

Rituals of Greeting and Farewell:

Reflections on a Visit to the Royal Court of Norway in 1302

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This article argues that by close reading of passages concerning ritual occasions in medieval chronicles it is possible to gain insight into the construction and communication of power. The case study concerns certain rituals described in *Erikskrönikan* (the chronicle of Duke Erik), a Swedish rhymed chronicle from the first part of the fourteenth century. An account of reception and farewell rituals at the royal court of Norway in 1302 is described in detail and analyzed through the use of ritual studies. Focus is on the portrayal of actors and actions. The rituals are shown to be important parts in the construction of ideals during a period when courtly and chivalric culture was gradually introduced in medieval Sweden. This article shows that through ritual analysis it is possible to gain insight into, and nuance the perception of, the construction, legitimization and perception of power and authority in Scandinavian society.

Ritual and Power

Formalized and institutionalized personal bonds, such as friendship and patron-client relationships, were important in medieval Europe.¹ By their very nature, these bonds were public, both when they were created, when they were maintained, and when they were ended. This visibility guaranteed their legitimization. The public and private power structures of medieval society were thus intertwined. This article argues that construction of power was in part done by public ritual. Ritual played a key role in medieval power relationships, which was all the more true in societies with a low degree of written administration and written culture, such as early medieval Sweden during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, where norms and values needed to be performed and witnessed in order to be legitimized.²

Ritual, however, is a complex term. Broadly speaking, there are two interpretations of ritual. The first sees ritual as separate from other forms of social interactions through the use of primarily sacred symbols. The second sees ritual as included in all

¹ Althoff 2003; Althoff 2004; Althoff 2005; Geary 1994; Esmark 2002: 27–48, 89–125; Esmark 2006: 3–22; Orning, Esmark & Hermanson 2010. See also Smith 1988 (1986); Smith 2003 for a different view on the medieval state.

² Reynolds 1994; Kertzer 1988; Monclair 1995: 12.

forms of social reality. This latter interpretation of ritual is current in historical medieval research that uses ethnological and anthropological theories and will be used in this article.³ I define ritual as acts imbued with meaning. That is, acts where actors in a given time and place perform actions which are collective, formalized, institutionalized and repetitive.⁴ Ritual is a communicative action that transforms existing structures and can be used to create and legitimize power structures, social structures and social relationships such as collective ideals.⁵ Rituals are therefore not merely symbolic representations of society; they are arenas for power negotiations.⁶ Viewed in this way, rituals encode cultural values. Through an analysis of ritual it is therefore possible to discuss a society's underlying values and norms.

This article will discuss how the new nobility that emerged in Sweden from the thirteenth century onwards was formed by the introduction of new norms and values in the form of European chivalric and courtly ideals. The nobility monopolized these values, and ritual was used as a way to construct and express power. In doing so, ritual was an integral part of the political culture.⁷ The definition of power in this article is taken from Michael Mann who sees social power as a means of social control and argues that power is the interrelation between ideological, economic, military and political power.⁸ In particular, Mann argues that ideological power is based on norms and that monopolizing norms empowers societal groups. A means of doing this is through what Mann terms "ritual practices".⁹ Ritual and power are therefore intimately connected.

This article will discuss chivalric and courtly ideals through an analysis of ritual receptions and farewells at Scandinavian royal courts as represented in the Swedish rhymed chronicle *Erikskrönikan*. This is one of only three major rhymed chronicles that covers Swedish medieval history, and is the only one of these that was written in the fourteenth century. This makes it a valuable source for the ideals of the emerging Swedish nobility.

³ Esmark 2002: 49–65.

⁴ This definition is taken from Muir 2005: 3. For work on performance, see Turner 1969 (1995); Turner 1982; Schechner 2003; Schechner 2006; Grimes 2004: 110–113; Rappaport 1999 (2008): 24–37.

⁵ Muir 2005: 253. For the function of ritual in the use and construction of power, see Althoff 2004; Althoff 2003: 66–67.

⁶ Bell 1992: 19–29; Bell 1997: 61, 74.

⁷ For courtly culture, see Bumke 2001, see specifically Bumke 2001: 59 for a definition of courtly ideals. For a general introduction to medieval Scandinavia, see Helle 2003; Line 2007.

⁸ Mann 1986 (1997): 1–33.

⁹ Mann 1986 (1997): 22–33.

One specific occasion will be analysed in this article, namely the Christmas visit in 1302 of Duke Erik Magnusson – son of King Magnus Ladulås of Sweden – to the royal court of King Håkon Magnusson of Norway in Oslo. The discussion will focus on ritual performance as well as relationships with body, social space and place, thereby also discussing the cultural practice of which rituals were a significant part. By discussing how the ritual practices of reception and farewell are expressed in the chronicle and viewing them as symbolical communication of power, it is possible to analyse the ideals which were introduced into Swedish society and thereby also the power relationships.¹⁰

The fact that we know these receptions and farewells occurred frequently at various medieval European courts, means that we have to interpret the descriptions of them in literature differently than for example the descriptions of courtly love in Scandinavian romances, of which there is little evidence. In all probability, the descriptions of ritual are reasonably accurate since, according to Joachim Bumke, events in daily life tended to be portrayed truthfully in literature.¹¹ However, medieval authors could have presented these rituals in their texts for various purposes. This means that, depending on the source, rituals might not be described in full detail, or, in fact, as they occurred.¹² Malcolm Vale discusses Bumke's argument and instead urges caution when using descriptions of ritual in literary sources since the authors might have had propagandistic intentions. However, Vale also shows how rituals depicted in romances and chronicles can be found in documentary sources, for instance such common rituals as the giving of vows.¹³ It is therefore important to tie rituals in literature to similar occurrences in other forms of evidence in order to show their relevance when discussing power relationships. Descriptions of rituals are unfortunately rare in other forms of contemporary written medieval Swedish sources. There are instances, however, that implies ritual. For instance, in the description of feasts in *Erikskrönikan*, various costly wines and fabrics are mentioned that can also be found in medieval economic accounts.¹⁴ Inventories from Swedish castles mentions items connected to tournaments, which was an important part of the rituals surround-

¹⁰ Mann 1986 (1997): 22–33. Rolf Pipping emphasizes that what he labels ceremonies are numerous in *Erikskrönikan*, Pipping 1926: 723–724.

¹¹ Bumke 2001: 4–5, 8–14.

¹² Reuter 1994: 471–474. See also Kerr 2007: 131 for a discussion on medieval literature and the veracity of the descriptions of events.

¹³ Vale 2001: 207–220.

¹⁴ In the accounts from 1328 of the funeral of Birger Persson, lawman and knight, see translation in Nelson 1927: 12–18. See also Bengtsson 1999: 192–193 who shows that *Erikskrönikan's* descriptions of feast halls can be substantiated by castle inventories.

ing courts.¹⁵ There are also references to jesters in Swedish laws, and in economic accounts, there are lists of payments to musicians. These entertainers are both mentioned in descriptions of courtly feasts in *Erikskrönikan*.¹⁶ In medieval Scandinavian church art, there are also solid indications that chivalric culture, and rituals associated with it, was well-known.¹⁷ In short, there is much evidence from a variety of sources that implies that the descriptions of ritual in *Erikskrönikan* have some basis in fact.

The study of ritual has increased in importance in European historical research due to various sociological, cultural, anthropological and linguistic turns.¹⁸ Aristocracy, ideals, collective identities and courts as social arenas are important fields of study for medieval ritual scholars who emphasize ritual in aristocratic power and gender relationships.¹⁹ However, the use of ritual analysis for medieval studies has been the subject of some dispute.²⁰ Philippe Buc has argued that it is problematical to use anthropological and ethnological socio-scientific models and theories while analysing medieval cultures. Buc argues that medieval sources are fraught with various problems, for example when it comes to identifying ritual acts and ritual behaviour.²¹ Buc raises interesting and difficult questions, such as what exactly is a ritual in medieval sources? In essence, he argues that modern historians simplify complex socio-cultural practices by labelling them rituals and analysing them through modern ritual theory. According to Buc, an historian can never recreate, and therefore not fully analyse, a medieval ritual by using written sources. Since the practice was written down for various purposes and through the lens of a biased interpreter, it can never be a true account of the event. In a reply, Geoffrey Koziol argues that Buc is too polemical. Historians are aware of authorial intent and the nature of the source material. The concept of ritual is not different from the concept of society, culture or class. These abstractions need to be defined and analysed in a given socio-cultural context. Although analysing medieval ritual is problematical, Koziol points out that it is possible to gain insight into medieval norms, values, and identities through an analysis based on function, ritual performance, and the socio-cultural context.²²

¹⁵ Bengtsson 1999: 56–57.

¹⁶ Bengtsson 1999: 62–63.

¹⁷ Bengtsson 1999: 72–91, 102–111.

¹⁸ Geertz 1973; Bell 1992; Bell 1997; Bloch 1989; Rappaport 1999 (2008); Muir 2005.

¹⁹ Althoff 2003; Nelson 1986; Petkov 2003; Arnade 1996; Monclair 1995; Orning 2008; Langen 2002; Birkedal Bruun & Esmark 2004; Orning & Esmark & Hermanson 2010; Jennbert & Andrén & Raudvere 2002; Habbe 2005.

