not interrupted. Before the marriage he manages to escape and, under false name, part take in the tournament preceding the ceremony. He wins the tournament and severs the right arm of Konstantianobis' suitor. Frago recognises him, thus making possible for the two lovers to finally openly meet. Persenober is chosen as king, because his noble hardships and valorous feats are renowned. The story happily ends with the two protagonists' wedding.

The links with *Cupid and Psyche* and *Ivan Løveridder* are rather clear, with a slight difference, in that instead of Konstantianobis being unable to see her beloved (like Psyche is when in the cave with Cupid), it is her that willingly challenges Persenober to not see her for half a year, thus bringing her into a position of command.

We can also connect the chastity present in the trial Persenober must undergo with the one in *Den kyske dronning*. It is noteworthy a quotation from Jørgen Olrik that Dahlerup writes:

Jørgen Olrik affirms that the chastity during the invisibility period is a Danish addition: "this attention to decency can maybe be associated with the fact that the Danish writer (or editor?) is known to have been a female, possibly a noble- or clergywoman." (*Danske Folkebøger VI*, p. 51, Jørgen Olrik doesn't state from where he gained knowledge of the sex of the translator. It is not indicated in the text itself).¹⁷³

The clues of a female collaboration in the making of the K 47 are even more considering this passage. If the tale was translated (and adapted) with the making of the codex in mind, it is also possible to hypothesise a deliberate insertion of chastity as one of Persenober's test to connect the story even more tightly with *Den kyske dronning* and with the rest of the tales as well. The manuscript could have had more appeal to a possible intended audience composed by women of the cloth.

¹⁷³ "Jørgen Olrik nævner, at kyskhedskravet i usynlighedperioden er en dansk opfindelse: "dette Anstændighedshensyn hænger maaske sammen med, at den danske Skriver (eller Bearbejder?) vides at have været en kvinde, maaske en Adels- eller Klosterjomfru." (*Danske Folkebøger VI*, s. LI, Jørgen Olrik anfører ikke, hvorfra han har sin viden over oversætterens køn. Det angives ikke i selve teksten)". Dahlerup (1998) p. 270

3.3.1. Differences with *Dværgekongen Lawrin*

The differences between *Persenober og Konstantianobis* and *Dværgekongen Lawrin* are fairly easily recognisable as well. The main one is that if the former is a typical courtly romance, most probably comes from a French source text and has at its centre courtly love; the second is part of the already mentioned *Dietrichepik*, appears to be an adaptation of a southern German tale and is focused on the honour and strength of the heroes. So love, pivotal in *Persenober*, is absent in *Lawrin*. It is the latter to be an exception in this, as all the other texts are more traditionally *courtly*, so love is, to different extents, part of the plot. The two tales are also different in their structure, even though sharing some similarities. Both Konstantianobis and Diderik are monarchs since the beginning of the tale, they don't achieve such status nor do they need to defend it, but their roles are completely different: the queen doesn't embark on a journey, she rather sends her knights to find a proper husband to inherit the crown; she then uses her magic powers to obtain what she desires, and challenges her chosen knight Persenober to withstand a trial. Throughout the text her focus really is love and -more cynically- finding a husband suitable to inherit the throne of Constantinople. When at the end of the tale there is the danger of an unwanted marriage with the heathen king, she succumbs to his requests, and it will be Persenober that will save her. On the other hand we have Diderik, who is not only eager for honour, but is also famous for his deeds and adventures (see chapter 2.2.2.), therefore he personally goes to the rose garden. He doesn't request his knights to come with him either, as it is Widrik to volunteer for going on the quest with his liege. A knowledge of witchcraft by Diderik is never mentioned in the tale; on the contrary, it is his enemy to be characterised by magic, as Lawrin's equipment is magic (his belt, his dragon blood-hardened helm, his magic hat, the sleeping draught), and the rose garden appears to be enchanted too (vv. 185-190). The focus of King Diderik is to achieve honour destroying the garden, avenge the knights fallen to Lawrin and prevent the dwarf king from damaging anyone else (even though these last two motivations appear rather late in the text, see page 24 and 44). When he is about to joust with Lawrin, thus being in grave danger (as per the words of the narrator on vv 489-492 and 615-624), he is indeed saved by Hillebrand, but not through a duel between his counsellor and the dwarf, rather through advice. It is King Diderik to fight his enemy, not another knight.