²⁰ Koziol 1992: 17, 289–290; Buc 2001: 1–12, 238–247.

²¹ Buc 2001.

²² Koziol 2002: 367–88; Koziol 1992: 289–290; Esmark 2002: 49–65. See also Buc 2007: 441–452.

This article will take Koziol's arguments as a starting point when analysing ritual in *Erikskrönikan*. It is not the rituals in themselves that are in focus, but rather what the descriptions of them tell of power, and construction of groups and ideals. In a work on supplication in medieval France, Koziol argued that it is not the grand, rare, and highly choreographed rituals such as a coronation that reveal the most about a society and its power structures, but rather the everyday rituals, because they were an integral part of life.²³ Everyday rituals such as receptions and farewells tell more about the power structures of society, and more about the norms and values of the people, than the grand rituals. Everyday rituals were crucial in shaping and determining courtliness and chivalry.²⁴ For Koziol, ritual is a medium for constructing collective identities, norms, and values. This is especially the case if the involved actors in a given ritual shared a common conception on the construction of society. As we will see, this was the case in medieval Scandinavia.²⁵

I argue that these formal ritual receptions and farewells at court were significant in constructing and shaping the ideal of courtliness and chivalry in Scandinavia, in particular at the royal courts.²⁶ Courts were arenas for influencing the elite, since young noblemen and noblewomen were sent to the royal courts and were introduced to, and educated in, behavioural patterns, norms, and values.²⁷ The behaviour at court was then mimicked at lesser courts and households all over the respective kingdoms. Like no other arena, the court therefore shaped Scandinavian noble ideals within the larger scheme of European chivalry and courtliness.²⁸

²³ Koziol 1992. For Koziol, ritual is ambiguous; various actors can interpret rituals differently as a part of a struggle for power, Koziol 1992: 309–316.

²⁴ Pipping mentions a few of these, Pipping 1926: 723–724.

²⁵ Michael Mann also discusses how an elite can co-operate to maintain and enhance power, and that if this is institutionalized in law, the elite can control society, Mann 1986 (1997): 6–7.

²⁶ Joachim Bumke argues that courtly society is best analyzed from events taking place at court, such as feasts, since these events brought forward the best courtly manners, Bumke 2001: 4–5.

²⁷ Vale 2001: 202–208 who underlines the importance of court.

²⁸ Bumke 2001: 312–316. Scandinavian courtly literature emphasized the importance of the royal court, for instance *Konungs Skuggsjá* (*Kongespeilet*), the Norwegian Mirror of Princes from the middle of the thirteenth century. See specifically Brøgger 2000: 74, 84–85; Bagge 2000; Bengtsson 1999: 33; Barnes 1975: 143–144. See also Gaunt 2000: 47–49; Fuchs 2004: 39–40; Hermanson 2009: 77–81; Mitchell 1997: 229–242.

***Erikskrönikan*: The new nobility and the courtly and chivalric ideals**

Medieval Sweden underwent a social transition during the thirteenth century and early fourteenth century through the construction of new nobility and the introduction of chivalric and courtly ideals. In *Alsnö stadga*, the statute of Alsnö, from c. 1280 King Magnus Ladulås formally created the *frälse*, the new nobility of Sweden. He gave this new secular elite privileges and obligations, primarily exemption from taxes, and the duty to give military aid to the king. However, this was not the dramatic, new development it might seem. It was instead merely the end result and recognition of a long development in Swedish society.²⁹

Swedish historians have largely neglected courtly ideals, as they have focused on the formation of the state and the role of the *frälse* in that process.³⁰ Research into chivalric and courtly ideals by historians has long been a vast field in, among other countries, France, Germany and England.³¹ However, Swedish courtly and chivalric ideals have attracted scholarly attention from other academic fields such as art history and linguistics.³²

In courts all over Western Europe, these ideals appeared in romances and chronicles.³³ The literary Swedish domestic culture concerning chivalry is sparse and judging by the surviving sources only emerges in the early fourteenth century although European courtly literature likely found its way to the Swedish courts earlier. The most shining examples of Swedish courtly literature are the three romances translated into Swedish from European originals that are collectively known as *Eufemiavisorna* and the rhymed chronicle *Erikskrönikan*.³⁴ The chivalric and courtly ideals as ex-

²⁹ Moore 2000; Rosén 1952; Småberg 2004: 53–76; Schüick 2003: 397–400; Mann 1986 (1997): 6–7.

³⁰ Löfqvist 1935; Jägerstad 1948; Rosén 1952; Andræ 1960; Liedgren 1985: 103–117; Sjöholm 1988; Schüick 2005.

³¹ With the exception of Karl-Erik Löfqvist, who briefly discusses Norwegian romances, Löfqvist 1935: 118–123; DUBY 1977; DUBY 1978 (1980); Keen 1984; Jaeger 1985; Crouch 1992; Crouch 2005; Poly & Bournazel 1991.

³² Bengtsson 1999; Waško 1996; Péneau 2002; Péneau 2007: 221–243; Ferm 2007: 53–65; Boklund Coffey 1976: 299–315; Layher 2009; Bampi 2008: 1–14; Sullivan 2009: 19–33.

³³ Bumke 2001: 7–14.

³⁴ Andersson 1959: 5–15, 80–86. *Eufemiavisorna* consists of three romances: *Herr Ivan Lejonriddaren* (translated primarily from the original Chrétien de Troyes romance *Yvain, le Chevalier au Lion*), *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie* (unknown original) and *Flores och Banzefflor* (translated from the Norwegian version *Flóres saga ok Banki flúr*). The translations were sponsored by Queen Eufemia of Norway, the mother-in-law of Duke Erik of Sweden. See Bengtsson 1999: 48–51.

pressed in these Swedish chronicles and romances were influenced by various European feudal cultures, primarily German courts.³⁵

Erikskrönikan covers roughly a hundred years of Swedish history up until c. 1320. The common view is that it probably was written by a minor noble sometime in the early fourteenth century.³⁶ The chronicler is believed to have used varied source material, such as oral sources, eye-witness accounts, and also written sources such as annals.³⁷ *Erikskrönikan* was written in a genre that was inspired by other, earlier rhymed literature. The chronicle itself is directly influenced by German chronicles such as *Braunschweigische Reimchronik*, which was written towards the end of the thirteenth century. This makes *Erikskrönikan* almost contemporary with its European counterparts.³⁸ The formulaic language of *Erikskrönikan* is also influenced by *Eufemiavisorna*.

The chronicle is a history of a royal Swedish dynasty, focusing on the deeds and character of Duke Erik Magnusson, who is portrayed as the ideal knight. The chronicle has previously been used by scholars mainly to analyse and discuss Sweden's political development.³⁹ Earlier studies have also discussed questions of *Erikskrönikan*'s origin and reliability. There is a clear tendency among scholars to see *Erikskrönikan* as an expression of the struggle between royal power and aristocratic power that dominated the Scandinavian kingdoms during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁴⁰

However, the few surviving manuscripts date to the fifteenth century. This has to be taken into account when discussing the value of *Erikskrönikan* as an historical source. We also know little of the textual transmission.⁴¹ Olle Ferm shows that

³⁵ Bengtsson 1999; Maillefer 1999. For a discussion on recent research into feudalism, see Reynolds 1994; Esmark 2006.

³⁶ Jansson 1971: 78–84, 132–164. See Andersson 1928; Andersson 1959: 33–35, 58–65, 132–139, 144–169. See also Lönnroth 1959: 70. For the most recent work on authorship, see Jonsson 2010, who instead proposes a clergyman. This has wider implications; if Jonsson is correct, this would mean that all courtly literature in Sweden from the early fourteenth century, *Erikskrönikan*, *Eufemiavisorna* and the Mirror of Princes *Um styrilsi kununga ok höfþinga* was written by clerics.

³⁷ Andersson 1928.

³⁸ Lönnroth & Delblanc 1999: 107–108.

³⁹ See Rosén 1939 for the use of the chronicle in analysing the strife between King Birger and his brothers, the Dukes Erik and Valdemar. See also Fagerland 2006 for the political culture in *Erikskrönikan*, and Bagge 2007: 5–7 on previous research and the political struggle. See also Ferrari 2008; Vilhelmsdotter 1992: 193–206; Vilhelmsdotter 1999; Péneau 2002; Péneau 2005; Péneau 2007.

⁴⁰ Andersson 1928; Andersson 1959; Lönnroth 1959; Jansson 1971; Bagge 2007: 6–7.

⁴¹ Most scholars agree that the chronicle was written by a single author, close to the events. For the most recent discussion on the source value of *Erikskrönikan*, see Fagerland 2006: 49–63, who argues that the chronicle is a good source both for events and for political culture.

Swedish courtly literature such as *Erikskrönikan* survived to modern times in manuscripts belonging to women of high nobility and demonstrates that this literature was disseminated in high aristocratic circles.⁴² That we know very little about either the author or the text redactor/-s complicates our understanding of the chronicle. Scholarly work on translation and transmission has shown the need to problematize genre, authorship and redactorship to better understand medieval literature.⁴³ Chronicles as such, I argue, are good sources for the norms and values of the intended aristocratic public. They were written by authors who usually were a part of the same circles and followed certain, fairly strict genre-related rules when writing what were essentially historical works where the world view was expressed through choices of language, norms, settings, and other aspects that had to resonate with, and be familiar to, the intended audience.⁴⁴ This does not mean that the descriptions of events and characters should be taken at face value.⁴⁵

The emphasis in later works about medieval literature is seeing texts such as chronicles as reflecting the society in which the texts were written and performed, and also both as shaping that society's norms and values and, through this, its ideals.⁴⁶ Joachim Bumke states: "[...]the idealized poetic image had a profound impact and influenced the real social behaviour of the noble upper class in many different ways."⁴⁷ The specific function of chronicles like *Erikskrönikan* in medieval society has been the subject of scholarly discussion. Primarily, there has been a polarization, seen mainly in earlier research, into two opposing views. One sees chronicles as entertain-

⁴² Ferm 1997: 14–16, 26–35. See also Carlquist 2002 and Layher 1999 for a discussion on the relevant Swedish medieval manuscripts.

⁴³ For a discussion on medieval translation, imitation, stylistic conventions and rhetoric as it relates to Swedish medieval literature, see Småberg 2011. See also Pettersson 2009, in particular 36–45, 56–60; Brügger Budal 2009, in particular ch. 4, 5; Sunnen 1990, esp. 36–45; Kalinke 2005: 318–320, 335.

⁴⁴ Fagerland 2006: 49–52.

⁴⁵ See Reuter 1994: 472–474 who stresses the need for source criticism concerning descriptions of medieval ritual in literary sources.

⁴⁶ Spiegel 1993; Spiegel 1997; Bagerius 2009; especially 87–89. See Kalinke 2005: 318–320, where she discusses the authors own awareness of the position of their literature in society. Jansson 2010: 229; Bampi 2008: 4–5, 12; Bumke 2001: 7–14; Vilhelmsdotter 1999; Fagerland 2006; Bagge 2007; Bengtsson 1999: 48–51; Småberg 2011; Keen 1984: 1–17; Jaeger 1985; Jaeger 1999; Krueger 2000.

⁴⁷ Bumke 2001: 275. See also Bumke 2001: 311–312 where Bumke argues that the ideals presented were intended to influence social practises.

ment. The other sees them as having a didactic purpose, by constructing models of behaviour.⁴⁸

Some scholars argue for a didactic purpose of *Erikskrönikan* and link the chronicle to the coming-of-age of young King Magnus Eriksson. The argument is that the chronicle's tendencies are friendly towards the nobility and a shared rule between the king and his council.⁴⁹ Sven-Bertil Jansson, a leading Swedish scholar on courtly literature, however, argues that *Erikskrönikan* lacks textual similarities to Mirrors of Princes, such as can be found in some of the passages in the three romances that constitute *Eufemiavisorna*. Therefore, he argues, the primary purpose of the text was not didactic.⁵⁰ Gisela Vilhelmsdotter, who has written one of the most recent, in-depth contributions on *Erikskrönikan*, also argues against a didactic purpose.⁵¹

The prologue of *Erikskrönikan* states that the chronicle's purpose was to entertain.⁵² The chronicle was apparently meant to be read at the great feasts of kings and nobles and entertain them with heroic tales. Entertainment such as this can be seen as ideologically bound, that is, reading chronicles and romances as entertainment is a cultural practice that only had meaning in certain cultures. The reading of chronicles at feasts also created a chivalric narrative, thereby educating the audience into the new culture. Joachim Bumke argues that: "[...]courtly literature was a social event, and its purpose lay in creating and confirming a sense of community."⁵³ Fulvio Ferrari argues that *Erikskrönikan* uses part history, part fiction to place the Swedish nobility in a new courtly and chivalric narrative, thereby reflecting and constructing new identities.⁵⁴ Such a narrative can have an overall didactic purpose, whether deliberately constructed or not. In such a narrative, ritual plays an important part for the description and construction of society.⁵⁵ Finally, regardless of the stated purpose, *Eriks-*

⁴⁸ See Bandlien 2001 and Småberg 2011 for a discussion of the didactic aspects of courtly literature.

⁴⁹ Bolin 1927: 288–309.

⁵⁰ Jansson 1971: 156–164. However, Jansson points out that there are a few passages within the text that might have had a didactic purpose.

⁵¹ Vilhelmsdotter 1999: 33–36.

⁵² *Erikskrönikan enligt Cod. Holm: D.2 jämte avvikande läsarter ur andra handskrifter*, ed. by Rolf Pipping (Uppsala 1963) vv. 25–28. Vilhelmsdotter 1999: 41–47; Weber 1986: 428–434 who discusses medieval literature as entertainment.

⁵³ Bumke 2001: 518.

⁵⁴ Ferrari 2008: 71–79.

⁵⁵ Geertz 1973: especially 112; Muir 2005: 4–5; Sahlins 1976); Victor Turner sees ritual as a product of social life, but it is also constructive since it shapes societal structures, Turner 1969 (1995); Turner 1982; Bloch 1989.

krönikan could have served several functions depending on the audience and occasion. Medieval literature such as chronicles therefore should not be categorized as either didactic or entertaining; simply put, they were both.

Erikskrönikan was part of Sweden's emerging new courtly and chivalric culture. The language in the chronicle links Swedish nobility to Western European chivalric and courtly ideals.⁵⁶ Since chronicles influenced social practices through content and performance, the chronicle was an important part in constructing and expressing these new ideals to the nobility, thus empowering the elite.⁵⁷ A construction of this type should also be seen in a broader socio-cultural context since *Erikskrönikan* was written when knighthood and courtly ideals were new phenomena in the kingdom, and when other literary works concerning chivalry were written in or translated into Swedish.

The chronicle is full of formulaic language, nearly identical phrases and repetitive words, which earlier research primarily has deemed as simply standardized language.⁵⁸ Ingvar Andersson, for instance, shows that the author of *Erikskrönikan* used language and scenes that had European literary counterparts, and argues that the author was imitating European patterns.⁵⁹ However, it is clear that European medieval authors carefully portrayed daily events as accurately as possible while at the same time telling stories of dragons and magic.⁶⁰ All similarities in *Erikskrönikan* are therefore not necessarily a literary imitation; instead, they could possibly be fairly accurate descriptions of courtly culture. Also, when placing the chronicle in its socio-cultural context, the recurring use of similar words and phrases, in keeping with genre rules, is also laden with meaning where repetition strengthens the norms and values the chronicle expresses. Language is given power to transform power structures by constructing mental landscapes.⁶¹ An analysis of *Erikskrönikan* has to take all this into account and put the passages into perspective by comparing it to other texts and sources, other passages in *Erikskrönikan*, and also to research into chivalry.

⁵⁶ Bagge 2003: 473–476. See also Fagerland 2006: 51–52. For the importance of courts, see Mazo Karras 2003. See for instance *Erikskrönikan* vv. 18–20, or *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1386–1457 for knowledge of Arthurian legends.

⁵⁷ This form of power is discussed by Michael Mann as “diffused power”. Mann argues that this form of power is not a result of direct action, but instead comes from influencing those social practices that in turn are laden with power relations. Mann also argues that ideological power is often dependant on this form, Mann 1986 (1997): 8–10, 22–23. See Reichl 2009 on orality and performance in medieval literature.

⁵⁸ See for instance Pipping 1926; Boklund Coffey 1976: 309–311.

⁵⁹ Andersson 1928: 14–15, 51–54.

⁶⁰ Bumke 2001: 8–14.

⁶¹ Boklund Coffey 1976: 311.

Rituals of greeting and farewell at the royal court

During the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries medieval Scandinavian courts were gradually introduced to rituals that expressed chivalric and courtly ideals, and kings' sagas and chronicles bear testimony of this.⁶² It was a lengthy process, and there was occasionally some resistance to the introduction of what were apparently perceived as foreign customs. A passage in *Erikskrönikan* where King Magnus and his new customs was attacked by opposition noblemen illustrates this.⁶³

These chivalric and courtly ideals were not adopted straight from a given model, since the literary sources show that the authors and translators adapted the stories so as to resonate with the intended audience. A case in point is *Eufemiavisorna*. They show us that the translator made significant changes to the stories thus adjusting them to the norms prevalent in Sweden while at the same time influencing them.⁶⁴ Also, there was no one clear model of courtly and chivalric behaviour in the Middle Ages, although courts such as the Burgundian were influential role models.⁶⁵ Authors and translators could therefore look to European courts and literature and find inspiration for knightly behaviour. Thus, the gradual introduction of the ideals was in some cases a conscious construction, since authors chose which originals to translate and which passages to adapt.

The main social arenas for the introduction, adaptation, and construction of these new ideals were the royal courts of Sweden, Denmark and Norway.⁶⁶ *Erikskrönikan* frequently mentions gatherings and meetings between kings, queens, and various nobles at these courts, but also in other settings, for instance various *hof*, a formal gathering.⁶⁷ Descriptions of ritual in the chronicle are notably similar between rituals set

⁶² See for example for Denmark: Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, and for Norway: Sturla Þórðarson, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*.