As we can see, the two main characters in the tales differ in many aspects, but taking into consideration the different natures of the two plots, it is also true that the stories appear to differ also in their focus. As already stated, the main focus of *Dværgekongen Lawrin* appears to be the importance of good advisors

and, to a more superficial level, knightly honour; the main perceivable focuses of *Persenober og Konstantianobis* are courtly love and honour: the former pervades the story and is its main motor, the latter is shown in the weight of Persenober's disrespect of Konstantianobis' will not to be seen. It is also shown in the faithfulness the two lovers have towards each other, that lasts for the whole of the text. The same fidelity is not to be found in every character in *Lawrin*: Thiellof's brief support towards Lawrin (from line 661 to Hillebrand's intervention on verse 681), as well as Widrik's uncertainty about the quest when seeing the beauty of the Rose Garden (vv. 197-208) hint that even though supposedly honourable and heroic heroes, the knights can falter (which is one of the main points of the parodistic reading, see chapter 2.3). There is one whose honour and devotion is not broken by Lawrin's possession: Hillebrand. The counsellor is always loyal to King Diderik and to his quest, in a way that can remind us of how Frago always remains faithful both to her mistress and to Persenober, and thus also to their quest for love. Once again counsel is the main common point between the texts.

3.3.2. Similarities with *Dvægekongen Lawrin*

As mentioned above, the easiest link to be found between *Persenober og Konstantianobis* and *Dvægekongen Lawrin* is the importance of counsellors. Hillebrand, Thiellof's sister and Frago are all intelligent and resourceful (and, in the case of Frago and Thiellof's sister, courtly)¹⁷⁴. Frago's introduction is similar to Thiellof's sister's, as it highlights her virtuousness and her nobility:

809 *hwn war dygdelig then edelæ jomfrve*¹⁷⁵

Confront this verse form *Lawrin*:

739 *then jomfrv rig met twct och sinnæ*¹⁷⁶

The “decency” and “dignity” of the latter are important virtues, but, as we can see from the text, these are not the qualities Thiellof's sister uses the most. It is her understanding of King Lawrin and her cleverness that are of most use in the tale, whereas her courtly ways are only a way to better approach her noble brother. To the same extent Frago's wisdom and intelligence is expressed more in her actions

¹⁷⁴ Hillebrand: v. 22; Thiellof's sister: vv. 739, 813-814; Frago: v. 809

¹⁷⁵ “she was virtuous, the noble maiden”

¹⁷⁶ “The maiden, rich in decency and dignity”

than in her first description, as she understands Persenober's worth and prevents him from being put to death. Doing so not only she saves the hero from his death, but also prevents her sister to marry the heathen king later on, since it will be Persenober to win Konstantianobis' hand from the pagan¹⁷⁷. She obeys Konstantianobis' orders even when being asked to arrange the unwanted wedding, showing her respect for her sister's authority. All this is reminding of two aspects present in both Hillebrand and Thiellof's sister: the first is the respect for the authority, shown by Frago in the example mentioned above, that we have seen to be extremely important in the comparison with *Den kyske dronning*; the second is initiative, mainly expressed by Hillebrand when proposing a pacific solution to the duel between Thiellof and Diderik and by Thiellof's sister when she warns her brother of Lawrin's plans, as well as when she gives him the magic ring with which he could see his king and the knights.

We can thus see once more that, no matter how fearless and valorous the highest authorities are, the prime movers of the plot, those who unlock seemingly hopeless situations, are good advisors. Wisdom and intelligence are compared to, and maybe even put before, the knightly virtues of battle prowess and bravery. An underlying purpose, a motivation the makers of the K 47 manuscript had in mind when translating, adapting and, in the case of *Den kyske dronning* maybe writing the tales, to later put them together, can be hypothesised.