⁶³ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1012–1015. Småberg 2007: 162.

⁶⁴ For work on adaption on *Eufemiavisorna*, see Jansson 1945: 25–46; Hunt 1975: 168–186; Boklund Coffey 1976: 299–315. For work into medieval texts and text redactors, see Pettersson 2009; Brügger Budal 2009; Bruvoll 2010; The University of Oslo hosts a project: "Translation, Transmission and Transformation: Old Norse Romantic Fiction and Scandinavian Vernacular Literacy 1200–1500";

< <http://www.hf.uio.no/iln/english/research/projects/ttt/> > (27/6 2011).

⁶⁵ Arnade 1996. For procedures on the arrival and departure of guests in England in the twelfth century, see Kerr 2007.

⁶⁶ For the importance of courts, see Gaunt 2000: 47–49; Fuchs 2004: 39–40; Hermanson 2009: 77–81; Mitchell 1997: 229–242.

⁶⁷ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1094–1125, 1146–1169, 1386–1457, 1806–1831, 2028–2032, 2180–2205, 2690–2703, 3424–3437, 3488–3523, 3658–3666, 3762–3764. Of these *hof*, no passage, with the exception of vv. 3554–3623, mentions any specific rituals concerning reception or farewell.

in either of the three Scandinavian kingdoms. This might imply that ritual appears in a similar fashion to construct certain norms and values to influence the Swedish audience. Perhaps it may be that the rituals themselves varied little between the kingdoms. Maybe the chronicle merely follows standardized genre rules.

Erikskrönikan rarely touches on the specific details of the formal and informal events at court.⁶⁸ Since the chronicle only records the manner of receptions and farewells in certain cases, these become all the more important to analyse. Jansson mentions passages that deal with receptions and farewells in *Erikskrönikan*, although he does not describe them as rituals. He specifically underlines that reception occasionally occurs, and Jansson links this to the construction of courtly and chivalric ideals.⁶⁹ According to Jansson, descriptions of reception usually include a procession, the occasional inclusion of a woman, and a description of a crowd's reaction. These elements also occur in passages in romances.⁷⁰ Jansson ties the farewell to two passages in *Erikskrönikan*, one relating to crusades, the other to a sea voyage. He links these descriptions of farewell to a genre from Antiquity, the *propempticon*.⁷¹ In these passages, where the farewell is not directly linked to court, the common denominators are the procession to the departure point, the handshake, and the weeping of women.⁷²

Joachim Bumke shows that courtly feasts are primarily described through the use of a formula: invitation-preparations, arrival-greeting, the feast itself, and finally, gift-giving. Bumke demonstrates that courtly poets used actual feasts and the entrances and departures surrounding them as role-models for passages in literature.⁷³ There are similarities to both Jansson's and Bumke's models in the passage describing Duke Erik's visit, but there are also significant departures that directly relate to the formation of Scandinavian courtly and chivalric ideals.

The passage concerning the 1302 visit of Duke Erik of Sweden to the royal court of King Håkon Magnusson and Queen Eufemia of Norway is one of the longest passages describing receptions and farewells in *Erikskrönikan*. I have divided the passage into four segments: the prologue (where the circumstances behind, and prepa-

⁶⁸ See for instance the receptions described in *Erikskrönikan* vv. 590–621, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 2201–2205.

⁶⁹ Jansson 1971: 195.

⁷⁰ Jansson 1971: 195 lists *Herr Ivan* vv. 172–202, 1863–1890, 3073–3106, 4809–4841 (Noreen 1930–1931); *Hertig Fredrik* vv. 277–350, 1924–1961, 2671–2678, 3035–3078. (Noreen (ed.) 1927).

⁷¹ Jansson 1971: 187–200; Vilhelmsdotter 1999: 59–63.

⁷² *Erikskrönikan* vv. 89–156 and vv. 3554–3623; Jansson 1971: 187–200.

⁷³ Bumke 2001: 213–230.

rations for, the visit are described) the reception at court, the stay itself, and finally the farewell.⁷⁴

The background to Duke Erik's 1302 visit concerns high politics, namely alliances between the royal houses of the Scandinavian kingdoms.⁷⁵ It is difficult to sort out the complicated political twists and turns that occurred around 1300, where in Sweden King Birger sat uneasily on his throne, contending with his two brothers, Duke Erik and Duke Valdemar.⁷⁶ Their relationship was a difficult one and the shaky peace between the brothers was to erupt into open hostility on several occasions. In the end, this claimed the lives of Duke Erik and Duke Valdemar and caused King Birger to lose not only his throne but his son's life as well.⁷⁷

As is usually the case, the bond between alliance parties consisted of young noblewomen or princesses who were promised in marriage to one party or other. In this case, the bride-to-be was Ingeborg, the daughter of King Håkon and Queen Eufemia, who was betrothed to Duke Erik at a very young age. She was one year old at the time of this forging of alliance, which took place at a meeting between King Håkon, King Birger and Duke Erik as well as other notables in the autumn of 1302.⁷⁸ Another matter was also settled, which the chronicle does not mention. In 1286 King Erik Klipping of Denmark had been murdered. Count Jakob of Northern Halland was among the accused and later sentenced. He and some of his compatriots fled the kingdom to safety in Norway. The Norwegian king granted them refuge and later aligned himself with these Danish expatriates and aided them in their struggle against the Danish king. At this meeting in 1302, King Birger shifted his foreign policy and aided Count Jakob and the Norwegian king, thus forming a powerful alliance against the Danish king.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ The passage is over a hundred lines long, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1832–1941. Pipping states that this event is confirmed by other sources, in particular Icelandic annals, Pipping 1926: 503–505. I will primarily analyze norms and values in *Erikskrönikan* through a focus on key words, phrases and formulaic language. I argue that these have a didactic purpose; for a discussion on this and methodology, see for instance Boklund Coffey 1976; Vilhelmsdotter 1999.

⁷⁵ Bagge 2007. These alliances form social networks of power, Mann 1986 (1997): 1–33.

⁷⁶ See Rosén 1939.

⁷⁷ Carlsson & Rosén 1962: 193–195.

⁷⁸ Carlsson & Rosén 1962: 193–195; Rosén 1939: 20–30. *Erikskrönikan* puts her age at five, which probably is due to confusion with another Ingeborg, daughter of the Norwegian king Erik II Magnusson and betrothed to Duke Valdemar, Pipping 1926: 503–504.

⁷⁹ Rosén 1939: 8–30; Fagerland 2006: 7–11. Present at this meeting was also Count Jakob and Prince Wislaw II of Rügen, father of Queen Eufemia of Norway, Pipping 1926: 503. The relationship between Wislaw and Eufemia is contested, see Holck 2012 for the latest discussion on this.

It is worth noting that the invitation from King Håkon to Duke Erik and the subsequent visit by the Duke came in the same month as the coronation of King Birger in Söderköping. The consolidation of his royal power through this important ritual was perhaps supposed to be strengthened by the alliance between his brother Duke Erik and Ingeborg, the daughter of the Norwegian king. It only served to strengthen the power of Duke Erik.⁸⁰

The invitation to the court for the Christmas feast came after the autumn meeting of 1302. The betrothal of Ingeborg to Duke Erik can be seen as playing an important role in this new alliance. For Duke Erik, the betrothal was very beneficial, since Ingeborg would inherit the throne of Norway and the marriage would thus secure him a substantial influence over the kingdom. Coupled with his own status in Sweden, a duchy and a claim to the throne, his power would be great. This, then, is the setting just prior to the feast of Christmas at the Oslo court in 1302.

The prologue and reception at court

In the chronicle, it is possible to discern several important rituals associated with the reception at court. Preceding this, however, is the invitation. *Erikskrönikan* mentions this formal invitation by letter quite thoroughly, describing it as full of beautiful words:

Konung hakon sende tith breff
ther stodho i fagher ord ok geeff⁸¹

King Håkon sent a letter there
consisting of well-chosen and fair words

The great commentator of *Erikskrönikan*, Rolf Pipping, makes little of this letter, claiming it to be a probable construction of the author.⁸² I argue that since the court would have as its guests all these new allies, a formal setting and a formal invitation ritualize the meeting, making it a glorious and official occasion, not a gathering of conspirators. Therefore the letter probably did exist.

Upon receiving this invitation, Duke Erik prepared for the journey and assembled his retinue.⁸³ The Duke's retinue consisted of his own loyal men, most notably his *drotsete* (seneschal), Abjörn Sixtensson who also was one of the councilmen of King

⁸⁰ Rosén 1939: 31–54. Pipping 1926: 504.

⁸¹ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1838–1839. I am grateful to Professor Lars-Olof Delsing, Lund University for his assistance in reading my translation from Old Swedish and giving insightful comments on various problematic translation issues.

⁸² Pipping 1926: 23, 504.

⁸³ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1848–1868. See also Pipping 1926: 277.

Birger. Two knights are singled out by name, thus signifying their importance: Mats Kettilmundsson and Arnvid Gustafsson.⁸⁴ Collectively, the retinue also included more knights as well as *svenar*, which was probably a lower rank of nobleman who served the king or the realm.⁸⁵ Prominent nobles also joined Duke Erik, including his cousin Erik Valdemarsson, and notably Count Jakob with his own retinue of Danish nobles.⁸⁶

The chronicle describes this following by the use of chivalric terms, for instance, pointing out that Count Jakob was nobly born.⁸⁷ Of course, such a following was a common sight even in earlier times when magnates travelled, so the chronicle is tying something very familiar to the new ideals here. Installing these new values and norms to young noblemen was partly done by showing them how to behave and what ideals to aspire to. The very act of travelling in this type of retinue would have been an education in chivalric culture. It was an important ritual, riding on trained warhorses, with banners and colours flying while wearing resplendent armour and weapons, perhaps especially on the last leg of the journey when approaching Oslo since that would have been an opportunity to make an impression on the Norwegian court by showing how chivalrous they were.⁸⁸

The reception of the Duke contains three elements: the procession, the reaction of a crowd, and the presence of the queen. This is a pattern we recognise from passages in romances.⁸⁹ However, there are some parts of the description of courtly manners and conduct which are more elaborate and therefore interesting to analyse. Courtly culture as expressed in literature emphasizes the conduct of nobility; it is important to behave properly and talk courtly. The mannerisms of chivalry and courtly culture could be conveyed through the chronicles.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Rosén 1939: 27, 31–34. The three are also closely related, Rosén 1939: 348–355; Pipping 1926: 482, 505–506.

⁸⁵ Fulvio Ferrari translates *svenar* as squires, Ferrari 2008: 69. Philip Line, however, translates *svenar* as soldiers in a nobleman's service, Line 2007: 560.

⁸⁶ Rosén 1939: 25–28. *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1854–1862, Pipping 1926: 504.

⁸⁷ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1848–1867.

⁸⁸ A similar retinue is described when princess Jutta, daughter of King Erik Plogpenning, journeyed to the court of King Valdemar of Sweden in the early 1270s, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 590–621.

⁸⁹ Jansson 1971: 195. It is possibly a literary *imitatio*, Vilhelmsdotter 1999: 37–41. Jansson 1945: 308; *Herr Ivan*, vv. 1833–1906. However, for imitation versus reality, see Bumke 2001: 213–230.

⁹⁰ For a discussion on the relationship between cultural practice and textual sources, see Langen 2002: 37–44. Michael Mann discusses expressions of chivalry and courtly culture in literature as ideological power, Mann 1986 (1997): 384–390. Kerr 2007: 131 for conduct.

The Duke and his retinue are met at first by anonymous men, probably noblemen; no women are mentioned, when entering Oslo.⁹¹ After this reception, the Duke is met by the King. The chronicle pointedly describes the King walking out to meet the Duke and receive him with great honour; no one else is described as going with the King:

ok konungen vt mot honom gik	and the King walked out towards him
ok vntfik han med mykin heder ⁹²	and received him with much honor

Going, or riding, to meet one's guests was common, and is usually interpreted as a sign of courtesy and of the importance of the guest.⁹³ The choice of the specific word "vntfik", "received", signifies a ritual reception, thus strengthening the interpretation of the entire passage as a ritual.⁹⁴ Valter Jansson, a foremost scholar on *Eufemia-visorerna*, notes that there are similarities between this reception of Duke Erik and a passage in *Herr Ivan*. Jansson however merely mentions the fact, and does not go into detail as to what exactly those similarities are.⁹⁵ In my opinion, one such is when King Arthur was received at Ivan's castle and there is a procession from the castle to the King, and the anonymous author/translator uses "vntfanga" in the context. The reception and procession is superficially similar to the passage in *Erikskrönikan*.⁹⁶

⁹¹ *Erikskrönikan* v. 1870, "hvar man honom ther wel vntfik", "every man received him well".

⁹² *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1871–1872. A procession was apparently common, see *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3645–3651 for an example when King Birger and Queen Margareta walked together to greet their guest, Duke Valdemar, where the chronicler uses the word "vntfik". In another passage, King Birger is described as walking out to meet his brothers, the dukes Erik and Valdemar, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3724–3748. On the other hand, Duke Erik and Duke Valdemar, after being banished from Sweden, went to the court of King Erik Menved of Denmark, and they are described as walking to where the King was and it is specifically mentioned that they stood before him, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 2150–2164. This is an entirely different reception at a court, and might signify a change of status and/or power. Monclair 1995 also discusses this type of ritual. Bumke 2001: 213–230.

⁹³ Kerr 2007: 132–133.

⁹⁴ Pipping notes that the term very frequently is used to refer to what he labels a ceremonial reception, Pipping 1926: 487–488. For use of the word, see for instance the reception of Duke Erik and Duke Valdemar by their brother, King Birger in the episode of the infamous banquet of Håtuna 1306, where the king was captured, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 2576–2580.

⁹⁵ Jansson 1945: 308.

⁹⁶ *Herr Ivan* vv. 1823–1844.

The difference here is that the King was received by anonymous knights.⁹⁷ Not all receptions in *Erikskrönikan* use the word “vntfanga” however, making the occasions where it is used of interest. Unfortunately, due to the short descriptions of receptions in the chronicle, it is difficult to see the differences between receptions where the term is used and where it is not.

The Duke’s reception can in some aspects also be likened to the reception of kings in Norwegian medieval literature. Hanne Monclair analyzes *adventus regis*, the ritual reception of the king, in several Norwegian sagas, which usually included a procession.⁹⁸ Monclair emphasizes the sacral aspects of this reception, where the king is perceived as the Lord’s anointed. When entering the city, the king is almost transformed into Christ entering Jerusalem.⁹⁹ Monclair points out that the ritual reception linking kingship with God is noticeably absent in Snorri Sturlusson’s *Heimskringla*, a collection of Kings’ sagas. She argues that this means that Snorri was ideologically against hereditary kingship where power was from God.¹⁰⁰ The passage on Duke Erik’s entry lacks a sacral element. The absence of sacral elements in the reception is perhaps due to the anonymous author’s probable noble background and ideology, and possibly a part of an argument against hereditary kingship. The most obvious explanation, however, is that he was not an anointed king although sacral elements in rituals are not always conditioned on this fact.¹⁰¹

The passage emphasizes that this was a public performance since there was a crowd present. This is not unusual in king’s sagas in Norway, where the king is met with joy, and these tales might have influenced the passage in *Erikskrönikan*.¹⁰² The similarities between passages in *Erikskrönikan* and other Scandinavian medieval literature, which differ in parts from European examples, imply a shared set of values regarding courtly culture. This means that it is perhaps possible to talk about a distinctly Scandinavian courtly culture.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ A similar meeting is described when princess Jutta is met by an anonymous following of knights and squires sent by King Valdemar, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 590–621. Another occurrence is when the Dukes Erik and Valdemar are met by the King’s knights and probably escorted by them to the king, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3724–3739.

⁹⁸ Monclair 1995: 51–62. For a discussion on Norwegian society and the role of the king, see Bagge 1991; Bagge 1996; Orning 2008. For work on royal entry, see Bryant 1986; Kipling 1998; Schenk 2003.

⁹⁹ Monclair 1995: 53.

¹⁰⁰ Monclair 1995: 61–62.

¹⁰¹ Jonsson 2010 who argues for a cleric as the author of *Erikskrönikan*.

¹⁰² Monclair 1995: 54.

¹⁰³ There are elements in for instance *Eufemiavisorna* and also Norwegian romances that are markedly different than their European counterparts, see Småberg 2011.

It is notable that the King walked to the Duke, but more so is the absence of women, particularly the Queen, in this first phase of the reception ritual. This separation of genders is most obvious as is the pre-eminence of aristocratic masculinity, values, and norms since it is a meeting between men.¹⁰⁴ Courtly and chivalric ideals are thus expressed in ritual where the ritual constructs hierarchical power relationships as well as gender identities.¹⁰⁵

It is significant that the King is described as active in the passage; the Duke is almost portrayed as a king himself since he is the one who is received. In *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, the saga of King Hákon Hákonsson of Norway (1217–1263), a ritual procession with sacral elements to receive the king is mentioned several times.¹⁰⁶ This form of public ritual was likely designed to bolster and uphold the king's power, and link kingship with God.¹⁰⁷ Monclair discusses ritual receptions where kings and other notables rode out to greet for example princesses and she assumes that the authors were familiar with European literature and copied this pattern for *adventus regis* in their own descriptions.¹⁰⁸ She argues that the reception where a king walked out to meet his guest and led him was in part intended as a means of displaying status and power.¹⁰⁹ The ritual is not merely a reflection on the power and status of the king and the duke; it is also an agent in creating this very power and status in the minds of the perceived audience.¹¹⁰

The next part of the passage describes the assembled crowd's awed impression of Duke Erik:

for thy at <i>han</i> war <i>ther</i> siellan seder	since he was seen so rarely there
Thy vndrade folkit mykit a han	the people marvelled at him
ok sagdo er thz then ädela man	and said is that the noble man
Then mille hertugh Erik	the generous Duke Erik
ok huxade manger wid sik	and many thought for themselves

¹⁰⁴ Lees 1994; Baswell 1994; Bennett 1999; Mazo Karras 2003.