¹⁷⁷ M.A.Nielsen writes that Frago is in this case wiser than Konstantianobis. *tekstnet.dk*, under the chapter *Personer* in the tale's description (*Beskrivelse af teksten*)

Conclusions

This analysis had two main aims: firstly, to hypothesise a connection between the tales in the K 47 manuscript, secondly, to expand the literature on the subject of the Danish *Dværgekongen Lawrin*, a topic not very much discussed in Germanic Philology. The first point, which of course incidentally comprises the second, was achieved through a literary comparison of the main themes present in the tales. Throughout this study, the main topics of the texts have been discussed many times, and some common elements emerged more than once. It could be noticed that every tale has some particular focus (*Lawrin* has honour, *Den kyske dronning* has justice and faithfulness, *Persenober* has love, etc.), and we can easily suppose that the choice of assembling texts diverse in some aspects but converging on others was deliberately made for a better reception for the intended audience.

It can be observed that one of the common themes present throughout the codex is magic. With the only exception of *Den kyske dronning*, every tale has magic elements (as already stated in the introduction of chapter 3), which hints that this topic was quite popular, at least among the intended audience. Nobility is also always present, from Duke Frederik (*Hertug Frederik*) to King Diderik, from Princess Flores to Queen Konstantianobis, the main characters are all nobles. This leads to the probable conclusion that the intended audience was composed by nobles, who could identify in the protagonists and be more engaged with the stories. Love is another common element, only absent in *Dværgekongen Lawrin* in its courtly and romantic form but present in the form of love for the family in Thiellof and his sister. We know from numerous tales, adaptations and poems that this was a popular theme, and its all-through presence in the manuscript can suggest that this was true also in the late 15th century Denmark. The same applies for quests and combat, with no exception (the presence of conflict of many kinds in art and literature is something that apparently ranges from prehistoric times to nowadays).

These elements already show a certain knowledge by the K 47 editor(s) about the intended audience and about how to assemble a successful work, as mentioned in chapter 3. Even so, it is another element that pervades the texts in a more subtle, yet important way, and this theme appears to be good counsel. It has to be noted that counsellors don't play a central role in all the tales, as in *Hertug Frederik af Normandi* and in *Flores og Blanseflor* the focus is all on knightly adventures and courtly love, respectively. Nevertheless, good counsel has been discussed many a time and has been hypothesised to be at the centre of more than one plot, not superficially -we can all agree that the explicit theme of *Lawrin* is Diderik's, and not Hillebrand's, quest- but rather internally. This appears to be a *topos* recurring through

the manuscript, that could indicate that the K 47 was intended both to entertain and to instruct on the importance of counsellors. Clearly, it could have been meant for advisors and the *advised* alike, to teach the former how to be good guides and the latter to value their positive influence, maybe also warning them of the control they could gain. So, in *Dværgekongen Lawrin* we would find the good and faithful counsellors, those who can advise their superiors in any situation; in *Ivan Løveridder* there could be both a warning and a praise of those counsellors who want to help someone else by helping their lord or lady; in *Den kyske dronning* there would be a warning to nobles and advisors alike about the consequences of dishonourable and egotistical counsel; finally, in *Persenober og Konstantianobis* there seemingly is a praise of counsellors who act for the good of their superiors despite their mistakes, even if this means going against their dispositions.

Taking everything into consideration, the message that appears to be given is: *trust good advice, but be wary of who gives it.*

Note to the conclusion

It could be argued that these hypotheses are influenced by a modern point of view, as there are numerous examples in modern literature, films and other art forms that speak of trust and betrayal, counsel and deception, and this could have interfered with my interpretations. Naturally, it is hardly possible to eliminate contextual bias, and objectivity, even though desirable, is equally difficult to achieve. This is a matter that generally applies to all non exact sciences (as the name suggests), but it hasn't stopped research. On the contrary, the application of modern translation theories (such as the polysystem theory) to medieval studies can be a useful resource for further philological as well as anthropological studies¹⁷⁸. Moreover, if we were to eliminate all those hypotheses *suspected* of carrying a modern bias, we would probably have to dismiss all the knowledge of the past (and present!) that we have. So, it is inevitable to put forward hypotheses with the risk of them being wrong. This is why the contextualisation of the K 47 texts was important, to reduce to the minimum modern bias by finding common points between texts that appeared to arise more prominently than others, confront such points with the context the tales were written in and, again, hypothesise which shared feature was the most prominent and why. Keeping a scientific mindset, different opinions, if well backed, are always welcome.

¹⁷⁸ see Bampi, in Lönnroth (2017)

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