¹⁰⁵ Butler 1993; Butler 2006. See Gaunt 1995: 10–16 for a discussion on gender as it relates to medieval literature. See also Mazo Karras 2003. Gender as a social construct is commonly accepted in medieval scholarship; see Hadley 1999: 1–4, 15. Carol Clover argues for a gender construction based on body and power, Clover 1993: 370–382.

¹⁰⁶ Monclair 1995: 55, Mundt 1977: ch. 19:17, 48:32, 77:47, 99:59, 224:119, 254:141, 302:183, 313:191–192.

¹⁰⁷ Orning 2008. For Norwegian kingship and sacrality, see Steinsland 2000.

¹⁰⁸ Monclair 1995: 56.

¹⁰⁹ King Birger is described as walking out towards his brothers and meeting them, and taking their hands and following them in, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3742–3748.

¹¹⁰ Langen 2002: 17.

<p>gud haffuer <i>han</i> wel til verldena skapat ther the haffdo swa lenge vpa <i>han</i> apat Tha bad <i>honom</i> got huar <i>man</i> <i>honom</i> saa gud lathe <i>hans</i> vilia <i>her</i> wel gaa Ok läti <i>han</i> framme huat <i>han</i> wil ther giwi gud <i>honom</i> lycko till¹¹¹</p>	<p>that God has created him beautiful after they had stared at him for a long time all who saw him wished him well may God grant him what he wills here and let him carry out what he desires may God grant him fortune in this</p>
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The chronicle embellishes quite a bit on people's reaction to the Duke and portrays him as a chivalric ideal. The Duke is described as noble and beautiful, a description often used in romances and other courtly and chivalric literature. He is also characterised by the word "mille", which in this context translates to "generous".¹¹² In European medieval literature, being generous with gifts was a characteristic commonly applied to kings, magnates, and heroes. This adjective in this setting is also important in another context since the Gift has a substantial place in Scandinavian society from the Viking Age through the Middle Ages.¹¹³ Possibly then, the chronicle's use of this word deliberately ties the past to the present.

After this, the Duke is described as walking to the place where the Queen was, and his courtly manners are emphasised:

<p>Tha gik <i>han</i> tiit <i>som</i> <i>drotningen</i> war mz tukt <i>som</i> <i>honom</i> til <i>retta</i> baar hon vntfik <i>han</i> wel <i>som</i> <i>hon</i> wel <i>kunne</i> mz söth ordh ok rodhom <i>mwnne</i> The aff hiertans kerlek gingo¹¹⁴</p>	<p>Then he walked to where the Queen was with courtesy (courtly manners) that he had she received him as well as she could with sweet words and red mouth that came from her heart's love</p>
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In contrast to the description of the meeting with the King, the Queen is described as passive. The Duke walked to her. It is also interesting to note that the King does not apparently accompany him. The Queen is a significant part of the reception, but is separated both in time and in place from the King's reception of the Duke. It is unclear if this was some distance away, perhaps within a castle or hall, or if she was

¹¹¹ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1873–1883.

¹¹² *Erikskrönikan* v. 1876. Pipping 1926: 235–236, 508. Joyful receptions are not uncommon in *Erikskrönikan*, Princess Jutta's reception is also greeted with joy, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 590–621. This fits the courtly ideal of a knight, Bumke 2001: 307–311.

¹¹³ See for instance Sigurdsson 2008; Bengtsson 1999: 31–33.

¹¹⁴ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1884–1888. For the importance of courtly manners, see Bumke 2001: 307–311.

present near or at the place of the Duke's encounter with the King. In *Herr Ivan*, a retinue takes King Arthur to the lady of the castle, Laudine. She is more active in that passage, since she was the one who organized the reception, but the guest's procession to her is similar.¹¹⁵

Erikskrönikan and *Herr Ivan* thus use body, place and social space to construct hierarchies and gender roles in order to display status and position in society.¹¹⁶ Social space and place is purposely constructed by one group of actors to influence the conceptions and actions of other groups of actors and is therefore tied to power.¹¹⁷ The use of place by the separation of gender and the primacy of the male gender can therefore be seen as a construction of power and ideals.

The encounter between Duke Erik and Queen Eufemia is described very differently from that between the Duke and the King. First, she is not described as walking towards Duke Erik as the King did. This reception differs from other examples in *Erikskrönikan*. One passage that describes a similar encounter depicts a queen walking towards the guest. This appears to be the most common way to greet guests at courts.¹¹⁸ Another example from *Erikskrönikan* is from a court in 1304, where King Birger and Queen Märta met King Erik Menved of Denmark, Märta's brother. The chronicle states that King Erik went to where his sister was and that she walked out to her brother.¹¹⁹ The similarity in both cases is the queen's physical separation. In this case, the Queen walks out to meet the guest. It might be that there are other considerations than gender playing a role, for example the close blood relationship between the parties. Other literary works show the same reception of men by women. In the meeting between King Arthur and the lady Laudine in *Herr Ivan*, the lady is described as walking towards the king. However, there are similarities to the reception of Duke Erik since in *Herr Ivan* the King is first escorted to the place where the lady is.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ *Herr Ivan* vv. 1845–1906.

¹¹⁶ The importance of body in ritual is discussed by Bell 1997. See Kerr 2007: 136–137 for bodily positions in greeting rituals.

¹¹⁷ For an overview of the scholarly work on social space, see Hansson 2006: 38–44; Ashmore & Knapp 1999: 2–3; Parker Pearson & Richards 1994; Harrison 1998 (2003); Cosgrove 1998: 1–10, 45–50, 66.

¹¹⁸ See for instance *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3645–3651. Pipping 1926: 507–508, who speculates that Queen Eufemia perhaps was indisposed. In such a case, however, why would the chronicler make such an effort in describing the greeting? Why not simply either not describe it at all, or note the fact that she was indisposed?

¹¹⁹ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 2201–2205, Pipping 1926: 507–508.

¹²⁰ *Herr Ivan*, v. 1865.

Second, while the King greeted Duke Erik with honour, no such word is used to describe the meeting between the Duke and Queen Eufemia. Honour is clearly something connected to masculinity.¹²¹ Instead, the chronicle uses the phrase “mz söth ordh ok rodhom mwne”, which is translated as: “with sweet words and red mouth”. According to Rolf Pipping, this can instead be translated as “with sweet words and a kiss”. If Pipping is correct, this kiss is significant since it adds a very public demonstration of the personal bond. A kiss from a queen was a high honour. Since public kissing was a common ritual in the Middle Ages, this strengthens Pipping’s interpretation.¹²² This phrase, however translated, is clearly linked to femininity and emotion.¹²³ Queen Eufemia is also said to have received the Duke this way because she loved him in her heart. *Erikskrönikan*’s use of language relating to feelings of love between men – and between men and women – reflects a common theme in medieval literature, since expressions of deep, intimate feelings were public ideals for the nobility.¹²⁴

The Christmas feast and the farewell

The Christmas feast is described very cursorily although it lasted four days, and the talks that must have taken place are not mentioned at all.¹²⁵ The use of words connected to chivalry such as “heþer” – “honour” – is present, thus once again employed to construct the new ideals.¹²⁶ Instead of a description of the feast, the text emphasizes an account of the death and funeral of Prince Wizlaw II, the father of Queen Eu-

¹²¹ For the ideal of women, see Bumke 2001: 325–327, 335–337 who argue that the ideal was beauty.

¹²² Bumke 2001: 219–220. For an in-depth work on the significance of the ritual of the kiss as a pledge of goodwill and peace, see Petkov 2003. See also Kerr 2007: 137–138 for kissing when greeting a guest.

¹²³ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1884–1888. Pipping 1926: 126. A similar phrase: “söth ord aff rödhum mwne” translates to “sweet words *from* (my italics) a red mouth”, *Erikskrönikan* v. 377, which in my opinion also strengthens Pipping’s choice of translation.

¹²⁴ Pipping 1926: 509. Gerd Althoff describes a parting between bishop Ulrich of Augsburg and Otto the Great, where it is said that they parted in love, Althoff 1999: 95. See also McGuire 1999: 229–232, 242. For love among aristocrats, see also Jaeger 1999: 6, 17, 24–30, 44–45; Ailes 1999: 216–223. For homosocial and homosexual relationships in Swedish literary sources, see Bagerius & Ekholst 2007: 7–12, and Bagerius & Ekholst 2011. They argue that homosocial relationships were used as a political tool. See also Bumke 2001: 360–413.

¹²⁵ Feasts were an integral part of the political culture, and negotiations on such occasions were seldom mentioned in literature, Bumke 2001: 208.

¹²⁶ Such phrases are also present in the passage in *Herr Ivan* vv. 1823–1906.

femia.¹²⁷ In particular, the passage states that noblemen bore him to the church where he was buried under the altar, the place of most honour and glory. Thus the chronicle links the nobility with God.

Finally, the farewell ritual is described, with these elements: the farewell of the King, followed by the farewell of the Queen, and finally, the farewell of a crowd. This is different than other farewells in *Erikskrönikan* where common denominators were a procession, a handshake and weeping of women.¹²⁸

First, the chronicle touches upon the Duke himself saying that he comported himself chivalrously when he asked “leave” – “orloff” – to take his farewell.¹²⁹ The use of the word “orloff” perhaps indicates Duke Erik’s status. By asking permission, his status is shown to be subordinate to the King since he follows the King’s rules of conduct.¹³⁰ In *Hirdskrá*, the Norwegian law text from c. 1273–1277, governing the king’s *hirð* – the fellowship of men sworn to the king’s service – certain categories of the king’s men had to ask “orlof” when the king went to bed.¹³¹ In another case, several categories of the king’s men were required to ask “orlof” to leave after Christmas.¹³²

Next, the King gives his farewell, begging the Duke to stay longer and expressing his sorrow that he has to leave:

¹²⁷ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1894–1901. Fagerland 2006: 128. Funerals of high nobility are well known in other source material besides chronicles, and this passage and the ritual with the accompanying noblemen are mirrored in contemporary European practice, Vale 2001:240–246.

¹²⁸ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 89–156 and vv. 3554–3623; Jansson 1971: 187–200.

¹²⁹ Kerr 2007: 140–141 for leave taking.

¹³⁰ Kerr 2007: 140. The word “orloff” is also used when the leading aristocrat *marsk*, earl marshal, Thyrgils Knutsson asked to leave the service of Duke Erik and Duke Valdemar, which is clearly a case of a person of subordinate status, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1942–2025. For Norwegian king’s use of power and subordination, see Orning 2008. See also Bagge 1991 and Bagge 1996 for royal ideology.

¹³¹ *Hirdloven til Norges konge og hans håndgangne menn: Hirdskræen: etter AM 322 fol /* edited by Steinar Imsen (Oslo 2000): 125.

¹³² Imsen 2000 *Hirdloven*: 179. For other examples, see Imsen 2000 *Hirdloven*: 93, 127.

Nyonda dagh jwla *han* orloff took
 som här star *scriuit* i *themne* book
 mz tokt *ther* *honom* aldregh brast
 Konungen sagde thz er mik last
 ath i vilin ey wara her jwlin all
 Han sagde thz era swa myn fall
 Thz iak giter her ey lenger biit
 jak wil ok see huat hema er tiit
 wiltu tha här ey lenger wara
 tha late gud tik wel at fara
 Ok läti tik lykko ok äro skeep
 ok *vmne* mik tik sköt athersee
 mz frögd ok gläde *som* iak tik an¹³³

On the ninth day of Christmas he asked permission to leave
 as here is written in this book
 with courtesy that never failed him
 the king said it saddens me
 that you do not want to stay the whole of Christmas
 he (Erik) said it is my intention
 since I can stay here no longer
 I need to see what has happened at home
 If you no longer wish to stay
 may God help you on your way
 and grant you joy and glory
 and permit me to see you soon
 with joy and happiness as I wish you (or “as I give you”)

This emotional display was expected behaviour at farewells.¹³⁴ In this case, the King and the Duke are apparently together for the ritual, as they were not at the reception, where instead the King walked out to greet the Duke. After the Duke tells the King that he has to leave nonetheless, the King wishes him a safe journey calling upon God to guard him, and wishes him all the fortune and glory in the world. At the very last, the King tells the Duke that he wants to see him again soon, and expresses himself with emotionally laden words: “mz frögd ok gläde *som* iak tik an” – “with joy and happiness as I wish you” (or “as I give you”).¹³⁵ Rolf Pipping translates this final line as “since I love you”. If this translation is correct, the use of love also corresponds with the same sentiment Queen Eufemia expressed for Duke Erik, which fits the repetitive element of ritual. Even if this translation is incorrect, the passage is still a dialogue between the King and the Duke, both surpassing one another with fair words using emotionally laden terms and phrases associated with chivalry, thus establishing a close, emotionally laden relationship between men.

As was the case with the reception ritual, the Queen is next, again separated both in time and place:

¹³³ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1902–1914.

¹³⁴ Kerr 2007: 140.

<p>tha gik then ädela wise man Til drotningena ther hon stodh tha sagde thz ädela rena blod Faar wel son ok jwla broder Han sagde myn kere sötha moder nw wil jak giffua jder gudi j wall fore jdra dygd swa marghfall ther iak hauer aff jder rönt ok seet ok mykin gläde j haffwen mik theet Min tjänist er jder hwar iak är Hon haffde han i sith hierta kär for vtan allan falskan sidh swa rönte han tha han torffte widh¹³⁶</p>	<p>then the noble wise man went to the Queen where she stood then the noble, pure blood said farewell my son and Yule (Christmas) brother he said my dear sweet mother now I will leave you to the mercy of God for your multitude of virtues that I have received and seen from you and much joy you have given me I am at your service wherever I am She had love for him in her heart with no deception which he felt when he needed it</p>
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The Duke, described as noble and wise, walks to where Queen Eufemia stands. This is a departure from the reception where it is not specified whether she was standing up. This was apparently significant in the farewell ritual; standing before someone is mentioned on other occasions in *Erikskrönikan*, although usually as someone standing before a king, thus signifying their subordinate status.¹³⁷ Geoffrey Koziol argues that "...the physical arrangements of public gatherings could force social interactions into patterns of deference".¹³⁸ Perhaps this is the chronicle's way of allowing the Duke to be portrayed as someone of high stature, a chivalric ideal made flesh, since a queen stands for him. It could also signify a change in Duke Erik's status in the eyes of the royal couple after the political deliberations. In either case, the bodies are prominent in this passage, conveying meaning of deference. The use of body language to convey status and power was common among the aristocracies in Scandinavian societies and frequently used in ritual.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Pipping 1926: 511. Joy is also linked to the courtly ideals, Bumke 2001: 307–311.

¹³⁶ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1915–1927.

¹³⁷ Pipping 1926: 536; Standing as a way of demonstrating social status, see also Brögger 2000 *Kongespeilet*: 110. Koziol 1992: 61–70.

¹³⁸ Koziol 1992: 62.

¹³⁹ The use of sitting and standing in important rituals can for instance be seen in the appointment of dukes in Norway in *Hirðskrá*, where the duke first is placed in a sitting position, and the king, standing, reads a ritual phrase. The king then leads the duke to a new sitting position, the high seat, and gives him certain objects while both are standing up. The appointment of a *jarl* also follows a similar ritual with very clear instructions on when they are to sit or when to stand. It is clear that various body positions are related to status since the lower mem-

The Queen speaks first to the Duke, as did the King, signifying that hierarchy also played a substantial role in these relationships, not only gender. Queen Eufemia is described as the “ädela rena blod”, which literarily translates as “pure, noble blood”, meaning a person of good, or high, birth. Pipping argues that this probably refers to her good character. Nevertheless this is clearly designed to be in accord with the chivalric ideals in the portrayal of a high-born woman.¹⁴⁰ What is significant is what comes next. Queen Eufemia, saying her farewells, called Duke Erik two things: “...son ok jwla broder” – “...son and Yule (Christmas) brother”.¹⁴¹ Duke Erik replied to the first by calling her his mother. This familiarity is likely because the Duke is now betrothed to Queen Eufemia’s daughter, Ingeborg. However, he does not reply to the second term. This is a very interesting and rare phrase in Scandinavian literature, but Pipping in his commentary merely notes that it has been used in pre-Christian Scandinavian society to signify a person who has drunk from a special beer, *jóladrykkia*, at a ritual drinking feast.¹⁴² Pipping argues that in *Erikskrönikan*, it is merely a relic of an earlier, pagan time, and that in a courtly environment it has lost its sacred meaning and devolved into something less, but perhaps still laden with intimacy. Yet, I argue that since beer drinking on special occasions is mentioned frequently in Norwegian society – for instance in the provincial law *Gulatingsloven*, which mentions a ritually blessed beer on Christmas – that the chronicle in this passage takes an old custom, something that would have been intimately familiar to the audience, and recasts it in a chivalric setting in order to appropriate it.¹⁴³ This is why

bers of the *hird* gets less physical attention from the king. When appointing a *stallare*, the man is led to the king, who then seats him, but directly after this the king withdraws to the high seat, Imsen 2000 *Hirdloven*: 75, 83, 99, 101–103, 121–123. See Orning 2008 for the relationship between king, the *hird* and nobility. See also Brögger 2000 *Kongespeilet*: 87–90 for the use of bodily displays of hierarchy when entering a hall to meet the king.

¹⁴⁰ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1915–1927. It can be translated as “pure, noble blood” or “most excellent, beautiful woman”, Pipping 1926: 511–512.

¹⁴¹ *Erikskrönikan* v. 1918.

¹⁴² Pipping 1926: 512.

¹⁴³ *Gulatingsloven* was in use until the middle of the thirteenth century, Den ældre *Gulathingslov*, <<http://da2.uib.no/cgiwin/WebBok.exe?slag=lesside&bokid=ng1&sideid=16&storleik=>20110404>>. See also Kristendomsbolk, chapter 6 and 7, Bjørn Eithun & Magnus Rindal & Tor Ulset (publ by). 1994. *Den eldre Gulatingslova*. There are a few instances in *Erikskrönikan* where the chronicler appears to be doing this. For example, the old ritual of giving fodder to the horses belonging to household men, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 3524–3623, Pipping 1926: 645–647, however argues that this ritual was being introduced at this time. He ties it to the office of Earl Marshall, who was the person actually giving with the symbol of a silver staff, but it could very well be that the Gift-giving itself is older. Another possible example is when

the text surrounding this passage is so laden with phrases associated with the new ideals, to facilitate in the minds of the audience this translation of association. Ritual here is transformative. Also, the use of the term “brother” is common in Scandinavian aristocratic circles. The Norwegian *hirð* was called both guild and brotherhood in *Hirðskrá*.¹⁴⁴ Further, *Konungs Skuggsjá* states that on Christmas and Easter the *gestir* joined the *hirð* in drinking and eating with the king, something the *gestir* was not allowed to do normally, which implies that Christmas feasts were considered especially important.¹⁴⁵

Finally, in two versions of a Swedish provincial law, *Äldre Västgötalagen* and *Yngre Västgötalagen* from the province of Västergötland, dating from the early and late thirteenth centuries, respectively, it is considered *nidhingsvärk*, a particularly foul crime which meant the perpetrator had no honour, to kill a man while sharing a special beer since there was friendship and peace sworn on the occasion of the feast. The gravity of the crime is reflected by the punishment, which was to be declared *friplös*. This meant that the individual in question was outside the protection of the law, reflecting the solemnity of ritual beer drinking.¹⁴⁶ Traditions and rituals surrounding beer drinking were widely known in Scandinavian society in the time of *Erikskrönikan*, and further, the anonymous author was likely from the province of Västergötland, which implies knowledge in these matters.¹⁴⁷ Thus, it is problematic to label rituals as pagan or Christian, Viking or chivalric, and, it is perhaps probable that in the audience’s minds, such a distinction was meaningless.

Then it is Duke Erik’s turn; he remarks on Queen Eufemia’s virtues and of the joy he has felt and ends with pledging eternal service to the Queen. The passage then goes on to say that the Queen loved him dearly and proved it to him when he needed her help.¹⁴⁸ Their relationship is therefore cast in a chivalric light. This was the new

a Swedish princess is referred to as “dana boot”, *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1222–1243, Pipping 1926: 388–389. This is similar to the phrase on one of the famous Jellinge runestones in Denmark, dating from the middle of the tenth century, where Queen Tyra, mother of the famous Harald Blue-tooth, was called “Danmarkar bot”. It appears that certain concepts in old Scandinavian society later reappeared in later courtly culture, which suggests to me an adaptation of the newly imported culture, see also Bengtsson 1999: 31–33.

¹⁴⁴ Imsen 2000 *Hirdloven*: 31, 40–42. The *hirð* was divided into three sections, *hirðmen*, *gestir* and *kertisveinar*, where the first category was the most aristocratic and had among its members dukes and earls as well as knights, Imsen 2000 *Hirdloven*: 35–40.

¹⁴⁵ Brögger 2000 *Kongespeilet*: 79.

¹⁴⁶ In Holmbäck & Wessén 1979: 70–74 under the heading *Urbotamål*.

¹⁴⁷ Rosén 1939: 347–355; Jonsson 2010.

¹⁴⁸ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1925–1927, Pipping 1926: 512–513. Joy is also linked to the courtly ideals, Bumke 2001: 307–311.

way between highborn men and women, not only to love but to give help in dire straits. It might be appropriate here to mention that *Erikskrönikan* never emphasizes courtly love; chivalry has other expressions in this source.¹⁴⁹

The last part of the farewell ritual, as well as the separate farewells of the King and the Queen, corresponds with similar occurrences at the reception ritual. This mirroring is an important part in the description of ritual. Duke Erik leaves the court of King Håkon and on his way he takes his leave of everyone he sees. Apparently there was quite a crowd:

Han helsade huar then man han saa	He took his leave of every man he saw
the frwor gingo alla ath staa	and all the wives went and stood
ä hwar i sith windogh	each in their own window
mz kâran vilia ok godhan hogh	with tenderness and good will
Ok sagho alla epte honom	and all watched after him
Honom war fulgot herberge j wanom	he could count on their hospitality on his return
ok laso alla for honom ok badho	and they all read and prayed for him
at gud skulle med sin nadhe	that God in his mercy should
sända han wel til landa heem	send him well back home
tessa lund skildis han with them	in this manner he parted from them
Ok reed swa thädhan ok hem til landa	and rode from there and home
Huat han sidhan haffde til handa	what he later did
thz warder ider framdelis sakt	you will soon find out
til dygd ok äro stod all hans akt. ¹⁵⁰	to virtue and glory were all his deeds

The passage relates that the wives went to view his departure from their windows.¹⁵¹ It is therefore likely that this shows a gender separation. Duke Erik bade farewell to the men he encountered, presumably then noblemen, while the wives were separate from this and not physically included in the same manner as the men. All their prayers and wishes of a return went with the Duke. The chronicle clearly goes to a great length to let the intended audience know what a perfect ideal Duke Erik was, the embodiment of the chivalric values, and what an impression he made at the court of King Håkon and Queen Eufemia of Norway. The farewell description then varies

¹⁴⁹ See Bandlien 2001 for love in Scandinavian culture. Bumke 2001: 213–230.

¹⁵⁰ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1928–1941.

¹⁵¹ *Erikskrönikan* vv. 1928–1941. Pipping 1926: 513.

significantly from the two passages that Sven-Bertil Jansson discusses – the ritual farewell is more focused on describing Duke Erik and his courtly manner.¹⁵² There is no description of a procession to the departure point, no handshake, and no weeping. However, there are similarities; there is a description of Duke Erik walking to Queen Eufemia, which might have been a procession. There is also sorrow expressed by the King, Queen and crowd, even though tears are not mentioned. Finally, the farewell also differs from Joachim Bumke's model, since there are no exchanges of physical gifts, unless one counts the promise of service as a gift.¹⁵³

Concluding remarks

The language of the chronicle is full of references to courtly culture and the new chivalric ideals. However, this change in the ruling elite's ideology was a lengthy process and also an ambivalent one, since there was opposition to these new ideals, primarily from powerful magnate groups who perhaps saw this as a way to strengthen royal power. *Erikskrönikan* represents the very first, and only, example of a rhymed chronicle from this time and it is influenced by *Eufemiavisorna*, the first examples of romances in Sweden. Together, these two expressions of courtly literature are unique in a Swedish context, and they also represent a major leap in written culture. This was a way to construct ideology, by using the written word, which was new in Sweden at the time.

The actors that were involved in introducing and constructing the new ideals appear to have been primarily kings and aristocrats, the secular elite which shared a common interest in shaping a power structure which placed them above others. Old power structures were reinterpreted during this time and translated into new power relationships, the magnate groupings and other secular elites such as the king's men merged into the new nobility, *frälse*. Literature such as *Erikskrönikan* was important to this process by creating a new narrative and a new language of power. However, it should be clear that the relationship between the chronicle and society was ambivalent and complicated. The chronicle is both a mirror of society as well as an active agent in the reinterpretation and constructing process.

Rituals in *Erikskrönikan* are portrayed as public acts of great power integral to the political culture. The public aspect of the rituals implies the need for an audience that can participate in the ideological power construction of the new ideals. Ideology

¹⁵² Jansson 1971: 187–200.

¹⁵³ Bumke 2001: 213–230.

is thus transferred from the relatively narrow social space of the court to a larger audience including other social classes which also were spectators. These ideals appear to be similar at the various Scandinavian courts. This is quite understandable since the elite in these countries shared common values and had also intermarried to a great extent, thus enabling cultural practices to be shared. The courtly and chivalric ideals expressed in *Erikskrönikan* and *Eufemiavisorna* also display certain characteristics that differ from expressions from German and French courts, specifically the de-emphasis of courtly love and the emphasis of behaviour associated with courage, battle, and honour, which, perhaps, is representative of Scandinavian courtly culture.

Erikskrönikan's passage shows similarities to formulaic descriptions in other chronicles as well as romances. Sven-Bertil Jansson discusses farewell passages and relates them to the *propempticon* with processions, handshakes and women's weeping. Joachim Bumke shows the formula of courtly feasts, with invitation, arrival, the feast itself, and gift-giving. The examined passage in *Erikskrönikan* does show some of these aspects. However, the chronicle emphasizes gender separation in time and place, thus making the placement of bodies in various place contexts important for the construction of power, both with regards to gender and social hierarchy. The role of women, even including women of substantial power, is clearly defined as subordinate to men.

Social interactions, such as ritual, were thus central for the construction of various power aspects, such as hierarchy and gender. Receptions and farewells were important rituals that conveyed power, status, hierarchies and ideals through concrete rules of repetitive behaviour. Through the use of body, body language and the placing of the body in social place and space, the chronicle conveyed what society should deem appropriate chivalric and courtly behaviour as well as norms and values. In defining new standards of behaviour, the chronicle actively constructed these new ideals for a Swedish audience. In the end, this shows that an understanding of ritual allows an insight into the rules which governed political culture at the time.

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